

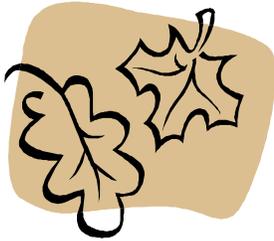
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Osseo AA Newsletter

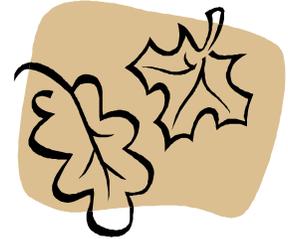
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“One Day at a Time”



Colors are Changing!!



Greetings:

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Joe R. for his service this past year as president. He did an excellent job of keeping the board “transparent” with the operations of the club.

I will continue that tradition, as the board is there to help and make sure that everything is running smoothly, and not hinder the functionality and purpose of our club.

This is my second “stint” on the board and I am humbled to be asked to serve. I could never say no to an organization that spreads such love and attention to those who need it the most.

It will be a busy year, as we have to plan the Omelet Breakfast and One Year Honoree Banquet along with other events that happen during the year.

My contact info will be posted on the bulletin board along with the other board members. Please do not hesitate to contact one of us if there is a need.

Regards,

Bob W

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Want to Contribute?

- Contact Bob G. or any Board Member with stories or suggestions
- Check the website often as it's constantly changing. It's also a good way to keep up with the news. If you have club news, please send it in.
- Edited by: Julee E.

This is a good tool we will use daily, either consciously or subconsciously. Some members do it on a daily schedule. Some do it as an action or thought is completed. Some do it weekly or monthly. Some do it only in facing a crisis. If it works for you, it has to be right for today.

The first part of this step does not seem to me to be only a continuation of step 4. In step 4, it says, a searching and fearless *moral* inventory. In this step, it says a *personal* inventory; which I think should include physical, mental and spiritual, as well as moral.

Everything my God has given me to work with and change, is encompassed in my body. This is the tool He has given me. I am not absolutely certain why He has done this or what He expects me to do with it the rest of my life. I do not have to know.

As a friend of mine in Omaha says, "It isn't what I don't know that gives me trouble, it's what I'm absolutely sure of that just isn't so."

So far, whatever purpose I interpret my God has placed me here for, it would behoove me to keep the tools He has given me in the best possible condition. These tools would be my body, my mind and my spirit as I understand it.

My personal inventory, then, would begin with my care of my body. Am I doing the things today that will help to put, and keep, me in the best physical condition possible? I don't have to train for the Olympics; but I think I should keep my body in the kind of shape where it is an asset to my living, and not a detriment.

Next on the list would be my mind. Am I exercising my mind on ideas more than on judging people? Am I reading the type of material that will force my mind to grow? Am I talking and listening to people who have something to give me, as well as to people to whom I can give?

The spiritual inventory is probably the degree of satisfaction I have in my relationship to my Power greater than myself. While it must often be a nebulous thing, it will not be any less real. If my spiritual beliefs require me to become active in one of the conventional religions, then I had better do it. Whatever decision I make in this area is only good for today anyway. I may grow to a better one tomorrow.

The moral inventory, I conduct, like I did in the 4th step. The two columns and the percentages. There hopefully will be some improvement.

I feel that, the thing I must watch out for most in this personal inventory is to make it non-judgmental. I am not sending myself to Heaven or Hell. I'm trying to learn what I am.

In doing this, I begin to understand what I believe. I begin to make the changes that are needed to make my philosophy of living consistent. This is a lifetime process; frequently painful. But, I may learn to laugh at myself. This will make it easier.

What should happen here is that we begin to become more aware, and to find that awareness is not frightening. I listened to three young men, who were out-patients in a day clinic for emotional problems, talk about why they were there. They all seemed to agree that the reason they were so disturbed, that they needed this treatment, was because their fathers hadn't loved them, or at least not enough.

One of them asked if I was going to start on the day clinic and I told them, "No, but I was interested in what they were saying". They gathered around and asked what interested me.

I told them what I had heard - that they were disturbed because their fathers hadn't loved them

enough.

And then I said, "It's quite possible you are right. Probably not, but it *is* possible; but do you realize now that you are going to have to find another excuse? You have just used that one up. Now that you are aware of it, you can't use it anymore. Once I realized that I have an explosive temper, because my father had one, it's no longer my father's problem. It's mine!"

So we take our inventories, and gradually become more aware that the problems involved belong to us and to us alone.

Will these inventories be completely honest? Hardly. If I can't honestly mark myself 100% honest in my inventory, my evaluation can't be 100% honest. But, of course, it doesn't have to be. It just has to be the best I can do today.

The second part of this step, "and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it", is a new lesson in living for some of us. The better job we do of this makes the repeat efforts at step five and nine much easier. I believe that this means we should admit our wrongs promptly to our families and friends, as well as people in work and other parts of society. We should learn to treat the people we love with just as much respect as we treat strangers. It's part of growing up. The main benefactor of this is us of course! We are learning to live with ourselves as we are. And, we do it on inventories based on our standards today.

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“Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.”

NEVER since it began has Alcoholics Anonymous been divided by a major controversial issue. Nor has our Fellowship ever publicly taken sides on any question in an embattled world. This, however, has been no earned virtue. It could almost be said that we were born with it, for, as one old-timer recently declared, “Practically never have I heard a heated religious, political, or reform argument among A.A. members. So long as we don't argue these matters privately, it's a cinch we never shall publicly.”

As by some deep instinct, we A.A.'s have known from the very beginning that we must never, no matter what the provocation, publicly take sides in any fight, even a worthy one. All history affords us the spectacle of striving nations and groups finally torn asunder because they were designed for, or tempted into, controversy. Others fell apart because of sheer self-righteousness while trying to enforce upon the rest of mankind some millennium of their own specification. In our own times, we have seen millions die in political and economic wars often spurred by religious and racial difference. We live in the imminent possibility of afresh holocaust to determine how men shall be governed and how the products of nature and toil shall be divided among them. That is the spiritual climate in which A.A. was born, and by God's grace has nevertheless flourished. Let us reemphasize that this reluctance to fight one another or anybody else is not counted as some special virtue which makes us feel superior to other people. Nor does it mean that the members of Alcoholics Anonymous, now restored as citizens of the world, are going to back away from their individual responsibilities to act as they see the right upon issues of our time. But when it comes to A.A. as a whole, that's quite a different matter. In this respect, we do not enter into public controversy, because we know that our Society will perish if it does. We conceive the survival and spread of Alcoholics Anonymous to be something of far greater importance than the weight we could collectively throw back of any other cause. Since recovery from alcoholism is life itself to us, it is imperative that we preserve in full strength our means of survival.

Maybe this sounds as though the alcoholics in A.A. had suddenly gone peaceable, and become one great big happy family. Of course, this isn't so at all. Human beings that we are, we squabble. Before we leveled off a bit, A.A. looked more like one prodigious squabble than anything else, at least on the surface. A corporation director who had just voted a company expenditure of a hundred thousand dollars would appear at an A.A. business meeting and blow his top over an outlay of twenty-five dollars' worth of needed postage stamps. Disliking the attempt of some to manage a group, half its membership might angrily rush off to form another group more to their liking. Elders, temporarily turned Pharisee, have sulked. Bitter attacks have been directed against people suspected of mixed motives. Despite their din, our puny rows never did A.A. a particle of harm. They were just part and parcel of learning to work and live together. Let it be noted, too, that they were almost always concerned with ways to make A.A. more effective, how to do the most good for the most alcoholics.

The Washingtonian Society, a movement among alcoholics which started in Baltimore a century ago, almost discovered the answer to alcoholism. At first, the society was composed entirely of alcoholics trying to help one another. The early members foresaw that they should dedicate themselves to this sole aim. In many respects, the Washingtonians were akin to A.A. of today. Their membership passed the hundred thousand mark. Had they been left to themselves, and had they stuck to their one goal, they might have found the rest of the answer. But this didn't happen. Instead, the Washingtonians permitted politicians and reformers, both alcoholic and nonalcoholic, to use the society for their own purposes. Abolition of slavery, for example, was a stormy political issue then. Soon, Washingtonian speakers violently and publicly took sides on this question. Maybe the society could have survived the abolition controversy, but it didn't have a chance from the moment it determined to reform America's drinking habits. When the Washingtonians became temperance crusaders, within a very few years they had completely lost their effectiveness in helping alcoholics.

The lesson to be learned from the Washingtonians was not overlooked by Alcoholics Anonymous. As we surveyed the wreck of that movement, early A.A. members resolved to keep our Society out of public controversy. Thus was laid the cornerstone for Tradition Ten: “Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.”

Al-Anon – A Fellowship of Relatives and Friends of Alcoholics

Al-Anon and AA go hand in hand when dealing with alcoholism. Both are a fellowship of equals that welcome members from all walks of life into the group to share experience, strength and hope with other members in order to solve their common problems.

Al-Anon's fellowship helps the relatives and friends of the alcoholic which has incorporated AA Twelve Steps and replacing 'alcoholics' with 'others' in the last step, Step Twelve. An Al-Anon member is encouraged to direct their attention away from the active alcoholic to get in touch with their own behavior and emotions. By turning the focus on themselves they can see that their personalities resemble those of the alcoholics. We have learned that all of us started out accepting unacceptable behavior and attaching excuses to those behaviors. After awhile the behavior of the alcoholic slowly grows more and more intolerable yet we still give excuses until it becomes the "norm". We become like the "frog in the water". It goes like this: If you put a frog into a pan of boiling water, it will jump out faster than the eye can see. But if you put the frog into a pan of water that is the frog's body temperature and then *slowly turn up the heat* the frog will stay in the water -- even to the point of boiling alive. Why? Because the frog does not notice the gradual change in temperature. Sometimes it is when our relationship with the active drinker takes us to the boiling point that is when we reach out to an Al-Anon meeting.

Removing our guilt and isolation begins the healing process. We change our habits of protecting the alcoholic to detaching with love and learn to use the tools of Al-Anon. We learn that as codependents obsessed with the alcoholics' behavior was just as toxic as the alcoholic with the bottle. Trying to control and "protect" the alcoholic create situations that makes it easier for them to continue and even progress with their drinking. This whole cycle ends up building anger and resentment in the relationship.

Lois W., wife of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) co-founder Bill W. writes in How Al-Anon Works for Families and Friends of Alcoholics page 136, "Lois's Story": After a while I began to wonder why I was not as happy as I ought to be, since the one thing I had been yearning for all my married life [Bill's sobriety] had come to pass. Then one Sunday, Bill asked me if I was ready to go to the meeting with him. To my own astonishment as well as his, I burst forth with "Damn your old meetings!" and threw a shoe as hard as I could. This surprising display of temper over nothing pulled me up short and made me start to analyze my own attitudes. ... My life's purpose of sobering up Bill, which had made me feel desperately needed, had vanished. ... I decided to strive for my own spiritual growth. I used the same principles as he did to learn how to change my attitudes. ... We began to learn that ... the partner of the alcoholic also needed to live by a spiritual program.

Al-Anon is that spiritual program that will help you weather the person in your life is still drinking or not. There are many Al-Anon/Alateen meetings in your area and you can find them by calling 952-920-3961 or looking on the website al-anon-alateen-msp.org. Al-Anon will work for you if you allow it to. It's as effective as you make it. It's the safe place, the right place to be.

Imagine that you had won the following prize in a contest: Each morning your bank would deposit \$86,400.00 in your private account for your use.

However, this prize has rules, just as any game has certain rules.

The first set of rules would be:

Everything that you didn't spend during each day would be taken away from you.

You may not simply transfer money into some other account. You may only spend it.

Each morning upon awakening, the bank opens your account with another \$86,400.00 for that day.

The second set of rules:

The bank can end the game without warning; at any time it can say, Its over, the game is over! It can close the account and you will not receive a new one.

What would you personally do?

You would buy anything and everything you wanted right? Not only for yourself, but for all people you love, right? Even for people you don't know, because you couldn't possibly spend it all on yourself, right? You would try to spend every cent, and use it all, right?

ACTUALLY This GAME is REALITY!

Each of us is in possession of such a magical bank. We just can't seem to see it.

The MAGICAL BANK is TIME!

Each morning we awaken to receive 86,400 seconds as a gift of life, and when we go to sleep at night, any remaining time is NOT credited to us.

What we haven't lived up that day is forever lost.

Yesterday is forever gone.

Each morning the account is refilled, but the bank can dissolve your account at any time....WITHOUT WARNING.

SO, what will YOU do with your 86,400 seconds?

Those seconds are worth so much more than the same amount in money

Think about that, and always think of this:

Enjoy every second of your life, because time races by so much quicker than you think.

So take care of yourself, be Happy,

Love Deeply and enjoy life!



Do you find yourself fuming when someone cuts you off in traffic? Does your blood pressure go through the roof when your child refuses to cooperate? Anger is a normal and even healthy emotion — but it's important to deal with it in a positive way. Uncontrolled anger can take a toll on both your health and your relationships.

Start by considering these 10 anger management tips.

No. 1: Take a timeout

Counting to 10 isn't just for kids. Before reacting to a tense situation, take a few moments to breathe deeply and count to 10. Slowing down can help defuse your temper. If necessary, take a break from the person or situation until your frustration subsides a bit.

No. 2: Once you're calm, express your anger

As soon as you're thinking clearly, express your frustration in an assertive but nonconfrontational way. State your concerns and needs clearly and directly, without hurting others or trying to control them.

No. 3: Get some exercise

Physical activity can provide an outlet for your emotions, especially if you're about to erupt. If you feel your anger escalating, go for a brisk walk or run, or spend some time doing other favorite physical activities. Physical activity stimulates various brain chemicals that can leave you feeling happier and more relaxed than you were before you worked out.

No. 4: Think before you speak

In the heat of the moment, it's easy to say something you'll later regret. Take a few moments to collect your thoughts before saying anything — and allow others involved in the situation to do the same.

No. 5: Identify possible solutions

Instead of focusing on what made you mad, work on resolving the issue at hand. Does your child's messy room drive you crazy? Close the door. Is your partner late for dinner every night? Schedule meals later in the evening — or agree to eat on your own a few times a week. Remind yourself that anger won't fix anything, and might only make it worse.

No. 6: Stick with 'I' statements

To avoid criticizing or placing blame — which might only increase tension — use "I" statements to describe the problem. Be respectful and specific. For example, say, "I'm upset that you left the table without offering to help with the dishes," instead of, "You never do any housework."

No. 7: Don't hold a grudge

Forgiveness is a powerful tool. If you allow anger and other negative feelings to crowd out positive feelings, you might find yourself swallowed up by your own bitterness or sense of injustice. But if you can forgive someone who angered you, you might both learn from the situation. It's unrealistic to expect everyone to behave exactly as you want at all times.

No. 8: Use humor to release tension

Lightening up can help diffuse tension. Don't use sarcasm, though — it can hurt feelings and make things worse.

No. 9: Practice relaxation skills

When your temper flares, put relaxation skills to work. Practice deep-breathing exercises, imagine a relaxing scene, or repeat a calming word or phrase, such as, "Take it easy." You might also listen to music, write in a journal or do a few yoga poses — whatever it takes to encourage relaxation.

No. 10: Know when to seek help

Learning to control anger is a challenge for everyone at times. Consider seeking help for anger issues if your anger seems out of control, causes you to do things you regret or hurts those around you. You might explore local anger management classes or anger management counseling. With professional help, you can:

- Learn what anger is
 - Identify what triggers your anger
 - Recognize signs that you're becoming angry
 - Learn to respond to frustration and anger in a controlled, healthy way
 - Explore underlying feelings, such as sadness or depression
-

Patience is needed with everyone, but first of all with ourselves.

--Saint Francis De Sales

One night Sandra was having trouble putting a puzzle together. Angrily, she pushed all the pieces into a huge pile.

"I can't do this," she said. She got up and walked over to the couch and plopped down.

"Let me tell you a story," said her dad, as he sat down next to her. "There was a daughter who helped her dad take care of her baby sister. Again and again, she helped her baby sister stand and try to walk. One day the daughter tried to put a puzzle together but gave up after only a few tries. She had forgotten how many times she had helped her baby sister."

We are all like Sandra, sometimes. We forget to allow ourselves to fail, even though our growth up to now has been a series of failures that we've learned from. With patience, we allow ourselves to take chances we might not otherwise explore, and we widen our world of possibilities. Life has been patient with us so far, now it's our turn.

What have I failed at that I can try again today?

Reading from: Today's Gift