

District 12 Newsletter

April 2012

Step Four

Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.



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Don't Drink

One Day At A Time

Ask For Help

Go To Meetings

And CHANGE

My Fourth Step Story By Marlene G., Wkgn, IL

My name is Marlene and I am a grateful alcoholic. Grateful that I have not had a drink since April of 1989 as a result of working the steps in Alcoholics Anonymous. Usually in AA when discussing steps at meetings, the common theme is to talk about one different step each month. So when I go to meetings in April we talk about the fourth step because April is the 4th month, but the steps for me have never been worked out that way. "A searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves" can occur anytime of the year.

When I started AA in April, I was on step one. When I came to step four, I completed it a couple months later, but one thing is for sure I was comfortable enough as a result of doing the first three steps in order to complete it. I did a really good third step, and knew my higher power was in control of my life so that I felt safe enough, and the inventory was fearless. I was not afraid to look at myself or my resentments. I really believed that God (my higher power) was looking out for me, and that I was in his care. Anything that was going to come out in my fourth step, would be in his hands. I, being somewhat new to the program knew I should work at the direction of my sponsor, which I did. Her help and experience really guided me through this very important step.

One of the things that I was afraid of was taking that first drink. I had heard over and over again about people relapsing as a result of not working step four. I went to my sponsor, and let her know that I really wanted to work this step. She gave me the go ahead. I said prayers before taking pen to paper, asking God to show me what he wanted me to see and know. I started writing and it was like magic. All of my fears, resentments, secrets, even secrets I kept from myself came onto the page. I learned things about myself that needed immediate work and attending to. I learned about how I lied to myself and others. I finally knew who I was and what made me "tick".

What really made me tick was a lot of fear and anger. Anger and fear are just two sides of the same coin. When I am angry, what is usually underneath all of the anger is FEAR, plain and simple. What was underneath all the lies I told? FEAR. What was under almost all of my character defects? FEAR! On page 67 of the Big Book of AA it even states that. See the last paragraph on that page (No, I'm not reciting it here, you'll have to read the book). Now I know that I am only talking about step four, but I have to say, that the best thing I have done in sobriety is work step four and step five. Step four is the preparatory step, so that my secrets, lies, resentments can be brought out into the light. They are brought out of the darkness and shared with God and another person, step five. I learned that I was not an alien from outer space, and that I really wasn't that different from any other recovering alcoholic. I really learned that I did not have to carry all of that "stuff" around anymore. I could finally let go. Thank you God and AA for giving us a way to clean out the past.

Page 64—Personal Inventory-Step Four

First, we searched out the flaws in our make-up which caused our failure. Being convinced that self, manifested in various ways, was what had defeated us, we considered its common manifestations. Resentment is the “number one” offender. It destroys more alcoholics than anything else. From it stem all forms of spiritual disease, for we have been not only mentally and physically ill, we have been spiritually sick. When the spiritual malady is overcome, we straighten out mentally and physically.

Matts Corner

- “Once a cucumber becomes a pickle, it can NOT go back to being a cucumber.
- “If you keep on doing what you always did, you’ll keep on getting what you always got.”
- “The Teacher never speaks during the test”
- “Absolutely nothing happens in God’s world by mistake”
- “We are all in this together, and we can only get out TOGETHER”.
- “I finally got a grip when I learned to LET GO.....

AA’s Stairway to Freedom

When I first became aware that I was trapped in a pit of my own design, I began to stubbornly fight and struggle to climb out by myself, on my own power. It was like crawling up a flight of stairs with chains and anchors dragging behind me. Each grueling step is harder than the one before. I sweat, I strain, I use all the strength inside of me and then suddenly, I see a handle of sorts. I look at it longingly and reach with every ounce of energy I have left. I fail to notice the sign next to the handle that clearly reads, “Flush Here”. I grip it desperately in order to pull myself up just a little higher, dragging my burdens behind me, and suddenly the handle moves, the stairs collapse beneath me, and I slide back down into my miry pit.

AA and the people in the rooms are a “few” steps ahead of me, offering a helping hand as I climb out of my pit ONE STEP AT A TIME. If I ignore their helping hands out of pride or shame or my glorious independence (that has done so much for me up until this point) and try to climb out of this lonely grave on my own then I will only make it so far before growing weary, and reaching for that “handle” rather than reaching for the generous helping hands so clearly available to me, I once again find myself right back where I began—only I find I am trapped in a far deeper pit than I was prior to this latest trip down the “slippery slide of misery”.

While I now realize that I was wondrously gifted at digging my pit deeper and deeper all by myself--even decorating it, and foolishly making myself believe it was a suitable home--I have finally surrendered to the fact that I will never get out of it alone. Without God, without the AA members that have gone before me, I am doomed to repeat this living hell until it finally claims my life, and I give up the fight to escape. I choose surrender. I choose acceptance. I choose to both ask for--and gratefully accept--all the help I can get. I choose to do whatever it takes to get out of this pit, and then help as many others as I possibly can to break out of their own prisons.

I thank God for AA, and for the love, compassion, understanding, humor and acceptance I have found inside the rooms. I am thankful to say, that one day at a time, I will never be the same.

Rae P., Zion

EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

NOTICE

Starting January 2 until April 1, 2012,
Friday Meetings start at 1 pm
all meetings at Joy Lutheran Church, Gurnee
will be moved to Lakeland Church,
440 N. Hunt Club Rd. Gurnee
(North of Washington, west side of Hunt Club)

Still Need Help

Lake County Work Release Program

2nd Thursday and 3rd Tuesday
at 7:15 pm.

It's really great service work!

WE ARE IN NEED OF WOMEN

Please call Chris for more information.
Chris M. 224-441-0454

DISTRICT 10 & 12 SPRING BREAKFAST

Speaker: Tina H. from Waukesha

Sunday, April 15, 2012
Saddle Ridge @ Ramada Inn
200 N. Greenbay Rd.
Waukegan, IL

Coffee: 8:00 a.m.

Breakfast: 9:00 a.m.

Cost: \$16.00

Contact: Karen F., 847-609-7354

Looking for a Sponsor/Sponsee?

Join us at the

ATP Sponsorship Panel

1st and 3rd Saturday of each month 12:45pm

Female sponsors needed!

Addictions Treatment Program

3002 Grand Avenue

Waukegan, IL 60085

District 12 Meeting

Third Sunday of every month at 4:00PM at Vista Medical
Center West, 2615 Washington Street, Waukegan, Illinois
60085. All alcoholics are welcome and group GSRs are
strongly encouraged to attend.

NOODLES & NUTS

1st Annual

BUNCH-O-NUTS

Anniversary Dinner

St. Marks Church

Corner of Delany and Yorkhouse

Saturday, April 21, 2012

From 4 - 8 pm

Free-Food-Fun-Fellowship

Sloppy Joes-Bring dish to pass

Speaker: Frank M.

HAPPY MOTHERS DAY

Treat yourself or your special someone to
Dinner, Speaker and a Dance

Date: Saturday May 12, 2012

Time: Dinner 6:30 pm

Speaker 8:00 pm

Dance 9-11 pm

Place: Zion Benton Alano Club

Cost: \$10 per person

\$ 16 per couple

\$5 Dance only

This is an open speaker and ALL are welcome

Contacts: Michelle—224-829-8357

Karen—847-609-7354

Step Study

Wednesdays @ 7 pm

St. Mark's Church

Yorkhouse & Delany Rd., Wkgn.

New Time & Place!

The District 12 Open Speaker Breakfast Vic-
tory Hospital

(also known as Vista Medical Center East)

Cost: \$7.00

Start time is 8:30 AM

1st Sunday of every month

“Most folks are about as happy as they make up their minds to be.”

Abraham Lincoln

Is Happiness The Goal?

“A happy person is not a person in a certain set of circumstances, but rather a person with a certain set of attitudes.”

“I don’t think happiness or unhappiness is the point. How do we meet the problems we face? How do we best learn from them and transmit what we have learned to others, if they would receive the knowledge?”

In my view, we of this world are pupils in a great school of life. It is intended that we try to grow, and that we try to help our fellow travelers to grow in the kind of love that makes no demands. In short, we try to move toward the image and likeness of God as we understand him.

When pain comes, we are expected to learn from it willingly, and help others to learn.

When happiness comes, we accept it as a gift, and thank God for it”

Bill W.— Letter, 1950

The District 12 Newsletter needs your help!

All alcoholics are welcome to contribute. We are happy to publish your recovery-related stories, poems, artwork, etc. Send submissions to lakecountydistrict12aa@gmail.com

A.A. Contacts

- General Service Office: <http://www.aa.org>
- Northern Illinois Area 20: <http://www.aa-nia.org>
- District 12 Website: <http://www.aadistrict12.com>
- District 12 Answering Service: 847-623-9660

District 12 Officers (Confidential – this information is for A.A. Use only)

If you are interested in one of the positions listed as OPEN, please contact an officer.

Position	Chair	Phone	Email	Alternate	Phone	Email
DCM	Martin C.	773-870-4010	claussenmartin@aol.com	OPEN		
Secretary	Terry V.		enchantedattic@hotmail.com	OPEN		
Treasurer	Sue D.	847-502-1007	susie12956@aol.com	Ron K.	847-623-0953	crkytasaari@att.net
Answering Service	OPEN			OPEN		
CPC / Treatment	Frank M.	224-399-6720		Francis K.	847-744-0793	
Corrections	Chris M.	224-440-5096		Scott E.		
Grapevine	Pete O.	847-662-8737	peter.ochoa73@yahoo.com	OPEN		
Public Information	OPEN			OPEN		
Literature	John M.			OPEN		
Newsletter	Kim W.	847-815-3316	lakecountydistrict12aa@gmail.com	Nick P.	847-872-6727	nicholas_prins@sbcglobal.net
Directory	Ted T.	224-627-7638		OPEN		
Archive	Marlene	224-545-1495	grubbsmarlene@gmail.com	OPEN		
Special Events	Karen F.	847-609-7354	k.finkel@comcast.net	OPEN		
District Breakfast	Jimmy F.	847-609-7354		Jimmy P.	224-538-1689	jimipinkstaff@yahoo.com
Webmaster	Larry			Beth B.	224-522-1676	pollockburke@gmail.com