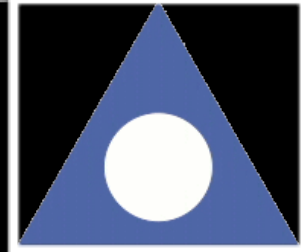


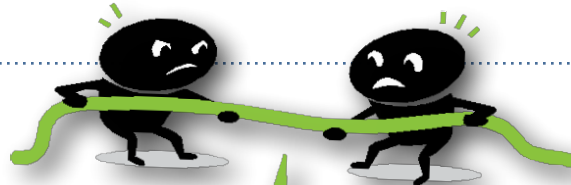
One Day at A Time

*Stories of recovery, news, and fun in the
Marin County Fellowship*



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HONEST CONVERSATION

BETWEEN ME AND THE PROGRAM

10/30/14 — Below is a little play I wrote for an Al-Anon share.

Love, Terri

ME: I HAVE AN IMPORTANT QUESTION. AND YOU BEST ANSWER IT. HOW COME IF I'M TRYING HARDER THAN EVERYONE ELSE AROUND ME I AM FAILING? SO VERY MISERABLY. FAILING TO GET THE OTHER TO HEAR ME? FAILING TO GET THE OTHER TO APPRECIATE ME? FAILING TO GET THE OTHER TO BECOME WELL? FAILING TO GET THE OTHER TO STOP DAMAGING EVERYTHING AND BREAKING MY HEART?

PROGRAM: YOU ARE NOT ALONE. WE UNDERSTAND. WE EMPATHIZE FROM THE CORE. YOU ARE PERFECT. YOU CAN CHANGE.

ME: WAIT, WHAT! I'M PERFECT? I CAN CHANGE? WHY DO I NEED TO CHANGE IF I'M PERFECT?

PROGRAM: WE WILL SHOW YOU LITTLE BY LITTLE. FIRST FOCUS ON THE PART ABOUT YOU BEING PERFECT. FOCUS ON THE RELIEF THAT COMES WITH DISCOVERING YOU ARE POWERLESS OVER THE OTHER.

ME: OK, GOT IT. SO IF I CHANGE THAN THE OTHER WILL CHANGE TOO, RIGHT?

PROGRAM: WE UNDERSTAND WHY YOU ARE ASKING THAT QUESTION. WE ALL ASKED THAT QUESTION MANY TIMES. SOMETIMES WE STILL FIND OURSELVES ASKING THAT QUESTION. BUT LESS AND LESS. SOMETIMES WE FORGET THAT WE EVER ASKED THAT QUESTION.

ME: WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

PROGRAM: CAN YOU BE A BIT MORE SPECIFIC WITH YOUR QUESTION?

ME: WHY DON'T YOU ASK THAT QUESTION ANYMORE? HOW CAN MY LIFE STOP FEELING LIKE A FAILURE IF I DON'T GET THE OTHER TO CHANGE?

PROGRAM: BECAUSE WE CAME TO LEARN A NEW QUESTION THAT BECOMES MORE COMPELLING. THE QUESTION CENTERS ON SELF-FRIENDLINESS. ON HOW WE WORK OUR WAY BACK TOWARD THE DEEP-DOWN PLACE WE FORGOT ABOUT FROM A LONG, LONG TIME AGO. EACH OF US HAD A KNOWING. A WISDOM ABOUT OURSELVES: THAT WE WERE GOOD; THAT WE WERE BEAUTIFUL; THAT WE HAD HEARTS OF GOLD. WE KNEW THAT OUR INTENTIONS WERE PURE, BUT WE FORGOT. WE GOT LOST. WE WANDERED FAR AWAY FROM THAT KNOWING. WE GOT CAUGHT IN A NET THAT WE DIDN'T SEE COMING. IT WASN'T OUR FAULT. WE WERE TRYING OUR BEST. WE WANTED TO LIFT UP THE PEOPLE WE DEPENDED ON SO THEY COULD LIFT US UP TOO. WHAT HAPPENED INSTEAD WAS THAT WE CAME TO BELIEVE IN FALSE MAGIC. THAT WE COULD MAKE OTHERS RESPOND LIKE PUPPETS. WE DEVELOPED GREAT SKILLS OF MANIPULATING OUR PUPPETS, OR SO WE THOUGHT. THE SKILLS BECAME LIKE A DARK ART BECAUSE THE SOURCE OF OUR ACTIONS WERE HIDDEN OUT OF OUR FEAR OF BEING ABANDONED AND DEEPLY HARMED.

ME: OH BOY. I'M A LITTLE OVERWHELMED. ARE YOU SAYING THAT ALL THIS TIME I'VE BEEN TRYING HARDER THAN EVERYONE ELSE, I'VE BEEN DOING SOMETHING BAD? SO I AM THE BAD ONE? JUST LIKE I THOUGHT? I AM THE ONE WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DISASTER I LIVE IN? IF I HAD KNOWN THE RIGHT THING TO DO NONE OF THIS WOULD HAVE HAPPENED?

Conversation, continued from page 1

PROGRAM: WE UNDERSTAND WHY YOU ARE ASKING THAT. WE ARE ALL ON THE SAME ROAD TO SEEING THAT THERE IS NO FAULT. THERE IS NO BLAME. THIS MESSAGE WILL ONLY COME THROUGH A SPIRITUAL VEHICLE. WE HAVE ALL TRIED TO LEARN THIS FROM OUR MINDS. FROM THINKING, THINKING, THINKING, ANALYZING, ANALYZING OURSELVES INTO AGONY. THE TWELVE STEPS TAKE US ON A JOURNEY INTO THE SPIRITUAL SOLUTION TO A HUMAN DILEMMA.

ME: WHAT IS THE DILEMMA?

PROGRAM: HERE IS THE DILEMMA: HOW DO WE RETURN TO THE PLACE OF UNCONDITIONAL SELF LOVE IN THE FACE OF SO MUCH PAIN AND HARM?

ME: AND THE ANSWERRRRRRR.....?

PROGRAM: DO YOU REMEMBER THOSE MOMENTS, HOWEVER FLEETING, FEW, AND FAR BETWEEN WHEN SOMETHING INSIDE YOUR BELLY, DEEP DEEP INSIDE, GOT REALLY QUIET AND CALM? AND FOR A TIME YOU HAD THE UNDENIABLE FEELING THAT YOU WERE MADE OF LOVE. AND THAT EVERYTHING, ABSOLUTELY EVERYTHING WAS AS IT SHOULD BE? THAT THE WORLD WAS MADE TO HOUSE YOU SAFELY IN IT AND THAT YOU WERE HERE TO ENJOY A GREAT DISCOVERY?

ME: OK, NOW YOU'RE FREAKING ME OUT. YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO KNOW THAT..... LET ALONE SAY THAT OUT LOUD..... 'CUZ THAT'S JUST A HIDEOUS WAY TO JINX EVERYTHING AND NOW I DON'T WANT TO TALK TO YOU ANYMORE.

PROGRAM: I'LL TAKE THAT AS A YES.

ME: OK FINE. YES. I DO REMEMBER. BUT I DON'T REMEMBER ANYMORE. IT'S TOO SQUISHED AND FLATTENED AND EMPTY AND HOPELESS.

PROGRAM: THAT'S RIGHT. YOU REMEMBER AND DON'T REMEMBER. THAT'S WHAT THIS PLACE IS FOR, THESE ROOMS. WE ALL REMEMBER AND DON'T REMEMBER TOGETHER. WHEN WE FORGET, OUR RECOVERY SIBLINGS TELL STORIES TO BRING BACK THE MEMORY. WE WORK THE STEPS TO BUILD THE MEMORY SOME MUSCLES SO THAT IT GETS STRONGER AND STRONGER. WE SIT WITH OUR SPONSOR AND TELL OUR HEART WRENCHING, DREADFUL STORIES SO THAT WE BEAR WITNESS TOGETHER, AND BY LINKING ARMS WITH YOUR SPONSOR THE STORY, WON'T HAVE THE POWER TO WIPE OUT THE MEMORY. WE PRAYWE MEDITATE, WE READ TO KEEP STRENGTHENING OUR SPIRITUAL MUSCLES.



EVERY DAY WE PRACTICE A PIECE OF THE PROGRAM. AND SO THE MEMORY COMES TO BE A GREAT ALLY

ME: WHAT DOES THAT ALLY DO?

PROGRAM: THE ALLY WORKS THROUGH US AS OUR HIGHER POWER. IT RESTORES UNCONDITIONAL SELF-FRIENDLINESS.

ME: WHY DO WE NEED UNCONDITIONAL SELF-FRIENDLINESS?

PROGRAM: BECAUSE THAT IS THE INGREDIENT THAT ALLOWS US TO LET GO.

ME: LET GO OF WHAT?

PROGRAM: OF EVERYTHING.

ME: STOP BEING CRYPTIC!

PROGRAM: YOU'RE RIGHT. GOOD CALL. OK, I'LL BE MORE SPECIFIC. REMEMBER EARLIER WHEN I SUGGESTED THAT WE DON'T ASK ABOUT HOW WE CAN CHANGE THE OTHER ANYMORE BECAUSE WE HAVE FOUND A MORE INTERESTING QUESTION?

ME: YES. BUT PLEASE GET TO THE POINT.

PROGRAM: OK. THANKS FOR YOUR PATIENCE. BEING WITH ONESELF ON A SPIRITUAL PATH WITH STEPS WE CAN TAKE TOGETHER, WITH OTHERS, BY GOING TO MEETINGS, WRITING, PRAYING, AND SHARING ILLUMINATES SOMETHING WE NEVER EXPECTED.

ME: OH FOR GOD'S SAKE, SPIT IT OUT.

PROGRAM: WE NEVER EXPECTED TO FIND OUT THAT BY BEING BATHED IN OUR OWN SELF LOVE AND SELF CARE AND SELF REVERENCE WE WOULD RELEASE ALL NEED TO CHANGE THE OTHER. WE WOULD SOMEHOW FINALLY SEE THAT THE OTHER IS JUST AS HE IS SUPPOSED TO BE. THAT THE PAIN AND ANGUISH IS NOT A MISTAKE OR A FAULT. IT IS PART OF THE ALCHEMY OF LIFE. WE FORGE OUR BEAUTY OUT OF OUR PAIN. WE LEARN WHAT IT'S LIKE TO FEEL REAL AND ALIVE BY FACING EVERY INCH OF OURSELVES. AND THAT BECOMES MUCH MORE COMPELLING THAN CHANGING ANYONE OR ANYTHING EVER AGAIN.

ME: HOLY SHIT THAT'S GOOD. THAT'S REALLY SOME GOOD SHIT RIGHT THERE.... OK, WHAT DO I DO NOW?

PROGRAM: LET'S KEEP TALKING. THIS IS A GOOD CONVERSATION.

ME: YEAH. YOU KNOW. I AGREE. THIS IS A GOOD CONVERSATION. THANKS.

PROGRAM: YOU'RE WELCOME. YOU KNOW YOU'RE ALWAYS WELCOME.

The End — so far.

News/Alerts

- ♦ **SR Monday night** topic/literature/discussion now has a **speaker on the 3rd Monday of every month.** We hope to inspire beginners to stay and listen and you to attend.
- ♦ District 12: **AMIAS Workshop. Alateen Sponsorship Is it for you? March 8th 1:00 - 4:00pm , San Francisco.** An afternoon of recovery, fellowship & service. Please register before March 6th by emailing John M. at alateen@al-anonsf.org - Spanish translation available.
- ♦ **SAVE THE DATE** April 17th-19th, 2015 Al-Anon NCWSA 2015 Convention "Color My World with Recovery" Modesto. Help will be needed and YOU can volunteer Michelle 209-595-7554
- ♦ Plan Ahead! **May 15 - 17, 2015 33rd Growing Together Weekend!** Westminster Woods, Occidental, GTW2015@gmail.com
- ♦ **PODCASTS** — Curious? Work the program? Serve? Group Conflict? Sponsorship? Try <http://www.al-anon.org/members/groups/blogs-and-podcasts> or WSO <http://al-anonfamilygroups.org/Podcasts/FirstSteps/>

Ways to Connect

- **Alcoholics Anonymous** (S.F. & Marin 24-hour Hotline (415) 499-0400 or help@aaaf.org Website: www.aaaf.org
- **Al-Anon Phone Meetings:** 712-432-8733 - code 52639# or www.phonemeetings.org/
- **Electronic Al-Anon meetings** Try e-mail, or chat @ <http://www.al-anon.alateen.org/electronic-meetings>
- **El grupo "Nuevo Amanecer"** Domingos 9:30-11:00 Mercedez 415-892-6031
- **Members' Web** - <http://www.al-anon.org/members/> for Cal publications, The Forum, events.
- **WSC Meeting Information:** (888) 4AL-ANON [425-2666] (8am-6pm Eastern Time M-F)# or www.phonemeetings.org/

Special Needs

Al-Anon and Alateen Literature is available in Braille, cassette tapes, and large print type and is distributed by Al-Anon Family Groups, Inc.. Details of available literature and where to obtain it can be found in the Al-Anon/Alateen Directory for Members with Special Needs (pdf) from Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc., 1600 Corporate Landing Parkway Virginia Beach, VA 23454-5617, Phone: (757) 563-1600 Fax (757) 563-1655.

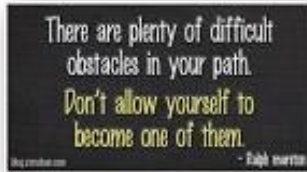


The Next Step....The Survey for Gender Neutral Language has been re-opened on:

<https://www.ncwsa.org/gender-neutral-survey/>

Information regarding member concerns can be read in the October and Nov./Dec. ODAT's @ <http://www.marinal-anon.org/pages/district/district-11-newsletter.php>.

KEEP COMING BACK. IT WORKS.



Call for Submissions:

The WSO Committee felt that One Day at a Time in Al-Anon (B-6) is primarily focused on wives with alcoholic husbands. Courage to Change shares were so generic that personal details and specific relationships got lost, giving the impression that we are all the same. All members are encouraged to write and submit shares for a new daily reader that will reflect the Al-Anon program and its members as we are today. Members can find writing guideline and submit to @

<http://www.marinal-anon.org/media/pdf/New%20Reader%20Flyer%20201412162014.pdf>

D-11's Quarterly ODAT will now be printed every 3 months. YOUR stories, notice of events, needs, introspection, E.S.H., desires, or whatever you are inclined to submit are needed to keep the ODAT going. We will help with the spelling or fears you may have. As if in a meeting, simply share @

editors@marinfamilygroups.org

Thank you,

peace

it does not mean to be in a place where there is no noise, trouble or hard work.

It means to be in the midst of those things and still be calm in your heart (unknown)

It's That Time of Year when we like to say "I will". We are here hibernating, cleaning out the icebox, sorting through the inbox, figuring new ways to fix the old, and wrestling with re-focusing ourselves. When I got busy I got better. Trust your HP and Challenge yourself to grow in service. Contact your GR Rep. or learn about D-11's open positions (below) listed below on: <http://www.marinal-anon.org/pages/service/district-service.php>

