

January 2008

Java Journal



All difficulties in your life have a purpose. They are pushing you toward harmony with God's will

Inside this issue:

Local Story	1
Solomon	2
FAQ	2
Akron Article	3
Calendar of Events	4

Time to Clean House!

From the Java Journal Editor, Colleen S.

This time of year (just before my sobriety birthday), I tend to get reflective.

Have you ever wanted something so badly, but just could not figure out how to get it? I wanted a sober lifestyle. I wanted close friends. I wanted to no longer be in debt. I wanted to feel good about the person that I was. I wanted to have hobbies. I wanted to be active and physically healthy. I wanted to have interesting experiences like exploring new places and cultures; going to the ballet or a Broadway show; eating at a fine restaurant. I wanted to show-up for every one of my children's school and sporting events. I wanted to get in touch with old friends. I wanted to be in a "healthy" relationship. I wanted to attend family gatherings and actually stick around for awhile. I wanted to be a person that my children might one day admire and respect. I wanted to do be a person that I would one day admire and respect.

Before I sobered up, I felt like an empty shell. I once heard a story (an analogy really) that I have embellished upon to reflect my own story. It's kind-of my version of how the Steps have worked in my life.

When still drinking, I imagined myself as a house. The outside was presentable. The lawn was semi-regularly mowed, there was a plant or two on the front porch, the paint job was acceptable. Curtains hung in the windows, closed.

On the inside of this house, however, there was no furniture, the walls and floors were dirty and dusty with cob-webs, there was no light and it was cold. There was a lot of work to be done on this house and I couldn't figure out how to do it or where to even start!

Early on in my path through sobriety I first

had to accept that my house was a wreck! I didn't want to admit this initially. After all, I had worked long and hard to make this house appear as though everything was just fine. I was told in treatment, "forget trying to make the outside look presentable, it's time to focus on the inside".

Once inside, my next step was to fling open the curtains and allow the sunlight to enter. This disturbed the dust, but allowed light and warmth to come in. There was dusting, scrubbing, and cleaning to be done. I was ready for this task. After some cleaning and polishing, things were looking much better.

Furthermore, there was a basement in this house. The basement was where for years I had thrown an enormous amount of garbage and "baggage" that I didn't want to deal with. So much crap that I could not even remember what was down there, only that it was full of stuff I didn't want to look at. I was told that I needed to open the basement door and clean and organize all the garbage and baggage. I would have to return what wasn't mine and everything else I would organize, categorize, and put away neatly. This felt like it would be the most awful part of this whole project, but I knew (and was told) that it was absolutely necessary. It turns out this apparently demoralizing task was not near as bad as I had anticipated. There was nothing down there that could destroy me or otherwise hurt me.

Once complete, the basement didn't look bad at all. All the crap that was down there was now neat and tidy and things were labeled (incase I needed to revisit any of it, which I choose to do on occasion!). Though there is still maintenance cleaning to do on a regular basis, this basement has now become a very

(Continued on page 2)

BIRTHDAYS

'Bookcover' Bob S., January 4, 1990 (18 years)

Colleen K., January 5, 2003 (5 years)

Colleen S., January 6, 2005 (3 years)

Dan M., January 10, 1979 (29 years)



Your motives must be good if your work is to have a good effect

Time to Clean House (continued)

comfortable part of the "house".

I have since refurnished my "house". It's simple, but welcoming. I have friends over often. Now, I even have time to go exploring in the backyard where there are mountains and meadows.

For me, this story illustrates the struggles and rewards of sobriety. Today, I am evolving into the per-

son I always wanted to be when I grew up.

If you're new to the program and are feeling, well ...reluctant to start the Steps, AA promises that before you are halfway through, you will gain a new sense of freedom. One that you may never have felt before in your life. At least that's the way it was for me.

The "sober lifestyle" that I

always dreamed of is even better than I imagined. People in AA loved and believed in me until I could love and believe in myself.

I think I'll keep coming back...one day at a time.

For all of my blessings and for my sobriety, I thank Alcoholics Anonymous, my higher power, and my loving family and friends.

Colleen S.

Solomon

Sent to the Java Journal from a local recovering alcoholic.

Solomon, was the third King of Israel, (more than 2,000 years ago). Under his reign the kingdom reached it's zenith. Solomon was noted for his wisdom and gift of expressing himself. People traveled from foreign lands to ask his advise and opinions. But when it came to alcoholics he was as mystified as people are today. He writes in Proverbs 23:29.

29 Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath con-

tentions? Who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes?

30 They that tary long at the wine; they that go seek mixed wine.

31 Look not thou upon the wine when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright and sparkles in the cup.

32 At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.



33 Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things.

34 Yea, though shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast.

35 They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.

FAQ

From www.anonpress.org/faq

Question: What is Rule 62?
Answer: **Rule 62, "Don't take yourself too damn seriously,"** is found on Page 148 of the book *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*

published by Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc.

In discussing Tradition Four - "Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other

groups or A.A. as a whole" - Bill W.'s essay spoke of an example where a group had grandiose ideas, partly because an enthusiastic promoter got them all excited about building "a great big

(Continued on page 3)

FAQ (continued)

alcoholic center" using other people's money. The deal went sour and the experience became a lesson in humility.

There is no actual set of rules. The number 62 was likely chosen at random in making



a joking reference to the big list of non-existent rules.

Jericho II

Lying to ourselves is more deeply ingrained than lying to others.

Fyodor Dostoyevsky

I used to lie to myself just to stay in shape! I was a master of foolery, as I called it. I could fool myself into believing anything, anytime. Where did that get me? It was hard to remember whom I told what to all the time. It was difficult for me to face someone when I knew I had told them a whopping lie the day before. I felt shame for my lying which I stuffed down deep inside myself.

When I got sober, things changed. I was told that honesty was the foundation upon which I was to build a new life. My sponsor told me that there was no such thing as a white lie, that lies don't come in colors, so I had better get used to telling the whole truth and nothing but the truth. But how was I to know what was truth and what was a lie? I had convinced myself to believe the lies during all those years of drinking. I

had no way of recalling all the lies I had told and sorting them out so my sponsor said to start fresh by working the Twelve Steps. The Twelve Steps were my path to honesty, I was told. Easy - just follow the path!

It was hard for me to quit lying when I came to AA. It was such a natural thing for me to twist the truth to suit me that I lied instinctively. I had to stop but didn't know how. I talked to my sponsor - honestly - about my habit of lying and was told to pray for honesty. Further, I should pray for *absolute* honesty and not be surprised when things started to become clear to me, like the truth. I prayed and prayed



and, lo and behold, I started to see glimpses of the real me and the real truth about me. What a horrible shock!

It seems that I was a liar, and a bad one at that. I then prayed for honesty anytime I opened my mouth. That's when things started to change for me. I began to be able to communi-

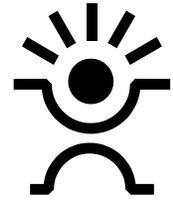
cate honestly with others and my life became so much richer.

Honesty was taking me to a place where real communication with another person was possible. I liked it, to be able to connect with another human being, to be able to begin to build friendships based on honesty. It felt good and I wanted more.

Through the *years* the "path gets narrower" so they say; I've found that to be true. After years of sobriety, I am still tempted to tell a little white lie now and then. But, I know the consequences of that today. I pay dearly for the slightest bit of misinformation I give out. I have to go back to that person eventually and apologize and confess - yuk! It's a lot easier just to tell the truth. I continue to get more and more honest with each passing day.

I've learned that honesty is something I have to continue to pray for, just in case I am tempted to tell "a little white lie".

Reprinted with permission from the Akron Intergroup news, 12/07, pg 5.



You cannot change anyone except yourself. After you have become an example, you can inspire others to change themselves.



AA's Newsletter for the Greater Tri-City Area

Central Office

102 E. Kennewick Ave. (upstairs at the Alano Club)
POBox 6675
Kennewick, WA 99336

Central Office Hours of Operation
Mon - Friday, 11:30 am—1:30 pm and 6:00—8:00 pm;
Sat, 10:00 am—2:00 pm; and Sun, closed

Central Office Questions: Jan P. (509) 547-3967 (h)
or 554-7507 (c)

Java Journal Editor: Colleen S. 528-4171 or
javajournaldistrict4@gmail.com

AA Hotline (509) 308-8219 (temporary)

The Java Journal is not affiliated with Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. or with the General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous. The distribution of this Journal has not been authorized or endorsed by, and does not imply affiliation with Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. or the General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous. The intent of this Journal is to communicate ideas for recovery and events for fellowship to recovering alcoholics in the Tri-City Area and beyond!

Please Contact The Java Journal Editor With the Following Info:

- Birthday announcements: send your name, sobriety date and years sober;
- Events, announcements, fellowship information, Journal corrections;
- Your email if you would like to receive the Journal in your inbox once a month.

Ham On Wry *Reprinted with Permission from the May, 1986 Grapevine*

A FEW MONTHS AGO we printed readers' suggestions of ways to say "no" to a drink if offered one. T. M. sent in a few more: No thank you, I might forget where I parked my car. . .if I'm going to blow my diet, I'd rather eat junk food. . .I'm saving all my brain cells for science. . .I don't look good in lampshades. . .my life is weird enough already. And finally, just plain "no."

Words of wisdom: C. M. of Atlanta, Georgia offers the following: She doesn't need AA for her drinking problem anymore, it's her living problem she can use help with now.

Calendar of Events



Christmas Alkathon Starting at 12 noon on Christmas Eve till 12 midnight on Christmas night. At the Alano Club in Spokane, 1700 W. 7th Ave. Contact Paul B w/questions: events-coordinator@area92aa.org	Dec 24—Dec 25
New Years Alkathon and Dance. Starting at 12 noon on New Years Eve and continuing till 12 midnight on New Years Day. At the Alano Club in Spokane, 1700 W. 7th Ave. Contact Paul B. w/questions: events-coordinator@area92aa.org	Dec 31—Jan 1
Chapter 5 Speaker Meeting and Pot Luck. St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 1609 W. 10th Ave., Kennewick. Pot Luck starts at 6pm, speakers begin at 7pm.	Jan 13
Washington State East Area 92 Quarterly 2008 ERC Building, 112 SW Basin Street, Ephrata, WA. Call Michael S at 942-4066 if you have any questions.	Jan 18—Jan 19
WACYPAА XI The Western Area Conference of Young People in AA. Doubletree Hotel Riverside at 2900 Chinden Blvd, Boise, Idaho. To register and for information go to www.wacypaa11.org or contact Casey (208)713-0302	Jan 18—Jan 20
3rd International Convention "There Is A Solution" Animation Centre, Kovalam JN., Trivandrum, Kerala, India. For information and registration flyer:: www.area92aa.org , go to "Fellowship Calendar of Events"	Feb 9— Feb10
44th International Women's Conference at the Oregon Convention Center in Portland, OR. Speakers, workshops, panels, etc. For more information: intlwomensconf.org	Feb 14—Feb 17
13th Annual Thailand Roundup , Pattaya, Thailand. For information: www.aathailand.org	Feb 21—Feb 24
33rd Annual Winter Holidays Conference "Courage to Change" Bellevue Hilton. Includes AA and Alanon Speakers, live entertainment, DJ hosted dances. For information and to register: www.psypc.org or call Smitty at (206)248-3952	Feb 22—Feb 24
Northwest Pocket of Enthusiasm , Spokane Valley Mirabeau Park Hotel, I-90 and Sullivan, Spokane Valley, WA. This event will include speakers, marathon AA and Alanon meetings every hour on the hour. More info to come... www.nwpockets.org	Mar 7—Mar 9
2008 Pacific Regional Forum , Hosted by Area 92. Double Tree Spokane Center, Spokane. More info to come... www.area.92aa.org	Aug 29—Aug 31