



Java Journal

October 2008



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Serenity...Got Any?

from Akron Intergroup News, Aug, 2008

It's a funny thing, serenity. You work and work on your character defects hoping that the exercise will lead you to a state of serenity. But I've found over the years that, just as the old saying goes, serenity is not a destination but a journey. I've reached a certain level of serenity and find that it grows a little as my character defects subside. Being honest with myself and rooting out those defects unblocks me from the love of my higher power and, thus, gives me a little bit more serenity.

I've known people who go to great lengths to obtain serenity. They read all the self-help books, they go to counseling, they hammer the Steps as if to beat themselves to death with the Big Book. They have no serenity because they are trying too hard.

Relax. Sit down and breathe! Relaxation is vital (Reference the Little Red Book, pg 16-17) to the alcoholic. Generally, we are high-strung people, always nervous or unsettled or restless. When I got to AA, I had to sit on my hands to keep from shaking. It's understandable that the new person would be nervous. But, if you've got some time under your belt, get honest and ask yourself if you are gently moving toward serenity and peace or are you working on yourself with a vengeance? We can be tough critics of ourselves. The Big Book extols the benefits of being hard on ourselves and gentle with others. While this is good advice many of us carry that way too far. I know quite a few people who seem perpetually concerned about their state of mind, as if they don't trust their thinking (this is not always a bad thing).

I'm not talking about the new guy since we're

all a mess of nerves and have whirling thinking when we get to AA. I'm talking about the person who has a few years racked up and is still searching for serenity.

Meditation is the best tool for gaining some measure of serenity. Alcoholics hate to meditate though. The thought of sitting down and being still with no distractions is frightening. We are unaccustomed to inactivity! There are many types of meditation—guided, mantra, group meditations. Contemplation can be considered a type of meditation, in my book, and it's a lot less frightening than closing your eyes and trying to clear your mind. While I've obtained the ability to meditate, I'm by no means completely good at it yet. I do guided meditations since it means someone is talking to me and it's not deafeningly quiet in the room. I feel refreshed after meditating or contemplating a passage from the Big Book. I feel physically relaxed and calm. I feel free to pray without hesitation, to be able to give all of myself to God - good and bad, as the prayer says.

Serenity can be likened to peeling an onion. With each stride we make emotionally and mentally through working the Steps and getting honest we gain a little bit more. Hopefully, it feels so good that we are willing to go to any lengths to keep obtaining serenity....it does for me.

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change. The courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.

-Author unknown

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

Cheryl S.
Oct 11, 1987
with 21 years!

E Edging
G God
O Out



I Stand At the Door

An Apologia for my Life

By Sam Shoemaker (from the Oxford Group)

I stand by the door.
I neither go to far in, nor stay to far out.
The door is the most important door in
the world -
It is the door through which men walk
when they find God.
There is no use my going way inside and
staying there,
When so many are still outside and they,
as much as I,
Crave to know where the door is.
And all that so many ever find
Is only the wall where the door ought to
be.
They creep along the wall like blind men,
With outstretched, groping hands,
Feeling for a door, knowing there must be
a door,
Yet they never find it.
So I stand by the door.

The most tremendous thing in the world
Is for men to find that door - the door to
God.

The most important thing that any man
can do
Is to take hold of one of those blind,
groping hands
And put it on the latch - the latch that
only clicks
And opens to the man's own touch.

Men die outside the door, as starving beg-
gars die
On cold nights in cruel cities in the dead
of winter.
Die for want of what is within their grasp.
They live on the other side of it - live be-
cause they have not found it.

Nothing else matters compared to helping
them find it,
And open it, and walk in, and find Him.

So I stand by the door.

Go in great saints; go all the way in -
Go way down into the cavernous cellars,
And way up into the spacious attics.
It is a vast, roomy house, this house where God
is.

Go into the deepest of hidden casements,
Of withdrawal, of silence, of sainthood.
Some must inhabit those inner rooms
And know the depths and heights of God,
And call outside to the rest of us how wonderful
it is.

Sometimes I take a deeper look in.
Sometimes venture in a little farther,
But my place seems closer to the opening.
So I stand by the door.

There is another reason why I stand there.
Some people get part way in and become afraid
Lest God and the zeal of His house devour
them;

For God is so very great and asks all of us.
And these people feel a cosmic claustrophobia
And want to get out. 'Let me out!' they cry.
And the people way inside only terrify them
more.

Somebody must be by the door to tell them
that they are spoiled.

For the old life, they have seen too much:
One taste of God and nothing but God will do
any more.

Somebody must be watching for the frightened
Who seek to sneak out just where they came in,
To tell them how much better it is inside.
The people too far in do not see how near these
are

To leaving - preoccupied with the wonder of it
all.

Somebody must watch for those who have en-
tered the door

But would like to run away. So for them too,
I stand by the door.

I admire the people who go way in.
But I wish they would not forget how it was
Before they got in. Then they would be able to

I Stand at the Door (continued)

help
 The people who have not yet even found
 the door.
 Or the people who want to run away again
 from God.
 You can go in too deeply and stay in too
 long
 And forget the people outside the door.
 As for me, I shall take my old accustomed
 place,
 Near enough to God to hear Him and know
 He is there,
 But not so far from men as not to hear

them,
 And remember they are there too.
 Where? Outside the door -
 Thousands of them. Millions of them.
 But - more important for me -
 One of them, two of them, ten of them.
 Whose hands I am intended to put on the latch.
 So I shall stand by the door and wait
 For those who seek it.
 'I had rather be a door-keeper
 So I stand by the door.

Poem copied from Silkworth.net

***SERENITY
 PRAYER
 (long version)***

*God, grant me the
 Serenity
 to accept the things
 I cannot change,
 Courage to change
 the things I can, and
 the Wisdom to know
 the difference.*

*Living one day at a
 time; Enjoying one
 moment at a time;
 Accepting hardship
 as the pathway to
 peace.*

*Taking, as He did,
 this sinful world as it
 is, not as I would
 have it.*

*Trusting that He will
 make all things right
 if I surrender to His
 Will; That I may be
 reasonably happy
 in this life, and su-
 premely happy with
 Him forever in
 the next.
 Amen*

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 1950. Reprinted with
 permission.)*

***Insiders Report on the
 "Pig-Nic"***

The 3rd Annual "Pig-Nic" hosted by The Pig Boys was held at Chiawana Park on Saturday September 13th. The weather was a perfect 80 degrees for the ~250-300 folks in attendance. Hamburgers, "traditional" Brats and Salmon were the main course with plenty of home cooked dishes and desserts.

We flew in Jim "H" all the way from Hermiston (via his Dodge Van) who shared his experience, strength and hope. Jim did a great job and has had a lot of experience "working with others"Thank you Jim !!!!

We had a great PA System provided by "Up for Sobriety" and Volleyball (set-up by Chapter-5) for those that didn't eat too much. Special thanks to both of those groups and all of the Pig Boy "Homies" that made this a great Saturday afternoon.

We look forward to our 4th Annual Event and will plan on even more growth in 2009.

Yours in service, Tim "H"

Newman's Corner



AA's Newsletter for the Greater Tri-City Area

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Mon - Thu, 11:30 am—1:30 pm and 6:00—8:00 pm;

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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 April 2006 Grapevine*

AN AL-ANON SPEEDS HOME, skids to a halt in the driveway, and runs into her house. Slamming the door, she shouts at the top of her lungs, "Honey, pack your bags. I've won the lottery!"

The drunken husband, from his spot on the couch, yells back, "You're kidding! That's great! Should I pack for the beach or the mountains?"

His wife yells back, "I don't care, just get the heck out!"

-Anonymous

Calendar of Events



October 2008 Assembly Mirabeau Park Hotel, Spokane Valley, WA. Contact persons: Craig H (509) 979-5338 or Kit W. (509) 559-5100. Also see fellowship calendar at www.area.92aa.org	Oct 17—Oct 19
Chapter 5 Pot Luck/Speaker Meeting St Paul's Episcopal Church, on the corner of 10th and Olympia, Kennewick. Join us at this Open Meeting for food, fun, and fellowship. Pot-luck theme is Mexican food. The names of the Speakers are as always...a surprise.	Oct 19
Answering Services Committee Help needed to carry the cell phone. Meets the last Wednesday of the month at the Alano Club at 6:30 pm. Call Robert S. w/questions 205-1657	Oct 29
20th Annual Mount Baker Roundup Bellingham, WA. Guest Speakers, Dance, Banquet, etc.. See http://www.mountbakerroundup.org to register or to get more information.	Oct 31—Nov 2
Archives Committee Help needed to assist with gathering historical information and memorabilia of our local AA. Meets the 1st Saturday of the month at the Alano Club at 1pm. Call Bob V. with questions: 948-5067.	Nov 1
Special Events Committee Meeting Help needed for planning fellowship events such as the Gratitude Banquet, Fourth of July Picnic, New Years Party, etc. Meets the 1st Monday of the month at the Alano Club at 6:45. Call Joseph A. w/questions at 539-5256	Nov 3
21st Gratitude Pot Luck St Joseph's Catholic Church (Dillon Hall), 520 South Garfield, Kennewick. Dinner at 5:30, Roast Beef, Chicken, and rolls provided. The speaker starts at 7:00 and is Brendan D., from Everest. Dessert Social following the speaker. Tickets are \$10.00. Call Jan P. (547-3967) for ticket availability.	Nov 8
Central Office Meeting This monthly meeting includes all committee chairs for the District 4 area. Any/all AA members are welcome! If you're interested in getting involved (just a little or a lot) or need a service position, please come and check it out. 6:45pm, Alano Club (downstairs), Kennewick	Nov 10