



The Pipeline

A South Central Texas Area Quarterly

www.ca-texas.org

April 2005

This quarter's newsletter

It is really an honor and a privilege to be of service to the fellowship that has saved my life. I had a lot of fear taking on this responsibility and to this day, don't know what to how this is going to turn out. I have been told early in sobriety to "latch" on to this fellowship and to put myself out there to be of maximum service...even though I may not know what to do at certain times, I know I have God and the people in this fellowship to guide me in putting together this quarterly newsletter.

-Ali S. Austin, TX

Area Meeting in College Station

Our last area meeting was hosted by our brothers and sisters from College Station and it was great to see old friends from the South Central Texas area once more. The speaker carried such a great message of hope, life in recovery and was very powerful. After lunch, the area meeting was held and several issues were discussed. Mainly, the area elections were held and the following people have been voted into service:

Vice Chair: Rick R.

Treasurer: Cliff W.

Alternate Delegate: Lori P.

Chips & Literature: Kirsten A

Newsletter Chair: Ali S.

Public Information: David O.

Web servant: Jay P.

Recovery Round-Up update

The recent Recover Round-Up held in Kerrville, TX has been a huge success! There were lots of activities including speaker meetings, workshops, a wild safari tour, banquet, auction, dance, fun-run and more! It was our area's first ever convention and it was such a privilege to personally be there. We had awesome workshops on sponsorships, sound sex ideals and very powerful messages of recovery from people around the country.

I feel personally blessed to have been a part of this convention. Driving to Kerrville is always an experience and enjoying the beautiful country side while listening to some music really makes it more enjoyable. Upon arrival, I went to the registration booth to pay the fees, check-in and say hello to registration people (who did a very, very great job! I may say). There were lots of speaker meetings and workshops and I tried going to as much workshop/meeting as I can. I went to a "sound sex ideal" workshop held by Chris R. and I also went to a sponsorship workshop held by Rudy V. and Sheldon G.

Later that night Tammy M. from Alabama shared her experience, strength and hope to all of us. Tammy is the current World Service Committee Chair and her message spoke a very powerful message of recovery.

After the banquet, Carl W. who is the current Pacific South Trustee shared a very inspiring, moving yet humorous story.

To summarize, this convention was a blast and everyone seemed to have fun. I'm always amazed at how much fun we can all have in recovery!

-Ali S.

The Hand of the Master

I saw you walking,
With someone holding your hand.
As you walked next to the ocean,
Barefoot in the sand.
You seemed so happy,
You had so much joy in your eyes.
You finally found someone,
To help your beautiful soul fly.
You walked with a peaceful ease,
And such smooth grace.
You had a look of confidence,
You finally found your place.
You had taken the only hand that
could guide you,
And gracefully show you the way.
That hand could not be mine nor
anyone else's,
I wish it could but what can I
say.
The love in your heart has
returned,
I can see that in your eyes.
As you comfortably walk,
With God as your guide.
-Cliff W.

Accepting the things I cannot change

"We admitted we were powerless
over cocaine-
that our lives had become
unmanageable"
This Step was the beginning of a
new attitude in my life.

As I reflected on my using
experiences with the insanity that
surrounded it, I realized not only
my powerlessness & unmanageability
over cocaine, but also over the
people, places, and things in my
life.

I began to write these examples
down, at my sponsor's suggestion,
and I would share these with him
when I finished.

With my sponsor's direction, I -
"began to see that the world and
its people
really dominated" - me. "In that
state," - of resentment - "the
wrong doing of others, fancied or
real, had the power to actually
kill!!!"

Duane C.

WHAT IS EXACT, EXACTLY?

STEP 5

"Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs."

What is exactly meant by the phrase "...*the exact nature of our wrongs*"? You see, the first several hundred times I read this step, I interpreted that to mean all of the bad stuff that I had done. What I have come to realize is that it isn't so important what I did, but why I did it.

For the first two years coming into the rooms of Cocaine Anonymous, I was on what I like to call "The Revolving Door Policy." I would often sit in the room and analyze the steps, pointing out what I was, and was not, going to do. This led me to celebrating several periods of continuous sobriety, free from most mind altering substances, with a few drinks and a bag of cocaine.

When I finally surrendered in June of 2002 and commenced working the steps honestly and thoroughly, I was able to look Step 5 in the eye. However, I was still under the misconception that it was all about airing my dirty laundry. Yes, the Big Book clearly states on page 75, "...*illuminating every twist of character, every dark cranny of the past.*", but I have come to realize that this step holds so much more for me. This step is the key to true freedom from my past. When I can look at the things that I have done in my life, and thoroughly understand the character defect that caused me to do it, I will run a much better chance of not repeating the mistake. For me, admitting I have done something is not enough; I must take the necessary measures to ensure that it does not happen again. Once I have done this, I can then use it as an experience to help carry the message of recovery; my liabilities having become an asset.

Today, I have two choices. I can either sit in the morbid reflection that accompanies my inability to look at what is really going on, or I can share with God, myself and my sponsor the various character defects that frequently pop up in my life. Once I have done this, I can let the defect run my life, or I can let God do with it as he sees fit. The Big Book also clearly states on pages 72 and 73, "...*If we skip this vital step, we may not overcome drinking. Almost invariably they got drunk.*" Posed with these alternatives, I know what my choice is today; I know how free from drugs and alcohol I want to be.

- Robert B.

First Step Consciousness

- I can't use and I can't stop. That is my powerlessness, I have no power over cocaine and ALL mind-altering substances. "Hopeless" just begins to describe my dilemma. I didn't know I was hopeless. I just knew I was miserable. I didn't know I had a disease. I thought I was weak and possibly losing my mind. I was screwed and didn't even know it. I'd just marry, use, divorce, use more, move, quit, marry, use, divorce, use more, quit, move, marry, use, divorce, and use more.

My first step experience was not what I have (slowly) come to know. As a result of continuing to set aside everything I think I know about The Big Book, the fellowship, the meetings, the 12 steps and my Higher Power, I have finally come to experience the First Step like never before.

When I finally understood the depth and weight of Step 1, I felt ill. I understood why I must have a spiritual awakening. I thought I was screwed because the first step meant I was not powerful, and that God was. This was important because, apparently, I thought I was more powerful than God.

I prayed because I was told it was important. I prayed and prayed and prayed and prayed. Morning, noon and night, I prayed. The 3rd and 7th Step prayers. The Serenity Prayer. The Our Father Prayer. I mixed them up. I can't tell you why it felt better, it just did. Only God knows why I didn't get high.

I have no way to not use, short of a miracle. No doctor can save me. No shrink, counselor, money, women, or prestige can keep me from using drugs and drinking alcohol. Ohhhh, that made more sense! I can't remember exactly when it happened. This realization brought everything else together.

I knew immediately what I was supposed to be doing. Sponsoring guys, doing service work and trying to use these principles in all of my affairs; it all made perfect sense now. I knew I was supposed to do all these things before. Now, it was a no-brainer. I went from believing to knowing in seconds. I had now, truly arrived home.



The Cocaine Anonymous South Central Texas Newsletter Committee reserves the right to edit submissions to this newsletter for length, clarity, grammar and suitability. We are under no obligation to print submissions.

I now, make sure my sponsees understand, as best I can, by sharing this story with each and every one of them. I recommend they attend lots of meetings, participate in local workshops, attend conventions and their workshops, call me every day, pray and know why they pray and meditate.



That said, please feel welcome to submit stuff to asanti@gmail.com. Your submissions may get published in a future newsletter.

I have a lifetime left to better understand. I have a lifetime left to help someone else. I have a lifetime left to watch the miracle of my son, Taylor. Today I have a life and time to live it. Thank you for being here when I arrived, I will never forget that. I will be here, to give it away, freely, until the day I die. I promise.

Austin

Problem , Solution , Action

When I first came to the rooms of Cocaine Anonymous, I had little trouble admitting that I was powerless and that my life had become completely unmanageable. Indeed, the very fact that I had come to the rooms made the first step seem almost self-evident.

At first reading, the second step sounded as though it would be very easy to complete; it seemed as though there were only two propositions to accept - that there was a power greater than myself, and that the power could restore me to sanity. I already believed in a power greater than myself, and it was nice to think that that power could restore me to sanity.

In order to be returned to sanity, one first had to be insane. Insane? That seemed like a very strong word to me. Sure, I am a drug addict - I had already admitted that. But completely insane?

I had always envisioned myself as an intelligent person, even at the height of my using. Now I had to admit that I was completely insane? This would not be an easy belief for me to accept - or so I thought.

I had always equated the word insanity with men in white uniforms carrying straight jackets. There was a strong negative stigma, a stigma more disturbing than that associated with addiction, attached to it for me.

Then one night at a meeting, I heard something that would forever change my concept of sanity. A gentleman stated that the definition of insanity was doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results. Wow! It was like a revelation

Just when I thought I would have to abandon all hope of completing the second step, I received a gift from my higher power - a new definition of sanity that was not only much easier to relate to, but obviously very true not only in my experience, but in the experiences of several other addicts.

For had not all of us kept repeating the same actions over and over, somehow believing that things would miraculously get better? In this context, being restored to sanity was simply *becoming willing do things differently than I had in the past*, and the second step is believing that a higher power would do for me that which I could not do for myself.

Now that I had come to truly believe that a power greater than myself could restore me to sanity, it was time to make the decision to turn my life and my will over to the care of this power - the third step.

As I approached this step, I became reluctant to the idea of turning my life and my will over to my higher power. My higher power had been given to me by an organized religion and was very condemning and vengeful. Surely, if I turned my life and will over to this power, lightning bolts would be flying in my direction!

Then my sponsor reminded me as we worked this step together that it was my higher power "as I understood him." Simply stated, this meant that I could choose a higher power of my own making.

My sponsor asked me what qualities I would want in a higher power if I could create my own. He offered a few suggestions, and I came up with some of my own - the power had to be loving, caring, compassionate, forgiving, etc. I almost forgot some very important characteristics the power needed to have - it had to be able to restore me sanity, and it had to be able to keep me clean and sober.

These were things I definitely could not do on my own. I was fairly confident that I had defined an acceptable higher power to which I could turn my life and will over to.

The concept of defining a higher power to which I could turn my life over to may seem somewhat strange at first. But isn't that what I had been doing for years? I had defined my higher power as dope, and I had turned both my life and my will over to it.

Every decision I made was based on my higher power, and every action I took was centered on either maintaining or re-establishing my contact with that power. If I could choose dope as my higher power, why could I not choose an infinitely loving being instead?

Just as I chose the characteristics of my dope by choosing which dealer had the best stuff, so could I choose the characteristics of my new higher power by selecting those attributes that seemed to appeal the most to my sense of spirituality.

Today, I am free because I choose to do things differently. I believe that a higher power can - and is - restoring me to sanity. I choose to turn my life and my will over to the care of this higher power. And I choose to hit my knees first thing every morning and remind myself of the gift I am given as a result of these choices - the gift of sobriety. Each day I am clean and sober, I feel a little bit closer to sanity - and a whole lot closer to God.

Kevin W.

Appreciation

I get down on my knees,
In the midst of my fears.
My hands go up to you,
As I cry out all these tears.
With all this pain,
I feel in my heart.
You are the one I rely on,
So I don't fall apart.
You give me gifts,
Of guidance and support.
Like a long lost ship,
Finally docking in its port.
Where I'm welcomed by,
My family and friends.
I'm given the chance,
To make my amends.
The path to you,
Is the one I chose.
With you in my life,
I surely can't lose.
And I'll end this with,
Just one last thing to say.
You are everything in life,
Especially today.

-Cliff W

Quiet the mind – A Meditation Book

“After having had a spiritual experience...”

This is a request from the Literature, Chips and Format Committee of the World Service Conference for submissions for a C.A Meditation Book.

Cocaine Anonymous would like you to share with us your experiences with meditation in the following areas:

Service the Newcomer One Day at a Time
Higher Power
Life on life's terms
Sponsorship
Spiritual Experiences
Meetings
The 12 Steps
Traditions
Acceptance

We encourage you to submit as many originals as you wish, keeping in mind the 12 step recovery program of Cocaine Anonymous.

All submissions will need to have an author release form signed by the author.

Please keep submission to 250-300 words, typed and double-spaced. Send your ideas to:

CAWSO

3740 Overland Avenue Suite C

Los Angeles, CA 90034-6337

Attn: LCF Committee – Meditation

Submissions

(310) 559-5883 (Office)

(310) 559-2554 (Fax)

www.ca.org

Tradition 1.

Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon C.A. unity.

Unity of our fellowship is one of the most sacred and blessed adhesive elements of this program.

Without unity, many of us would not know how to interact in a society or fellowship. Let alone, how to operate by acceptable social standards amongst others.

Not all of us within this fellowship, are fortunate enough to have such a strong companionship with one another. Perhaps the growth and strength of this our area can attest to the brotherly kinship among us all. Not everyone is so fortunate to have such humble and knowledgeable leaders who have come before us, and are still willing to guide us whenever we have a stumbling block. Not everyone gets the luxury of participating in such a variety of service positions, let alone, a very diverse Hospitals and Institutions schedule. Our meeting schedules alone are pretty cultured and flexible.

All is not well from our outside appearance. That is our nature. To be actors. To wear masks and display an outside appearance to the other areas and the region. Let alone world.

Sometimes I feel that to be working this tradition in my life, I need to be working the program "perfectly". Usually that is a fancied delusion of my mind's eye. From time to time I will openly hold our first tradition higher than the rest of the steps. In an attempt to place the entire C.A. fellowship ahead of one sponsor / sponsee. In some cases it may be true, but I hardly doubt that any one-loner off in an isolated area would try to up hold a group conscience in complete and entire flawlessness, when he doesn't even have a voting body. Let alone a single man/ woman to work with, which would be vital to his own sobriety.

From time to time, I will hear a new man complaining about a meeting, or a few select members. The apparent answer for me has been to start a new meeting in an attempt to create the fellowship I earn for.

It's been a privilege and an honor of mine to be able to attest to the promises out of the Alcoholics Anonymous book. In "watching a fellowship grow up about you . . . and thus we grow". Being able to view a certain cross section of the fellowship in this area getting into relationships in early sobriety treads my nerves a bit. Meditation has revealed to me that this is yet but another form of growth of the aggregate. And I am not a whole society to disagree with whatever personal decisions people wish to make. Regardless of how it may jeopardize or strengthen their own personal recovery.

Continued→

To know that no sacrifice is too great or too small for the preservation of this fellowship, we ought to consider how much more of an important demonstration lies amongst our family, friends and coworkers. The new comer is still the most important aspect of any society. And making them feel welcome does seem to be more paramount than total of the entire world. For with each one of us, there should've been someone to allow us to feel that way upon arrival.

David O.

Prayer of Gratitude

There are nights when I am so much at peace, that happiness seems like an endless landscape, more beautiful than any ever seen.

There are also nights when my heart is so lonely, the only comfort I can find is knowing that God is still carrying me and that He still loves me.

It is at these times when I have the strength to cry and thank God for all the blessings in my life, such as friends close to my heart, sunrises and sunsets, being in love, and many other countless gifts.

I don't know what God has in store for me, but I believe I can be one of His chosen, if I use my heart and do my best to be as honorable as I can be. God, thank you for the love in my heart. Amen.

Henry J.

The Annual C.A. World Service Convention

The purpose of the World Service Convention is to promote enthusiasm and unity within the fellowship of Cocaine Anonymous, and to work toward the continued growth of Cocaine Anonymous throughout the world, through financially supporting World Services' effort to carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers.

21st Annual C.A. World Service Convention

Rendezvous on the River

Tennessee Area / Atlantic South Region (hosts)

Memphis, Tennessee, USA

LOCATION:

Memphis Marriott Downtown

250 N. Main Street

Memphis, Tennessee 38103

Toll Free 1-888-557-8740

(901) 527-7300

Please mention the CAWS Convention's Group Code ("CAWS") when reserving your room over the telephone. If using the hotel's online reservation website, please use the Group Code "CAWCAWA" instead.

Visit the CAWS 2005 website for more information.

Contacts:

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Rickey J. Registration Chair

Teri K, World Service Trustee – Atlantic South Region

Rendezvous on the River

MEMPHIS • TENNESSEE / MAY 26-30, 2005

