

QUINTE WEST MESSENGER

SEPTEMBER OCTOBER EDITION

Hi friends welcome to some more great sharing put together for all of us to view and read in our Newsletters latest edition of our Messenger.

My name is Mark I'm an alcoholic who bid and was given the privilege of editing this Newsletter for all of us to enjoy reading.

Articles are more than welcome as this is our memberships Newsletter. They can be sent via emails through our Quintewestaa.org website via the cpc link. Can be hand written as well being turned over to group reps reaching me via a regular meeting or at the district service meetings monthly. Here is hoping we get submissions based on Experience Strength and Hope in simply 150 words or less. Tell next time happy reading and hopefully soon writing.

Your Editor Mark B.

OUR THREE LEGACYS

Alcoholics Anonymous doesn't demand that personally we have to believe or do anything. It's all on suggestive help found through material read shared by individuals coming together nightly or daily. All for one common bond to help one another stay sober for just One day. In keeping what we have it's suggested we should pass on what has been freely passed our way. We may not know it early on but we all fit in and have something wonderful to offer. A warm hug , handshake, an ear and a helping hand to our next fellow sufferer either inside or

outside this wonderful Fellowship. God's handiwork is never done I pray we all take the time needed and much appreciated efforts of Recovery staying United and doing some Service. We all find what we have been missing and looking for that Happy Joyous and Free lifestyle.

Anonymous

The Joy of Sobriety

I had always been a very serious individual, drunk or sober. As has been experienced by many, I was surprised at the joy that was evident in AA group members as I started to attend meetings. How could this be? Alcoholism is a serious business. But it has been 5 years since I took my last drink and I am experiencing the most wondrous joy in life that I never thought possible. As the result of working the 12 Step Program, joy seemed to come into my life quite naturally without me consciously realizing what was happening.

It was just before my first year medallion and I started to feel differently. I couldn't immediately put my finger on it but it finally dawned on me one day that the knot in my stomach had disappeared ... that "day in and day out" fear was gone! I had just finished my first run-through of the steps and at long last understood what my sponsor meant by "turn it over". I was actually able to put that suggestion into action in my life - what a relief. At that time, I started to feel lighter and freer. People began commenting on how relaxed and happy I looked. I was interacting more easily with people and participating more openly in discussion groups. I was starting to see the changes in myself also as I was feeling comfortable enough to let the joy I felt show.

That was just the beginning. I began to notice my self-esteem increasing due to a growing knowledge and acceptance of who I actually was. I had always spent so much time concentrating on being critical of others that it never occurred to me to take a good look at myself. Well this had changed, thanks to the steps. My self-confidence was also increasing from being active in my home group. I was realizing that I was capable of doing many different things as long as I stayed sober. I was starting to live a productive life by simply getting involved and participating in activities, rather than relying on my old habit of just sitting on the sidelines. Isolation was becoming a thing of the past as new relationships were developing and old ones improving. I was amazed that people actually wanted to be around me and spend time with me, a situation that was foreign in my past life. Happy? You bet.

As was suggested, I started living just "one day at a time" and my journey towards understanding spirituality led me to the concept of staying in the present moment. It took

persistence in actually putting this principle into action in my life, but what joy it has brought me. Staying present allows me to fully enjoy and appreciate every single moment of my day, rather than dwelling in the past or fretting about what the future may bring. I try my best to concentrate on each specific task at hand, whatever it is, and have found that I can have fun doing almost anything in my life. Rather than focusing on the end result, thinking that I should have done it differently or dwelling on the extra time needed to complete a project for example, I simply enjoy the actual doing of the undertaking. This has helped me to put into action the slogans “Keep It Simple” and “Easy Does It” and has instilled in me a feeling of gratitude for the simplest things in life.

As we all know, life is constantly changing, sometimes bringing us times of struggle and great challenge. I’ve learned that these periods are opportunities for learning and growth as with the help of my Higher Power, I have been able to surmount a number of trials that previously would have buried me in negativity, self-pity, avoidance and fear. Even challenging situations today bring tremendous joy to me after having used my recovery behaviours and the steps to get me through. I always seem to get over each hurdle knowing that I’m all the better for it. Each new challenge squarely faced increases my faith and trust in my program, my recovery and myself which is to say my Higher Power who supports me and “does for me what I cannot do for myself”. The bottom line is I have a profound feeling of gratitude for my Higher Power who, with love, compassion and wisdom, guides and enables me in coping with the realities of life. I truly feel “happy, joyous and free” as I have an amazing source of power which I can rely on every minute of each day. Given this situation, I can’t help but feel happiness and joy as long as I’m working my program.

And what a joy it is to be approached by a fellow member and told “I want what you have!” because it is a sign that another suffering alcoholic is finally ready to surrender. Giving it away while working with others and watching them change and grow is an amazing experience. I watch in awe as expressions of joy start to appear on their faces as they incorporate the 12 Step Program into their lives. To me, joy is a natural byproduct of working the steps and it can be had by all who have the “honesty, openness and willingness” to give it a try.

Susan M.