

If Nothing Changes, Nothing Changes

There are specific times in my life when I consistently pause and scan over the past months with a mental tally card, noting the pros and cons...every birthday and each New Year. With the tools of our program, it is an opportunity to dissect the years experiences offered by my higher power and incorporate the lessons learned. You know, life has a way of offering us a stark look in the mirror every now and then. These become my own private awakenings that I can either embrace or ignore. With a combination of grace and humility, I just may allow something greater than myself to step in and manage new areas of my life (step one). And if I simultaneously step aside, such a change may release some twisted thinking that no longer serves me (step two). Happy New Year to me! So, what lessons did the experiences of the last year offer? Several strong examples have surfaced for me; and, I imagine it wouldn't take much for you to jot down a few of your own.

#1 One of the most valuable was the understanding that a dozen people can experience the same event, with each one reacting differently, very differently, black and white differences. Maybe that isn't a shocker, but the lesson that followed was a new way of thinking for me. Nobody was wrong and nobody was right, especially when the event was tangled up in years of emotion.

Each individual's experience was relative to their own journey. Unless I am able to step into someone else's body, heart and soul, I really have no way of knowing how they might feel. I have learned that there was a great freedom in allowing others their own opinion and reaction. Logically, it was only fair if I was asking them to do the same for me.

#2 You know we have become very comfortable with the phrase, "...our lives have become un-manageable." For years I held on to the illusion that sobriety would somehow return that manageability to me. Today, I understand that true surrender means my life will *never* be manageable by me. It was never mine to manage. But, my personality requires that I take repeated action to move that truth into my everyday thinking. Surrender requires me to get increasingly comfortable with CHANGE.

My second lesson, should I choose to embrace it: Control is a pushy, rigid animal and it boxes a person into a small, stuffy, uninviting existence. The greater my struggle with control, the less open to change I have become. This new year presents me with an opportunity to invite change into my life as often and as extensively as I choose. Starting small, I can change where I sit in a meeting, get out of my comfort zone and talk to someone I do not know, or maybe even hit a new meeting altogether once a month. I could drive a different way to visit my sister, shop at a new grocery store or try a spinach smoothie instead of chocolate milk. The possibilities are endless.

And, I may become a more flexible, compatible human being in the process :-)

#3 This last lesson I'd like to share may be the most valuable. I came into the program at the age of 27. Staying sober one day at a time for the rest of my life seemed to be an unfair proposal. Today, I realize it is a priceless gift. While the one day at a time passed excruciatingly slow back then, many years have come and gone. Lesson #3 reminds me that whether we change or stay the same, time passes. Sober time holds countless opportunities to grow, change and make a positive difference in the world around us. Living by 12 step principles is the balm that heals the wounds of our past, changing our attitude and outlook upon life for the better. The most valuable lesson I learned in 2018 is that 'life' is just another word for all of my 'todays' piled on top of each other in the end. It isn't something I've already messed up or something I'm still getting ready for. Life is in this very moment. It is the words I'm choosing and the actions I'm taking. May my choices of today genuinely reflect my gratitude for this sober 'life' I've been given.

In summary, 1) empathy towards others, 2) openness to change, 3) living in the present moment. I wouldn't call them New Years resolutions as much as I'd consider them opportunities to enjoy a new freedom and happiness this year. May your lessons from 2018 be your own, and may the growth you experience from them gift you with all the serenity and peace our program promises. Happy 2019!

~Cathy M.

New Beginnings

STEP 1- “We admitted we were powerless over alcohol that our lives had become unmanageable.”

For me this first step gave me a mechanism to develop a force to counteract my powerlessness against alcohol. Having no power over it I found a way to fight it. Like all of us, one drink is too many and a million is not enough. Once I came to understand and accept this as a glimmer of hope began to light up my despair and kindled a dim sense of hope. A sense of liberation came to me. I now had a chance to confront the denial, self-delusion and shame that were my traveling companions. The key was to see this acceptance of powerlessness not as defeat but as the sign of possibility; the possibility that I might take charge of my life. Before that moment alcohol had been directing my actions. Directing me to make sure I fulfilled my commitments, paid my bills, did my work well, kept myself in good stead with society so I could keep a buzz and maintain my supply. I wasn't in charge. I was doing what I had to do to be able to drink and buy my beer. I wasn't managing my life, my alcohol was managing me.

STEP 2- “Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.”

This step is easier to take than it sounds. It does not require adherence to any formal religion or institutionalized worship, deference to a supernatural entity or acceptance of a divine deity. For those who believe no proof is necessary for those who don't know proof is possible. The founding fathers of AA realized this and made sure to make clear that this power greater than ourselves, or “higher power”, was an individual experience. For them it was God. The God most of us pray to but they made sure to be clear that it could be a God of one's own understanding; “God as we understand him.”

They didn't want to get bogged down in semantics or theological debate. The important thing was that it required a power greater than the alcohol. They strove to emphasize the spiritual aspect of the higher power that was the source of strength. This includes the group itself, the meetings, fellow alcoholics and their stories and what they share; maybe even a gravitational singularity of infinite dimensions. Function over form. They strongly suggest that we find God now but they were not telling us who or what God is, only that he, she or it be of our own understanding; that there be comfort and hope.

~Chief Billy

Prayers for Steps One and Two

First Step Prayer

Dear Lord, Help me to see and admit that I am powerless over my alcoholism. Help me to understand how my alcoholism has led to unmanageability in my life. Help me this day to understand the true meaning of powerlessness. Remove from me all denial of my alcoholism. (This prayer is developed from the chapter, More About Alcoholism)

Second Step Prayer

Heavenly Father, I am having trouble with personal relationships. I can't control my emotional nature. I am prey to misery and depression. I can't make a living. I feel useless. I am full of fear. I am unhappy. I can't seem to be of real help to others. I know in my heart that only you can restore me to sanity if I am just willing to stop doubting your power. I humbly ask that you help me to understand that it is more powerful to believe than not to believe and that you are either everything or nothing.

(p. 52:2, 52:3, 53:1, 53:2)

The Amethyst Statement of Purpose: The Amethyst is published every two months for members of the A.A. community in the Fort Wayne area. The Amethyst is financially supported by contributions to Fort Wayne Area Intergroup. The purpose of The Amethyst is to share information and experience in recovery, unity and service within the Fort Wayne area. The articles published in The Amethyst are not intended to be statements of A.A. policy nor does publication of any article imply endorsement by either Fort Wayne Area Intergroup, Inc. or A.A. as a whole.



Welcome to the **2019** edition of **MAN CAVE**. In the interest of not being sexist we always welcome women seeking a break from productivity to visit and share.

This edition addresses the months of January and February, bowl season marking the ending of College Football, Super Bowl marking the ending of Pro Football, and spring training marking the beginning of major league baseball. Other major events include the Rose Bowl Parade and Groundhog Day.

What would **MAN CAVE** be without a contest for the display of the mental grasp of manly proclivities? This edition we picked The Super Bowl and the format is shown below. We have a few early picks to start the fun.

<u>First Name, Last Initial</u>	<u>Team</u>	<u>Total Points</u>
Jim C.	Chicago Bears	40
Bill H.	Ohio State Buckeyes	70
Louie D.	Cleveland Browns	3

Don't forget to submit your pick **prior** to The Super bowl. They can be sent either to the Central Office or to ldipiero@hotmail.com. The winner gets to decide whether the Raiders remain in Oakland or move to Las Vegas.

And now for the winner of our weight gain contest from last edition.

<u>First Name, Last Initial</u>	<u>Weight at 11/21/2018</u>	<u>Weight at 12/31/2018</u>	<u>Gain</u>
Jackson P.	0 lbs	7 lbs 2 ounces	7+lbs

Jackson joined our ranks on December 7th, free of character defects and is the newest member of Alanon. And please, folks, don't ask the parents "How'd you do it?"

~Louie D.

Anniversaries

January

Cheri V. 1/1/86
 Dave H. 1/1/05
 Zac C. 1/4/05
 Gregg B. 1/7/03
 Paige S. 1/7/08
 Scott M. 1/7/88
 Steve M. 1/7/91
 Tyler W. 1/9/17

January

Don T. 1/10/93
 Brent S. 1/12/97
 Emily H. 1/21/17
 Shannon I. 1/15/15
 Steve K. 1/21/07
 Tom R. 1/21/16
 Kevin C. 1/26/06
 Nancy S. 1/26/02

January

Nancy S. 1/26/02
 Shari A. 1/26/94
 Tom B. 1/27/85
 Brad M. 1/29/12
 Jim B. 1/29/93

February

Kenny B. 2/2/17
 Lynnie T. 2/3/92
 Melissa H. 2/4/07
 Scott S. 2/5/17
 Dori D. 2/7/00
 Bill C. 2/10/06
 Jim S. 2/10/18
 Taryn W. 2/14/10

February

Lou H. 2/17/10
 Brenda M. 2/19/99
 Mike M. 2/20/88
 Mike B. 2/21/02
 Kristen P. 2/24/17
 Mike C. 2/24/09
 Nathan B. 2/28/17

Events & Notes

Events:

January 9, 2019

Big Book Workshop

Women Only- 12 Week Study (Bring Big Book)

Hope House

5920 Decatur Rd.

Fort Wayne, IN

7:00 P.M.-8:30 P.M.

May 17,18,19 2019

Area 22 Service Weekend

“Our Big Book- 80 years- 71 Languages”

Camp Alexander Mac

1113 E. Camp Mac Rd.

Milford, IN

Registration begins- 2:30 P.M.

Dinner- 6:00 P.M.

March 15-17 2019

66th Annual State A.A. Conference

“Joy is in the Journey”

120 Martin Luther King Jr. Dr.

Century Center

South Bend, IN

Register Online at:

<https://www.area22indiana.org/66th-indiana-state-convention/>

New Meetings:

Find Yourself in Sobriety (Open Discussion)

Antwerp United Methodist Church

(Parlor Room first door on the right)

202 E. River St.

Antwerp, OH

Saturday's at 3:00 P.M.

Live Your Life Alateen Meeting

(Room 200 Upstairs)

Aldersgate United Methodist Church

2417 Getz Rd.

Fort Wayne, IN

Tuesday's at 7:30 P.M.

Beginning of Hope Alateen Meeting

Taylor Chapel United Methodist Church

10145 Maysville Rd.

Fort Wayne, IN

Sunday's at 4:00 P.M.

Alcoholics Anonymous Newcomer Orientation Meetings

Saturday's at 8:30 A.M. Parkview Hospital 2231 Carew St.

Door 4 Down 1 Level

Sunday's at 4:00 P.M. Taylor Chapel 10145 Maysville Rd.

Questions answered by email:BTGFortWayne@gmail.com

The Amethyst

SUBMISSIONS: The Amethyst welcomes feature articles, supporting articles, group histories, anniversaries, jokes, cartoons and upcoming events as long as they relate to A.A. experience and reflect an awareness of A.A.'s singleness of purpose. Submissions are reviewed by The Amethyst committee and recommended to the editor for publication.

Length of submission: The Amethyst will publish work of different lengths, from feature articles to one-liners.

Send submissions to:

editor.amethyst@gmail.com or:

The Amethyst

Fort Wayne Area Intergroup

2118 Inwood Drive Suite 112

Fort Wayne IN 46815