



OCTOBER 2022

EDITOR CHRISTELLE L.

HELLO THERE

Welcome to the Idaho Area 18 AA Newsletter Wagon Wheel Newsletter!

I'm Christelle, an alcoholic, and pluggin away as your editor. It's crazy to believe we are almost through one year of our service term.

I know we still live in uncertain times but please remember everyone is doing their best and please remember everyone is volunteering their time and love for AA in service.

Let's be kind.

Thank you for viewing and/or downloading the newsletter!

I try hard to hold fast to the truth that a full and thankful heart cannot entertain great conceits. When brimming with gratitude, one's heartbeat must surely result in outgoing love, the finest emotion we can ever know.

BILL W.

THAT QUOTE AND SERVICE

This is such a good reminder. For me it means to remain in gratitude and always be thankful. If I am not thankful or in gratitude - the chances are great that something is wrong and most likely I will act out accordingly. I wanted to bring up the topic of Loss. We all will experience it at some point in time and some of us more than others. I've also found that it is harder to be grateful when I am in grief. My grief process goes to anger very quickly. I think it is because I feel vulnerable and feel that I need to protect myself.

It usually takes time for me to get to gratitude. The last two years I've lost quite a few people. in my life. It was damn hard. I didn't have a hard time staying sober - I had a hard time containing my anger. I just didn't have the patience I normally had. Eventually - I found gratitude and maybe patience (some would disagree. :) I've been able to live with the loss. I never feel that loss is something you get over. I feel it is something you live with. Because we live with memories- good and bad. We sometimes aren't even offered closure - we just keep moving on, continuing with living amends and staying sober. If you are experiencing grief right now, my wish for you is healing.. healing and comfort for the rest of your life.

Oh yeah, and also that you stay sober.

Much Love. Christelle

LESSONS OF LOSS AND THE SPACE IT CREATES CLARK K. – BOISE, ID

Stick around long enough in Sobriety and you will witness and experience all kinds of “life on you moments”. I started drinking to celebrate the good times and numb out the uncomfortable, until Gin dragged me to the bottom and left me only isolation & terror. I clearly remember being upset and somewhat cheated by AA when the first big reality of life hit me in recovery. 18 years ago, my father called to let me know that he was diagnosed with Prostate Cancer. I knew that this was going to be the kind of black belt life experience that would change my world forever.

At the time, I had not experienced any significant losses in recovery. In fact, since getting sober I had received a whole lot of good things including daily hope, job success, a chance at honest relationships, and self-respect. My experience with loss before getting sober of course was horribly predictable; a life filled with black outs, frequent humiliations, disappointed bosses, debts, no driving privileges, and friendships lost.

But bracing for the loss of my Father in sobriety created a personal crisis... I knew I had to lean on the fellowship of AA for help in a different way. So, during my father's time in hospice, I committed to meet with my AA friend and Sponsee: Dave S. who had suffered the loss of his mom, Dad and a Child way too early in life. I knew that he had an experience, strength and hope that would help me walk through this moment. I sat down with Dave S. in a breakfast diner over pancakes and a hot coffee. He asked me: “What is your biggest fear when it comes to losing Your dad?” I immediately blurted out: “My two kids will never receive all the amazing lessons that my father has given me.” Dave S. immediately responded: “Clark that was never your dad's job... it has always been your job is to pass along the lessons that your dad has given you.”

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Lessons of Loss and the Space It Creates cont'

Walking through my father's passing was the beginning of a deeper relationship with my recovery. I had to ask for help in a very vulnerable way, something that I had not had to practice often in my first 10 years of recovery.

For 18 years the emotional waves of my Father's passing have left a permanent space inside my soul. I have learned that this space cannot be pushed away from, or ignored. Loss will always find space inside you, and it requires you to make a choice; you can fill that space with love, lessons and honor, or it will certainly fill you with fear and anger. I have learned to welcome the ones I have lost when they come to visit me with emotions, tears and wonderful memories.

One of the huge gifts that AA has allowed me to do, is show up for the loss of my father, mother, and 4 years ago the failure of a marriage in a way that I would have been incapable of without recovery. I work hard to look outside of myself and be there for my fellow travelers and loved ones.

A day does not go by that I do not thank my higher power for the time I had with each of those that I have lost. Not least of those is my wise friend in this story; Dave S. who passed away of cancer 9 years ago at way too young of age. Dave S. taught me many things and ultimately " Loss creates space, and it is my job to freely pass along the lessons and memories that I have gotten from him and others along the way."

Clark K.

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THE SIBLING RELATIONSHIP AVALON K. – AREA 18 ARCHIVIST

The relationship you'll have with your siblings will probably be the longest relationship that you'll ever have. I remember sharing that with my one and only sibling, who smiled and said, "You're probably right".

It felt good to see that smile. It meant that I mattered. Being younger, I often felt quite a few steps behind or below. I understand now, I had the feelings that many younger sisters and brothers experience, nothing unusual. As an adult I can look back and it's very obvious I was shown a protective care, that was a love never spoken. I just didn't realized how much until one of his best buddies shared a story that woke me up to the fact that my big brother really was in my corner all along.

I was asked to share on the subject of loss. The term "loss" brings to mind the uncomfortable idea of death. It's not my favorite subject. Yet, it is a fact, an undeniable truth. We can't wish or drink it away. I have to mourn, I have to grieve, I must feel loss of course, but then what? At this point in my 12 years of sobriety I can't justify self-indulgent, self-pity or "selfish" loss, it becomes toxic to my serenity and therefore my sobriety. I am very familiar with it. I've had, it a lot! Cont 6'

The Sibling Relationship cont'

I've witnessed how debilitating not accepting death can be to those who've not completely vested themselves into our spiritual way of life. I have watched seemingly helpless A.A.'s struggle with an enormous and overwhelming agony. This spills over onto anyone or anything in their path, it has been very unsettling.

I often mention how I used to cringe at the corny sayings we often use in the rooms. The "Spiritual Tool Kit", how lame! Well not anymore, get one and fill that sucker full!!! Suit up and show up, bring some solution to the meetings. Call your Sponsor, pray, look for the gratitude, reach out to another A.A. These are some of the things, I did the day my brother had died in a one vehicle motorcycle accident in Montana, in August 2022.

With the loss of my brother, God had gifted me another glimpse of His power. I feel comfort in knowing that we all have equal access to limitless gratitude. It is truly beautiful. Especially when you consider the alternative. I loved and respected my brother, and he knew it. I know my brother felt the same about me.

When my Mother said, "I have no regrets" I wasn't surprised, just filled with joy knowing that a Higher Power was working in her life, and also helping her to find gratitude that could be easily hidden with self-indulgent "justified self-pity". Think about it, her only son. These gifts come from asking and welcoming our Higher Power to work in our lives. Every day we A.A.'s must give our thoughts/will, our actions/lives, over to God, a Higher Power or whatever title fits. I ask God for the willingness to be willing, sometimes daily, sometimes minute by minute. My alternative would be to die a painfully helpless alcoholic death, alone, afraid and hopeless. God's grace took those selfish and wasteful thoughts of loss and replaced them with new thoughts. Thoughts which turned into feelings of gratitude. "Thank you, God, he didn't suffer, thank you God no one else was hurt, thank you God his wife didn't find him, thank you God we got to take my mother to see him just weeks before. Thank you, God, he had the honor giving to others with unselfish acts and sharing his amazing talent for creating and performing music. Thank you, God, he was doing exactly, what made him happy in his life and his death. Thank you, God."

You have to dig through a lot of dirt to find gold. I only have to be willing to suit up and show up with tool kit and shovel and do the work. I am now willing to dig and find the gratitude, it's golden.

Avalon K.



HOUSEKEEPING STUFF

I am always looking for submissions! Email me please. I know that typically I will be asking people to write articles but would always love a submission. While bringing our newsletter into current industry standards I would also like to shorten and give length requirements (approximately 500-600 words) as I've also learned that sobriety has given us wonderful, full lives and I think we can keep your attention a little longer with shorter articles. If you are interested in being on our email list and receiving a mobile friendly version a fill out the form on our Area website on the Newsletter page.

Emailing address is:

newsletter@idahoarea18aa.org

No personal calamity is so crushing that something true and great can't be made of it.

BILL W.

UPCOMING EVENTS

AA Service Manual Study

Led by former Area 18 Delegate Thad N.

Wednesdays at 7:00pm Starting January 12, 2022

Zoom Meeting- See Area 18 website for more information

Pocatello AA Group 1

12 Steps and 12 Traditions in 13 Weeks

Online and In person -

see Area 18 website for more information

Starts August 26 - November 18

248 N Arthur Ave

Pocatello, ID 83204

Online Idaho AA Let's Talk

Sept. 7, Oct. 5, Nov. 2, Dec. 5, 2022

7PM Mountain Time

See Area 18 website for Zoom Information.

2023 Spring Assembly & Convention

May 12-14, 2023

Nampa Civic Center, Nampa, ID