



OCTOBER 2023

EDITOR CHRISTELLE L.

HELLO THERE

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

I'm Christelle, an alcoholic, and I've been your editor on the newsletter for this term, which is coming to an end, I might add. Usually, I'm ready to rotate out of my service position but I've really had fun with the newsletter and meeting people who are new to service at the assemblies.

It's been an absolute blast!

I want to thank you all for letting me be the Wagon Wheel Editor and I want to wish all of you good luck in sobriety and service as we trudge the road of happy destiny.

“We know this because we see monotony, pain, and even calamity turned to good use by those who keep on trying to practice AA’s Twelve Steps. And if these are facts of life for the many alcoholics who have recovered in AA, they can become the facts of life for many more.

12&12 p.112

THAT QUOTE AND SERVICE

This is also how we stay sober. When all else fails.. work with another alcoholic. I’ve also heard it said that when things feel bad or rough that is the best time to help another alcoholic. I don’t know about you but that also seems to be the hardest time to work with another alcoholic. But it does work because we are no longer focused on ourselves or our problems.

Helping others is the foundation of our recovery and sometimes it feels hard, but the deal is we stay sober. We stay sober whether our “prospect” does or not. If the person we are working with does happen to get and stay sober, there is nothing like that in the world. It is such a gift to see someone else get their life back and experience the gifts of the twelve steps. If by chance they sponsor others is also miraculous.

If there is one thing that resonates with me it is to “make myself available” I do that by greeting the newcomer, giving them my phone number or asking them to coffee. This is something I would have never done before I got sober. Helping others? That wasn’t even a concept to me, but today - it is the highlight of my life.

This is my wish for everyone taking time to read this that in your life you find a way to give back - whatever it be.

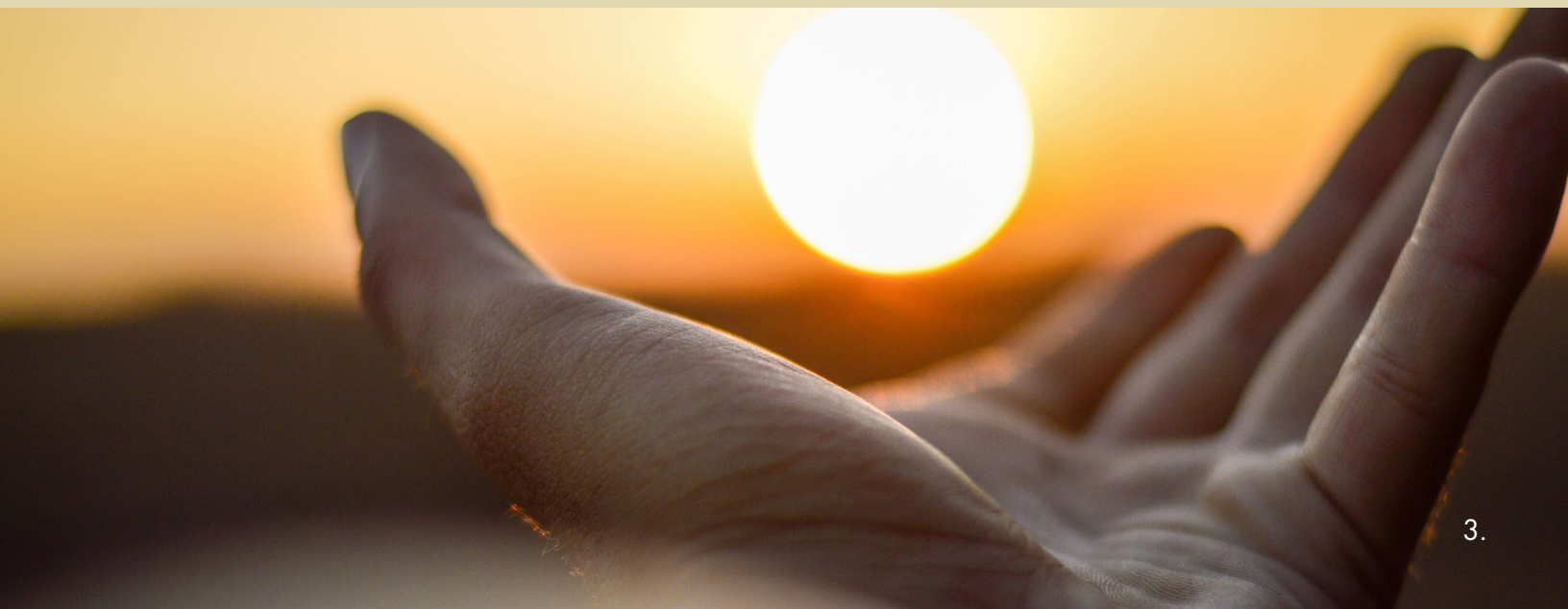
Blessings. Christelle

HAVING HAD A SPIRITUAL AWAKENING HEATHER N.

Step 12, "Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs." I don't know about you, but for the better part of my first 15 years in recovery, it was like the sentence ended after "...carry this message to alcoholics..." I had taken the steps with a sponsor, established a connection with a higher power, made amends, had a job and a child, was sponsoring and involved in service, heck I was even NICE to people! What more do you want from me!?!?

Carrying the message to alcoholics is VERY important and often doesn't even involve sponsorship. Giving my number to a new gal, bringing a shaky newcomer a cup of coffee, taking meetings into treatment centers, jails, work release and halfway houses, grabbing coffee with an old-timer who's going through a rough time, giving someone a hug when they come back from a relapse, etc. Something in me shifted when I heard in a meeting, "It is easy to love the lovable ones." I felt like I'd been sucker-punched! Being loving, kind and tolerant in AA is easy! What about the other 23 hours in the day? Am I showing the same grace to my family, friends, and co-workers? When I took an honest assessment of myself, the answer was NO, I wasn't practicing these principles in all my affairs. I reached out to my sponsor and others who had the emotional sobriety I was missing and asked for help. More spiritual growth was (and always is) the answer. I leaned into my HP and took a hard look at my character defects to understand the TRUE nature of my wrongs. Diving into the *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* has been essential for this growth. Example, lying is an action – not the true nature of my wrongs. Being selfish and inconsiderate is the true nature of my wrongs.

Cont' 4



Having Had A Spiritual Awakening cont'

I thought since I'd stopped lying all the time meant that I'd fixed the problem. No... I'd only stopped one of the ways I'm selfish and inconsiderate. I've found my character defects aren't always so obvious and I get to work to rid myself of them each day. When I was new, I had to admit I was powerless over alcohol AND my life was unmanageable. As I continue in my journey, I must carry this message to alcoholics, AND practice these principles in all my affairs. Half steps don't cut it – I must take full steps.

In closing, I hope to leave you with a little laugh... We have two signs in our guest bathroom. The first one says, "Please don't do coke in our bathroom." The second says, "Childish, emotionally sensitive, and grandiose." These signs not only say a lot about my husband and I, but also about the people frequenting our home! I mention these signs because the second one is a direct quote from Step 12, page 123 in the *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*.

Heather N.

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to my sponsor
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CARRYING THE MESSAGE

CHRISTELLE L.

Early in sobriety, I remember looking at the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions that hung on the wall of the meeting I was attending. I remember thinking, "That stuff must be optional. I don't think it applies to me." Besides hanging there it looked like the 10 Commandments, or the Dead Sea Scrolls. I felt it was a bit lofty to list 12 items when the Bible only had 10 Commandments. Still, I was sure those numbered items did not apply to me. I was different.

As I started to get healthy I changed my meeting. I was moving up in the world after all, to a place where drunks wore ties, skirts, suits and had purses (insert eye roll emoji here). They also had long term sobriety.... like one year! Wow! And yet, there still hung those dang 12 steps on the wall. So, finally I began to read them.... "Blah.. Blah... wait! Carry the message? Now, I know that does not apply to me. I am very busy. I'm a busy girl and don't have time for that."

I continue to blab on in meetings without having acquired a sponsor or done any step work. Those poor Alcoholics. I'm amazed they put up with me. The day came when I did get a sponsor and yes, I started working those steps.

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Carrying the Message cont'

I'm giving you a little background because none of us can work the 12th Step to it's fullest potential without having worked the other 11 steps.

A very sweet woman gave me a hug and a phone number after a meeting and that is where my journey through the 12 Steps began. While I did have a great deal of fear about sharing my darkest moments with her, but she stayed with me through our journey together through the 12 Steps.

During that time, I found myself starting to make coffee for the meeting. I showed up before the meeting and stayed after to clean up that old percolator coffee maker along with the cups and napkins. At the time, I worked in a coffee shop and sometimes would purchase a special brand of coffee, and use that instead of the crappy ol' generic coffee that came in a large can. Everyone was wondering what my secret to such good coffee was. One day I showed up at my home group's business meeting, just so I could hang with my sponsor. My home group did not have a Secretary at the time, so my sponsor asked if I'd take minutes and she conveniently handed me a pen and a 3-Ring binder. You guessed it, I was Secretary for my home group for two years. At this point I would have done anything for my sponsor. Just to show her how grateful I was for her taking me through the steps. It would ALWAYS blow my mind when after I'd thank her for working with me at she'd reply, "Oh, you are helping me too." and I'd think, "What the heck is she talking about?"

After I completed step 9 and started living in step 10, 11, and 12. I would raise my hand to sponsor new women. If there was a newcomer I would give her my phone number and ask her to coffee. I did this for 10 years. I had maybe two women ask me to sponsor them but then, I wouldn't hear from them again.

At the time, I always felt like a failure since I didn't have any sponsees or didn't have anyone to help through the steps. I continued to volunteer for service positions and make myself available. I believe that is the key. Making myself available. I can make myself available and leave the rest up to my Higher Power. The results are always in my HP's hands. So, if you are at the assembly and are courageous enough to stand for a service position- not only do I wish you the best of luck, I want to thank you for making yourself available and leaving the results up to your higher power. You serve as a great example of the program and are my hero! Thank you again for your service and for allowing me to serve. Best!

Christelle L.



HOUSEKEEPING STUFF

There aren't any housekeeping items. I'll be saying goodbye and rotating out as your Area 18 Wagon Wheel Newsletter Editor. It has been such a privilege to serve you and I wish my successor great luck as well. If you are interested in becoming the next newsletter editor I am happy to show you how I created a mobile friendly, inclusive accessible emailable version of the newsletter. Just ask me.

E-mailing address is:

newsletter@idahoarea18aa.org

**AA is unified and strong, because we are not organized...
we've insisted that all those serving AA derive their
authority from a loving god expressing himself within
the informed group conscience**

AA Grapevine, September 1992

UPCOMING EVENTS

Meeting Crashers

Visit meetings all around the Treasure Valley

An opportunity to visit groups outside Boise

Information available on Flyer on the Area 18 Events webpage.

District 2 Halloween Traditions 9-12 Workshop

Saturday, October 21st, 2023

11:00am-3:00pm

Jerome Public Library

Hybrid Event: Zoom Info available on Flyer

on the Area 18 Events webpage.

District 8 Fall Workshop: We are Not a Glum Lot

Saturday, October 28, 2023

9:00am-1:00pm

First Presbyterian Church

950 W State Street, Boise

2024 Idaho Area 18 Spring Assembly

Hosted by District 7

May 3-5, 2024

Hilton Garden Inn, Idaho Falls