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# FELLOWSHIP CENTER NEWS

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*Anything an alcoholic lets go of has claw marks all over it - Anonymous*

Before recovery, I tried to control everything. I would lie in bed at night planning my days and weeks, making endless lists of activities I could follow that would lead to specific results. I played and replayed conversations that were sure to take place to make sure they came out the way I wanted them to. When the last thing I tried to control - my alcohol use - spun out of control, I finally surrendered.

When I got sober, I had to let go of all my plans and schemes for controlling my drinking and drug use. Because I was at bottom, it was easy for me to abandon my old ideas and to ask God to restore me to sanity. Just because this worked for my alcoholism, though, didn't mean I was willing to turn the rest of my life over. "God, you can have my drinking, but I'll handle the rest" was my attitude. You can imagine how that went for me.

What I've learned over the years is that my life gets better in direct proportion to my willingness to trust God with the other areas of it. It continues to be hard to let go and act with faith - especially when I'm in fear - but each time I do I'm rewarded with a freedom and a joy that could never have come so long as I continued to try to control things. Today if I'm not willing to let go, then I pray for the willingness to be willing.

And once I withdraw my claws, God takes over and the healing begins.

**St. Patrick's Day Pot Luck Party, Saturday, March 16** 8:00 – 11:00 pm (Music by the Hip Replacements), \$5 members, \$7 non-members

**Fellowship Center Members Meeting – April 2, May 7, June 4** at 8:15 pm in the Club Room.

**Karaoke Night! Sat. April 6, May 4, June 1** 8:00-11:00 DJ, snacks & refreshments, \$2 members, \$3 non.

**Open Mic./ Coffeehouse– Sat. April 13 & June 8** 8:30 - 11:00 pm, \$3 members, \$5 non-members

**Open House 3<sup>rd</sup> Year Anniversary Sunday, April 28<sup>th</sup>** 12:00 noon – 7:00 pm

“In my judgment, such of us who have never fallen victims (to alcoholism) have been spared more by the absence of appetite than from any mental or moral superiority over those who have. Indeed, I believe if we take habitual drunkards as a class, their heads and their hearts will bear an advantageous comparison with those of any other class.”

- Abraham Lincoln, Address to the Washington Temperance Society, 1842.



*Irritations,  
like a grain of sand  
in an oyster,  
can turn into  
a beautiful pearl.*

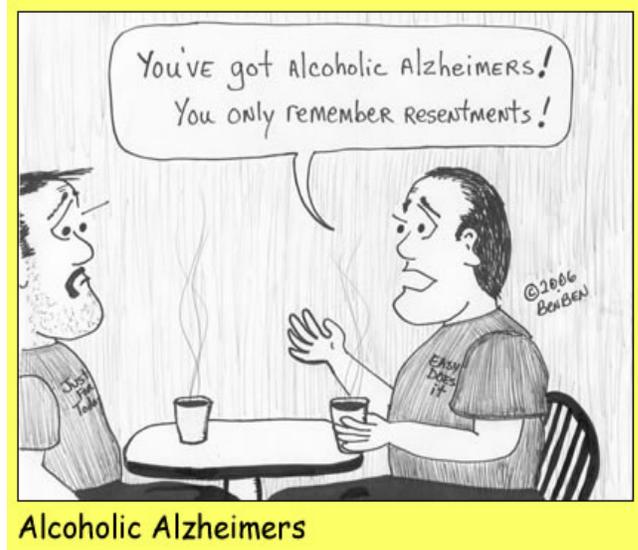
**"There are no victims, only volunteers - you always have a choice."**

This was a tough lesson to learn. When I was new to Al-Anon, I was a victim to so many people and situations and when I spoke to people about it, what I was hoping for was some sympathy and understanding. Imagine learning that I was instead a volunteer for the drama and pain in my life. That was a large pill to swallow.

And it didn't go down easily either. After I accepted I had a choice, and actually began exercising it by not engaging or by acting differently, other people got pretty upset. They were used to me playing a certain role and grew angry and resentful as I began to take different actions.

The breakthrough came as I persevered and worked the program. The miracle was that as I changed and recovered, the dynamics of my relationships changed, too. Suddenly, as I took more responsibility for myself, other people took more responsibility for themselves as well. As I focused on myself and recovered, other people and situations improved as well. It all started when I accepted my role as a volunteer and began making different choices.

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**Going to meetings is like taking aspirin before a headache.**

I was reminded of how true this is just yesterday. I have been really sick this past week - I mean in bed sick. As such, I haven't been to a meeting all week which is unheard of for me as 3 meetings a week is my usual minimum, while 4-5 is more common. So there I was at my local Rite-Aid staring down the cough syrups when all of the sudden I saw one that said "Alcohol-free". So that's the one I automatically choose, right? Not at all!

You see, because I hadn't been to a meeting in a week, my keen alcoholic mind was thinking again. And without my conscious permission, it was arguing with me as to why the non-alcoholic version obviously couldn't be as good as the one with alcohol. In a flash it had me convinced that it must be the watered down version, probably didn't have as much of the active ingredient in it, and without the alcohol I wouldn't even get the rest I so desperately needed to get better. I was sold...

As my hand reached down to get the 'right cough syrup', a tiny, far away 12-year sober voice whispered, "That might not be such a good idea." I almost didn't hear it, but its truth was powerful. I snapped out of it and in a moment of clarity, grabbed the 'Alcohol-free' one and quickly got out of there. Now I'm pretty sure that if I had been to my regular meetings that week, the choice would have been clear.

*It just goes to show that if you don't want a (Major!) headache, then keep taking your aspirin regularly.*

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***Moving Into Color***  
***By Mary-Margaret Walsh***

For a long time,  
I saw my world  
In black and white  
A sorry site.

Green Eyes seeing  
Frozen moments  
Caught with fright.

My life has been rushing  
Full of black and white  
Now, I'm moving into color.  
Moving into color.

A Canvas  
Splashed with fear  
Longing to create  
Longing to belong

Firm Fingers holding  
Painted brushes  
Gathering courage.

My life has been rushing  
Full of black and whites  
Now I'm moving into color..  
Moving into color.

We have hope.  
We have strength.  
We have color.

Our lives have been rushing  
Full of black and whites  
Now, We are moving into color  
Moving into color.



**Things aren't necessarily going wrong just  
because they're not going my way**

This is *still* hard for me to accept. My ego tells me that my plans and ideas about how things should go, and how you should act, are 99% right, and that if everybody would just fall in line, then everything would be great and I'd be happy. But how many times has myself will twisted or bullied things into place and got me what I thought I wanted, when I'd eventually realize it wasn't what I wanted? Most of the time is the short answer.

There's an old gypsy curse that goes, "May you get everything you want." Once again, my ego hears that and says, "That doesn't sound like a curse!" but my experience understands the wisdom in it. And one of the gifts I've received in recovery is the willingness to pray for the knowledge of God's will (not mine) and the power to carry that out.

And that's when the miracle truly happens for me and countless others. You see, the wants and needs of my ego are limited and short sighted. But God's will is vast and includes infinite possibilities for happiness and fulfillment. By developing the faith to truly seek God's will, I've been able to let go of controlling others, to show up and look for ways to be of service, and to let go of expectations.

*And doing this has enabled me to see that, "Things aren't necessarily going wrong just because they're not going my way."*

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# MEETING SCHEDULE

FELLOWSHIP CENTER 18 Great Plain Road Danbury, CT 06810-5022

Website: [www.danburyfellowshipcenter.org](http://www.danburyfellowshipcenter.org) "Like" us on Facebook REVISED: 02-04-13

## MONDAY

7:15 a.m. Morning Watch Group  
12:00 p.m. Speaker Discussion  
5:30 p.m. Happy Hour Meeting – 24 Hour & Daily Reflections  
5:30 p.m. Dual Diagnosis (BACK ROOM)  
7:00 p.m. Beginner's Meeting 1, 2, 3  
7:30 p.m. Back Door Group – Big Book Study (BACK ROOM)  
8:15 p.m. We're All In – Beginners/Speaker

## TUESDAY

7:15 a.m. Morning Watch Group  
12:00 p.m. Living Sober Meeting  
5:30 p.m. Happy Hour Meeting – Speaker/Discussion  
7:00 p.m. A Way Out (Big Book)

## WEDNESDAY

7:15 a.m. Morning Watch Group – Step Meeting  
12:00 p.m. Big Book Study  
5:30 p.m. Happy Hour Meeting – Topic/Discussion  
7:00 p.m. Marching In Step – Closed Step  
7:00 p.m. Treasure Trove Group - Spiritual (BACK ROOM)  
8:15 p.m. Joe & Charlie Big Book Comes Alive

## THURSDAY

7:15 a.m. Morning Watch Group  
12:00 p.m. 20 Questions Discussion (Are you an Alcoholic)  
5:30 p.m. Happy Hour Meeting – "The Promises"/Discussion  
7:00 p.m. First Things First Step Speaker/Discussion  
8:30 p.m. Complete Abandon Group

## FRIDAY

7:15 a.m. Morning Watch Group  
12:00 p.m. Grapevine Meeting  
5:30 p.m. Happy Hour Meeting – "As Bills Sees It"  
7:00 p.m. Meeting Makers Make it – Beginners  
8:15 p.m. A Way Out – Beginners

## SATURDAY

7:15 a.m. Morning Watch Group  
9:00 a.m. Yoga for Recovery  
6:00 p.m. A Power Greater Than Ourselves (Spiritual)

## SUNDAY

9:00 a.m. Morning Watch Group – "The Promises"/Discussion  
6:00 p.m. 24 Hour Book



## Clancy's Seven Questions

Several years ago, Clancy I., was explaining to me that guilt, resentment, fear, feelings of personal inadequacy and loneliness were the five areas that seem to cause the most serious problems for people in recovery.

He shared with me seven questions that he uses to help a person start writing and he emphasized that the questions and the writing are not intended to replace A.A.'s Step 4; they just help the person get started.

Most of the people, who approach Clancy or are referred to him, are very hardcore cases who have tried numerous times and approaches to solve their problems.

I have been using these "Seven Questions" with the people that I sponsor ever since Clancy shared them with me.

I've discovered that they are very effective when dealing with rock-bottom newcomers and with the high-bottom intellectual types. I have also used them numerous times in helping old-timers who were struggling through a difficult period.

Here are the Seven Questions:

1. In looking back over your life – what memories are still painful, guilty, and dirty?
2. In what ways do you consider yourself an inadequate person?
3. Who do you resent – and why? Be specific.
4. What do you conceive to be your defects of character – as you see them today?
5. What is the nature of the ongoing problems you have with people close to you – in human relations – what seems to always happen when you have these things that blow up?
6. In what way do you believe that A.A. can help you with any of these problems?
7. In what way do you believe that A.A. can begin to change things?

I never give the newcomer the questions without also setting a time for them to complete their writing. Normally, I'll give them the questions and expect them to be finished with their writing by the next day, and I'll have them call me so that we can get together and discuss their answers and apply the solution to their problems.

If the newcomer procrastinates and doesn't meet the deadline for the questions I usually consider that they are not yet serious enough to approach their problem and I move on to help someone else.

I pass them on to you with the hope that they will help you in helping others as much as they have helped me.

~ Dallas B.





***The Fellowship Center News needs you!***

Articles about personal experiences, favorite sayings/books, event ideas:  
[hermansdorfer@att.net](mailto:hermansdorfer@att.net) or call Bryan 203/940-0702

#### FRIENDLY REMINDERS

- **The Club Room is for Paid Members only, except for open house events.**
- **Smoking is outside in the back, not in the front.**
- **All children must be accompanied by an adult at all times for personal safety and insurance reasons.** We need each of the event Chairpersons and all meetings to make sure that children at the Fellowship Center are inside the building with an adult to supervise them. They cannot be left alone in a room nor supervised by another child.
- **Last one out: please empty the coffee pots, turn off TV and lock both doors.**
- **No pets, except guide dogs allowed inside.**

***Enjoy the Journey:***

