

Outside the Bottle



District 16 Newsletter
October 2019

"Awakening" by KC

“The terms “spiritual experience” and “spiritual awakening” are used many times in this book which, upon careful reading, shows that the personality change sufficient to bring about recovery from alcoholism has manifested itself among us in many different forms”.

(Big Book Appendix II pg 567)

What follows is a collection of thoughts and experiences from members of District 16.

My son called just to ask how I was doing.

The fact that I have found a new high to replace alcohol and pot constantly amazes me. Occasionally I get very inspired when saying the prayer at the end of a meeting when we all join hands. I feel as if every molecule of my body is transforming and I get a feeling of overwhelming joy and being connected to a power greater than myself. I feel the unity, God and I feel peace.

I realized that I've had a spiritual awakening when I started to recognize the spiritual experiences in my life.

The moment I realized I stopped analyzing what I should keep and what I should give to God.

Every time I am truly grateful, I have a spiritual experience.

Everyone you meet is a teacher. There is a lesson in every moment.

When I decided that I was going to be the kind of person who puts the shopping cart back where it belongs.

I was volunteering at the March Round Up, and I was asked to help count some money. The person in charge left me alone in a room with a large amount of cash. For me to be trusted, and to remain honest when no one was watching, was a huge deal at that point in my early recovery.

I was on my way to a meeting to drop off some flyers. I decided that I was not going to stay. Feeling guilty during the drive, I made a deal with my Higher Power that I would stay only if there was a newcomer there. It turned out that I stayed for the meeting and left with a new sponsee.

I spent a lot of time trying to be who I thought everyone wanted me to be. In AA, I found that I can be happy being who I actually am. I'm not imitation crab meat, (which is just different fish made to taste like crab) I'm just fish! When I made my ammends to my mother, I asked if there was anything else I could do to right my wrongs. She began to cry and told me to just keep doing what I had been doing since getting sober.

When I finished my 4th and 5th step, I was, at first, saddened by the mess that I was. I realized that I could not change any of my character defects alone. The light bulb went off. I realized that I needed a Higher Power to help me change these things. So I began my quest for this Higher Power of my understanding. This changed everything for me.

My daughter telling me that she wants to come live with me...and her mother allowing it.

It is difficult for me to not believe in God because when I observe nature, I notice that under magnification it only becomes more beautiful and yet whenever anything man made is magnified the imperfections become increasingly more apparent.

It was a few years ago when a fellow I know helped restore my perspective. I had been whining about something. I cannot recall what. At the end he asked me if I had ever heard the old saying, “I felt sorry for myself because I had no shoes, until I saw a man who had no feet”. I understood.

What is a Spiritual Experience?

By LJ

If one were to ask one hundred people, one would probably get one hundred different answers. In general terms, I believe that the term, Spiritual Experience refers to a triumph over one's Ego or unchecked self will. The abandonment of our entrenched and rigid worldview in favor of a more, truly objective perspective, with a deeper understanding of life and our proper place within it. According to Socrates, "...true wisdom is the realization of one's ignorance..." In the case of the problem drinker, whose thoughts and subsequent actions are forged in the crucible of the "infallible" Ego, wisdom is an unattractive and unattainable goal. Indeed, anything that contradicts with the delusional fantasy of self will can never be reconciled with a deeper spiritual awareness.

One of the key characteristics of a spirit awakening is the realization and acceptance of the fact that our self will is the where our misery and self made chaos has its genesis. Only after this admission is made can one begin to grow and walk towards freedom from self. For many of us this was a long and arduous journey. In the course of our lives we gather others among ourselves who through their own character defects enable our own.

We are, at times, totally lacking the strength of character and spiritual insight to sufficiently relinquish the ego. Self-will rules all and in spite of our best intentions, we drive loved ones and caring friends from ourselves. So blind to our shortcomings that we often play the victim of our own handiwork. Confused, angry and frustrated we turn to alcohol to find relief and escape, but never to find it...

"Sobriety in Alcoholics Anonymous delivers what alcohol promises..." Once we begin down the path of sobriety and recovery we begin to get to the root of the, we begin to deal with our thinking and ourselves. We found that we and our thinking were the root of our troubles.

When we set about the work of recovery we began to see that things were never really as we believed them to be. We had to look at life through a different lens, not with blinders nor with rose colored glasses.

We found that looking at life in a purely positive light is just as bad as always viewing the world negatively. Neither perspective is accurate or helpful. If one sees nothing wrong with anything, then there is no reason to change, resulting in stunted spiritual growth. Conversely, if you proceed through life as a hammer, then every "problem" is a "nail." After a time in recovery we finally begin to realize that life is not a series of problems to be solved, but a continuum, a stream of life to be lived and experienced.

Through the steps, we surrender the bottle and our thinking, share our faults and attributes, offer restitution for past wrongs. Only after this have we become ready to begin to share in the true reality of The Spirit and enjoin others to partake in a new life, now worth living.

Although our shortcomings do not disappear entirely our new found "God Consciousness" enables us to recognize and correct them much more effectively. The thought of drinking rarely enters our minds, after a time, and when it does we now find that we have the power to simply dismiss it as the foolish and destructive musing that it is...

Keep on Trudgin'

By: Phil S.

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.

Aw, man. I thought you said "spiritual a-bakening". Now what am I gonna do with all These angel food cakes?



THE BROAD HIGHWAY

A Monthly Update from the GSRs of District 16

Opportunity realized... the 2nd Annual Unity Picnic found around 70-80 attendees enjoying their time together in the practical practice of all that is embodied in a single word—We. Many served, many came and many, would confirm, it was time well spent.

Opportunity missed... the once-automatic and prized Labor Day Alcathon was missing in action this year. Our hats are off to the groups situated at Good Shepherd Lutheran for their years of service coordinating numerous Alcathons. What a grand opportunity it must be for those seeking to make 12th step work occur? Are there groups or individuals willing to coordinate Alcathons and build upon those that came before them? May the powers that be shine down upon us.

News and Announcements

Sunday Sobriety is moving to Heritage Church (God of Prophecy) 600 N. Campbell in Royal Oak as of October 6th. Time remains 3-4 pm

Royal Oak Noontimers are also moving to the same location starting Oct. 2nd

Next District 16 Meetings: Fourth Thursday – Oct 24, Nov 14
Next Area 33 Meetings – Oct 13, Nov 17

Anniversaries

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| 9 Mile Road Lahser Group | Southfield |
| Better Late Than Never Group | Hazel Park |
| The Grace and Mercy Group | Southfield |
| Working With Others | Royal Oak |
| Primary Purpose Mens Group | Royal Oak |
| Two Or More Miracles Group | Ferndale |
| Ferndale Womens Group | Ferndale |

Friendly Ferndale is celebrating its 70th Anniversary
Oct 24: doors 6:30, dinner 7:00, speaker 8:00

Outside the Bottle is the newsletter of District 16. The newsletter contains announcements, meeting changes, events, news and information around the district, short articles on sobriety and recovery, and even some humor.

Any A.A. member is invited to submit material to the newsletter. Please send questions/comments/contributions to district16news@gmail.com



Thank you to all newsletter contributors!

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