



# Awareness Window

A newsletter for those in recovery  
and their families

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*Please share your story or  
materials you find helpful in  
your walk of recovery.*

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## Points to Ponder: Step Three—Faith

Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to  
the care of God as we understood him.

*We understand this to mean:*

**Having understood God's purpose to save us, we turn our will and  
our lives over to the care of Christ as we understand him—hoping  
to understand him more fully.**

*Joshua 24:14-15: "Now fear the LORD and serve him with all  
faithfulness. Throw away the gods your forefathers worshiped beyond  
the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. But if serving the LORD  
seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom  
you will serve, whether the gods your forefathers served beyond the  
River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as  
for me and my household, we will serve the LORD."*

Joshua was asking his people to choose whom they would serve. What was desirable for them might not be the same as what was desirable for him. Perhaps you have had the same choice challenge placed on you by family members, friends, and/or even your pastor. When it comes right down to it, the choice is yours. Yet is it really within you to make the right choice?

This step has always been a difficult one for me, and I have often gotten into intense discussions over it with people in recovery. I think the heart and core of my challenge is centered on what is known as "decision theology." I cannot make a decision to turn to God or place anything in his care without the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is a gift of God, not a behavior change I can personally make without him. Martin Luther addressed this in his explanation to the Third Article of the Apostles Creed when he said, "I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength, believe in Jesus Christ my Lord, or come to Him, but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel..."

God in his love and grace gives us the power to place our will and lives under the direction of his Word. Making this Third Step decision

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## Step Three—Faith

(continued from p. 1)

is purely by the grace of God.

In one of his Bible studies on the Third Step, John Cook stated that the “goals of the Third Step study” were 1) to identify the person of the true God of the Bible, 2) to identify the obstacles in turning our lives over to God, and 3) to identify the most difficult parts of our lives to give to God.

The world asks and searches for the answer to the question “Who is God?” God tells who he is, what he has done, and what he expects in his Word. He is our Father who made and cares for us. He is Jesus, who is God’s Son, our Savior. He is the Holy Spirit who brings us to faith and keeps us in faith through God’s Word.

What prevents us from turning our lives over to God? A simple, yet complex, answer is SIN. Sin directs our thinking to self-gratification and personal pride. By ourselves we do make some logical decisions, but a long-lasting change of heart and mind can only come through the work of the Holy Spirit through the Word. That is why we started the Awareness programs, so we can truly “walk in his paths in recovery.”

What are the most difficult parts of our lives to turn over to God? That takes honesty and soul-searching on our personal part to admit what our personal challenges are. For some it may be self-identity and pride; for others, demands of work and family that overwhelm us; and for others, it may be a need for social identity and acceptance. The list could go on. Only God and self know. That’s why Steps 4 and 5 ask us to do a searching, fearless inventory of ourselves and admit to God, ourselves, and another the exact nature of our wrongs.

Joshua’s invitation to Israel to choose whom they will serve still stands today. Is your choice a STEP THREE?

*Prayer: Take my will and make it Thine; it shall be no longer mine. Take myself, and I will be—ever, only, all for Thee. Amen.*

(Adapted from Hymn 469,  
Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal)

## Did You Know...?

Did you know that some products contain a good amount of alcohol? When one stops drinking, continuing to use these products can contribute to continued addiction.

Listed below are some OVER-THE-COUNTER medication categories and the potential percentage of alcohol that may be in them.

- ✓ **Antidiarrheals:** 1%-18%
- ✓ **Laxatives:** 4%-18%
- ✓ **Internal pain:** 7%-48%
- ✓ **Iron products:** 5%-10%
- ✓ **Mouthwashes:** 5%-65%
- ✓ **Toothache, cold sore, canker sore:** 4%-90%
- ✓ **Vitamin drops or liquids:** 3%-7%
- ✓ **Antiemetic:** 5%
- ✓ **Cough, cold, allergy:** 2%-70%

Remember to read the labels! When in doubt, ask your pharmacist or doctor.



This article by Jeff Richardson, CSAC, ICDAC, is the first in a series of articles addressing the issues of teenage drug use. Part 1 will look at teens and alcohol; Part 2 will cover inhalants & designer drugs; and Part 3 will look at other drugs, such as prescription drugs and "hard core" drugs.

## Teenage Drug Use

The title causes fear. The question is, why? Let me start with this: Martin Luther's explanation to the First Article of the Apostles' Creed in the Small Catechism speaks of God our heavenly Father providing us with family. Children make up our family, and he entrusts us with their care. He gives us special commands on how to raise our children and gives strong warning to anyone who causes children to fall away. In regard to parenting, Martin Luther stated: "The head of the family should teach [God's Word] in all simplicity to his household" so that our children grow to be God-fearing adults and know Christ as the true foundation of life.

There is something horribly wrong, though. Our sinful world surrounds, encapsulates, and tests us. St. Paul said it so eloquently in his letter to the Romans: "I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do" (7:15). Paul's words can be applied to the addict as well. Why would drugs be any different for the sinner? That is what this article is about. And the reason it causes fear for parents is because illegal drugs can hurt, injure, and kill God's most precious gift to us.

So, what drugs might my child "experiment" with? Let's start with alcohol, the most widely used and socially accepted drug known to man. The type that we can safely consume is ethyl, ethanol, or ETOH—all the same, just with different names. Alcohol is the only drug that contains calories, yet they are wasted calories with no health value. Simply put, you drink it; you put on extra weight. Alcohol has such terms as "proof." Its origin begins with sailors of old determining the purity of rum. They would mix rum with gunpowder, ignite it, and watch for the POOF! The amount of "poof" or "fizzle" would tell its makeup: more water, more fizzle, more alcohol—more POOF! The term then turned into "proof," which measures alcohol content, whether it is 40% or 50% alcohol. A proof of 80 to 100 is simply doubling the percentage rating: 40% equals 80 proof. Excessive use affects the whole body because the chemical structure of alcohol ( $C_4H_{10}O$ ) mixes thoroughly with our body's primary substance of water. It is now chemically joined and requires the body's ability to break it down, which equates to one drink per hour. More than one drink an hour leads to passing the body's ability to process it, and then the alcohol builds up in the system, causing intoxication.



Health effects of intoxication are numerous: heart, circulatory, pancreas, digestive, and endocrine problems. It also can brutally lead to death, whether by drinking and driving; participating in alcohol-induced hazardous activities; or the body actually failing due to long, sustained drinking. Alcohol withdrawal, meaning that a person has consumed so much alcohol over their life that the body requires it to be present to operate properly, causes the person to be physiologically dependent on alcohol. When alcohol is not present, the body panics on its quest to find it.

*In the next issue: Inhalants & designer drugs*

### Living to Conquer Death by LS



Born a child  
And yet heaven's King,  
Our Jesus came down to earth  
Bearing sin's burdens,  
Laughter, scorn  
Earthly life  
And sin's curse of death  
Jesus took on so that we'll live  
Surviving sin's curse.  
Forgiven!

Yes, Christ died  
On that Good Friday.  
"It is finished!" Jesus cried.  
Buried by loved ones.  
Yet He'll live.  
Christ arose  
On that Easter day  
Just as He promised He'd do!  
Sing Hallelujah!  
Death's conquered!



## Retreat 2013 & "I Have a Life" & April 26-28

Along with your newsletter you will have received the brochure for the "I HAVE A LIFE" Retreat 2013, on April 26-28. We hope that old-timers and newcomers have made plans to attend. You can be a person in recovery or a friend or family member of someone in recovery from anywhere in the U.S. to benefit from this retreat. Our friend coming from California usually is the person traveling the farthest.

This will be Retreat #29! You old-timers can remember such places like Holy Hill, Cousin's Center, Salvation Army Camp, and Byron Center as places where we've met over the years. Monte Alverno Retreat Center, Appleton, WI, will be our meeting place for the fourth year.

Pastor Henke from Bethany in Appleton will be our morning speaker on Saturday. You may remember that he presented our Retreat 2011 Sunday church service. Renewing ourselves and our life in Christ will be a great blessing.

Read through the brochure for more retreat information. Register soon. We would appreciate registrations no later than April 12. Looking forward to seeing you!

### A&DA Meetings

	<i>When</i>	<i>Where</i>	<i>Contact</i>
Sunday	7:00 p.m.	St. Paul's Lutheran*	Onalaska, WI (608) 777-6329
Monday	6:30 p.m. 7:00 p.m.	The Gardens of Hartford Mt. Zion Lutheran	Hartford, WI Missoula, MT (262) 224-0483 (406) 490-9345
Tuesday	7:00 p.m. Call for times	St. Mark's Lutheran Ascension Lutheran	Watertown, WI Harrisburg, PA (920) 262-8500 (717) 319-5424
Thursday	8:00 p.m.	Bethany Lutheran	Manitowoc, WI (920) 684-9620
Friday	5:30 p.m. 7:00 p.m.	Salem Lutheran (East Side) Mt. Olive Lutheran Church*	Milwaukee, WI Appleton, WI (414) 964-7036 (920) 233-0437
Saturday	8:00 p.m.	St. Peter's Lutheran	Fond du Lac, WI (920) 921-8075

\*also have Al-Anon meetings; call for details

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*A.A.'s Step Three: "Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him."*

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