



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 Seven—Humility

Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

We understand this to mean:

We humbly asked Christ to remove all our shortcomings.

James 4:10: Humble yourself before the Lord and he will lift you up.

As we stand before God, we recognize our worth as zero. By ourselves we are spiritually dead. We are not able to heal ourselves. With the tax collector in the temple we say, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." God promises he will lift us up.

Realizing our shortcomings already indicates that God is working in us. By nature we would try to defend the wrong we did or blame others or the disease for what we have done. Inside, however, we know this isn't true.

In James 4:7-9 we read the ways we come near to God with these words—*Submit to God; Resist the devil; Wash your hands; Purify our hearts; Grieve, mourn, wail.* All these actions are possible through God's grace working in us. We see what our sins have caused and can only get out of that behavior with God's power.

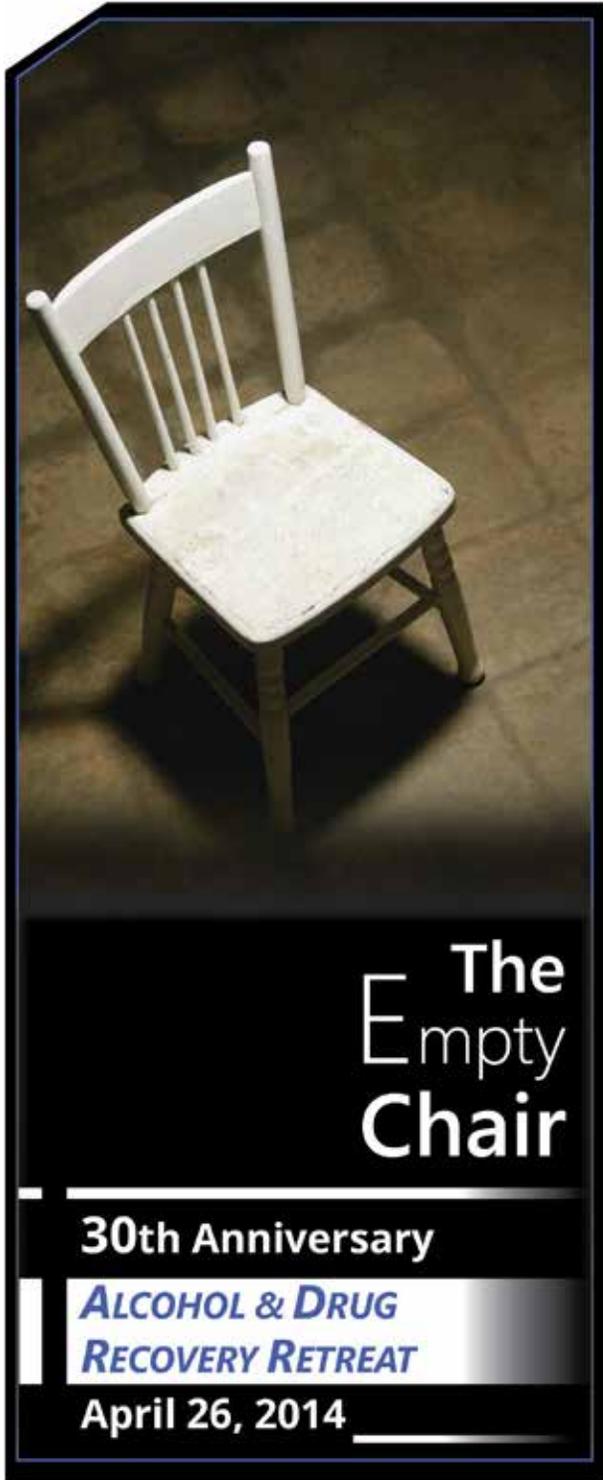
In our days of using, our laughter was present, but it was not a pleasing laughter to the Lord. Now we feel sorrow for hurting our Lord yet find real laughter in knowing our forgiveness won by Christ. The joy provided by the buzz from the bottle or high from our drug of choice now is replaced with true joy in knowing our worth only comes from our God. We see clearly instead of through the addiction fog.

Prayer: *Lord, make me humble! I know I often project an image that is untrue. I strive to be number one, because false pride doesn't permit me to be second. Too often I exaggerate my importance and achievements. Help me to be free from all my grandiose ideas and images. Free me from the sinful claims that lie so heavily upon me. Help me to honestly evaluate myself, my abilities, and my achievements in life. Give me the ability to accept what I really am and the strength to become what I must be. Give me willingness in all times and in all places to find and do your will. Loving Savior, I look to you in thankfulness. Amen.*

(This prayer is taken from the words written by John Cook in one of his meditations.)

New Look for Retreat 2014

Our **30th Anniversary Retreat** will take on a new look this year. Instead of being a weekend event, the retreat will be for just one day. Our day at St Peter's Lutheran Church, Fond du Lac, will go from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. Events of the day will include a scriptural study, closed meeting, breakout sessions, and business meeting.



Of course there will be food! A continental breakfast will be available for you to enjoy when you arrive. You will be treated to a delicious anniversary lunch with, of course, anniversary cake.

Our theme this year is ***The Empty Chair***. These words can mean different things to different people. As we chose this theme, we discussed the "empty chair," which will be noticed since Steve now lives in heaven. Our recovery process makes us look at the loss of relationships, jobs, and status that occurred due to our substance use. Recovery also means dealing with the "empty chair" situation by filling the emptiness with new activities, relationships, and self-concept in Christ. The "empty chair" is also a role-play technique used in recovery. If you look up "empty chair" on the Internet, you will read about a man who improved his prayer life by imagining God on the empty chair and having intimate talks with him. Come and see how "empty chair" is applied in this year's retreat.

Fond du Lac does have several hotels—perhaps the best known are Holiday Inn, Comfort Suites, Country Inn and Suites, Retlaw Plaza Hotel, and Days Inn. If there are several people who choose to do an overnight on Friday or Saturday, you can contact any of the above hotels. Those who choose to stay overnight could arrange to go out to eat and meet for an evening of fellowship. There will be a place where you can note this on your registration form.

We hope that our new one-day format will encourage a greater attendance since only one day is required as well as a reduced attendance fee. As stated in the enclosed brochure, **we would like your registration by April 11, 2014**, which is the Friday before Palm Sunday. Late registrations will be accepted as space allows.

We look forward to old friends and new attendees gathering to celebrate the gift of recovery through Christ and the Christian support and friendship that the past retreats have provided.



Call Elsa Manthey
at 800-282-0561
or e-mail: emanthey@wlcfs.org
for any questions regarding
The Empty Chair Retreat

Codependency and the Addict

This article is written by Jeff Richardson. Jeff is a counselor with WLCFS Christian Family Counseling. He specializes in substance abuse disorders.

"Frequently, you have felt obliged to tell your husband's employer and his friends that he was sick, when as a matter of fact he was tight." (*Alcoholics Anonymous*, p. 115)

This quote from *The Big Book* really defines the part of codependency in the relationship, and it really shows that making excuses for others is part of codependency or codependent behavior. Codependency is a difficult situation for all involved. It causes problems and complications in the relationship. Codependency creates a two-sided relationship where one individual enables behaviors, and the other individual controls or is being controlled by addiction.

It is an unhealthy place because there is deception. In my opinion it is the worst kind of deception, because the codependent lies to him/herself. The deception is that the person believes that he/she is unable to go through life alone and needs someone else to make decisions, plan, and ultimately "take care of ____." This also brings along these problems as well: self-worth, self-esteem, and generally a desire (whether conscious or subconscious) to help or to change another human or the false belief that he/she can "fix" the addiction because of love for the addict. This "self-deception" hurts everyone in the relationship, including the addict. The codependent will try to hide the problems from others by keeping them in the family. If children are involved, this hurts even more.

The effects on children will be covered in our next issue.



God's Salvation Plan: Suffering, Death, Resurrection



God
Sent His Son
To die to free us
From the devil,
Sin.

God's
Justice plan
Christ's death on the cross
Sin's dreadful
Price.

God
Raised His Son.
Victorious Christ
Triumphant
Rose.

JOY!
Jesus LIVES!
We are forgiven!
We Live!
God Loves!



Thirtieth Retreat

The Empty Chair

April 26, 2014, 8:00 am-5:00 pm

St. Peter's Lutheran Church

1600 S. Main Street, Fond du Lac, WI 54937

920-921-8075

Come join us! In **The Empty Chair** retreat, we will address how our Lord helps us through the challenges of our recovery and provides strength to deal with them. Feelings of emptiness and loss are replaced with a new and better lifestyle and improved relationships.

Our day at St Peter's Lutheran Church, Fond du Lac, will go from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. Please fill out the form included with this newsletter or contact Elsa Manthey at **800-282-0561** or e-mail: **emanthey@wlcfs.org**.

The
Empty
Chair



*Therefore we do not lose heart.
2 Corinthians 4:16*

A&DA Meetings

	<i>When</i>	<i>Where</i>	<i>Contact</i>
Sunday	7:00 p.m.	St. Paul's Lutheran*	Onalaska, WI (608) 783-2552
Monday	6:30 p.m.	The Gardens of Hartford	Hartford, WI (262) 224-0483
	7:00 p.m.	Mt. Zion Lutheran**	Missoula, MT (406) 490-9345
	7:00 p.m.	Mt. Lebanon Lutheran	Milwaukee, WI (414) 461-1563
Tuesday	7:00 p.m.	St. Mark's Lutheran	Watertown, WI (920) 262-8500
	Call for times	Ascension Lutheran	Harrisburg, PA (717) 319-5424
Thursday	8:00 p.m.	Bethany Lutheran	Manitowoc, WI (920) 684-9620
Friday	5:30 p.m.	Salem Lutheran (East Side)	Milwaukee, WI (414) 964-7036
	7:30 p.m.	Mt. Olive Lutheran Church*	Appleton, WI (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

**please call if interested in attending

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A.A.'s Step Seven "Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings."

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