



Awareness Window

Spring 2015

A newsletter for those in recovery and their families

Points to Ponder: Step Eleven

Sought to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

We understand this to mean:

“Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” Matthew 6:10

These words of the Lord’s Prayer are often prayed regardless of where you may be. This prayer ends numerous AA meetings, as well as numerous church services throughout the world. This was Christ’s answer to those who were listening to His Sermon on the Mount. Christ gives much information on how not to pray in this chapter of Matthew. For those who struggle with addiction, this step is an important time even though they have been faithfully working their program. It has been some time since the addiction has not been speaking for the person. This is a time where the person is speaking rather than the addiction. Prayer is important because it is a time in which we can give our struggles

to God—fears, anxieties, sadness, or any other emotion with which we wrestle. This giving it to God releases us from the weight of the situation or event, which is as Christ teaches: “For my yoke is easy and my burden is light” (Matthew 11:30).

This release then gives us the freedom to grow without burden. It is during this time that we can submit ourselves to God’s will and move forward without having the addiction guiding our path. We can fully follow His will, and He promises to give us the strength and resources to carry out His will.

“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the

Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:19-20). And finally, as Christ has commissioned us in this Scripture passage to reach out to others by spreading His gospel, AA has asked us to reach out to others who struggle with addiction. And once that addiction is in remission, we then have a clear path to reach out to the sober individual, who may just listen also to the words of Christ. Because as we all know, when the addiction is speaking, we listen only to it. ∞

this issue

P2
Spring
2015
Retreat

P2
Wisdom
from
Luther

P3
Prospering
by
Grace

P4
A&DA
Support
Groups



Snail mail:
1049 N. Lynddale Dr., Suite 1B
Appleton, WI 54914

phone: 800.438.1772 e-mail: jrichardson@wlcfs.org

VICTIM/VICTOR

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.

Our theme this year is Victim/Victor. Which one are you? Our Retreat 2015 is planning to take a look at both identities. Hopefully we see ourselves in recovery as victors through Christ.

This retreat will again be at St. Peter Lutheran Church in Fond du Lac. Following the suggestions of those who attended the one-day retreat last year, we are making a few additions. The main part of the retreat will be one day, **Saturday, April 25**, at St. Peter's Lutheran Church.

However, for those who would like to come early, we have arranged for a special rate at the historic Retlaw Plaza Hotel on Main Street in downtown Fond du Lac for Friday and Saturday nights. Please read through the **enclosed retreat brochure** to see what other changes have been made in addition to last year's format.

Hope to see all of you there! Remember, **your registration needs to be in at the beginning of April**; payment can be made at the retreat. ➤



Wisdom from Luther

“Everything that is done in the world is done by hope.”
—Martin Luther

The word **hope** is a powerful word. We can always **hope** for a better future; we can always **hope** for prosperity. We can always **hope** to stay sober. The word **hope** in this context cannot always provide a solid reassurance. However, if we get help from our Christian support group, our pastor, and Christian friends, and, most importantly, from Christ through his Word, the word **hope** becomes much more powerful. It is not a lonely flower blowing in the winds of change, or an empty boat on the sea. It is being part of the world, our world that is founded on the hope of Christ—the trust that we have in

Him to forgive us and to always love and care for us regardless of what we do. The world can be a small place—not the large planet we call Earth, but our network of sober friends, support group members, family, friends, our pastor, and the community of saints (us). This part of **hope** is what we have. Using these pieces in our recovery makes **hope** a strong anchor that holds us when the winds of change blow. So then everything done in the world is done by **hope**. ➤



Please e-mail Jeff Richardson at jrichardson@wlcfs.org with your comments on Wisdom from Luther.



Prospering by Grace



“It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly...who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.” —Theodore Roosevelt, 1910

Treatment. That is one of the many thoughts that enter my mind as I read these words of President Theodore Roosevelt. Please, take a moment to reminisce over your life. What struggles have you endured? What challenges have ensued? What abuses of life have you tolerated?

How did you get sober? Was it easy? Did you wake up one day and you were cured? The answer I am certain is a resounding NO! Did you go to treatment? If so, that was where you were in the arena. I bet your face was marred by dust and sweat and blood, as you knew great enthusiasms and great devotions as you faced the challenges of your own despair, sadness, fear, hurt, and a host of negative experiences that flooded your mind.

Think about treatment. How many times did the tears flow as you recalled the pain of the past? How many times did the anger explode? How many times were you brought to your knees by the power of the past? Did you listen to the support of others? Did you hear the counselors console you as you fought the emotion that was strangling the life out of you? Did you hear how others also shared in your pain? Perhaps not the exact pain, perhaps not the exact experience, but still could relate to your agony? Did you listen as others shared their experience and how they dealt with their agony and how they learned to put the addiction away

using the skills they gained from treatment? Did you hear their words as their voice cracked, while in group, as the emotion was barely able to be contained? Did their words comfort you as you heard them echo words of wisdom and how “this too shall pass,” and that you are strong, and worth it, and that you have meaning? Did you hear their love for you?

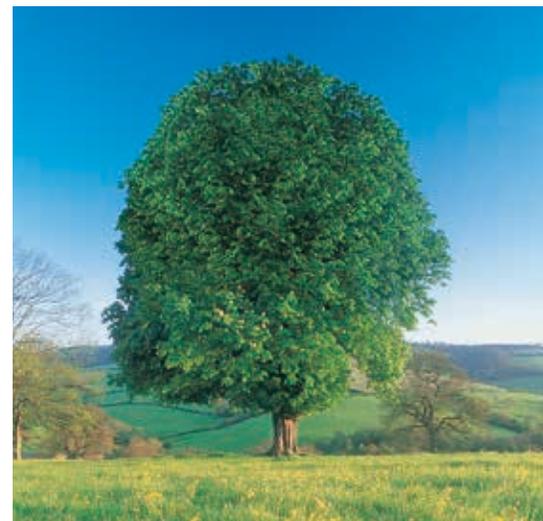
As you were given tools, new coping skills, and new ways of looking at things, did your pain regress? Did it diminish as you heard others’ stories on how they dealt with their time in the arena? Did you gain understanding as you focused on being honest, open, and willing? Did you feel empowered as you received and accepted these words and how you were able to be open to new ways of looking at your life? Did you also feel empowered for once rather than being swept away?

Did you relapse? Did it hurt, and did it cause frustration and anger as you look at all the sober time you had? Did it cause remorse? More importantly than looking at the failures of relapsing, did you come to an awareness of how you got to the point of being sober and holding it for the period of time you did? And at least while failing, you were daring greatly as you realized that you can and will be sober again? Can you listen to the words of others in your groups and meetings who share in your struggles? Did you find that you could forgive

yourself? Did you find that relapse is a part of the process of reaching sobriety even while in treatment?

Are you aware of the triumph you experienced in getting sober? Did you feel the excitement as you handled life on life’s terms rather than your own? Did you feel the victory you had in getting sober? Did you smile when you completed treatment or received your sobriety coin in front of your partners in sobriety? Were they smiling, too? Did your family smile and continue to smile and look at you with dignity and respect as you move on in your life, being the person whom you wanted to be rather than what the addiction wanted you to be?

Can you relate to the fact that you are not one of those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat? You have known both. You have seen this arena. You have prospered. You, by the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, know true victory. ☞



Alcohol and drug abuse (A&DA) support group meetings are held throughout the state of Wisconsin and in other parts of the country.

Our Christian A&DA 12-step meetings are designed to provide a safe, Christ-centered atmosphere in which participants feel comfortable sharing their struggles. With the help of God and working the 12 steps, participants are able to share their faith, strength, and hope.



Alcohol & Drug Support Groups

A&DA meeting times, location, and contacts

	When	Where	Contact
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	7:00 p.m.	Living Hope Lutheran	Midlothian, VA (804) 464-1424 (Roxanne) (804) 744-8869 (Church)
	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

©2015 Awareness Window is a free newsletter published quarterly by the Appleton office of WLCFS-Christian Family Solutions.

Editor: Jeff Richardson ~ Design: Ann Zuleger ~ Copyedit: Ann Jahns

A.A.'s Step Eleven: "Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out."

The Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous are reprinted and adapted with permission of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. ("AAWS"). Permission to adapt the Twelve Steps does not mean that AAWS has reviewed or approved the contents of this publication, or that AAWS necessarily agrees with the views expressed herein. A.A. is a program of recovery from alcoholism only—use of the Twelve Steps in connection with programs and activities which are patterned after A.A., but which address other problems, or in any other non-A.A. context, does not imply otherwise. Thus, A.A. is not affiliated or allied with any sect, denomination, or specific religious belief.