

Awareness Window

Winter 2014-2015

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 Ten—Admit When We Are Wrong

We continue to take personal inventory and when we are wrong, promptly admit it, and when we are right, thank God for his guidance.

We understand this to mean:

*"If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us."
—1 John 1:8*

When we read those words from 1 John, it really describes taking a personal inventory. While looking at ourselves, performing this inventory, it should be clear that we have done wrong, and that very wrong can be equated into sin. If you are not sure which sin, use the Ten Commandments. Be honest with yourself and really meditate on what those commandments from God are saying. When we do wrong, God has built in us a feeling of guilt. The type of guilt I am referring to is the guilt we feel when we, as individuals by our own actions, do wrong. We are not responsible for others' wrongs.

Admitting our sin then leads us to repentance, whether it was directly to God our Father, or to another and indirectly to God. With that repentance, we are then relieved of that sin and the feelings that we had over our sin are much easier to let go. With the 12-step work that was done while recovering, letting go and accepting the situation, as well as the forgiveness, will help us be one with God, through Christ. We can rest assured that our eternal life is with Him in heaven. **The last three steps are how we KEEP our will and our lives turned over to God indefinitely.**

RETREAT 2015—

Same place, but a little bit different!

Yes, plans are in the making for Retreat 2015 to be held at St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Fond du Lac, WI on **Saturday, April 25th** with the thoughts being directed to VICTIM/VICTOR. Pastor Bill Heiges will be one of our speakers.

What will be new this year?

Although the main part of the retreat will be on Saturday, we will plan for Friday evening activities if enough people would plan to stay overnight.

We have asked the RETLAW Plaza Hotel in downtown Fond du Lac for room rates for a block of rooms on Friday night, April 24th and Saturday night, April 25th. A standard single or double room would be \$79 + tax per night. This includes a hot continental breakfast and access to the health club's pool, hot tub, sauna, and workout center. There is a parking ramp connected to the hotel. *You are responsible for making your own reservations.* More information will be coming in the brochure in Spring. **So start making your plans!!**



Wisdom from Luther

"Wisdom from Luther" is a section of the Awareness Window Newsletter that we added in our last installment. Luther has some interesting quotes that we will use to help us gain an understanding of how our sins, in the light of addiction, are forgiven and help us all move forward in our lives, free from the guilt of our sin that we left at the cross. Please e-mail Jeff Richardson at jrichardson@wlcfs.org with your comments.

"To be a Christian without prayer is no more possible than to be alive without breathing." —Martin Luther

Prayer is so important in our lives. We have a living conversation with our Father in heaven. We pray to him and he speaks to us through his Word. I once knew a man who said that he drank heavily for years. He realized that his drinking was becoming a problem, and he didn't know what to do about it. He went on to explain that every morning he woke up and prayed, "Father, please take away from me the desire to drink. Help me to stay sober today so that I can live the life You want me to live. Amen." He said that at the end of the day he would pray again with a prayer of thanksgiving because he was sober the whole day. At first it was hard not to drink, but every day after his morning prayer, the cravings lessened until finally after several months of these prayers, the desire to drink was minimal to non-existent. Prayer is one of the most important parts of our Christian life. I firmly believe that without prayer and our Savior, we would truly suffocate in life's troubles. Peace be with you.

Treatment for Addiction

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

Addiction is alarming and harms our society. It is on the increase in our country, our states, our counties, and our communities. Dr. Kima Joy Taylor, director of the Closing the Addiction Treatment Gap (CATG) Initiative, states: "Drug use is on the rise in this country and 23.5 million Americans are addicted to alcohol and drugs. That's approximately one in every 10 Americans over the age of 12—roughly equal to the entire population of Texas."

The National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence states, "As the nation's number one health problem, addiction strains the economy, the health care system, the criminal justice system, and threatens job security, public safety, marital and family life." Their statistics agree with CATG. Yet, there are some sources that state that over one in every seven Americans suffers from addiction.

These numbers are staggering and are getting worse. Looking at it from a religious perspective, it is sinful behavior. The First Commandment states, "You shall have no other gods," so when a person is using, where is God in their lives? Are they relying on Him? Or are they relying on their addiction? So what do we do? It is important for the addict to get help. Treatment is the best way to get assistance. Treatment programs offer services designed to help the addict.

There are in-patient services that serve to detoxify people in a safe manner. There are some that offer a four-week program, and others offer a 90-day program. Typically, treatment includes educational services on how the disease progresses as well as the health impact on the body. When a person is using, how are their eating habits? Are they eating three meals per day and making sure they get the proper amount of protein, carbs, and fats? More than likely, they are not. So then nutrition is also addressed. Typically, a reliance on AA is another focal point for numerous reasons. It culminates into aftercare/continuing care to assist the sober person to continue in recovery.

Families. How do they impact the addict? It takes time to go through all of the effects that the addict caused on the family. How is the family dealing with the addiction? Are they exhausted, stressed out, and loaded with shame and guilt at how their efforts have failed in getting their loved one sober? Or are they supportive and willing to engage in getting the addict help? These are all parts of the treatment process. Family can be one of the strongest resources for addicts.

Addiction is growing. Is it because the nation as a whole is becoming more secular with the desire to remove God from everything? Or is it something else? No matter the cause, there is help out there. There are many treatment facilities that can address the causes of addiction. Treatment allows for an individual's defenses to be challenged, which will then lead to a greater understanding of how their addiction has shaped their life. Only then can they learn to be empowered and to make good self-choices. After looking at these parts, coupled with the knowledge of addiction and its effects, the deeper problems are addressed and coping skills are given. Relaxation, stress or anger management, and bio-feedback can be used along with many other techniques. With Christian Family Counseling, the sins that cause grief, shame, sadness, despair, guilt, and a host of other negative feelings can be addressed as the client and counselor work together to make the necessary changes in the life of the addict. Ultimately, one must rely on Christ and the forgiveness of sins. Then the hard work begins of personal forgiveness, living in sobriety, and exercising recovery techniques that were learned through treatment and AA.

A&DA Meetings

	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 AI-Anon meetings—call for details
 **please call if interested in attending

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A.A.'s Step Ten: "Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong PROMPTLY admitted it."

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On Eagles' Wings

*Even youths grow tired and weary,
 and young men stumble and fall;
 but those who hope in the Lord
 will renew their strength.
 They will soar on wings like eagles;
 they will run and not grow weary,
 they will walk and not be faint.*

—Isaiah 40:30-31

