

### Making Amends

Steps 8 and 9 were hard for me. Initially, I fell into the trap of looking at how others had harmed me - my parents and ex-husband, especially. But, with the guidance of my sponsor, I had to work to become more open minded and honest. In early sobriety, I didn't know when I wasn't being honest. "Self-centeredness was the root of my troubles." It was clear that my primary **amends** HAD to be to my sons. I had been irresponsible, irritable, easily angered, and, at the same time, wondering why I couldn't feel the love and concern for them that I had as a young mother... before I started abusing alcohol. Even though I thought alcohol made me "happy", I was often a depressed person trying to change who I was, to change my reality.

My **amend** to my children of "I've stopped drinking and was sorry about my not being there for them" was met with "Yeah, sure, Mom". Understandably, they did not trust what I said for I had been dishonest with them for several years. Saying, "I'm sorry", wasn't going to be enough, I had to change my actions to match my words. I had to show my love and concern for them in hopes that they could once again be able to depend on me. One day, I had "hollered" at the boys about some trivial thing, stomped down the hall, and slammed my bedroom door. As I returned, having recognized my poor behavior and unjustified anger, I heard the 13 year old say to his older brother, "Don't worry she'll be back to say she's sorry". I chuckled and apologized. My making **amends** to them continues today, primarily, to not drink and to be considerate and loving.

My egoism, displayed by intolerance for other's opinions, always having the answer and advice on most subjects (self-seeking!) describes some of my behavior in the workplace. Having taken Steps 1-7, I was able with the guidance of my God to change my interactions with fellow staff members. I learned how to make immediate **amends** seeking out those who had been on the other side of my irritability and abruptness. I strived to have calm and rational discussions considering the other person's feelings. Again, the key word was and is CHANGE. Changing the way I thought changed my feeling about a situation or person, therefore changing my actions or interactions. Basically, doing the right thing at the right time for the right reason. My work-life continued to get better.

I also became willing to make financial **amends** which consisted of paying bills and paying on time. Having spent money on booze and "fun" activities meant there was rarely the right amount of money to pay bills at the right due date. Becoming current led to fewer phone calls about when I was going to pay and there were no late fees—a bonus. I feared the IRS would be after me because I was certain my husband had falsified our returns. So ... I didn't file for 4 years. Was that rational behavior? No! But, that is a response to unreasonable fear experienced by a practicing alcoholic.

The 10th Step keeps me current on my **amends**, but from time to time people and old events come to mind and I realize that I have more **amends** from my past to make. My God provides me with these realizations and opportunities. Whenever needed, I have Steps 8 and 9. **I truly believe that righting wrongs through living amends is what brings about the continuous experience of the 9th Step Promises.** I'm so grateful that God indeed has done for me what I could not do for myself.

Jan S.

The best  
apology is  
changed  
behavior.

### The Twelve Promises

1. WE ARE GOING TO KNOW A NEW FREEDOM AND A NEW HAPPINESS.
2. WE WILL NOT REGRET THE PAST, NOR WISH TO SHUT THE DOOR ON IT.
3. WE WILL COMPREHEND THE WORD SERENITY.
4. AND WE WILL KNOW PEACE.
5. NO MATTER HOW FAR DOWN THE SCALE WE HAVE GONE, WE WILL SEE HOW OUR EXPERIENCE CAN BENEFIT OTHERS.
6. THAT FEELING OF USELESSNESS AND SELF-PITY WILL DISAPPEAR.
7. WE WILL LOSE INTEREST IN SELFISH THINGS AND GAIN INSIGHT INTO OUR FELLOWS.
8. SELF-SEEKING WILL SLIP AWAY.
9. OUR WHOLE ATTITUDE AND OUTLOOK WILL CHANGE.
10. FEAR OF PEOPLE AND ECONOMIC INSECURITY WILL LEAVE US.
11. WE WILL INTUITIVELY KNOW HOW TO HANDLE SITUATIONS WHICH USED TO Baffle US.
12. WE WILL SUDDENLY REALIZE THAT GOD IS DOING FOR US WHAT WE COULD NOT DO FOR OURSELVES.

*Sobriety  
Delivers  
Everything  
Alcohol  
Promised*

## Words on the Wall Become Words to Live By!

Here's another favorite "slogan" article... I was all kinds of mixed up when I slinked into my first AA meeting. My thoughts were mixed up, my emotions were

**Live  
and Let  
Live..**

mixed up, and my priorities were definitely mixed up. As I surveyed the room, I saw a sign on the wall that said, "Live and Let Live". Huh? It's "Live and Let Die". Really People! Remember ... James Bond ... Paul McCartney ... Wings?? These AA folks had the saying mixed up, so how are they going to straighten me out? I didn't realize it at the time, but that was my alcoholism working on me....Trying to find fault in the program, and in the people that made the program up.

Over time, a variation of the "Live and Let Live" slogan would allow me to not worry about what I perceived as faults in the program and other people. Instead, I began to focus on the

real problem, which was me. This was a critical hurdle for me to overcome in my recovery because I would get distracted by trying to fix other people and their problems, and it didn't matter if they asked for help or not!

Growing up, I always took pride in being someone that could get things taken care of for other people. I suspect that my ego really needed this because I didn't really have anything else of value to bring to the table. My current job involves me fixing problems for other people. It's what I was trained to do, and have been doing it for 20 years. It was a reflex response for me to do this, without being asked. Of course, I would tell myself, "This is service work" or "I'm helping others." The truth is, I was working someone else's program and completely disregarding my own. It was when I intentionally mixed up the slogan and read it as, "Let Live and Live" that I began to find relief and made more progress. By just letting everyone else do their own thing, I was free to do what really needed to be done. That is, work the steps and connect with a higher power. Now, I actually can live, and let live. Matt W.

**The Capital City Group** was started around 1981 by Sean F., in collaboration with the Twelve Oaks Recovery Center and the Addiction and Recovery Center (ARC), located on the corner of Jaclif and Capital Medical Boulevard. In the early 90's, the meeting was relocated to TCH next to the helicopter pad. At that time, the meeting was very big, 30 regulars. Patsy and Bubba P. were instrumental in running the group back then. They kept our gigantic coffee pot and all our supplies in the back of their van and set up every Sunday. I remember when I was newly sober, filling and cleaning the coffee pot was done around the side of the building at the outdoor faucet next to the woods. It was the only faucet the pot would fit under! When the new hospital was built, we were moved to a class room just in back of the reception desk. The set up was uninviting with anonymity concerns when using the front entrance to a major hospital! Attendance plummeted. We were in need of another meeting space, and Jack R. kindly opened the back conference room of his office to us on Mahan Drive. Even with the reduced attendance, it was a squeeze to get everyone into the room, and, as attendance dropped further, we continued to look for a larger meeting space. 3 - 4 years ago, Killearn United Methodist created a classroom in a store front near the Shamrock roundabout and has allowed us to use it. It seems we have found a home.

We are an open discussion meeting held from 6:30-7:30 on Sunday nights. The last Sunday of the month is birthday night and there is always cake. Silver dollars are given at the first birthday and can be punched annually by Sue C.'s husband. We have a minimal amount of organization with only a treasurer, currently Jim P., who delivers a financial report 1-2 times a year. He sends our contributions to the higher levels of AA and Founder's Day Florida Style annually. Keith serves as Grapevine Rep. Our current format is 2 people co-chair per month and are also in charge of set up and clean up. We once again have about 30 members at our meetings. We have a core of old-timers, a strong group of regulars with single digit sobriety, as well as, newcomers, ACOA's, AL-Anon's, visiting students, and those who have a mandatory meeting requirement (professional or court related). It is a strength of our group that many members, who started coming because of a professional requirement, have found long term sobriety and friendships here. They have continued to come many, many years after their mandatory requirement was over. We hope to see you soon. Sue C.

**AA History: Is Being Made Every-day, One Day at a Time; With Every Meeting, One Meeting at a Time... With God's Help.** There are many milestones in the history of AA. The history of this "spiritual program" is rich with:

- significant people, places, and dates from the early days;
- details related to "what it was like" before AA was founded;
- "what happened" to create this miracle of recovery, based on the 12 Steps, from a "seemingly hopeless state of mind and body";
- "what it's like now" - as a worldwide program of recovery made up of millions of people participating in meetings, prayer, meditation, fellowship, and service;
- the stories - the experience, strength, and hope - of people who have recovered from alcoholism, and, perhaps most of all;
- the daily practice of "carrying the message" and "being the message", as a result of having a spiritual awakening, to other alcoholics who are still suffering.

We are starting a series of articles for this newsletter during the upcoming new year on the "History of AA". "WE", all of us, are a part of this amazing history. Please participate by suggesting historical topics and/or writing an article! Contact the Editor: [message@intergroup5.org](mailto:message@intergroup5.org)

### When in doubt:

1. Do what it says in the AA Big Book.



2. Pray about it.

