

VOLUME LI | ISSUE 2 | MARCH-APRIL 2019

THE 12 STEP RAG

THE BI-MONTHLY
NEWSLETTER OF THE
FAMILIES ANONYMOUS
FELLOWSHIP

FOR RELATIVES AND FRIENDS
CONCERNED ABOUT ANOTHER'S USE
OF DRUGS, ALCOHOL, OR RELATED
BEHAVIORAL PROBLEMS

2019 Board of Directors*Chair**Barbara S. - Cherry Hill, NJ**Vice Chair**Hank H. - Cedarburg, WI**Treasurer**David D. - Chattanooga, TN**Recording Secretary**Maria S. - Bradenton, FL*

Members at Large:*Alan B. - Kendall Park, NJ**Ann P. - Cazenovia, NY**Beverley B. - London, UK**Robert S. - Bradenton, FL**Donna D. - Sayville, NY**George R. - N. Chesterfield, VA**Helen L. - Lutraci, Corinth,
Greece**Marc B. - Mayfield Heights, OH**Vince M. - Scoresby, Australia*

THE 12 STEP RAG

Published six times a year by

Families Anonymous, Inc.

701 Lee St., Suite 670

Des Plaines, IL 60016

12StepRag@FamiliesAnonymous
.org

Editor: Elizabeth S.

Copyeditors: Robert S, Chris Y

EDITOR'S NOTE

It's great to be focused on a goal, but it's also good to remember that much of recovery is about the journey. Between where we need to get and where we began is the path we have to walk. Our trials, challenges and struggles lie on the way. While we aim for nothing less than complete recovery, we must learn to stop beating ourselves up about not feeling upbeat all the time. Learning to let go is also learning to 'just be' sometimes. Not trying anymore, at least for a while, being comfortable with the 'in-betweens' that are not fun. Waiting for a loved one to recover, working on our own recovery, there are times when progress is not obvious. Sometimes a loved one may slide back, bringing back a flood of negative feelings, leaving us to despair, wondering, "Not again!, Why do I have to go through this so many times?"

I know I've been there. I am learning to be at peace though things around are not changing at the pace I might want them to. I am 'unlearning' frantically trying to change, control and fix everything. Honestly, who among us hasn't tried before, it just didn't work, did it? Perhaps we need to acknowledge that growth is never easy, it's uncomfortable, it challenges us, it pushes us out of comfort zones and sometimes, it brings us to our knees. But when we go through the discomfort that comes from making the right choices, we can at least be sure; we're on our way to recovery. This isn't like the needless pain we put ourselves through before. In my personal recovery, I am somewhere in between, oscillating between hope and disappointment. But I am learning to not struggle against it and to take in the views while I am passing through.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition, do send us your thoughts and stories!

In Fellowship, Elizabeth

Silver Linings

A mother learns she can't be 'magic mommy' when it comes to addiction

This is a story about silver linings. Why discovering, facing and recovering from our daughter's addictions proved to be a good thing; a blessing in disguise. When my kids were young, I was blissfully naïve. As I delighted in their innocence, affection, adorable antics and adoration, I naturally assumed I was the solution to all of their problems. Not only did I believe that it was my job to create their perfect world, but I assumed that somehow I was capable of fixing whatever was wrong. My son even dubbed me "Magic Mommy" for a time, clearly confirming that I had the superhuman ability to make things right. When in adolescence, our formerly happy, well-adjusted little girl began to show signs of trouble, I was at a loss. Our exceptional daughter had seemingly been taken over by someone we didn't recognize. The sunny disposition, the humor, the engaging personality, were suddenly replaced by unpredictable mood swings, alternating between manic energy and debilitating depression. High school quickly

Our exceptional daughter had seemingly been taken over by someone we didn't recognize.

became an emotional roller coaster of passivity and rebellion, grandiosity and self-loathing, fearfulness and risky behavior. I had never felt so helpless. We sought professional help, initially with talk therapy, followed by academic and psychological testing and medications, and culminating in an accurate but devastating diagnosis at the age of 21 of bipolar disorder

After college, her life appeared to stabilize as she established a career, but the mood swings were still apparent and we were vigilant and uneasy. I was so very busy trying to manage her life, researching her

illness, finding the right doctors and therapists, trying to monitor her medication compliance, actually believing I could control and fix her, that I failed to notice a secondary concurring problem developing...a potentially more lethal one. We were aware that she drank in college and were especially concerned after her psychiatric diagnosis and its accompanied medications. What we didn't foresee, however, was the degree to which this could escalate

and the potential for other substance use that could follow. She now tells us that her “self-medication” was her desperate attempt to escape the chaos in her brain, but, in fact, only served to interfere with her medications and worsen her condition. Alcohol, her original drug of choice, led to experimentation with more potent drugs and we were shocked when we eventually discovered the truth. We just couldn’t fathom that serious substance abuse could touch a member of our family. We came to our first FA meeting on the eve of her admittance to a residential treatment center. Little

did we know at that moment of crisis and despair that all three of us were on the brink of a major life change.

Here we are, almost three years later, and

I am grateful to say that she is sober, stable on her meds, and has recovered most of those qualities which once defined her. She has been sober for two years and seven months. She has recently begun a new satisfying full-time job...an unexpected silver lining for her, as she is working for the father of a girl she met at her outpatient

rehab program. We have begun to exhale. The silver linings I’d like to talk about, however, pertain to me and how I’ve evolved as a human being after discovering this program. If it wasn’t for FA, my husband and I would never have found the strength, the support, and the guidance to survive the crisis that brought us here. But the big bonus is that we now have new wisdom and real tools that have enhanced our lives. Once I got the message that there was no one I could control or change but myself, I felt both relieved and empowered. It was an emotional breakthrough. I began to understand



that endlessly worrying about another person not only proves futile, but damages everyone involved. When I consciously moved that unhealthy focus off my daughter

and began to exert control over my own life, I breathed easier and felt lighter. I spend more time these days engaged in activities that are meaningful and satisfying to me and, in doing so, have found my own version of “serenity.” I also find myself sharing much of the wisdom I’ve absorbed in this room. Often, when I

try to offer a helpful comment to someone, I hear “that was great advice,” to which I respond – “You can thank Families Anonymous.” FA has woken me up! I now pay more attention. I’m more “present,” more observant and have clarified my priorities. I don’t remember previously being so grateful for a “really great day.” Now, when those fearful and negative thoughts creep in, I make a conscious effort to replace them with my many blessings. I have also discovered an authentic and welcoming community of healing. I just researched the term “community”

*We possess not only
power over ourselves, but
the power to strengthen
others with our
acceptance and our love.*

and learned its origin; a Latin word, “communis,” which means “common.” The words communication, communal, communion, and hence, community, imply sharing, finding common ground, and experiencing relationships with others. The sense of community that lives and breathes in this room is something I carry with me now all the time, in every aspect of my

life, and is truly an unexpected gift. I could continue, but I’ll end by saying that if I had to choose one lesson that has had the most profound impact, it would have to be Step One. In understanding that I am powerless over others, I have gained a greater power over myself, and have learned that I now have a choice as to how I want to live. So...here I am, decades after those naïve early parenting years. I finally “get it.” There is, and never has been, a “Magic Mommy” who can fix everyone’s problems. But while we may not be the solution, we are far from powerless. We possess not only power over ourselves, but the power to strengthen others with our acceptance and our love. In the spirit of taking ownership of ourselves, I have created a version of the “The Cherokee Tale” for everyone. The tale reads: “A Native American grandfather was speaking to his grandson about violence and cruelty in the world and how it came about. He said it was as if two wolves were fighting in his heart. One wolf was vengeful and angry and the other was understanding and kind. The young man asked his grandfather which wolf would win the fight in his heart. And the grandfather answered, the one that wins will be the one I choose to feed.” Marcia S Winnetka
#494 Republished from the Rag
VOLUME XL

Where Has Your Smile Gone?

The pain of losing a loved one to addiction is still there, and the loss of a precious smile is still mourned while accepting they must find their own way back

Where, oh where has your beautiful smile gone? The smile that stretched from ear to ear; your pearly white teeth glinting in the sun; the infectious laugh that filled the air. Where has it all gone? I know, It is buried deep within your soul, too sad to burst into the light and let you free. The dark hole gets deeper and deeper and we, who love you, sink into the abyss with you. They tell me to be patient, kind, loving and



understanding and I do my utmost to comply. But deep down, tucked away in a tiny place in my heart, I suffer the

pain, anguish and doubts. When will I be free of the burden of worry that comes with substance abuse? How can I be balanced and cheerful when living with you is a roller-coaster ride? They tell me to fake it to make it, but I know, yes, I know it well, that the road could be long and bitter, sad and frightening. Will I be blessed to see that smile again? To withstand your rage, I walk away. To cope with the sarcasm, I laugh it off. To swallow the lies, I pretend I don't understand. I accept your unacceptable behavior by shrugging it off. When conflict raises its ugly head, I know that you will not see reason, so I stand back before things we say to each other get out of hand.

How can I say that I've made changes in my life and found serenity, when in reality the pain often overwhelms me? How can I get into your head and find the key to helping you turn your life around? The answer is, I **can't** find the key for you. You must find it yourself. My power is simply to love you and pray for you. I hope you let me in and let me once again see your smile, no matter how wan. This will help me know there is hope. Give me just a flicker of a smile, just a flicker. **By Carole**

2019 Families Anonymous Convention Schedule

June 7-9, 2019 Atlanta Marriott Perimeter Center

	ROOM 1	ROOM 2	ROOM 3
Friday	4:30-7:00	Registration (Location TBD)	
	7:00-7:45 (45 Minutes)	Dessert and Meet & Greet	
		Opening Remarks	
	8:00-8:45 (45 Minutes)	Finding Joy in Your Story - Hope Potter Aldred	
	8:45-9:30 (45 Minutes)	Variation on an FA Meeting - Facilitated by Hope Potter Aldred	
Saturday	7:30-8:00	Breakfast	
		Opening Remarks	
	8:15-9:15 (1 Hour)	Cultivating Joy in the Face of Addiction - Meridith Elliott Powell & Beth Brand	
	9:30-10:30 (1 Hour)	Community Resiliency Model <i>Lisa Marie Walsh</i>	Physical & Psychological Impacts of Addiction on the Brain <i>Jim Seckman</i>
	10:45-11:45 (1 Hour)	CRM Skills Experiential Practice <i>Lisa Marie Walsh</i>	Codependency: How Can a Good Thing Be So Wrong? <i>Millicent Parker</i>
	12:00-12:45 (45 Minutes)	Lunch	
	12:45-1:30 (45 Minutes)	Collegiate Recovery: How the Past Influences the Present - Teresa Wren Johnston	
	1:30-2:30 (1 Hour)	WSB Business Meeting	
	2:45-3:45 (1 Hour)	Family Recovery Story <i>Jeanne & Jeff S. and Family</i>	Family Healing & Acceptance <i>Dean Monteleone</i>
	4:00-5:00 (1 Hour)	Sober Living Panel <i>Trey Lewis, Lisa Lunsford, James May & Spencer Stein</i>	Surviving Family Crisis <i>Dick D.</i>
	5:15-6:15 (1 Hour)	Naloxone Overdose Training <i>Lindsay Montgomery</i>	WSB Board Meeting
		Break	
	7:00-9:30	Dinner & Entertainment	
	8:00-8:45 (45 Minutes)	Breakfast	
		Opening Remarks	
Sunday	9:00-10:00 (1 Hour)	Denial, Surrender & Acceptance - Ben C. Wilson	
	10:15-11:15 (1 Hour)	It Works - It Really Does! - Bill Brown	
	11:30 - 12:00	Closing Remarks	

CONTENT:

Key Note Speakers & Full Group Events
Mindfulness
Family Recovery & FA Principles

Addiction Education
Recovery Stories

Register at: FAConvention.com



Raffle Ticket Entries Available Online at:
faconvention.rallyup.com/finding-joy

or

Text **"FINDING-JOY"** to **(855) 202-2100**

2019 Convention Prize Raffle



#1 - White Gold Diamond Infinity Necklace

The defining interpretation of gold and diamonds, in classically chic Phillips House style for everyday.

Size: 15mm in diameter (0.58 tcw)

Retail Value: \$1,850



#2 - Amazon Echo Spot

A smart speaker with a customizable 2.5 inch screen. Alexa voice recognition can help you to see the weather, get the news in a video flash briefing, set an alarm, and see your calendar.

Retail Value: \$130



#3 - Google Home Mini

A smart speaker powered by Google Assistant. Ask it questions. Tell it to do things. Make hands-free calls.

Retail Value: \$50

Tickets Available
as follows:

\$10 for 10 Entries
 \$25 for 30 Entries
 \$50 for 75 Entries
 \$100 for 200 Entries

Families Anonymous World Service Convention

June 7-9, 2019

Atlanta Marriott
Perimeter Center

Registration &
Hotel Rooms at:

faconvention.com

Raffle Ticket sales will take place until Saturday, June 8, 2019 at 8:00pm EST.

Each entry gives you a chance to win any prize.

Prize Drawing will be held at the 2019 Families Anonymous
World Service Convention on Saturday evening, June 8, 2019.

You need not be present to win - prizes will be mailed if you are not at the convention.

*Entering the raffle is a great way to support Families Anonymous and
help out the Convention whether or not you are able to attend.*

Thank you for purchasing tickets! **faconvention.rallyup.com/finding-joy**

TEACHING OURSELVES TO LET GO

A family's struggle with their son's addiction and a mother's eventual acceptance of serenity

My family became painfully aware of my 37-year-old son's alcohol addiction during his freshman year of college. While home for Christmas break, after drinking alone, we found him passed out. At this point we realized this was a much more serious problem than just college binge drinking.

Before returning for his Spring semester, we contacted his school counselors and discussed support for his drinking. We thought he had agreed to find AA and recovery support. Unfortunately, he did not keep up with any support and his drinking became much worse. Consequently, during the spring semester of his freshman year, after failing to attend classes and knowing he was about to lose his scholarship, he ran away. This was the first of many times he would do this. Later, rather than accept help from an inpatient hospital program he eventually chose to participate in couple recovery house

programs. During these programs he would often do well for a few months but eventually it ended in another relapse. In retrospect I suspect the shame of his addiction was too hard for him to face or admit to his family. So, he chose to run away.


For the first 9 years of his addiction, as a family we struggled with the disease without a support group of our own. All the recovery programs he attended didn't have a family program and therefore I had little education about addiction as a disease. Additionally, I was unaware of Families Anonymous. Even after eventually finding Families Anonymous in 2009, traditional holidays were still particularly painful times, especially when we didn't know where he was, if he had a job, food or shelter. Even after attending FA I grieved over my 'Norman Rockwell' vision of each holiday. I clearly recall one 'Post-FA' 4th of July meeting. I woke up that morning feeling sad and depressed. My husband and I were at our summer home by ourselves. My 'Norman Rockwell' vision of holidays where my sons were with us enjoying the day on our boat, feasting on BBQ and enjoying evening fireworks was a lost dream. We had not been in touch

with our alcoholic son for months. We were filled with anxiety and fear not knowing where he was. Additionally, our other son was suffering with depression and chose not to join us either. After a few hours of feeling sad and resentful, my Higher Power graced me with the reminder that we were on our way to be together with several of our closest friends. I recognized that I could choose to suffer with sadness over a situation I could not change or, choose to enjoy the company of friends that we dearly loved. With that changed attitude, we spent the holiday in a different way but thoroughly enjoyed it none-the-less.


Years have passed since that July 4th and our son still struggles with his addiction, but I have made progress in my own recovery. I now seek and find blessings in each day and every holiday. I have given up on my 'Norman Rockwell' vision of the holidays and instead make different plans and enjoy the company of those we are with that day.

FA has taught me many other lessons that have improved my serenity. Our son still relapses and goes through periods without maintaining

communication, but I no longer leave voice or text messages asking where he is, what he's doing or adding to his shame and guilt for not staying in contact. Additionally, because of his continued relapses, it has been hard for him to maintain a steady job, but I have stopped giving unwanted advice and asking if he is working. Instead, I send encouraging texts letting him know he is loved. It has taken time, but



I could choose to suffer with sadness over a situation I could not change or, choose to enjoy the company of friends that we dearly loved.



we have a much better relationship, and now I enjoy his company when we spend time together. He knows he is always welcome as a guest in our home if he is sober. Although we are not living the 'Norman Rockwell' life of my dreams, working the FA program has brought much improvement in our relationships and we have truly found 'A Better Way to Live'. **Kathy S, Park Ridge, IL, Group #173**

DO YOU WORK IT?

Don't let day to day problems of living divert you from your program says Jo Anne G

It works if you work it, that's what they say.

But have I worked it at all today?

I've had my coffee, to my job I go.

The traffic is bad, the horn I blow.

Easy does it comes to mind,

But if I'm late I'll fall behind.

The weeks are filled with much to do.

Where to start, I don't have a clue.

First things first, I heard someone explain.

But they don't know me or understand my pain.

It works if you work it, it's worth it they say.

But I never have courage to do things my way.

The bills are now piling way up high,

Sometimes I think I'm just going to cry.

One day at a time, someone said.

But why can't I ever seem to get ahead?

My kids are veering way off course.

I fear my marriage will end in divorce.

Lately I just want to stay in my bed.

My mind is paralyzed with worry and dread.

My health is failing, something is wrong.

It's been a long time since I've felt very strong.
It works if you work it, that's what they say.
But have I actually worked it today?
Practicing the steps has gone astray.
To my Higher Power I did not pray.
I haven't been to a meeting at all.
To my sponsor I didn't make a single call.
I know all the slogans but don't put them to use.
For every one, I have an excuse.
I had a phone list but it's nowhere to be found.
Last I remember, it was just lying around.
So maybe I haven't been doing my part.
Or admitted I was powerless right from the start.
But it's time to let go and let God lead the way,
And follow my program, just for today.
It works if I work it, this I believe.
And together with God, peace I'll achieve.

*Is there a topic you would
like to see covered in the
Rag? Send your ideas to
12steprag@familiesanonymous.org*

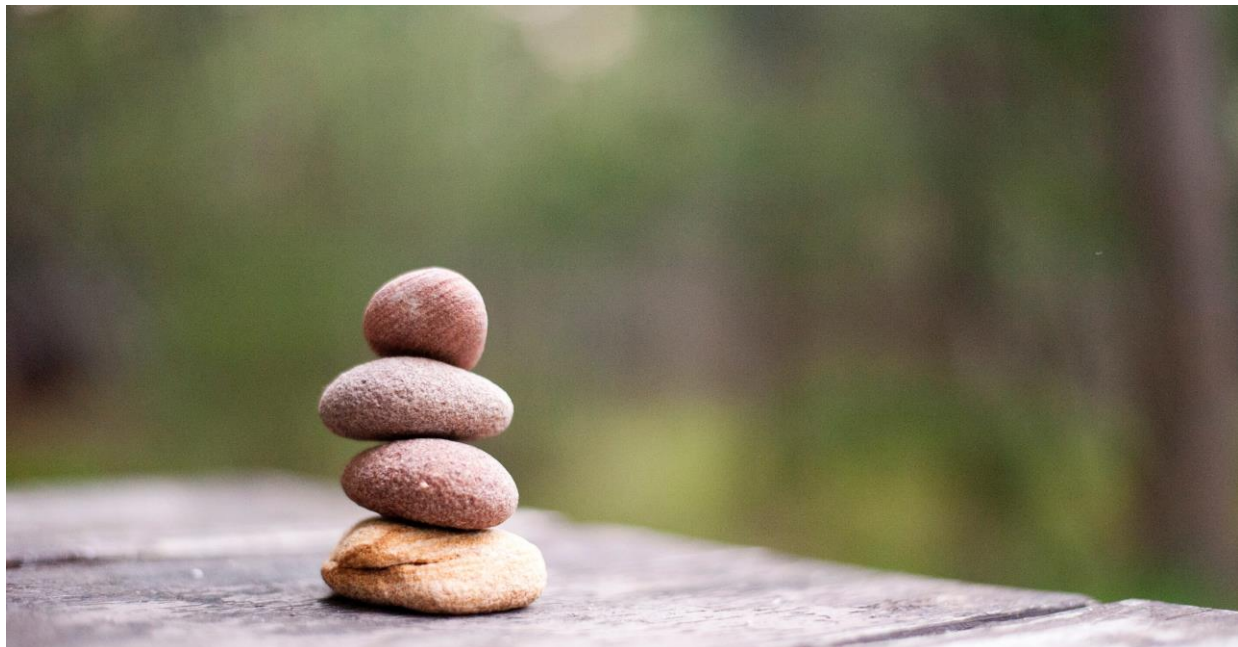
Calling all members! What do you do for yourselves to cope with and enjoy life. Is it photography? Yoga? Painting? Pottery? Writing? Share what you do and how it has helped you. And be sure to send in photos of your work. Submissions or questions can be sent to:
12steprag@familiesanonymous.org

Finding Peace

An FA member learns to look for peace in the right place

When I think of peace I tend to think of “peacefulness.” I am not sure if there’s a difference. A reading titled *Strength from Today a Better Way* (TABW), says peace comes from within. I believe that, but when life is chaotic and unmanageable I need to grab on to a lifeline that will let me find peace outside myself. Some things that help me arrive at peace is letting my mind wander in an open and searching way. I begin an “out loud self-talk.” I listen to myself and hear bits of wisdom. Little “aha” moments arise, and when they do, I stop and dwell on the thought. I can relax into it and feel myself exhaling with relief. To be at peace is

one of the most greatly desired things in this world. This desire motivates people to risk many things including their lives. When I saw on the news the boatloads of people from Syria, Libya, Egypt and other war torn countries, trying to cross the Mediterranean to Europe, it hit me how precious and important peace is to all people. Without it in my life, I would be in a constant state of stress. Deep breathing, exercise, prayer, and quiet time, all contribute to finding peace within. The realization that I am not the only problem solver in the room has allowed me to step back, let go, and let someone else handle the emotions of a situation. Even though peace comes from within, I need outside help from trusted friends and my FA group to acquire the inner peace. Peace is embracing life the way it is, it is



accepting who I am and not being angry with myself because I think I fall short in terms of successes in my life. Not to be angry because I made poor decisions in my life and poor decisions as a mother of an addict. The past carries too much weight and takes up too much space in my mind. I am slowly letting bits and pieces go, including resentments and shame. Once I clean them out of my life, just like a messy closet, there will be more room for new fresh stuff. Stuff I need now, in the present. Peace is one of those things. My daughter came by one night and we sat and talked. I didn't

The self-loathing doesn't allow the heart to open and embrace calm. Instead, it keeps me stirred up, agitated, and not able to gracefully accept who I am and just as importantly, where I've been.

lecture; I just asked her questions about her life and her lifestyle. It was sad for me to hear about her desperate, do-nothing life. I could only tell her I

love her and hope she finds a better life for herself, soon. She has no desire at this time to seek recovery. She is deep into a self-destructive life and no one, including myself, can talk her out of it. These are the times peace is most difficult for me. I feel smug that I am able to have a happy life: to be able to go about my daily activities with no responsibility for her or her situation. I certainly don't feel responsible for my other children's lives and choices, so I need to come to terms with the guilt I feel in relation to her. The guilt is a barrier to peace. It has to go. Striving for peace in my life has become almost a full time job over the years. I don't equate lack of troubles with peace. I think true peace can find a home in my heart even when I do have troubles. Peace is like a light. It keeps me attached to hope, grounded in the real world, and quiet enough to appreciate what my life includes; grandchildren, a loving husband, children, terrific friends, and FA. The inclusion of this horrible, insidious disease of addiction has not distanced me from life but has brought me closer to an understanding of the unthinkable desperation in an addict's life. I am able to separate the disease from the person and continue to love and cherish my daughter despite the madness and craziness that surrounds her. **Helen C, Group 777**

VOLUME XLIV May-June 2015

THE GIFT OF SPONSORSHIP

A father shares the stress of his daughter's addiction and how he reluctantly embraced sponsorship

I am a person who prefers not to discuss my personal issues, but my wife dragged me to a Families Anonymous meeting hoping that we could learn something to help us with our daughter, whose addictive behavior was driving us up the wall. At the meeting, my wife was enthralled, but I listened grudgingly as I heard about sponsorship for the first time. I dismissed it as something I didn't need.

My wife was excited about getting a sponsor and so we took home the FA telephone list that contained some identified potential sponsors. I must admit that she selected a woman from the group who seemed to be balanced and knowledgeable about FA. They made arrangements to talk to each other and



this seemed to work well for my wife. However, as a father I felt that if I could find an answer to my daughter's

I began to realize that maybe I wouldn't feel uncomfortable talking about my problems to him.

addiction, I would be able to set everything right. Not surprisingly this approach didn't work out so well. Over time my wife began changing her whole approach to our family problems and began to reference "my sponsor." She spoke more gently and smiled more often leaving me wondering, "What is there to smile about?"

I saw that my wife was changing in a positive way but I wasn't. Around this time, I began to listen more carefully to several men who had been in FA longer than me. One of them was leading a meeting on sponsorship and he suggested that we each read a piece of literature called *Families Anonymous and Sponsorship*. After the readings, we discussed the content.

I was impressed by the leader's calm attitude and serenity even though his own problems were not fully solved. I began to realize that maybe I wouldn't feel uncomfortable talking about my problems to him. I trusted that he would keep my story confidential. I also felt a desire for the peace of mind he seemed to have.

As a follow up I bought a copy of *Families Anonymous and Sponsorship* and spent the next week reading and thinking about it. I contemplated what it meant, and began questioning whether I had been off-track with my attempts to keep our daughter safe and get her off drugs. I concluded that I needed to talk to someone who had "been there and done that" and he seemed to be the right choice for me.

I began working on The Twelve Step Workbook with this new FA friend and it paid off! My sponsor was a keen listener and helped me grasp the principles of the Twelve Steps and I began to feel as though I were getting a handle on things. I felt better and my personal life seemed calmer. What more can I say about sponsorship? Don't be a hard-headed like me. Give it a try sooner than later.

Step 6: "We are entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character"

Defects of character - I guess I have many. Enabling was probably my biggest defect because ultimately my enabling did not help my son. Now, I try to listen and not judge. I'm not perfect, and giving unwanted advice not asked for has been the most difficult to stop. In reflection, it seemed easy to give advice, but he didn't listen so now he needs to find his own path. I hope I can continue to accept what he chooses. For both of us to have a better life, it's best not to be in each other's business.

At times I find myself wondering if he's using. Presently he continues to have life challenges, but he is currently sober. Am I wrong for being suspicious? Not knowing what is really going on in his life is very hard. Sometimes I return to my old habits. I need to stop and remember that you take a day at a time and realize that you can't change anything. So, I'm trying to make good decisions and let my son live his life. At times it is hard, but the FA program allows you to live it and practice it. We always want the best, but the reality is what he chooses and in turn what I choose can be different. **Celine K.Group #2070**

FA LITERATURE SPOTLIGHT

A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to Recovery

Is there a place in FA for humor? While at first it may sound strange or even out of place, the answer to this question is a definitive "yes". Not only can humor be helpful, at times humor can be downright needed.

If you have experienced being part of an FA meeting, chances are that humor has been demonstrated during your meeting. Generally, these humorous moments bring a smile to a number of faces when a smile is just what is needed. Laughter heals!

With this premise in mind, please give consideration to obtaining a copy of *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to Recovery (#1032)*, a publication comprised of "real-life" stories and witticisms contributed by fellow FA members. The Literature Committee feels that the stories and anecdotes shared, will "hit home" with you.

Are many of our family actions seemingly absurd? Certainly! This new piece of literature will open the door for all of us, encouraging us to share a chuckle or laugh at the absurdity and craziness of our actions as codependents. Not only will we be amused by our own actions, but also by reading about the convoluted antics of our addicted loved ones and our reactions to them.

We encourage all members to provide this new piece for your groups. At the end of the booklet, there are activities and other stories to use for meeting discussions. This very helpful and quite useful booklet can be purchased from the FA website for only \$3.75 a copy. Even the cover of the booklet may bring a smile to your face. And if this is the case, you are off to a good start to your day! Why not order a copy (or two or more) now?

Donations

MEMORIAL DONATIONS

*In Memory of Eliza,
Daughter of
Stacey and Doug D,
Group 1345
By Barbara S*

*In Memory of Steve E
Group 1844,
By Cynthia E*

GROUP DONATIONS

GR0124 CA, Northridge
GR0288 OH, Pepper Pike
GR0746 IN, Evansville
GR1096 VA, Richmond
GR1345 NJ, Cherry Hill
GR1522 IL, Chicago
GR1615 MI, Birmingham
GR1773 WI, Madison
FL, Delray
GR1836 Beach
GR1974 NY, Syosset
GA, Olmstead
GR2049 Township
IL, Chicagoland
GR3001 Intergroup

GR0124 CA, Northridge
FL, Delray
GR1836 Beach
GA, Olmstead
GR2049 Township
IL, Chicagoland
GR3001 Intergroup
GR0746 IN, Evansville
GR1615 MI, Birmingham
GR1345 NJ, Cherry Hill
GR1522 IL, Chicago
GR1974 NY, Syosset
GR0288 OH, Pepper Pike
GR1096 VA, Richmond
GR1773 WI, Madison



As per the Seventh Tradition, each group should be self-supporting. Your donations help support the activities of the World Service Office. For more information on how to donate, please visit www.familiesanonymous.org and click **DONATE NOW!** Thank you for supporting the many activities of FA World Service. Your contribution is tax-deductible



VOLUNTEER WITH THE RAG!

The Twelve Step Rag is critical to helping keep the Fellowship connected, inspired, and informed. It's published every two months under the expert guidance of its current Editor, Elizabeth S, but she can't do it alone.



Here's how you can help:

1. **"Content is King."** The rag team can't do anything without raw materials - your written work. We're always desperately in need of content, whether it be an article, poem, slogan, or anecdote - please just write. The topics are as broad as your interests: your growth in the Fellowship, your journey toward a more fulfilling life following the Twelve Steps, your struggles, setbacks, victories, hopes and dreams, the list goes on. Just talk about whatever moves you and that you believe will be helpful and/or interesting to others in the fellowship. And don't worry if you're not a great writer - that's what editors are for. We're looking for heartfelt and truthful writing, not literary masterpieces (but if you write like John Cheever, so much the better!). Please send

your work to our editor at 12steprag@familiesanonymous.org. The submission deadlines for upcoming issues of the Rag are provided at the end of the guidelines (the Step and Slogan listed for each issue are suggestions to focus your efforts, but not mandatory).

2. **Calling all Tech-Oriented Graphic Designers and Editors!** Each issue must be designed and laid out with appropriate graphics, headlines, and artwork so the final product continues to be attractive and fun to read. Right now the Rag is particularly in need of people with graphic design and editing experience. Can you please contribute some of your time and skills to helping ensure that the Rag continues to be of the highest quality, and that it comes out on a timely basis? We're looking for volunteers to work with us.

Please contact Elizabeth at 12steprag@familiesanonymous.org or Bob S at bobs@familiesanonymous.org if you have the skills, the time, and the desire to help, or if you have any questions.

Keep those submissions coming!

Yours in the Fellowship,
Bob S
WSB 12 Step Rag Liaison

TWELVE STEP RAG 2019 PUBLICATION SCHEDULE

ISSUE	FEATURED TOPICS	ARTICLES SUBMISSION DEADLINE	ANNOUNCEMENTS/ DONATIONS/ADS SUBMISSION DEADLINE
MAY/JUNE	-Step 3 - Misery is optional	June 10	June 23
JULY/AUG	-Step 4 - First things first	August 10	August 23
SEPT/OCT	-Step 5 - Help is only a phone call away	October 10	October 23
NOV/DEC	-Step 6 - Just for today	December 10	December 23

The Great Wave, Katsushika Hokusai

