

Volume lxi | Issue IV | FALL 2024

SERENITY MESSENGER

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



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FAMILIES ANONYMOUS FELLOWSHIP

SERENITY MESSENGER

Newsletter of the Families Anonymous Fellowship



EDITOR'S NOTE

In late August at the New Jersey shore the calendar may say it's summer, but the sun sets much sooner than it did in June. And the longer nights are laced with light, brisk breezes.

Every day, it seems, I'll see a crisp leaf floating in the ocean. Like a curled-up brown boat, it's so buoyant it barely touches the surface as it shudders and skitters in the wind. Still, there's a bluntness about it that makes me uneasy; it seems like an ill-mannered intruder among the splashing swimmers.

Autumn is coming.

Seeing another summer pass is hard in a number of ways. Our children and grandchildren and other visitors have packed up their towels and beach chairs and gone back to the "real life" of work and school. It was a great summer, full of laughter and love. But as always, it seems, now that it's over we wonder how those good times could have slipped so quickly through our hands.

That feeling is more intense now because I turn 70 this September, so there's no doubt there are more summers behind me than there are ahead.

But I have no complaints. I live in the joy of now, the only place we ever truly exist. I'm grateful to my core for the memories of this happy summer, and for all the others I've seen. And I look forward to making the most of the coming fall, one day at a time.

I'll continue to take my daily personal inventory and, assuming life grants me the opportunity, I'll act accordingly tomorrow. I'll work harder to see the good in all people and to treat everyone with the respect and understanding I hope for from them. I'll be kinder and more forgiving to others and to myself.



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EDITOR'S NOTE

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In other words, with the help of my Higher Power—whether that means my FA family, God as defined by me, or some combination of both—I'll try to be a better person.

Fortunately, for today, our daughter is in recovery, so my FA program is in “maintenance” mode: I'm working on myself by attending my weekly FA meeting and continuing to study the FA literature, trying to help others if I can, consciously nurturing my relationship with a Higher Power, and always trying to keep the FA principles top of mind because the more closely I follow them, the better I feel. And you never know—crises come and go, that's life—someday I may need to apply the principles in “emergency” mode again, too.

When our loved one was still struggling with substance use, it was impossible for me to take care of myself or to feel any joy in life. Seeing the heavy burden our daughter was carrying, and feeling anguish at my inability to help her, made life nearly unbearable.

But the seasons passed, and life went on, and I found I could make my whole world better—tremendously, transformatively better—by attending FA meetings and conscientiously working the Steps.

Is it easy? No. Is it worth it? A resounding yes!

Seasons change, and so can we. This program really does work—if you work it.

Keep coming back.

Happy Autumn!



**IN FELLOWSHIP,
BOB S.**

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FALL OPPORTUNITIES

As Students Head Back to School, Fall is the Perfect Time to Reach Out to Educators, Say Board Members Maria S. and Bob S.

This is the fourth in a series of Serenity Messenger articles about how groups can raise awareness of FA in their communities. We've dealt with Faith Leaders (in the January/February 2024 issue, page 4) and Behavioral Health Professionals (in the Spring 2024 issue, page 4); and in the Summer 2024 issue (also page 4), we outlined opportunities to participate in events related to International Overdose Awareness Day (August 31).

This fall, there are a number of opportunities for FA groups to sponsor and/or attend events that highlight what can be done to address drug abuse at a town- or city-wide level.



September is [National Recovery Month](#), dedicated to increasing public awareness surrounding mental health and addiction recovery. It's a time to recommit to helping prevent substance use disorder, supporting those who are still struggling, and providing people in recovery with the resources they need to live full and healthy lives.

October is [National Substance Abuse Prevention Month](#), a time to recognize the importance of substance abuse prevention for the health of both individuals and the communities in which they live.



October 23–31 is [Red Ribbon Week](#). During this week, parents, educators, and communities reinforce drug-free messages and highlight the destructive effects of drug abuse.

Please consider going to the websites shown above to explore ways that your local FA group can join or support these efforts.

WORD FROM THE BOARD

(CONT'D)

Fall is also when kids go back to school, so it's a natural time to reach out to educators. Teachers and school administrators are often in a unique position to witness the problems that substance use disorder causes in their students. These problems can arise either when the students themselves are abusing substances or when they are suffering the adverse effects of substance use disorder in a parent, sibling, or other loved one. If a teacher sees the problem, FA wants to be a resource they'll look to for answers.

Consider reaching out to educators, which could include any of the following:



- Assistant superintendents of instruction
- Directors of curriculum
- Counselors in charge of drug and alcohol prevention programs
- Principals, vice principals, and counselors at elementary and secondary schools
- Administrators of local colleges and universities (including trade and technical schools)
- Principals of adult education and college preparatory programs
- Parent-teacher association (PTA) leaders

Ask to attend staff meetings, if appropriate. It's also useful to attend PTA meetings or any other meetings attended by parents. If you're allowed to speak, provide an overview of FA and, at the very least, leave behind pamphlets which can be shared with parents and others.

The following free e-brochure, "*Families Anonymous and the Professional Community – Educators*" (#7010EducE) can be emailed and sent to any of the individuals listed above. You can find it here: <https://familiesanonymous.org/fa-professional-community-educators>

Here are links to free materials that you may want to distribute, if possible. These materials are also available in Spanish on the FA website:

Electronic Resources

These items can be downloaded and e-mailed or can be printed for free distribution.

- [#7003E](#) - FAMILIES ANONYMOUS - FOR ME?
- [#7009E](#) - ARE YOU TORN APART?
- [#6003E](#) - TO THE CONCERNED FAMILY MEMBER OR FRIEND
- [#7014E](#) - ARE YOU AT YOUR WITS' END?
- [#5003-1](#) - AN INTRODUCTION TO FAMILIES ANONYMOUS

Printed Materials

Each of the following can be downloaded as an editable pdf, and your local meeting information can be added:

- [#7014](#) - ARE YOU AT YOUR WITS' END?
- [#7003](#) - FAMILIES ANONYMOUS FOR ME?

"If you're allowed to speak, provide an overview of FA and, at the very least, leave behind pamphlets which they can share with parents and others."



WORD FROM THE BOARD

(CONT'D)

And remember, it's always impactful when we share our personal stories of how FA has improved our lives.

Please consider making an effort, however large or small, to raise awareness of FA in your community. Do it in connection with this fall's recovery events, or do it just because it's today—and what better time is there to take action?

MARIA AND BOB S.
WSB MEMBERS

THINKING OF SUBMITTING AN ARTICLE OR ANNOUNCEMENT TO THE SERENITY MESSENGER?

For our upcoming issue, the deadline to submit announcements is November 23rd.

We gladly accept submissions of original articles, letters, poetry, or artwork at any time!

Email us at newsletter@familiesanonymous.org.
We'd love to hear from you!



Want to learn more about how your FA group can thrive and grow? Go to familiesanonymous.org, click on "Members" and go to "Group Materials," where you'll find an array of helpful, informative publications concerning group dynamics and management.

Still have questions? Send an email to the Group Outreach Committee at GO@familiesanonymous.org.

Have a great meeting!

HAPPY RECOVERY (MONTH!)

September is National Recovery Month.

Robyn H. Writes About Living Life Happily No Matter What Path Our Addicted Loved Ones Choose.

**NATIONAL
RECOVERY
MONTH**
RECOVERY. HOPE. HEALING.

For our loved ones suffering from substance use disorder and mental health issues, recovery means:

- Finding a program
- Working the program (the 12 Steps, for instance)
- Living a clean and productive life

But when it comes to us family members, what does recovery even mean?

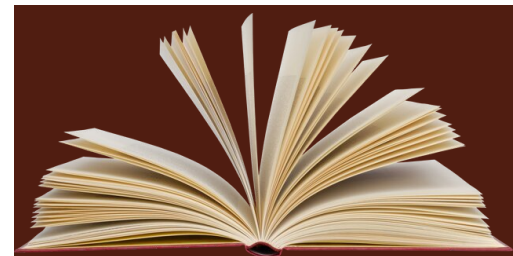
I remember sitting in my first Families Anonymous meeting when *The Big Book* was pulled out. It was April, and the group was working on Step 4: “Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.”

If my head could have spun a 360, it would have. Why on earth would *I* need to make an inventory of *myself*? It was my loved one who needed to do that work, not me. I was there to sob and tell my story, and to listen to others do the same, right? Also, why were we reading from *The Big Book*, something clearly meant for people with an addiction? Was I in the wrong meeting?

Nearly three years later, I am leading many FA meetings and mindfully working the 12 Steps, with both my sponsor and my first sponsee.

Why do the 12 Steps of AA work so beautifully for family members with loved ones suffering from substance use disorder and mental illness?

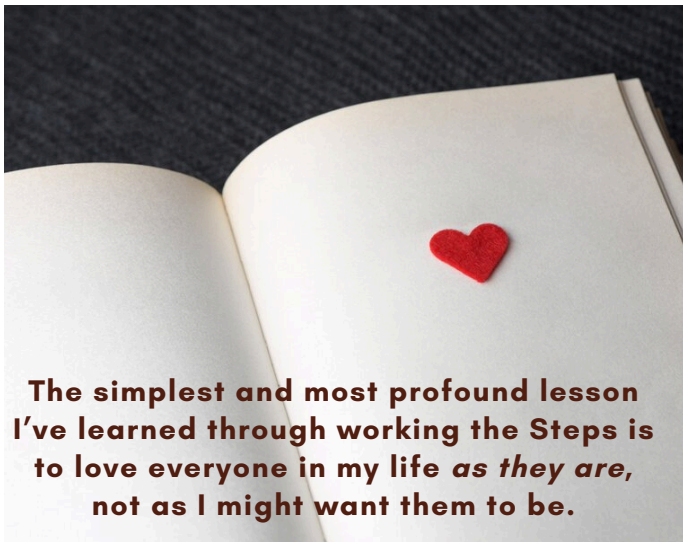
Because often those family members have spent years obsessively trying to fix/cure their loved ones. In essence, their loved ones became their drug. Step 1 teaches us that we are powerless over others. Whether another person seeks treatment or continues using is simply none of our business.



“Step 1 teaches us that we are powerless over others. Whether another person seeks treatment or continues using is simply none of our business.”

**SUBMERGING OURSELVES
BENEATH OUR OVERWROUGHT
EFFORTS TO FIX THEM, AND
THE EXCESSIVE ATTENTION WE
PAID TO THEM, WE WERE
NEGLECTING OUR OWN LIVES,
INTERESTS, AND EVEN
DREAMS.**

When we FA members are just starting on our road of recovery, we can find it terrifying to let go of trying to save our loved ones. What if they should die—because we have not spent every minute of every day trying to save them? Before embarking on recovery, we believed we were responsible—responsible for curing our loved ones of their addiction and, most times, even believing we were somehow responsible for the addiction itself. Submerging ourselves beneath our overwrought efforts to fix them, and the excessive attention we paid to them, we were neglecting our own lives, interests, and even dreams.



In FA, we learn to turn the mirror onto ourselves. This is a bona fide struggle for us codependents, whose self-worth is fueled by constantly helping others. Looking into that mirror, we might say, "Hey, who are you?" At first glance, we might throw the mirror down, run full-force back into the maelstrom of our loved ones' lives and problems, armed with books and programs we believe will finally save them. But the harder we try, the less they seem to want anything to do with us—and with the recovery we are so heroically offering. They simply are not ready. Forcing someone into recovery never works.

Until we delve deeply into the 12 Steps, we will keep losing our very selves in our efforts to save other people. These efforts are futile because, in reality, only they can save themselves. And saving themselves (in my experience as well as that of others in my group) may "magically" happen once we are connected to our own lives and working our own recovery.

The simplest and most profound lesson I've learned through working the Steps is to love everyone in my life as they are, not as I might want them to be. This means accepting them whether they choose sobriety and wellness, or whether they don't.

Working the Steps sets us free to engage fully in our own lives. We find ourselves freed of previous resentments, freed of imagining, "If only my loved one would accept treatment and get well, then I could finally have my life back." Guess what? Your life has been waiting for you with open arms all along. Live your life happily, healthily, and otherwise fulfilled. No matter how sick (or well!) your loved one chooses to be, you can live you.

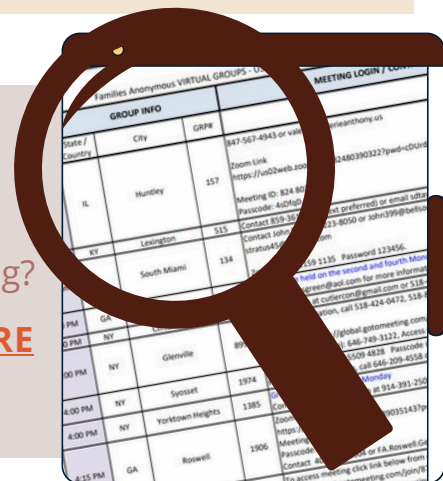
ROBYN H.

Looking for a Meeting?!

New to Families Anonymous and looking to join a meeting?

Interested in checking out either a new Virtual or In Person meeting?

Find all our Meetings Directories on our website, by clicking [HERE](#) or under the "Meetings" > "Find a Meeting" tab.



TURNING OUR ANGER INTO UNDERSTANDING

Her Younger Son's Addiction Led to Her Entire Family Struggling with Anger, Writes an FA Member

I am roaring up from inside, my heart beats faster, but my adrenaline rush is not following through. It is stopped up at my neck. My shoulders raise, stiffen; I feel my face flush red, and I feel so violated I could scream. But I don't. When I get this angry, I can yell, but usually I cry.

Anger is an emotion that folds back on itself. It feels like it is projecting outward, or is supposed to be projecting outward, away from me, and landing as a huge exclamation that points onto others.

But that projectile lands back on me, sending its pointy spike into my heart. My brain cannot register this, it cannot think.

And that feeling of not being able to think, of not being able to evoke reason from the insanity, is what makes anger such a frustrating emotion to experience—again and again.

“AND THAT FEELING OF NOT BEING ABLE TO THINK, OF NOT BEING ABLE TO EVOKE REASON FROM THE INSANITY, IS WHAT MAKES ANGER SUCH A FRUSTRATING EMOTION TO EXPERIENCE—AGAIN AND AGAIN.”

When our son, then 22, was in his deepest point of addiction, he evoked in us, for a long time, fear, frustration, some compassion—and then anger. We had “tried everything,” as we say, and even the long-time-in-rehab had ended in an extended relapse. He had not hit bottom, and he seemed crazily adamant to coast steadily downhill, a couple inches from that unforgiving end.



“And as that anger folded back on itself, again and again, destroying my serenity, I became beaten down by it. It was robbing me of any further emotional growth I was supposed to be having in my life.”

Anger was, for me, endless crying and asking, “Why?” I was mad at me; sometimes my husband got mad at me, then I'd get mad at my husband, then at some teacher whose name I couldn't remember, and at society for allowing such scum to roam the streets selling drugs to the weak and needy. And then I got mad seeing our son as weak and needy and wondering how that ever came about.

And as that anger folded back on itself, again and again, destroying my serenity, I became beaten down by it. It was robbing me of any further emotional growth I was supposed to be having in my life. I learned later, after attending FA for a while, that the addict's emotional growth will slow or be stunted during the time he is on drugs.

And as our son was not recovering or growing, neither was I. I was losing ground in my own emotional development, in any growth with my husband; and I was stagnating in my job and unable to attend the volunteering I had signed up for. I fell into a hopeless state. Hopelessness was the end-game of my anger.

Years ago, I heard a song on the radio with a verse saying that we tend to hurt the ones we love. I don't remember the song, but it is not surprising that when our son or daughter falls into substance abuse, everyone in the family can find a way to get angry. I was angry that my son felt he had to depend on pot, and then on meth, to deal with his emotions. My husband was angry at him for not being able to deal with everyday life.

TURNING OUR ANGER INTO UNDERSTANDING

(CONT'D)

And our older, more independent son, got angry at his younger brother for the pain he saw us going through. But then he turned his anger onto us, anger for the added attention, time and money we had spent on his brother. He soon divorced himself from our family, neither realizing the additional pain he was causing nor knowing, at that point, that he, too, was part of that same dysfunction.

As our younger son, at 26, was finding his way into a sober lifestyle, his older brother was still burning with anger and resentment. We found ourselves in the most ironic place of being in the middle of our sons' divorce from each other. We didn't want to pick sides, despite each of them trying to make us do so. We couldn't believe we were dealing with this after our 36 years of marriage, working hard to keep love alive and mutual respect and support for each other at the core of our family.

We saw how anger had brought us all down. Shaking off anger takes time and patience; it has a tendency to want to stick.

Our FA book, *Today A Better Way*, reminds us, in many days' readings, that anger can be replaced by understanding. Thanks to five years in FA, my husband and I have been able to grow together in our understanding of our sons and of ourselves. We work our program and rejoice in how far we have come. But we cannot change our sons' attitudes about each other. We can only provide opportunities for them to gain understanding of and patience with each other.

"OUR FA BOOK,
TODAY A BETTER WAY,
REMINDS US, IN MANY DAYS'
READINGS, THAT ANGER CAN
BE REPLACED BY
UNDERSTANDING."



I used to blame drugs for all our family's problems, but it was our response to the drug use—the anger—that hurt all of us in different ways.

I used to blame drugs for all our family's problems, but it was our response to the drug use—the anger—that hurt all of us in different ways. Today, FA serves as a garden of understanding, and out of that garden's growth have come tools, information, and the support of others experiencing the same things. We all still need more understanding, but now we also have a lot of hope and a path to proceed on.

"TODAY I WILL continue to apply the principles of FA as I replace my anger with understanding."

ANONYMOUS
SACRAMENTO, GROUP #1894

REPUBLISHED FROM THE 12 STEP RAG, VOL. XLII, JULY-AUG 2013

CONVENTION ANNOUNCEMENT

43rd Annual Chicagoland Families Anonymous Convention

FA - A Beacon of Hope



FA - A Beacon of Hope

WHERE

Gloria Dei Lutheran Church

**4501 Main Street, Downers
Grove, IL 60515**

Park in Church Lot or School Lot
(across street). Enter through
either the North or South Main
door.

WHEN

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 2ND

8 AM – 3 PM

SCHEDULE

**Registration/Continental
Breakfast 8 a.m. – 8:45 a.m.**

Program 8:45 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Includes speakers, breakouts,
and lunch.



for more information, scan or
click the QR code,
call 847-795-8320, or email
FAchicagoland@aol.com

Come and spend a day learning how FA can help you relate with a family member or friend affected by mind-altering substances or related behavioral issues. Whether you are an active member of Families Anonymous or have just heard of this group, we welcome you to attend. Learn how you can find serenity in your life despite unsolved problems!

**EMAIL FACHICAGOLAND@AOL.COM TO
REGISTER!!!**



JOIN OUR FA RAFFLE!

Need not be present to win!

6 TICKETS FOR \$5.00

THREE WINNERS (\$100, \$50, \$25)

(Additional Donations Welcome)

**Please send a check for tickets to the address
below and we will send you back your half.**

Chicagoland FA Intergroup 2024 Convention

701 Lee St., Suite 670

Des Plaines, IL 60016

Please make checks payable to: Chicagoland FA
Intergroup

Email FAchicagoland@aol.com with any questions



CONVENTION ANNOUNCEMENT



FA - A Beacon of Hope

REGISTRATION FORM

Special group rate **\$45pp** Mail 4 or more registrations together.
(Must be received in the office by October 19th)

Early individual registration **\$50pp** (Must be received in the office by October 19th)

Registration after October 20th **\$55pp** Walk-in registration: cash or check (no credit cards)

Please make checks payable to: **Chicagoland FA Intergroup**

Mail to: Chicagoland FA Intergroup 2024 Convention
701 Lee St., Suite 670
Des Plaines, IL 60016
fachicagoland@aol.com

Zelle Payment: Fachicagoland@AOL.com (Pay with Zelle, and mail/email Registration Form)

Please Print First Name & Last Initial (for name tag)	Group Discounted Rate 4 together \$45	Early Individual (by 10/19) \$50	Received after 10/19 or Walk-in \$55	Donation Amount	Special Dietary Needs

FA Group Name and # (if applicable) _____ Total Amount Enclosed _____
Contact Person _____ Phone _____ Email _____



for more information, scan, click,
call 847-795-8320, or email
fFachicagoland@aol.com

MEDITATION AND ANGER

FA Member Ellen Shares How Meditation Helps Her Deal with Anger

Whether I practice yoga, walk, skip, run, hula hoop, dance or glide, I still have powerful emotions. Meditation helps me manage them. It's a healthy practice that requires attentiveness. The evidence that it's healing for me is not merely anecdotal; it's supported by scientific research.

Meditation does not negate anger. But it does help me understand and moderate my flash responses so that I do not have to engage.



**ANGER CAN BE VERY PROBLEMATIC.
SOMETIMES IT'S ACUTE AND
ABRUPT, SOMETIMES LONG-TERM
AND SUPPRESSED; IN EITHER CASE
IT CAN CAUSE REAL PHYSICAL
PROBLEMS.**

Anger can be very problematic. Sometimes it's acute and abrupt, sometimes long-term and suppressed; in either case it can cause real physical problems. So what can we do? Well, that is the million-dollar question. For me, the 12 Steps and meditation are both ways to become self-aware.

Self-awareness is a path to knowing. Knowing involves understanding what is ours and what is not. Flash anger, in my opinion, occurs when I cross this line.

For example, when walking the city streets, I at times feel angry when motorists stuck in traffic blare their horns, expressing their anger and frustration. When this has happened—when I am “minding their business”—I have “caught” their anger, like catching a cold. But if, on the other hand, I am “minding my own business,” I am not contaminated by their anger. I can acknowledge the situation and let it go.

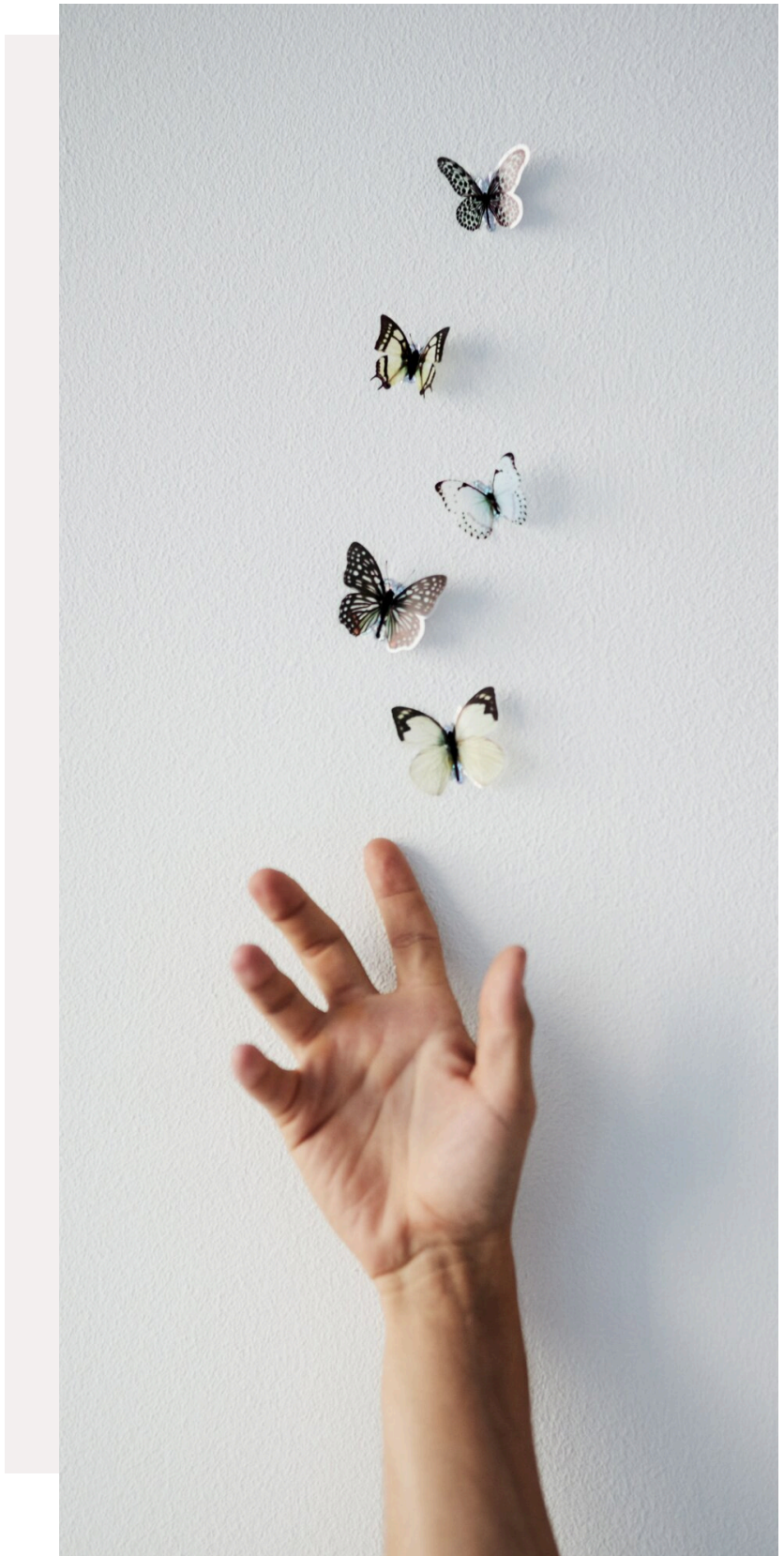
There are many paths to the same destination, which is peace of mind and self-knowledge. These paths support one another and make the journey easier. So consequently, I try to use them all. My life is what I pay attention to. FA is part of my life. Be well.

ELLEN

REPUBLISHED FROM THE 12 STEP RAG, VOL. XLII, JULY-AUG 2013

I CAN DO IT MYSELF

I can do it myself
I said without much thought
I can handle the chaos
your addiction has brought
I am strong and
for you I know what's best
It's a phase or a joke
or maybe a test
My patience grew thin
I fell to my knees
I am no match
for this terrible disease
I asked for his power
to break this great curse
My answer came quickly
and I thought it reversed
We must start the healing
and you must be first
A message so simple
"Love and Let Go"
You'll be surprised
how fast they will grow
Then one day you'll wonder
where did the resentment go?
The hurt will seem distant
and the tears will have dried
You'll be able to smile
and your fears will subside
As your faith grows stronger with
your Higher Power at your side
Your prayers will be answered
as you ask for his plan
But don't go at it alone
there's no one that can.



CLIFF S., MEDINA

REPUBLISHED FROM THE 12 STEP RAG, VOL. XLII, MAY-JUNE 2013

THE LAST FLICKER OF HOPE

Letting Go Is Not the Same as Giving Up

The TWELVE PROMISES of Families Anonymous

1. We are going to know a freedom from worry and a new happiness.
2. We will not regret the past or wish to shut the door on it.
3. We will comprehend the word serenity.
4. We will know peace.
5. No matter what we've been through, we will see how our experiences can benefit others.
6. Those feelings of resentment and self-pity will disappear.
7. We will lose interest in trying to change others, and we will gain an appreciation for those special people in our lives.
8. Self-righteousness will slip away.
9. Our attitudes and our outlook on life will change.
10. Our insecurities and our fear of other people's opinions will leave us.
11. We will intuitively know how to handle situations that used to baffle us.
12. We will come to realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.

Out of my anger, fear and frustration, I slammed the door shut on my son. Yet my addicted child had but one flicker of hope left for his recovery: knowing that his family would be there for him when his recovery is ignited. Expressing our hope to our son is the only thing addiction can't destroy. My family's hope keeps the potential for recovery alive in our son. **I once believed that addiction could be reasoned with and therefore influenced to stop. I was naive.**

Addiction is not influenced by even the best of my human interventions. Addiction is not impressed with even the best treatment program. Addiction is not altered by even the best counselor.

Addiction must run its course. It is not possible for me to predict when or why addiction stops and recovery begins.

Addiction thrives when I intervene inappropriately. My interventions prolonged the life of my son's addiction. Addiction thrived when I kept it as a family secret. Being isolated deepened and extended my suffering. Addiction fueled my guilt, creating a heavy burden for me which blocked my recovery.

Addiction created a mission for my self-discovery. I gave my life over to my God and the Families Anonymous way. I was given back the life I was meant to live. The Twelve Promises of Families Anonymous are all true.

Addiction awaits its death when a powerful, mystical yet merciful spiritual intervention by the God of my son's understanding is awakened.

THE USER'S PARENT

REPUBLICED FROM THE 12 STEP RAG, VOL. XLII, JULY-AUG 2013

A NOTE OF GRATITUDE

Dear FA:

I am savoring a big, bright, glorious bowl of gratitude today.

Gratitude for the peace and presence that steadily grows to fill my mind and disposition, after so many, many lost days of fear, anxiety and despair.

Gratitude for my loving husband who has stayed beside me, especially because my son is not his son, when addiction came into our lives like a tsunami.

Gratitude for my son, who has navigated his way out of homelessness and unemployment, with a new job today and a safe place to live. All of which he accomplished on his own, because he had to, and because he wants to live.

Gratitude for my health, now eighteen years cancer-free. I am grateful for each day that I awake feeling well, strong and free to live without fear of dying.

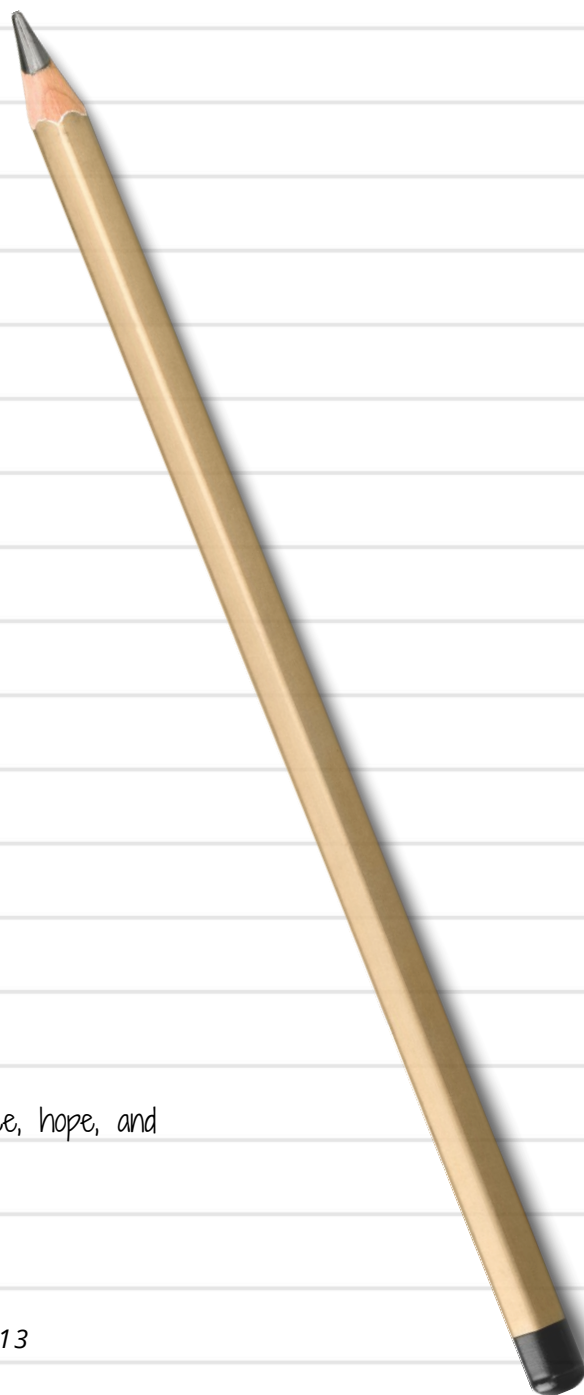
Gratitude for the simple eloquence of the Serenity Prayer, whose words have comforted me in the darkest of nights and pulled me back up when I have fallen off my path to recovery.

Gratitude for the unquantifiable power to affirm, support, and care that is alive in this FA fellowship.

To the new members tormented, crushed and weary, to the practiced members reaching down from the 12th Step to extend a hand of compassion: "Follow this path. It is a better way." I extend my heartfelt gratitude for making this a place of experience, hope, and strength.

SERENITY SEEKER

REPUBLICATED FROM THE 12 STEP RAG, VOL. XLII, SEPT -OCT 2013





LITERATURE SPOTLIGHT



HUMILITY:

A small word that carries a big punch

As presented in the Literature Committee's latest release—*Humility: An Essential Key to Our Recovery* (#1038 in the literature catalog)—humility is a founding principle of the Twelve Steps.

This is true not just within the Families Anonymous fellowship but going all the way back to the beginnings of Alcoholics Anonymous, founded in 1935 by Bill W. and Dr. Bob.

In Twelve Step programs such as A.A. and FA, we are invited to take an honest, humble look at ourselves. As we engage in our ongoing inventory-taking—both in-depth in Step Four and daily in Step Ten—our attention is repeatedly directed toward an exploration of the topic of humility.

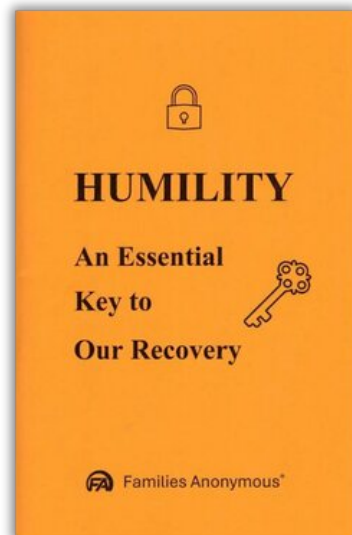
Humility is a key concept in our search for recovery, serenity, forgiveness and peace. If we are to find any of these, then working towards humility is a task we must face.

Accomplishing this task can be tricky, though, both because the essence of humility can be hard to understand, and because even when we do understand it better, it can be hard to hold onto and stay focused on.

This new booklet examines the components of humility and helps us grasp its many aspects. Most importantly, it provides a guide for integrating this positive quality into our FA program of recovery.

Humility: An Essential Key to Our Recovery begins by exploring some of the common emotions that interfere with our recovery, such as anger, fear, denial, embarrassment and sadness. All of us have struggled with these emotions, and more, from early in our journey with our addicted loved ones.

Often these emotions are ego defenses, and as we work our FA program, we become able to calm them down and lay them to rest. Practicing humility means quieting our ego: Whereas ego resides in our head, humility comes from our heart, our seat of love and compassion.



Humility reminds us to step off our pedestal of self-assumed power, of our notion that we are superior to and wiser than others.

It's never too late for us to set our ego aside, look honestly at who we really are, and courageously take responsibility for our conduct, past and present.



With the help of our Higher Power, and with humility and gratitude, we will count ourselves fortunate when our controlling, compulsive and excessive behaviors become relics of the past.

A.A., in its publications and meetings, speaks a lot about humility. They point to ego as standing in the way of humility. They refer to ego defenses as unconscious mechanisms that diminish our capacity to be humble.

In FA, too, humility is an integral part of our program:

Humility enables us to welcome and embrace the necessity of changing ourselves. It leads us toward the how of our FA program: being honest, open-minded and trusting. Humility opens the way to seeking and receiving help, support and guidance from others and from our Higher Power. It spiritually connects us to other people and is a bridge to freedom from loneliness and self-imposed isolation. We are no longer alone.



With input from this booklet, the Literature Committee humbly hopes that we can all gain some insight into the role humility can play in our lives, our recovery program, and our serenity.

We can, with humility and without remorse, engage in the simple joys of living. We can celebrate milestones—birthdays, anniversaries, holidays—with no preconceived notions of what we once thought they should be. These landmark days are opportunities to give to others simply because it makes us feel good and not because we expect to receive something in return. ... In our recovery from codependency, we learn the big difference between practicing humility and discounting ourselves. As a well-known writer once said, "Humility is not thinking less of yourself. It's thinking of yourself less."



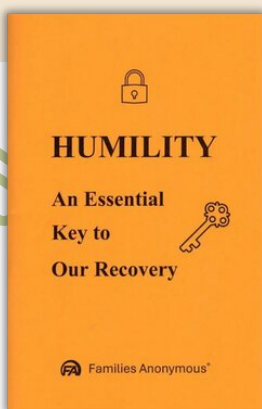
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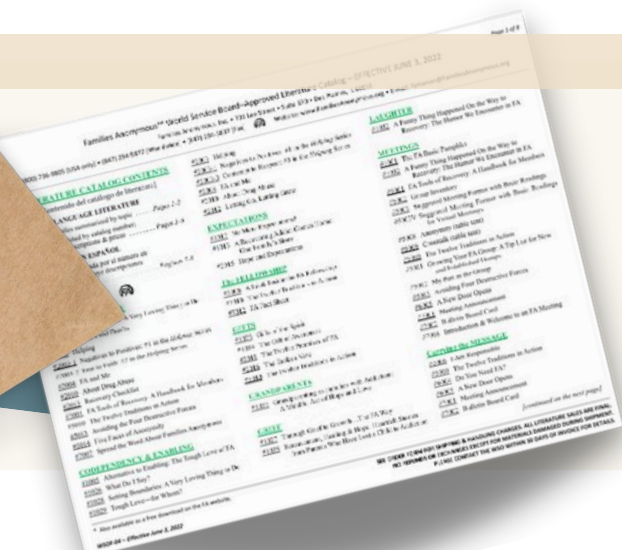
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Humility: An Essential Key to Our Recovery (#1038)

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LITERATURE ANNOUNCEMENTS



Announcements, Announcements, Announcements!
One new, one not, both important.

1st

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Literature Committee has combined the “Suggested Meeting Format” for in-person meetings and the “Suggested Meeting Format for Virtual Meetings” into one format—and then added a third option: for hybrid meetings.

So, we now have just one “Suggested Meeting Format” (#5003-1 in the literature catalog) from which each group can find what suits them best.

Whether your group meets in person or virtually or both; takes a break or does not; displays literature for sale or refers members to FA’s e-store; passes a physical basket or asks for online donations; or anything in between, the new “Suggested Meeting Format” clearly delineates how to proceed.

Find it on the Free Downloads page of the FA website. (It’s part of #5003 *Suggested Meeting Format with Basic Readings*.) Check it out, and start using it at your next meeting!



2nd

ANNOUNCEMENT

The holidays will be here before we know it. So, if you like to get a head start on your holiday shopping, don’t forget about the *Serenity Medallions* (#3051). ... More to come on these in the upcoming Winter issue of the Serenity Messenger.



DONATIONS

COMMEMORATIVE DONATIONS

- Wishing Alex M. a speedy recovery, on behalf of Syracuse, NJ Group 1301
- In loving memory of Harry K. Your first anniversary in heaven. Founder of Garden City Group 262. We miss you Harry and share your promise with all the newcomers.
- In loving memory of Joe, son of Joan and Dale H., on behalf of Group 1820
- In memory of long time member, Jan L., on behalf of Group 746
- In memory of Russell S., son of Connie S., on behalf of Group 746



GROUP DONATIONS: May - July 2024

Over \$500

- GR1974 NY, Syosset

\$101 to \$500

- GR0133 CT, West Hartford
- GR0134 FL, South Miami
- GR0173 IL, Park Ridge
- GR0976 NJ, Colts Neck
- GR1348 IL, Peoria
- GR1382 IL, Schaumburg
- GR1522 IL, Chicago
- GR1906 GA, Roswell
- GR1989 KY, Louisville
- GR2056 FL, Bradenton
- GR2105 PA, Lafayette Hills
- GR3001 IL, Chicagoland

Up to \$100

- GR0121 CA, Torrance
- GR0162 IL, Des Plaines
- GR0171 IL, Arlington Heights
- GR0252 NJ, Summit
- GR0262 NY, Garden City
- GR0279 NY, Amityville
- GR0478 IL, Glenview
- GR0631 TX, Dallas
- GR0853 IL, Palos Heights
- GR1096 VA, Richmond
- GR1301 NY, Syracuse
- GR1531 AZ, Scottsdale
- GR1639 GA, Atlanta
- GR1773 WI, Madison
- GR1844 WI, Mequon
- GR1996 FL, Fort Myers

As per the Seventh Tradition, each group should be self-supporting. Your donations also help support the activities of the World Service Office. For more information on how to donate, please [click here](#) or visit www.familiesanonymous.org and click **DONATE!**

Thank you for supporting the many activities of FA World Service.

Your contribution is tax-deductible.

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