

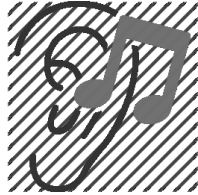


CONNECTIONS

Volume 80

Official Newsletter of the Greater Saint Louis District of Cocaine Anonymous

July, 2018



Listen To The Music

By Glenn F.

I loved to drink, drug and hang out with my friends. We all enjoyed carousing on the weekends. I quickly learned, though, that I had an insatiable taste for partying and always had to do it. My friends did not.

I didn't have a choice, I had to have it. My partying gave me great comfort. I felt insecure during my teenage years and thought I was somehow different than my peers. Throughout my adolescence, I always felt afraid and never a part of anything. I don't know why, I just did. I was always chasing fun. I couldn't just be still and have it.

Looking to the external world to complete me inside, it was always the next sensation that was going to fulfill me. I felt like I didn't measure up. I was always hoping to catch a glimpse of something that would bring me contentment; but that thing, whatever it was, was always fleeting. Cocaine seemed great but I could never have enough.

I felt like the unheard "rest" note ♮ in a song. I was like that void. Absent in life's melody, I was just an empty space. I lived like that for twenty years. Eventually, the fun of the high wore off. I found myself in a world where I no longer wanted to drink and drug, but I couldn't stop. I was a self-diluted, self-convoluted wreck. I was just existing, sucking air.

There in that despair, I would find the answer to my life's problems. It was a way out through Cocaine Anonymous. I exhausted every other option. I even tried that crazy controlled drinking thing. I finally admitted my problem to myself and found in these rooms a solution to live liberated from cocaine and all other mind altering substances.

Through working the 12 Steps, I found a freedom, a contentment, and a God. That empty anxious feeling of always needing one more is gone. Cocaine Anonymous has replaced that emptiness with a full life and decisive measures of action. I found I am enough just as I am. Cocaine Anonymous continually teaches me a way of living that is more rewarding than anything I have ever known. I have a new perspective that fulfills me inside and out. Escape through drugs and alcohol is not needed or wanted.

Today, I am a man of faith, hope, vision and action. I believe all things are possible with prayer and action. Provided I don't pick up, I have a choice as to how I want to live. I've learned I have a chronic disease coupled with a perpetual living problem that will always need the program of recovery.

I thank C.A. for giving me a God of my understanding to teach me how to live life successfully. I thank God for C.A. The drug and drink appeal has vanished. Now I reap the rewards of a spiritual solution to my daily struggles (which always seem to derive from self!).

I no longer chase fun, I have it. I am achieving goals and conquering dreams. I am continuing my education and working in the field where I have always fantasized of establishing a career.

I have traded-in a lost life full of despair, anxiety, fear and depression for a life with serenity and peace of mind. Those wasted spaces of "rest" I once felt so stuck in are now beautiful moments of rest, dropped on peaceful ears. They are the still notes in my busy life that keep my song smoothly flowing.

Recipe For Sobriety

By Vicky M.

One of my definitive moments in the course of my recovery journey came before I got sober. I was in the process of completing a year-long, state-mandated, once-a-week program in conjunction with my second offense DUI arrest. I called it “drunk school” and went out of necessity, but was not staying sober.

Every Monday night, I would report to the facility. We would either have a group session or a lecture. My counselor’s name was Don. He was fifty-something years old and was nine years sober from heroin addiction. I liked Don and could see he knew what he was talking about. Yet I was never able to be fully honest with him because I wasn’t staying sober, and he had the power to send me back to court for that infraction.

One night, Don wasn’t there and we had a substitute counselor named Rick. It was a lecture night, and although I couldn’t for the life of me tell you what that lecture was about, I remember being drawn to Rick’s persona. He had a light in his eyes and an upbeat, positive energy that was magnetic. In a nutshell, **I wanted what he had**, even though I didn’t have those words at the time to express that thought.

I stayed after class and asked Rick if I could talk to him. I have no idea why I felt safe saying what I did, but obviously, it had to come out. I confessed to Rick that I’d been lying about my sobriety to Don; and that I had come to the realization I was an alcoholic/addict, but that I didn’t know how to stop. Rick was kind and compassionate. He took the time to talk to me at length about his own recovery and shared with me what I now call my “**Recipe For Sobriety**.” He wrote it down on a piece of paper.

It started with “**Prayer (on knees) night & AM (Help & Guidance)**.” He asked me if I was comfortable with praying and had any place at home where I could do it in private. He explained that when he prayed, he simply talked to God like he would to a friend, telling him how he felt and asking for help and guidance to get through the day. He said it was helpful for him to get on his knees and pray out loud—not because he thought God wanted that action, but because it helped him to stay focused and in the moment with what he was doing.

Next he wrote, “**Thought for day—EVERY AM.**” He told me about his morning meditation readings and said it didn’t matter what I read, as long as it was something that would stimulate me in a spiritual nature. He explained that this would set his tone for the day and start him out thinking about God with a positive attitude towards life.

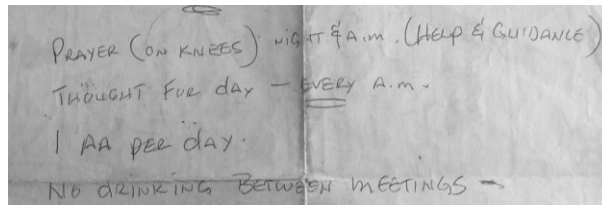
Next he wrote, “**1 AA per day.**” Self-explanatory, eh? Then he finished it up with, “**No drinking between meetings.**” It sounded so simple. It is simple, and still holds true in answer to the question, “How can I stay sober?”

I heard everything he told me that night and took it to heart. It made perfect sense, and I vowed I would try it. But it wasn’t until a year later, long after I had completed the “drunk school” and fulfilled my court requirement, that I finally sought (and achieved!) recovery on my own volition. I never forgot Rick and held onto that little piece of paper. I still have it today—30 years later.

You see, in spite of my failure to remain sober, I am eternally grateful for the court-ordered mandate. Even though, I wasn’t ready yet, I was being forced to learn about my disease and the 12 step solutions that would treat it if and when I ever became willing to take that first step. Seeds had been planted and tools given to me so that when I finally got sick and tired of being sick and tired, I knew what to do—and I did it!

I never saw Rick again, but I had the opportunity to go back and make amends with Don for lying to him about my sobriety the whole time I had been in his program. With a huge grin on his face, so happy to see me sober and actually working a program, he said, “Vicky, you weren’t lying to me . . . you were lying to **YOURSELF!**”

So grateful to be here!



Happy, joyous & free!

Staying Connected

Our local Saint Louis Cocaine Anonymous Hotline (314/36-3506) is answered 24 hours a day by volunteer members of our Fellowship. It's a Fabulous resource for anyone feeling squirrely—pick up the phone—NOT THE DRUG!!!

Staying Connected

The Missouri Area website (www.camissouri.org) has lots of helpful information, including a link to the C.A. World Services pages. Here, you can not only learn many things about C.A. and their upcoming events, but you can also be directed to one of our on-line meetings, accessible anytime, anywhere you have a computer.

DISTRICT DONATIONS

<i>Meeting Name</i>	<i>March 2018</i>	<i>April 2018</i>	<i>May 2018</i>	<i>June 2018</i>
Come & Get It	\$10		\$20	\$15
End Of The Line			\$21.70	
Fried Pipers & Cocanuts	\$20	\$20		
Get To Steppin'		\$25		\$25
Men's Meeting			\$50	
Serenity On Saturday	\$15	\$10	\$20	\$20
THE Meeting		\$5	\$5	

H & I DONATIONS

<i>Meeting Name</i>	<i>March 2018</i>	<i>April 2018</i>	<i>May 2018</i>	<i>June 2018</i>
Come & Get It	\$20	\$13	\$23	\$18
Fried Pipers & Cocanuts	\$16.25	\$18	\$25.10	\$22.33
Serenity On Saturday	\$12	\$7.20	\$3	\$14

Detailed financial information is available at our monthly business meetings. All C.A. members are welcome and urged to attend if possible.

The Greater Saint Louis District Central Service meeting is held the second Sunday of each month at 4:00 PM at the 212 Club, 204 West Pitman, O'Fallon, Missouri 63366. If the second Sunday falls on a holiday weekend, this meeting is held the first or third Sunday. Confirmed meeting dates are always available on our website www.camissouri.org. Directions—Take I-70 west to Exit 217 Highway K. Go Right on Main Street off the exit ramp. Go .3 mile to left on Pitman. Facility on the left.

The Hospitals & Institutions Committee takes meetings into facilities where addicts cannot get out to attend a meeting on their own. H & I volunteers are constantly needed and should express interest by attending a District Central Service meeting or contacting the District Chair, Laura N. at 636/577-4760.

Fundraiser Dance A Smashing Success!



On May 12 if you weren't at the "It Can Be Tempting To Focus On Our Differences" C.A. fundraiser dance, you missed a REALLY good time. Attendance was strong with people coming from all corners to spend the evening together enjoying recovery with friends. Since the event boasted a "Best Dressed" contest in order to encourage folks to dress up, attendees were decked out in their finery and all looked smashing! **Earl S.** from Chicago delivered a powerful message as our speaker and then went on to win the men's portion of the Best Dressed contest. **Vicky M.** won the women's side, although it was a close race with numerous stylish outfits in contention. DJ **Darryl J.** kept everyone moving on the dance floor, spinning tunes all night long. Our kitchen crew of **Donna Y.**, **Harriet W.** and **Pam S.** served up delicious \$5 spaghetti dinners to hungry addicts while one of our newest members to District service, **Stephanie B.**, worked the door selling and collecting tickets. There was plenty of opportunity to win fabulous prizes with a cup raffle and 50/50 opportunity drawing. **Donna Y.** took home the dough on the 50/50! The venue of ASA Christian Academy proved to be a great location, and everything couldn't have gone any smoother. The District raised over \$1,200 on this event thanks to many donations from C.A. members and some of our meeting groups. This allowed us to turn around and make generous contributions to the C.A. Missouri Area and World Service Office. Thanks to everyone who contributed to make this event happen, especially **Darryl J.** who hatched the idea and brought it to fruition with the help of a hardworking committee. But it was the strong participation from fellowship members that made it so successful—thank you everyone for your support. See you next time!

Connections is a quarterly publication published by the Greater Saint Louis District of Cocaine Anonymous. It is intended solely to provide information for the fellowship of Cocaine Anonymous. We hope to communicate the experience, strength, and hope of C.A. members, reflecting recovery, unity, and service, within the bounds of friendliness and good taste. This Newsletter presents experiences and opinions of Cocaine Anonymous members. Those opinions expressed herein are of the individual contributors and are not to be attributed nor taken as an endorsement by Cocaine Anonymous, Cocaine Anonymous World Service Office, Inc., Greater Saint Louis District of Cocaine Anonymous, or Connections. The editors reserve the right to edit any submissions in adherence to the Twelve Traditions of Cocaine Anonymous. If you would like to know more about Cocaine Anonymous, the Twelve Steps and the Twelve Traditions, please write and ask about C.A. World Service Conference approved literature at CAWSO, 21720 South Wilmington Avenue., Suite 304, Long Beach, CA 90810; e-mail to info@CA.org or fax to (310) 559-2554. Contact C.A. by phone at (310) 559-5833. Also note that the C.A. World Service Office web page is www.ca.org. This publication and all its contents are copyrighted by the Greater Saint Louis District of Cocaine Anonymous. Any unauthorized duplication or publication is prohibited. In the spirit of Tradition Six, "C.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution."



Happy Birthday

Congratulations to each of our members who celebrated a sobriety milestone this issue. Birthdays are generally reported via your group GSR, so if you don't see your meeting/birthday listed, please check with your GSR. Or, you can contact the Editor directly. Birthdays printed are those that have already been celebrated since the last newsletter printing at the time this edition went to press.

Come & Get It

Sunday 6 PM
212 Club

Laura N. 17 Years

Fried Pipers & Cocanuts

Wednesday 7 PM
First Unity Church

Alan E. 90 Days
Cheryl K. 90 Days
Eddie H. 90 Days
Miles H. 6 Months
Zach H. 6 Months
Hannah H. 1 Year
Jenifer W. 6 Years
Wayne E. 8 Years
Jeff S. 12 Years
Glenn F. 13 Years
Donna R. 22 Years

The Thursday Night Meeting

Thursday 7:30 PM
Saint Mary's Hospital

Nancy O. 6 Years

Men's Meeting

Saturday 6 PM
Saint Mary's Hospital

Darryl J. 19 Years

The Meeting

Saturday 6 PM
Baden Facility

Dwanna R. 26 Years

Serenity On Saturday (S.O.S)

Saturday 1:00 PM
Harris House

Cassie P. 90 Days
Pablo S. 90 Days
Carol B. 6 Months
Courtney R. 6 Months
Monica M. 6 Months
Jim H. 1 Year
Jovana L. 1 Year
Wendy M. 31 Years

*Every day I must
remember I have a
choice on how to look
at things—Happiness
is a basic instinct!*

Greater Missouri Area of C.A.

Annual Unity Cookout

Saturday, July 14, 2018
11 AM to Dusk

Stephens Lake Park

Happy Hollow Shelter
2001 East Broadway
Columbia, MO 65201



Meat & Drinks Provided – BRING A COVERED DISH TO SHARE
*Games * Music * Opportunity Drawings * Guest Speaker*



Swimming Beach Available – Beat the Heat and Bring your Suit!