**January 2021 AA Newsletter:**

**Step 1**: “We admitted we were powerless over alcohol— that our lives had become unmanageable.”

**Tradition 1**: “Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity”

**Concept 1**: The final responsibility and the ultimate authority for AA world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole fellowship.

**1st Step Prayer**: “In this moment, I do not have to control anyone, including me. And if I feel uncomfortable with what another person is doing or not doing, I can remind myself that I am powerless over this person and I am powerless over my compulsion to act in inappropriate ways.”

**January Birthdays:**

**Care Group**

Allan R Jan 23 31 yrs

Amanda B Jan 27 6 yrs

**Weekenders Group**

Cliff W Jan 17 36 yrs

Jimmy M Jan 15 34 yrs

Cathy M Jan 1 33yrs

*\*submit your group’s birthdays to* *Amanda@myardor.com* *to be in that month’s newsletter*

-Be sure to check out your local AA website for up to date meeting lists and zoom meeting info!

[www.fortwaltonbeachaa.org](http://www.fortwaltonbeachaa.org)

-You can also make your 7th tradition contribution on the website if you can’t attend in person meetings due to COVID-19.

Upcoming Events:

Funnies:

 

Inspirational Story:

*Tricia’s Story*

**Start by describing the situation that changed your life or a loved one’s lif**e.

On January 10, 2013 I was reunited with trauma. My mom had a massive heart attack and without taking a second to process the information, I called up a local drug dealer to meet me at the hospital with my analgesic of choice. After all, how could I possibly be sober and emotionally available for my father, brother, and son? My worst nightmare became a reality and my Mom passed away two days later. Life as I knew it had been completely dismantled. I felt as though I had been stripped of every ounce of oxygen in my body and the only relief was opiates. There was not an hour I didn’t spend without some form of mood/mind altering substance in my body. I dove head first into running my parents’ restaurant. Without skipping a beat I was working full time, raising my son alone and compensating for all of the responsibilities my mom once held. As the pain of her absence grew, so did my unrelenting addiction. Plagued by the stigmas of addiction, I thrived off of my own denial and lived a double life. I maintained the picture perfect life on the outside but emotionally I was dead. Grief swept in like a tidal wave and I was drowning. I remember waking up to indulge in my vices before I would even kiss my son good morning.

**Based on your situation or story, was there a turning point that prompted the need for change or help**?

Frantically searching for relief, I outsourced my avoidance. Drugs and alcohol became my first reprieve. I finally found the solution — complete oblivion. I spent 4 years of my life drowning out pain, anger, fear, even happiness. I traveled down a dark road — one that ultimately led to my demise. This spiraled out of control until one day I was brought to my knees. Eventually I found myself in handcuffs on the side of the road in the small rural town I grew up in. Unaffected, I spent 3 days and 2 nights confined to a place I didn’t belong. Upon getting released, I was faced with the reality that everyone knew my secret. Everyone knew I wasn’t handling things so well — I wasn’t handling anything at all. I was numb. Relentlessly pursuing after things that never served me, a credible force propelled me into facing my fears head-on. Walking out of the local county jail, I felt complete apathy. The superwoman act was a fluke. I hopped onto a plane desperately seeking relief. To this day, the hardest moment in my recovery was kissing my son goodbye the morning I left with no real timeline for when I’d see him again. This is a painful memory that continues to ignite the flame of perseverance into maintaining my sobriety. How could I possibly raise my son and stay sober without my mom here? I was crippled with fear and self doubt but one day that all changed.

**How did you or your HERO get help?**

My father finally came to my rescue. He offered me the gift of recovery. I attended a 30 day dual-diagnosis treatment center. At first I was convinced I was entering the initiation into a cult. The idea that I would walk through the trauma I experienced completely sober was insane. I’m not like any of these people. Again, my comforting desire to be the isolated victim crept in. Drugs and alcohol were never the problem, I was. After weeks of intense group and individual therapy, I came to the realization that not only was I healing from my addiction but from undiagnosed PTSD and and anxiety. This was the turning point in my journey to recovery. At the root of it all I was the scared little 5 year old girl that never healed the wounds of her past. Without drugs and alcohol my resources were severed. Aside from the common withdrawal symptoms, I found myself struggling to eat, sleep, process emotions or engage in any sort of vulnerability. During one of our self demolition sessions, I remember my therapist asking me, “How much pain do you want to be in today? Only you can lay it down and start to heal.” No one ever validated my trauma until that day. In recovery many people speak of spiritual experiences and this was my first encounter. I remember sobbing and yelling throughout the remainder of our session unloading years of guilt, shame, and unadulterated pain. I didn’t have the “white light” experience — my spiritual awakening was one of the more educational variety. I blame that on my stubborn Italian genes.

**Based on your experience, what lessons did you learn? Do you have any advice to give?**

Through hard work and pain I managed to incorporate real recovery into my life. I could finally breathe again. I slowly started to welcome the idea that I had complete control over how much I truly wanted to recover from a seemingly hopeless state of mind. About a year into my sobriety I was blessed with a beautiful little girl. A whirlwind of emotions flooded my thoughts. How could I possibly raise a little girl without my Mom here to help lead the way? I couldn’t have been more misled. I found myself walking into two years of sobriety, with two kids and living a life beyond anything I could’ve ever hoped for. It was as if my mom was carrying me when I couldn’t carry myself. Every experience that led up to my recovery and the structure of my family played a part in shaping me into the woman I am today. I became a courageous, unstoppable force. Get connected in the fellowship, work the steps, find awareness, accept grace and ultimately redemption will follow.

**If you or your loved one is in recovery, describe what life is like today.**

Today I gravitate towards things that make me uncomfortable. I know that through discomfort comes adversity but ultimately becomes growth. I continue to seek ongoing therapy for my PTSD and I am actively involved in my local AA community. I stay connected to the women I’ve met in sobriety. I pause before responding, impulsivity no longer controlled my actions. Meditation and spirituality have become my stress relievers. From the motherless, hopeless drug addict to the graceful woman of integrity I am today, there is no doubt that everything happens exactly as it should.

**Is there anything else you’d like to share?**

Sharing my experiences with other women struggling with co-occurring disorders gives me hope. Pursuing the things that set my soul on fire has been my saving grace. I have finally found my purpose and this has been the driving force for me to continue the good fight. For anyone struggling with addiction or any mental health disorder, take heart. There are unlimited resources waiting for you. I never imagined my life would be as amazing as it is today. Do not give up, there’s always hope

Source: https://heroesinrecovery.com/stories/tricias-story/

Be sure to visit the local website to see updated meeting lists and 7th tradition contribution link!

https://www.fortwaltonbeachaa.org/

Newletter By: Amanda B.