



BREAKTHROUGH

THE BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS NORTHERN ILLINOIS, AREA 20, DISTRICT 42
SERVING BURR RIDGE, CLARENDON HILLS, DARIEN, DOWNERS GROVE, HINSDALE, OAKBROOK, WESTMONT & WILLOWBROOK

Resentment's Kryptonite

*The first part of this article was printed in the May/June Breakthrough. Tom H. talks about his experience with resentment has taught him how to **Name It, Claim It, and Tame It**. We continue with the second part of his article.*

Claim It

Once I've named it, I have to own it. That's the next step.

My resentment is mine to deal with. The focus has to shift from what they did to what I'm going to do about it. What kind of person do I want to be?

That doesn't mean I pretend I wasn't wronged. Some harms are real and undeniable: betrayal, abuse, death, injustice, tragedy. There are times when there truly are not "two sides". I'm not being asked to excuse evil. But even when I'm fully justified, the resentment still poisons me.

Fault-finding, even when I'm partly to blame, rarely helps me get free. Adding a scoop of self-blame to the mix doesn't dilute the poison — it just changes the flavor. What matters isn't how the harm happened, but what I do with it now.

Claiming my resentment means acknowledging that it's a toxin I willingly swallow. Like liquor, it can be intoxicating. It promises power and control but delivers isolation and pain.

That's why I return to the Serenity Prayer:

I can't change what happened. There is no mission to rewrite the past. My only mission is freedom in the present—to try my best to align with God's will for me.

In scripture, vengeance belongs to God. When I take revenge into my own hands — even in thought — I'm trying to play God. My job isn't to distribute justice. My job is to be free.

Resentments are seductive. They make me feel smart, righteous, superior. There's a certain thrill in seeing through hypocrisy and pointing out wrongs. I can love everything about my resentment — the sense of moral clarity, the feeling of power, the illusion of control.

But there's one thing I can't love about it: it will kill me.



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Unchecked resentment isolates me from others and from God. My world gets smaller. My mind darker. And eventually, I'll need a drink to live with myself. That's why I must own it. My resentment is my problem to solve.

People often ask, "Would you rather be right or happy?" I've always hated that question — it feels like a false choice. But a better question is: *Would you rather be right or wise?*

Being right doesn't ask much of me. Wisdom does. Wisdom calls me to humility, forgiveness, grace. Wisdom asks me to let go of my ego's need to win and choose the path that brings healing.

I can be right in all the wrong ways — yelling at my wife, proving my point, burning bridges. Being "right" can make everything worse even when I am objectively correct. Have you even seen this? You might say to yourself, "Technically he's right but what a jerk—he's going about this all wrong." Wisdom invites me to something higher: to be free.

... to be continued in the Sept./Oct. Breakthrough

The Gap

This month's piece might be uncomfortable to read.

That's intentional. Because real recovery happens when we're willing to feel what we've been avoiding. The answer you don't want to hear is usually the one you need. So ask yourself.

You say you're working the program. But are you really?

When you're in meetings, do you share your truth, or are you performing recovery for the room? And when no one's watching, are you the same person?



I remember the gossip. Hearing something about someone and instead of staying in my own lane, I'd spread it. I'd fuel the rumor, make myself feel better by making someone else look worse. I told myself it wasn't a big deal. It was.

Then there was the judgment. I got some time, and suddenly I thought I knew better than everyone. I'd watch newcomers struggle, watch people fail, and instead of offering help, I'd keep score. I'd think at least I'm not that bad. But I was just as sick.

And the newcomers themselves—especially the ones I could help or attract. I'd see vulnerability and see an opportunity. I'd dress it up as sponsorship, as care, as something noble. But I knew what I was doing.

But here's the thing. It was never about me. While you were reading, you were already judging—looking at someone else's flaws so clearly that you walked right past your own. So look in the mirror. If any of this describes you, then you know what needs to happen. Stop watching their program. Start working yours.

Recovery is about acknowledging our own mistakes, the hidden truths behind everything we do. Every day is a struggle. But in that struggle, in that honest work on your own life, your own truth—that's where real sobriety lives. I understand my struggles now. I see the work ahead. And in that seeing, I choose myself. Every day, I choose sobriety—not because it's easy, but because I'm finally worth saving.

—Rodney B.

Different

*If only things were different, I would do everything I could
To not be such an idiot with a screwed up childhood.
Save me from temptation, been down that road before,
Help me fight these monsters, can't face them anymore.
My body's strong, yet tired, no longer have the power,
To cast demons out of me, my mind they will devour.
Can't control the feelings and overwhelming rage,
An endless chapter in a book with doom on every page.
A never ending story, a movie with no sequel,
Stuck here in jail now where everyone's my equal.
The silent cries I have held inside have turned to screams and shouts,
Emotions locked within a cage making their way out.
My head's above water now, the shore is in sight,
I'll just keep swimming and hope I'll be alright.
Forever thankful to Alcoholic's Anonymous, keeping them in sight,
Without AA in my life nothing would be right.
If only things were different.....*

Robert A.

Upcoming District 42 Workshops

*St. Andrew's Episcopal Church
1125 Franklin
Downers Grove,
10 am – 12 noon
2nd Saturday of the Month*

Please consider supporting these workshops by attending, and having your group volunteer to present a workshop.

Ask your group's GSR for details.

Monthly District Meeting

3rd Tuesday of the Month at 7:00 p.m

****Service Opportunities Available****

St. Andrews Episcopal Church
1125 Franklin St.
Downers Grove

I AM RESPONSIBLE

Meetings and Events

For a list of Meetings , Service Opportunities
And Upcoming Events
in District 42
go to:

aa-nia-dist42.com



Dist. 42 Answering Service

630-387-9942

Women's Meetings

Serendipity Group - Hybrid
Tuesdays 10 a.m.
New Day Center

740 Pasquinelli Drive, Suite 104
Westmont
Discussion
Zoom Meeting ID 5200041125
Password 1212

Step into Sobriety -Remote
Thursday 10 am
12 steps and 12 traditions
Zoom Meeting ID 5200041125
Password 1212

Thank God Women's Group Meeting
Fridays at 7 pm
Avenue Christian Church
5750 Holmes Ave.
Clarendon Hills (Enter Door #4)
1st and 3rd Friday: Big Book Topic
2nd and 4th Friday: Step Reading
5th Friday: Speaker and Food ☺



2nd Annual
Just For Today
— WOMEN'S AA RETREAT —

Marie K.

Will lead us on
The Spirituality of Rest and
Carefree Time in Sobriety

Saturday, August 22, 2026
1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Community United Methodist Church
20 North Center St.
Naperville, IL.

We will be in the Fellowship Room – the big room in the basement!
Detailed parking information will be available
Registration Fee of \$30.00 can be sent via Venmo or Zelle to Patti C.

630-674-2797
NewPatti04@aol.com

Sharing Our Sobriety One Half-Day at a Time

For More Information, Contact Patti

Moderately Confused

by Jeff Stahler



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34rd Annual

'All is Well' Golf Outing

Sunday, August 30st
Belmont Golf Club
Downers Grove
Four Person Scramble
Prizes, Lunch, Fellowship

The only requirement is that you must have at
least driven by a golf course at some time in your
life. ☺

Contact Terry: 630-205-3729
Dave: 630-212-9004

Articles /Announcements
Are due by September 4th

Send to:
breakthrough@aa-nia-dist42.com