



ALINA LODGE

LITTLE HILL FOUNDATION

operating Alina Lodge and Haley House

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alinalodge.org • haleyhousewomen.org

FALL 2015

Gratitude as a Spiritual Practice

"Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend. Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow."

- Melodie Beattie on gratitude.



When Students come to Alina Lodge they are often broken physically, mentally and spiritually. As a 12-step based program they are encouraged to find a Higher Power. For some this can prove to be a difficult proposition. As a Counselor here, I often suggest using spiritual principles as a bridge or link to finding that connection. In the spirit of the season of Thanksgiving this article's focus will be on gratitude as a spiritual practice.

One of the initial written assignments given to new Students at Alina upon arrival is to do a daily gratitude list. Each day they are encouraged to identify three things or more that they are thankful for. Being in a place of gratitude helps transmute feelings of self-pity and resentment. This is because it is quite difficult to feel resentful and grateful simultaneously. Why is this important? In the book of "Alcoholics Anonymous," or the "Big Book" as it is affectionately referred to we are taught that

"Resentment is the number one offender. It destroys more alcoholics than anything else. From it stem all forms of spiritual disease, for we have been not only mentally and physically ill, we have been spiritually sick. - P 64"

By writing gratitude lists as a daily routine, a new habit is formed. Keeping a gratitude journal is also complementary to any existing spiritual or religious practices someone may already have and it is not objectionable to anyone who may still be searching.

In addition to the daily gratitude lists I often have the women I counsel write down three things that they are "proud of" or "feel good about." In the early days the good thing can simply be something like, "I stayed in treatment another day" or "Today I took a shower and made my bed." Making a connection of thankfulness to small accomplishments helps create self-esteem and ultimately builds self-love.

Personally I have had a daily gratitude practice for the majority of my ten years in sobriety. Each morning I arrive early and make my list before the day starts. Often the momentum I get from being in a place of gratitude causes me to list many more than three to five items. By searching for things to be thankful for I am essentially "re-wiring" my brain to shift things to a positive outlook.

Advanced Placement Gratitude

A spiritual advisor of mine once told me that in order to stretch my practice I needed to be grateful for "that which I am not grateful for!" She encouraged me to look at the people or events in my life that were troubling, or that I viewed as "bad." What is the learning opportunity from this experience? On cognitive level by being thankful, I was able to change my perspective on the situation.

I'll often put this into practice when a Student will come to complain about something. I'll encourage them to "go do a gratitude list on the person or situation that they are angry at." This is usually not the response they had hoped for but again, focusing on finding something to be grateful for can often foster compassion, forgiveness or understanding, all important parts to a spiritual foundation.

- THERESE SMERKLO

Thank you Jolene C. for sharing your message of hope to all of our guests on a beautiful October Saturday. The Chapel was full, the lunch was spectacular and our hearts could not be more grateful.



E-MAIL REQUEST

Alina Lodge needs your email address!

Please send your email address, along with your full name to reneeh@alinalodge.org

Help us save some trees!

© Many Thanks.



A Year of Reflection



We have accomplished some wonderful things during the year of 2015 – I'd like to share them with you.

- One of our counselors has been trained in trauma work by the "Queen" of trauma training - Judy Crane – formally of the Refuge. Another one of our counselors is undergoing the same training. This is premier trauma training – not your average daily course work.
- A wonderful counselor from the United Kingdom, Mark Drax, runs a sex relation, and intimacy group at the Lodge every 3 months for six students.
- We have been approved for accreditation by the Joint Commission of Hospitals. This is the pinnacle of accreditations and very necessary for insurance reimbursements for our students. We are now CARF and JCOH accredited.

- Our generators are up and running – when necessary.
- We are halfway to our fundraising goal of adding an addition onto Noble Women's Center. This will make the women's facility state of the art.
- We have a new luncheon format which will begin in 2016. We will have a Tuesday and a Saturday luncheon in the spring, and then again at the end of the year. Having a Saturday luncheon enables all of our friends and family who cannot attend the Tuesday luncheon, to take part in the tradition began by Mrs. Delaney all those years ago. Please watch for the invitations and be sure to RSVP.

Rita Cohen has been a Board Member for many years, and most recently was our Board President. Words cannot express my gratitude for working with such a gracious and devoted person. She loves both Alina Lodge and Haley House unconditionally. Her leadership has been exemplary and we have accomplished so many important initiatives over the past few years. I am forever grateful for my dear friend Rita. She is taking a much needed break and will return to the Board of Trustees as soon as possible.

Sally Shaw is our new Board President. Another gracious, smart and committed woman will be leading the Foundation. I am so pleased that Sally has taken this position. She is a woman who also loves Alina Lodge and Haley House as Rita does. I have commenced working with Sally already and she is really up for the task. Welcome Sally!

I'd like to welcome Dr. Michael Allison to our Executive Committee. He has an important leadership role with our Medical Committee and will serve the Executive Committee as Secretary. Ray Soroka has joined the Board for the first time and I look forward to working with him.

Steve Berkowitz, Robert Berry, Isabel Heini, Tim Neely, Michael Noyes, Andy Olson, Robert Parsley, Brooke Phillips, Jody Sydow and Susan Walsh all remain on the Board. It's a talented and committed group of people that I am honored to work with to ensure the future and legacy of Alina Lodge and Haley House.

Sobriety brings one peace and comfort. During this time of year, I wish all of our friends and family a peaceful and happy holiday season.

Michael Hornstein

Michael Hornstein
Executive Director



Ray Soroka, Trustee



Happiness

The foolish man seeks happiness in the distance; the wise grows it under his feet. ~JAMES OPENHEIM



Susan Nordstrom

Who doesn't want to be happy? What does it take to be happy? Prior to getting sober I was looking for my purpose and believed if I knew, I would be happy. It used to mean getting what I wanted or what I thought I deserved, a good job, a family, friends, nice things, THEN I'll be happy. Of course these are not unrealistic but had the cart before the horse. I discovered in choosing a life based on spiritual principles, how I lived was far more important than arriving. The word kindness and its deed in action is woven into this busy thing we call living. It is a good measure of how happy or unhappy I am in any single moment. Random acts of kindness done for me and those that I do for others is one of the most powerful influences of life. I remember a day of self-indulgence. I'd decided I deserved to spend some money on myself, I deserved it. I'd gone out shopping and was driving home with a car full of things that would eventually mean less to my self-worth in no time. The roads were snow covered and it had begun to snow. Nothing that concerned me because I was nice and warm in my car when I spotted a woman drudging through the snow along the side of the road pushing an ill equip metal cart full of groceries. I was past her just as quick as I finished thinking how fortunate I was not to

have to walk to get my groceries. I had no intention of stopping, after all she must be close to her home since the distance from the grocery store was at least a mile back and she looked...well, too old to walk very far. But in a moment of pause, I knew I had to go back for her. I turned the car around and then again pulling just a few feet in front of her. I offered her a ride. With a few seconds of sizing me up, she smiled and accepted my offer. She told me her name and that she lived alone, was 72 and this wasn't the first time she had to walk to the grocery store. I don't recall her name now or even the exact location of where she lived, but I recall a knowing that at that moment, that day, that is what my purpose. I drove home with a happiness I had not felt in a while. In that moment, on that day, I was changed, as I had been many times over my life when I chose a random act of kindness. What does it take to be happy? We all have the power within us to change the world by changing ourselves. We can get use to hanging if we hang long enough. If you want happiness or need to redefine it for yourself, look for opportunities to do random acts of kindness. It may be a smile, a compliment, allowing someone to go in front of you in line at the grocery store, going toward the newcomer in a meeting instead of hanging with your friends and see what happens. Happiness may only be a moment away. Peace

STAFF APPRECIATION DAY

Thank you to Rita and Joel Cohen, for hosting the Employee Appreciation Day Breakfast!



THE NUMBER ONE THING TO REMEMBER THIS HOLIDAY SEASON



Laurie Andrysiak

MY SOBRIETY COMES FIRST

No slacking off... meeting makers make it!

If your ass is falling off... put it in a paper bag and take it to a meeting!

Easy does it on the people pleasing...

MY SOBRIETY COMES FIRST

Watch out for HALT: HUNGRY, ANGRY, LONELY AND TIRED.

If you put anything before your sobriety you will lose it.

Most that relapse share a similar theme: they stopped going to meetings, and they stopped talking to other alcoholics/addicts.

There is no holiday from alcoholism and drug addiction. Your disease isn't taking the day off.

The commercials on TV at the holidays are not real life. What is important is that you have the rest of your life clean and sober one day at a time.

I've heard people share that relapsed - they weren't thinking about picking up but THEY WEREN'T THINKING ABOUT NOT PICKING UP EITHER. If we are talking to other addicts/alcoholics and going to meetings we are remembering what we are and who we are and that we don't want to pick up.

Your family doesn't care if they have a perfect holiday; they care that you will be around for future holidays to come.

Warmly-

Reality check Scrooge a.k.a. your alumni coordinator that cares about you.

- LAURIE ANDRYSIK

2015 SUMMER ANNIVERSARIES

JUNE

Eddie F. 6 Years
Larry N. 21 Years

JULY

Nick P. 1 Year
Tony W. 2 Years
Mike R. 40 Years
Cheryl K. 1 Year
Steven P. 2 Years
Donna B. 13 Years

AUGUST

Jim F. 1 Year
Poul H. 1 Year
Sydney P. 2 Years
Leslie Z. 29 Years
Brad M. 22 Years
Brother Joseph G. 42 Years

SEPTEMBER

Alice G. 1 Year
Jane H. 1 Year_
Dorothy B. 35 Years
Marijane V. 40 Years
Amy M. 1 Year
Sharon L. 39 Years
Clayton C. 11 Years

A story from an Alumnae

As I sit here, and begin to chronicle the tale of what I once used to refer to as a very sad and tragic story, I can't help but to smile and notice the overwhelming sense of peace and gratitude that I feel in my heart. As I begin to tell this story, I now know that this life that was given to me, this "Journey" if you will. Has unfolded exactly the way it was supposed to unfold...exactly as my Amazing God meant for it to unfold.

My name is Cheryl, and I am a very, grateful alcoholic! Never in a million years would I ever have thought that I would say those words with any Truth or Conviction. I was the alcoholic who lost custody of her children when they were very young, for 15 long, lonely, and very suicidal years, hurt everyone, and destroyed every relationship that I was ever involved in. I was a liar, a manipulator, a thief and a woman who had not one ounce of dignity, grace or most importantly self-respect. I wanted to die on a minute by minute basis. I could not stop drinking and drugging. My shame and guilt kept me on a downward death spiral; until August 15, 2013. On that day, I lost everything and every relationship that was remaining in my life. On that day, I was given the Gift of Desperation, and the gift of Willingness and Life!

I arrived at Alina Lodge a very Hopeless, Broken and Spiritually Dead Shell of a Human Body. I thought my life was over, and all I wanted was to know and learn how to live without the horrible pain and emptiness that had become my life for so many years.

Alina Lodge loved me, carried me, nurtured me, and held onto to me, until I could learn to love myself a little bit at a time. The female students surrounded me, and became my family, when I knew for a fact that my family would never return to my life. I started to feel a little hope, and slowly a small twinkle came back to my eyes. After many months I started to smile, and then came the laughter. It felt so beautiful for all I had known were tears for sooo many years.

Alina Lodge nurtured me back to Life, and I became part of the living again. I found a very spiritual relationship with an Incredible God of my understanding. The staff loved me like their own, and Alina Lodge loved me as only a True and Real family can.

Today, I am two years clean and sober. My life is full of beautiful relationships. I have an amazing 12 step program in my life, and that life was given to me by the love and guidance of Alina Lodge and Haley House. I know now how to love, receive love, love myself and be of service to God and others. I am convinced that my primary purpose is to stay sober and help another sick and suffering alcoholic. I am living with joy, gratitude and love in my heart on a daily basis.

Alina Lodge is a very special place where Hope does Become Fact!

Alina Lodge will forever be my Soft Place to Land...

Thank you Alina © !!!

Cheryl K.



Fundraising News!!

As most of you know, Little Hill Foundation operating Alina Lodge and Haley House is a not-for-profit organization. Simply stated, we depend on philanthropy to accomplish our mission. Your donations enable us to keep our daily rate as low as possible, keep our buildings up-to-date, and provide scholarships to those whose financial resources have run out.

Need an inspiring story? Read the Alumnae story on page 4. Nothing explains what we do here, the caliber of our work, and our mission better than our alum. They are walking, talking proof of the quality treatment Alina Lodge and Haley House provide. Cheryl K. says it best in her story, *"The staff loved me like their own, and Alina Lodge loved me as only a True and Real family can."*

Every year we are blessed with generous donations from friends, family and alumni. We need your support to continue helping people like Cheryl. I hope you will consider a gift this year. The traditional November Green Envelope is inserted in this newsletter. Please use it to help a struggling addict have the same opportunity Cheryl had. Listed on the right, is a menu of giving opportunities. If you are interested in one of these opportunities, just write it in the memo section of your check, or on the green envelope. I will personally take care of it for you. May you all have a blessed holiday season.

My very best,
Renee Harman

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Give the Gift of a Day \$170

Can you sponsor a day at Haley House? Haley House provides a safe, sober and supportive living environment for women who have completed treatment for addiction, but need more time preparing for living sober.

The Admission Bag \$200

An admission bag is full of information a student needs during their stay. Everything from literature, to laundry bags, to tooth brush cases are included in this bag. Would you like to sponsor one?

The Pathway of Hope \$250

Engrave a brick on the pathway of HOPE leading to the chapel. There are 3 lines on each brick consisting of 12 characters per line. What will your brick say?

Pizza Night \$300

If you are unfamiliar with this event, let me tell you - it is a piece of normalcy for the students in treatment. They smile more, talk to fellow students more and enjoy the simple pleasure of PIZZA! We host them twice a month, and always announce the sponsor during the evening. Would you like to sponsor a Pizza Night?

Give the Gift of Treatment..... \$400 daily or \$12,000 monthly

We do our very best to keep the daily rate as low as possible. But to be honest, this rate does not completely cover the cost of the comprehensive treatment given which includes Addiction Counselors, 24 hour nursing staff, psychiatrist and psychologist, family therapist, trauma specialist, Eating Disorder specialist and more. Can you give the gift of treatment to someone who is seeking a life free from drugs and alcohol? It is the greatest gift of all.

Volunteer Spotlight

"Volunteers are not paid - not because they are worthless, but because they are priceless."

Every day, someone is volunteering at Alina or Haley House. They have booked a speaker, or are sharing their own message of hope. They have offered their help with the picnic, or shared their professional expertise, they do fifth steps with our students, host an alumni event and some become family or alumni contacts for students being discharged. Our volunteers are not always alumni.

They care and always take the time to make sure their commitment is filled. Our speaker bookers always send people that they know are active members of AA and working a program. It is easy to 'talk the talk', but they send us people that 'walk the walk'. In this time of giving thanks for all our blessings, we would like to let all of our volunteers know how grateful we are to have them, thank you for always answering the call. You have made a difference in our student's lives. Not every message is heard by every student, but every message is heard by that specific student who needs it. Thank you for your time, your devotion and for passing on your hope.

With Gratitude,

The Staff of Alina Lodge and Haley House

Why do you volunteer?

"I love the program, it saved my life. I want to give it back to someone else." ~ Cowboy Kenny

"Service to AA that I will continue to do. To pay back a debt to AA for which without it I would be dead or in jail." ~ Pat C.



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Have you had a kindness shown?

Pass it on;

'Twas not given for thee alone,

Pass it on;

Let it travel down the years,

Let it wipe another's tears,

'Til in Heaven the deed appears -

Pass it on.

- Henry Burton, *Pass It On*



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