

CHANGING OUR THINKING--CHANGING OUR LIVES!

07/03/2017

Most all of us have said, at one timer another, "That always happens to me" or, "It figures this would happen to me" whenever something negative occurs in our lives. I guess it's only human nature to focus on the negative situation rather on all the positive events and blessings we have in our lives.

As I've written about many times, my experience with Alcoholics Anonymous when I stopped drinking, turned my life around--and particularly my ways of thinking. I had become, not only addicted to alcohol, but "addicted" to negative ways of thinking about myself and my life. I had forgotten that God, or "my Higher Power", was continually blessing me with everything I needed. My thinking had degenerated to the point where I was taking all of my needs that were being supplied for granted.

It wasn't until I sat down, on more than one or two occasions, and took a personal inventory that I realized how fortunate I was. It was during that inventory, listing all my shortcomings and blessings, that I realized God was, always had been and always will be there blessing

me with all of my needs! I began to be more aware of my blessings-- everything from the fact that I have a place to live to never going hungry, to having two beautiful and wonderful children and believing that I would be taken care of by a Power much greater than myself.

An "attitude of gratitude" became a way of life and, hopefully, it will remain that way for me. I now try to be aware of the smallest of my blessings--that "Hello" or smile from someone in the grocery store to the beautiful birds I see soaring over my head. Little things that, 20 years ago I wouldn't have noticed, or even cared, were occurring. My life has become better by living in an attitude of thankfulness. My life has become better through Prayer and a renewed relationship with God.

Looking back on my life 20 years ago I would have to say a miracle happened to and through me! 20 years ago I was still wondering, when I awoke in the morning, how, when and where I was going to get my alcohol or drugs for the day. That WAS my life. Getting sober, though, was only a part of the puzzle I had to put together. Living in a continual attitude of gratitude and faith is what turned my life around!

I would invite all of you, alcoholic or sober, drug user or "clean", to take that personal inventory--especially of the blessings in your lives. I believe, like it did with me, it will open your eyes and, perhaps, change your way of thinking about yourself and your relationship with God--or your "Higher Power", however you understand it. My life is certainly better for changing my thinking. And, if my life is better, I can guarantee the lives of those close to me are better--and, isn't that what life is all about? Making our lives better makes this world a little better place for all of us!

God bless--

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