



Clarity Chronicle

DEBTOR'S ANONYMOUS OF MINNESOTA, NEBRASKA & IOWA

April 2016, Volume 1, Edition 4

Chair's Notes by Chris S.

Happy Birthday Debtors Anonymous! On April 15 Debtors Anonymous celebrates 40 years. I owe a tremendous amount of gratitude to this program. I would not be writing these notes today if were not for DA. Throughout my long and painful debting history, I had often entertained thoughts of suicide. I could see no other answer to end the shameful and downward spiral of debting and spending. Today, I celebrate an abundance of money, time and energy. I am and will be eternally grateful for those first few struggling compulsive debtors who met in New York in 1976 and started DA, based on the program of AA. You can read more on the history of Debtors Anonymous at the Debtors Anonymous website, <http://www.debtorsanonymous.org/about-da/history/>.

Also, MN Intergroup will be hosting a party to celebrate DA's Birthday on Saturday, April 16. We will have cake, ice cream, costumes, "Recovery Jeopardy," music from the 70's (especially 1976), and dancing! Please join us. For more information, please go to Minnesota DA Intergroup website, <http://www.daminnesota.org/2015-events-1.html>.

And as we are now in the fourth month of 2016, we move our thoughts to Tradition 4 and Sign 4.

Tradition 4: Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or D.A. as a whole.

On a personal level for me, Tradition 4 is about an awakening. Step 12 of DA speaks to that awakening, "...having had a spiritual awakening as a result of taking these steps..." My first awakening in DA was the undoing of my scarcity beliefs. I came to the program with a belief that there was not enough. The main symptom of this belief was not enough money, but it manifested in *all* areas of my life. Not enough time, not enough play, and most definitely not enough care or love. This first awakening, that there is indeed enough, was a result of; showing up at meetings, keeping track of my income and spending, participating in and asking for pressure relief groups (PRGs), and working the 12 Steps of DA.

2016 DA EVENTS

4/16 40th B-day Party

9/9-10 Fall Retreat

10/22 Visions Workshop

10/29 Planning Meeting

There were numerous other awakenings and one in particular in relation to Tradition 4 which came to me gradually as I continued to practice the principals of DA. This tradition seems very broad as it speaks to group autonomy and not injuring DA as a whole. What does that mean to me on a personal level? How could I injure DA? If I look at some of my early behavior in the group, I am not always proud. I was wrapped up in myself. I secretly believed I was above the rules. I have gradually awoken to the fact that how I act and what I say may be the only view of DA that other people see. Do I show up to meetings on time? Do I talk when others are talking? Do I engage in crosstalk? As a longtime member of DA, I have the honor of sponsoring others and providing service at the group and Intergroup level. My actions define the kind of DA member I am. I strive, admitting that I am far from perfect, to follow the principles set out in the Steps and Traditions of DA and in particular, watching how I affect DA, which begins with treating my fellow members with respect.

Next, a DA member shares on Sign 4 of Compulsive Debting.

ARE YOU A COMPULSIVE DEBTOR?

Sign Four: Compulsive shopping: being unable to pass up a “good deal”; making impulsive purchase; leaving price tags on clothes so they can be returned; not using items you’ve purchased.

By Janet E.

When I arrived in DA two years ago, I was mired in debt and complete vagueness about my financial situation. When I was sad, depressed or in the mood to celebrate, I went to the mall, or went online “just to look” at things. With just “one click,” items would arrive at my doorstep. I would often not even remember that I had made a purchase until it arrived. Depending on my mood or emotional state I would buy things that I did not need, simply to feel better or to pat myself on the back. My closet was filled with clothes that I had purchased and never used. I would look at these things and think, “Why on earth did I buy this?” Last year I moved across the country. While packing, I truly got to see the extent of my impulse buying. I packed countless boxes of unused items. I drove to Goodwill and let them go. I see now that these impulse purchases were driven by fear and pride. I imagined that with the things that I bought, (designer bags and clothes), that I would get more attention and be more accepted, and feel better about myself.

Through working the steps in DA, I have come to believe in a power great than myself that is my provider and source. I cut up my credit cards, started tracking my numbers, and then got a spending plan that creates structure around my spending today. Because I have a God in my life and a fellowship of other recovering debtors, I am supported in my disease, and in my recovery. My desire now is to have God direct my life, and to be of service to others.