

The Check IN

Volume IX

“... *Spiritual Progress Not Spiritual Perfection.* ...”

Fall Issue

Eighth Annual Retreat Approaches

Every 12-Step program, no matter what addiction it addresses, is first and foremost a *spiritual* program. And, therein lies the rub for many of us.

The first spiritual experiences many of us had were negative. Some generally well-meaning and good-hearted persons used religion to abuse or accuse us.

In their attempts to see that we were “scared straight”, they repeated the same negative religious instruction they had received at their parents’ knees.

Unfortunately, many religions (especially Old Testament based religions) are shame-based rather than spirit-based. They emphasize the evil that is inherent within each of us without acknowledging that each of us exists because we have within us the spirit of our creator. If the creator is intrinsically good, so too must be the created.

The faults, failings and flaws that keep us from perfection are not a reason for hopelessness. On the contrary, Jesus himself said, “People who are in good health do not need a doctor; sick people do. Go and learn the

meaning of the words, ‘It is mercy I desire and not sacrifice.’ I have come to call, not the self-righteous but sinners.” (Matthew 9:12-13)

Similar arguments are found in all of the world’s major religions.

If, then, we are by our very nature good, worthwhile, and lovable in the eyes of our Higher Power, why do we shrink under the gaze of those who hold themselves to be better than us? How do we, instead, tap into that part of us that is truly spiritual?

At least part of the answer to that question can be found in Step 11 of our program “Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious

contact with God as we understood God, praying only for knowledge of God’s will for us and the power to carry that out.”

But, how does one pray; how does one meditate? Is there only one way? Is there a “best” way? Or, like everything else in our universe, is there a great diversity in the ways by which we can enter into communication with our Higher Power?

These are the types of issues that our local fellowship and guests will wrestle with at the eighth annual IISAA fall retreat the weekend of **October 25-27**.

Registration forms are now available at your meetings. Scholarships are available to those in financial need.

Trusted Servants Chosen

At its July meeting, the Intergroup representatives selected the following trusted servants to lead IISAA for 2002-2003.

Chairman

Joe D.

Vice Chairman

Richard S.

Treasurer

Dale W.

Corresponding Secretary

Sherwood W.

Recording Secretary

Dick L.

Literature Representative

Mike C.