

Along The Path

Vol. 1, No. 2

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Greetings...

I hope this correspondence finds you in good health.

Welcome to the second issue of *Along the Path*, a newsletter for friends and alumni of Pathways Treatment Center. It is our hope that you will find in it something useful for your journey further along the path of recovery.



Brent McCraw

Please mark your calendars for the 16th Annual

Pathways Alumni Holiday Party. I'm delighted to announce that our first ever summer event for alumni, a watermelon/ice cream social, was a success with more than 75 in attendance.

This issue includes an article by Chaplain Willie Smith Sr. about the Serenity Prayer and spirituality. His career includes work as a substance abuse counselor, and we are grateful for the time he spends at Pathways.

I'm also pleased to announce a new counselor at Pathways, Steve Baker. Steve is already making positive contributions. Welcome Steve.

I am hoping to hear from you, and I wish you peace.

Brent A. McCraw

Brent A. McCraw, M.Ed.
Director



Begins with our hearts and minds

Recovery through serenity

By the Rev. Willie Smith Sr.

Chaplain, Virginia Baptist Hospital

When David, the psalmist, stood his ground and declared: "I will look toward the hills from whence cometh my help..." he was declaring that his God was beyond the mountains themselves. The mountains stood as the symbol that lifted David's faith and imagination off of the lower thoughts of fear and worry. Looking toward the hills meant that David would gaze toward a much brighter reality.

In many ways, the Serenity Prayer serves as a similar "see-saw," with its ability to lift our gaze towards that which gives serenity: God.

In light of the fact that spirituality produces the warmth and sense of well-being that is artificially generated by drugs and/or alcohol, it is well worth the effort to review the process of acquiring the serenity that will keep us chemically free.

Webster's Dictionary defines "serene" as to be "clear and free of storms and unpleasant change." Spiritually speaking, we know that this clarity is of

Continued on the back



Reverend Smith

The Rev. Willie Smith Sr. is chaplain at Virginia Baptist Hospital.

The Reverend Smith holds a bachelor of arts degree from Fairleigh Dickenson University and a master of divinity degree from Drew University. During his career he has served as a hospice chaplain, the pastor for Diamond Hill Baptist Church, Lynchburg, and career counselor/substance abuse in the U.S. Navy.

Baker joins Pathways as counselor

Steven E. Baker, M.A., CAC, Certified Addiction Counselor III, has joined Pathways Treatment Center.

Baker earned his bachelor of science degree in psychology from the European Division of the University of Maryland and holds a master of arts degree in counseling from Liberty University. He has more than 20 years of clinical experience in substance abuse and mental health.

Baker moved to the Lynchburg area after retiring from the U.S. Air Force. During his last four years of service, he was the superintendent of a mental health clinic that included a substance abuse unit, a mental health unit and a family advocacy unit. Since retiring from the Air Force, Steve has worked as a graduate assistant at Liberty University, a program manager for the Sabre program and an Access, Crisis and PATH coordinator for Central Virginia Community Services. He is also an adjunct professor at Liberty University.



Steven Baker

Recovery through serenity

Continued from the front

the world of our own thoughts and emotions. And yet the storms themselves speak of the relationship that our inner world has with that of the outer world.

The Serenity Prayer speaks of our calmness coming from a power greater than ourselves. "God, grant me the serenity..." It's clear that the source of peace and comfort does not come from ourselves, nor the persons, places or things that we live with. It is God who grants, or gives, or provides the ability to accept the things that we cannot change. This serenity is not something that we can naturally produce by ourselves alone. It is the gift of God, the grantor.

And likewise, the courage to change the things that we can, and the wisdom to know the difference; these are all pieces of the same serenity. The serenity to accept, the courage to change, the wisdom to know—they are all aspects of the same lever that lift our thoughts and emotions off of ourselves and onto the creator and giver of life.

When we consider that recovery is a spiritual process, our approach and reliance on God as the giver of serenity takes on a whole new meaning. To know that sobriety does not come by the power of human manipulation and games, but by means of a type of surrender to that power which is greater than ourselves, places us in the frame of mind to receive, as well as recognize, the help we need. In this sense, to receive the serenity that God alone gives is to openly end our denial of God's existence and our dependency upon the same.

The Serenity Prayer moves toward the spiritual work of sobriety. It begins within our own hearts and minds, when we open ourselves to the influence of a power that is greater than ourselves...confronting and facing the issues of life by means of the gift of life that is poured into us:

*God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,
The courage to change the things I can
And the wisdom to know the difference.*

*Alumni:
You Are
Cordially
Invited*

**16th Annual
Holiday Party**

*Sunday
December 7*

Registration
3:30 p.m.

Speaker
4 p.m.

Food & Fellowship
5 to 7 p.m.

**Craddock
Auditorium**

**Virginia Baptist
Hospital**

*RSVP by December 1
at (434) 947-4455*

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For more information about
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For referrals or admissions,
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