

Recovery Slogans I: Good Advice for Everyone

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Slogans are everywhere. Short, easy to remember, catchy phrases encapsulate and project a company's business image and specific niche in the market, or spread a targeted message about a political candidate's essence and purpose. Bumper stickers effectively and efficiently communicate a driver's opinions and beliefs on issues, and signal a unifying call to others who think and feel the same way.

The effectiveness of slogans in both reinforcing a message and self identifying a group of people in a common belief system has not been lost on communities of individuals recovering from a variety of addictions and compulsions. During meetings of self help support groups for people suffering from the effects of alcohol, drugs, compulsive overeating, gambling, sexual acting out, co-dependency and other conditions, one will often see and hear several quick reminders of those simple ideas and practices that have helped save so many lives over the years.

Interestingly enough, while reinforcing important principles and practices of living for members of 12 step "Anonymous" programs, recovery slogans also offer wonderful gold nuggets - 'pearls of wisdom', if you like - to any and all of us as we "trudge the Road of Happy Destiny" (page 164, Alcoholics Anonymous, Fourth Edition). This month's E-tips will focus on a few of the more well known, often repeated slogans of AA, Alanon, NA, OA, GA and other programs, in an effort to share some of the experience, strength and hope with a wider audience. Here is one such wise idea to consider daily.

"LIVE AND LET LIVE"

Recovering people learn early on that one essential life lesson involves keeping focused on one's own thoughts, feelings, needs and personal responsibilities, and allowing others to do the same. Meddling in others' affairs by expressing - indeed, even forming - opinions or judgments about how others choose to conduct themselves takes valuable time, energy and wisdom away from the first job we all have, namely managing our own lives appropriately and responsibly. Besides, many of us haven't done so well with our own lives that we actually have the credentials or experience to really know what is best for someone else.

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