

Sadly, this is the last Newsletter that I will be putting together for you guys and it will be a small one because there were only a couple of contributions.

I hope somebody picks this service up and runs with it — expanding it and breathing fresh air into it. If not, then I guess it isn't needed anymore.

Thanks to those who contributed faithfully almost every single month — and YOU know who YOU are!!

Love,
Cheri



Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukah, Joy to the World, etc. from me and Lola, the Wonder Dog!!

The Journey, by Mary Oliver

One day you finally knew what you had to do, and you began — though the voices around you kept shouting their bad advice, though the whole house began to tremble and you felt the old tug at your ankles. “Mend my life!” each voice cried, but you didn't stop. You knew what you had to do.

Though the wind pried with its stiff fingers at the very foundations, even though their melancholy was terrible, it was already late enough, and a wild night, and the road was full of fallen branches and stones.

But little by little, as you left their voices behind, the stars began to burn through the sheets of clouds, there was a new voice which you slowly recognized as your own. It kept you company as you strode deeper and deeper into the World, determined to do the only thing you could do — determined to save the only life you could save.



Unconditional Love

I'm a cat-lover & have had many beloved cats over the years. My first cat was a big grey tabby named Peeper. He was talkative, confident, playful & affectionate. We went through a lot together & I loved him dearly. One day I let him out & he didn't come back for several days. I was worried sick, afraid I'd never see him again, imagining something terrible had happened to him. When he reappeared safely I was very relieved. I still loved him dearly despite this upsetting experience.

When he was about two years old Peeper was diagnosed with a serious heart condition which meant that he needed medication twice a day as well as regular & expensive visits to a specialist vet. As anyone who has ever tried to give a cat a pill knows it's not an easy task! It also meant that I couldn't travel because I needed to be home to give him his medicine twice a day. Inconvenient & challenging, but I still loved him dearly.



When we moved to a new house Peeper started to spray which is unusual for a cat that's been neutered as he had been. He sprayed carpets & furniture, & the smell was almost impossible to remove. We had to throw out one of my favorite armchairs. Annoying, but I still loved him dearly.

It occurred to me recently that the unconditional love I had for Peeper, which didn't change no matter what he did, is like the unconditional love & acceptance that my Higher Power has for me. It's the one constant in my life that nothing can change. Even when I make mistakes, even when I forget to check in with HP for a while, even when I'm ungrateful & cranky, HP loves me dearly. Knowing that I'm never alone & that I always have support gives me strength to keep putting one foot in front of the other & do the next right thing. It allows me to give instead of just taking, to be kinder & have compassion for myself & others & to take care of myself because HP tells me I'm worth it! I deserve TLC just like my kitties do!

IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR — SO REMEMBER . . .

H. = Hungry
A. = Angry
L. = Lonely
T. = Tired

Be aware of feeling any of these emotions.
If you do: stop, take a breath, call your sponsor,
read some OA literature, pray, take a nice walk
or bubble bath —
BEFORE TAKING THAT FIRST COMPULSIVE BITE.