

MENTORING

GOOD EVENING FELLOW TOASTMASTERS AND DISTINGUISHED GUESTS. THIS EVENING I'M GOING TO TELL YOU WHAT A MENTOR IS, AND HOW MY MENTORS HAVE ASSISTED ME SINCE ARRIVING HERE AT EAST MOLINE.

I TOOK THE LIBERTY OF LOOKING IN THE WEBSTER DICTIONARY FOR THE EXACT DEFINITION OF MENTOR AND IT IS AS FOLLOWS; A MENTOR IS DESCRIBED AS SOMEBODY OFFERING ADVICE OR GUIDANCE, OR SHOWING YOU HOW THINGS WORK AND HOW TO GET THINGS DONE.

UPON FURTHER INVESTIGATING I DISCOVERED A MENTOR;

- A) TAKES A PERSONAL INTEREST IN AND HELPS AN INEXPERIENCED PERSON.
- B.) SERVES AS A ROLE MODEL, COACH OR CONFIDANTE.
- C) OFFERS KNOWLEDGE, INSIGHT, PERSPECTIVE AND WISDOM USEFUL TO THE MENTEE.
- D.) A MENTOR HELPS SOMEONE BECOME ^{SUCCESSFUL} ~~USEFUL~~ AND LEARNS NEW SKILLS THEMSELVES.

WHEN I FIRST ARRIVED HERE AT EAST MOLINE IN JULY OF 2014, I WAS SENT TO THE ADVENT BUILDING, DORM-1, WHERE I WAS A THIRD-SHIFT PORTER. I ONLY WORKED APPROXIMATELY ONE HALF AN HOUR A DAY. I ALSO WORKED OUT LIFTING WEIGHTS FOR ABOUT AN HOUR AND A HALF A DAY. SO THAT WAS THE EXTENT OF MY

DAY. NOW I HAVE THREE YEARS TO COMPLETE AND COULD NOT PICTURE MYSELF DOING THIS AND NOTHING ELSE. THIS WOULD DRIVE ME ABSOLUTELY CRAZY. THE ONLY OTHER THING LEFT TO DO WAS SIT ON MY BED AND WATCH T.V.

AT THE SAME TIME I WATCHED MY ROOM-MATE / MENTOR TO BE, RUNNING IN AND OUT OF THE DORM CONSTANTLY, HE WAS BASICALLY OUT MORE THAN HE WAS IN, AND DIDN'T EVEN HAVE A JOB. NOW MEQHI MOGHADDEN MY MENTOR IS BETTER KNOWN AROUND "TOASTMASTERS" AS MR INTERNATIONAL.

I FINALLY HAD A CHANCE TO CATCH UP WITH MEQHI ONE DAY AND ASKED HIM WHAT WAS HIS SECRET, HOW DID HE ACCOMPLISH SO MUCH MOVEMENT AND EXACTLY WHERE DID HE GO? MEQHI STARTED LAUGHING, AND TOLD ME THAT IF I LIKED, I COULD SHADOW HIM FOR A WEEK OR SO AND THEN IF I CHOOSE, I COULD FOLLOW IN HIS FOOTSTEPS.

SO, BASICALLY, AROUND HERE, THE NAME OF THE GAME IS TO STAY BUSY AND OCCUPY YOUR WISELY. THIS MAKES THE DAYS AND WEEKS MOVE QUICKLY. SO, I DID JUST THAT, I SHADOWED MEQHI FOR A WEEK AND THE NEXT THING I KNOW

I WAS SENDING REQUEST SLIPS WITH WHAT SEEMED LIKE EVERYBODY ASKING TO JOIN OR PARTICIPATE IN THEIR CLUBS OR ACTIVITIES. SOON ENOUGH I STARTED ATTENDING

- A) ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS TWICE A WEEK
- B) NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS TWICE A WEEK
- C) I JOINED A YOGA GROUP TWICE A WEEK
- D) I ALSO JOINED TOASTMASTERS ON WED.
- E) I ALSO STARTED ATTENDING VOCATIONAL SCHOOL "CUSTODIAL MAINTENANCE" (FULL TIME)
- F) ALSO CATHOLIC MASS EVERY TUESDAY

BEFORE I KNEW IT MY DAYS WERE FULL! AT THE END OF THE DAY ONCE AGAIN I FELT A SENSE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT. BUT SOMETHING STILL WASN'T RIGHT, I FELT STILL I WAS MISSING SOMETHING, BUT COULDN'T QUITE FIGURE OUT WHAT THAT WAS.

BY THIS TIME, IT WAS NOW NOVEMBER. MR INTERNATIONAL WAS GOING HOME, I THANKED HIM FOR EVERYTHING AND ON HE WENT, ALTHOUGH, I WAS LUCKY ENOUGH TO BE ADOPTED BY MR MARSE VISNEVAC AS MY MENTOR FOR TOASTMASTERS.

I AM NATURALLY A QUIET PERSON AS WHICH I'M SURE MANY OF YOU HAVE

NOTICED ALREADY. THIS SEEMS TO HAVE WORKED FOR ME MY WHOLE LIFE, TRY TO FLY UNDER THE RADAR, SO TO SPEAK, SELLING DRUGS AND A LOT OF OTHER UNNECESSARY THINGS IN LIFE. ALSO TRYING TO BLEND IN AND GO UNNOTICED. THAT IS... UNTILL MARCE SPOTTED THIS CHARACTER FLAW AND STARTED INSTANTLY, AT TOASTMASTERS, TO PUT ME ON THE SPOT AND HAVE ME CALLED TO THE FRONT OF THE MEETING FOR "TABLE TOPICS" HE ALSO STARTED ME AT VOLUNTEERING FOR POSITIONS AT TOASTMASTERS SUCH AS; TOPIC MASTER, WORD GRAMMERIAN, TIMER AND AH & UM COUNTER. MARCES ALSO PUSHED ME TO PRESENT MY FIRST THREE SPEECHES AT TOASTMASTERS

ALL OF THIS HAS HELPED ME TO BREAK OUT OF MY SHELL, SO TO SPEAK. NOT ONLY HAS THIS HELPED ME WITH TOASTMASTERS, BUT VERY NOTICEABLY IN OTHER AREAS OF MY LIFE. FOR INSTANCE, PREVIOUSLY, I WAS JUST ATTENDING, N.A., A.A., CATHOLIC MASS, ETC... I REALIZED I COULD NOW PARTICIPATE AND BEFORE I KNEW IT, THINGS SEEMED EVEN BETTER. THATS THE PIECE OF MY DAY EARLIER THAT I SPOKE ABOUT AND FELT SOMETHING WAS

BUT COULDN'T QUITE PUT MY FINGER ON IT.

NOW EVERY WEDNESDAY I'M CALLED UPON TO STAND UP FRONT OF THE CONGREGATION AND READ SCRIPTURE FOR THE MASS, WHICH GIVES ME MORE OF A SENCE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT AND WHOLENESS.

AT NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS I ALSO STARTED TO NOT JUST ATTEND, BUT I NOW VOLUNTEER TO GET UP AND SPEAK TO AND IN FRONT OF THE CROWD. I NOW AM BEGINING TO FEEL A SENCE OF HEALING COMING OVER MYSELF, SOMETHING I NEVER FELT OR IMAGINED BEFORE WHEN I JUST SAT IN THE MEETINGS WAITING FOR A MIRACLE TO TAKE PLACE!

EVEN IN THE BIBLE IT SAYS "FAITH IS DEAD WITHOUT WORKS" WHICH MEANS TO ME IS, DON'T EXPECT ANY RESULTS IF YOU DON'T PUT FORTH ANY TIME, EFFORT OR WORK.

JUST RECENTLY IN MY "ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS" MEETING I WAS ASKED TO BECOME THE "CHAIRPERSON" FOR THE NEXT 90 DAYS. ONCE AGAIN THIS IS THE PERSON UP IN FRONT OF THE CROWD HOSTING THE MEETING AND SETTING

THE PACE. NATURALLY MY FIRST INSTINCT WAS TO DECLINE, BECAUSE THATS WHAT I'VE ALWAYS DONE, WAS STAY IN MY COMFORT ZONE, NOT PARTICIPATE, JUST BE PRESENT. BUT INSTEAD, I ACCEPTED. OF COURSE, I WAS VERY UPTIGHT AND NERVOUS MY FIRST COUPLE OF TIMES AND HAD NO IDEA WHAT I WAS GOING TO SAY OR HOW TO SURVIVE STANDING UP FRONT FOR AN HOUR & A HALF WITH NOTHING REHEARSED, BUT I SURVIVED AND STILL AM TODAY. IT COMES NATURALLY EVERY WEEK.

IN CLOSING, I WOULD LIKE TO SAY I'VE GIVEN YOU TWO OF THE EXAMPLES OF A MENTOR AND MENTEE RELATIONSHIP THAT I'M AWARE OF. ALSO I WOULD LIKE TO MENTION HOW MUCH TOASTMASTERS HAS HELP WITH BOOSTING MY CONFIDENCE AND CONFRONTING MY FEAR OF SPEAKING TO AND IN FRONT OF OTHERS
 THANK YOU VERY MUCH, AND HAVE A WONDERFUL EVENING!

Christopher Gibbons
 #B09504