

LIFE ON LIFE'S TERMS, MY TERMS AND GOD'S TERMS

I began living this life on earth on "life's terms". I was a little boy and didn't seem to have a lot to say about anything. To start off with, EVERYONE WAS BIGGER THAN ME! This meant that whatever the adults decided to do, I had to go along with it and there was usually nothing I could do about it. The time my step father backhanded me in the face, I had barely learned to speak, All I could do was cry and endure the shock and pain from such a sudden and brutal attack. I was living life on life's terms and it wasn't any fun. *Life's terms for me was having to accept and suffer from all of the imperfect and hypocritical behavior of the adults that surrounded me in life.*

I endured life on life's terms without any attempt at escape until around the age of 10. There were two means of escape I could find. One was reading. I had learned to read and found that I could go to my room and escape , if even for a little while, the hellish life's terms I had to deal with. I could immerse myself in a book reading about the adventures of men who fought valiantly against evil. The reading coupled with smoking cigarettes and sipping my parents liquor seemed to give some escape from the dysfunction I had to live in. This marked the beginning of me living life ON MY TERMS.

LIFE ON MY TERMS

Life on my terms BEGAN as I **began to take action** to escape life on life's terms. Life on life's terms had been brutal. I remember the time my mother grabbed my hair, as she was accustomed to doing when angry. I was tired of life on life's terms and for the first time ever resisted her abuse. I reached and grabbed her wrist and began squeezing them and watched the look of surprise on her face. She released my hair (I was hurting her wrist) and she turned and walked away quickly knowing that I was no longer going to passively endure her treatment of me. I tried running away from home on several occasions and was always brought back kicking and screaming. Since I had begun living life on my terms and was getting bigger and stronger, at age 17 they finally kicked me out of the house. They has lost control of me and it was time to go.

That year, I met an older woman and moved in with her. She loved having a young man in her life that she could get to do anything she wanted...with the “right persuasion” of course. I was her boy toy and sex became a bigger diversion and escape from life on life’s terms. I has been sexually molested as a baby and a child and was not new to sex. This relationship was just another way living life on MY TERMS. Sex, alcohol and OTHER drugs were the terms I was going to live life. I would work hard to make money so I could live but that was where living life on life’s terms ended. Even with the job thing, I could walk off a job at the drop of a hat if I didn’t like what was going on. I was hired once as a helper and asked the guy I was working for a question. His response was “I don’t need someone with a strong mind, I need some one with a strong back and a weak mind”. I walked off the job and frankly, I don’t remember even going back to get my paycheck. I was living life ON MY TERMS and everyone else could kiss mywell, you know what the next word is.

Needless to say, between life on life’s terms and life on my terms, all of the innocence and love I was born into this world with was gone. I had become a selfish and very narcissistic person. I was living life on my terms and if you didn’t have something to contribute to MY escape from “life’s terms” then you were gone. I was the epitome of the term “I have no use for you. I gave new meaning to the term “Users only use”. Living life on my terms meant that you weren’t any real part of my life if you didn’t contribute to life on MY terms. Finally in 2000 I was dead in the water and dead inside. It was total and complete murder. Life on life’s terms had begun the brutal onslaught and life on MY terms had finished me off. I needed a different way of life, IF I was going to SURVIVE. The problem was that my terms were all I knew. ALL I COULD DO WAS WHAT I KNEW.

LIFE ON MY HIGHER POWER’S TERMS

I didn’t know it at the time, but It was my first 12 step meeting that I began to CONSIDER living life on God’s terms. I didn’t know the 12 steps were God’s instructions for me to survive living life on my terms. The God I grew up knowing about hated people who sinned and did things the way they wanted to do them. He even killed those people according to some sources so this idea

that God was trying to save me with the steps was new.. The steps seemed brutal to me. I had done some pretty selfish, bad and illegal things; How was I going to turn my will and life over to something or someone who hated me and wanted to kill me. I had enough voices around me telling me how bad I was. The police and most of society all saw me as a waste and with no redeeming value.

The reality is that I didn't have many options. If I didn't want to die or spend my life in Prison, I had to find a way to get away from my demons, my drinking and drugging. Life had really boiled down to RELIEF or DEATH. For a minute it seemed my only relief WAS death.

So, I started going to meetings and listening to how other's had found that relief from living life on my terms. I considered trying to work the steps and slowly, little by little began to see how living life on God's terms gave me a much better life with happiness, joy and freedom that I couldn't imagine before.

Before you dismiss the idea that living the steps is actually living life on God's terms please talk to someone that has been working the steps for many years. They will tell you that the steps ARE divinely inspired and that inspiration was the beginning of Alcohol Anonymous as implemented by Dr. Bill and Bob. This inspiration given to Bill And Bob has saved countless lives. Learning to live the steps has given many a life of happiness, joy and freedom that is virtually unknown to millions in society today.

I would guess that no one knows how hard it is, more than me, to give up living life on MY terms. Giving up "my terms" leaves me vulnerable and kills my ego. The truth is I am still partially living life on my terms because I don't live the steps perfectly or fully. Make me angry or try to stop me from having something I want, and I can revert back to my old self and doing things MY WAY.

The good thing is I recognize this. Now at least I have a chance, if I keep going to meetings and re-visiting this subject. The key is to keep changing and learning to do things the way my higher power would have me to do... living LIFE according to HIS 12 steps. And so it is.