

Reflections on Winter Dreams Retreat 2017

I am sitting in my car on the grounds of the abbey, feeling such inner peace and joy, listening to the beautiful bells ringing in the background, seeing the light dusting of snow on the grounds and the sun shining so brightly. I am just not yet ready to leave.

I was so warmly greeted with hugs and kisses and shouts as I walked in the retreat house, I already felt loved. A sweet little charm was found on my bed containing a prayer and the joy of hope. The principles of the steps were the focus of this meeting, how clearly, honestly and confidently they were spoken, shared and lived in each share and each moment. (Honesty, Hope, Faith, Courage, Integrity, Willingness, Humility, Self Discipline, Love, Perseverance, Spiritual Awareness and Service)

At the beginning I was asked what I was hoping to get from the retreat, I really hadn't thought about it, but then I was struck - I was here to listen and absorb as much experience, strength and hope I possibly could. That is exactly what I got and way more than I could have anticipated. OA Speakers came from all different places and one persevered through the snow, to share their stories filled with tidbits of self discipline, integrity and amazing faith that were so lovingly received. It was easily seen and felt through the crying and laughing and dancing and hugging that occurred all weekend long.

I witnessed such courage, such honesty that I knew I was safe to be me, to be vulnerable enough to explore my program and the steps more deeply. With willingness and humility I heard and found my own lessons and truth and even made some new friends. The church bells kept ringing throughout the weekend and all I could think was what reminders of the spiritual awareness I heard and felt. It was only through the service of others that this retreat, this program and this message was and continues to be available to me. The principles are a guide on how to connect with my Higher Power and to show up in my life while I continue, one day at a time, to do the step work that allows me to live a life filled with joy and opportunity. Now I am off to continue my OA journey, with new ideas, new contacts and renewed peace. I've left behind some fears and some tears that I no longer need. I am most grateful, Love and Hugs, Lisa

Enjoy the Journey,
Lisa