

TRULINCS 23038076 - LUMMUS, ALLAN CRAIG - Unit: BAS-T-A

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FROM: 23038076

TO: ~~Off Prison Ministry - The~~

SUBJECT: mp 84 Coming to my senses...

DATE: 04/10/2015 05:10:44 PM

mp 84 Coming to my senses

Beginning to get more at ease with the process of the addiction treatment program. I have to keep my focus on my recovery, because there is a lot of pull to get sidetracked on other issues in the community. I have to have faith that what is best for me will be beneficial for others as well.

The highlight of the first month was giving a presentation to the community about my readiness for treatment. Few in the community knew I am queer, so when I talked about being in an abusive relationship with a guy I definitely got some peoples' attention. I have not noticed any negative reactions. It has only been positive so far. I am glad I did not skirt around the issue. Honesty is central to getting sober. Processing the old unresolved grief about that part of my life is aided by talking about it.

I am glad I did it to make it easier for gay guys to talk openly. I know of one for sure that said he appreciated me being out. So frankly, if it helped one person be comfortably out, then it is worth it.

One thing I worried about when I decided to be more visible as a bi, was that would feel the need to pair up. My old pattern is to run to a relationship as a way to get away from me. So far, I have resisted the temptation to seek are partner. I had one for while, but stopped it once I moved over to Travis DAP side. I am glad, it was not based on anything other then physical attraction. So it was not the type of relationship I need anyway. I have focused on getting my head clear and unlearning old mental habits like trying to seek others attention to in order to validate my own sense of self. My 12 step groups and friendships (plus meditation and journaling) have allowed me to process my feelings of grief and shame. My readiness statement allowed me to publically acknowledge some of the same issues in a way that was very healing and empowering. I reclaimed a bit of my heart in the process. I can just focus on friendships instead of romance. Romance gets into territory that still is sensitive and unhealed. Let me get free of as much baggage as I can now and worry about intimate relationships later.

I have two friends who make no bones about absolutely no relationships for them. I never even considered that an option. That is funny since I read so many celibate writers (monks and nuns). Now I am very content with waiting. I have done my time (8 years Bobby and 18 years Connie), I can put that on hold till I get settled back in Memphis.

Coming to my senses. That has been my focus lately in my meditation. Using the five senses to ground my mediation. It is easy on my Saturday mediation on the rec yard. But can happen in the unit as well, just a smaller range of sounds and smells inside then out. Using the sight, sound, and smell helps to keep me grounded in my body - observer mind - and out of my cognitive - thinking mind.

mindful prisoner at [betweenthebars.org](http://betweenthebars.org) | allan lummus #23038076 | pobox 1010 bastrop,tx 78602