

April 1958

AGIN PAPERBACKS

To: BURLINGAME GROUP, CALIF.:

Dear Friends—

In reference to page 60, January Grapevine: Does anyone ever appreciate anything made too easy? [The Burlingame group had inquired about a paperback edition of the Big Book—Ed.]

The very root of AA is in "wanting." If one wants a thing enough, one will get it—whatever the price. Remember? So happens I recall the pattern very vividly. I am the wife of an alcoholic, on his tenth year of happy sobriety . . . plus a first year that was anything but happy. That year was an up and down (mostly down) affair for twelve long months. We got our first copy of the Big Book sometime in that year. It has since strayed and returned many a time . . . and has been strayed a couple of years now. But, we have our second edition to turn to . . . it is a must on our bookshelf. Perhaps we fail to encourage others to buy and read it!

To me, the book—as it is—would be worth double the price. To make it a paperback would be wrong, in my opinion.

How can any recovered alcoholic feel that four dollars is expensive for a book that is the very basis of saving a life or a mind?

Yes, there are many AAs on the program for several years who do not own a copy! I doubt if they would feel it necessary to own a paperback either. Some people have never acquired a habit of reading anything, and being sober does not change that. Others will sit through the late hours at a card game (for money, of course) and still say they cannot afford four dollars for the Big Book. Is the price the true reason they do not have the book?

Perhaps the non-alcoholic has a duty here; possibly it is for them to buy the book. To me, that is the best possible start for a new member and the family.

Whether we are AAs or Al-Anons, let us ask ourselves this question: As a Twelfth Stepper, do I urge the newcomer to read and re-read the Big Book?

If I believe in it myself, and pass that belief along, there will be plenty of copies sold at the current price . . . and the growing revenue will insure GSH services for this generation and all to follow. We "give" four dollars—who can enumerate all we receive?

When I read your article I just had to tell you how I felt about the idea . . . not as a criticism but just to give you another view on the subject. One of our greatest joys in this way of life is to visit other groups. I hope to meet you of Burlingame sometime too. May God bless you always.

Vera S., Yankton, South Dakota