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The national monthly journal of Alcoholics Anonymous, devoted to those seeking further knowledge on the problem of alcoholism, with the hope that it will help all alcoholics everywhere. Individual opinions expressed here are not, necessarily, those of A.A. as a whole.

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Habit Formation in a New Personality

(Final article in a trilogy on personality integration. The first article, "What Is the Alcoholic's Moral Responsibility?" appeared in the November, 1945, issue; the second, "Re-creation of Personality Possible Through Training," appeared in the May, 1946, issue.—Ed.)

There are good habits and bad habits. Good habits are those which interest and serve other people. Bad habits include the "drink habit." This is an old-fashioned expression particularly obnoxious to alcoholics. It implies that his failure or refusal to exercise a little will power is the only obstacle to the drinker's reformation. No alcoholic likes to have his "sickness" called a bad habit or to be regarded as an object of reformation.

As a summary statement of the problem of alcoholism, the phrase "drink habit" undoubtedly proceeds from the depths of profound ignorance. And the injunction to reform strikes many as a pious exhortation, ineffective as it is abhorrent. Yet, when we face the situation with integrity and insight, we see that we *are* dealing with a habit and that we *are* striving for reformation—in terms of a re-creation of personality. (Re-creation of Personality, *Grapevine*, May, 1946, p. 1.)

For, we have learned, much of our drinking which was originally voluntary became habitual before it became pathological, and even then remained to some extent habitual. We also learned that to suppress the habit was to provoke a neurosis and that to yield was fatal. Obviously, there is only one way out of the dilemma—an understanding of the nature of habits and of how to reconvert them.

Many learned treatises have been written upon the subject of habit: Indeed, the science of psychology is principally devoted to the systematic study of habits and their formation: first, so that those habits may be better understood; second, so that they may be better con-

trolled. To these more technical works the reader is referred for a detailed treatment of the origin and nature of habit, as, for example, William James' classic chapter on Habit in his *Principles of Psychology*.

For present purposes, therefore, it will perhaps suffice to paraphrase George Bernard Shaw's definition of habit as *action which was originally voluntary but later became more or less automatic and involuntary*. All unreflective action, however, should not be condemned as undesirable. We must remember that there are approximately two hundred habits and activities which contribute to personality and daily living and which are necessarily automatic in operation. For example, if we begin to think about our speech we are likely to stammer; or, if we begin to deliberate about our walking, we are liable to stumble. We get along much better

when such processes are left to the role of habit. These and a multitude of other routine activities exemplify the utility of habit. Alcoholism is an example of the tyranny of habit.

In any event, *habit* is an acquired mode of response and not an *inherited* instinct. A bad habit can, therefore, be eliminated. A good one can be cultivated. More accurately, a bad habit may be displaced by the substitution of a new one. This basic psychological principle is implicit in the A.A. program.

We now seem to be confronted with another dilemma. It is impossible to get rid of a bad habit without assuming a better one. One can't acquire a constructive habit without sloughing off a vicious one. Man's personality complex is not so separable and divisible that traits and attributes can be taken on and put off without

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VETERANS OF TWO WARS FIND HELP IN OWN HOSPITAL GROUP

The first A.A. group in a veterans' hospital, although started primarily to aid World War I servicemen, is proving equally as effective in helping uncontrolled drinkers who served in the recent war.

In the fall of 1941, an A.A. member living near the Northport (L. I.) Veterans' Hospital told the commanding officer of that facility about A.A. and of his willingness to carry the message to alcoholic patients. Three years later—in November, 1944—the officer took him up on the offer.

Two World War I patients at the hospital had heard about A.A. and wanted additional information. After the A.A. talked to them, arrangements were made to form a group at the

hospital.

About a week later, eight patients—all veterans of World War I—attended the group's first meeting. Meetings have been held every Sunday night since, and at present are attended by from 15 to 30 patients. Only World War I veterans were present at early meetings, but now the attendance is divided about equally between veterans of both world wars.

To date about 60 members of the group have been discharged from the hospital. Although no exact check can be made on them, only ten have returned, and most of the ten have been re-discharged.

One member of the group—Joe, a veteran in

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EDITORIAL: On the 9th Step...

"Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others."

"The amends we make must be *direct*. We must pay *in kind* for the hurt we have done people. If we have cheated them, we must make *restitution*. If we have hurt their feelings, we must *ask forgiveness* of them."

These words are our guide posts, which we follow while taking the 9th Step on the *Road of Repudiation* of our former alcoholic way of life.

Here—in the 9th Step—is where we A.A.s have a Heaven-sent chance to prove ourselves—to redeem ourselves—in the eyes of our loved ones, with our families first of all, with the ones we have made to suffer such keen anguish because of our uncontrolled drinking; to redeem ourselves in the sight of our friends and our business associates.

Performing the 9th Step helps us to rid ourselves of the oppressing and tormenting feelings of remorse, of agitated memories and agonizing regrets. It helps us to regain a clear conscience, a peaceful, contented mind, a buoyant disposition, and some long-lost tranquility. We're getting back again to acting like the sober people that we were once upon a time, long ago, and observing the little amenities of life, being courteous and considerate.

We make direct amends wherever possible. If we encounter a situation in our lives where this is not possible, we make indirect amends by resorting to the 5th and 7th Steps. In such a case we admit to ourselves and to God our past wrongs and we humbly ask *His* forgiveness, in lieu of being able to make direct amends. If the matter still presses heavily upon our conscience, we can, if we wish, talk the matter over—and out—once and for all with a person who has an understanding heart and a close mouth; one who will never violate our confidence.

In making amends with regard to our financial affairs we make recompense in kind, with dollars and cents.

Now let us take the words: "Make direct amends, except when to do so would injure them or others."

Amends are never to be made rashly or indiscriminately without careful forethought. Causing injury to others isn't making amends at all; it's merely making an existing, lamentable situation more deplorable, and we are placing ourselves in a position where we'll be making amends for having tried to make amends. A general fiasco would result, of benefit to no one.

Here is a quotation taken from the big book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, with reference to the 9th Step: "Sometimes we hear an alcoholic say that the only thing he needs to do is to keep sober. Certainly he must keep sober, but he is yet a long way from making amends to the wife or parents whom for years he has so shockingly treated. Passing all understanding is the patience which wives and parents have had with alcoholics (I'd like to add: which husbands and children have had with alcoholics, too). . . . There is a long period of reconstruction ahead. We (alcoholics) must take the lead (in making amends). A remorseful mumbling that we are sorry won't fill the bill at all.

I revised the preceding passage just quoted—applying it to myself as follows: "Certainly I must keep sober, always, but I am yet a long way from completing amends to my daughter, whom I hurt so deeply and so often. Passing all understanding was her patience with me, her alcoholic mother."

We have said it before: "We're sorry." And sorry we stayed until the next bender. Then remorse set in and we couldn't stand it, and we became intoxicated again because

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The Individual In Relation to A.A. as a Group

By Bill

It may be that Alcoholics Anonymous is a new form of human society.

The first of our 12 Points of A.A. Tradition states. "Each member of Alcoholics Anonymous is but a small part of a great whole. A.A. must continue to live or most of us will surely die. Hence our common welfare comes first. But individual welfare follows close afterward". This is a recognition, common in all forms of society, that the individual must sometimes place the welfare of his fellows ahead of his own uncontrolled desires. Were the individual to yield nothing to the common welfare there could be no society at all—only self-will run riot; anarchy in the worst sense of that word.

Apparent Contradiction

Yet Point Three in our A.A. Tradition looks like a wide-open invitation to anarchy. Seemingly, it contradicts Point One. It reads, "*Our membership ought to include all who suffer alcoholism. Hence we may refuse none who wish to recover. Nor ought A.A. membership ever depend on money or conformity. Any two or three alcoholics gathered together for sobriety may call themselves an A.A. Group*". This clearly implies that an alcoholic is a member if he says so; that we can't deny him his membership; that we can't demand from him a cent; that we can't force our beliefs or practices upon him; that he may flout everything we stand for and still be a member. In fact, our Tradition carries the principle of independence for the individual to such an apparently fantastic length that, so long as there is the slightest interest in sobriety, the most unmoral, the most anti-social, the most critical alcoholic may gather about him a few kindred spirits and announce to us that a new Alcoholics Anonymous Group has been formed. Anti-God, anti-medicine, anti-our Recovery Program, even anti-each other—these rampant individuals are still an A.A. Group if *they think so!*

Our non-alcoholic friends sometimes exclaim, "Did we hear you say that A.A. has a sound social structure? You must be joking. To us, your Tradition Number Three looks about as firmly grounded as the Tower of Babel. In your Point One you plainly say that group welfare comes first. Then you evidently proceed, in

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... That Our ... Blessings ... 'Never Spoil Us'

In the Twelve Steps, A.A. offers not a theory, not a hypothesis, not a pious hope, not—thank God—wistful or wishful thinking, but an historical record of how more than 25,000 alcoholics achieved sobriety.

Set down from that same historical record are the *Twelve Points to Assure Our Future*, points dealing with us in A.A. as groups. They were set on paper by Bill, our founder, not as a sudden inspiration but only after long and prayerful thought and in response to an insistent and persistent demand from groups throughout the country.

They've Lived Program

For eleven years now most of Bill's waking moments have been devoted to A.A. Through these years he and Dr. Bob have lived A.A. Lived A.A.—with all that the phrase implies.

Not only have Bill and Dr. Bob lived A.A. in their own lives and in their own particular groups, but because they are our founders, they have been sought out by earnest A.A.s from all parts of the country, both in person and by mail. And, on occasion, they have journeyed hither and yon, visiting groups throughout the land.

So there has come to them a steady flow of reports, triumphant reports of achievement for the most part. But reports, too, of differences, of difficulties, of setbacks. Through them has been distilled the group experience.

So it is that in these 12 Points of Group Tradition, there are experience and prudence and wisdom. ...

"Each member of A.A. is but a small part of a great whole," says the first sentence of Point One.

Each of us alone, striving in our small way, can exert but a small influence. But all of us together can exert the mighty influence that is A.A. My part is important, but it gains its importance not through me but through my membership in A.A., not through me but through my active participation in the work of the group; not through me but through my willingness to make myself a pliant tool in the Hand of the Higher Power.

More Than Sobriety

The second sentence says: "A.A. must continue to live or most of us will surely die." . . .

You remember as well as I that hagridden existence; those stumbling, chaotic, aimless days; those haunted, horrendous, phantom-filled nights; miserable and sick of body, each nerve a throbbing agony; and worse, far worse the desolating misery of mind and of heart and of soul.

Yes, A.A. must continue to live or most of us

will surely die. A.A. must continue to live, and we must continue to live in it and with it, or most of us will surely die while yet we live.

"Hence," this first point continues, "our common welfare comes first. But individual welfare follows close afterward."

You know and I know that any man who lives the 12 Steps will achieve and maintain sobriety—and much more. . . .

The Second Point—"For our Group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our Group conscience."

One doesn't long scan the 12 Steps without realizing the demand for humility. One doesn't long consider the 12 Points without seeing the emphatic restatement of that demand.

VINO VIGNETTES: Group Starter

(Editor's Note: The author of the following was asked to do a piece for The Grapevine on the subject of starting new groups, since she has been instrumental in aiding the establishment of several in Texas.)

When I was 22 months old in A.A. I landed in Dallas, Texas—a lone female carrying the A.A. torch in one hand and the A.A. book in the other. I was weighted down with a terrific feeling of responsibility—I had to start a group, I had to do it, I felt very inadequate, I wanted to "build a home in a day," I met with lots of opposition, I met with disappointments, till I woke up and found the key to the situation. Too much I, too much self in the whole deal. "I" only had one responsibility—that of keeping "I" sober. What did that entail? Daily contact, daily bit of positive A.A. work, daily true and thoughtful gratitude—leave the results in the hands of this "Power greater than I am." And from then on the results have amazed me.

For those who would like to know what my "daily bits" were, I'll list a few. Seeing doctors, ministers, the Y.M.C.A., Salvation Army, talking A.A. to anyone who would listen. I rented a post office box, sent The number to our national secretary so inquiries and help could come through that source. Soon the days became weeks, weeks months, and there was a group.

When the group here was five months old, a plea came to help get "something going" in San Antonio. Down I went with two of the Dallas "babies," for three days and nights we did our A.A. bit with a burning zeal. We did all we could, left feeling very hopeful, but nothing "caught fire." In a few weeks we thought the trip had been in vain and that old "I" trouble reared its ugly head. Maybe if / could have stayed on the spot to do there all the things /

Our leaders lead, not by right of seniority, not by election, not through dominant personality, the orator's gift, the executive's talent; no, not by any of these things.

Some men may *appear* to be the leaders in a group, but your real A.A. leader is the man who has actually and wholly turned his will and his life over to the care of God as he understands Him.

It is from this man that the faltering seek help, the troubled seek counsel, the burdened seek the relief and the release of the 5th Step. His power lies in the knowledge that of himself he has no power; in his humble awe that a Higher Power has deigned to use him as a human means toward a supernatural end. . . .

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had done here, maybe / could have made it go. A year and a half later another plea came from San Antonio, so down I went, with the same burning zeal, but worked no harder and in one week rounded up four alxies, three females and one male. "The male" was a man we'd contacted on the previous trip. This time he happened to be ready to grab the torch out of my hand and so "evah-thing" caught on fire. In just a year San Antonio has a vital and growing group. I visited them for ten days a month later; all they've done since has been through their own efforts, not mine. "I" definitely wasn't needed on the spot. The gent's being ready to grab the torch was definitely not my doing.

The complete death, I hope, of the "I" trouble has come through my experience with a group in the United States Disciplinary Barracks at North Camp Hood, Texas. I've sponsored it solely through correspondence for a year and a half. "No females allowed" kept me away. Weekly I've written the two men who contacted me. They kept doggedly on till they had a group. Now the group, through its own efforts, with no help from the outside, has gained all the respect and notice it deserves. And this month a letter from none other than the Commandant of the Camp arrived, inviting this female to visit!

In the beginning of this article I said I'd found the key—that the results lie in the hands of this Power greater than I am—and it is the one that fits. The key is not mine so I can't feel in any way responsible. The groups to me are as miraculous as my own sobriety. They are God's doing and both awe me in a wondrous way.—*Esther E., Dallas, Texas.*

"... That Our .. . Blessings ... Never Spoil Us

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Of such stuff is the real A.A. leadership. It is rooted in God's will. It knows, this A.A. leadership, that as God takes care of us as individuals—and that is manifest in more than 25,000 lives—so does He take care of us as a group. God can not take care of us as individuals without simultaneously taking care of us as a group.

The Third Point—"Our membership ought to include all who suffer alcoholism. Hence we may refuse none who wish to recover. . . ."

This is strong medicine, my friends, this business of refusing no one. It's a demand, ***, for charity in the old and beautiful sense that Christ used it—the love of our fellow man for the love of God.

And still further it's a demand that we show our gratitude for the gift bestowed upon us—by a willingness to share that gift with others—all others who suffer from alcoholism—all others regardless of race or creed or color—all others—rich, personable, charming or no.

Not Ours By Right

A.A. is a gift, a free gift from on high. There's no question but what we earned the need of the gift, earned it in the bitter torture of alcoholism, but it is also true that no one of us earned the right to the gift.

On the contrary, some of us fought the Giver and His gift, refused the Giver and His gift until alcohol had beaten us to our knees in our own particular gutter. Then, and only then, did we accept the gift.

It is an A.A. paradox many times stated that only by sharing this gift, by seeking to give it to others, can we retain it for our very own. and so retaining it, see it grow in import and beauty. The more of it we give, the more of it we have.

And we can not, in conscience, pick and choose as to whom we shall give it. God has a way of making a pauper out of the niggardly soul; a way, too, of rewarding ever more richly the spendthriftsoul.

Point Four: "With respect to its own affairs, each A.A. Group should be responsible to no other authority than its own conscience. But when its plans concern the welfare of neighboring groups also, those groups ought to be consulted. And no group, regional committee or individual should ever take any action that might greatly affect A.A. as a whole without conferring with the Trustees of the Alcoholic Foundation. On such issue? our common welfare is paramount."

We as groups should try to live with other groups as we try to live with fellow members

in our particular group. Charity, kindness, tolerance, thoughtfulness, a striving to be unselfish—these are the hallmarks of the A.A. who is living the life of the 12 Steps. . . .

Point Five: "Each Alcoholics Anonymous Group ought to be a spiritual entity having but one primary purpose—that of carrying its message to the alcoholic who still suffers."

Here as in Point One we seem to be running contrary to the accepted teaching that continued sobriety is the first and foremost purpose for us in A.A., The most important thing in our lives. But the conflict is more apparent than real.

The primary purpose for the *individual* is continued sobriety, and simultaneously and

stemming from that purpose for us as individuals, the primary purpose *for the group* is spreading the A.A. message to those who need it.

Having achieved sobriety as individuals, are we, Buddha-like, to spend the years in contemplation of our navels? Are we to cloister ourselves in our newly found paradise hoping to live happily and selfishly ever after?

You know and I know that life isn't like that, even life in A.A. You know and I know that the A.A. program is a living thing. Death comes when growth ceases. That's elementary. . . . As we as individuals cannot remain static, so the group. The group must grow in and through us, and growing in and through us, it must grow in and through others. When those two growths cease, A.A. will cease.

Point Six: "Problems of money, property and authority may easily divert us from our primary spiritual aim. . . ."

Point Five asserts that an A.A. group ought to be a spiritual entity. Point Six emphasizes this viewpoint. If we regard A.A. as a spiritual entity, we'll do our best to keep from being cluttered up with too much money, too much property, too much management.

Excess Dangerous

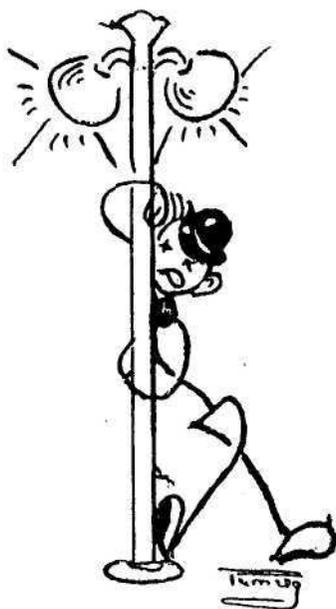
You can see that these things *in excess* indicate a doubt as to God's providence. They question the soundness of the 24-hour program. They give lip service only to that petition in the Lord's Prayer—"Give us this day our daily bread."

You can see, too, that these things in excess interfere with the spiritual flow that characterizes A.A. They take the time and thought of A.A.s who would be better occupied—both for themselves and the world at large—in carrying the A.A. message to other alcoholics.

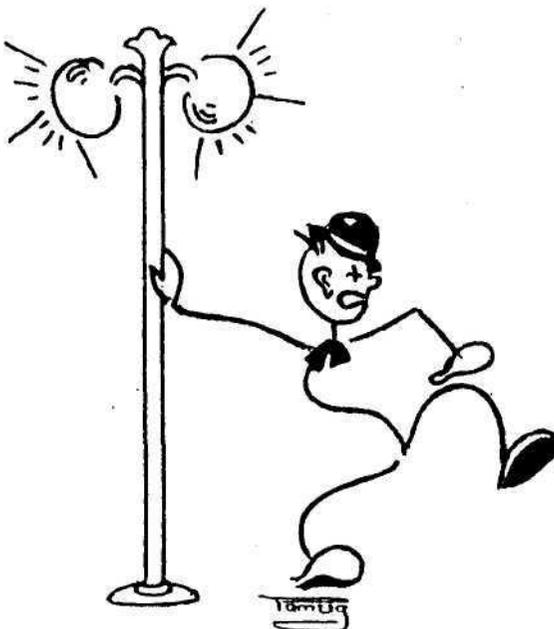
Point Seven: "The A.A. Groups themselves ought to be fully supported by the voluntary contributions of their own members. We think that . . . any public solicitation of funds using the name of Alcoholics Anonymous is highly dangerous; that acceptance of large gifts from any source or of contributions carrying any obligation whatever, is usually unwise. Then, too, we view with much concern those A.A. treasuries which continue, beyond prudent reserves, to accumulate funds for no stated A.A. purpose. . . ."

When a man becomes well in A.A., he wants to be his own man again. And part of this being your own man, of recovering your integrity, I believe, is to carry your own hod.

If an A.A. is justified in having any resentment, I think it would be a resentment against being thought of as an object of charity, a seeker



If My Wife Hasn't Got My Dinner Ready—
I'll Give Her HELL



—And If She Has—I Won't Eat It

after alms, a relief client or the deserving poor.

The fuel that makes the A.A. engine go is spiritual. The moment we add other ingredients, we begin to foul the spark plugs.

Point Eight: "A.A. experience has taught us that: "Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever non-professional. . . ."

You know and I know the satisfaction we've had when some suspicious prospect inquired, "What's the angle?" and we were able to tell him that there isn't any angle, there isn't any catch, there isn't any concealed bite—that we were there to help him for a darn selfish reason—that while we were seeking to teach him, we were once again convincing ourselves—that our visit was all part of our own recovery.

A Way of Life

The burden of Point Nine is that an A.A. group needs the least possible organization. It sets forth, too, the part played by the Alcoholic Foundation as to tradition, funds and our newspaper, *The A.A. Grapevine*.

A.A., as has been often said, is a way of life; not an organization. It is so good when it is simple. God save us from bustling little badgers that would make of us a non-drinking uplift society with buttons and badges, with committees and committees and committees, with titles and chairs and a uniformed rank.

Point Ten: "No A.A. Group or member should ever, *in such a way as to implicate A.A.*, express any opinion on outside controversial issues—particularly those of politics, alcohol reform or sectarian religion. . . ."

Let's get back to fundamentals. Our prime purpose as individuals is to achieve and maintain sobriety. Our prime purpose as a group is to carry the A.A. message to the alcoholic who is still sick. Certainly brawling in the market place is out of tune with the steps of the recovery program.

Point Eleven: "Our relations with the outside world should be characterized by modesty and anonymity. We think A.A. ought to avoid sensational advertising. Our public relations should be guided by the principle of attraction rather than promotion. There is never need to praise ourselves. We feel it better to let our friends recommend us."

Point Twelve: "And finally, we of Alcoholics Anonymous believe that the principle of anonymity has an immense spiritual significance. It reminds us that we are to place principles before personalities; that we are actually to practice a truly humble modesty. This to the end that our great blessings may never spoil us; that we shall forever live in thankful contemplation of Him Who presides over us all."

Every now and again A.A. attracts a man who is so fired by the beauty of it, he wants to hire

The Pleasures of Reading

BERNARD CLARE by James T. Farrell (Vanguard Press, \$2.75)

It is news when the creator of Studs Lonigan and Danny O'Neill, who also depicted for future generations the lower middle class life of the Irish in Chicago, turns to another background for a major work of fiction. James Farrell has deserted neither his realism nor his interest in himself but he has changed the background of his novels from Chicago to New York.

He writes not of the New York of today but of the middle 1920's which in retrospect seems the last normal period in our lives. At least those were the last years in which the future seemed secure and the present only a foretaste of better things to come. Into the New York of those days, with little money in his pockets, Bernard Clare plunges as an older Danny O'Neill who wants first of all to be a writer but must at the same time earn a living. With enough cash to live for a short time at a cheap hotel he spends his first two weeks in the reading room of the New York Public Library, alternately dreaming of his ultimate success as a writer and of his conquest of any attractive girl who happens to be sitting opposite him at the reading table. When necessity drives him to a job in a cigar store on upper Westside Broadway he is still the thwarted writer. He looks on life and human relations as in part the projection of himself and in part the human comedy of which he is a superior observer.

It must be said frankly that Bernard is not entirely a sympathetic character, which is unfortunate since he must always hold the center of the stage. Cut off from family and stable environment his human contacts in New York are limited and necessarily resolve themselves into the casual and the episodic. His chief absorption is himself. His relations with other people of his own age fall into two patterns typical of the subjective young man who is tortured by his own sense of insecurity in relation to the world around him. Men of his own age he must impress with his greater knowledge or greater wit and if this fails he must fall back on the simple process of tearing down or ridiculing their faiths or their beliefs, whatever they may be. Since he soon establishes himself in one of the smaller Y.M.C.A.'s he finds enough targets in the latter category to keep him busy in his leisure hours. Girls whom he meets must either fall in love with him and accept him on his own terms as a future novelist of importance, giving themselves unreservedly in the process, or they must be considered as unintelligent and flighty females unworthy of serious attention.

This is a novel for readers who are interested not in plot but in character. It has the weakness of the realistic school which must achieve its effect by a multiplicity of detail but despite this fact few readers can fail to respond to the author's account of his hero's experiences in selling to small business men in Queens advertising space for what must be the New York Telephone Company's Red Book and to the very moving scene in which he waits as a spectator in Union Square for the news of Sacco and Vanzetti's execution.—*J.J., Greenwich Village, New York City.*

a brass band, march down to the courthouse square and to high-pressure all and sundry alcoholics to get in on a good thing.

We have seen that type of promotion operate. We have seen it fail. The wholesale business is a nice business, but it's not for A.A. A.A. is a quiet thing, a confidential thing, a man to man thing. It would be just super delooperus to dry up all the alkie in one bell-ringing, hell-bending, cloud-busting, gully-washing campaign, but I suspect that our present way of reaching an individual's heart is the way God wants us to do it.

Now as to the emphasis placed on anonymity. Many of us were wont to think of the anonymity of A.A. simply as a protective measure, with the added advantage, perhaps, of giving the lure of mystery to our group. But Bill, with his deep insight, early caught the spiritual significance of anonymity.

And there are two phases to this: The first is the spirit of renunciation; the second is principles before personalities, the movement before the man, the emphasis on the goodness of God rather than the puny effort of the alcoholic.

Let us accept the Twelve Points as our guide.

"To the end that," in the words of the 12th Point, "our great blessings may never spoil us.

"That we shall forever live in thankful contemplation of Him Who presides over us all."—*Clem L., Chicago.*

New York, *Wall Street Journal*: Writing of the *Bawl Street Journal*, a paper lampooning the *Wall Street Journal*, *The latter says:*

". . . In the paper is the story of Speculators Pseudonymous, an organization for reformed stock traders similar in its work to that of Alcoholics Anonymous in the liquor field."

The Individual in Relation to A.A. as a Group

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Point Three, to tell every A.A. that nobody can stop him if he thinks and does exactly what he pleases! True enough, your Second Point speaks vaguely about an *ultimate authority*, 'A loving God as he may express himself in our Group conscience. With all deference to your views, that Point does look just a little impractical to outsiders. After all, the whole world today is but the sad story of how most men have lost their conscience and so cannot find their way. Now come you alcoholics (unstable people, too, you'll admit) and you blandly tell us: 1. That A.A. is a beautiful socialism—most democratic. 2. That A.A. is also a dictatorship, its members subject to the benign rule of God. And finally, 3. That A.A. is so very individualistic that the organization cannot discipline its own members for misbehavior or unbelief.

Crux of Our Credo

"So," continue our friends, "within the society of Alcoholics Anonymous it appears to us that you have a democracy, a dictatorship and an anarchy, all functioning at once. Do these sleep quietly in the same bed—these same concepts whose conflict is tearing apart our world of today? Yet we know that A.A. works. So you people must have somehow become reconciled to these great forces. Tell us, if you can, what holds A.A. together? Why doesn't A.A. tear apart, too? If each A.A. has personal liberty which can amount to license, why doesn't your A.A. society blow up? It ought to, yet it doesn't."

Our friends of the world outside, so puzzled over this paradox, are apt to miss a most significant statement as they read our Point One. It is this: "A.A. must continue to live or most of us will surely die."

That stark assertion carries a world of meaning for every member of Alcoholics Anonymous. While it is perfectly true that no A.A. group can possibly coerce an alcoholic to contribute money, to conform to the 12 Steps of our Recovery Program or to the 12 Points of A.A. Tradition, each A.A. member is, nevertheless, most powerfully compelled, in the long run, to do these very things. The truth is, that in the life of each A.A. member, there still lurks a tyrant. His name is Alcohol. He is cunning, ruthless. And his weapons are misery, insanity and death. No matter how long we may be sober, he always stands at each man's elbow, ever watchful of an opportunity to resume his destruction. Like an agent of the Gestapo he ever threatens each A.A. citizen with torture or extinction. Unless, of course, the A.A. citizen is willing to live unselfishly, often placing the welfare of A.A. as

a whole ahead of his own personal plans and ambitions. Apparently no human being can force alcoholics to live happily and usefully together. But Mr. John Barleycorn can—and he often does!

Rugged Souls Return

A story will illustrate: Some time ago we made a long list of our seeming failures in the first years of A.A. Every alcoholic on the list had been given a good exposure. Most of them had attended A.A. meetings for several months. After slipping and sliding around they had all disappeared. Some said they were not alcoholic. Others couldn't, stand for our belief in God. Many had developed intense resentments toward their fellows. Anarchists at heart, they could not conform to our society. And because our society did not conform to them, they quit. *But only temporarily.* Over the years, most of these so-called failures have returned, often becoming magnificent members. We never ran after them; they returned of their own accord. Each time I spot one newly back, I ask him why he has rejoined our fold. Invariably his answer runs like this: "When I first contacted A.A. I learned that alcoholism is a disease; an obsession of the mind that compels us to drink, and a sensitivity of the body that condemns us to go mad or die if we keep on. I also learned that A.A. worked, at least for some alcoholics. But I then disliked A.A. methods, hated some of the alcoholics I met there and I still toyed with the idea that I could do the job of quitting all by myself. After several more years of terrible drinking, which I found I was powerless to control, I gave up. I returned to A.A. because it was the only place left to go; I'd tried everything else. Arrived at this point, I knew that I must act quickly; that I must adopt the 12 Steps of the A.A. Recovery Program; that I must cease hating my fellow alcoholics; that I must now take my place among them as a very small part of that great whole, the society of Alcoholics Anonymous. It all boiled down to a simple question of 'do or die'. I had to conform to A.A. principles—or else. No more anarchy for me. So I'm back."

This illustration shows why we of A.A. must needs hang together "or else hang separately." We are players at a stern drama where death is the prompter to those who falter. Could anyone imagine a more powerful restraint upon us than this?

Yet the history of uncontrolled drinking shows that fear alone has chastened but few alcoholics. Much more than fear is needed to bind us anarchists together. Several years ago, speaking at Baltimore, I ran on at a great rate

about the terrible sufferings we alcoholics had endured. My talk must have had a strong flavor of self pity and exhibitionism. I kept referring to our drinking experience as a great calamity, a terrible misfortune. After the meeting I was approached by a Catholic clergyman who genially remarked, "I heard you say you thought your drinking a great misfortune. But it seems to me that in your case it was your *great good fortune*. Was not this terrible experience the very thing which humbled you so completely that, you were able to find God? Did not suffering open your eyes and your heart? All the opportunity you have today, all this wonderful experience you call A.A., once had its beginnings in deep personal suffering. In your case that was actually no misfortune. It was your great good fortune. You A.A.s are a privileged people."

Searching the Motives

That simple yet profound remark affected me deeply. It is a landmark in my life. It set me thinking as never before about my relationship to my fellow A.A.s. It caused me to question my own motives. "Why had I come to Baltimore anyway? Had I come only to enjoy the applause and approval of my fellows? Was I there as a teacher or a preacher? Did I fancy myself a great moral crusader?" On reflection, I shamefacedly admitted to myself that I had all these motives, that I had been taking a vicarious and rather self-centered enjoyment out of my visit. But was that all? Had I no better motive than my natural craving for prestige and applause? Had I come to Baltimore in response to no better or deeper need than that? Then followed a flash of realization. Underneath my shallow and childish vainglory I saw Someone much greater than I at work! Someone who sought to transform me; who would, if I permitted, sweep away my less worthy desires and replace them with truer aspirations. In these I might, were I humble enough, find peace.

At that moment I saw ever so clearly why I really should have come to Baltimore. I should have journeyed there with the happy conviction that I needed the Baltimoreans even more than they needed me; that I needed to share with them both their burdens and their joys; that I needed to feel at one with them, merging myself into their society; that even if they did insist on thinking me their teacher, I should actually feel myself their pupil. I saw that I had been living too much alone, too much aloof from my fellows, and too deaf to that Voice within. Instead of coming to Baltimore as a simple agent bearing the message of experience, I had come

as a founder of Alcoholics Anonymous. And, like a salesman at a convention, I had been wearing my identification badge so that all might well see it. How much better it would have been, had I felt *gratitude* rather than self-satisfaction—*gratitude* that I had once suffered the pains of alcoholism, *gratitude* that a miracle of recovery had been worked upon me from above, *gratitude* for the privilege of serving my fellow alcoholics and *gratitude* for those fraternal ties which bound me ever closer to them in a comradeship such as few societies of men have ever known. Truly did the clergyman say, "Your misfortune has become your good fortune. You A.A.s are a privileged people."

Anarchy Melts

My experience at Baltimore was not unique. Every A.A. has such spiritual landmarks in his life—moments of insight which draw him closer to his fellows and to his Maker. The cycle is ever the same. First we turn to A.A. because we may die if we don't. Next, we depend upon its fellowship and philosophy to stop our drinking. Then, for a time, we tend once more to depend upon ourselves, seeking happiness through power and acclaim. Finally, some incident, perhaps a sharp reverse, opens our eyes still wider. Then, as we learn our new lesson and *really accept its teaching* we enter a new level of better feeling and doing. Life takes on a finer meaning. We glimpse realities new to us; we apprehend the kind of love which assures us that it is more blessed to give than to receive. These are some of the reasons why we think that Alcoholics Anonymous may be a new form of society.

Each A.A. Group is a safe haven. But it is always circumscribed, however, by the tyrant Alcohol. Like the men on Eddie Rickenbacker's raft, we who live in the haven of A.A. cling together with an intensity of purpose which the outside world seldom comprehends. The anarchy of the individual melts away. Self love subsides and democracy becomes a reality. We begin to know true freedom of the spirit. The awareness grows that all is well; that each of us may implicitly trust in Him who is our loving Guide from within—and from above

Have Yon Tried This One?

From the *New York Sun*:

Amethyst is composed of two Greek words meaning "not to be drunk."

The ancients believed this stone would keep the wearer sober.



EDITORIAL ON THE 9th STEP

(Continued from Page 2)

(!) we felt so remorseful. Then we said, "I'm sorry," all over again. But that is not the way we are going to say it this time, if we are sincere about the 9th Step.

Do we then ever become articulate and express our regrets to those whom we have hurt? Obviously! It's the only decent, Christian-like thing to do. We should.

You can take it or leave it; I took it several times with gratifying results. But if you are one of those persons whom false pride, or a past hangover from alcoholic egotism, holds back from saying: "Forgive me," then I feel sorry for you. And I'll tell you the reason, shortly.

There are on my list of amends five persons. Specifically then (besides living the 12 Steps), how did I commence to make amends to those whom I had hurt? I'll use as an example my employer.

My employer is a "prince-of-a-chap." He's charitable, tolerant and extremely good-natured, all of which fine attributes "alcoholic me" had taken advantage of for nearly two years.

I set a goal for myself. For six consecutive months I would not, while working for him, be absent from work one day, barring illness or something over which I had no control. That I have done, my longest period of non-absenteeism in the last ten years.

Now when The Chief steps into our office in the morning on his way to the San Francisco office his eyes are brimful of twinkles and he booms out at me in a voice one can hear on the next floor. . . . I'll bet, while we're exchanging greetings, we're both thinking the same thing:—"Teddie wasn't drinking yesterday. And today, too, she is sober, thank the Lord!"

He did a favor for me not long ago, which I appreciated, and I thanked him for I am indebted to him for that and for past consideration. I said, "I don't know how in the world I'll ever be able to repay you." He said something like this: "You just keep on being a good girl—like you are now—and that's how you'll repay me." I thought to myself: He means keep on being "good and dry."—*T.L., Oakland, Calif.*

A.A. DIGEST —Excerpts from Group Publications

The Rope. Yarn (A.A. Seamen's Club), New York City: "Honesty with one's self is a 'must' for constructive thinking. A.A. gives us just that in place of former turmoil. DON'T KID YOURSELF—no one can suffer out your hang-over but yourself. . . ."

* * *

The Eye-Opener, Los Angeles, Calif.: "Through the aid and eager cooperation of Judge John J. Ford, with Probation Officer W. W. Lord, a really outstanding experiment has been tried.

"In six weeks' time, 81 alcoholics were released on waiver without appearing in court. They had made no promises but only had indicated a real interest in A.A., and in the judgment of the A.A. member there at the time were worth taking a chance with.

"Upon hitting the street they were told more about A.A. and then directed to the first available meeting. However, they were also told they were *not* on probation and were under no compulsion by the law to have anything more to do with A.A. *The decision was theirs* to make.

"Sixty-four have been sober for periods ranging from a few days to six weeks; seventeen fell by the wayside almost at once. . . . So far these first ones have brought 19 others into the meetings to find out what A.A. is all about. . . ."

* * *

Weekly News Letter (Deep East Texas Group), Nacogdoches, Tex.: "At the last meeting in Nacogdoches the 35 A.A.s and wives traveled a total of 3,480 miles in order to 'make a meeting' (and maybe to partake of that delicious barbecue which wound up being served at the Country Club). It was an inspiration to see that fine group of thirteen from Longview, 160 miles round trip, five from Palestine, 130 miles round trip, and two from Centerville, 240 miles round trip."

* * *

Dubuque Alanews, Dubuque, Iowa: "A member of A.A. is like a locomotive, always on the upgrade. Good works are the firemen, and faith is the engineer. Our meeting rooms are where we take on coal and water at least once a week. And it doesn't hurt to take on a little extra fuel once in a while at some other coaling station, for emergency use. . . . We can all stand a few extra shots of A.A., so why not sample the brands our neighbors put out?"

* * *

Central Bulletin, Cleveland, Ohio: "Self discipline is a lifetime effort, even for non-alcoholics. It takes time to get the upper hand over bad habits of thought and action, and then we have

to keep on guard continuously to see to it that we do not slip back or that we do not fall prey to the evils of egotism in other ways. That is why it is well to keep on taking inventory."

Yale Summer School Opens July 7

New Haven, Conn., *Evening Register*: "The School of Alcohol Studies of the Laboratory of Applied Physiology at Yale University will hold its fourth annual summer session from July 7 through August 2, Prof. E. M. Jellinek, director, announced. . . ."

"The object of the summer session is, according to Professor Jellinek, 'to make the most recent findings of scientific research available for application to the problems of alcohol in the community.'

"The educational program of lectures and seminars is designed to meet the needs of those who are engaged in professions or activities in which a thorough knowledge of the facts about alcohol problems will be of particular usefulness."

Barley !!! CORN !!!

(What's the funniest A.A. tale or quip you've heard? Others would like to hear it. Send it in.)

The old Irish woman was on her way back to Dublin from the north. The customs man fished out a bottle from its temporary sanctuary in a voluminous nightdress.

"And what's this?" he asked. "Shure an' it's holy water," said the woman, clutching for it.

The customs man had his suspicions. He pulled out the cork and sniffed. "This is whisky," he said sternly.

Up went the old woman's hands in amazement. "Glory be! A miracle!"

* * *

From Manny F., Miami, Fla.

PLATITUDES WITH LATITUDE

(Strictly cum grano salis)

I joined A.A. to learn how to become a controlled drinker.

I stopped drinking just to please my mother.

I get drunk often but I know I am not an alcoholic.

I can stop drinking any time I want to. I do EVERYTHING better with a few drinks under my belt.

Alcohol makes me think more clearly.

The Clip Sheet

St. Paul, Minn., *Dispatch*: "Women drunkards are on the increase in St. Paul, in the opinion of those who study the problem here.

"Increase is noted both in those women who drink 'socially' and those who drink 'hard' and often alone.

"Total number of such women alcoholics ranges from estimates of 500 to 1,000. These estimates are based on a report by the Mayor's Committee on Alcoholism."

* * *

Brockton, Mass., *Enterprise and Times*: "... A local organization interested in helping each other solve a personal problem, presented a book to the library. The book is *Alcoholics Anonymous* and the Brockton Group of that organization is the donor. We admire the group and the manner in which its members have attacked their own problems. In presenting this volume to the library, they have done so in the hope that others who may wish to know more about Alcoholics Anonymous may do so easily."

* * *

Marquette, Mich., *Mining Journal*: "One hundred eighty Marquette residents heard discussions on 'Alcohol and Modern Life' by a public health physician, a member of the licensing and enforcement division of the Michigan Liquor Control Commission and an attorney who is a member of Alcoholics Anonymous at a conference in Guild hall here. . . ."

* * *

New Rochelle, N. Y., *Standard-Star*: "Appeals for greater awareness of the magnitude of the problem of alcoholism in Westchester and throughout the country, more sympathetic understanding of the chronic alcoholic as a sick person on the part of the physician, and recognition of this illness as a public health problem requiring facilities for care and treatment in both voluntary and public hospitals, were made by speakers at a meeting of the Westchester Medical Society on the general subject of 'Alcoholism.' . . . Three hundred doctors and laymen attended."

* * *

Another recent AP story . . . this one from Atlantic City, N. J.:

"Don't use sleeping tablets in the barbiturate family when you're drinking (or vice versa) unless it's a long sleep you're after.

"This was the gist of a report to the American Therapeutic Society by Dr. H. B. Haag who, with two research workers at the Medical College of Virginia, has concluded a series of experiments illustrating the dangers of combin-

(Continued on Page 10)

Mail Call for All A.A.s at Home or Abroad

Letters to this department are invited on any subject pertinent to A.A. Due to space limitations you are asked to hold your letters to a maximum of 350 words.

Only initials will be published unless the writer authorizes use of his first name as identification for A.A. friends.

The Grapevine will not divulge the full name of any writer but will forward A.A. communications addressed to the writers of letters published here.—The Editors.

Sunrise, and a New Vision

From Richmond, Va.

Alcoholics Anonymous at work was demonstrated in a Richmond, Va.—New York City setting on Sunday, May 26, 1946. At 4.40 a.m. that day, a woman member of the Richmond A.A. Group boarded a plane for New York, to seek hospital treatment there.

Two Richmond A.A.s—man and woman—stayed up all night to walk "the last mile" with her. At the LaGuardia airport to meet the plane were two New York A.A.s—man and woman. The man had met the Richmond plane passenger two weeks before, had been in her company only three times. The New York A.A. woman was a complete stranger. They, too, were walking "the last mile" with another human being needing help.

Was it symbolic of rebirth that the plane trip started on a Sabbath morning? The woman passenger was making her first long plane trip. To her, the method of transportation and the experiences to follow, represented a new adventure. A gorgeous sunrise lighted up the horizon. . . .

She was sailing into a new horizon, seeking sunrise and a new vision on life, before sunset intermingles with the final shadows of life.

She will have to stand on her own feet when she returns home to her children, family, job and A.A. friends. She will not walk alone if she sincerely asks God's help, and lends self-help in the process. A.A. cannot keep sober any one who wants to drink, but A.A. can give friendship, example and inspiration.

No credit is due the four A.A.s who helped a fifth A.A. member. It is insurance against taking that first drink. To remain a "dry drunk", and not help others in need, will never give one the exhilarating feeling that the 12 Steps induce, when followed.—*Bob H.*

Material for Discussion

From Oakland, Calif.

Our national monthly, I believe, can well be read by all possible members and used more for discussions in groups. Could not group and

larger central bodies order bundles in reasonable quantities—at least now—in order to extend the reading and study of the latest and best thought on our grand association? I am basically in agreement with *Tom K., Pasadena*, on policy clarification and increased guidance for newcomers.

In the May issue *J.L.N.* on "Lack of Faith" almost speaks as though group therapy and spiritual (or religious) aspects are mutually exclusive. I feel there is a tendency in some discussions to be mechanical (either-or) rather than "organic". There can, of course, be no true group therapy without the spiritual aspects—the giving by the individual—faith in the group as a Power also. Indeed, Link is well quoted in the lead article—personality is habits and skills which interest and serve other people. The group can help the individual, also, to wholeheartedly pray in practise, and cultivate the "earnest thought which is prayer".

I prefer the parallel on a Tree to that on a *New House*. The tree gives, the house does not, unless guests, friends and those who need help share it. Giving is the positive, primary thing (12th Step), insurance on the house is a by-product. "True love differs from dross and clay—that to divide is not to take away".—*George M.*

How Much Is Too Much?

From Wilmington, Del.

Is there such a thing as having too much A.A. association?

Yes, I believe this is true, from this standpoint. As for myself, I had become, as I believe most of us had, a very undesirable person, to my fellow workers, neighbors, family and friends, and came to know that I had to do something about it. Therefore, I joined A.A. to make myself a more desirable citizen, better liked by my friends, better to get along with at my work, and more respected and loved by my family, and A.A. has done just that. But I don't believe I should spend all my time with A.A. and drop these former friends, give up all the things I've always wanted to do—namely—go *any* place, sober, and be respected, entertain in my home decently fellow workers, neighbors and friends of long standing not in A.A. I think, above all, I should and need to attend where at all possible, the A.A. meetings, in fact, put them first as to my engagements. Also I feel that I've made some of the best and finest friends I've ever had in A.A., and I enjoy the social part the club has offered me. My home is open any time, day or night, to all A.A. members, who are most welcome. But back to the question, I don't think all one's free time from

business should be spent on A.A. work and association just with A.A. members, for this may have a tendency to limit one's sociability, and I believe would only make it harder to go out in the world, should one's work take him to perhaps a place where there wasn't any A.A. club.

Therefore, I think there should be a varied program of life aside from A.A. and that too much A.A. association could lead to difficulties. Besides, a part of free time should be spent, I believe, in association with some church, showing appreciation to the Higher Power for all the good gotten from A.A. and its kind way of life.—*C.F.J.*

Silkworth Recordings

From Manhattan, N. Y.

I am a recent graduate of Knickerbocker Hospital, where I landed after a rather bad slip, a slip that taught me a great deal, but possibly not enough.

On the fifth day of my five-day stay I got a psychiatric A.A. pep talk from that sainted little coach, Dr. W. D. Silkworth. We had quite a session and his "Listen, fella!" still rings in my ears. But not enough of what else he said rings in those self same ears. I only wish it did.

But I think there is a way in which his warning voice can be made to ring for me again.

I told Dr. Silkworth when our session broke up that I wished he'd make a record—a phonograph recording—of one of his actual pep talks to an outgoing patient, perhaps one for each sex if that should be necessary.

I know this: That if I felt a slip coming on it would be mighty salutary therapy for me to be able to turn on the Silkworth record and listen hard. For me it would be good preventive medicine.

Somehow I think the danger of that slip would pass—and quickly.—*J.W.C.*

Habit Helps

From Linda Vista, Calif.

I have had for some time a curiosity to find out what it was in A.A. that kept me sober when all else failed, so I do a lot of thinking. The results of that thinking I like to pass on to others in the hope that in it will be something to help them find this new way of life so full of sunshine, happiness and contentment.

As I review my past I find that I was decidedly a creature of nature and very easily fell into a rut that sooner or later got me into trouble.

This fault in my character, or whatever it is, finally led me to the brink of utter ruin and dis-

(Continued on Page 12)

Habit Formation in a New Personality

(Continued from Page 1)

reference to their particular characteristics and independently of time and purpose. The answer seems to be, first, that the transformation is a single, not a double operation; and second, that the process of casting off the old and engrafting the new, concurrently, is a process of growth, of evolution, having as its ultimate goal a complete integration of the personality.

In other words, the bad habit is not rooted out by excision or extirpation so as to leave a vacuum for occupancy by the next tenant in the person of a good habit. On the contrary, the very same energies and resources which were expended in the pursuit of the bad habit must be used again—*this time, however, with proper motivation and aims*—directed and channeled to a higher and more constructive level. Psychologists call it sublimation, and moralists call it reformation; in the phrase of the day, we might call it psychological re-conversion.

In terms of the A.A. program, the motivation which should inspire us, the aims which should guide us, and the habits which should be cultivated, are clearly set forth in the 12 Steps. There we have a recognition and declaration of our inability, unaided, to solve the problem of living; "the emptying of the memory" as St. John of the Cross would call the moral inventory; the aspiration to higher levels of honesty and tolerance; and the dedication to a life of usefulness by participation in activities which interest and serve others. "The spiritual life is not a theory. *We have to live it.*" (*Alcoholics Anonymous*, p. 95.)

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Personality Formula

It is in this last respect that the process of habit formation, or, more properly, re-formation takes place in the reconstructive way we have tried to describe. The nub of the matter is that habits of service and self-sacrifice are of the essence of personality. The most significant clue to the psycho-dynamics of personality is in the Biblical concept: 'For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.'

As has been stated, the ultimate objective, in the attainment of which constructive habits are a determinative factor, is complete integration. In a properly integrated personality, the ego or individual consciousness is in tune with the universal consciousness, or the Higher Power as we understand it. And the integrated individual consciousness directs and guides the mind and body in a harmonious, intelligent and spontaneous way. Integration of personality, then, has its physical and mental as well as its spiritual aspects, all of them related to the phenomenon of habit.

Alcoholics, and neurotics generally, are saturated with the toxic substance of fear, distrust, inferiority and despair. For this, a well known psychologist recommends the active use of the body, bodily movements being a common denominator of personality. But again, the exercises suggested are not just any bodily activity but those carried on with or in relation to other people, in play or in work. Likewise, pursuits predominantly mental in character advance personal integration when helpfully shared with others.

Task a Personal One

Much of the work of individual reconstruction must be initiated and performed by the alcoholic himself. "After all," it is written in *Alcoholics Anonymous* (p. 116), "our problems were of our own making. Bottles were only a symbol." One looks askance, therefore, at any system which calls for transference to professional advisors of the individual's own responsibility in the premises. Similarly, by attributing the patient's unfortunate plight to morbid complexes, repressions, moral illness or the subconscious mind, the individual's incentive and opportunity to develop habits of self-control by progressive action are postponed. Human nature being ever alert, to find excuses, for its mistakes and weaknesses is astute to adopt pseudo-scientific explanations for the abandonment of the last vestige of moral responsibility (What Is the Alcoholic's Moral Responsibility? *Grapevine*, November, 1945, p. 1).

On the other hand, the alcoholic's job of personal re-conversion is one of considerable magnitude, entailing strenuous individual effort regardless of how much human and divine help he receives. Upon the authority of St. Francois de Sales, therefore, he is entitled to be patient with himself as he is expected to be with others:

"Be patient with everyone, but above all with yourself. I mean, do not be disheartened by your imperfections, but always rise up with fresh courage. I am glad you make a fresh beginning daily; there is not better means of attaining to the spiritual life than by continually beginning again, and never thinking that we have done enough. How are we to be patient in bearing with our neighbor's faults, if we are impatient in bearing with our own? He who is fretted by his own failings will not correct them; all profitable correction comes from a calm, peaceful mind."

R.F.S., *Montclair, N. J.*

The Clip Sheet (Cont. from Page 8)

ing certain sleeping pills and alcohol.

"Experimenting on mice, dogs and rabbits, Dr. Haag reported that, the toxic effect of seconal, for instance, was increased 40 per cent when the animals were fed a small quantity of alcohol.

"The 'chain reaction' was even greater when barbital and phenobarbital were used, the researchers learned.

"Half the animals used in the tests were killed in a short time. . . ."

* * *

Chicago, Ill., *Sun*: "Sipping tea rather than drinking old-fashioned and Martinis at cocktail parties is the future in store for a group of prominent Chicago businessmen. . . .

"They feel that holding cocktail parties is a bad example to the younger generation.

"So they have organized 'Alcoholics Anonymous.' The last word, of course, means 'bearing a name,' as opposed to Alcoholics Anonymous."

VETERANS OF TWO WARS FIND HELP IN OWN HOSPITAL GROUP

(Continued from Page 1)

his early thirties with submarine service in the recent war—had been committed to the hospital by his wife. Because of her past experiences with him, she refused to sign his release. A.A. had confidence in him, arranged for his discharge from the hospital, and got him a job in the vicinity. Joe made good, later got a job in his home town, and has since been reunited with his wife.

Ted, an aviator of the first World War who had kicked around with A.A. since its inception without making the grade, ended up in the Northport Veterans' Hospital in 1939. In 1941 he managed to get a commission in the Air Corps, but within a short time he drank himself out of the service and back into the hospital. Recently he was again discharged from the hospital after several more trips in and out. But now he has that "something" that gives A.A.s faith in a fellow-member.

Medical officers and employees of the hospital give the group their support and co-operation. One employee, Charlie C., got his start in A.A. through the group. He has since been instrumental in forming a group at Kings Park State Hospital on Long Island.

The A.A.s who are contributing to the success of the A.A. group at the Northport hospital hope that they are laying the groundwork for a program long needed by veterans. Through this kind of work, the many veterans with alcoholic tendencies returning from the recent war may be able to recognize their ailment without waiting fifteen years or more—as many World War I veterans did.—*Fred S., Manhattan.*

A. A.'s Country-Wide News Circuit

A.A. in Atlanta, Ga., has made great progress since its birth five years ago. The two groups are plugging for the establishment of an alcoholic ward in the big Fulton-DeKalb County Hospital soon to be built. . . . The Newark Group has moved into its new meeting quarters at 66 North 7th Street, about one block from the Alanon Clubhouse. More than 100 people were at the first meeting in their new home. Another group, known as the North Newark A.A., is growing to such an extent that they are now forming a second one. Other new groups in this vicinity are the Vailsburg and Clinton Hill. . . . Rochester's *fourth birthday* dinner was attended by 230 members and guests. This group has branched out into morning meetings to provide for night shift workers or others who are unable to attend evening meetings. . . . To extend the scope of its usefulness, the Middletown, Conn., Group each week invites six different guests: doctors, pastors, judges or other substantial citizens.

* * *

Two new A.A. broadcasts have gone on the air—in Dallas and Los Angeles. . . . The Cincinnati Fellowship of A.A. celebrated its *first anniversary* in the new clubhouse early in July. When the idea of obtaining a new clubhouse was first suggested there were numerous objections and many predictions were made of future trouble regarding the administration of the affairs of the club. Happily, none of these predictions has materialized. The financial and administrative affairs of the club are handled by elected representatives and the Board of Trustees, all of whom are two-year-old members.

* * *

Cooperating with the Fort Worth Group, Dr. W. B. Nies, City-County physician, addressed the Texas State Medical Association in Galveston on "Relation of Alcoholism to Public Health." Dr. Nies presented his facts on alcoholism to this medical body for the first time in Texas; other city-county health officials became interested, asked for more information and expressed their desire to cooperate more closely with A.A. groups throughout the state. . . . Growing membership of the four-year-old Dallas Group (approximately 150 strong) has necessitated division into 10 units for the weekly closed meetings held in members' homes, offices and hotels. This group, now searching for permanent quarters, reports an increasing cooperation of medical, clergy and law-enforcement officials.

* * *

The Indianapolis Group now numbers about 275 members. There are five sectional groups: Broad Ripple (bi-partitioned this spring because

of luxuriant growth), East Side, West Side, Women's Group and the Meyerson Group. The present arrangement provides a meeting by one of the sub-groups every night in the week.

* * *

The Pensacola, Fla., Group is receiving many inquiries as a result of an A.A. advertisement in their local paper. . . . After some five and one-half years there are now nine well-established groups in California's San Diego County: La Mesa, San Marcos, Chula Vista, Old Town, Presidio, City Jail Group, Pacific Beach Women's Group, San Diego Women's Group and the San Diego Group. A group of San Diego A.A.s were present at the first meeting in El Centro; representatives of the local clergy, civil authorities and radio were present.

* * *

Big crowds of Cleveland A.A.s were attracted to the Little Theatre when Mack's Merrie Minstrels presented their third annual minstrel show. It ran two nights and was a complete success, with end men, an interlocutor, a chorus, and even a big olio. . . . That city's Lorain Avenue Monday Group celebrated its *fifth anniversary* with a meeting and dance. . . . Another big event for the Ohioans was the third annual A.A. boxing show. Five hundred fight fans saw the nine bouts. The previous night, the A.A. Bowling League Banquet (for members of 32 participating teams) was served to 200. Teams from the Glenville and West Side Morning Groups were declared champions.

24 New Groups

New groups reported in the month ending June 7 include:

CALIFORNIA—Anaheim and Whittier.
CONNECTICUT—Saybrook.
FLORIDA—KeyWest.
GEORGIA—Macon.
ILLINOIS—North Side (Peoria).
MAINE—New Brunswick.
MICHIGAN—Clare and Midland.
MINNESOTA—Elbow Lake.
MISSOURI—Kansas City Salvation Army.
MONTANA—Fort Missoula.
NEBRASKA—Auburn.
NORTH CAROLINA—Henderson.
NEW JERSEY—Passaic.
NEW YORK—Lockport.
OHIO—Tri-City of Gallipolis.
TEXAS—Hamilton, Mission and San Augustine.
VIRGINIA—Newport News.
WYOMING—Cheyenne.
CANADA—Vancouver, B.C., Island.
NEW ZEALAND—Richmond.

In "Easy Does It." its second annual variety show, the East Orange, N. J., Group went to town again this year, displaying lots of talent and ingenuity. The show was produced and directed by the group, with scenery painted by the members. Stage crew, electricians, ticket-takers and ushers, all were recruited from the local A.A.s. And the cast of 36 "Easy-doers" came from the group. The music was furnished by the Alanon orchestra from Newark. This entirely A.A. production brought an audience of 600 A.A.s and friends from nearby communities. Some of the rollicking musical numbers and satirical skits were "The March of Crime," "You Made Him What He Is Today," "Boys Will Be Girls," and "Don't Point."

* * *

This has been "open season" for members of the Boston, Mass., area. More than 500 people gathered to hear the talks at the recent open meeting in Worcester; about 200 attended the first open meeting of the Woburn Group. The second monthly joint meeting of the Greater Boston Groups, for the benefit of the Central Service Committee, had as guest speaker Austen Lake, columnist and war correspondent. A member of the Boston Group addressed a gathering of the District Nurses' Association in Swampscott. . . . The Pittsfield, Mass., Group, started last November, has now reached a point where it is beginning to be felt in the community. Today the total membership is 18. At the first open dinner meeting five-minute speakers were heard from Albany, Schenectady and Troy, N. Y.; Hartford, Conn.; Springfield and Boston, Mass.

* * *

The one-man group in Mission, Tex., has been 12th stepping by writing letters to be read at meetings of larger groups. He got going about six months ago. . . . Such a large number of California state institutions have asked groups in the Los Angeles area to introduce A.A. to their patients that the Los Angeles Central Committee has had to coordinate the work among the various groups. . . . The Mill Creek Group of Salem, Ore., recently held an essay contest for members, who wrote on "What A.A. Means to Me." . . . Des Moines A.A.s recently had a professional movie camera crew record activities at one of their regular Saturday night open house parties at their newly-painted clubhouse. The showing (for members and friends only) is scheduled for July.

* * *

With help from the Denver, Colo., Group, an A.A. brunch got started in Cheyenne, Wyo. . . . A Detroit A.A. spoke for the Saginaw County

(Mich.) Public Health Association at a community dinner meeting on "Alcoholism" attended by teachers, doctors, public officials and other interested residents. . . . A transcription of the "Cavalcade of America" A.A. story was played at an open meeting of the Seattle, Wash., Group.

* * *

The Kansas City, Mo., Group, which recently observed its *fifth anniversary* with a supper and door show, some time ago started holding small neighborhood meetings. Beginning with 10 units, there are now 17. The success of these small neighborhood discussion units is reflected in the increased attendance at the weekly central meetings, where the average number has risen from 125 to 250. The group's membership has doubled since its fourth anniversary. . . . A district group meeting, representing the four groups that sprang from the Bellevue, Ohio, Group—Norwalk, Sandusky, Port Clinton and Fremont—was held at the Bellevue Town Hall. . . . The Fresno, Calif., Group, which held its first meeting March 1, now has nine active members. The address is P. O. Box 131. . . . Memphis, Tenn. A.A.s observed their *second anniversary* with an open house for members and friends.

* * *

The newly organized Alano Club in Milwaukee, which was incorporated under the state laws of Wisconsin, is holding a series of Sunday evening buffet suppers. The Milwaukee A.A.s invite out-of-town members to their clubrooms in the Metropolitan Block, 3rd and State Streets. . . . Now that vacation time is here, the Toronto Group sends a cordial invitation to A.A.s who may be traveling in the North to make their clubrooms at 1170 Yonge Street their headquarters. "If we can tell them where to catch some

big ones, or help in any way to make their stay in or around Toronto happier, it will just tickle us pink," writes a Toronto member.

* * *

A capacity crowd of 600 gathered at the *tenth semi-annual* banquet of the Minneapolis Group to honor 56 members who had achieved their first year of aridity since the last banquet. A.A.s in the towns of Alexandria, Osakis, Morris, Elbow Lake and Starbuck, Minn., gather in one of these towns at least monthly for meetings; the three A.A.s in Fairvault are striving toward larger numbers.

Mail Call

(Continued from Page 9)

aster, to the point where it was either do a complete about face and start back up or jump off the brink.

I now believe that that very flaw in my character—getting in a rut easily—is one that has made it possible for me to stay on the A.A. program and find this new way of life.

I early formed the habit of attending all the meetings I could, the habit of taking all the activity I could in the program, the habit of study and research into my life to dig out the flaws in me; the habit of never allowing myself to forget that I was an alcoholic; the habit of listening with an open mind; the habit of taking my own inventory every time someone slipped to see if I was thinking like he had been; the habit of honesty with myself; the habit of tolerance, and last but not least, the habit of seeking the company and companionship of my own kind, the same habit I formerly had, only now, instead of looking for them in saloons, cocktail bars and places where they serve liquor, I look for them in the A.A. meetings, where we are all trying to do the same thing—that is, stay sober, on an all-time basis.—*J.F.H.*

Works Make the Man

From Chicago:

Question: Having attained sobriety and resumed a normal life, do we find the principles and precepts of A.A. more effective in directing our lives than those of other organisations such as churches, lodges, societies, etc.?

Yes, we do. The test of anything is "will it work?" I should like to add practices to the question asked. The principles, precepts and practices of A.A. are a practical distillation of many faiths, hopes and aspirations, brought down from lofty heights to guide us in actually living better lives. Other organizations are more like the classroom work. In A.A. we have a compassionate cooperative understanding of our

fellows and while the 12 Steps may not be the stairway to Heaven, the treading of them daily leads to the worship of God. No man ever sank under the burden of the day. It is when tomorrow's burden is added to the burden of today, that the weight is more than a man can bear. Herein lies our emphasis on the 24-hour program of abstinence. Each of us has known the utmost of humiliation, of despair and of defeat. So why should we who know the Resurrection, have fears of any disaster which might befall us?

In A.A. we do not engage in moralizing or preaching. We are mindful that no one of us is any better than the other so we put ourselves in the other fellow's shoes. The rule of the game is to actually lend a hand instead of talking about it—to lift up to—not to talk down to. Who can jest at scars who never felt the wound? We have felt wounds. Therefore, through our compassionate understanding and group fellowship, we are able to transcend the doctrines and dogmas of other organizations, and practice our principles. We in no way deprecate the teachings of other media for good in the world; in fact, the principles of religion are incorporated in our 12 Steps. We believe that . . . good works make the man; therein lies the effectiveness of the A.A. program.

A Planned Way

From Jackson, Mich.

"I planned it that way," was the theme of an address by Eddie D. of Detroit at the formal opening of A.A. clubrooms in Jackson recently.

"I had to make my choice, to live an A.A. or to die a victim of chronic alcoholism. There was no alternative. So I am here tonight because I have planned it that way.

"I am grateful to those who have shown me the way, and I am happy to be able to show other victims the way to overcome the disease of alcoholism.

"The so-called slips our A.A. friends have are not, to my mind, slips. They are planned drunks or binges. Those A.A.s who are really trying to live the A.A. way will admit as much when they recover and return to the program.

"I now pick my jobs with an eye to helping me to stay with the A.A. program, rather than the salary, and I am happy then, for I planned it that way."

A.A.s were present from Kalamazoo and Battle Creek. Local non-alcoholic friends also attended. Similar meetings will be held the first Saturday of each month.—*G.R.I.*

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