



Published by  
Cleveland Central Committee of A.A.  
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Vol. XXXVIII-No. 4

## PRACTICE-A MUST

The word practice is defined as "repeating an action in anticipation of improvement". This certainly fits the advice we are given for living in the last of our twelve steps. In no uncertain terms throughout the big book, we are shown that the taking of the steps provide support for our continuing growth. (The personal kind, not the public growth so readily attained by just being at a lot of meetings.) Those who cleared the path we follow certainly did not intend a once in a life time remedy for past ills, followed by a sense of moral righteousness that would allow us to slide through the rest of our days under the protection of a benevolent god, who if prayed to often enough-would, in return, keep us happy. Our book, in fact, promises a return to sanity, a normal life without drinking; not rendered unaware, not a coping state of existence, certainly not a life centered around a weekly venting of fears and frustrations at meetings where we repeat the same problems in the hope of a magic solution. Sanity and normal imply the need for an ever increasing participation in an ever expanding circle of personal relationships . . . at home . . . at work . . . "in all our affairs."

On page 44 we find a caution that can be downright scary: "If a mere code of morals or a better philosophy of life were sufficient to overcome alcoholism, many of us would have recovered long ago. etc" Even more direct is the last paragraph on page 43. "Once more; the alcoholic at certain times has no effective mental defense against the first drink. Except in rare cases, neither he nor any other human being can provide such a defense. His defense must come from a higher power." If we should think that these words apply only to the newcomer, we need only look around. Too many of us slip out after 2, 5, 10, 20 or even more years, and get drunk. (and, firstly, that's what we were here to avoid) A lot of them don't make it back either . . . "There is always a chance for another drunk, not always a chance for another recovery." Sure that's a cliché . . . it wouldn't be though unless it were true. That's what clichés are.

It seems better not to take the chance at all . . . And what most have found, is that the steps . . . all the steps . . . are really the method of developing a relationship with a higher power and a sense of self as described in the Serenity Prayer . . . Step Eleven does say "to expand" and for good reason.

Terry W.  
Bay West Discussion

## AREA WIDE MEETING

Area wide meeting is sponsored by Central Committee to enable members of all groups in North-eastern Ohio area to meet each other and share experiences, to hear outstanding leads from out of town.

This meeting is held in January, March, June, September and December.

March 9th, 1980, area wide meeting will be held at St. Malachi's School Hall, 2401 Washington St. Speakers will be from our own area, Walter & Plumie H. of New Way of Life. This is a A.A. & Al-Anon lead. Come and hear this couple tell their story of how it was and the way it is now.

The Serenity Singers from Akron will also be in attendance.

Area wide meetings are open to the public. To obtain information on alcoholism as well as what A.A. can do to help the suffering alcoholic.

## MONEY WE CANNOT KEEP

Most people do not realize that A.A.'s Tradition of self-support is really vital in our recovery. So sometimes in the obituary of a wellknown local A.A., the newspaper notes that the family of the deceased "wants in memoriam contributions sent to A.A."

It is a beautiful gesture, of course, and we are deeply grateful to these non-A.A. family members and friends who send us checks. We are proud of their respect for A.A. and gratitude to it.

But, of course, we have to return such donations, and it is not always easy to do so without hurting the feelings of the nonalcoholic contributors who have never encountered our Traditions.

Decades ago, we in A.A. assumed responsibility for financial support of our Fellowship. We even limit the amount acceptable from one member in one year—now \$500, by 1979 Conference Advisory Action.

We can take one bequest of no more than that amount from the estate of deceased member, too. However, we return all contributions from non-A.A.'s

It might help if we explained to our non-A.A. relatives and friends the therapeutic benefit of our self-support tradition.



Published monthly by the Cleveland Central Committee of A.A., a non-profit fellowship dedicated to service. Address all letters to Central Bulletin, One Public Square, Mezzanine #6, Cleveland, Ohio 44113. Subscription price - \$3.50 per Year.

Harry D.. Founder and Editor 1892-1968

No.38

January 1980

No. 4

MINUTES OF CENTRAL COMMITTEE  
JANUARY 8, 1980  
WESTERN RESERVE ROOM  
OLD STONE CHURCH  
8:00 P.M.

Meeting was presided over by Moderator, Don E, who led the members present in the Serenity Prayer. Roll call showed that 47 persons attended this meeting representing 46 groups. Jean M., Vice Moderator, read the purpose of Central Committee and the Twelve Traditions of A.A.

Minutes of the December 4th. meeting of this Committee were read and approved by motion by those attending this meeting. Treasurers report through December 1979 was read showing a balance in the Central Committee account of \$457.50 and in the Central Bulletin account of \$773.67. 137 speakers were supplied by the District Office to non A.A. groups for Months of January thru December inclusive.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

**Central Bulletin:** Dick F., Chairman, asked for a report on renewals and new subscriptions. We are still interested in articles by local members, and again new subscriptions.

**Rosary Hall:** No report.

**Bay View:** Terry L., reported the Patients have been moved back down to the first floor, their original location. Mr. Harnish, Program Director of Serenity Hall and the Staff extended their thanks to the A.A. Community for their support of Serenity Hall.

**Brecksville:** Don E., reported, in addition to Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday, there is a Sunday meeting at Brecksville Hospital. Sunday afternoon at 1:00 P.M., still an ongoing plea for leads,

**Merrick Hall:** Phyllis H., representative, the Assertiveness growth sessions start at 9:45 A.M. with coffee and Donuts, sessions start at 10:00 A.M. concludes at 12:00 P.M. Open to A.A. women only. For information call Merrick Hall. There is no charge for these sessions. Jane M. thanked A.A. for their support of Merrick Hall.

**Metro:** No report.

**East Side Veteran:** Lucretia W., representative, Meetings are well attended.

**Woodruff:** Edith H. gave the schedule of meetings at Woodruff, and she would like to stress, if you are

visiting at Woodruff please call for a pass, if you can **speak** at one of the meetings call one of the Secretaries.

**Harbor Light:** No report.

**Justice Center:** Warren M., reported things are coming along well.

**Areawide Committee:** Chairman, Ed K. announced the next Areawide Meeting will be Sunday March 9th. 1980, at St. Malachi's 2401 Washington St. at 2:00 P.M. Dual Lead, Walter H. & Wife, Alanon. 3 Big Books will be given away as prize.

**OLD BUSINESS:** Moderatot, Don E., announced Florence K., will be the new Action Committee Chairperson.

**New Business:** There was a lengthy discussion about the Drug Addict attending A.A. meetings. An Article was read out of New York by Jean M. Vice Moderator, with the explanation that a poly-addicted person is welcome at A.A. meetings, and can be a part of A.A.. The drug addict should be welcome at any open meeting of A.A. providing they don't participate, if they feel they can be helped. A copy of the article that was read at this meeting will be sent to all group Secretaries.

**N.E.O. General Service Report:** Terry L., Delegate, reported the next Assembly Meeting will be Sunday, January 20th., 1980, 2:00 P.M. American Legion Hall, Rt. 21 & 82, Brecksville, Ohio. All welcome.

N.E. Ohio Mini Conference (Workshop) will be March 21, 22, and 23rd, Ramada Inn 4073 Medina Road, Akron, Ohio Rt. 18 & 177. All welcome.

The International Conference, New Orleans in July.

August 29th., 30th. and 31st. we will be host to the Ohio State Convention.

For the groups that are interested in contributing to North East Ohio General Service can send their checks to 7009 Columbia Road, Olmsted Falls, O. 44138 C/O Terry Leach.

There being no further business, the meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Elvira A., Secretary.

## OBITUARY

Ed Sullivan, 30 plus year member of the fellowship passed away. Ed was an active member of the Lorain Ave. Monday and other groups. For years carried the message to our penal institutions. His say was "This way of life sure beats the workhouse". He will be missed by all his many friends.

Our deepest sympathy to his family in their great loss.

Lou Gertner, of the Heights Close Discussion Group passed away. He was a active member for many years. Our condolences to the family.



### AN OVERVIEW OF "AA"

You know, one never feels so totally inadequate as when asked to explain AA. How is it possible to reduce a lifetime of gratitude into a writing such as This? And, how is it possible to describe a sober way of life based on such simplicity that anyone can understand it?

Even when we face the new man we suddenly feel that we know so little about the subject of AA and we urge this new man to attend meetings in order to understand the basis of Alcoholics Anonymous as well as to discover how it can work for him.

How, then, can we describe AA or how do we account for its success in bringing the drunk back to sanity, sobriety, and a respected way of life?

If one word can portray Alcoholics Anonymous, that word is **Humility**. Our publication of June, 1962 states that humility is teachability and in this simple explanation we have the working principle of AA. Coupled with a willingness to try, we have a combination that results in a greater percentage of recovery than by any other method or methods combined. In addition, no other method can or does guarantee happiness along with peace-of-mind and a great fellowship.

**Humility is teachability**; and we can now account for the person who is still drinking or the one who slips. For if one is capable of being taught, then one must be able to learn and learning is a change in behavior as a result of experience.

We all know of the person who talked a great AA philosophy and went out and got drunk. We find that this person has not learned much about AA at all; he merely repeated some memorized phrases and words with no change in behavior as a result of applying the things he has heard and talked about.

The one who is still drinking but feels that he can quit when he wants to will not learn anything at all about alcoholism due to a closed mind. He may experiment with several various methods to keep from getting too drunk such as "just beer", "drinking only in the company of the wife", etc. but this is not learning since no behavior change has taken place.

Until humility had touched us, we were not capable of learning or of being taught and not even AA could help us. We now attend many meetings in AA in order to stay sober and to keep the humility we discovered when we first called for help, for the **alcoholic** is prone to forget and instead of continuing to be a learner he tends to become a teacher with disasterous results.

We all come to learn that humility does not mean "get on your knees" but instead merely asked "get off your high horse."

John B.

**FAITH MAKES ALL THINGS  
POSSIBLE.-LOVE MAKES THEM  
EASY**

### A MEW YEAR

Taken from ALVINOS '64

As we enter a new year many will have the inclination to review the old. To the extent of cementing the wisdom of its experience that is good. To go beyond that is bad, for it may lead to pride over good things; or, worse yet, self-pity and resentment over adverse happenings.

At the end of a year we must simply realize that the Great Moving Finger has written another page in our copy-book of life. If a page is a year, then perhaps we might regard a paragraph as a month, a sentence as a week, words as a day, and a comma or letter as a moment. We must know and accept the fact with grace that not one word or letter or comma in the pages of life can be changed. It is deposited forever in eternity. Today is our time. This is the reality we face, it is all here now in this present instant. We live one day at a time for "Now" is reality. The future holds nothing for us but fear or scheming. If we would do today that which might be helpful tomorrow, it is the doing right as of now, which is our sole concern.

The future is the area in which we must have faith; must surrender completely to our Higher Power, not knowing what it holds or whether in fact it will come to be. This is in his hands. But we know that whatever it may be, a merciful God as we understand Him, will never change the sobriety we have had or the good we have done today.

George VI, in the last New Year's broadcast he made to the British Commonwealth of Nations, so aptly put it:

"I said to the man at the gate of the New Year, "Give me a light that I may find my way through the unknown." He replied, "Go out into the darkness of the New Year and put your hand firmly into the hand of God. That shall be better for you than any light or any known way."

by Jim T.

Wife: "You look tired, dear. "Did you have a bad day at the office"?"

Husband: "I'll say, I took an aptitude test, and believe me, it's a good thing that I own the company"!

#### ARE YOU PLANNING TO MOVE?

If so, clip this coupon and mail to One Public Square, Mezzanine #6, Cleveland, Ohio 44113. immediately. It is urgently needed before the next issue of the **Central Bulletin**.

Name .....

Old Address ..... Zip.....

New Address .....

City ..... State..... Zip.....

It will help you and it will help us.



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Vol. XXXVIII-No. 5

Central Bulletin:

To answer your QUESTION in the December 1979 Central Bulletin. I thought this poly-drug abuser question was resolved in our newer A.A. booklets. Summary: A cross addict (booze plus Valium, perhaps) or a poly-addict (beer, booze, uppers, downers, narcotics, etc.) is accepted in A.A. if the main addiction/problem is alcohol.

There are few "pure alcoholics" under 20-30 years of age. A mood controlling drug of any kind cannot be taken by the compulsive personality alcoholic. He/she loses control. Typically they start with beer plus pot, then booze, then downers to calm them in the morning, uppers (speed, TCP, PCP, angel dust, etc.) for a greater high.

For the pill addict there is PA, Pills Anonymous, out of New York City.

Regards,  
Ralph W., Cleveland, Ohio

## ARE YOU SOBER BUT STILL IN AN "EMOTIONAL PRISON"?

Six months after coming to A.A., I found I had a great deal of trouble adjusting to reality and with inner conflicts as well.

I talked to members of A.A. about these feelings of fear, self-condemnation, depression and, at times, overwhelming feeling that living was too painful. At the same time I felt guilty for feeling this way in the first place.

Recovery helped me learn how to deal with these feelings. Mentioning Recovery will touch a sore spot with some A.A.'s. I have heard that if you go to Recovery meetings there is the danger that the alcoholic will doubt his problem is alcohol and will drop A.A.

From my experience, alcoholism is not only a disease of denial but also of doubt. No matter how long the alcoholic is sober he will be tempted to doubt. That is why praying and meetings are so very important. In my heart I do believe God guided me to Recovery. I had asked Him to remove my defects of character—self-hatred, fear and despairing thoughts. However, after a time, they were still there and as strong as ever. I also believe that God will do for you what you cannot do for yourself. It was up to me to learn how.

A.A. saved my life but Recovery saved my sanity. No one wants to be sober and be unable to enjoy living. So many times God would give me a beautiful day and I wouldn't be able to savor it because of mental torture and a feeling of helplessness.

Through A.A. and Recovery I found that no one is hopeless. For information write: Recovery Headquarters, 116 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago, Illinois 60603.

Anonymous

## FUND DRIVE IS UNDERWAY

When you support the Downtown Office, you are doing an important 12th-Step job. Your dollars make it possible for hundreds of calls for help to be received and turned over to groups. Your dollars provide a central place for those seeking help and AA visitors to call; a clearing house for our AA literature; a source for speakers; a telephone answering service which handles almost 18,000 calls a year. No single individual could do such widespread good. But, as an individual your dollars actually do this tremendous job!

And the opportunity is again almost here. During March, Greater Cleveland's AA will be asked to contribute to the support of the District Office. This money pays the salaries of a full time Secretary and his assistant; office rent, telephone, electric light, night-time telephone answering service, literature, printing, postage, and other mailing costs.

Last year, 247 groups and 2797 individual AA members pledged money to support the work of your Office. This year it is hoped that even more of the 380 Greater Cleveland groups can see their way clear to making a group pledge. Experience has shown that the combined effort of the groups is the greatest single factor in raising the money necessary for this important work.

As in past years, you and your respective groups will be contacted for your practical help. If each group will assume their proportionate share of the load, and if individuals who are financially able will continue to supplement group contributions—we can succeed.

It is our fervent hope that the District Office may be able to continue the invaluable services for which it was organized almost 36 years ago. We all know how AA has grown—let's see to it that the important services of your Office can keep pace!

Thank you, in advance, for your understanding and assistance.

## AIN'T IT THE TRUTH? CHANGING FROM "BOOZE" TO "POT" MAKES ABOUT AS MUCH SENSE AS CHANGING SEATS ON THE TITANIC.

A wife went to the missing person's bureau to report that her husband had mysteriously vanished.

"Can you give us some descriptive points about your husband?" the sergeant asked.

"Well, he's short and skinny," she answered, "and bald and has a couple of front teeth missing. In fact a big part of him was missing before he was and on second thought • forget it!"



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Harry D., Founder and Editor 1892-1968

No. 38

February, 1980

No. 5

MINUTES OF CENTRAL COMMITTEE  
WESTERN RESERVE ROOM OLD STONE CHURCH  
FEBRUARY 5, 1980  
8:00 P.M.

Meeting was presided over by Moderator, Don E., who led members present in the Serenity Prayer. Roll call showed that 63 persons attended this meeting representing 56 groups. Jean M., Vice Moderator, read the purpose of Central Committee and the Twelve Traditions of A.A.

Minutes of the January 8, meeting of this Committee were read and approved by motion by those attending this meeting. Treasurer's report through January was read showing a balance in the Central Committee account of \$361.26 and in the Central Bulletin account of \$776.84. 18 speakers were supplied by District Office to non A.A. groups for the month of January 1980. There were 27 new Central Bulletin subscriptions, and 12 renewals, in answer to question asked last month by R.F. for the month of January.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

**Area Wide Committee:** Chairman, Ed K. was out of town. Moderator Don E., reminded members of the next Area Wide meeting, Sunday March 9th.-2:00 P.M., St. Malachi's Hall, 2401 Washington Street. Speakers Walter H., A.A., Plummie H. Alanon, The Serenity singers will be there also.

**Central Bulletin:** Dick F., Chairman, announced, the Central Bulletin is the oldest publication in Alcoholics Anonymous, over 38 years old. It started in this area. We are still looking for subscriptions and articles from local members, something that may have inspired you since you have been in the Program. There are order blanks in all of the Bulletins.

**Rosary Hall:** Representative, Lou W., reported all is quiet. The ongoing situation is the same, lack of sponsorship, reminded Sponsors to see the new Man before you call Rosary Hall for a bed.

**Bay View:** Terry L., reported, they are looking for volunteer Leaders for the After Care program at Serenity Hall. If you are interested, see the After Care Coordinator, Bay View Hospital.

**Brecksville:** Ken, reported. the meetings are going along fine, still requesting leads.

**Merrick Hall:** Phyllis H., representative, Patients and Staff viewed the film "Inside View". It was received enthusiastically by both staff and patients. We felt it gave a realistic, positive and an appealing picture of what goes on in A.A., as seen through group experience.

We are hoping to be able to procure a copy for use at Merrick Hall for Patients and visitors. We are proud to announce that we have again been awarded a two year accreditation by J.C.A.H., this assures our patients that meeting the highest standard of care set by J.C.A.H. for Alcoholism units, the best care available.

This award from J.C.A.H. for 2 years is the maximum award given to Alcoholism units.

**Metro:** No report.

**East Side Veteran** Lucretia W., representative, reported everything's fine.

**Woodruff:** Edith H. representative, everything's going good-meetings are well attended. They would like to start a Saturday meeting at Woodruff, anyone interested or any suggestions, call Woodruff and ask for Annette.

**Justice Center:** Warren M., reported, everything's the same as last month. Occasionally they see some Inmates at outside meetings.

**New Business:** Ralph K., from the Lake County Area stated, he and some others from that area felt a need for another Inter-group Office. Discussion held pertaining this matter. Poll will be taken of all the Groups in the area-then majority will rule. Results will probably be noted in future minutes.

**N.E.O. General Service Report:** Terry L. Delegate, reminded members present of the next G.S.R. meeting, February 17, 1980, 2:00 P.M. American Legion Hall, Routes 82 and 21, Brecksville, Ohio. March 21, 22 & 23rd., Mini Conference, Ramada Inn Akron, Ohio. The Big Book is now available in Cassette tapes. The biography of Dr. Bob will be released in New Orleans in July.

There being no further business, the meeting closed with the Lords Prayer.

Elvira A., Secretary.

CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
MARCH 4th, 1980 - 8:00 P.M.  
OLD STONE CHURCH-PUBLIC SQUARE  
BE INFORMED  
GROUP REPRESENTATIVES-WELCOME

AREA WIDE MEETING  
MARCH 9th, 1980 - 2:00 P.M.  
ST. MALACHI'S HALL-2401 WASHINGTON ST.  
SPEAKERS: WALTER & PLUMIE H.  
NEW WAY OF LIFE GROUP

G.S.R. MINI CONFERENCE  
MARCH 21, 22 & 23RD  
RAMADA INN-AKRON, OHIO

TWENTY-NINTH  
 INTER-GROUP DINNER DANCE  
 SATURDAY, MAY 3, 1980  
 THE CLEVELAND PLAZA-BALLROOM  
 SPEAKER: RICHARD B. WASHINGTON, D.C.  
 TICKETS \$12.50 PER PERSON

**INTERNATIONAL A.A. CONVENTION**  
**45TH ANNIVERSARY**  
**"THE JOY OF LIVING"**  
**NEW ORLEANS JULY 3-6 1980**

2ND ANNUAL  
 YOUNG PEOPLE OF OHIO  
 BOWLING GREEN UNIVERSITY  
 JULY 17, 18, AND 19, 1980

OBITUARY

Eddie Gordon, thirty-four year member of the fellowship passed away. He was a active member and helped many people. Our condolences to his two brothers.

Dear Mr. Hopcraft:

We are referring to the write-up which appeared in The Plain Dealer on Sunday, February 10, 1980, "Drinking teen-agers turn to AA for support" by Ms. Tina Schlatter. The statement in this article that "Each teen stays an average of from five to eight months in AA, depending on the severity of his or her addiction" is completely erroneous. The belief in Alcoholics Anonymous is that once one is afflicted with the sickness of alcoholism one will remain always an alcoholic, very similar to the diabetic who can be as well as anyone else providing he follows his doctor's prescribed diet and abstains from sugar. We in AA acquire our sobriety by abstinence from alcohol and pursuing the new way of living suggested by the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous.

The article by Ms. Schlatter states that it is only recently that we have launched two groups geared



----- *Be a Bulletin Booster* -----



**AA CENTRAL BULLETIN**

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specifically for youths. There is an error in this statement because AA in Northeastern Ohio has had several groups for youths for a number of years.

We are profoundly grateful to Ms. Tina Schlatter and The Plain Dealer for the publication of the article we have here mentioned. It helped a number of young people to call us asking for help.

Sincerely Yours,  
 Alcoholics Anonymous District Office

P.S. We would greatly appreciate to have this letter published in your newspaper at your earliest convenience. We have omitted the use of personal names because of our tradition on anonymity.

Dear Friends:

Responding to the question posed in the December issue of Central Bulletin, with reference to a newcomer, suspected of not being a "true" alcoholic because of other substance problems, and asking the question as to whether or not he should be permitted to fully participate in group activities, may we respectfully submit the following:

Part of the question is answered in the same issue in the article on the 3rd Tradition, which clearly defines the only requirement for membership.

Who among us came to AA with a single problem? Who among us is willing to say that we will deny to anyone that which was given so freely to us?

Shall we be divided into classes of membership? Shall we have "full" members, "probationary members", "partial members", etc., or shall we continue to share with others a program that has proven to solve problems other than the physical intake of alcohol?

This man is addicted to a drug different than the drug to which most of us have admitted helplessness. As long as he has sought us out, we ought not slam the door on him without careful consideration.

Should he be encouraged to lead? Who knows what he will say? There may be others amongst us who share his problem. Here in Florida there are many so called narcotic addicts who have been helped by our program.

In closing, let us remind you that it is an established fact that what is good for AA will survive, and what is bad for AA will die aborning.

We hope that the opinions expressed here will generate some constructive discussion and that the "group conscience" will prevail.

As Always  
 Jack and Billie M.  
 (formerly in the Parma Group)

A drunk from New York who had never been out of the city in his lifetime was visiting a farm for the very first time. Looking at a fat sow lying in a pen, the farmer said to the drunk, "She's mighty big, isn't she?"

"You bet", said the drunk. "I just saw six little piggies blowing her up a few minutes ago."

## THE ONLY REQUIREMENT

No one could ever claim **that** A.A. is a stranger to controversy, but sometimes an issue arises that could do serious harm to A.A., if not eventually destroy our fellowship. Our fourth tradition states that each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole. But at what point does autonomy cease being desirable and start to affect other groups and A.A. overall?

Our Fifth Tradition states that each group has but one primary purpose - to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers. But notice that it says "alcoholic" rather than "drug addict" or "chemically dependent person". Many treatment centers and hospitals are now telling their patients that there is no difference between alcoholism and addiction to narcotics, barbiturates, tranquilizers and other addictive drugs.

Graduates of these institutions than continue to foster these misconceptions by "sponsoring" more recent graduates and encouraging narcotic and pill addicts who have no real alcohol problem at all, to call themselves A.A. members and to attend closed A.A. meetings. In many cases this is leading to the formation of so-called "A.A. groups", many of whose members are not alcoholics at all, but who use the group to try to recover from a narcotic or pill addiction.

This violates our Third - Fourth - Fifth and Sixth Traditions. We feel strongly at this point the autonomy of these "groups" and their members is affecting other groups and A.A. as a whole, and could even lead to the collapse of A.A. as a fellowship, unless these misconceptions are corrected. This whole controversial subject is more than adequately covered in the A.A. pamphlet entitled "Problems Other Than Alcohol" by A.A. confounder Bill W., available from A.A. service office in New York (or S.F. Central Office).

We couldn't be more sympathetic with the non-alcoholic drug addict who sincerely wants to recover, and sees A.A.'s astounding record of success with alcoholics. We'll gladly lend you our Twelve Steps and other tools if they'll help you, but we must ask you not to attend our closed meetings under false pretenses, since that can only lead to misunderstanding and disappointment for you, and would divert us alcoholics from our primary purpose, which is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

We must also request that hospitals, treatment centers and counselors refrain from encouraging their non-alcoholic patients to attend closed A.A. meetings under false pretenses. Honesty is one of the primary requirements for recovery, whether from alcoholism or any other addiction.

If you have a genuine alcoholic problem and in addition have become hooked on pills, as has happened to so many of us, you are of course welcome at any A.A. meeting, whether open or closed. We do ask however, that at meetings you confine your remarks to your alcoholic problem. With recovery from alcoholism, the pill problem will usually take care of itself in due time.

Taken from the A.A. NEWSLETTER of  
the Louisiana Area Assembly.

## HAVE YOU HEARD.. .

There are those who predict that Alcoholics Anonymous may well become a new spearhead for a spiritual awakening throughout the world. When our friends say these things they are both generous and sincere. But we of Alcoholics Anonymous must reflect that such a tribute and such a prophecy could well prove to be a heady drink for most of us - that is - if we really came to believe this to be the real purpose of Alcoholics Anonymous and if we commenced to behave accordingly. Our Society, therefore, will prudently cleave to its single purpose: the carrying of the message to the alcoholic who still suffers. Let us resist the proud assumption that, since God has enabled us to do well in one area, we are destined to be a channel of saving grace for everybody.

On the other hand, let us never be a closed corporation; let us never deny our experience for whatever it may be worth to the world around us.

Let our individual members heed the call to every field of human endeavor. Let them carry the experience and spirit of A.A. into all these affairs, for whatever good they may accomplish. For not only has God saved us from alcoholism; the world has received us back into its citizenship.

Yet, believing in paradoxes as we do, we must still realize that the more the society of Alcoholics Anonymous as such attends to its own affairs and minds its own business, the greater will be our general influence, the less will be any opposition to us, and the wider will be the circle in which our fellowship will be likely to enjoy the confidence and respect of men.

From: The Oregon Newsletter  
(transcribed from a talk  
Bill W. gave at the 2nd  
International Convention  
in 1955) St. Louis, Mo.

No doubt we'll look back on June as a month of roses:  
Gasoline rose; food rose; utilities rose!

### ARE YOU PLANNING TO MOVE?

If so, clip this coupon and mail to One Public Square,  
Mezzanine #6, Cleveland, Ohio 44113. Immediately.  
It is urgently needed before the next issue of the **Central Bulletin**.

Name .....

Old Address ..... Zip .....

New Address .....

City ..... State ..... Zip .....

It will help you and it will help us.





Published by  
Cleveland Central Committee of A.A.  
One Public Square  
Mezzanine Room #6  
Cleveland, Ohio 44113

Vol. XXXIII- No. 6

## JUST BE GLAD

"Be glad you don't 'haftal'!"

This little sentence, following the remark "Don't feel sorry for yourself because you can't drink," sank home and highlighted a most interesting and instructive talk by Doc. C.C.H. at a recent Berea Fine Arts meeting. The portly optometrist summed up his five years of continued sobriety by emphasizing the need of finding joy in working for others..

Complete surrender is difficult for most newcomers in the movement and the shedding of old habits, thoughts and inclinations offer the greatest obstacles to attaining the peace of mind and happiness so alluringly promised.

Some get just enough AA to cause them to be unhappy. They hate the simple "musts" that AA restricts them with, such as you must admit you're powerless over alcohol; you must believe in a Power greater than yourself and you must turn your life and will over to Him; you must take an inventory-an honest one; you must admit to God, yourself and to another person, the exact nature of your wrongs and not hold anything back; you must make a list of all people you've harmed and you *must* make amends; you *must* pray daily for knowledge of His will and the power to carry it out; you *must* carry this message to other in grateful appreciation to Him for giving you freedom; you *must* attend meetings regularly!

Must, must, must! To an alcoholic that's like waving a red flag in front of a mad bovine! But *must* it *must* be if you want sobriety badly enough. Your success and eventual happiness is predicted on the measure of which you absorb the *musts*.

Look around you. Who are the happy ones? They're the ones who learned not to question the program and in their desperation accepted it in blind faith and with complete **surrender**. Then look at the unhappy ones-those that won't do this, don't like that, *won't* find time for Twelfth Step work, carp, complain, ridicule and wear expressions as though they had been weaned on a pickle.

Yes, learn from these also, for they're the ones who will do your experimenting for you. They'll test themselves to prove that they're not as bad alcoholics as others, and don't have to observe all the *musts*. Visit them in the hospital and listen to their self-pity and self-justification. You too will agree with the good doctor, when he said "Don't feel sorry for yourself because you can't drink-be darn glad you don't *hafta!*"

## STAIRWAY TO SOBRIETY.

I ALWAYS LIKE TO THINK OF THE TWELVE STEPS AS MY STAIRWAY TO THE KIND OF LIFE I WANT, Sober, free and happy. I don't consciously work each step each day, and a couple of months ago I thought I was really faltering.

I tried reviewing the Twelve Steps as they work for me and found myself even more confused. So. . .I looked for a study group. I wanted to hear how people older and stronger in their sobriety used the steps.

The first group I went to was **on** the Third Step. When we divided into smaller groups, I found myself with people very young in sobriety. As we were sharing, I discovered they needed to know how it had been for me.

Turning my will and my life over to the care of God as I understand him is one thing I have to do each day. Acceptance comes hard for me.

"I can really identify with what you said" and "YOU feel that way too?" "It really helps me!" seemed to be the most frequent responses.

I was filled with a kind of wonder. I had come to take and in sharing my experiences I found I received far more from these "babies" than I had dared to hope for. I once more became aware we all have today by the Grace of God.

This happened several times, on different steps. 'As I climbed my stairway again-serenity returned.

Sober, free, happy, by the grace of the Higher Power I call God; understanding "we can only keep it, if we give it away" Filled with gratitude for A.A. Fellowship, where everything I need is so freely given, it is here that God answers me.

WE HAVE TODAY, WE HAVE A.A.! WE LIVE--  
SEE YOU ON THE STAIRS?

From: The Beacon-Duluth Mn by Jean F.

## HAPPINESS

Ever wonder where happiness is to be found? Listen to this from the December GRAPEVINE: "I don't believe it takes anything to be happy. It is an inside job, something I choose, or refuse to choose, for myself. Circumstances outside myself have nothing whatever to do with it." Addendum: From JUST FOR TODAY, Abe Lincoln is quoted to have said this, "Most people are about as happy as they make up their minds to be." Oh, what pain there is in the truth! My happiness is dependent upon me.



Published monthly by the Cleveland Central Committee of A.A., a non-profit fellowship dedicated to service. Address all letters to Central Bulletin, One Public Square, Mezzanine #6, Cleveland, Ohio 44113. Subscription price is \$3.50 per Year.

Harry D.. Founder and Editor 1892-1968

No. 38 March 1980 No. 6

MINUTES OF CENTRAL COMMITTEE,  
WESTERN RESERVE ROOM OLD STONE CHURCH  
MARCH 4, 1980  
8:00 P.M.

Don E., Moderator, opened the meeting by leading members present in the Serenity Prayer. Roll call showed that 60 members were present representing 56 groups. Jean M., Vice Moderator, read the purpose of Central Committee and the Twelve Traditions of A.A.

Minutes of the February 5, meeting were read by the secretary. A motion was made seconded and carried that these minutes be accepted as read. Treasurer's report through February was read showing a balance in the Central Committee account of \$335.88 and in the Central Bulletin account of \$617.67. 42 speakers were supplied by District Office to non A.A. groups for months of January and February 1980.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Action Committee: No report.

Area Wide Committee: Chairman, Ed K, reminded members present of the Area Wide Meeting, and brought attention to the drawing coupon that's attached to the Area Wide Meeting notices, for the three Big Books that will be given away as prizes. Chairman also explained the purpose of Area Wide Meetings.

Central Bulletin: Dick F, Chairman, stated, still looking for Articles and subscriptions from local members. There are order blanks in all the Bulletins one year, \$3.50.

Bay View: Terry L, reported, still looking for After Care Leaders for Serenity Hall, anyone interested see the Aftercare Coordinator, Bay View Hospital.

Brecksville: Ken, Representative, Meetings are going along fine-still an ongoing plea for leads, Tuesday and Thursday's.

Merrick Hall: Phyllis H, representative, sent in her report: the assertiveness growth sessions has begun again, start with coffee and donuts, sessions start at 10:00 A.M. Open to A.A. Women, and Merrick Hall Alumni. March 1st., 15th. and 22nd.

East Side Veteran: Lucretia W., Representative, meetings are well attended.

Woodruff: Edith H., representative, there are 13 meetings a week at Woodruff, we are in desperate need of leads, if you are available please call. Wednesday Unity group will be celebrating their 3rd. anniversary, April 12th., more on this later.

Justice Center: Warren M. representative, nothing is new. Old Business: Moderator, Don E., commended the District Office, for sending out letters to the Secretaries, explaining the purpose of Area Wide Meetings, and Information on Alcoholic Anonymous.

New Business: A new group was announced: Big Book Study Group, held on Saturday's 10:30 A.M., Parkwood United Church of Christ, 13714 Madison Avenue, Lakewood, Ohio.

Members from the Young People group was down with questions and information, on the 2nd. Annual Young People's Convention held in July.

N.E.O. General Service Report: John B., representative, reminded members of the Mini-Conference, March 21, 22, & 23rd. Ramada Inn 4073 Medina Road, Akron, Ohio. Panels, Discussion Groups, Presentation, Workshops, and Films.

N.E.O. Delegate: Terry L., informed us of the place and date of change of the Ohio State Conference. The Conference will be held August 1st, 2nd. and 3rd. at Stouffer's Inn on the Square. Flyers will be sent out to all groups. The date of the release of biography of Dr. Bob has been changed, it will be released at Founders Day, held in Akron, Ohio, June 20, 21, and 22nd. After June 1st. the subscription for the Grapevine will be increased from \$5.00 to \$6.00.

General Service is in need of Corresponding Sponsors for Correctional Institutions. If you are interested please write General Service Office, P.O. Box 459, Grand Central Station, N.Y. 10017

There being no further business, the meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Elvira A., Secretary.

CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
APRIL 1st, 1980  
OLD STONE CHURCH-PUBLIC SQUARE  
CLEVELAND, OHIO  
BE INFORMED  
GROUP REPRESENTATIVES WELCOME

TWENTY-NINTH  
INTER-GROUP DINNER DANCE  
SATURDAY, MAY 3, 1980  
THE CLEVELAND PLAZA-BALLROOM  
SPEAKER: RICHARD B. WASHINGTON, D.C.  
TICKETS \$12.50 PER PERSON

**INTERNATIONAL A.A. CONVENTION**  
**45TH ANNIVERSARY**  
**"THE JOY OF LIVING"**  
**NEW ORLEANS JULY 3-6 1980**

2nd ANNUAL  
YOUNG PEOPLE OF OHIO  
BOWLING GREEN UNIVERSITY  
JULY 18, 19, 20, 1980  
OHIO YOUNG PEOPLE IN A.A.  
P.O. BOX 6427  
TOLEDO, OHIO 43612

### AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE

In recent columns we have spoken about inventories, or self-analysis, if you like. The longer we are around the program, the more we realize the tremendous importance of personal inventories.

How could any one of us realize our capabilities and limitations if we didn't check our daily progress against our past mistakes? How can we come to any sense of balanced living without this constant re-examination? For that matter, how could we have come to a decision that we are definitely **alcoholic**, that our lives were unmanageable and that we were powerless over alcohol if we didn't first check into our past?

How could we come to know that were sick people-and are still sick, only arrested? That the first drink will eventually put us right back into that same sickness? (Unless we remember that fellow who experimented for us and came back for help after he, too, found out he couldn't beat the thing that made him so sick.) How can we ever fully realize our lives can be happy without drinking unless we compare the past with its miseries and broken resolutions?

Eventually we quit rationalizing and lying to ourselves. We quit trying to sell ourselves that fictitious bill of goods. We aren't what we always wanted people to think we were. We're just small grains of sand on the vast seashores of time-and one little wave can completely destroy us.

But-we don't have to drink today. And, with the help of honest inventories, we don't want to drink today. It's great to be sober! And, you, too, can honestly say this and believe it. But first you have to check and check and re-check yourself before you begin to find out who you really are, who you once were, and most importantly, who you honestly want to become.

Inventories aren't important? Inventories are important!

Mike M.



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### THE SOMETIMES ARROGANCE OF NEWCOMERS

When I became an enthusiastic, confused, new member of A.A. I didn't understand the program. The meetings were so simplistic that I became an unbeliever of my own eyes and ears. This, I told myself, is just the surface stuff for us new members.

Later on I am sure, those who are older and wiser in A.A. will take me aside and whisper the real secrets of how A.A. works. Understand, no one mentioned any set length of not boozing, but I was sure that there was some set of standards based on the new members length of sobriety. Maybe three months? Six months? Could it be as long as an ENTIRE YEAR? The time would surely come when THEY would take me aside and allow me to enter the inner "inner sanctum" of A.A. This where all the real inside knowledge would be made available to me.

The program simply had to be tougher than just going to meetings, making 12 Step calls, smoking cigarettes, drinking coffee, and talking about God.

Of course, I had other things to consider in addition to locating the inner sanctum, like:-"Who is making the profits on the sale of the books' & There was a juicy plum if only I could crack the wall of secrecy about what the books cost, who made them, where they bought them, and what the mark-up was. I entertained visions of buying the books at a low "wholesale"-obtaining terrific **books at a low "wholesale"-obtaining terrific discounts**, and then retailing them around to the various A.A. groups. And this never happened 'NEITHER'.

After working this unknown program feverishly for 12 months I arrived at being sober for one year - my first A.A. BIRTHDAY. Still I had not been asked to enter the inner sanctum. If I was ever going to make it, now should be the time, so I asked an old timer (one of them bleeding deacons) If this was all there was to the program. In a great burst of generosity he said "No. now that you actually have a year's sobriety, I am going to let you in on the inner most secret of the entire Fellowship".

Eureka!! At long last - and about time. I asked "What is it?" Do you know what that "bleeder" told me? Twas this:

"WE JUST DON'T TAKE THAT FIRST DRINK."  
Aaarrrgh. . . . . and thank God!!

INTERCOUNTY FELLOWSHIP OF  
ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

A minister at the Methodist Church saw a little boy looking at a scroll in honor of their war dead. The little boy asked why all the names were there. The minister said, "They are the names of all the boys who died in service, the 9 o'clock or the 11 o'clock one?"

## KEEPING IT SIMPLE

Since coming into this program, I realize how very much my thinking has changed. It was inevitable that that should happen in order for me to gain my sobriety and have some degree of contentment.

I came into this program knowing I wasn't an alcoholic, there were so many things I hadn't done in my "social drinking." In fact, I didn't want to quit drinking. I didn't think I had had as much fun with my drinking as I had heard others talk about. I felt cheated. Drinking had never really been a lot of fun for me and I thought if I could do it all over again, I'd have one great time. Insanity had really set in.

I certainly wasn't an alcoholic the night my husband and doctor decided together that I should go to treatment. Me? I was pretty nutty and impossible to live with, but after all, it was none of their business if I wanted to do some suicidal drinking. It was my life, not theirs. I wasn't in treatment very long before my thinking started to change. I was grateful to both of them that I was there and for the first time of my life maybe get some meaningful help. I was glad they had made that decision for me. I was finally beginning to comprehend 'alcoholism. I became grateful that I was only an alcoholic. I had diagnosed all kinds of things, my greatest fear was that I would spend the rest of my life in an institution. At least I discovered alcoholism can be arrested.

Treatment was the discovery. I had so many things to learn and after leaving those hallowed walls, came the discovery. That's when AA came into my life and I was lucky. I haven't had a drink since the day I entered treatment. I've been close, very close, but I've managed to hang in there with the help of people and discovered it became easier (not easy). As I look back, I know the struggles were worth it and the rewards are really there.

I discovered those recovering alcoholics I started to hang around with were really pretty smart. They had learned a lot about a contented way of life, something I had yet to experience, but something I wanted pretty bad. They told me they accomplished this by just keeping it simple. What's that??!! I didn't have the slightest idea what they were talking about. I thought my complicated life was pretty simple. The only thing simple about it was everything was consistent, even if it was consistently bad.

I just kept going to meetings, sitting at the club house and listening instead of talking and I finally discovered ways to keep my life simple, too. To me, that's the key. Keep it simple!!

Esther G.  
Siver Dollar-Fargo, N.D.

"Lady," said the bus driver to a woman who was boarding his bus with eleven children, "are they all yours or are you going on a picnic?"

"They're all mine," she replied, "and believe me, it's no picnic!"

## FIRST STEP

The most important step we take is the "First Step." That one is the sticker, and one we can't skip over if we want to stay sober. "We admitted we were powerless over alcohol, and that our lives had become unmanageable." Did we accept it? Did we surrender to it? Did we reconcile ourselves to the fact that we couldn't safely take that first drink? OR, did we excuse ourselves to ease the "conscience" that we told ourselves we didn't have. As past masters of rationalization, did we paint a pretty picture of ourselves to justify everything-even when we know it was wrong?

We have heard so many say, "I don't have any trouble with the first step." And then, off they go to get drunk. Or, the lesser evil, "I'm not as bad as that one," or "I'm just doing this for myself." Then they wonder why that nagging wife is still nagging and they don't have the pocket full of money they expected to when they gave up drinking.

Did you ever tell YOURSELF that "Maybe I'm not an alcoholic after all"?

If any of these things have happened to you, or do happen, better take another inventory. Take that good look in the mirror and see if you're being honest with yourself. Forget the other fellow for a minute, and just consider yourself. If you've missed that first step-and haven't surrendered completely, you don't stand a chance. But we'll pray for you. . .it's all anyone can do to help you.

## TRUST THE TRUTH

If you have told the truth, then do not worry. If you have taken your side with the truth, then be not concerned. Only be sure a thing is true, then take your place beside it in the complete confidence that, though you may have to stand out against unpleasantness, you will never be humiliated by failure. Nothing is to good to be true; for truth and goodness are always inseparable. If anything is evil, it is not necessary; if it is necessary, it is not evil, but good. Truth and eternity, likewise, are partners. He who takes his place alongside truth and trusts it may be sure of the future. He and God are linked together in ties that do not break apart. . .

### ARE YOU PLANNING TO MOVE?

If so, clip this coupon and mail to One Public Square, Mezzanine #6, Cleveland, Ohio 44113. immediately. It is urgently needed before the next issue of the **Central Bulletin**.

Name .....

Old Address . . . . . Zip .....

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Vol. XXXVIII-No. 7

## CLIQUES

Recently, I received word that our group was being run by a clique. I was concerned with this dangerous situation and decided to investigate. After considerable discussion with our loyal members and a complete investigation, this is what we found.

First of all, this report is TRUE. Furthermore we found that the clique is composed of faithful and loyal members who are only interested in the group and A.A. as a whole. They are present at every meeting and accept responsibilities cheerfully. They contribute generously of their time, effort and materially to carry the message to other alcoholics. They are grateful to A.A. for their sobriety and they show their gratitude with action rather than lip service. Thus, we can honestly report that there is no question that the group and A.A. is run by a clique of **enthusiastic** and responsible men and women.

To correct the situation, we recommend that more members join the clique. You do not have to have any signatures of recommendation or show any credentials. The only requirement for membership in the clique is that you attend every meeting that you can, help to make your group one of the best groups in your area, and you will find yourself in the clique. Before you realize it, others will be talking about you belonging to a clique but you will be glad you are in it.

## WHAT PRICE FRIENDSHIP

Not long ago, I read in one of our AA magazines this startling question, "What price do you demand for your friendship? Every member of AA should ask themselves that same question, and then go one step further and ask themselves if their friends can afford the price they are asking. Even our fellowship is infected with a few folks who have not solved their selfish demands for friendship. They use their friends as pawns on the chessboard of their desires and ambitions. They are always hurt by something someone said or didn't say. They yearn for friendship but at the same time, they carry a grudge against the world, because those people in the world are not willing to pay the price for their friendship.

Nevertheless, there are more wonderful men and women in AA than in any other group in the world who would gladly share their friendship freely with others. They are the people we see at every meeting who are adding something to the emotional bank of others. They help to make life worth living, friendship worth treasuring, work worth doing and the group worth serving.

How expensive are we to our friends? How many unreasonable demands do we make upon them? Let's think this over and if the price is too high - REDUCE IT.

## HOW IT WORKS

This is the title of the Fifth Chapter in the book Alcoholics Anonymous. It is positive, confident, definite. This is significant. There is no question about "does it work?" or "will it work?". IT WORKS. The evidence is there, it is irrefutable.

"How It Works". This is not a theory, or a wild-eyed dream, advanced by some band of "**johnnie-come-laielays**". On the contrary, it is a demonstrated, valid, successful approach to this tremendous problem. It has stood the test of time. The fact that more than a million recovered alcoholics are well today is sufficient proof that it works.

As to "How It Works" I can only express my personal opinion. Whether you agree with what I write or not, if what I write may provide some food for thought, then some good will have been accomplished. And in case anything I say may sound dogmatic, I apologize now, in advance. I do not intend to sound dogmatic. We have no dogma or creed in A.A. How I work the program might make you drunk. How you work the program is your business. You work it your way — **I work** it my way. There is no standardized way of working the program that I know of.

I have heard people refer to what **they** term the "right brand of A.A.". I don't know what this means. I don't know who does the branding. Nor do I know of the necessary qualifications that enable one to attain this exalted position. All I know is, if I try to practice these principles as best I can, in all my affairs, the program should work for me as it has for all those others. I will have mental sobriety as well as **physical** sobriety, which is the only true sobriety.

On the other hand, it is my belief that if we approach the program as a "doubting Thomas", or employ an intellectual approach, if we do a vast amount of research, and analyzation, and criticizing; if we try to rewrite the program, or delete portions of it, or add to it, if we try to change the program in any way, the odds are we will end up in a shambles of discontent and restlessness, on a 'dry drunk'. For all the peace of mind and serenity we will enjoy, we might as well be drunk. My opinion is (and I am aware this may sound dogmatic) nevertheless my opinion is that the program should be approached on a basis of Faith. If it works for all these other people, it will work for me. What other logical conclusion is there?

FAITH MAKES ALL THINGS POSSIBLE



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Harry D.. Founder and Editor 1892-1968

No. 38 April 1980 No. 7

MINUTES OF CENTRAL COMMITTEE  
WESTERN RESERVE ROOM  
OLD STONE CHURCH  
APRIL 1, 1980, 8:00 P.M.

Don E., Moderator, opened the meeting by leading members present in the Serenity Prayer. Roll call showed that 50 members were present representing 50 groups. Jean M., Vice Moderator, read the purposes of Central Committee and the Twelve Traditions of A.A.

Minutes of the March 4, meeting were read by the Secretary. A motion was made seconded and carried that these minutes be accepted as read. Treasurer's report through March was read showing a balance in the Central Committee account of \$364.16 and in the Central Bulletin account of \$591.88. 59 speakers were supplied by the District Office to non A.A. groups for months of January thru March inclusive.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Action Committee and Justice Center, no report.

**Area Wide Committee:** Chairman, Ed K, reported the next Area Wide meeting is tentatively scheduled for June 1st, lead will be Jim and Carol E., Wickliffe, Ohio. The Serenity Singers are planning on being there also.

**Central Bulletin:** Dick F., Chairman, stated, still looking for articles and subscriptions, asked to spread the word around in order to boost Bulletin subscriptions.

**Bay View:** Terry L, reported, Serenity Hall is quite full. There has been some additions to the Lectures that are given to patients at Serenity Hall.

**Brecksville:** Ken H., representative, meetings are going along fine, need help for the meetings that are held Tuesday and Thursday.

**Merrick Hall:** Phyllis H., representative, Things at Merrick Hall are going well. Merrick Hall is "running full" according to Jayne M, which is pleasing because it shows that Merrick Hall is being of service to people.

Another seminar designed for the Recovering Alcoholic Woman (Merrick Hall grads, A.A. Women) on dealing with Anger, managing the most common of human emotions. Seminar designed to strengthen ongoing recovery and to be used in conjunction with the A.A. program. It will be presented by Mary-Thomas T.J. Two Saturdays, April 26, May 3rd. 7th floor auditorium, Women's General Hospital. 9:00 to 12:00 noon. Register now.

25 people. No charge.

**East Side Veteran:** Lucretia W., representative, meetings are well attended.

**Woodruff:** Edith H., representative, "Correction," Wednesday Nite Unity will be celebrating its 2nd Anniversary, Saturday, April 12, 1980. Society for the Blind, 1909 E. 101 St., Cleveland, Ohio, Door open 3:00 P.M.

**New Business:** Marilyn V., announced the formation of a new group for Women in Berea Ohio, more on this later.

**N.E.O. GENERAL SERVICE REPORT:** Delegate, Terry L., reported on the Mini Conference held earlier. She will be leaving April 19th for a General Service 5 day conference in New York, and will be available in May to speak at groups, on what goes on at General Service Conferences. International Conference, July 3, 4, 5, and 6, New Orleans La.

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There being no further business, the meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Elvira A., Secretary

CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
APRIL 1st, 1980  
OLD STONE CHURCH-PUBLIC SQUARE  
CLEVELAND, OHIO  
BE INFORMED  
GROUP REPRESENTATIVES WELCOME

TWENTY-NINTH  
INTER-GROUP DINNER DANCE  
SATURDAY, MAY 3, 1980  
THE CLEVELAND PLAZA-BALLROOM  
SPEAKER: RICHARD B. WASHINGTON, D.C.  
TICKETS \$12.50 PER PERSON

LANGUAGE OF THE HEART  
8th ANNIVERSARY  
SUNDAY, MAY 11, 1980  
4:00 P.M.  
SPEAKER: ART W. BEDFORD WED.  
HOLY FAMILY CHURCH  
3845 E. 131 STREET  
CLEVELAND, OHIO

2nd ANNUAL  
YOUNG PEOPLE OF OHIO  
BOWLING GREEN UNIVERSITY  
JULY 18, 19, 20, 1980  
OHIO YOUNG PEOPLE IN A.A.  
P.O. BOX 6427  
TOLEDO, OHIO 43612

OBITUARY

Chuck Gresser, of North Canton passed away suddenly. Our deepest sympathy to his family.

A SUBSTITUTE FOR SECOND BEST

I have occasionally had to miss meetings. Something in my other affairs arises which I permit to take precedence. I find this to be normal for me.

Some of the reasons that I have missed meetings are: car trouble, personal sickness, family illness, court hearings, getting married, vacation travel, conflicting schedule, having baby, work requirements and self indulgence.

When I'm attending a "comfortable number" of meetings for me, I find that I think less about me and more about others. When conditions cause me to decide to miss some meetings, I slowly become conscious of my self-concern. I think more about myself and less about others. Then I tend to worry more, fret oftener and rise to anger.

During some of these periods I have tried in various ways to compensate for the time spent away from meetings. Some of them are: reading literature, thanking God, saying prayers, pondering defects, attending church, making amends and helping others.

The effects of these attempts to compensate never fail to surprise me. They just don't work! I recently read half the Bible between home grup visits, and was bent as far out of shape when I walked in as I have ever been during my sobriety.

I find that it takes a proper balance of reading literature, attending meetings, applying the steps and helping others to attain my quest for a comfortable sobriety. Substitutions results in an improper balance which then leads me to a discontented sobriety. Now that beats drinking, of course, but it's really only second best. I think I'll try a substitute for second test. See you at 8:30?

Anonymous Good News

MI

Be a Bulletin Booster

AA CENTRAL BULLETIN ORDER BLANK. Please write distinctly. . . or print. . . to avoid errors. Date, Name, Address, Street, City, Zone No., One Year at \$3.50, Amount enclosed \$, Mail to Central Bulletin One Public Square, Mezzanine #6 Cleveland, Ohio 44113

The Only Requirement

Alcoholism is an equal-opportunity disease, and A.A. is an equal-opportunity fellowship, our Third Tradition says. A person becomes a member of A.A. upon deciding that he or she is a member, and remains a member as long as he or she wants to. Neither race, color, sex, age, religion, nor any other identifying characteristic has an effect . . . The forward to the first edition of the Big Book states that "the only requirement for membership is an honest desire to stop drinking." The forward to the second edition states that "no alcoholic man or woman could be excluded from our Society." . . . Our Twelfth Concept, and particularly our Fifth and Sixth Warranties, point out that no person can be expelled from A.A. . . . A.A. was founded and is designed to help the alcoholic deal with the disease of alcoholism. In this narrow area of living, our Fellowship has expertise that is unequalled by any other source. We do not, however, have expertise with other problem areas that affect people. Nor are we, as a fellowship, expert in helping alcoholics with problems other than alcoholism. When we try, we will most probably fail . . . Our success with alcoholism does not give us authority to practice medicine or law without a license. . . When people decide they are A.A. members, they also assume the responsibility of membership. This includes the adherence to, protection of and perpetuation of the Traditions and Concepts . . . My number one problem is alcoholism. It will continue to be. I have many other problems, and these rotate in and out of my number two slot. I do not view with alarm persons who come to A.A. with dual problems. In fact, if they are as I am they have not only dual problems, but also triple, quadruple, and soon . . . What I do view with alarm is the occasion when we forget, when we replace alcoholism with some other problem in the number one spot. We are then in peril, both as individuals and as a fellowship . . . So what do we do? In my judgement, we accept our responsibility as members, concentrate on alcoholism, and expect other members to do the same. We adhere to the Traditions and Concepts, and we expect other members to do the same. We view with alarm those instances when problems other than alcohol are discussed at A.A. meetings. We express our concern to those involved, and we share with them our reasons . . . What we must do, in addition, is to advise all that we are involved with alcoholism and cannot become involved with other problems.

By Vic B. from High & Dry

Patient: "What would you charge to alter my nose?" Doctor: "Five hundred dollars." Patient: "Anything cheaper?" Doctor: "You can try walking into a telephone pole!"

Tom: "These days, everything I buy costs about four times what it used to cost."

Jerry: "Yes, and what's worse, half the time it isn't fit to drink!"

## MY HIGHER POWER AND ME

*Win S, Fairfield, CA  
Good News*

At the very moment of my birth, my God, as I understand Him, looked down at me as he did when He created Adam and Eve and said:

"You, as a member of the human race, are but a minute part of my scheme of things. I created you for the very same reason that I have created all living things—simply to propagate the species.

"I have provided for you all the material things that you will need, and in an abundance that will last beyond eternity.

"However, I have gone one step further with you. As a member of the human race, which is only one of a multitude of living species which I have created, I have endowed you, like all other humans who have been born and all of those yet to be born, with a third, or higher level of brain, over which you will have complete control.

"Housed in this cluster of gray matter is your ability to:

1. Think for yourself—control your actions.
2. Reason—distinguish between right and wrong.
3. Remember—retain experiences for future use.
4. Care—exemplify compassion and concern.

"Furthermore, I have given you five basic attributes called human emotions. These are: hate, love, fear, happiness and grief.

"I have done this for you because the human being is the last of my creations, the finishing touch to My master plan for the universe. I have taken great pains in perfecting this plan, and I have left nothing undone. It is important that you remember always that you, like the tiniest microbe, are inconsequential by yourself, but so very, very important in My master plan.

"And furthermore, I have reserved for Myself alone, the control of everything I have created, inert and alive, with one exception; that is how you, a human being, thinks and acts.

"Use these capabilities I have given you to develop the material things which I have furnished for your well-being. And use these attributes wisely. Above all, develop a sound maintenance control of your five basic human emotions. By accomplishing these things, you will have for yourself a peace of mind, serenity, and an enduring love for Me that will expand to all things I have created.

"How will you do this, you ask. I leave that for you to figure out. My will for you as a living species is to propagate the race, and as a human being, to lead a fruitful and contented life.

"And lastly, have infinite trust in Me that these things which I have said to you are true. However, should you at any time become aware that there has grown within your mind a distrust and disbelief in Me, and that you have inadvertently taken upon yourself certain responsibilities which I have reserved only for Myself, and you get yourself into trouble because of it, I will always be ever present to give you guidance, but for the asking."

AND WITH THAT, I WAS LEFT ON MY OWN.

## OUT OF UNIFORM???

Recently we had a two-hatter from out of town who proceeded to monopolize the meeting by telling us all about the wonderful program they had in the place where he worked. It was interesting, but it wasn't what we were there for. I guess part of the fault was the Chairman's for not cutting him off, but there were some pretty unhappy AAs who left the meeting muttering to themselves and each other.

My sponsor wasn't there that night but when I saw him again, I told him about it. He said, "Yeah you'll find some over-enthusiastic alumni doing this too. The guy was out of line, and all the other people were out of line for letting him get away with it. It's up to the GROUP to decide what goes on in it's meetings.

You've just had a good lesson on why AA is self-supporting and why we don't endorse anything or anybody else's programs, products or whatever. There ain't no such a thing as a free lunch. Every day we read in the papers about the strings attached to the money that the Federal and State Governments 'give back' to the local level. John D. Rockefeller was one of the first to tell us that if we took money from outside sources we would wind up having these same "benefactors" trying to influence the way we operate the program.

Apparently, AA people back at the start were rather hostile toward anybody who thought they knew more about alcoholism than the AAs did. Then, gradually, they began to realize that there was plenty of room for everybody.

I guess there are a lot more "two-hatters" and Rehab Alumni around now than there were back then because of all the new rehab programs operated by the hospitals and the government people. There's a world of good we can do, as private individuals, in connection with these programs but from now on, if somebody tries to take over our AA meeting he will be politely reminded that he is

"OUT OF UNIFORM"

when he wears his Rehab Hat at an A.A. meeting.

Sam, UNITY, Dayton, Oh.

### ARE YOU PLANNING TO MOVE?

If so, clip this coupon and mail to One Public Square, Mezzanine #6, Cleveland, Ohio 44113. immediately.

It is urgently needed before the next issue of the **Central Bulletin**.

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It will help you and it will help us.





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Cleveland, Ohio 441 13

Vol. XXXVIII-No. 8

## SHARING-IT'S BOTH GIVE AND TAKE

In the environment in which I was raised, in church, at home and in school, sharing meant giving of that which had been given to you in abundance. Giving money to the missions, or a charity, giving time as a volunteer to help a worthy cause - whatever, the basic ideas was of course, to pass on to those less fortunate some of the bounty God provided. So too in the first seven years of my AA program. Almost immediately upon joining up I was made aware of the need for "carrying the message". Hospital visits, providing rides to meetings, making coffee and later on - "sponsoring".

"In order to keep it - you've got to give it away". This cliché is probably the 2nd most often quoted; right after "Easy Does It" , . . and without doubt it is flat-out right. We must live Chapter Seven - or as our book and history remind us - we die. Not "Just" drink - we - alcoholics - have proof positive almost daily. Drinking, for us, leads to insanity or death. It's serious business we're about . . . Damm little Mickey Mouse in AA.

But what about these people who do drink or slip after long periods of sobriety? Are they all "Bad AA's"? Did they all stop going to meetings? What about those who seemingly lose enthusiasm for the program after 5-10-15 or more years, and seem to have become embittered of life? Are these to be thought of as "Drop-outs" and simply prayed for: and even more importantly how can we (mainly me!) avoid this life of bitter sadness. What causes this change? Is it the result of circumstances in ones life? Mid-life panic - normal responses to growing older - played out upon the ever present alcoholic ability to make a mountain out of every molehill? Is it boredom? A childish response to a lessening of attention?

Maybe - I don't know anymore than perhaps you do. But, I do know I don't want it to happen to me again. While I didn't get drunk - I got every thing else **but!** And I know why too.

I had not learned that sharing has two parts. The first, most obvious we all know and feel. The second part is more difficult to live with. In particular after a period of sobriety - a period in which I am supposed to have my act together. How can someone seek help when they have assumed a role of "Old Timer", (There is always someone newer). Pride is the culprit. Pride is self - which is, of course, dumb. Self did nothing in getting me sober - why do I now assume self needs protection? Just plain dumbness. The ability

to seek comfort through AA at any stage of sobriety is a blessing - a gift from the Twelve Steps - and in particular from step eleven. The book promises "A normal life without drinking". A normal life means just that. Good and bad - happiness and sadness - pain and pleasure . . . guilt and glory.

Working the program, to me, now means working both sides of the sharing street. Without guilt, without fear of ridicule, without a phoney sense of indebtedness. There is no need for feeling indebted - only involved. AA is the 12 Steps - through these all of life may be experiences . . . **today.**

Terry W.  
Bay-West Discussion

My subscription to the Bulletin is even newer than my new found sobriety. I look forward to it as I do the "Grapevine", my meetings, and my all too infrequent readings of the "Big Book". The "Bulletin" makes a nice addition to the reading material I keep by the big overstuffed chair and what's more as time goes by I find that I can actually remember what I read in it. Thanks.

Anonymous on the Westside.

## There is a vacancy in the clique

AA was saddened to learn this week of the death of one of its members, **SOMEONE ELSE**. **SOMEONE's** passing **creates** a vacancy that will be difficult to fill. **ELSE** has been with us for many years. **SOMEONE** did far more than a normal person's share of the work. Whenever there was a job to do, some activity to volunteer for, a committee meeting to attend, one name was on everyone's list. "Let **SOMEONE ELSE** do it."

It was common knowledge that **SOMEONE ELSE** was among the largest contributors to AA. Whenever there was a financial need, everyone just assumed **SOMEONE ELSE** would make up the difference. **SOMEONE ELSE** was a wonderful person, sometimes appearing superhuman but a person can only do so much. Were the truth known, everybody expected too much from **SOMEONE ELSE**.

Now **SOMEONE ELSE** is gone! We wonder what we are going to do. **SOMEONE ELSE** left a wonderful example to follow, but who is going to follow it? Who is going to do the things **SOMEONE ELSE** did? When you are asked to help, remember, we can't depend on **SOMEONE ELSE** anymore.

The Winners Circle.

CENTRAL BULLETIN



Published monthly by the Cleveland Central Committee of A.A., a non-profit fellowship dedicated to service. Address all letters to Central Bulletin, One Public Square, Mezzanine #6, Cleveland, Ohio 44113. Subscription price \$3.50 per Year.

Harry D.. Founder and Editor 1892-1968

No. 38 MAY 1980 No. 8

MINUTES OF CENTRAL COMMITTEE  
WESTERN RESERVE ROOM  
OLD STONE CHURCH  
MAY 6, 1980  
8:00 P.M.

Don E., Moderator, opened the meeting by leading members present in the Serenity Prayer. Roll call showed that 39 members were present representing 39 groups. Jean M., Vice Moderator, read the purpose of Central Committee and the Twelve Traditions of A.A.

Minutes of the April 1, meeting were read by the Secretary. A motion was made seconded and carried that these minutes be accepted as read. Treasurer's report through April was read showing a balance in the Central Committee account of \$331.06 and in the Central Bulletin account of \$688.06. 66 Speakers were supplied by the District Office to non A.A. groups for months of January thru April inclusive.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Action Committee and Rosary Hall no report.

Area Wide Committee: Chairman, Ed K., announced the next Area Wide meeting will be Sunday, June 1st, 1980, St. Malachi School Hall, 2401 Washington St., speakers Jim and Carol E., A.A. and Alanon. The Serenity Singers of Akron, Ohio will be there also. Don't forget the coupon that is attached to the notice. Three books will be given away as prizes.

Central Bulletin: Dick F., Chairman, still looking for articles and subscriptions. There were 48 exonerations sent out last month, please send in your renewals.

Bay View: Terry L., reported things are going quite well. They are developing the After Care Program. Serenity Hall will be moving March 1st, 1980, and will be called St. John and Westshore Hospital.

Brecksville: Ken H., representative, we need speakers from the outside meetings. Please call if you are available. The meetings are going along O.K.

Merrick Hall: Phyllis H., representative, Merrick Hall continues to respond to the needs of Women. Another Growth Workshop begins May 24, 1980, for couples. A growth Workshop in Assertiveness training begins June 1st. for details call Merrick Hall.

East Side Veterans: Lucretia W., representative, meetings are well attended.

Woodruff: A report from Edith H., representative was read by Moderator. "Everythings going great at Woodruff". Still need leads for meetings, anyone

wanting to volunteer, please call Annette C., at 795-3700".

Justice Center: Warren M., representative, Everything fine, the response has been great.

New Business: An announcement was made Stella Maris is having Bingo, and wanted to bring attention to members that this is not an A.A. affair.

N.E.O. General Service Report: Delegate, Terry L., reported for those that have registered for the International Conference, please bring your confirmed registration with you. They will need some volunteers to help with food, write to General Service for details about this. Ohio State Conference, August 1st, 2nd and 3rd., Stouffers Inn on the Square, there will be a Dance after the Banquet speaker-and an interpreter for the deaf. If you have gotten your reservation back, please mail it back again, the problem has been taken care of. The next Assembly meeting will be Sunday, May 18, 2:00 P.M., American Legion Hall, Brecksville, Ohio, Rt. 82 and 21.

A report on the General Service Conference: 'Markings on the Journey', a filmstrip on the historical development of A. A., using material from the archives, has been prepared for submission to the 1980 Conference. The film "Inside View of A.A." can be obtained free of charge. The agenda—Cooperation with the Professional Community, Correctional Facilities, the Grapevine, Literature, Public Information and Treatment Facilities.

There being no further business, the meeting closed with the Lords Prayer.

Elvira A., Secretary.

AREA WIDE MEETING  
JUNE 1ST, 1980—2:00 P.M.  
ST. MALACHI SCHOOL HALL  
2401 WASHINGTON ST.  
CLEVELAND, OHIO  
JIM & CAROL E. A.A. & AL-ANON  
SERENTIY SINGERS FROM AKRON  
EVERYONE WELCOME

CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
June 3rd, 1980  
OLD STONE CHURCH-PUBLIC SQUARE  
CLEVELAND, OHIO  
BE INFORMED  
GROUP REPRESENTATIVES WELCOME

G.S.R. THIRD LEGACY  
MEETING-2:00 P.M.  
SUNDAY, JUNE 15, 1980  
AMERICAN LEGION HALL  
ROUTE 82 & 21, BRECKSVILLE, OHIO

45TH FOUNDER'S DAY  
AKRON, OHIO  
JUNE 20, 21, & 22nd 1980  
P.O. BOX 12, AKRON, OHIO 44309

**INTERNATIONAL A.A. CONVENTION**  
**45TH ANNIVERSARY**  
**"THE JOY OF LIVING"**  
**NEW ORLEANS JULY 3-6 1980**

2nd ANNUAL  
 YOUNG PEOPLE OF OHIO  
 BOWLING GREEN UNIVERSITY  
 JULY 18, 19, 20, 1980  
 OHIO YOUNG PEOPLE IN A.A.  
 P.O. BOX 6427  
 TOLEDO, OHIO 43612

OHIO STATE CONFERENCE  
 AUG. 1, 2, **3rd, 1980**  
 STOUFFERS INN ON THE SQUARE  
 CLEVELAND, OHIO  
 DANCE AFTER BANQUET SPEAKER  
 INTERPRETER FOR THE DEAF

CLEVELAND DISTRICT OFFICE  
**WILL BE CLOSED ON SATURDAY'S**  
**DURING JUNE, JULY AND AUGUST.**  
 ALL CALLS TO THE OFFICE WILL BE  
 RECORDED AND PROCESSED THE SAME DAY

**MAKE THE FIRST MOVE**

It is hard to avoid occasional "run-ins" with other people. No matter how hard you try they are bound to happen once in a while. But when they do, don't let hurt feelings fester. Carrying grudges is a sign of a little mind and a stunted personality. Don't carry grudges and do your best to keep others nursing grudges against you. When you've had trouble with someone, do not hesitate to make the first move toward apologizing. You may have to swallow some pride to do it, but it is well worth the cost. If the other fellow makes the first move, it is a pretty good indication that he is a little smarter than you are.

— *Be a Bulletin Booster* —

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**LIVE AND LET LIVE**

Most of us have spent years in our drinking careers pursuing a course of death and destruction. Now that we are in the A.A. program and working the Twelve Steps, let's go forward with a program of living. **Nietzche** said "A man who has a why to live can bear with almost any how." Sobriety furnished the "why;" the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous, the Twelve Steps to recovery, and the one-to-one sharing at A.A. groups and through sponsorship provide the "how."

But have you let go? Are you living a life of fear and limitation because of a "sin" committed very long ago? A sin is nothing but a mistake, and everyone makes mistakes at some time. In making choices along the way, any decision made at a particular time no doubt was correct for that moment in time. There was a reason for choosing, you did the best you could under the circumstances, and if it was not the right decision, now you know. So breathe deeply, you are free, this is Today. Let go, let God, and live!

And Let Live! Some of us become so righteous and judgmental in our sobriety that it almost creates a feeling of alienation from others. Whether we voice our disapproval of others or just think it, it does not make for happy human relations. Many times such people also feel they cannot forgive or forget, and keep alive past hurts and resentments, which they seem to see reflected in other associates. Thomas Merton said "He that cannot forgive others breaks the bridge over which he must pass himself; for every man has need to be forgiven."

No matter how justified a person may feel in judging or condemning that which seems wrong to him, he cannot afford to continue in such a state of mind. As Bill said in the **12 x 12**, "It is a spiritual axiom that every time we are disturbed, no matter what the cause, there is something wrong with us." The principles of tolerance and love have to be emphasized in actual practice. When we can accomplish this, the orthodox and the unorthodox mix happily and usefully together. We all are children of God, as we understand Him. Let us not be our brother's keeper, but rather our brother's brother.

*By Dean K-Good News*

The saloon doors swung open. A cowboy rushes out, takes a running jump and lands in the gutter.

"What's the matter with you, fellow?" asked a bystander. "Did they kick you out or are you just plain drunk?"

"Neither" says the cowboy, "but I'd like to know who the son of a gun is that moved my horse!"

"That pain in your leg is caused by old age," the doctor said.

"Don't be silly," replied the old gent. "My other leg's the same age and it doesn't hurt."

### ACCEPT

One of the first things I learned when I came into Alcoholics Anonymous was the Serenity Prayer. Hundreds of times, over the years, I have said it and it has helped me.

But, as I now look back, how did I accept? Did I have humility and **was** I happy accepting or was I like in my drinking days saying "Oh, Lord, get me by this one and it may **not** happen again."

When it came to alcohol, many times I accepted the fact that I couldn't take that first drink, but I wasn't happy about it. Not until the time came when I actually admitted I couldn't change my drinking pattern did any happiness come to me. Had this happiness not **come**, I would never have stayed sober.

Today, without alcohol in the picture at home and otherwise, I find things and situations that I cannot change. I feel temper and all my old alcohol traits creeping back to make me unhappy. Just because, for the time being, I lost my humility and couldn't accept the fact that I was the one who had to change.

When you have done your best to change what you would like to change and have asked God to help you, then be happy as much as you might not like to. If it's major, He will come to your rescue and give you wisdom to know what to do. If it is minor, such as your wife's hollering at you, smile. If you can't smile, keep your teeth well brushed and show her how pretty they look. She may say some sarcastic words, but if you keep your humility and continue to do so, she will end up saying the Serenity Prayer.

When both accept in the right way, what a happy home you will have. Tomorrow morning look in the mirror and ask that lad or lassie if you need to change. If the head goes up and down, which means, yes, get busy at once before the rust gets too deep. It's awfully hard to loosen if it gets too deep.

### MASTERING RESENTMENTS

We began to see that the world and its people had really dominated us. Under that unhappy condition, the wrong doing of others, fancied or real, had power to actually kill us, because we could be driven back to drink through resentment. We saw that these resentments must be mastered, but how? We could not wish them away.

This was our course: We realized that the people who wronged us were perhaps spiritually sick. So we asked God to help us show them the same tolerance, pity, and patience that we would cheerfully grant a sick friend.

Today, we avoid retaliation or argument. We cannot treat sick people that way. If we do, we destroy our chance of being helpful. We cannot be helpful to all people, but at least God will show us how to take a kindly and tolerant view of each and every one.

*Taken from the book Alcoholics Anonymous, pg. 66-67, permission granted from A.A. World Services inc.*

### LEARNING TO LIVE

#### *From the Road Back-Dublin Ireland*

It is the practice at Selsey England Convention to hold a thanksgiving service at which clergymen of all denominations participate. We have quoted this before and do so again.

**"THERE IS NO LEARNING TO LIVE WITHOUT LEARNING TO LOVE**

Every recovery story told in AA is linked with some other person in the Fellowship.

Because that other person lives, I was made to love.

I was given an example of love which I try to follow.

The good that is in our lives is not exclusively **ours—** it has been given to us.

God does not create life so that He can possess.

He creates life so that he can share.

The size of a person's world is the size of their heart.

We can be at home in the world of reality only to the extent that we have learned to love it.

Fully alive men and women escape from dark and diminished worlds of egocentricity which always has a population of one.

They are filled with an empathy that enables them to feel deeply and spontaneously with others.

Because they can enter the feeling world of **others—** almost as if they were inside other or others were inside them--their world is greatly enlarged and their potential for human experience greatly enhanced.

They have become "persons for others" and there are others so dear to them that they have personally experienced "greater love than this" sense of commitment.

They would protect their loved ones with their own lives,

People who love learn to move the focus of their attention and concern for themselves out to others.

Real love cannot be successfully initiated.

Our care and concern for others must be genuine or our love means nothing.

This much is certain.

There is no learning to live without learning to love.

John Powell

#### **ARE YOU PLANNING TO MOVE?**

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It will help you and it will help us.



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Vol. XXXVIII-No. 9

## IS THERE TOO MUCH WATER IN THE PABLUM?

After leading at a meeting in Akron the other night, a fortish-year old lady offered a private comment and question about the advice given her by her sponser to not take the 4th and 5th steps during her first year in the program. Into the conversation another women who sort of agreed, but felt it could be done sooner if sincerity was present in large measure. Another advised against any steps until comfortable in sobriety. . .yet one more wanted first to get in touch with her innermost feelings prior to attempting to really know herself through the steps, which after all were a "lifetime program". At the next pause two men joined in with the neat advice to "wait until you hurt enough" and, of course, the ever present "Easy Does It".

(If AA has taught me anything in ten years, its taught me to stay the hell out of dumb arguements or at least to do so unless I'm at my home group where I still seem to reveal my own ineptness most easily). . .Then I went home.

I couldn't help contrasting this advice with the story of Clarence S. being asked to kneel at the side of his hospital bed and start to ask for help from a greater power at the direction of Dr. Bob. . .of Dick P. being told to pray for a week PRIOR to going to a meeting. But most of all the thought of Warren C. Sr., dead just over two years now, but alive in the programs of so many of us on the west side. . .well probably more than the west side. . .probably his influence extends throughout the program itself. . . throughout even those parts of AA where his name would not even be known. . .his thinking would be.

I was reminded at my home group just last month of Warren's habit of speaking to patients at one or another of the area drunk tanks and holding up the Big Book to page 59, of pointing to the 12 Steps and stating as fact . . . "If you DO want to drink again, for goodness sake dont take these steps . . . for if you do take them, you'll never drink again." Warren spoke at hospitals for years and only spoke of the steps. The implication of recovery, is of course, an implication of recovery from alcoholism and how in the heck you can wait to get better before you take the medicine is beyond me. Warren and others also taught us that all of lifes problems could be dealt with by using the 12 steps as tools for living . . . without question there has been plenty of opportunity for me to need the help of the steps. But first, I can hear him say "you gotta get sober" and the best way to do that, the most successful

means of getting sober are the 12 steps. Then the other things fall into place.

Too many of us recently **equiped** with rose-colored hindsight and indeed many of our friends in treatment facilities seem hell-bent on turning the steps into some kind of "after-care program" which is designed to aid us in reinforcing our sobriety. They are not . . . they are as chapter 5 claims and as proven by thousands in Cleveland and a million or so in the world t'o date..." a program of Recovery . . .that rarely (Clarence S. says never) fails.

Terry W.  
Bay West Discussion



## THE POSTMAN NEVER RINGS TWICE

Our Second Tradition says in part, "our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern." A group secretary is one of our trusted servants. One of the trusts given to a secretary is that his name and address are listed as a point of communication between the Alcoholic Foundation, the Cleveland District Office, and other groups. Mail from AA sources, although addressed to this secretary, is actually property of the group, and as such, should be transmitted to all the group.

The writer travels widely around the AA circuit, and in too many instances is sorry to find that some secretaries do not even bother to bring the group mail to the meeting. This practice definitely violates part of the trust that has been placed in the hands of the secretary.

Our group receives considerable intergroup mail, and seldom does the reading of the mail to the group take over five minutes, so the argument advanced by some secretaries that 'it takes too long' simply is not true. Moreover, when we send our mail to other groups, we intend that the message be carried to all the members, not just the secretary.

-Anonymous



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Harry D., Founder and Editor 1892-1968

No. 38 June 1980 No. 9

MINUTES OF CENTRAL COMMITTEE  
WESTERN RESERVE ROOM OLD STONE CHURCH  
JUNE 3, 1980  
8:00 P.M.

Don E., Moderator, opened the meeting by leading membes present in the Serenity Prayer. Roll call showed that 41 members were present representing 40 groups. Jean M., Vice Moderator, read the purpose of Central Committee and the Twelve Traditions of A.A.

Minutes of the May 6th, meeting were read by the Secretary. After Correction, "The film Inside View of A.A., can be obtained for a service charge", minutes accepted as read. Treasurer's report through May was read showing a balance in the Central Committee account of \$319.18 and the Central Bulletin account of \$735.02. 93 speakers were supplied by the District Office to non A.A. groups for months of January through May.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Action Committee and Rosary Hall, no report.

Area Wide Committee: Chairman, Ed K., reported that 116 people were present at the last meeting, and asked for suggestion for A.A. and Alanon speakers for the next Area Wide Meeting.

Central Bulletin: Dick F., Chairman, still looking for subscriptions and articles by local members. Suggested groups might try to give Central Bulletins subscriptions as prizes at meetings.

Bay View: Terry L., reported, we are continuing to have good communication between staff at Serenity Hall and cooperation between the A.A. Community. We now have a new physical Therapist.

Brecksville: Meetings are well attended. Still an on-going plea for leads, anyone wanting to lead please contact, Ken H.

Merrick Hall: Phyllis H., called in her report. A Growth Workshop in Assertiveness training, June 7, 14, 21, and 28th, 9:45 Coffee and donuts, sessions begin 10:00 to 12 noon. A.A. women, no charge. July 13th, 2:00 P.M. Merrick Hall anniversary, Sight Center. All A.A. people welcome. All day workshop, Saturday July 19th, call Merrick Hall for details.

East Side Veterans: Lucretia W., meetings are well attended.

Woodruff: James S., reported still need leads for all meetings.

justice Center: Warren M., representative, nothing new to report.

N.E.O. GENERAL SERVICE REPORT: Delegate, Terry L., a reminder: anyone attending the International Convention in New Orleans, be sure to bring your registration slip. The next N.E.O. General Service Assembly meeting will be an open House, pot luck dinner. Diana H., of Youngstown area will be speaker. June 15, 1980, American Legion Hall, Brecksville, Ohio Rt. 82 and 21, 2:00 P.M. Please register for the Ohio state Conference, Jack B., of Detroit Michigan speaker. Founders Day, July 3,4,5 and 6th, Akron, Ohio.

There being no further business, the meeting closed with the Lords Prayer.

Elvira A., Secretary.

CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
JULY 1st, 1980  
OLD STONE CHURCH-PUBLIC SQUARE  
CLEVELAND, OHIO  
BE INFORMED  
GROUP REPRESENTATIVES WELCOME

2nd ANNUAL  
YOUNG PEOPLE OF OHIO  
BOWLING GREEN UNIVERSITY  
JULY 18, 19, 20, 1980  
OHIO YOUNG PEOPLE IN A.A.  
P.O. BOX 6427  
TOLEDO, OHIO 43612

OHIO STATE CONFERENCE  
AUG. 1, 2, 3rd, 1980  
STOUFFERS INN ON THE SQUARE  
CLEVELAND, OHIO  
DANCE AFTER BANQUET SPEAKER  
INTERPRETER FOR THE DEAF

CLEVELAND DISTRICT OFFICE  
WILL BE CLOSED ON SATURDAY'S  
DURING JUNE, JULY AND AUGUST.  
ALL CALLS TO THE OFFICE WILL BE  
RECORDED AND PROCESSED THE SAME DAY

AA IS FOR ALL PEOPLE

Alcoholics come from all walks of socity, regardless of job, religion, color, age or sex. Alcoholism has no respect for anyone. Therefore when we attend our meetings we leave the above outside the meeting room. We go with a opened mind to be helped and to carry our message and our example. We are tree to attend any A.A. meeting anywhere.

### HOW MUCH TO A.A.?

Do we give much to A.A.? I don't mean dollars and cents, I mean of ourselves. It's easy to dig deep and think all is well, but then it is also pretty easy to get gummed up about money and excuse oneself by saying we don't go along with it.

When I first came to A.A. for help I would do anything, go anywhere, see anyone, as I was prepared to go to any length to stop drinking. I believed all my sponsor suggested about keeping an open mind and being willing to try.

How being sober awhile can alter all that. It's easy to miss a meeting or two for any sort of reason, to find an excuse to avoid calling on someone whom you consider to be a slipee, easy to do their inventory and be sure they are not really trying. Meetings don't go your way so you miss instead of offering your two pennyworth.

If we do not add to the bowl of recovery we can't get much from it, and neither can others gain from our experience.

A.A. is a fellowship based on a definite program that calls on us to accept and practice certain things. We must know what to accept and practice and what better place to learn than at an A.A. meeting.

Example is not only good for us, it's all we have to show new members **what** A.A. is all about and I believe it to be part of the program.

Just being sober does not give us the right to call ourselves members of A.A. • many people are sober without hearing of A.A. • while others call themselves AA's and members of a particular group yet never darken the group's doors. I have been in A.A. some time and can honestly say I have never seen a member slip that has tried A.A. and continue to attend meetings, but have seen many slip who for some reason or other have ceased to attend A.A. We don't really graduate nor do we get a diploma; it doesn't all happen in five minutes and it's necessary to stick around.

Anon.-New Zealand

~~THIS IS A LIFETIME JOB!!! MAINSTAY.~~

*Be a Bulletin Booster*

### THOUGHTS. . .WHILE. . .SHAVING

We, in AA, have a great responsibility to all the many thousands of alcoholics who are still suffering. And, yes, we have a responsibility to those yet unborn who will one day be afflicted. We should accept this responsibility and be grateful for it and at the same time be careful that we don't assume a "holier than thou attitude."

We are the lucky ones who, for whatever reason, have been loaned the gift of sobriety. We have been granted a reprieve for 24 hours. We renew this reprieve each day by asking God for it and by trying to live by the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous and practice the AA principles in all our affairs. The best way we can insure our own continued sobriety is by sharing with others that which has been given to us.

Twelfth Step work is one of the easiest and best ways we can do this. Attending meetings is important. Perhaps we feel that we aren't helping anyone by repeating ourselves over and over again at a meeting, but we may never know when something we say, or the manner in which we say it, will be just the thing some newcomer has been waiting to hear. Our regular attendance at meetings besides being vital to our own sobriety is also helping others, because our presence alone, assures others that we care enough to be there. As a group, we are strong, but alone we cannot survive.

This brings up an important question-What do we owe our group? Anyone who thinks there is anything free, is living in a dream world. To get something, we must give something and that goes for AA as well. It is certainly true that for the newcomer coming into the fellowship, broke in many ways and hurting inside and out, he doesn't need money. For he or she, AA is free. However, as sober day follows sober day, this newcomer will have to see that some giving must begin in order to hold on to this new found sobriety.

We owe our group our loyalty. We must help carry out any special project as well as the day to day things that need to be done to keep a group active. We owe our group our presence. If everyone stayed at home, there would be no meeting. The meeting we might miss may be the one at which someone needs our help.

We also owe our group our dependability. If we promise to do something, we must follow through on that promise. If we accept a job as a trusted servant, we must fulfill that **commitment**. Then we owe our financial support. It takes money to support the group and to carry the AA message. Those expenses go on whether we are in town or not, or whether we are present at meetings or not.

Then we owe our group our prayers. Most of us who are sober today have learned that there is much power in prayer. The fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous should be included in our prayers because our lives depend on it!

Bud G. Silver Dollar

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30TH CONFERENCE

Agenda-recommended that the theme for the 1981 Conference be built around "A.A. Takes Its Inventory-General Service Conference Structure"; and that there be a "What's on Your Mind?" session for the full Conference.

Cooperation with the Professional Community-recommended in-person A.A. talks rather than videotaping; anonymity Traditions should be maintained on videotape.

Correctional Facilities-reeammended emphasizing cooperation with correctional administrations and courts, prerelease sponsorship, and referrals to meetings through local committees.

Grapevine-recommended that groups make every effort to introduce newcomers to the Grapevine as a sobriety tool.

International Convention-reaffirmed the 1979 Conference recommendation that simultaneous translation in French, Spanish, and German be provided free for the Big Meeting and the Spiritual Meeting.

Literature-recommended adoption and adaptation of a pamphlet from Great Britain entitled "A Newcomer Asks"; approved manuscript of book "Dr. Bob and the Good Old-timers."

Policy/Admissions-reaffirmed the importance of the committee system for accomplishing business of the General Service Conference.

Public Information-recommended that the film "A.A.—An Inside View" be released for general distribution.

Report and Charter-recommended that "The A.A. Service Manual" include additional material on the role of the alternate at all levels of service.

Treatment Facilities-encouraged the distribution of Guidelines for A.A. Members Employed in the Alcoholism Field in treatment, institutional, and other facilities where they apply.

Trustees-recommended that owners and operators of treatment facilities not be excluded from service on the General Service Board solely because of their occupations.

REPRINTED FROM BOX 4-5-9

The small daughter of a newly elected town mayor was quite proud of her father's accomplishment and was always introducing herself as "Mayor Smith's daughter." Her mother thinking this sounded rather snobbish, instructed her to refer to herself simply as Betty Smith.

That afternoon she was playing in her front yard when a lady came by and gushed, "My goodness! You're Mayor Smith's little daughter aren't you?"

"I thought I was," replied the little girl, "but Momma says no."

HOUSE CLEANING

I attended a meeting the other day with the discussion on Step Six. It had been a while since I had seriously studied this step and it brought to mind some thoughts I would like to share.

It seemed the biggest stumbling block for those attending this meeting was the old devil resentment. Almost to a person, this was the one character defect they seemed to have the most difficulty in dealing with. It seems that resentments keep bouncing back again and again.

As I sat thinking about my own character defects, one thought in particular came to mind. Here, at this meeting and at almost every AA meeting we pray the Lord's Prayer. "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." I guess I have been paying a lot of lip-service to that part of this prayer.

After the meeting, I turned to the "Little Red Book" for a little review. It states, in part, "there is a latent power within each of us that develops through conscious contact with God." "It replaces alcoholic fear and weakness with spiritual strength and understanding."

Without working this Step and gaining the new personality, rehabilitation is impossible. AA is not a matter of not drinking and coming to meetings alone. We have got to change and if we don't change, we are the same person with the same problems. The only difference is we're not drinking.

If we ask for forgiveness for wrongs and protection from self-pity, resentment and all selfishness and do it sincerely, we are working the Step and we will find relief. I have vowed to try to concentrate more on our simple program of recover and especially in the repeating of our prayer at the close of each meeting. I will say it with more concentration in hopes that it may cause me to recognize these defects of character and that I may be forgiven for these defects.

Ken. G. Silver Dollar, Fargo, N.D.

SHORTCOMINGS:

Doing What We Should Not Do— Not Doing What We Should Do—

ARE YOU PLANNING TO MOVE?

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It will help you and it will help us.





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Vol. XXXVIII-No. 10

## IS BEING ABLE TO ASK FOR HELP A "GIFT"?

Since PRIDE ranks the FIRST among a number of DEADLY sins I believe it is a gift to ask for help.

There are many alcoholics out there who can't or won't ask and are truly suffering because they aren't using this life saving gift.

Recently I have asked for help from friends, relations and they have, not meaning to, let me down either with not understanding or a feeling that I have let them down.

I do believe no one knows us better EMOTIONALLY than God.

If you have turned to whomever for help and you seem to come away just as suffering as before (or maybe more because they've disappointed you) go directly to the Heart that knows your interior being more than anyone on earth.

His arms are ALWAYS waiting for your hurt, confused and dispiriting feelings.

Also say a little prayer for the one's who have let you down, their only human and HE is all powerful and loving so use your God given Gift. . . . ASK.

Anonymous

Dear Dick,

It has been a while since I heard from you, and I know I owe you a letter. I appreciate the literature you sent to me. I also am receiving "Central Bulletin" regularly and read it with interest.

I thought you might be interested in a little of our literature from southwest Florida. I enclose one of our monthly bulletin and meeting lists of our seventh district and the fifth district to our north. I attend three meetings a week in our area, and once in a while go up to the fifth district where I have many friends.

I always try to get to the North Fort Myers Group on Saturday evening. This is the home group of Will H., whom I know you are acquainted with. He will be in Cleveland in a week or two and I am sure he will call you.

I suppose you are going to New Orleans. We are not, but a lot of our friends are.

Yours in AA  
Don S.  
Fort Meyers, FLA.

## TRUTH CAPSULE

Be thankful for bad luck. Without it, you'd have to blame yourself.

-Franklin P. Jones

## "IF I WERE AN ALCOHOLISM COUNSELOR"

Which I am not. . . I'd like to try a little experiment. First, though, let me try to stay out of trouble. "AA as a whole has no opinion on outside issues etc." I agree totally, but since this is an internal bulletin, sent to members of the program, it seems in order for just a touch of personal opinion. Now, I am aware that there are no such places as AA hospitals or treatment facilities. . . **but** the facts are that here in the Cleveland area, half-a-dozen places gladly take in patients brought to them by AA members. Each of these facilities is quick to claim treatment in accordance with AA principals (excluding Spirituality. . . God. . . and Prayer, of course. . . **nobody** in a hospital wants to get caught recommending that anyone pray. . . **they** now talk about such things as "value clarification and establishment of a value system." . . . **but** that's another story). I also hasten to add the already well known fact that I am not an expert on treating anything - I have spoken at one area hospital for 7 years and filled in from **time-to-time** at two others. . . **but** as Warren C. used to say "just talk about the steps, they already get more advice than they need."

And that, of course would be the experiment. First turn the body over to the medical guys for a complete check-up and detoxification and then see if they couldn't get sober the easy way. By the way, I have no idea which method of detox is best, some use whiskey and some use pills. . . this is another good area to stay out of.

But, when they are fit and sober, I'd be in favor of a written test. . . **with** just one question. . . "Do you have a desire to quit drinking?" . . . If he or she could write the word YES. . . **then** they would pass. Treatment could begin. . . The Twelve Steps. . . **starting** with Step One. . . **then** and there. . . on the spot. . . **right** away. No lectures, no literature, no books or movies. . . no searching for meaningful insights into those basic emotional trauma or whatever. . . no getting in touch with ones feelings. . . no diversions (guided or not) into family problems, job problems, legal problems etc., and so forth.

Just this one individual who has a desire to quit drinking and wants what we have and is willing to go to any lengths to get it, plus the Twelve Steps (yes all of them), prodded by his AA sponser and taken by the hand by a **counselor** who shows his or her own sense of commitment to the Steps, who refuses to be drawn in to the sort of pity party playfulness we all wanted in our first days in the program.

Ah well. . . **its** just a daydream. . . **but** I wonder sometimes. . . **What** if?

Terry W.  
Bay West Discussion



Published monthly by the Cleveland Central Committee of A.A., a non-profit fellowship dedicated to service. Address all letters to Central Bulletin, One Public Square, Mezzanine #6, Cleveland, Ohio 44113. Subscription price = \$3.50 per Year.

Harry D.. Founder and Editor 1892-1968

No. 38 JULY 1980 No. 10

MINUTES OF CENTRAL COMMITTEE JULY 1, 1980  
WESTERN RESERVE ROOM OLD STONE CHURCH  
8:00 P.M.

Meeting was opened by Don E., Moderator, leading the members present in the Serenity Prayer. Roll call showed that 23 groups were represented at this meeting. Jean M., Vice Moderator, read the purpose of Central Committee and the Twelve Traditions of A.A.

Minutes of the June 3rd meeting were read and approved after correction. Correction: In the N.E.O. General Service Report to read - "Founder's Day, June 20, 21 and 22nd, Akron, Ohio". Treasurer's Report through June 1980 was given showing a balance in the Central Committee account of \$327.43 and in the Central Bulletin account a balance of \$844.34. 98 speakers were supplied by the District Office to non A.A. Groups for months of January through June.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

NO REPORTS: Action Committee, Rosary Hall, East Side Veterans, Woodruff or Justice Center. Neither Metro or Harbor Light.

**Areawide** Committee: Ed K., Chairman, announced that he had the speakers for the next meeting - Bill F. and his wife from Vermilion. The tentative date is Sept. 7, 1980 also tentative location, St. Malachi's at 2:00 P.M. also at this time - tentatively, we will have the Serenity Singers from Akron. Definite information to follow.

Central Bulletin: Dick F., Chairman, reported that he is still looking for articles and subscriptions. Subscriptions have dropped approximately 50 in the month of June. Please urge your members to renew when they get their expiration notice which is sent out first class mail.

Bay View: Terry L., representative, reported that things are going well and the Director and staff are continuing to upgrade the program there.

Brecksville: Don E. reported that they had some offerings from groups to handle leads on a monthly basis on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. They appreciate this and would appreciate more involvement along those same lines. The meetings are well attended.

Merrick Hall: Phyllis H., representative, could not attend meeting but sent in her report as follows: Mer-

rick Hall is operating at total capacity with overflow and they want to express appreciation for the sponsors who continue through the summer season to fulfill their responsibilities to the new women members. She thanked all who participated in the recent assertiveness training growth workshop. There are a few openings for the Anger Growth Workshop which will begin July 8th and continue for three more Saturdays. Call Merrick Hall for reservations. Couples workshop begins July 19th - again call Merrick Hall for information. All members of the fellowship and Merrick Hall grads are invited to Merrick Hall's anniversary on Sunday, July 13th at 2:00 P.M. at the Sight Center on Chester Avenue.

N.E.O. GENERAL SERVICE REPORT: Terry L., Chairman and Northeast Ohio Delegate, reported that the International Convention is starting this week in New Orleans on Thursday, July 3rd through July 6, 1980. Terry will be speaking at one of the Alkathons on Saturday morning - she views this as a tremendous experience for her and a very memorable experience in A.A. Our Ohio State Conference will be held August 1, 2 and 3 at Stouffer's Inn on the Square. Please get your reservations in - you must be registered in order to attend the banquet and dance on Saturday night - price for registration and banquet - \$20.00 per person and reservations should be in at least 48 hours before the beginning of the conference. Films that will be shown are "Inside View of A.A." and they just got through with the prints of a new film strip called "Markings of a Journey". This will be the first time it will be shown around the state. Time: 37 minutes and it will contain photographs from the Archives. It tells our history of how we started with pictures and also the voices of Dr. Bob and Bill W. Also at the State Conference there will be an interpreter for the deaf. Please suggest to any deaf members that wish to attend to mark "deaf" on their registration form so that special seating can be arranged.

The next General Service meeting will be held on September 21, 1980 at 2:00 P.M. in the American Legion Hall, Brecksville, routes 82 and 21. The purpose of this meeting will be to go over the election procedure because in October they are going to have the election for the new officers of Northeast Ohio and will be selecting a new delegate.

There being no further business, meeting closed with the Lords Prayer.

Elvira A., Secretary.

## OBITUARY

Geo. Gardner, Co-Founder of the Forest City Group and a active member of the fellowship passed to that big meeting above on July 2, 1980. Our deepest sympathy to the family.

Mike Bovenzi, Of the Parma Hts group passed away on May 24, 1980. Our condolences to his family.

Ed Hinkle A active member of AA. Passed in June 1980, our sympathy to his family.



## IN OUR CASE, IT PAYS NOT TO ADVERTISE!

We have all been subject to the power of advertising. Many have found that life has been made easier by some of the products now on the market; but to get the benefits of these, they have to be tried and assessed. AA has been tried and tested and the results have been astonishing for the alcoholic. His becoming able to live without alcohol, seemingly impossible at one time, is now a reality. Manufacturers have to advertise to sell their products, and they use all kinds of gimmicks to get their message across to the public. AA has nothing to sell; but to the alcoholic it does have something to offer, with no need for gimmicks. What its members offer is proof that what they have does work. No sales promotions, no free gifts, just a simple program, 12 Steps to a better and easier way of living, one day at a time. Hundreds of thousands of alcoholics can testify that what man has done, man can do. Maybe not on his own, but quite certainly with the help of a Power greater than himself, the God of his own understanding. AA does not advertise or "promote" itself, but it does attract those with a drinking problem who really want to solve it. To see a helpless and hopeless drunk, a human being written off, now restored to decent living, able to take his place in society, is one of the greatest gifts one could wish for. Money or power cannot always bring happiness. What better joy could one get out of life than to help to restore a fellow alcoholic to real living again? By giving, we receive and by helping another we are strengthening ourselves and our own sobriety.

Also From: The Road Back, Dublin, Ireland

The Hindu Guru was explaining to his pupils how everything was of God, the flowers, the animals, and man. The pupil left elated. As he was going down the road he saw an elephant approaching from the other direction. He thought, "If the elephant is of God and I am of God, then there is no need for me to fear or to move off the road."

As the elephant approached, the driver on top of the elephant rang a bell and shouted "Move out of the Way". The pupil kept going straight ahead till the elephant picked him up with his trunk and threw him out of the path into a ditch.

All torn and disheveled, the pupil returned to the guru and asked why such a thing happened. The guru explained, "My son, yes, you are of God and the elephant is of God, but did you not hear the voice of God speaking thru the driver telling you to move out of the way?"

Moral • We first have to listen in order to intuitively know  
and  
God works through people.

Doctor: "Why do you drink so much?"

Lush: "To steady my nerves, but last night I got so steady that I couldn't move at all."

## ARE WE MEETING THE CHALLENGE?

AA today is reaping the rewards • but also the problems • of success. At one time, we were begging people to send us drunks. Now that this is happening, we cry havoc. And it frequently is havoc, but what an opportunity to roll with the punches. We have the tools, but have we the willingness and understanding.

AA first began to grow when co-founders, Bill W. and Dr. Bob, realized that in order to stay sober, they had to work with other drunks, the question was: Where to find them? Our founders went out and looked for them, usually going to doctors, members of the clergy, or others who worked with alcoholics. These professionals made it possible for alcoholics to find us, or for AA to find them.

Today the picture has changed radically. Far from our having to go out and find drunks, they are coming to us in droves. Some members are worried about the influx of new people entering AA under "pressure" from outside agencies and programs. Some groups are overwhelmed when large numbers arrive, perhaps reluctantly, from a treatment facility or a court program. Others have trouble handling newcomers' hostility or lack of interest.

Do we really care where people come from? The vast majority of AA's answer "no". We are grateful newcomers are here, and we are looking for ways to meet them where they are. This means welcoming "too many" newcomers to meetings, and being glad to see the reluctant referrals from court programs. Many of us, now sober, remember how we glowered and grumbled through our first few meetings, but sat it out because of an angry spouse or boss or family doctor had told us to go to AA or else!

In 1950, the phrase "honest desire" in the Preamble was changed. Today, that best-known description of AA reflects the wording of Tradition Three: "The only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking". Many AA's have come to realize in a new way that our "desire to stop drinking" can in reality be the merest germ of an idea. If it is there at all, whether it began with person's contact with a professional or with just plain old hitting bottom, we can be here to help it

grow.

(Excerpts from Box 4 5 9)

### ARE YOU PLANNING TO MOVE?

If so, clip this coupon end mail to One Public Square, Mezzanine #6, Cleveland, Ohio 44113. Immediately. It is urgently needed before the next issue of the Central Bulletin.

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It will help you end it will help us.



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Vol. XXXVIII-No. 11

## BUT FOR THE GRACE OF GOD

Most of us do not even begin to comprehend how really sick we have been until we have been sober in the AA program for a number of years. Then we can look back and realize how we have narrowly escaped the Grim Reaper: Totalling cars and walking away unscathed; insane experiments with combinations of tranquilizers, sedatives, hard drugs and booze; varied unexplainable accidents, which should have been fatal. Each of us could recount numerous incidents, where probably we would have died-But for the Grace of God. When we review our pasts, we truly can identify the un-sound passion we had for self-destruction. Life is like walking through the snow-each step shows. Each of these incidents was absolutely necessary to push us ahead on our long journey to Alcoholics Anonymous. By Gods Grace we survived and arrived at the door which opens on a new journey to a better life. Then "To be or not to be" no longer is the question; the question is "How to be?"

But the Grace of God does not stop here. It does not take much strength to do things, but it takes a great strength to know what to do. The Grace of God will inspire us to see ourselves, all people, all of life with a new vision. It will enable us to express our talents and abilities-show the truth of our being, the purpose in living. It will show us how to be a source of help to others. By the Grace of God there is an appointed time to be born and to die, but the time between the two is of great importance-Use it wisely. If we try to encompass all of life at once, we spread ourselves too thinly. We must learn to let life enfold us and then take not what we want, but what we need from it; thus it is possible to co-exist within the AA program and to practice these principles in all our affairs. Remember, what we do today will determine what we will be tomorrow. Making amends for the life we lived can be found only in the life we now express.

It is a genuinely humbling experience to realize the more we know, the more we understand how little we know. There is an ultimate promise in Chapter 11 of the Big Book: "God will constantly disclose more to you and to us. Ask him in your morning meditation what you can do each day for the man who is still sick. The answers will come, if your own house is in order."

Philosophies and promises which we would never experience-But for the Grace of God!

**IF A MAN DOES ONLY WHAT IS REQUIRED OF HIM, HE IS A SLAVE. THE MOMENT HE DOES MORE — HE IS A FREE MAN.**

## SECRETARYS AND A.A. GROUPS

May we respectfully make an important suggestion?

When it comes time to "elect"- "select"- "sand-bag" (however your group does it) a new group secretary, please give this action careful and sober consideration.

In the first place let's all remember, that to be asked to be a Group Secretary is an HONOR. You **are in** effect saying to this person:

"We respect you-we trust you-and we feel that you have the interest of OUR group at heart-so we are asking you to be of "loving service" to the Group by accepting the secretaryship."

Please do not take the attitude that your group secretary is of no real importance to your group. Do not try to drop the job on some unsuspecting but well intentioned newcomer to AA who accepts through ignorance of the requirements. Remember that the poor devil is trying to get his/her life under control and surely is not capable of taking control of a group. Also, never appoint a "slipper" with the banal remark of "It will be good for him". To do this says that you do not value your Group or the help it has been to you over the months or even years.

What your group always needs is a secretary who will be good for the group, who will take the job seriously, who will arrange for chairmen and speakers in advance of the meeting night-who will see to it that the coffee and refreshments are at hand, who will in fact show his gratitude by doing the best possible job he can.

I hope this doesn't sound "heavy", but I've seen some great groups go down the drain of neglect over the years; for the reason that members didn't care enough to see that there was a responsible secretary for their group.

## HALF OUR TROUBLES COME FROM WANTING OUR OWN WAY-THE OTHER HALF FROM GETTING IT.

A drunk and penniless wino managed to stumble into the Rectory of his local parish in California and beseeched his priest for some liquid refreshment. "But, by son," the Father said, "we only have sacramental wine here."

"Well, I don't care if it's from Sacramento, Modesto, or Napa Valley," muttered the drunk. "I need a drink!"



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Harry D.. Founder and Editor 1892-1968

No. 38 AUGUST 1980 No. 10

MINUTES OF CENTRAL COMMITTEE AUGUST 5, 1980  
WESTERN RESERVE ROOM OLD STONE CHURCH  
8:00 P.M.

Meeting was opened by Don E., Moderator, leading the members present in the Serenity Prayer. Roll call showed that 46 members were present representing 44 groups. Jean M., Vice Moderator, read the purpose of Central Committee and the Twelve Traditions of A.A.

Minutes of the July 1st meeting were read and approved. Treasurer's Report through July 1980 was given showing a balance in the Central Committee account of \$299.92 and in the Central Bulletin account a balance of \$793.65. 99 speakers were supplied by the District Office to non A. A. Groups for months of January thru July inclusive.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

**NO REPORTS:** Action Committee, East Side Veterans, Justice Center, Metro, or Harbor Light.

**Areawide Committee:** Ed K., Chairman, confirmed that the speakers for the next Areawide Meeting will be-Bill F. and wife Carol of Lorain, O. The date is Sept 7, 1980, at St. Malachi's, 2459 Washington St., at 2:00 P.M., Serenity Singers will be there to sing, and to all Secretaries, if you are not coming to the Areawide Meeting, send someone with the coupon that's attached to the notice for raffle of 3 assorted books.

**Central Bulletin:** Dick F., Chairman, reported we are still looking for articles and subscriptions. We are particularly looking for articles from local members, some experience you may have had in the Program, something that turned you around, or how you feel about A.A., whatever experience you have experienced in A.A. Subscriptions blanks are in all of the Bulletins, \$3.50 per year.

**Rosary Hall:** Lou W., representative, reported things are going along quite well. Wanted to remind sponsors of their contact with the patients, and the after-care meetings they are to attend. If you have made a reservation with the hospital and can't keep it please call and cancel.

**Bay View:** Terry L., reported the communication between the A.A. Community and the Director is open, anyone wanting to speak with the Director, please feel free to call.

**Brecksville:** Don E. gave report for representative Ken H., they are getting good response from A.A. members, and wanted to thank all that helped. Still an ongoing plea for leads.

**Merrick Hall:** Rachel D. reported for representative, Phyllis H., they enjoyed their hospitality room at the Conference. There will be another seminar starting August 9, Dealing With Anger.

**Woodruff:** Edith H., representative, meetings are well attended. They will be starting Recovery Inc., a self help program, more on this later.

**New Business:** Bill G. announced the formation of a new group, at Hill House, a Vocational Center located in the University Circle area. More on this at a later date.

**N.E.O. GENERAL SERVICE REPORT:** Terry L., Delegate, reported the Ohio State Convention, this past week-end was a success, She expressed her gratitude at being able to participate in both the International and Ohio State Convention.

The 2 films, "Inside View of A.A." and "Marking of a Journey" are available for a fee, contact her for information. The film "Marking of a Journey" can be purchased from General Service for \$8.50 if your group wishes to purchase.

The next Assembly meeting will be held on September 21, 1980 at 2:00 P.M. in the American Legion Hall, Brecksville, O., routes 82 and 21. The upcoming election will be discussed at this meeting. It's time to be thinking of a new G. S.R. representative for your group, the officers should be rotated. Be sure your group has a voice in the group conscience.

There being no further business, the meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Elvira A., Secretary

OBITUARY

**Armond A. Daddario**, an active member of our fellowship passed away. Our sympathy to the family.

**Wallace R. Loder**, a 40 year member an active in the former Lakewood Sat. group. Died in Charlevoix, Mich. our condolences to the family.

CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 2, 1980  
OLD STONE CHURCH-PUBLIC SQUARE  
CLEVELAND, OHIO  
BE INFORMED  
GROUP REPRESENTATIVES WELCOME

AREA WIDE MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 7, 1980 - 2:00 P.M.  
ST. MALACHI SCHOOL HALL  
2401 WASHINGTON ST.  
CLEVELAND, OHIO  
Bill & Carole F. A.A. & AL-ANON  
SERENTIY SINGERS FROM AKRON  
EVERYONE WELCOME

G.S.R. THIRD LEGACY MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 21, 1980 2:00 P.M.  
American Legion Hall  
Brecksville, Ohio-Route 82 & 21

### HAPPINESS IS HOMEMADE! FIRST YOU STOP DRINKING!

The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. This is the beginning, but there is so much more to it. That Tradition gets the foot in the door. Now, If you want to STAY STOPPED it means getting "involved".

FIRST understand what this Alcoholics Anonymous thing is all about. Get yourself a Big Book and it helps if you READ IT.

GET YOURSELF A HOME GROUP. This is where the feeling of self worth and belonging materialize ten fold.

In your home group you share your experience, strength and hope with your friends. Your common peril becomes your common bond and a family evolves. Love and trust begins to replace fear and contempt. Because you attend this meeting on a regular basis, you know immediately when someone comes in the room who is new. You learn how to extend your hand in friendship, welcoming the newcomer. For the first time in your life you experience unconditional love. GOD'S LOVE. Giving a small portion of yourself to help another, without expecting anything in return.

The amazing thing about that is that we get the greatest gift in the world in return. OUR SOBRIETY.

By this time, maybe the over-inflated ego has dwindled in size a little and you may feel the need for a S-P-O-N-S-O-R.

A sponsor is NOT a "Higher Power"

It is simply another drunk who has traveled the path before you. Ask for help and direction and they will be glad to share their experience, strength and hope with you. For me, this is how I learned the meaning of the word "FRIENDSHIP".

*Silver Streak - Las Vegas*

— Be a Bulletin Booster —

### EMOTIONALLY WHAT?

Just after I got a firm grip on sobriety and a sturdy handle on the entire A.A. program (in about three months) I had a shocking and aggravating experience.

I was in attendance at a "speaker meeting" prepared as usual to enjoy the speaker. However, my plans for enjoyment were rudely destroyed. The reason? Wait until you hear! This so called A.A. speaker, in front of a large audience (for those early days) of perhaps seventy-five made an ego shattering statement. This is what he said:

"ALCOHOLICS ARE EMOTIONALLY IMMATURE"

What a stupid and needless thing to say in front of all those people. That he was emotionally immature was obvious. He also went on insultingly to say that alcoholics were "picked green emotionally" Green indeed - ridiculous - positively! ! !

Since I was forty plus at the time it would be clearly impossible for ME to be emotionally immature. I turned out the rest of this man's blathering and engaged myself in taking his inventory. I was GOOD at this. On the way home from the meeting I continued my inventory taking. Suddely the thought crossed my mind - "Why am I so upset and resentful?"

The answer sprung at me - full blown. The reason I resented his remarks was because they fit me EXACTLY. It was a revolting but true fact. After mentally walking through a couple of drunks I could remember I convinced myself.

So there I was - a sober, smart-aleck, know-it-all member of AA with yet another burden to bear - 'emotional immaturity'. However, over the past thirty-three years I sometimes get the feeling that I am a little LESS immature emotionally and through God's grace and the AA program - SOBER. Blessed be those AA members who go about crushing ballooning alcoholic egos.

### WHAT IS A SPONSOR?

A sponsor is someone you call on the telephone to tell him you are not speaking to him-and he listens to every word you are not saying.

A sponsor is the person you most fear to lose, so you tell him you don't want to see him-and he still comes when you call.

He accepts your insanity when you won't even admit it.

He knows you're only human when your're being God and judging him.

He remembers what you did when you had amnesia-and still wants to know you.

He is responsible enough to care, but humble enough to know which decisions are yours, or God's.

He stands by his other commitments as well as you-so you call him selfish.

He is a tower of strength-and a frail fragment of humanity. He gets his rotten days-do you share your good ones?

He is an alcoholic too.

**AA CENTRAL BULLETIN  
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Cleveland, Ohio 44113

### HUMILITY

One of the most difficult concepts in the program for me to grasp was this business of HUMILITY. To begin with, I had a natural aversion to the word, for it reminded me of the awful feeling of humiliation that I, as an alcoholic, have come to know so intimately. That was certainly not a place I wished to visit again! But, meeting after meeting, I would hear those successful at staying sober quietly extol the virtues of this elusive quality. One day I **approaced** an old-timer and put this question to him:

"Joe, just what IS Humility and how do I get it?"

The first thing he did was grin, then he said, "All of us have a terrible time with ego and pride. . . You know, always looking to get something in return for giving. So, what I would suggest is for you to do one kind, giving thing for another person, without their knowledge, and without telling another soul. If you can accomplish this you have learned an important lesson about humility\*"

That didn't sound too hard to me! I gave it a lot of thought and finally hit on a plan that I thought would work.

There was a gal in my group who had been sober for countless 24 hours, and never missed the opportunity to tell you sol I had worked up quite a resentment over all her unsolicited advice, but I thought "What a great idea it would be for me to send her flowers on her birthday coming up the following week and send them without her knowing who they came from."

The next time I saw old Joe, I ran over to him and grinning from ear to ear I announced, "I did it, I did it"

"That's just fine," Joe said shaking his head in approval, "but it seems to me you're feeling pretty proud of yourself, and you know pride is the direct opposite of humility."

It took a moment for that to sink in. . .and to hurt, but I saw that what he said was true. I believed that having succeeded actually made me better than the people around me. I was acting just like the woman who's arrogance had so offended me. But worst of all, I knew that I had failed in gaining an understanding of what humility is. I looked at the kind expression on Joe's face and tears started in my eyes. I said "Oh Joe I can't do it, I have no humility.

"Aaahh", he answered, "but you DO! You see, humility has nothing at all to do with the things we CAN do; rather it's a sad awareness of just how many things we can't do. Humility is the quiet knowledge that we must turn to a Power greater than ourselves and ask for help if we are to succeed. We learn how the ways of pride have deluded us into believing that we were virtuous. In this case, do you see that your act of kindness was very much prompted by a motive of gain? In payment for it, you wanted Humility. It is Gods kindness to you that you have received this gift anyway. For he does not require that we succeed; only that we TRY, and my girl you have tried. . ."

That was the beginning for me. because I did understand what this wise "old-timer" had given me in this

lesson. Time has brought many more opportunities for me to grow in humility. Each time I feel despair, or encounter failure; or receive disappointments in my spiritual growth and feel afraid, if I ask for His help He gives me the ability to go on and TRY Again. I'm still not very humble, but I am hopefull, and very, very greatfull

"Anonymous"  
Las Vegas A.A.

### ASK

If you want to learn about prayer, don't ask someone who has studied about it. Ask somebody who has prayed! !

By the same token, if you want to learn about A.A., ask a member who is staying sober. Not some drunk in a bar room who says "A.A. doesn't work - I tried it".

### YOU ARE A 12TH STEP

Your attendance at an A.A. meeting is 12 Step work. If you feel that you aren't carrying the message the way some do - your attendance at any A.A. meeting IS carrying the message - even though you say nothing.

Your physical presence says you are interested. That you are back of the program. That you identify yourself with the rest of us - that your spirit is on the job. And this, after all, is a program of the spirit.

### CHILDREN LEARN WHAT THEY LIVE

- If a child lives with criticism: he learns to condemn.
- If a child lives with hostility: he learns to fight.
- If a child lives with ridicule: he learns to be shy.
- If a child lives with tolerance: he learns to be patient.
- If a child lives with encouragement: he learns to appreciate.
- If a child lives with fairness: he learns justice.
- If a child lives with security: he learns to have faith.
- If a child lives with approval: he learns to like himself.
- If a child lives with acceptance and friendship: he learns to find love in the world.

**ARE YOU PLANNING TO MOVE?**

If so, clip this coupon and mail to **One Public Square, Mezzanine #6, Cleveland, Ohio 44113. immediately.** It is urgently needed before the next issue of the **Central Bulletin.**

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**It will help you and it will help us.**





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Vol. XXXVIII-No 12

## A NIGHT TO REMEMBER

Recently, a warm and pleasant memory was revived in my mind; a memory of a Friday evening in February 1964. It began with a telephone call from the late Sister Ignatia who launched the alcoholic ward at St. Thomas Hospital in 1939, and came to St. Vincent Charity Hospital in 1952 to administer to alcoholics in Rosary Hall. She called my place of employment two or three days earlier while I was away from my desk. When I returned to the office, a note lay upon my desk saying: "Your sister, Ignatia, called." The dear lady was quite amused when I showed it to her, later. I returned her call, and she said: "Mr. B., Bill Wilson is making an unannounced visit to Cleveland, and I am arranging a dinner for him on Friday night. Could you come?" Of course I could come. I would have postponed open-heart surgery in order to be there.

When I arrived, I found that about a dozen people were present. I was to learn that Bill had specified whom he wanted present. This included our Regional Trustee on the General Service Board: Bruce M., our Delegate to the General Service Conference from Northeast Ohio: George M., the Secretary of the Cleveland District Office: Dick P., the Chairman of the Office Operating Committee: Jess A., the late Editor and the late Co-Editor of the **Central Bulletin**: Harry D. and Lloyd H., a Master of Ceremonies: the late Howie L., a prominent woman member of AA, a prominent Black member of AA, Bill W., . Sister Ignatia and the Moderator of Central Committee. Inasmuch as I was the Moderator of Central Committee in 1964, that is how I came to be invited.

During the dinner we enjoyed a stimulating conversation covering many subjects of interest to members of our fellowship. After the meal was concluded, Bill suggested that each of us take three to five minutes to tell how we came to know Sister Ignatia. These accounts were varied and fascinating.

Then, Bill sprung his surprise. It was his opinion, which was shared by an overwhelming number of alcoholics, that Sister Ignatia was deserving of some recognition for twenty five years of dedicated, selfless service to the thousands of sick alcoholics to whom she had ministered and started back on the road to physical, mental and spiritual health. Had she been aware of Bill's intention to have this recognition take place, she would have opposed it, being the humble person that she was. As it was, she was overcome by this event. But all of us felt that this **occurrence** was long overdue, and we appreciated Bill for having taken the initiative.

Not all members of our fellowship are privileged to take part in such events I have described. But Alcoholics Anonymous is not only a way of life, it can and should be **THE WAY OF LIFE** for us recovering members. Remember that greater involvement brings greater satisfactions and greater rewards.

J.T.B., North Olmsted

## THE CONTAGION OF CRITICISM

Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship composed of imperfect people. None is without faults, but the amazing thing is that God has been able to work wonders through a fellowship of the imperfect. In fact, He has never had a chance with any other kind.

If any AA member ever finds a perfect AA group -one which has not faults - he will come to the place where there is nothing for him or the membership to do. It is the imperfections of the membership and prospective members which constitute the task.

If any AA group ever finds the perfect leader, he will seem unreal, completely without understanding of those hardships, of the difficulties under which members struggle. It is the imperfect working together, wrestling with their weaknesses and forgiving one another's faults, which make the "perfect" group.

The AA member who has become infected with the contagion of criticism is one who has lost sight of the major cause. He has become engrossed in details and missed the supreme design. His eyes have wandered from the alcoholics who need help and focused on the faults of those whom the program has helped. This inevitably has the effect of drying up the great aspirations of his life and substituting animosities and jealousies.

There can be no serene sobriety, unity, strength, progress or fellowship in any AA group or individual AA member that is cursed with the contagion of criticism. **THINK BEFORE CRITICISING!**

Bristol Fashion

## EVERYBODY WILL DO IT

This is about four persons named Everybody, Somebody, Anybody and Nobody. There was an important job to be done and Everybody was asked to do it. Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it. Somebody got angry about that, because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought that Anybody could do it, and Nobody realized that Everybody wouldn't do it. It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when actually Anybody should have known that Everybody **was** to blame.



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Harry D., Founder and Editor 1892-1968

No. 38 SEPTEMBER 1980 Vol. 12

### MINUTES OF CENTRAL COMMITTEE SEPTEMBER 2, 1980

WESTERN RESERVE ROOM OLD STONE CHURCH  
8:00 P.M.

Meeting was opened by Don E., Moderator, leading the members present in the Serenity Prayer, Roll call showed that **41** members were present representing **40** groups. Jean M., Vice Moderator, read the purpose of Central Committee and the Twelve Traditions of A.A.

Minutes of August 5th meeting were read and approved. Treasurer's Report through August **1980** was given showing a balance in the Central Committee account of **\$286.30** and in the Central Bulletin account a balance of 890.64. 99 speakers were supplied by the District Office to non A.A. groups for months of January thru August inclusive.

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS:

**NO REPORTS:** Action Committee, Justice Center, Metro, or Harbor Light.

**Areawide Committee:** Ed K., Chairman, reminded members present of the Area Wide meeting Sunday September 7th at St. Malachi's School Hall, and asked that members take the message back to their groups.

Central Bulletin: No report.

Rosary Hall; No report.

**Bay View:** Terry L., we are continuing to develop the Film Program there, the latest film they **have** purchased is Alcoholism and Nutrition. Everything else is going well.

**Brecksville:** Don E., reported for Ken H., meetings are well attended, still an ongoing plea for leads, particularly for Tuesday and Thursdays, and they have a full house.

**Merrick Hall:** Phyllis H., representative, **Merick** Hall also has full house. The Couples Group sponsored by Merrick Hall **was** well attended, **25** women have been coming to the Anger Growth Workshop, and **Mer**-rick Hall is grateful to the volunteers who filled in the **gap** during the regular volunteers vacation.

**East Side Veteran:** Lucretia W., meetings are well attended.

**Woodruff:** Edith H., representative, Woodruff is full also, and announced a new group, Silent Sobriety for Deaf only. Meetings are well attended.

New Business: Dave G., announced the 1st Anniversary of the Cuyahoga Hills group, a prison group for boys, Thursday September 4th. Its a prison group, if you would like to get involved please contact him.

**N.E.O. GENERAL SERVICE REPORT:** Terry L., Delegate, the next Assembly meeting will be held Sunday, September **21st** 1980 at 2:00 P.M. American Legion Hall, Brecksville, O., routes 82 and 21, everybody's welcome.

If you would like to know more about what General Service is about, and what we do in this area, feel free to come. We will be dealing with the upcoming election which will be held in October. In addition to the General Service representative, you might think about a Grapevine representative for your group also.

There being no further business, the meeting closed with the Lords Prayer.

Elvira A., Secretary

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CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
**OCTOBER 7, 1980**  
OLD STONE CHURCH-PUBLIC SQUARE  
CLEVELAND, OHIO  
BE INFORMED  
GROUP REPRESENTATIVES WELCOME

---

G.S.R. THIRD LEGACY MEETING  
**OCTOBER 19, 1980 2:00 P.M.**  
American Legion Hall  
Brecksville, Ohio-Route 82 & 21

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AL-ANON GRADITUDE NIGHT  
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER **14, 1980**  
**8:00 P.M.** JORDAN HALL  
ST. VINCENT CHARITY HOSPITAL  
CLEVELAND, OHIO  
COFFEE AND BAKED GOODS

---

### NEW GROUP

Silent Sobriety - Monday **7:30** p.m. Woodruff Hospital, Euclid & E. 89 Street Deaf & Hearing impaired only

---

Billy: "I thought I asked you not to tell the folks what time I got home last night."

Sis: "I didn't." When they asked, I merely said I said I was so busy making breakfast that I hadn't noticed."

Teacher: "What is the meaning of the word 'unaware'?"

Billy: "Unaware is what you put on first and take off last."

**"WHAT REALLY HURTS," SAID THE DRUNK AS HE STAGGERED TO HIS FEET FOR THE THIRD TIME. "IS MY WIFE THINKS I'M HERE IN THE BAR HAVING FUN."**

OBITUARY

James E. Rolan, member of Y.O.U.R. Group, Died Sept. 16 after a short illness. Our condolences to the family.

Marty Mann, member of A.A. and one of first women to try A.A. died on Tuesday, July 22nd. She had just returned from the 45th International Convention.

David Messinger, Manager of Fresh Start #1 and member of the Angle Group. Passed away suddenly at the district office.

Dick Snyder, Secretary of Valley View Group. Passed away Sept. 5, 1980 after a long illness. Our condolences to the family.

Tony Kapot, Member of the Clark Group, Husband of Pearl, our sympathy to the family

SMILES

In a football game a huge guard on one team became incensed when the referee penalized his school fifteen yards because of unnecessary roughness. When the players followed the official with the ball as he stepped off the penalty, the angry guard snorted: "Mister, as a football official, I think you stink!"

The referee, who was in the act of putting the ball down, immediately straightened up and paced off another fifteen-yard penalty against the speaker's team. Then, turning to face the protesting player, he said sweetly: "Tell me, how do I smell from here?"



A golfer was playing with a clergyman partner who was sinking one long putt after another. He himself was missing the cup a lot and asked, "Reverend, do you think it would help my score if I said a short prayer at every green?" The pastor replied "I don't think it would help a bit." "Why not?" asked the first golfer. The minister replied, "Because you're a lousy putter."



Wife to complaining husband: "What do you mean, when am I going to fix supper?" "I put two eggs in your beer, didn't I?"

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ONLY THE STRONG SURVIVE THE WEEK!  
US AGNOSTICS

The following true incident will provide no magic answer, but it sure gave me something concrete to think about. In the sincere hope that by retelling it, it will provide somebody else with a useful "piece to their life puzzle" I wish to share it. For several months I had been experiencing problems with accepting the spirituality part of the AA program. Oh, I'd professed a belief in God, but as I'd done when first agreeing to enter the program, it was done mainly in an effort to get certain people off my back (also to feign signs of personal growth). However as time passed and actual "growth," did occur, pretending to be a real Christian became harder and harder. Finally one night in frustration I blurted out to an individual: "OK. I'm not really a believer, I'm still an agnostic (a fence sitter). I don't know for sure whether or not God actually exists." The aforementioned individual looked me directly in the eye and quietly asked' "How long has it been since you've been without a drink for SEVEN MONTHS?" Talk about being "shot out of the saddle". When I gave no answer the person continued "Do you think you did it all alone?" In closing, I'm still an agnostic, but now I'm doubting whether or not God DOESN'T exist.

Anonymous  
From: The Beacon-Duluth, Minnesota

JUST AS NO ONE CAN

Sneeze for you  
make love for you  
blow your nose for you  
cough for you  
breathe for you

No one can work YOUR AA program for you. AA is truly a DO-IT-YOURSELF program.

Remember, any way YOU apply AA principles to your life, no matter what anyone else says, if you are staying away from that first drink, you are working the program - 100 per cent correctly for you.

We learn a lot by attending AA meetings, we are able to exchange thoughts and ideas with our friends, talk about the 12 steps, but in the last analysis, it is up to the individual concerned; to apply what we learn to OUR OWN WAY OF LIFE.

We didn't join AA to become intelligent- to go beyond- to rise above-to gather untold monetary wealth-to become socialites-to lecture-or-to educate.

When we came to AA we were looking for an escape hatch from beyond. We were trying to save our own lives. If we are still sober today-WE GOT THE MESSAGE. Our primary purpose is to carry the message (after we get it) to those who still suffer. (Take a peek at Step 12 and Tradition 5).

Intercounty Fellowship of AA  
S.F. Calif

## THE PROPER SPIRIT

Most of us who have attended meetings with some regularity have heard this familiar statement repeated many times at **AA** meetings. "This is a selfish program," - which is partially true. However, to the new person, it is confusing and particularly when he sees his **AA** friends, giving so much without asking for anything in return.

What really makes this so-called selfish program difficult to explain to the new person is when he hears his **AA** friends talk about the midnight telephone calls, the Twelve Step calls, the hundred mile round trip to speak at another **AA** meeting, and the five dollar bill handed to someone under the table, whom is in need. What makes it more confusing is that the people who are sharing with others seem to get a sense of satisfaction every time they go out **and help another human being.**

In our drinking days, most of us were great sharers as long as it was the other fellow's share. We had to depend on others to share with us because we didn't have anything to support our drinking habit. We added up every penny and nickel to see if we had enough to buy a cheap bottle of wine and if we didn't we would beg or steal, for many of us came into **AA** with the habit of counting our pennies and nickels. Some of us became so conservative with our money that we palmed our dime and dropped it silently in the basket, but it looked strange among the dollars and the sight of that dime gave us a feeling of guilt.

As we continued going to meetings and watched our **AA** friends contributing generously to every **AA** cause, our dimes gradually became quarters, eventually half-dollars and finally dollars. **Today** we can look back over the past years and see how the **AA** principles are working out, and how our association with our **AA** friends was actually the thing which broke the chain of our selfish attitude and opened the door to a sober and better life.

Perhaps the real reason why our selfish program is difficult to explain is because it has to be lived, and as we live it, a **day** at a time, the mystery of our **AA** principles unfold, slowly but surely, and gradually we begin to understand that it is in sharing that we receive. In the measure in which we share with others, our own burdens become lighter. In measuring up to life's demands, our character will grow in widening sympathy and deep understanding.

There is no question to the meaning of sharing with others. Everytime we share something with another human being, we add something to our spiritual and moral bank account, enabling us to draw on our spiritual savings account when extra demands are made upon our moral courage. During an emergency is not the time to start our bank account as it must be in the bank when we need it.

Yes, this is a selfish program and perhaps it will never change, but we must change our attitude from the spirit of grabbing for ourselves, to the spirit of sharing with others. This is the spirit that we need to carry the message to another sick alcoholic; this is the spirit which

keeps the General Service open; this is the spirit which keeps the hand of **AA** always there, when anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, and for that, this is the spirit that is responsible.

(Edward B. in Akron Intergroup News)

## PRAYER AND MEDITATION

Recently at a meeting, the Eleventh Step was raised again and many speakers mentioned how they hadn't yet arrived at the 11th. Others said they couldn't master the art of meditation. Some said it was ridiculous. Some talked of Yoga and various religious orders of priests and monks. Today I reckon the program was given by alcoholics to alcoholics for alcoholics, not just for priests, monks or gurus.

When I was a lad, I was told rain would make me wet and I **accepted** that. God was in Heaven and I accepted that. When taught the "Our Father", I repeated that - I either accepted or repeated with a closed mind what I was told. But through **AA** I have learned that a closed mind is useless and since then a new awareness has begun to seep into my mind as I think or meditate about God and the "Our Father". I have realized that "As we understand Him" may not have been written in italics for nothing. To me this is the key to the spiritual program.

On thinking (meditating) about "Our Father" which I had so often repeated over the years, I became aware that the first word is "Our" - Not His or yours or theirs, but Our (yours and mine) and the second word He gave us was "Father" - not punisher or slave driver or boss, not Director General or General Manager. No, it was Father. By the time I reached "Give us this day" (Not tomorrow or yesterday) "our daily bread" my "Our Father" developed into an experience and I now believe that every day he gives me cake not just bread.

Also on the way I learned that "Keep it simple" doesn't mean easy, but uncomplicated, like cycling a bicycle uphill is simple but driving a car is easy, and sometimes keeping it simple (uncomplicated) can be hard but with twelve steps to help us along, it's well worth effort.

S.O'D., The Road Back, Dublin, Ireland

### ARE YOU PLANNING TO MOVE?

If so, clip this coupon and mail to One Public Square, Mezzanine #6, Cleveland, Ohio 44113. immediately. It is urgently needed before the next issue of the Central Bulletin.

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VOL. XXXIX-NO. 1

## ARE WE GRATEFUL?

How many of us have said "I owe my life to this A.A. program"-and at the time we really mean what we have said. I cannot place a measurable value on any one human life, but I know, for me, that had A.A. not been made available to me when I cried out for help, that, today I would not be alive. I love our A.A. program and I enjoy my sober life today and both are beautiful. I have also incurred a debt.

The Professor, on page 341 of the Big Book (circa 1955), cites the paradox "We Give Away to Keep". Recovery, Unity and Service are the legacies that keep our program alive and viable. Take one leg from a three legged stool and you know what **happens!** I owe my recovery to the unity of a group which supported a member who performed a service to carry to me the message.

The Traditions insulate A.A. from ridicule and censure except in cases where we fail to live up to agreements. Our most visual contact with the public is in carrying the message to those in treatment, confinement or those hospitalized. A.A. suffers a big black eye when we fail to meet our accepted public obligations. When an A.A. group neglects to **fullfill** a commitment, that failure reflects seriously on the credibility of our Fellowship. Patients or prisoners may or may not welcome the A.A. meetings that we provide. Many may be critical of A.A. in their denial will welcome any opportunity to prove we are not the answer to their problems. Maybe you remember how skeptical and critical you were in your first days of recovery?

Alcoholics suffer from a chronic fatal disease judged, after heart disease and cancer, to cause the untimely death of thousands of American adults each year. The third greatest killer of Modern Man. As members of A.A. we are recovering, one day at a time, and our continued treatment does not cost us a single penny! Check out treatment costs for heart and cancer problems! Anyone fortunate as we to be sober with a magnificent program for better living should have absolutely no problem welcoming opportunities to repay our debt.

Each of us have a personal debt to repay for what was so freely and unconditionally given to us in our beginning. The twelfth step mandates our responsibility in this area if we are living the program in all of our affairs. We have to give it away to keep it and this includes service.

Bill C.  
Trolley Square  
Wilmington, Delaware

## "TWELVE STEPPING"

If you listen to people like Dick P. of the Newburg Group or almost anyone from the Angle Group and then compare the type of sponsorship you most often see being offered at area hospitals and yes, at our meetings as well, you really have to wonder what in hell, is going on. And, it may be time to face 'up to the rather unpleasant fact, that for most newcomers, there will be no sponser in the picture. . .

I had lunch the other day with a secretary of a local group who felt almost helpless when a request for a ride to or from a meeting was made and even worse when someone actually wanted a sponser to help. Just help, not be a treatment counsler nor a new parent, nor a spiritual guide to somewhere. . .**just** be whatever a sponser is or was for those who speak with real gratitude in so many leads. There is no shortage of those who like to make twelve step calls, by the say, this seems to be an easy means of working the program. Without too much strain too. The problem is getting an individual to spend the long time necessary to allow that new person to talk. .and talk out the fears we all faced, maybe still face.

Now in the treatment atmosphere it is somewhat understandable. The places in our town don't really have a place in their programs for the sponser and we've all felt like 5th wheels. This is even reasonable. They are, after all, engaged in the practice of medicine and not in the practice of AA. They must treat all parts of many problems, physical, mental etc. and so on. We frankly can get in the way. (They do like us to visit, of course) It is always very difficult for me and probably you too, to accept that the hospitals are not a branch office of our program. . .but they are not.

However, what about us? How can we divert this trend, can we? Does each group still have a sponsorship committee, a group who look for new people at meetings, an idea of who is sponsoring whom? Or have we fallen into a sense of "bigness" Does everyone belong to more than one group so that we all think that every other group does the sponsoring? Are we now so damn successful at having people walk into our program that we need no longer seek them out? And is this the reason we hear less and less of the steps?

And what of Chapter Seven of our big book? It is now out of date or nearly so or perhaps that's a job a counsler or are we now into "group sponsors" or. . .**hell** I dont know either. . .do you?

Terry W.  
Bay West Discussion



Published monthly by the Cleveland Central Committee of A.A., a non-profit fellowship dedicated to service. Address all letters to Central Bulletin, One Public Square, Mezzanine #6, Cleveland, Ohio 44113. Subscription price is \$3.50 per Year.

Harry D., Founder and Editor 1892-1968

VOL. 39                      OCTOBER 1980                      NO.1

#### MINUTES OF CENTRAL COMMITTEE

OCTOBER 7, 1980

WESTERN RESERVE ROOM OLD STONE CHURCH  
8:00 P.M.

Meeting was opened by Don E., Moderator, leading members present in the Serenity Prayer. Roll call showed that 48 members were present representing 47 groups. Jean M., Vice Moderator, read the purpose of Central Committee and the Twelve Traditions of A.A.

Minutes of the September 2nd meeting were read and approved. Treasurer's Report through September 1980 was given showing a balance in the Central Committee account of \$309.03 and in the Central Bulletin account a balance of \$807.30. 116 speakers were supplied by the District Office to non A.A. groups for months of January thru September inclusive.

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS:

NO REPORTS: Action Committee, Justice Center, Metro, nor Rosary Hall.

**Areawide** Committee: Ed K., Chairman, reported the last **Areawide** Meeting was a success, and the next meeting will be Sunday, December 7th, at 2:00 P.M., St. Malachi's School Hall, 2459 Washington St., and that the speakers will be Mary and Clay B. The Serenity singers will be there also.

Central Bulletin: Dick F., Chairman, We just finished 38 years of publication that makes us about the oldest A.A. paper. Still looking for articles and subscriptions.

Bay View: Terry L., reported the existing Bay View Saturday group will soon be disbanded, a closed A.A. group is being planned. The Hospital is moving in March and will be known as St. John and Westshore Hospital, Serenity Hall will be moving with them.

Brecksville: Don E., reported, we are still having our regular meetings, and we have been getting groups to offer to supply leads for an entire month, if your group happens to be interested in doing something like this it would be a wonderful opportunity to visit and lead a hospital group.

Merrick Hall: Phyllis H., representative, A.A. women are invited to participate in the Merrick Hall growth Workshops, Saturdays 9:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M., 7th floor auditorium at Women's General Hospital. Merrick Hall continues to run at full capacity, and extends its appreciation to all members of the A.A.

community who have helped and continue to help the patients.

East Side Veterans: Lucretia W., reported the meetings are well attended.

Woodruff: Edith H., representative, reported Woodruff is now 10% alcoholic patients, and all of the meetings are well attended.

New Business: Mary P., announced the formation of a new group-Hill House, on Magnolia Drive, Mondays at 12:30 P.M., its an open meeting, all welcome.

Ed P., announced a new group, New Life Discussion Mondays at 7:00 P.M., McCafferty Health Clinic, 4242 Lorain Avenue, its a closed discussion group.

There was a lengthy discussion regarding the Horizon Center groups.

N.E.O. GENERAL SERVICE REPORT: Terry L., Delegate, reported, the next Assembly meeting will be October 19, 1980, at 2:00 P.M., the American Legion Hall, Brecksville, O., routes 82 and 21, the election of Area officers will be held at this meeting.

November 16th is Gratitude Sunday, at Trinity Church, 3525 West 25th St. off Scranton, at 5:00 P.M., we will have 2 local speakers. Everybody is welcome.

There being no further business, the meeting closed with the Lords Prayer.

Elvira A., Secretary

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CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
NOVEMBER 4, 1980  
OLD STONE CHURCH-PUBLIC SQUARE  
CLEVELAND, OHIO  
BE INFORMED  
GROUP REPRESENTATIVES WELCOME

---

AL-ANON GRADITUDE NIGHT  
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 1980  
8:00 P.M. JORDAN HALL  
ST. VINCENT CHARITY HOSPITAL  
CLEVELAND, OHIO  
COFFEE AND BAKED GOODS

---

GRATITUDE SUNDAY  
NOVEMBER 16, 1980 at 5:00 P.M.  
TRINITY EVANGELICAL CHURCH  
3525 WEST 25th STREET.  
ENTRANCE OFF SCRANTON RD.  
SPEAKERS: Marlene N.—CALIF. STYLE  
SAM N.-GARDEN VALLEY  
EVERYONE WELCOME  
FELLOWSHIP-COFFEE-PRIZES

---

#### OBITUARY

Hubert Carlin, member of Lakewood Friday passed away recently. Our sympathy to the family.

William Burns, member of the fellowship died Sept. 28, 1980. Our condolences to the family.

Dick Gymer, active member of Rocky River group and volunteer at BayView passed away. Our deepest sympathy to the family.

CLOSED MENS DISCUSSION

Mentor Headlands Community Center
End of Courdoroy Road - behind fire station
Monday - 8:30 P.M. No Format

ROSARY HALL CLOSED DISCUSSION
ST. VINCENT CHARITY HOSPITAL

2351 E. 22nd STREET
MONDAY-7:00 P.M. - 2ND FLOOR LEADROOM

THE IMPORTANCE OF A SPONSOR

One of the first things I was told when I began to attend meetings on a permanent basis was the importance of finding a sponsor. And to myself I said, "I knew it, another angle, now comes the pitch for money," You see, in my mind's eye, the significance I put on what was suggested was entirely different than what was meant.

I realize now that what may be important to one person won't be to another, but when it comes to the AA philosophy of life all we need do is read the first line of "How It Works" and the answer to any doubts we may have is right there. "Rarely have we seen a person fail who has thoroughly followed our path," Was I going to follow their path or would I reject the gift I was being offered? Anything considered important is vital, so therefore, it was necessary for me to have someone talk to on a one to one basis in order to share my most intimate thoughts. No doubt someone could say we can do this at a meeting but the personal contact is what counts. So therefore, the basic importance of a sponsor is their knowledge and experience in the program, To be a guide not a judge; a friend not a crutch and to share in both the joy and sorrow we all feel at one time or another. Combining all the aids that are suggested by the "Founding Fathers" of the program, each one of us can fulfill the wish we all had when we first came to A.A., the DAILY REPRIEVE from our affliction.

Pat N. in Here's How - Chicago

Be a Bulletin Booster

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WHAT IS A.A.

AA is life with laughter in it.
It's a handshake from a guy whose last name you cannot remember and aren't embarrassed.
AA is hot coffee, cold cuts, and warm friends.
It is a bright morning.
It is fishing trips and green grass and romping kids.
It's a gentle breeze on a warm day.
It is prayer and poetry.
AA contains all the great principles, right relationships and good people that we had always suspected must exist somewhere.

AA is emptying ash trays and turning out the lights.
It is driving 70 miles and making only one stop.
It is old friends in new people easy to talk to.
It is warm faces flushing out - and flushed faces paling.
It is the calming of our nervous hands.
It is hollow-eyed wives-hoping.

AA is a telephone call on a cold night.
It is a trip to a dingy hotel, or through the back door of a house on the hill.
AA is words coming from us, yet, greater than us.
It is hope and strength and despair and disappointment.

AA is victory in surrender.
It is getting by giving.
It is treasure in a trash heap.
It is standing up by kneeling down.
It is a tear washed smile.
It is GOD
And guts

J.H.-Akron, Ohio

THINK BEFORE CRITICISING

There can be no serene sobriety, unity, strength, progress of fellowship in any AA group or individual AA member that is cursed with the contagion of criticism.

The AA member who has become infected with the contagion of criticism is one who has lost sight of the major cause.

He has become engrossed in details and missed the supreme design.

His eyes have wandered from the alcoholics who need help and focused on the faults of those whom the program has helped.

This dries up the great aspirations of his life and substitutes animosities and jealousies.

We are imperfect people and perhaps there is much to criticize but who among US has the right?

Anonymous

WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS MORE OF IS GENIUSES WITH REAL HUMILITY-THERE ARE SO FEW OF US LEFT!!-TRUE?

### ARE YOU CHEATING YOURSELF?

Are you really getting everything we in Alcoholic's Anonymous have to offer?

I remember you said to me, when I was new "You can't keep it unless you give it away". Like everything else you said to me, it didn't make any sense. you also told me to take the cotton out of my ears and put it in my mouth. When I was so full of questions, this didn't make any sense either. "The more you give, the more you get" was another goodie you threw at me. All I wanted to do was stop drinking. But you know what? Since I did want to "not have to drink", I did try to listen and I did try to do what you told me. Guess what? You were right. The more you give the more you get.

I was suprised, relieved, happy, astounded, and of course puzzled when lo and behold I found I really didn't have to drink anymore.

But I found you seemed to have more and that too, I wanted. What was it? That was when you pointed out to me that there are 12 steps. The 12th one told me I was to carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic. You told me to re-read the big book. You pointed out to me that Bill W. made that famous phone call at the Mayflower Hotel in Akron because he had to have another alcoholic to work with, or he was going to get drunk. It was as simple as that. You said that's what this program is all about, passing on the message. And again, you know what? you were right, when I started going on 12 step calls - I found it.

Words cannot express the feeling I get each time I "carry the message", The preamble reads "Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety". Your group will be getting a 12 step list soon. Do yourself a favor and put your name on it. Try it you'll like it. Ask yourself "Am I cheating myself?"

Ginnie K.  
Crosstown  
from Toledo News

### SILENT VOLUNTEERS

Did you ever notice how few members there are who really work in this program. There are many who are dry or even sober but there are so few who do the things that NEED to be done. How silent it grows when we ask for volunteers. Then a hand goes up and usually it is a familiar hand. Why did the owner wait so long to volunteer? They wanted to give someone else an opportunity to really get in and get extra benefits from the program. Try doing a little more than necessary. Be something. A chairman • a G.S.R. • a group officer • a member of the clean-up crew. Somehow the job always gets done but it is usually by those who have always done it.

AND THEY ARE THE ONES WE ACCUSE OF TRYING TO TAKE OVER!

### RESENTMENTS

Resentment is an attempt to make our failure palatable by explaining it in terms of unfair treatment, injustice, etc. But, as a salve for failure, resentment is a cure that is worse than the disease. It is a deadly poison to the spirit, makes happiness impossible, uses up tremendous energy which could go into accomplishment. A vicious cycle is often set up. Resentment is also a "way" or an attempt to wipe out and eradicate, a real or fancied wrong or injustice which has already happened. The resentful person is trying to prove his case before the **courst** of life, so to speak. If he can feel resentful enough and thereby prove the "injustice", some magic process will reward him by making "not so" the event or circumstances which caused the resentment. In this sense, resentment is a mental resistance to, a non-acceptance of something that has already happened. Resentment is an emotional rehashing or re-fighting of some event of the past. You cannot win because you are attempting to do the impossible • to change the past.

Resentment, even when based on real injustice and wrong, is not a way to win. It soon becomes an emotional habit. Habitually feeling that you are a victim of injustice, you begin to picture yourself in the role of a victimized person. You carry around an inner feeling which is looking for an eternal peg to hang itself on. It is then easy to see "evidence" of injustice, or fancy you have been wronged, by the most innocent remark or neutral circumstance. Habitual resentment invariably leads to self-pity, which is the worst possible emotional habit anyone can develop. When these habits have become firmly ensconced, a person does not feel "right" or natural when they are absent. They literally begin to search and look for injustice. Someone has said that such people feel good only when they are miserable.

Remember that your resentment is not caused by other persons, circumstances or events. But it is caused by your own emotional response • your own reaction. You alone have the power over this and you can control it if you firmly convince yourself that resentment and self-pity are not the ways to happiness and success but ways to defeat and unhappiness.

Kansas City Newsletter

#### ARE YOU PLANNING TO MOVE?

If so, clip this coupon and mail to One Public Square., Mezzanine #6, Cleveland, Ohio 44113. immediately. It is urgently needed before the next issue of the Central Bulletin.

Name .....

Old Address ..... Zip.....

New Address .....

City ..... State..... Zip.....

It will help you and it will help us.





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VOL. XXXIX-NO. 2

## A QUESTION

The other night I was asked, by a new AA member, just what was meant by the slogan "Easy Does It."

I told him that was a very broad question to answer because each individual is different and might have different thoughts about his slogan. However, I told him I would try and tell him how I worked it and maybe it would help him in some way.

Back when I was drinking, my day usually was one round of speed, pressure, stubborn determination, and blind rushing through life irrespective of the outcome.

In AA I finally learned that life is to be sipped - not gulped. If we wish happiness and sobriety, we should try to take life in this manner. Our primary job in life is US, but we have a lifetime to do it in. Sobriety, I mean happy sobriety, doesn't come in a day or a year. It is a continuous patience and practice by applying it in all our affairs.

This principle is called "Easy Does It" as I see it. I didn't become an alcoholic overnight, to the best of my knowledge. It cost me a great deal of time and money. When I found out it was easier to drink than stay sober, I didn't realize just how powerful alcohol really was.

Through the years of my sobriety, there have been many periods of a "No man's land." Then and only then did I learn the real meaning of "Easy Does It" and here are some of the things I learned:

1. If you can't solve a problem, accept it.
2. If you can't finish a job today, there will be tomorrow. If there isn't, it won't make any difference.
3. Hurry never helped anyone to achieve sobriety.
4. Time can and will solve most problems.
5. It's the effort, not the results, that count.
6. We can't change others, but we can change ourselves.
7. Don't try to prove yourself for pride's sake. What shall we call it? To me it is an atomic bomb.

I learned to take it easy on these. I know it not only helped me, but with God's push, I have stayed sober.

Leo R.  
Silver Dollar

## OOOOPs

In last month's Bulletin, I seemed to have gotten my fingers crossed while attempting to uncross my eyes or wires or whatever. In the last paragraph I meant to say;

And what of Chapter Seven of our Big Book? Is it now out of date or perhaps sponsors are now to be only professionally trained counselors or we are to evolve group sponsors or something?

What came out sounded like an endorsement for, rather than a cry against. . . **While** I've certainly enjoyed talking to those who have taken the time to call me. . . I Didn't Mean It. Believe Me. . . **I'm** on your side. . .

Terry W.  
Bay West Discussion

## MERRY CHRISTMAS 1980

I caught a glimpse of AA's future the other day, and initially scared the heck out of myself. Please be sure to understand, I frightened me. While leading the Powerless Group last month, I was struck by a sense of freshness and intensity I would normally associate with a newcomer's reflection of gratitude. Since I knew **everybody** wasn't new - I've gone back several times in the hope of identifying this excitement. Seriously joyful within the **12** steps and about sobriety itself would be as close to a description of what I felt from the group as I can get. You should know of it. (yes, sobriety is the correct word, I looked it up.)

The Powerless group takes anyone. Drunks, chemically dependants, alcoholics, potheads, pill freaks, addicts, junkies and all of the above. Including what seems to be a bewildering blend of users of anything in combination. Each is welcomed and given sobriety through the 12 steps. . . **which** is to say god. The group takes as its special theme the 2nd last paragraph from the Big Book." Our book is meant to be suggestive only. We know only a little. God will constantly **disclose** more, etc." Powerless members are not self exclusive either. I see them at many other meetings. A little more subdued, of course, but there. Learning from others. . . **all** others. . . **specially** those with large measures of sobriety is still a necessity. And they seek it. Of course they don't flaunt their differences and, in fact, seem to be following the advice given at the conclusion of Chapter 7 of our book. They must do so. . . or go back out.

This must be like early A.A. before we developed such a strong sense of second generation sanctity. The early members had no rules nor guidelines. . . and only later the 12 steps. The most they had were good intentions and a faith in a power greater than themselves. All else we've added as a result of our growth in numbers. Maybe the people who wrote the book were right, maybe we are not experts on anything. Maybe what we should be doing is to seek God's will and understanding and not strive to become interpreters to those less fortunate than we. Perhaps part of chapter 9 applies too. The paragraph which begins "Those of us who have spent much time in the world of spiritual make-believe have eventually seen the childishness of it. etc."

This holiday season also creates a comparison. It would seem likely that this AA group within the whole, must be feeling what the early followers of Christ felt at the time St. Paul opened the doors a little wider. Faith, Joy, certainly. But. . . a little fearful **uncertainty** as well. Me too.

Terry W.  
Bay West Discussion



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**Harry D., Founder and Editor 1892-1968**

Vol. 39 NOVEMBER 1980 NO. 2

MINUTES OF CENTRAL COMMITTEE  
NOVEMBER 4, 1980  
WESTERN RESERVE ROOM OLD STONE CHURCH  
8:00 P.M.

Meeting was opened by Don E., Moderator leading members present in the Serenity Prayer. Roll call showed that 45 members were present representing 43 groups. Jean M., Vice Moderator, read the purpose of Central Committee and the Twelve Traditions of A.A.

Minutes of the October 7th, meeting were read and approved after correction: "that you must enter off Scranton Road to get into the church for Gratitude Sunday, the speakers for the **Areawide** Meeting are Mary and Clay B., and the New Life Discussion group meet on Wednesday's" Treasurer's Report through October 1980 was given showing a balance in the Central Committee account of \$285.18, and in the Central Bulletin account a balance of \$758.91. 124 speakers were supplied by the District Office to non A.A. groups for months of January thru October inclusive.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

**Areawide Committee:** Ed K., Chairman, stated, it would be nice if everyone here tonight would bring a friend and anyone else that interested in A.A. to the **Areawide** meeting Sunday December 7th 1980. Speakers will be Mary and Clay B., of **Newbury**, Ohio, also the Serenity Singers. Ask your Secretary for the coupon that's attached to the notice for the raffle of 3 assorted books.

**Central Bulletin:** Dick F., Chairman, we have a few copies of the Central Bulletin for the taking hoping you will the use the subscription blanks to subscribe to the Bulletin. We are still looking for articles, and thanked the groups that use the Bulletin as prizes.

**Rosary Hall:** Lou W., representative, announced the new group Rosary Hall, a closed group for men that meet on Monday's at 7:00 P.M., and that things are running smooth.

**Bay View:** Terry L., reported the Program Director at Serenity Hall is investigating the possibility of developing an out-patient program to be added to the existing programs there, and that last Saturday the first closed A.A. meeting was held.

**Brecksville:** Ken H., representative, thanked all the groups that helped in furnishing the leads, a special thanks to Berea Wednesday for the leads for October, meetings are going along fine.

**East Side Veterans:** Lucretia W., representative, reported the meetings are well attended.

**Woodruff:** Brenda P., reported, November is Alcoholism month at Woodruff, they are having a series of special speakers, November 24th at 1:00 P.M. you will need a reservation, contact the Hospital for information, and that they are full at this time.

**Justice Center:** Rudy W., reported things are going along well.

**New Business:** Bill S., announced, the 3rd Anniversary of the Ohio Young People Conference held at John Carroll University, June 5, 6, and 7th 1981, more on this at a later date. There was a discussion about Alcoholism and Chemically dependent persons and a discussion regarding Anonymity at the level of the press.

**N.E.O. GENERAL SERVICE REPORT:** Terry L., Delegate, reported the new officers for 1981 North Eastern Ohio area was elected, they are: Delegate, Joan A., Alternate Delegate, Ted H., Chairman, Jim T., Secretary, Jim B., and Treasurer John K., also elected as a nominee for Trustee of the East Central Region John T.B.

Gratitude Sunday November 16, 1980, at 5:00 P.M., Trinity Church, 3535 W. 25th Street.

The next meeting will be Sunday January 18, 1981, 2:00 P.M. American Legion Hall Brecksville, Ohio, and that they are looking for Grapevine representatives.

There being no further business, the meeting closed with the Lords Prayer.

Elvira A., Secretary

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CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
DECEMBER 2, 1980  
OLD STONE CHURCH-PUBLIC SQUARE  
CLEVELAND, OHIO  
BE INFORMED  
GROUP REPRESENTATIVES WELCOME

---

AREA WIDE MEETING  
DECEMBER 7, 1980 — 2:00 P.M.  
ST. MALACHI SCHOOL HALL  
2401 WASHINGTON ST.  
CLEVELAND, OHIO  
MARY & CLAY B. NEWBURY, OHIO  
SERENTIY SINGERS FROM AKRON  
EVERYONE WELCOME

---

DECEMBER 7, 1980  
SOUTHWEST SUNDAY 17th ANNIVERSARY  
BEREA HIGH SCHOOL—CAFETERIA—8:30 P.M.  
Cor. Bagley & Eastland Roads  
Speaker: FRANKLIN W. OLIVEBRANCH, Miss.

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OBITUARY

Farrel Gallagher, member of the Angle Group, passed away Oct. 30 as a result of a car accident. in August. Our Deepest Sympathy to the family.

# WE ARE RATIONALIZERS

Alcoholics are as erratic as the English language. The trouble with alcoholics is that they are not rational. Now rational means to be sensible and reasonable. It denotes the ability to think and reason clearly. That's why the book says we must straighten out our thinking. Irrational thinking is the basis of our trouble. But here is where the quirk comes in - both in the alcoholic and the language. Too often alcoholics begin to rationalize. While this word comes from the word rational, it has been twisted by usage to mean the making of excuses, and the formulation of alibis and downright lying. It is awfully easy for the alcoholic to go beyond being rational, and start to rationalize. All of us have encountered some outstanding examples.

There are the persons who use Alcoholics Anonymous as a sobering up station. They have sunk pretty far down the slide. They are in trouble at home and at work, possibly even with the law. They cry out for help and get it. What happens in such cases? They come out of the fog and they want to take charge of the world again. The tears and hand wringing of five or six days before are forgotten. The "Thank the Almighty for such friends as you" go by the boards. The promise to abide by the rules, and take it gradually is not recalled. They even get angry if you remind them of it. They're feeling swell again. Why should they put themselves under any obligation - especially the insulting one of taking an inventory and trying to remedy any defects of character. Me? Defects of character? Are you nuts? This is what is known as stinking thinking. This is rationalization of the first water.

There's the person, too, who takes a superficial attitude toward AA. He attends because his family, or his employer more or less compels him to. He flits around the perimeter of the group. Pleasant enough as an individual, he never does a lick of work in any form. And as far as putting himself out, taking time and energy to help sober up another alcoholic - never. In fact, he can't. He hasn't got the program himself to begin with. He is in

### — Be a Bulletin Booster —

**AA CENTRAL BULLETIN**  
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the same class as the rationalizer who is always making excuses, either volubly for everyone to hear, or mentally through his own limited cranial processes.

These examples, which are almost standard, and others which any of us could cite, should underscore a basic truth. Alcoholics Anonymous is not a way station for troubled drunks. It is a program for a new way of life that can function only in the individual, by the individual and for the individual. There are plenty of cures and rest homes and agencies that can handle the persons who want to call an intermission in their drinking, but Alcoholics Anonymous is not one of them.

Alcoholics Anonymous was devised for men and women who, through bitter experience, have determined to change their lives, alter their characters and give of themselves to help others. This society came into being to help those of us who sincerely wish to become rational, to do something on our own initiative and with the help of a Higher Power and our fellow sufferers, to make our lives orderly and decent.

It is not a haven for the alibi artist, the excuse expert, or the irrational rationalizer. The AA program is designed for sobriety, which in turn leads to happiness and peace of mind. But it won't work unless you are willing to do something about your own problem. Let's quit worrying about the other guy or gal. Action is the magic word. And that means action for you, not your neighbor. Why don't you give AA a chance, it works.

(Chit-Chat)

At meetings, we all hear comments that seem especially inspired — often right on target with where we are. NEWS FROM TROLLEY SQUARE would like to print some of these comments as a regular feature. So, if you sometimes get the urge to jot down two or three — just another way we can all share.

- One of the best ways to get back on your feet is to get down on one's knees.
- Don't tell me what to do: tell me what you did.
- Some people try so hard to get serenity that they become a nervous wreck.
- If you think, you won't drink: if you drink, you can't think.
- ‡ Some get up with the lark, and others want a swallow in the morning.
- Fellowship means give and take, but here I draw the line. When it comes to inventories, you take yours and I'll take mine.
- ‡ Alcohol is no longer a solution to my problems.
- When my EGO gets in the way, it's usually a way of Easing God Out.
- ‡ The truth will set you free, but first it will make you miserable.
- Today is the tomorrow that you worried about yesterday.
- Step ONE A Day keeps the bottle away.
- ‡ He who drinks before he drives, puts the quart before the Hearse.

Trolley Square

### BELIEVE IN A.A.

Alcoholics Anonymous is a magnificent program which has provided space and some of the tools by which millions of people have transformed their lives.

Some of the content which is at one point in time what's so for individuals, instead of being or long after being recreated has continued to be used. It has gotten agreement and solidified as positions, belief, context, etc. One example of this - "Hi, I'm, I'm an alcoholic" - is a salutation used at every meeting.

Basic evils ■ things that don't work ■ have developed within AA through misinterpretation, misunderstanding, and even before that through some of the founders not seeing a larger view of life.

These are some of the position, operating principles, considerations, beliefs, etc., that I see and as the body known as Alcoholics Anonymous, I make these statements:

I am Alcoholics Anonymous. The "Big Book" is my Bible and my context.

I think that as a group "alcoholics" are . . . "bodily and mentally different from his fellows" (p. 30). I believe that. . . "We are like men who have lost their legs; they never grow new ones. Neither does there appear to be any kind of treatment which will make alcoholics of our kind like other men." (p. 30-31).

I think that I am different, handicapped, and not normal. I come from and believe that I am not responsible for it all. The 1st step says "We admitted we were powerless over alcohol. . .". I have taken that to mean that I am powerless over alcohol forever.

Inherent in my beliefs is that there are some alcoholics that have no choice about recovery ". . . They are naturally incapable of grasping and developing a manner of living that demands rigorous honesty."

Within me as group and as individuals is love and acceptance, something that is wanted by all of us. However part of me has taken to mean that because we are alcoholics we are loved in this group.

There is a position within me that the program of AA "did it to me, for me and/or gave it to me."

Also a part of me thinks that this program is about staying comfortable.

I do believe in a Higher Power and that turning my self-willed self over to it is the answer, although somehow I have given my responsibility over in a way that denies myself as cause.

I know that I am a valuable program in the world. It is now time for expansion and growth as an organization. It is time to enlarge my context and let go of the basic tenets that don't work.

Thank you for listening to me and for your support.

In Appreciation,

Alcoholics Anonymous

### We get letters

Dear Paul:

I read the letter from Phil and felt irritated. When I get irritated it means my spiritual condition is not at the level it should be.

I am one of the old-timers Phil has seen at his meetings making up about 15-20% of the meeting. *Everying Phil has observed is probably true.*

The problem is that you and I know none of Phil's proposals has worked and never will work. AA groups are made up of individuals. Could you and I insist, command, (?), order (?), members of a group to be "assigned to taking care of people"?

Let's see what we have in each group. We have individuals. We have people who will not talk to anyone. We have people who talk too long and too much. We have the great middle ground. We have newcomers. We have old-timers. What does this mean? It means they are all THERE. Without them, without all these individuals being there, even the surly, clannish, hostile ones, there would be no meeting.

The message is: ■ The Program Works. Perhaps it is the best thing we do not to form committees to welcome people. The "guy who just stumbled in off the street" is just as likely to want to be left the hell alone until he can get his bearings as he is to want a royal welcome. A committee formed to welcome and coddle me at my first meeting would have scared me half to death.

One of the many of AA's miracles is the attitude that you can come in and look around. No one is going to pressure you.

The great fact is that if the newcomer is willing to say to the group "I need help", the group will respond. I have never been in a group that failed when a newcomer identified himself and asked for help.

I think what Phil and I need to do is for each of us to go into each group and *not make any judgments at all* about what is going on. If Phil and I make up our individual minds to to greet the newcomer, I am sure the newcomer will feel welcome. That is what I am going to do. How about Phil?

Intercounty Fellowship of AA Very truly yours,  
Si

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**It will help you and it will help us.**

## SOBER HOLIDAYS



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## THIRTEEN CHANCES

He was sitting disconsolately in his living room. He had just shut off the radio. He was bored! Before he "was forced to join AA" at his wife's and boss' insistence he was never bored. Now he was bored all the time.

AA meetings bored him. People in AA bored him. So he stopped going to meetings and began hobnobbing with his former drinking pals who kidded him unmercifully on being tied to his wife's apron strings. Just last night he'd been with them, and the gang relived some of the escapades and wild parties they'd had together when he was the star of the cast. He was happy then. AA had ruined his chances for happiness.

Just then was his *first* chance to think-to remember the terrors of what that right to drink cost him. But in his present mood he thought, "yeah, I got in some awful jams. But if I ever drink again, I'll drink differently. I control it this time!"

On a sudden resolve, he reached for his hat and coat, deciding to make his experiment. He had his second chance to think. He could still lay is hat and coat down again, go back to his uneasy *chaîr* and evaluate his thinking. Pausing just a second, he slapped his hat violently on his head, threw his coat on his back and grabbed the door knob.

Before he turned the knob he had his *third* chance to think. He could still go back and settle down. But he ripped the door open and headed down street toward the nearest bistro. On the way he began justifying his act-his fourth chance to think! He could still turn around and go home.

But he was drooling by this time as his eyes focused on his neon-lighted goal and he quickened his steps. Here was a promise of relief from boredom, a return of the old happy days (his *fifth* chance to think-to think of how artificial that happiness was! He could, if he would, recall them as evil days-days of recrimination and degradation.)

He reached the portals of the bistro and as he readied himself to open the door, he had his *sixth* chance to think! He could take a Coca Cola. He could turn back and shrug off the sneer which was on the face of the bartender who had already seen him at the door-the bartender who had predicted he wouldn't last in AA very long-who had laughed at the news and said, "That guy? He CAN'T stop! He's too far gone." He had full intentions once to show him how wrong he was. (Here was his *seventh* chance to think.)

Stubbornly resisting his hatred for the bartender, he walked nonchalantly up to the bar, rapped insistently

on the bar for service and as he waited he had his *eighth* chance to think!

He disregarded this chance and ordered a double-header, resenting the smirk on the bartender's face. That smirk gave him his *ninth* chance to think. (Fair weather friend! Double crosser! Back slapper and **stabber-in-the-back!** That's what that bartender was. He'd show him he was a man.)

As the amber poison glugged into the glass our "hero" had his *tenth* chance to think. That glug-glug should have brought fear in his soul. It had ruined his life before. It had caused him to lose his home, his job, his wife- his everything.

But he reached for the glass. If he used his *eleventh* chance to think, he could still draw his hand back.

He ignored the chance and grabbed **the** glass defiantly. The old familiar feeling of independence suffused him as he held it lovingly and admired the beauty of its color. He had his *twelfth* chance to think. He could still dash the contents on the bar.

His *thirteenth* and last chance came when he brought the glass to his lips. Could be, he thought, that if God didn't want him to have this drink he'd knock it out of his hand! Will he? Think, poor man, think!

If he had really thought, and thought rightly and sanely- having dared to bring God into his thoughts on his thirteenth chance to justify his act, if he'd only remember again the **agony** of soul he had suffered when he solemnly promised "to turn his life and will over to Him" in all his affairs!

If we could only counsel him and remind him of it and beg him not to virtually kick God in the face. If he does-may He have mercy on his soul!

## The Word Is RESTORE. . .

Often our whole viewpoint on life can be lifted up and improved simply by restoring some of the attitudes we once may have had but let slip away. Perhaps we have forgotten how it feels to love and to be loved, to see the positive aspects of our life situation, to know the wonder and curiosity of the searching mind, or to believe that the very best of things can happen to us. To restore a sense of adventure in life is to make sure **that** we don't view a beautiful sunrise with our eyes closed!

Anonymous



Season's Greetings





Published monthly by the Cleveland Central Committee of A.A., a non-profit fellowship dedicated to service. Address all letters to Central Bulletin, One Public Square, Mezzanine #6, Cleveland, Ohio 44113. Subscription price - \$3.50 per Year.

Harry D., Founder and Editor 1892-1968

VOL. 39 DECEMBER 1980 NO. 3

**MINUTES OF CENTRAL COMMITTEE  
DECEMBER 2nd, 1980  
WESTERN RESERVE ROOM OLD STONE CHURCH  
8:00 P.M.**

Meeting was opened by Don E., Moderator leading members present in the Serenity Prayer. Roll call showed that 28 members were present representing 27 groups. Jean M., Vice Moderator, read the purpose of Central Committee and the Twelve Traditions of A.A.

Minutes of the November 4th, meeting were read and approved. Treasurer's Report through November was given showing a balance in the Central Committee Account of \$271.25, and in the Central Bulletin account a balance of \$754.52. 131 speakers were supplied by the District Office to non A.A. groups for months of January thru November inclusive.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Areawide Committee:** Ed K. Chairman, reminded members of the upcoming Area Wide meeting Sunday December 7th, 1980.

**Central Bulletin:** Dick F., Chairman, stated we are still looking for subscriptions and articles from local members.

**Rosary Hall:** Lou W., representative, things are going fine.

**Brecksville:** Don E., extended his thanks to all of the groups for their help at the hospital. An A.A. room will be opening soon at Brecksville and they would like A.A. visitors and sponsorship.

**East Side Veterans:** Lucretia W. representative, announced meetings are well attended, and they will be celebrating their 17th. anniversary, Wednesday December 3rd.

**Woodruff:** Edith H. representative, reported all of the meetings are well attended. There is a meeting at Woodruff Monday's thru Friday.

**Harbor Light:** Al W., reported, in addition to the regular Friday meeting there is a meeting on Tuesday's at 7:00 P.M., Friends of Harbor Light, and a special need for Women sponsors. There is also a Social room available to A.A. sponsors-please call the Counselor or Nurse in charge to facilitate arrangement for the room.

**New Business:** There was a discussion about poor sponsorship, a motion was made and second to draft a letter to all Hospitals and Institutions explaining the

nature of sponsorship in respect to the A.A. program and the suffering Alcoholic.

Bonnie L., announced the formation of a new group, Live and Let Live, Thursday at 8:00 P.M., held at the Unbar, 6406 Detroit Avenue.

There was a lengthy discussion regarding non Alcoholic's leading a closed discussion group.

At this meeting an election for Vice-Moderator was held, the name of Ed K., was placed in nomination, there being no further nominations from the floor, Ed K., was unanimously voted as the new Vice Moderator.

**N.E.O. GENERAL SERVICE REPORT:** John B., reported, a State meeting was held in November regarding the upcoming Conference to be held July 10, 1981, it will be called the Ohio State Convention. The next Assembly meeting will be held January 17th, 1981, American Legion Hall, Brecksville, Ohio.

There being no further business, the meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Elvira A., Secretary.

**CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
JANUARY 6, 1981  
OLD STONE CHURCH-PUBLIC SQUARE  
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BE INFORMED  
GROUP REPRESENTATIVES WELCOME**

**THIRTIETH ANNUAL INTERGROUP  
DINNER-DANCE**

SATURDAY, MAY 2nd, 1981  
STATLER OFFICE TOWER  
SWINGO'S AT THE STATLER  
EUCLID AVE. AT EAST 12th  
SPEAKER: DOROTHY T.  
PITTSBURGH, PA.

"HE TOLD ME TO PUT A TIGER IN MY TANK, AND I DO EVERYTHING THAT AN A.A. TELLS ME TO DO."

(From the late John Smooch who died in Lakeview Hospital of tiger bites and scratches.)

Gentlemen:

I have been making notes of some of the rememberable sayings I have heard in leads and comments and would like to share some of them.

"Yesterday is history, tommorrow is a mystery"

"Thank you for a good job in giving AA to others"

"Life used to be a plastic happiness"

"I want to appologize for being late but I didn't

intend to be here tonight. I used to be addicted to alcohol but now I am addicted to AA"

"The doctor found one pint of blood in my alcohol system"

Hope some of these will be enjoyed.

As ever,  
Rick M.  
Nite-N-Day

### BACK TO BASICS

Often the advanced student of A.A. becomes something of a snob. Once he has mastered the rudimentary ideas of the A.A. philosophy, he feels he has gone beyond the need to return to his basic roots in the program. How wonderful to overcome the initial problems that once plagued us and go on to more enlightened thinking, but it is such a shame to lose the early joy of the discovery that brought us where we are.

I always enjoy being around new A.A. members. **They** are so keen in their desire to pursue a way of life that sets **them** free from past limitations.

I am very sad when I see this child-like exuberance disappear into blase attitudes as sobriety becomes "old stuff".

It is the newly awakened openness that we must keep fresh if we are to progress in the spiritual realms of the A.A. program, and we put our growth in jeopardy if we luxuriate too long in just our own private wisdoms. We are all still children in the spiritual knowledge and we would do well in remembering this, as I am aware of the need to return frequently to my roots. One day at a time shall keep my outlook as fresh as it was the first day I came into the program of Alcoholics Anonymous. I am still teachable.

Edna R.  
Adrian Votec Group  
Toledo News

### "ATTRACTION"

Lately, I have been attending meetings all over the area and one of the faults I must express is our failure to extend the hand.

The handshake is mighty important to that new member and **they** feel very sad when no one takes the time to say hello to them. Are we all too lazy to welcome the individual?

Anonymous



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### A FEW WORDS TO A NEW MAN

I don't consider myself an expert on alcoholism and I don't have all the answers to all the alcoholics problems. Nevertheless, I am directing this message to the man or woman that is just starting on the **adventure**-road of sobriety.

If this is your first A.A. meeting, you will hear a lot of talk about staying sober, one day at a time, and of course that is the way we stay sober. You will also hear someone say, if you don't take a drink today you won't need one tomorrow. This should not be hard for you to understand. If you don't drink today, you won't suffer tomorrow. This sounds simple, and it is, but are you ready to stop punishing yourself?

Perhaps you have wasted many years in pursuit of the bottle, now you should start pursuing something that will bring your life into some kind of productive balance. You can live a productive life if you follow the suggestions that are offered to you at the A.A. meetings, and you will get a better understanding of God and His grace. It is up to you to follow instructions and try to build a new life out of the wreckage of the past. This is your responsibility, so start now, no one else can do it for you.

The lessons that you have learned when you were drinking are not as important as the lessons you should be learning. Your sobriety and your way of living will depend on how long you will keep your capacity to learn. There are no graduations in A.A. but there are many men and women who are sober, ten, twenty and thirty years and they are still learning. If you look around at any A.A. meeting you can pick them out from the crowd. They stand out above all **mediocres** who stopped learning.

Perhaps right now you are sure that you will do everything to maintain your sobriety and you are reasonably sure that you will never take another drink as long as you live. I will never take another drink as long as I live, is a familiar statement, maybe you have made the statement yourself, but it never worked for us until we admitted that we were powerless over alcohol.

The novelty of your sobriety will wear off and temptation will cross your path, so you should start now to improve on your character defects and reinforce yourself with moral courage. Your moral courage will be revealed in time of temptation only if you build it up before you need it. You cannot call on your moral strength if it is not there.

The A.A. way of life is the road to spiritual and moral progress. The Twelve Steps will show you where to go and how to get there and if you follow them to the best of your ability, you will never stray away from the adventure-road of sobriety.

Eventually, you will be asked to carry the A.A. message to another alcoholic. This will require some sacrifice and even some disappointment, but don't let that discourage you. Even if you only have one success, it will be worth all your troubles. Our fellowship was hammered out on the anvil of trial and error by men and women like yourself. And my sincere wish is that God will bless you in all your worthy endeavors.

Ed B.

### IT MAKES ME LAUGH

Poor Al had just one too many in his life, and was lying on his death bed. While awaiting for the doctor to come, Al was wondering out loud, "I wonder if there's A.A. in heaven?"

Suddenly, a deep voice bellowed, "I have some good news and some bad news."

"What is it?" cried Al.

"The good news is that AA is in heaven. The bad news is that you're leading the meeting tonight!"

Recently, we received some advance stuff from a magazine called Mother Earth News, one of the so called alternative magazines out today. Well, they're pushing gasahol as a big energy saver, and part of their campaign is a bright orange bumper ticker that proudly proclaims MY CAR IS AN ALCOHOLIC.

An alcoholic went to the doctor and after the exam he says, "Doc, give it to me straight. How long do I have?"

The doctor says "Well, I don't want to upset you, but from now on I must demand payment in cash!"

There also is the story of the poor guy who died from accidentally picking up and guzzling a bottle of varnish. He had a terrible end, but a beautiful finish.

### THE SECOND STEP

CAME TO BELIEVE THAT A POWER GREATER THAN OURSELVES COULD RESTORE US TO SANITY.

All of us now in A.A. had to make one crucial decision before we felt secure in the new program of life without alcohol. We had to face the facts about ourselves and our drinking realistically and honestly. We had to admit that we were powerless over alcohol and that our lives had become unmanageable.

Then came the question: If we are powerless over alcohol and our lives, and we cannot manage either of them, then just WHO is going to manage our lives? This is the time that we must call on higher power. I choose to call this higher power my GOD.

The teachings of many of our churches tell us that GOD is all merciful, and that HE just doesn't answer our prayers, but goes one step further and answers them in the way that will be best for us. He won't manage our lives the way we might like them managed, BUT then. . .we didn't do a very hot job by ourselves.

We learn to trust in a higher power who will help our minds function as a normal human beings does. Restore us to sanity. . .there will be those who will say that they weren't insane. Was it sane to drink the way we did? Was it sane to act the way we did? Was it sane to think the way we did? Let this higher power restore our sanity to us.

The program of Alcoholics Anonymous is a program with a backbone of spiritual power. The whole program revolves around a higher power. We all know that we couldn't get sober and stay sober by ourselves. . .LET A POWER GREATER THAN OURSELVES RESTORE OUR SANITY AND GIVE US A NEW WAY OF LIFE.

Bill G.

### CLEAN MEETINGS

Perhaps I am getting old and intolerant, and perhaps some members of AA will not agree with me. But I want to get some of my pet peeves off my chest. First, I think that when a group is stagnant and not making any progress, the fault lies somewhere in the group. The chairman of every group should try to make his group meetings interesting and instructive by selecting speakers who will not bore their listeners with blow-by-blow drunken brawls.

It seems that some speakers are trying to outdo each other with their wild drunken stories which do not add anything to the growth of the group or help the alcoholic to improve his conscious contact with God. Any speaker can assure his listeners in ten minutes that he is an alcoholic. The rest of his talk should be on the AA principles and provide hope for the new person without promising him the millennium.

Another thing that irks me is when I bring a new person to his first meeting, after spending much time telling him how important the meetings are, then hear the speaker make the statement that he does not belong to any particular group and that it has been six months or more since he attended a meeting. A speaker who does not attend meetings with some regularity, cannot help any group to get any support from the members who are honestly grateful for their sobriety and believe in the principles of AA.

Another embarrassing situation I find myself in is when I bring some clergyman, or some other non-alcoholic, to impress him with the sincerity and humility he will find at the AA meetings and then hear the speaker punctuate his sentences with profanity. This has happened to me and to other members of AA. Profanity does not add anything to improve the speaker's oratorical performance and it does not fit into any conversation, whether it is at an AA meeting or in some gutter.

Every member and chairman should be interested in the progress of his own group and select speakers that will help the group and his listeners grow in spirit. Speakers who attend meetings and believe in the principles of AA and who take part in the AA activities.

—Jerico in Akron Inter-Group News.

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