



## ON THE TWELFTH STEP

Last week we were working on Step 12 at our AA meeting and the thoughts from it have stayed with me for several days.

The first part of Step 12 refers to a spiritual awakening. I think so often that this is happening without our even being aware of it. For several years I wanted the spiritual life my folks had, it seemed so simple, easy and real for them and I'm sure it was, but you can't copy someone else's spiritual concept, you must be able to feel it for yourself.

Some how with our 12 Steps and the help of understanding people, I have been able to work this all out for myself and when that could happen, the contented sobriety that everyone talks about, began to come and has become something pretty special.

Then to carry the message to other alcoholics what better form of reference could we have? I encourage everyone to really work this step and feel we also work this part of it without really knowing it's happening. Just by staying sober, we really don't know how many people are watching us.

It could be a pretty sobering thought when we think we do have a responsibility first to ourselves and then to others, too. to live a positive thought life and be willing to share it with others. The little insignificant things we do probably leave as big an impact as actually calling on someone who is asking for help.

Please don't get me wrong, that personal calling is vitally important, too. Also I feel there is no such thing as a good or bad 12th Step call. Just being willing to share our experience, strength and hope may pay off immediately or in some distant future time.

Then practicing these principles in all our affairs was the tough part for me, and this is where we can experience so much growth. By doing just this, it's amazing the difference it makes in the way others react to us.

For me, just removing the negative and working so hard on the positive took care of most of my problems with my relationships to others, especially with my family. What a difference and I love it. I don't have to be defensive anymore, but just honest, fair, loving. . . and well, I could go on and on, but instead I'll just say all these Steps help me keep my life simple.

Esther G. • Silver Dollar

## DETOX DUMPING

As recently as ten years ago AA members were sitting with the suffering alcoholic, sometimes through the night, in an attempt to help him (her) stay sober. A few still were taking the drunk into their homes in an effort to generate sobriety. These were activities above and beyond the 12th step of "carrying the message", but often proved successful, and certainly helped both the suffering and the sober alcoholic.

Today the scene has changed. Word of the availability of detoxification centers has filtered down into the community of practicing drunks, and many times the first thing the sufferer asks is to be taken to detox. AA members, too, for the most part, have succumbed to the "easier, softer way" of taking the practicing alcoholic to a detox center immediately, and without determining the circumstances. Now this is not necessarily wrong, but it raises a question of whether we are shirking our responsibility to "try to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers?"

Of course, we are not doctors, and we are not qualified to determine whether or not an individual needs medical attention • nor should we attempt to do so. But more and more instances are occurring where the drunk merely needed an assist to get through the night, perhaps sleep it off, then return to work without losing any more time off • but instead, he is dumped into a detox center and forgotten. Perhaps all of us need to re-read Chapter 7, "Working With Others" in the Big Book, and once more begin to "follow instructions".

Twelfth Step calls are never convenient, and seldom easy. But in order to keep what we have, we must give it away. This means a giving of our time, ourselves, and sometimes our money. Where would AA be today if Bill had simply dumped Dr. Bob into another hospital and let the contact go at that?

When in the opinion of an AA member, referral to a detox center is absolutely necessary, this should not be the end of the 12th Step call. The sufferer should be contacted upon release from detox, and an attempt made to bring him (her) to an AA meeting. In such cases, follow-up is almost as important as the first contact.

And remember, the successful Twelfth Step call is the one where you walk away sober!

Dean K., Oakland, CA.

REMEMBER • IF YOU'RE DOING ISN'T WORKING  
TRY SOMETHING ELSE!

REMEMBER • "NOTHING IS SO BAD A DRINK  
WON'T MAKE IT WORSE!"



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 JANUARY 1981 NO. 4  
MINUTES OF CENTRAL COMMITTEE  
JANUARY 6th, 1981  
WESTERN RESERVE ROOM OLD STONE CHURCH  
8:00 P.M.

Meeting was opened by Jean M., Moderator leading members present in the Serenity Prayer. Roll call showed that 19 Members were present representing 18 groups. Ed K., Vice Moderator, read the purpose of Central Committee and the Twelve Traditions of A.A.

Minutes of the December 2nd, meeting were read and approved after correction: "that the next Assembly meeting will be January 18th, 1981." Treasurer's Report through December was given showing a balance in the Central Committee Account of \$217.00, and in the Central Bulletin account a balance of \$896.83. 14.5 speakers were supplied by the District Office to non A.A. groups months of January thru December inclusive.

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS:

**Areawide** Committee: Ed K., Chairman, announced announced tentatively, the next Area Wide meeting will be March 8th, 1981, at St. Malachi's School Hall, 2459 Washington St., The speakers are Bill and Delores M., representing A.A. and Alanon. The Serenity singers will be there, don't forget the coupon that's attached to the announcement that's sent to all Secretaries.

No report: Central Bulletin, Rosary Hall, Woodruff, nor Harbor Light.

Brecksville: Ken H., representative, reported meetings are going along well, and thanked all the Area Secretaries that's been helping out with leads.

Metro: Gary M., reported meetings at Metro are well attended.

East Side Veterans: Lucretia W., thanked members for their donations, and meetings are well attended.

New Business: Calvin B., announced the formation of a new meeting, Mustard Seed, Tuesday's at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, at 10:00 A.M., 18615 Harvard Avenue, Warrensville Heights, Ohio.

N.E.O. GENERAL SERVICE REPORT: John B., reported the next Assembly Meeting will be January 18, 1981 American Legion Hall, Brecksville O., routes 82 and 21. Sunday 2:00 P.M., John also read an article from the January issue of the Grapevine.

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

Elvira A., Secretary

CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
FEBRUARY 3rd 1981  
OLD STONE CHURCH-PUBLIC SQUARE  
CLEVELAND, OHIO  
BE INFORMED  
GROUP REPRESENTATIVES WELCOME

G.S.R. THIRD LEGACY MEETING  
FEBRUARY 22nd, 1981 • 2:00 P.M.  
AMERICAN LEGION HALL  
ROUTES 82 & 21  
BRECKSVILLE, OHIO

AREA WIDE MEETING  
March 8th, 1981 • 2:00 P.M.  
ST. MALACHI SCHOOL HALL  
2401 WASHINGTON ST.  
CLEVELAND, OHIO  
Bill & Delores M. A.A. & AL-ANON  
SERENTY SINGERS FROM AKRON  
EVERYONE 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.  
\$14.00 PER PERSON

*Common sense and a sense of humor are the same thing, moving at different speeds.*

*A sense of humor is just common sense, dancing.*

#### GOD SAVE ME FROM NORMALACY

Several 24 hours ago I found AA for the first time. It was not long before the great gift of recovery began to work it's magic and I felt almost "normal" again. To celebrate my new found physical freedom I faced a series of "problems" with my old established arsenal of booze and pills. They, the drugs won, and I almost lost the battle for good. God, save me from every thinking I can pass for "normal" again. I am damn lucky to be recovering once more.

#### BE A BULLETIN BOOSTER

We have no knowledge of how many members there are in the 400 groups listed in our Group Meeting List, but what concerns us is that there are so many in our area who are not subscribers.

We would appreciate it greatly if the secretaries of all the groups listed would stimulate the interest of their members in subscribing. If you do not have a subscription book, let us know and we will send one by return mail.

We would appreciate your cooperation. Our mailing address is Central Bulletin, Mezzanine #6 One Public Square Cleveland, Ohio 44113.



## ABOUT MONEY

It's time for the Secretary's report, and we hear, "We don't have fees or dues, but we do have, **ahem**, (cough, choke) expenses." It would be an interesting game, if it weren't so serious and important. "We don't have dues or fees, but we do have-baskets, tin cups, problems, no money, reasons, the habit, coffee,-." It's serious and important because we take the 7th Tradition seriously, and we feel that it's important. We want A.A. and our individual groups to be self-supporting, which means that no outsider, or one person or organization, controls the AA Group. We want A.A. to be independent and self-respecting, and we think that accepting donations from outsiders may cause loss of control of the organization.

For example, if your group meets at a church, where you do not offer any payment for the church's expenses (utilities, sexton's services), if your're sponging off the host church, they could have a voice in dictating what kind of meeting you hold, who can attend,-who knows what? On the other hand, if you're paying your way, you can resist the pressure of an outsider to influence the policies of your group. That's being self-supporting and self-respecting.

Alcoholics have sponged off others in their drinking days, and this is a chance to re-pay society. Maybe it's such a small repayment that it appears to make no difference., but in our minds, it can be a means of becoming responsible, or of attaining or keeping self-respect.

So when it comes time for the secretary to say "We don't have fees or dues, but we do have expenses" the secretary might also proudly add "and this is an opportunity for all of us to repay society for some of the times when we couldn't or wouldn't carry our responsibilities."

## WHAT DO WE OWE TO OUR GROUP

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 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 use 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!

## LET GO!!

If you want to be healthy morally, mentally and physically, just let go. Let go of the little annoyances of everyday life, the irritations and the petty vexations that cross your path daily. Don't take them up, nurse them, pet them, and brood over them. They are not worthwhile. LET THEM GO.

That little hurt you got from your friend. Perhaps it wasn't intended; perhaps it was but, never mind, let it go. Refuse to think about it.

Let go that feeling of hatred you have for another, the jealousy, the envy, the malice, let go all such thoughts. Sweep them out of your mind, and you will be surprised what a **cleasing** and rejuvenating effect it will have upon you, both physically and mentally. Let them all go; you house them at deadly risk.

But the big troubles, the bitter disappointments, the deep wrongs, and the heart breaking sorrows, tragedies of life, what about them? Why just let them go, too. Drop them, softly maybe, but surely. Put away all regret and bitterness, and let sorrow be only a softening influence. Yes, let them go, too, and make the most of the future.

Then, that little pet ailment you have been hanging on to and talking about, let it go. It will be good rid-dance. You have treated it royally, but abandon it, let it go. Talk about health instead, and health will come. Quit nursing that pet ailment and let it go.

It is not hard once you get used to the habit of it-letting go of these things. You will find it such an easy way to get rid of the things that mar and embitter life that you will enjoy letting them go. You will find the world a beautiful place. You will find it beautiful because you will be free to enjoy it-free in mind and body.

Learn to let go. As you value health of body and peace of mind, let go. . just simply LET GO!!!

Anonymous

IF YOU CAN'T BE THANKFUL FOR WHAT YOU RECEIVE, AT LEAST BE THANKFUL FOR WHAT YOU ESCAPE!

**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.



## A BAD LEAD?

When I was relatively new in the program many of the old timers would say, "there is no such thing as a bad lead" or "I have never heard a bad lead." I listened to them & I believed, as I also remembered no one would lie to me in AA. One particular Saturday night I was pleased to go to a meeting where a fellow was giving his first lead. The meeting started in the usual manner & the man came up to the podium, introduced himself as an alcoholic after which he shakily led us in the serenity prayer. He then stammered through ten minutes of the most disoriented unrelated sentences a person could possibly put together & ended all with would you join me in "the Lords Prayer" I sat in my chair absolutely stunned thinking I just heard a bad lead. That evening I tried to rationalize that lead & try to convince myself I didn't hear a bad lead. The answer that kept coming up was the same - bad lead. This lead preyed upon my mind off & on for about five days. Finally my abused brain sifted out an answer-I can never forget. When that new guy got up & gave his lead he told his story by the "book". He was not a public speaker or entertainer. He got up & spilled his guts to all who were present at that meeting & by our legacy that was exactly what the "Big Book" Suggests we do. He was following our program to the letter, following our path step by step as it is laid out for us. "a bad lead"? It kept this dummy stewing for five days until I came up with the right answer. I was able to learn a very important AA lesson. He shared with me, he shared with us, so that we may share with others. Thank you—

Don E. Brecks. Wed.

## The word is SERENITY. . .

When we see a person who has an unusually high degree of serenity, we may feel that this person has not had to meet many serious problems in life. A closer look would tell us the exact opposite. A serene person is usually one who has met many difficulties in life and learned to meet them in the right way. Serenity does not come easily. Serenity comes only through learning to trust life and our ability to meet any life situation, knowing that we are moving toward that which is highest and best for us.

## 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 **20,000** 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 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 37 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.

TO: All Secretaries and Group Members

LETS ALL PRACTICE OUR 10TH AND 11TH TRADITION IN OUR MEETINGS. THE IMPORTANCE OF OUR GUIDLINES DEPENDS ON ALL OUR MEMBERS. LET US NOT USE OUR MEETING AREAS FOR ANYTHING BUT A.A. ACTIVITIES. AFTER EACH MEETING, MAKE CERTAIN THAT NO OTHER FUNCTIONS BE MISTAKEN WITH A.A.

William E.

Sober Singles Closed Discussion



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Harry D., Founder and Editor 1892-1968

VOL. 39 FEBRUARY 1981 NO. 5

MINUTES OF CENTRAL COMMITTEE  
WESTERN RESERVE ROOM OLD STONE  
CHURCH

FEBRUARY 3, 1981  
8:00 P.M.

Meeting was opened by Jean M., Moderator leading members present in the Serenity Prayer. Roll call showed that 37 members were present representing 37 groups. Ed K., Vice Moderator, read the purpose of Central Committee and the Twelve Traditions of A.A.

Minutes of the January 6th, meeting were read and approved. Treasurer's Report through January was given showing a balance in the Central Committee account of \$119.25, and in the Central Bulletin account a balance of \$707.81. 4 speakers were supplied by the District Office to non A.A. groups for the month of January 1981.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

**Area Committee:** Ed K., Chairman, confirmed the speakers for the next Area wide Meeting, Bill and Delores M., representing A.A. and Alanon, March 8th 1981 at St. Malachi's School Hall, 2459 Washington St. The Serenity Singers are unable to come as reported at the last meeting. Come and bring a friend.

**Central Bulletin:** Dick F., Chairman, stated we are still looking for subscriptions and articles from local members, and thanked the groups that are using a subscription to the Bulletin as a prize.

**Brecksville:** Don E., stated, the participation by the A.A. community in respect to leads has been very good. The meetings are open to all, and urged members to attend.

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

**Rosary Hall and Horizon Center:** Lou W., representative, announce at Rosary, they are full to capacity, and Horizon, they are expanding to 38 beds, the 19 beds now are filled.

**Woodruff:** Edith H., reported meetings are well attended, and announced a new Gay group, "You Are Needed," Thursday's at 8:30 P.M.

**No Reports:** Harbor Light and Merrick Hall.

**New Business:** Jeanne C., announced a new group, Parma Women Discussion, Monday at 1:30 P.M., at Parma So. Presbyterian Church, 6149 Pearl Road. Jean M., Moderator introduced the new Northeast Ohio Delegate, Joan A. to members present.

A motion was made and second, to send a letter to all A.A. groups asking for donation of \$5.00 to help keep the doors of Central Committee open.

At this meeting an election was held for an Action Committee Chairperson, the name of Lucretia W., was placed in nomination, there being no further nominations from the floor, Lucretia W., was unanimously voted as the new Action Committee Chairperson.

There was a lengthy discussion regarding Special Interest groups.

**N.E.O. GENERAL SERVICE REPORT:** John B., reported, the next Assembly meeting will be Sunday, February 22nd, at 2:00 P.M., American Legion Hall, Rt. 82 and 21, Brecksville, Ohio. Let's all attend. There being no further business, the meeting closed with the Lords Prayer.

Elvira A., Secretary

CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
MARCH 3, 1981 - 8:00 P.M.  
OLD STONE CHURCH-PUBLIC SQUARE  
CLEVELAND, OHIO  
BE INFORMED  
GROUP REPRESENTATIVES WELCOME

6th Mini Conference  
"AA Takes It's Inventory"  
March 20-21 & 22, 1981  
Ramada Inn Northwest  
RTS. 18 & I-77 - Akron, Ohio.

AREA WIDE MEETING  
March 8th 1981 - 2:00 P.M.  
ST. MALACHI SCHOOL HALL  
2401 WASHINGTON ST.  
CLEVELAND, OHIO  
Bill & Delores M. A.A. & AL-ANON  
SERENITY SINGERS FROM AKRON  
EVERYONE 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.  
\$14.00 PER PERSON

OBITUARY

**Frank Aurit**, member of the fellowship for 38 years passed away in Florida, Feb. 1, 1981. Our sympathy to the family.

Serenity Hall as of March 1, 1981 will be located in St. John-West Shore Hospital, 29000 Center Ridge Road, Westlake, Ohio.



### ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

There are no rules or laws in A.A. but every member of this wonderful fellowship is honor bound to respect the anonymity of another member, particularly now that we are coming out of a blackout. Not the blackout of the individual, but the blackout of public misunderstanding and indifference that has long cloaked the alcoholic problem.

Politicians, radio, television, newspapers and magazines are all scrambling to get on the A.A. bandwagon to spread the story of alcoholism. In many cases the individual member lends his name to the newspapers, however, this wouldn't matter much if it would only effect the individual member. In the process of an awakened public interest there lurks a danger to the fellowship, and if the individual gets drunk, he leaves a cloud of doubt about our fellowship. This is a danger that every member should consider as a calculated risk. Therefore, we should know that we are doing and be constantly aware of the calculation.

Certainly we don't want to do anything to hinder the present wave of interest in alcoholism. This interest is good and eventually it may help the public to understand the alcoholic problem and help remove the stigma that still shrouds the alcoholic. Most alcoholics are "prima donnas" who like to be in the spotlight. Their ego is fed on attention and now that others are studying the alcoholics problem. The alcoholic wants to do the teaching.

We still need the same kind of A.A. that was handed down 45 years ago and we should never forget that there are two parts to our fellowship. (Alcoholics Anonymous). Our anonymity is a vital part of our fellowship. It builds our honesty which strengthens the bonds that hold this fellowship together.

Anonymity is import to some business men and to some professional men who are doing business or serving people that **have** a contemptuous attitude toward alcohol and people who drink it. One of the greatest offenses against another member is to breach his anonymity without his consent. An individual may be able to make his or her own decision, but they cannot be certain that the breach will not hurt someone else.

There are some men and women in A.A. who want to impress their friends by name dropping of people who are holding highly responsible positions. They overlook the fact that A.A. is for alcoholics, and we are all on the same level. There is no aristocracy in A.A. but outside of it, every member should be free to live his or her own life.

The founders of A.A. did their best to protect the alcoholics from people who do not understand him or her or their problem, but are always ready to bring in a verdict of guilty without giving them a chance to defend themselves. So, if it was good some 45 years ago to protect the alcoholic's anonymity, it is also good today. Every member should have the right to live, work and play under the protective cloak of anonymity.

Ed B  
Akron Intergroup

### AN ATHEIST AND . . .GOD AS WE UNDERSTAND HIM

50 years ago I found I could not accept the idea of a supernatural personal God and so, after a period of agnosticism, became an atheist. Today, by most religious standards, I suppose I would still be classified as one, but, in the wider, deeper realm of belief, I make so bold as to call myself a believer.

Why? - because in endeavoring to practice the A.A. of recovery, **the** Twelve Steps, I came to believe many things; in a power greater **than** myself for a start; also trying to understand God as the universal principal for all time.

I believe in A.A., in sobriety, in charity, in tolerance, in science, in love, in service, in mankind, in some creative evolution, in humility and in prayer.

Particularly, I **belive** in the prayer that Ebby gave to Bill when he asked for help "try asking whatever higher power there is, if only as an experiement, for help to find the grace to be released from alcoholism." For over 20 years this prayer has been answered for me - may I recommend it to all alcoholics who want to get well - especially atheists? I believe it will work.

H.W.S.  
The Road Back

Bartender: "Why don't you just say you've had enough when you've had enough?"

Drunk: "Cause when I've had enough, I can't say had enough!"

During a community drive to round up unlicensed dogs, a policeman whistled a car to the curb. When the driver, already stoned to the gills, demanded to know why he had been stopped, the officer pointed to the dog on the seat beside him, "Does your dog have a license?" he asked.

"Course not, offisher," snapped the driver. "He doesn't need one. Can't you see he isn't driving?"

I always keep a supply of stimulant handy in case I see a snake-which I also keep handy.

W.C. Fields

#### 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.



## "WHAT DID YOU DO TODAY"

So you've been around for many years, helping to spread A.A.  
You've worked like hell since you first came in, but what did you do today?  
I heard your pitch, it was kind of long, you really told them how  
You worked the steps in 41, but how are you working them now?  
Do you still get up from your soft, warm bed when someone is in trouble?  
Do you grab your hat and your A.A. book and get there on the double?  
Or have you forgotten the early times when you were sort of new,  
Maybe you've been around so long that A.A. is old hat to you.  
Maybe you're one of the Senior Saints, sober **and** satisfied,  
And you've forgotten when you were sick and when you damn near died?  
Maybe I shouldn't bring it up, **maybe** you're too blase,  
But just for the hell of it Mister, what did you do today?  
Have you been around so cock-eyed long you leave it to Harry or Sam,  
'Cause you're not your borther's keeper and you don't give a damn?  
Maybe tonight the fights are on or you're going to the old ball game,  
So what the hell, if the guy is sick, he has only himself to blame.  
Well, Mister, you have a perfect right to work your own A.A.  
And you know you'll do it your way, no matter what I say.  
But, tonight before you go to bed, just look in the glass and pray  
That you and the Lord know the answer to "WHAT DID YOU DO TODAY?"

This poem was given to the Editor by Frank B., NYC, NY. Frank said he had been given this poem by someone in the early days of his sobriety (over 30 years ago) and he carries it with him so he can share it. The wonders of this Fellowship of ours, running into Frank out on the Atlantic Ocean and he is just as enthusiastic about his sobriety today, sharing with the newcomers how it works for him. Thank you, Frank.

Gloria P., Editor  
GoodNews

## FROM A FRIEND

Some of the fastest trips to the gutter have been taken by people who, after becoming sober on the AA program, have secretly decided they are, after all, superior types of persons. With a couple months of sobriety under their belt, a few bucks in thier pocket, and a wife who has returned to the chamber, this type of alcoholic takes a look around at the group and once more falls prey to his own asinine arrogance. He convinces himself that he is a cut above the level he attributes to other alcoholics-has better clothes, more poise, a better income-and above all, oh yes, by all means-more brains. That's where he excels! He can out-think, **out-plan** and out-fox all these other goofs in any area. The 12 steps are O.K. for guys who can't think for themselves, who must have their daily program **spoon-fed**, who cannot make decisions or control them if they do make them.

Our hero, on the other hand, now sees everything clearly in the light of his own brilliant intelligence. Oh, yes, he got fouled up a bit, but it was merely a human foible, a temporary lapse from his perfect control of all situations. Losing his job-well, his superiors weren't bright enough to grasp his great capabilities. But now that they know he is a hot shot, they won't be so flip in the future; they'll let him do it his way, and he'll prove it. He'll prove it his own way; without the help of those AA goofs, even though these goofs happened to be handy-and willing-when he needed a lift to crawl out of the gutter and smooth over the difficulties that brought him to the gutter.

Well, this type of fellow is going to prove something. He's going to prove the old, old story of what happens to the supercilious, the haughty, the arrogant person. He's going to prove what always happens to men who have not learned the lesson of humility. He's going to prove the inevitable fate of the man who climbs into the driver's seat and says "move over." And just before he proves all these things, he's going to get drunk, awfully drunk. Then all his goofy friends, not anywhere near his equal, will rally around once more, pull him out of his mess, put him on his feet, without a word of censure. **Why?** Because they're **AA's**. Real Ones.

(via the Missing Link)

Reprint from Central Bulletin  
February 1957



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Harry D.. Founder and Editor 1892-1968

VOL. 39 MARCH 1981 NO. 6

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MARCH 3, 1981  
8:00 P.M.

Meeting was opened by Jean M., Moderator leading members in the Serenity Prayer. Roll call showed that 38 members were present and one visitor representing 38 groups. Ed. K., Vice Moderator, read the purpose of Central Committee and the Twelve Traditions of A.A.

Minutes of the February 3rd, meeting were read and approved. Treasurer's Report through February was given showing a balance in the Central Committee account of **\$125.49**, and in the Central Bulletin account a balance of \$799.37. Eighteen speakers were supplied by the District Office to non A.A. groups for months of January thru February, inclusive.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Area Committee:** Ed K. Chairman, reminded members of the up-coming Area Wide meeting Sunday March 8th, coffee and donuts will be served. Don't forget the Coupon that's attached to the **Areawide** notice.

**Action Committee:** Lucretia W., Chairperson, gave a report on the article in the newspapers: Personal anonymity at the level of press-her results will be reported as progressed.

**Central Bulletin:** Dick F., Chairmar., stated still in need of articles and subscriptions for the Bulletin. Anyone wishing to contribute an article or subscription send to the District Office.

**Rosary Hall and Horizon Center:** Lou W., representative, reported Horizon Center will open a new floor, A "Special" evening is being set aside for A.A. members and their families, Tuesday March 17th, visiting period, 7:30 to 9:30 P.M., coffee and refreshments will be served.

**Brecksville:** Don E., reported the Hospital is full, there is an A.A. room on the 3rd floor for sponsors or visitors to talk with the patients.

**Metro:** Chester Y., reported the Friendship room at Metro will be closed as of March 15th.

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

**Woodruff:** Edith H., reported, the sponsorship is improving, and reminded A.A. members when you bring a patient in don't just drop them off, please come and visit them. The hospital is full and meetings are well attended.

**New Business:** Lorain Community Hospital is opening a ward for Alcoholics. Ed Parker, announced a new group, Friday Midnight, at 2486 W. 14th Street. Tim Shave, announced a new meeting. Back to Basic, at Baldwin-Wallace college 120 E. Grand, Student Union Hall, Berea, Ohio.

**N.E.O. GENERAL SERVICE:** John B., reported, the March 20, 21, and 22nd at the Ramada Inn, Akron, Ohio. Come and let your Delegate know how you feel about the matters that will be discussed at this meeting.

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

Elvira A., Secretary

CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
APRIL 7, 1981-8:00 p.m.  
OLD STONE CHURCH-PUBLIC SQUARE  
CLEVELAND, OHIO  
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.  
**\$14.00 PER PERSON**

3rd ANNUAL  
OHIO YOUNG PEOPLE'S CONFERENCE  
JUNE 5th, 6th, & 7th 1981  
JOHN CARROLL UNIVERSITY  
FOR INFORMATION

O.Y.P.A.A.  
P.O. Box 139  
Twinsburg, Ohio 44087  
Total Package \$55.00

**OBITUARY**

**OLDRICH KOUBA**, 33 year member of the Brooklyn Group passed on after serious illness. Our deepest sympathy to the family.

**JIM GLYNN**, 9 year member of the Bedford Wed. Morning Group passed away. Our condolence to his wife.

**A Declaration  
of unity**

*This we owe to A.A.'s future:  
To place our common welfare first;  
To keep our fellowship united.  
For on A.A. unity depend our lives,  
And the lives of those to come.*

### ANSWER TO JERICO

Now from me to Jerico about clean meetings.

- 1. I'm glad he got it off his chest
- 2. I was taught tolerance for the speakers. He only tells his story in his way. (No rules)
- 3. When I bring a non-alcoholic I take the time to pick out a meeting where I know who is leading that night.
- 4. If I don't like the speakers at my home group (and that's the only group I have any right to say anything about) I ask for the chairmans job myself. So far I've always been satisfied.

5. He didn't mention the coffee. In case he didn't like that, he can probably get that job too.

In spite of every thing and still your friend.

Gib  
Elyria Men's Stag Group

\*\*\*\*\*

*Dale Carnegie said: You can make more friends in two months by becoming really interested in other people, than you can in two years by trying to get other people interested in you.*

\*\*\*\*\*

If you don't go to your A.A. Meeting you won't know who else is not going and none of you are giving back what someone else gave you, when they came to the meeting!

\*\*\*\*\*

### AND HAVE A REALLY GOOD DAY!

Business man to beggar: "I'll give you 50 cents — not because you deserve it, but because it pleases me to do so."

Panhandler: "Well, thank you, sir. You're awfully kind, but while you're at it, why don't you make it a dollar and really put some joy into your day?"

A.A. Silver Dollar — Fargo, N. Dak. (Nov. '80)

— Be a Bulletin Booster —

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Cleveland, Ohio 441 13

### 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 no 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 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 curse with the contagion of criticism. **THINK BEFORE CRITICISING!**

Bristol Fashion

### DELEGATE REPORTS

The snow storm raged and then the weather cleared for our trip February 13, 14 & 15-to Green Bay, Wisconsin for the Delegate/Past Delegates Conference.

East Central Region, our region, consists of Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan and Wisconsin. There are 14 delegates in our region • 8 of us are new. We got acquainted with each other and practiced a bit for the upcoming conference in New York.

Our Regional Trustee "Ginny" told us that the GRAPEVINE needs our support. It is a good tool for Discussion Groups, a good gift for our AA friends, and a good raffle and door prize at group anniversaries.

The 1985 International Conference will be held at one of these sites: Chicago, Minneapolis, Montreal, New York or San Diego.

Thanks to Akron, Canton, Cleveland, Mansfield and Youngstown Central/Intergroup Offices for sharing with us at our Area Assembly February 22nd. We appreciate your reports.

Bob H. (Past Delegate from Columbus Area) shared with us. One day while looking at BOX 459 he translated the numbers into their corresponding letters. 459 became DEI. DEI in Latin means "of God"

Your trusted servant

Joan A..

Delegate Northeast Ohio

## BLOW BY BLOW

The following letter was written by one of our very active members and merits the attention of every member who is called upon to address a captive audience.

After listening to a lead last night where the qualifying took one hour and twenty minutes, in which every thought and emotion since age 5 was gone into and explained, I began to wonder if I and the new man who was attending his first meeting, were not in the wrong place.

In my opinion, no speaker in A.A. has a right to bore a captive audience for one hour and twenty minutes with an account of every drink he ever took and every emotion he ever experienced.

At the end of the lead, the speaker did say that he hoped and prayed that some day he could cut down on his qualifying. In my judgment, he need not worry too much about this, for word does get around and he will be in less demand as a speaker. I feel it is proper to so inform the misguided few who try the patience and tolerance of the many who are seeking more handles to strengthen their resolve to stay sober.

The length of the lead has nothing to do with my thinking on this subject. Most leads are too short as far as I am concerned, for when A.A. is the topic, the main topic of discussion, I cannot hear enough.

This subject has come up in the past and I was a little hesitant to mention it again because the pattern was set many years ago by our founders and their followers. Their purpose was psychological in that newcomer would also open up the floodlights of candor which enabled the members to better counsel him. As the member told his story, the newcomer became willing to put his cards on the table face up and tell all.

However, as A.A. groups began to sprout rapidly in every sector of the United States, the audiences grew beyond the "closed conferences" stage to large mass meetings. Closed conferences were also held for newcomers, who after a period of time, were permitted to attend the regular meetings as members.

At these regular meetings the speaker spent little time in qualifying in as much as he wouldn't be addressing unless he were qualified. So most of his talk centered on the necessity of practicing the Twelve Steps and his own method of applying them. Many of them differed in their approach, but in the main, each was sincere and determined to adapt his daily life to the Four Absolutes-honesty, unselfishness, love and purity.

I join in the concensus with many A.A. friends and beseech those who are asked to speak to limit their qualifying to a reasonable amount of time, to prove their point but to place emphasis on the qualities of the program of Alcoholics Anonymous which is keeping all of us sober.

Everyone knows how to get drunk but there are thousands of us who need to know how to stay sober. Many listeners are seeking a formula for drinking moderately, and little do they realize that they have become compulsive drinkers, and accordingly, alcoholics.

Let us all take stock of ourselves and think when we are asked to speak. How can we best impart our formula for sobriety to the men and women who are seeking a solution to their problem.

A Recovering Alcoholic  
Akron Intergroup

The drunk teed his ball up for the fifth time, swung violently, and watched with jubilation as a small object whirled away at a 45-degree angle. "I got that ball off at last," he muttered.

"Mister," said the caddie, "that was your wristwatch!"

## HOW HANDY ARE YOU?

One of the most important parts of any AA meeting is the handshake extended to all who attend. At least we hope it is being extended. Sadly enough I have attended some groups where handshakes were not very evident. Do we become so busy with our old friends that we forget the new person who really needs to know that we want them there. In the early days of my own sobriety I was awed by the many who offered me their hand and asked only for a smile or a nod in return. I try to seek out the newcomer and see that they get at least one handshake. As Bill W. said "I want the hand of AA always to be there and for that, I am responsible."

Box 1232

Louisville, Ky. 40201

## ATTENTION ALL SECRETARIES

Secretary List

This list is for the purpose of helping Group Secretaries to contact each other and for the general welfare of A.A. and it's members.

IT IS AGAINST THE EXPRESSED WISHES OF OUR A.A. TRADITIONS IF USED FOR ANY OTHER MAILING PURPOSE.

This list should not be in the possession of any outside organizations or institutions, for retreats or special masses.

### 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.



"The problem of drug addiction in its several forms lies close to us all. It stirs our deepest interest and sympathy. Many A.A.'s, especially those who have suffered these particular addictions, are now asking, 'What can we do about drugs-within our Fellowship, and without?'"

"Specifically, here is a list of questions we are often asked:

- "Can a nonalcoholic pill or drug addict become an A.A. member?" **No**
- "Can such a person be brought, as a visitor, to an open A.A. meeting for help and inspiration?" **Yes**
- "If so, should these nonalcoholic pill or drug users be led to believe that they have become A.A. members?" **No**
- Can a pill or drug taker, who also has a genuine alcoholic history, become a member of A.A.?" **Yes**

"Now there are certain things that A.A. cannot do for anybody, regardless of what our desires or sympathies\* may be. Our first duty, as a fellowship, is to insure our own survival. Therefore, we have to avoid distractions and multipurpose activity.

"Sobriety — freedom from alcohol — through the teaching and practice of the Twelve Steps, is the sole purpose of an A.A. group. Groups have repeatedly tried other activities, and they have always failed. It has also been learned that there is no possible way to make nonalcoholics into A.A. members. We have to confine our membership to alcoholics, and we have to confine our A.A. groups to a single purpose. If we don't stick to these principles, we shall almost surely collapse. And if we collapse, we cannot help anyone.

"I see no way of making nonalcoholic addicts into A.A. members. Experience says loudly that we can admit no exceptions, even though drug users and alcoholics happen to be first cousins of a sort. If we persist in trying this, I'm afraid it will be hard on the drug user himself, as well as on A.A. We must accept the fact that no nonalcoholic, whatever his affliction, can be converted into an alcoholic . . . and an A.A. member.

"We cannot give A.A. membership to non-alcoholic addicts. But, like anyone else, they should be able to attend open A.A. meetings, provided, of course, that the groups themselves are willing."

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## WHAT PRICE FRIENDSHIP

"What price do you demand for friendship?" Every member of AA should ask themselves this question, and then go one step further and ask 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 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.

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 the meetings 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. Think over your price for friendship and if it is too high, reduce it.

From High & Dry  
Seattle, Wash.

## THAT IMAGINARY LINE

Sometime, somewhere in our lives, we alcoholics reach that imaginary line. It is there! And we cross over it. We now have reached the point of no return, and as alcoholics we can never return to social drinking. If we take our lives back from God, and take that first drink, we are headed back to that jungle with all its Hell, its misery and its suffering.

We can lose all that we now have and more. This way of life in the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous is far better than the kind of life we led when we were drinking. As Recovering Alcoholics, we can live a satisfactory life as average reasonably sane human beings. We now are somebody and not just something, and we can have happiness.

That is one thing that a lot of us missed for years and years. We can get away from that loneliness we lived with or existed in. We will never be perfect, but we can be much better than we were in our drinking days. We can carry the message to other suffering alcoholics, and we can show them that there is hope, and that life can get better each day with the help of God and AA.

by Sam K.  
Trilby Group

## 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

Vol. 39 April 1981 No.7

MINUTES OF CENTRAL COMMITTEE  
WESTERN RESERVE ROOM OLD STONE CHURCH  
APRIL 7, 1981  
8:00 P.M.

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

Minutes of the March 3rd, meeting were read and approved. Treasurer's Report through March was given showing a balance in the Central Committee account of \$652.17, and in the Central Bulletin account a balance of \$613.92. Thirty five speakers were supplied by the District Office to non A.A. groups for months of January thru March inclusive.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

**Action Committee:** Lucretia W., Chairman, nothing to report

**Areawide Committee:** Ed. K., Chairman, stated the next **Areawide** meeting will be June 7, 1981, at St. Malachi's School Hall, 2459 Washington St., at 2:00 P.M.-and asked for lead suggestions.

**Central Bulletin:** Dick F., Chairman, reported still in need of subscriptions and articles from local members. He thanked the groups that use a subscription to the Bulletin as a door prize.

**Rosary Hall and Horizon Center:** Lou W., representative, reported, the passing of Kevin B., and effective April 5th, the new Director — of Rosary Hall will be sister Mary George. Horizon Center is functioning well, the Fellowship room is open for meetings.

**Harbor Light:** Al W., reported, there is a need for women sponsorship at Harbor Light.

**Brecksville:** Don E., representative, reported, the hospital is full as usual, the meetings are well attended. Meetings are Tuesday at 7:00 P.M., Wednesday at 8:00 P.M., Patient orientation meeting at 7:00 P.M. on Thursday, 1:00 P.M. on Saturday afternoon and 1:00 P.M. on Sunday. The A.A. community is welcome.

**Merrick Hall:** Rachel D., reported, Merrick Hall continues to function at full capacity, and continue to focus on the Big Book and step work with the in-patients and graduates in after-care. We are adding a growth work shop in Communications and resuming the "Anger" workshop in May. We are grateful to the

A.A. volunteers for giving so generously of themselves, and their time. We thank the sponsors for their cooperation and dedication for carrying the message.

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

**Woodruff:** Edith H., representative, announced that the Wednesday Nite Unity group will be celebrating their 3rd anniversary Saturday April 18, and the Hospital is filled to capacity. The halfway house is under going renovation, anyone needing a place to stay can call Woodruff and ask for Annette C.

**Serenity Hall:** Terry L., reported they are in their new quarters, 29000 Center Ridge Road, Westlake, Ohio. The closed A.A. meeting is located in the cafeteria. The family meeting held on Sunday night is in the All Purpose room. A.A.'s are invited to socialize with the patients in the All Purpose room upstairs.

**N.E.O. General Service Report:** John B., representative, read a transcript of the Relationship of the Central Office and General Service Committees, dated April, 1974. His report: Joan A., our Delegate, will be going to New York to represent Northeastern Ohio Area. The next Assembly meeting will be Sunday, May 17, at that time our Delegate will report on what transpired at the New York Conference. June 14th will be Open House, American Legion Hall, Brecksville, Ohio-bring a covered dish. Tom B., of Avon O. will be the speaker. The Ohio State Conference, August 8, 9, & 10th-held at the University Hilton Motor Inn, Ohio State University, flyers will be sent. Inter-group Dinner Dance tickets are still available at the District Office.

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

Elvira A., Secretary

CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
May 5, 1981 • 8:00 P.M.  
OLD STONE CHURCH-PUBLIC SQUARE  
CLEVELAND, OHIO  
BE INFORMED  
GROUP REPRESENTATIVES WELCOME

G.S.R. THIRD LEGACY MEETING  
MAY 17, 1981 • 2:00 P.M.  
DELEGATES REPORT OF THE  
NEWYORK CONFERENCE.  
AMERICAN LEGION HALL  
ROUTES 82 & 21  
BRECKSVILLE, OHIO

3rd ANNUAL  
OHIO YOUNG PEOPLE'S CONFERENCE  
JUNE 5th, 6th, & 7th 1981  
JOHN CARROLL UNIVERSITY  
FOR INFORMATION

O.Y.P.A.A.  
P.O. Box 139  
Twinsburg, Ohio 44087  
Total Package \$55.00

OBITUARY

KEVIN BIRT, member of Lakewood Armory Hall, passed away from cancer, March 20, 1981. Our deepest sympathy to the family.

JIM MARTIN, 20 year member of the Independence Group and other Groups, passed away in Florida after 10 years of recurring cancer. Our sincere condolences to Rita and children.

WORDS OF GRATITUDE

On November 13, 1980 I found myself sitting in a hospital waiting room while Ron's brother Tim was undergoing surgery for the removal of a brain tumor. I had never faced major surgery for anyone close to me in my life and I knew that with all the years that I tried to practice the Twelve Steps of A.A., I had to totally rely on them this day.

During that 6% hours that we sat there drinking cup after cup of coffee, a lot of things went through my mind. I would like to share them with our beautiful fellowships, both A.A. and Al-Anon. Ron has been given the privilege of Al-Anon for almost fifteen years and myself, have had the privilege of being an A.A. member for almost sixteen years. I knew that I would have to let all I heard in meetings go to work for me. This was the time to put all the words that I may have spoken in meetings into action.

I was told when I came into A.A. to build a good foundation and if I did, when the chips were down that what I had built would go to work for me.

Well, it did that day. At first I thought about the possibility that if I were still drinking at this time, what an additional burden I would be to the family. I talked to God as I understand Him today, and it went like this:

God, I am so grateful for my sobriety at a time like this. I know that whatever Your Will is for Tim, let it be. I cannot express the gratitude I feel at this time, that I can be of support to this family. I've thought about the years I drank, and what kind of



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trouble I made for these people, and I am so grateful for amends that were made many years ago.

When Tim went into surgery I was quite frightened for his survival because the Neurologist told us that it would be touch and go.

While I sat there with God, I felt a calmness come over me because I knew Tim was in His Good Hands. During this very trying day I was thankful for our program and the Steps it had given me. I could be of support to our family instead of being selfish as I had been in the days of drinking when I thought only of myself. Our whole family did quite well during this ordeal.

When the surgeon came out and talked to Ron's family and told them that he felt that Tim would make a full recovery we felt hope. When Ron and I got on the bus to come home we knew that God had carried all of us in His Hands.

When we came back to Cleveland we felt things would go fine from now on. In our morning and evening prayers Ron and I asked for God's Will.

After Thanksgiving, which Tim was able to spend with his family, he had a set-back of Meningitis and had to return to the hospital. Again, in January of this year he had to return to the hospital for the third time sicker than the last time. Through tests, they isolated the bacteria and were able to start a long process of treatment, which started Tim on a real road of recovery.

Ron and I still asked for God's Will and daily practiced the Eleventh Step, which reads: "Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understand Him, praying for the knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry it out".

This March Tim returned to work completely recovered from his ordeal.

Ron and I believe God performed a miracle in our lives and for the entire family. We can't express the gratitude that we feel. Because of complete surrender to God's Will our lives are fuller and no matter what God gives me today I can handle.

We have had other problems since then and by turning our will over every morning and leaving it to God, it has given us a richer life.

Thank God for the many prayers from A.A. and Al-Anon members and all the help we have gotten from people who were willing to take us to Canton when we needed to go.

There is no way to express gratitude but to repeat the words of a deceased A.A. member, who said every time she led a meeting.

A SOBER HEART IS A GREATFUL HEART

Edie H., A.A.

OR DOUBLYOURMONEYBACK!

A drunk staggered into a bar and somehow made out the sign that read: "All the beer you can drink for \$5.00"

"Wow, what a bargain!" he exclaimed\* to the bartender. "I'll take \$10 worth!"

### "A DESIRE TO STOP DRINKING"

It is begining to appear as if our zeal to sober up everyone who seemingly needs it has resulted in a rather awkward trend within our own program. We've developed such a frenzy for hospitalization and an accompanying acceptance of whatever is taught while "in-treatment" as gospel truth, that in my view, our basic message is being diluted. Dangerously so.

As I write this, I have before me a 12 month report published by a local treatment facility . . . over the signature of the Alcoholism Program Director. One example of the developing problem is shown as "TIMES IN TREATMENT" . . . a direct quote reads . . . "The percentage of admissions representing the first time in alcoholism treatment was 46.6%, second time • 25.5%, third or more times . . . 27.9%" This was actually an improvement over the first six months of the year, these showed . . . 39% / 27% / and 34%. Now we are not talking about the average slipper here, we are looking at those individuals who slip badly enough to require re-admittance to a hospital. I am also aware that we are dealing with a disease, and that relapse is a medical reality. But, are we helping or hindering by "Detox Dumping" (As written about in the January Central Bulletin) and perhaps equally as important . . . is this even adequate?

The bottom line is, of course the end result. Lets quote again . "Follow up Results . . . 1510 calls to former patients indicated that 70% had maintained sobriety for 3 months, 57% for 6 months, and 37% for 1 year." (this assures everyone told the truth . . . Drunks Lie?) What business is this of ours? Again a quote "the percentage of patients having a sponsor on admission or securing a sponsor during their stay totals 90%. Now then . . . If we bring these people to a hospital as a result of their asking AA for help, do we not have an obligation to insure that they receive massive dossen of the 12 steps? Along with the best medical care possible under the direction of the MD's, who know this part of the "booze business" better than we. I think we do.

I think, in my personal opinion, representing no one but my own conscience, that we who refer patients, must start inquiring as to the success in intermingling newcomers and those who come back again and again. Threat them all but treat them as individuals. Lets look into our blind admission of everybody who throws up in the am. And, by all means, into the non-physical aspects of the educational information being given to our referrals. For example, does the staff lead the patient through the steps or do they leave that "spiritual stuff" for the volunteers . . . thereby inferring 2nd. class status?

Let us not forget . . "these are the steps we took as a program of recovery" not (as some now style us "the most effective form of aftercare" RECOVERY. . .

Terry W.  
Bay West Discussion

### FAITH

Just what is faith? To me, it is trust and God is my number one trust!

When I joined AA, I had faith that if I would work the 12 Steps and attend meetings, I would get what I wanted • sobriety.

But first and foremost, I had to have faith in myself. I had to have faith that I would carry out the program which AA had to offer me.

So day by day, I had faith in myself that I could do this. At first it wasn't easy, but tell me anything in this world that is worth while that you don't have to work for?

Man is egotistical, but he may begin to regard pride and humility in a very different light when his perspective becomes free of false standards. There is something in humility which lifts the heart and makes a backbone in a human being.

Faith will not spare a person from adversity, loss, hardships, injustice, or any of the other evils of life, but it will give to him or her the strength, courage and understanding to triumph over these things.

Following faith, comes peace. I never had a peaceful day when I was drinking. We, who have suffered the curse of alcoholism, can vouch for that statement.

When troubled days come, have faith in God and AA. Read the Ten Commandments and the Twelve Steps and you will find the seat of your trouble. Then have faith in yourself to overcome the problem and a happy day ahead awaits you.

Leo R.  
Silver Dollar

**REMEMBER . . . YOU ONCE CALLED FOR HELP TOO. . . DON'T NEGLECT YOUR PART OF "12 STEP" WORK THAT IS NEEDED TO HELP OTHERS.**

**IF YOU CAN'T DO SOMETHING BIG  
DO SOMETHING MEDIUM SIZE  
IF YOU CAN'T DO SOMETHING MEDIUM SIZE  
DO SOMETHING SMALL  
BUT FOR HEAVEN SAKES. DO SOMETHING!**

**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.



## ARE WE DOCTORS?

My name is Ray and I'm an alcoholic and drug addict. My story is one of confusion and delusion, everywhere, always.

One day when the help I wanted and so desperately needed was offered, I grabbed fast, without question. Placed in a psychiatric ward for six weeks, the doctors and nurses went to work to bring me to reality. It was hell. My attitude was: whatever it takes to free me from my bondage to booze and street drugs, I will do.

The day I was released from the hospital I went to an AA meeting. I kept going to meetings. Some members of AA believed it was their duty to tell me I shouldn't be taking the medicine the doctor had prescribed. So I stopped taking my medicine because I wanted to be drug free, in the first place, and because some people in AA told me I didn't need the drugs prescribed.

Seven months passed and I was back in the psychiatric ward. I did not drink or do drugs. I had gone to many meetings, was chairman, made coffee and yet I wound up in the hospital. Finally, my doctor and the hospital staff got me back to reality. When asked the reason for my relapse, the doctor said, "Because you stopped taking your medicine."

Today I take my medicine. I believe that if someone comes to AA who is taking medicine as prescribed by the doctor, he should continue taking the medicine. No one has any business telling that person to stop taking the medicine.

Ray

Life is always a terrific burden to the alcoholic. It is likewise to all neurotics. And it is the same to many people who go through life never making full decisions, who always tack on to every decision some reservation, some if, some but, some maybe. In all of life's decisions they keep a door open. And at other times, in fact most of the time, they tried to avoid a decision altogether, and were, as a result, victims of that terrible de-energizing force, procrastination, the end product of indecision. In AA we learned that a decision, a full decision was the only real difficult part of the whole program. Given that, the rest would be followed up. And then we learned as we went along that most failures came from indecision, that most nervous, emotional, and physical tension inside comes from INDECISION."

From . . . "Sobriety & Beyond"

CAUTION: The Elevator to Sobriety is Out of Order, Use the 12 Steps!

We wish Dick P. and Helen the very best in their retirement. Thanks Dick, for an outstanding job the past 18 years.

IMOGENE Z., new secretary of the Cleveland District Office, beginning June 1st, 1981. Congratulations! Let us all give her our support in A.A. UNITY.

## THE WAY OF LIFE

The other night at a meeting I heard a man say he could not afford to take AA at his leisure. I can relate to that! To me, the program is a way of life. I have found the Twelve Steps to be a great teacher. I need no formal education to decipher them. An open mind, coupled with a willingness to change my life, will start me down the road of a concrete sobriety. And as I travel one day at a time, I learn. As I learn, I grow. And as I grow I realize what a long way I have yet to go, and each day is challenging and interesting. No longer do I want a wobbly existence with A.A. only half time. Today I want the fulfillment of the AA principles in all my life.

From the 12 Stepper

## PITFALLS TO SOBRIETY

Probably one of the biggest, if not the biggest handicap to our sobriety (or at least it was to me) was my attitude that somehow I was different. I was, and I cringe to use the word, "Superior;" to the other members.

After several years of observation, it is now my considered opinion that many of our new members suffer from this same malicious malady. Until it is corrected, recovery will be extremely difficult, if not impossible.

The snobbery can take many forms. The fellow who has lived by his wits and pan-handled for drinks can, if he is so inclined, look down his nose at the man who has not reached that point in his alcoholism saying, "he never had the problems that I have had! what is he doing in AA? One of us doesn't belong here"

Again it may be the man or woman who has occupied a superior social or financial position who thinks to himself, "I'm above the other members of this organization." It's alright for them, but the program is really not for me.

For almost as many people as there are, there are an equal number of false reasons for anyone, if he so desires, to feel that he is a cut above the rest of us. It can be youth, physical attractiveness, wit, intelligence, experience, age. All are spurious reasons for which he can say to himself, "this program is not suited to my particular being."

With such an attitude all will continue to have extreme trouble in adjusting to our AA way of life which demands humility and total abstinence.



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 May 1981 No. 8

MINUTES OF CENTRAL COMMITTEE  
WESTERN RESERVE ROOM OLD STONE CHURCH  
MAY 5, 1981  
8:00 P.M.

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

Minutes of April 7th, meeting were read and approved. Treasurer's Report through April was given a balance in the Central Committee account of 638.38 and in the Central Bulletin account a balance of \$668.06. 48 Speakers were supplied by the District Office to non A.A. groups for months of January thru April inclusive.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

**Action Committee:** Lucretia W., Chairman, nothing to report.

**Areawide Committee:** Ed K., Chairman, announced the Twelve Tradition players will perform at the next Areawide meeting, Sunday, June 7th, at 2:00 P.M., St. Malachi's School Hall, 2459 Washington St., Come-bring a friend.

**Central Bulletin:** Dick F., Chairman, reported still looking for articles and subscriptions from Northeastern Ohio members. There is a subscription blank in all of the Bulletins.

**Rosary Hall:** Lou W., representative, reported the Hospital is operating at full capacity.

**Brecksville:** Don E., representative, reported, We continue to have many meetings at the Hospital. We have people that come and talk to the patients in respect to the Big Book, Twelve & Twelve and the Twelve Traditions. The Hospital definitely advocate the A.A. program in respect to recovery.

**Merrick Hall:** Rachel D., representative, stated they are operating at full capacity, and thanked the speakers for their time. They have started their Workshops, Assertiveness, and Managing Your Anger, May 4, 11, 18, and 25th also May 12th and June 2nd. Open to all Merrick Hall graduates and A.A. Women.

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

**Horizon Center:** Lou W., reported, the beds have been increased to 34. Meetings are held, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday Breakfast, the last week of every month is Family Night.

**Woodruff:** Edyth H., called in her report: Beds are full, and they expect to start an Alanon group soon.

**Serenity Hall:** Terry L., invited all A.A. down to see the new facility at St. John and Westshore Hospital. The closed A.A. meeting is well attended.

**N.E.O. General Service Report:** John B., representative, reported, our Delegate just returned from New York. The theme this year was "A.A. TAKES IT'S INVENTORY". You are all invited to Brecksville this Sunday May 17th, at 2:00 P.M., American Legion Hall, Route 21 and 82, She will make a report. Don't forget the Ohio State Conference, August 8, 9, and 10th. Open House, June 14th.

Terry L.; reported, in addition to the covered dish, there will be a workshop, starting at 9:00 A.M., also a Tradition Skit. Speaker at 2:00 P.M.

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

Elvira A., Secretary

CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
JUNE 2ND, 1981 • 8:00 P.M.  
OLD STONE CHURCH-PUBLIC SQUARE  
CLEVELAND, OHIO  
BE INFORMED  
GROUP REPRESENTATIVES WELCOME

G.S.R. THIRD LEGACY MEETING  
JUNE 14, 1981  
WORKSHOP 9:00 A.M. SPEAKER 2:00 P.M.  
OPEN HOUSE • BRING COVERED DISH  
AMERICAN LEGION HALL  
ROUTE 82 & 21 - BRECKSVILLE, OHIO  
46TH ANNUAL FOUNDERS DAY  
JUNE 19, 20 & 21  
AKRON, UNIVERSITY • AKRON, OHIO.

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

## OBITURARY

**ANTHONY J. TOMC**, 31 year member of Brooklyn, Ramdna And Equity Groups died suddenly. Our deepest sympathy to his family.

**LEW NOTARSANTI**, member of Y.O.W.R. Group passed away May 13, 1981. Our condolense to the family.

**ART FULTON**, active member for many years passed on and will be missed by those who knew him best. Our sincere condolences.

\* \* \* \* \*

## HOW ABOUT 2 OUT OF 3?

The teacher was testing the knowledge of the kindergarten class. Slapping a half-dollar onto the desk, she asked.

"What *is that?*"

Instantly a tot in the front row called out: "Tails!"

### WE CAN'T BE EVERYTHING TO EVERYONE

In our efforts to be friendly we should remember we can never be all things to all people. Our intention to be kind can be misconstrued, or even rebuffed, but these things don't happen often. When they do, if our intentions are honest and sincere we must consider that the other person has not grown sufficiently to accept our friendly overtures. In any case we will never appeal to everyone, and that is not important as long as we are pleasing ourselves and God.

The thing I am talking about is true love for my fellow man through the elimination of self-centeredness. AA has taught us what true love is, and how to strive for it. Love means no severe judging, no resentment, no malicious gossip, and no destructive criticism. It means patience, understanding, compassion, and helpfulness. Trying to incorporate these ideas in our daily AA life brings true peace of mind, most of the time, and more important, we move further and further away from that first drink.

### 4 LETTER WORDS

I have, what I consider a big problem at meetings.

I am hearing many unhappy people attending AA meetings where vulgar language is used.

I recently heard of an open mixed AA meeting where the speaker had a few years dry, not sober, ended the dialogue with a very vulgar ending.

I think maybe new people who were there for the first time may think very hard before returning.

I think people in charge of speakers should screen them very carefully.

I don't think the use of four letter words gets our point across better or makes our story more effective.

Sobriety to me means having respect for others. Thank you.

(Signed) • A concerned member.

### Be a Bulletin Booster

#### AA CENTRAL BULLETIN

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Date .....

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### RELATIONSHIP -OF CENTRAL OFFICES AND GENERAL SERVICE COMMITTEES

### Relationship Between The Cleveland District Office Of Aloholics Anonymous And The General Service Committee of The Northeastern Ohio Area

Delegate • John Baker, Ohio

An elementary school student was writing a composition about the Platypus. The main body of his paper dealt with the unrelated oddities of his animal. His description included such facts as a horny, leathery bill like a duck rather than a nose and mouth; fur like a seal but a tail like a beaver; claws on all four feet but with hollow spurs on the hind legs that excreted a venom and webbings of skin between the toes; giving birth by laying leathery eggs like a turtle but nursing its young like any other mammal. The youngster concluded his discourse by observing: "It looks like the work of a committee."

This might be a biased observation, but sometimes the end result of a committee's labors are unpredictable.

The first cooperative effort undertaken by groups in Cleveland, Ohio was begun by the late Jack Darrow early in 1940. He persuaded each group to send a representative to attend informal meetings periodically to consider matters which were of interest and importance to all groups and the members thereof. Within a short time, these meetings were formalized, were presided over by a moderator and a vice-moderator, and minutes kept by a recording secretary. Central Committee has met the first Tuesday of each month ever since. Subcommittees were formed to serve A.A.'s collective interest such as the Hospital Committee, the Institutions Committee, the Consolidated Meeting Committee, the Action Committee, the Training Meetings Committee, the Central Bulletin Committee (which publishes the Cleveland Central Bulletin each month, etc.)

In late 1944, a committee was formed to create a central office. This office opened its doors in February 1945 and adopted the name: "A.A. — Cleveland District Office." It was operated by a full-time paid employee with the title of Secretary. The committee which founded the office became autonomous and independent of Central Committee and became known as the Office Operating Committee. This committee is actually a board of trustees which directs the affairs of the office. At present, the Office Operating Committee consists of eleven members who serve 3-year terms, and whose terms are staggered and thus overlap. Candidates for election are selected so that members will represent all sections of the territory served the District Office, all races and both sexes. About eight months following the opening of the District Office, a meeting was convened of representatives from each

Continued on page 4

group served, and this became known as the District Office Advisory Committee. This meeting has continued to be called four times a year ever since. It is the Advisory Committee which elects members of the Office Operation Committee, keeps the Office responsive to the groups and vice versa.

At present, the District Office is staffed by the Secretary, several full-time paid assistants and several part-time unpaid volunteers. Calls are received from alcoholics seeking help, relatives of alcoholics and others seek information about the A.A. program or the service of the office. An up-to-date list of meetings, meeting places and times and group secretaries is compiled and distributed several times each year. It sponsors an annual intergroup dinner and speaker every year. It handles sales of literature and arranges for speakers, upon request, for A.A. and non-A.A. functions. It does the administrative work for Central Committee.

Cooperation between the General Service Committee of the Northeastern Ohio Area does not occur very often because there is not much occasion for it. However, relations are very good, and when there is occasion for cooperation, there is no problem in making this happen. For several years, the meetings of Central Committee and the Office Advisory Committee have been attended by the delegate of this area. Every four years Northeastern Ohio is the host area for the Ohio State Convention, and the District Office provides the literature, sets up the display and keeps the table manned throughout the convention. This is a tremendous assist to convention planners and provides the District Office with an opportunity to do some public relations work. The General Service Committee of Northeastern Ohio does not attempt to duplicate the services of any of the bodies aforementioned or to infringe upon their function.

This delegate would be negligent if he did not acknowledge and invaluable assist given to General Service in 1956 by the District Office and Central Committee. This Area's participation in the General Service Conference was lackluster and unenthusiastic from 1951 through 1954, and nonexistent in 1955 and 1956. The late Harry Dankworth, founder and editor of the Cleveland Central Bulletin for 26 years, vigorously campaigned to make this Area aware of its responsibilities, and the District Office assisted in setting up a meeting, obtaining meeting space and recruiting capable people to get the ball rolling again. As a result, Northeastern Ohio has sent a Delegate to every General Service Conference since 1957.

Half Of Our Troubles Come From Wanting Our Own Way, The Other Half Come From Getting Our Own Way!

The man who cannot believe in himself cannot believe in anything else. The basis of all integrity and character is whatever faith we have in our own integrity.

-Roy L. Smith

### FIRST THINGS FIRST

This cries out for establishing priorities. But what should come first? Values must be weighed, decisions must be made and then carried through. Each of us sober alcoholics has been restored to the great privilege of choice. Every new day offers us a thousand different ways to go, limited only by self-determined choices. We can turn aside and, as the old song goes, take the high road or the low road. We can stall, procrastinate, delay, and take no action at all - that, too, is a choice. But always there is the idea of change; we can elect new ways and thus achieve our goals.

How do we choose the No. 1 priority? For the alcoholic (both suffering and sober), we know that without sobriety we have nothing. Without sobriety there is no job, no home, no family, no life. So it would seem natural that our first priority is sobriety.

Now most of us are convinced that without AA, we could neither have found sobriety, nor stayed sober. Our individual efforts were fruitless; but in joining together with other recovering alcoholics, through the Unity of Alcoholics Anonymous, we are able to stay away from that first drink and to maintain a way of life without alcohol. Should our first choice then be Alcoholics Anonymous?

In Chapter 3 of the Big Book Bill W. emphasized once again, "The alcoholic at certain times has no effective mental defense against the first drink. Except in a few rare cases, neither he nor any other human being can provide such a defense. His defense must come from a Higher Power". This would strongly suggest, perhaps that our first Choice should be God, as we understand Him. Does this pose a dilemma? We think not. To find and maintain sobriety, we need both AA and the Higher Power. There is no competition between the two; they work hand in hand. For many of us the Higher Power keeps our heads in the clouds, while AA keeps our feet on the ground. It is certain that with one hand in God's and the other in the grip of a suffering alcoholic, we have no hand free to take the first drink.

Of course, we each are individual expressions and always have the freedom of self-determination. The great privilege of choice is yours to place First Things First.

Dean K., Oakland, Ca.

Good News

**ARE YOU PLANNING TO MOVE?**

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



June  
1981

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One Public Square  
Mezzanine Room #6  
Cleveland, Ohio 44113

VOL. XXXIX-No. 9

## HAS THAT OLD ROCKING CHAIR GOT YOU?

At almost every A.A. meeting, I hear a lot of praise given to the old-timers and how their presence influences the new man. However, glorifying the old-timers too much at times inflates their ego and some become somewhat of a patriarch with all the answers to the alcoholic problem. This may sound as if I have a resentment against old-timers but this is not true. I am also considered an old-timer with 37 years of uninterrupted sobriety, and I still do not have all the answers. I still attend my homegroup meetings with regularity and I pick up some valuable advice from some of the new men.

I don't agree with some of the old-timers who are advocating that they should sit back in an easy chair and let the younger members take over all the A.A. activities. A person who separates himself from his group will soon wilt away and be forgotten.

The value of our sobriety increases with each year and our appreciation should increase accordingly. I feel sorry for the man or woman that give up all their A.A. activities and retire to an easy chair, because an empty life is an indication of selfishness, and the cure for such a condition is not found in an easy chair. People with too much time on their hands gradually start watching their symptoms and coddling their complaints. No empty life can be a healthy one.

Certainly, the years take their toll and slow down the old-timer. Then, some of the heavy leg work should be delegated to those younger. But people who give up all of their activities are harming themselves by allowing their thoughts to center too heavily on their own condition and problems. On the other hand, if fleeting years are wisely used, we should not let our values depreciate. Our value to the fellowship is measured by our donations regardless of duration. Lofty and ethical attitudes of generosity, sympathy, helpfulness are not maintained in an easy chair.

The average old-timer does not have the strength and fervor that the younger members have. Yet, he can have his high moments when he still feels that two crowded hours at a meeting is worth an age in reclining in a rocker. If he will continue to put his mind to worthy ideals and open his heart to those less fortunate, God will fill his minutes with magic contentment. When a person spends his time in a way that adds to the welfare of others, he is not wasting time. We are never too old to use our yesterdays, today, and the tomorrows will add up to something useful, that will go on far beyond our years.

We will never have all the answers to life's problems but we need never feel too old to live with our own. All the knowledge we have acquired can become covered with dust, the finest brass will tarnish, the purest steel will rust. So, too, the wisest man can become useless unless he keeps himself polished by exposing himself to the great fundamental truths. Everyone needs rekindling periodically. All of us should remain interested in new targets and new causes.

Today when a man reaches a certain age he is forced to leave the realm of commercial rewards but our sobriety gives us better opportunity to enter the sphere of values where there is no law of supply and demand to limit our production of good fellowship.

\* \* \* \* \*

Ed B.

Akron Intergroup

Editors note. What a wonderful example this man, Ed. B. has set for us to follow. He is truly a grateful A.A..

## ARE WE DOCTORS? MY REPLY

I have been an active member of A.A. for seventeen years. During this time I was associated with many male and female alcoholics that were on medication. To my astonishment, I could not believe that many of them were. Some, I had no doubt. Why the difference?

The alcoholics that were on legitimate prescribed drugs by a physician, for a legitimate illness, or disease and followed the prescription were no different than the alcoholics that weren't on medication. Then we had the others. They love controversy. They love to be the exception. Their only topic of conversation is how they are proving A.A. and its philosophy on drug abstinence as false. You will usually see this person "spaced out" every now and then. No-one has to tell me they are on medication, I can see it. So can every other group member. How did the group know that you were on medication Ray? Was it evident? Do you know if you take a prescription legally and get spaced out, you shouldn't drive? Did you drive? Were you spaced out?

There is much concern about dually addicted members. Why the emphasis on the dual addiction? It's not new. The members coming in today seem to feel it is. Read the pamphlet "The A.A. member and Drug Abuse." It was published in 1964. We never had people standing up and stating dual problems. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. You don't have to be over qualified Ray! GET HONEST.

Bill F.

Lorain, Ohio



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Harry D.. Founder and Editor 1892-1968

Vol. 39

June 1981

No. 9

At our last Central Committee Meeting, motion was made, seconded and passed that we discontinue publishing minutes of Central Committee in the bulletin, because the bulletin does fall into the hands of outside enterprises.

The minutes will be sent to each secretary to be read at the meetings.

CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
July 7, 1981 8:00 P.M.

OLD STONE CHURCH-PUBLIC SQUARE  
CLEVELAND, OHIO  
BE INFORMED

GROUP REPRESENTATIVES WELCOME

25TH OHIO STATE CONFERENCE  
AUGUST 7, 8, 9, 1981  
COLUMBUS, OHIO  
UNIVERSITY HILTON  
3110 OLENTANGY RIVER ROAD  
REGISTRATION 12:00-BANQUET \$12.00  
OHIO STATE GENERAL SERVICES  
CONFERENCE P.O. BOX 2131  
COLUMBUS, OHIO 43216

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.

IN THE MAY 1981 ISSUE JOHN B. IS NOT THE  
PRESENT DELEGATE. JOAN A. AKRON, OHIO IS  
PRESENT DELEGATE.

## GARFIELD WEDNESDAY

For so long the Southeast area around St. Alexis Hospital was in dire need of an A.A. meeting, with lighted T.V. monitored parking garage. The hospital has encouraged and assisted the Garfield Wednesday A.A. group in fulfilling that need.

Garfield Wednesday A.A. group, Guild Hall, 5115 Fowler Avenue, directly across from Parking garage. Thank you.

## OBITUARY

**PHIL BURKART**, 40 year member of the fellowship passed away June 5, 1981. Phil was a member of Independence & Seven Hills men discussion, also co-founder of other groups. Our deepest sympathy to the family.

**DR. HERMAN SPIVACK**, our condolence to the family.

**(BIG) JOSEPHINE OBERSTAR**, 36 year member of our fellowship. Passed away June 11, 1981. Our sincere sympathy to the family.

**CURTIS ROWE**, of Garden Valley Group passed away June 4, 1981. Our sympathy to the family.

**MARY GOVE DOERING**, 27 years of active sobriety, passed away May 30, 1981. We will miss her. Our condolence to the family.

**IRENE WALTERS**, 38 year member of Lakewood Cross Roads Group. Our deepest sympathy to the family.

## I'D BE DRUNK IF I WORKED FOR THE ANSWERING SERVICE

After a conversation with our AA answering service Saturday, I'm glad I don't work for them. I'd be drunk in a week.

After I was given a number across town, I brought it to her attention that it was quite a distance away from me. Her response was "I know, but I have called 12 other people already" It was good for me to have accepted the call, but that poor lady had no way to release her frustration. I imagine how she must feel having someone waiting for help and no one to pass it on to. Not knowing alcoholics as we do, there must be quite an excitement that sets into her as she answers the phone to an upset, perhaps drunk, irrational person. Surely she feels a pressure of responsibility to get that person some help. It's not only her job but perhaps she feels a human, moral obligation as well.

She also told me she was only to call women for women and men for men. I'm glad the fire department doesn't work like that. She certainly might feel she's working with one hand tied behind her back. Where does it say in the Big Book men carry the message to men and women to women? It tells us to carry the message to other alcoholics. Surely sponsorship works best on gender to gender basis, but to talk on the phone? We can always call a friend of the same sex or spouse to make a house call or go see that person.

It concerns me as to what she (the answering gal) would say to her neighbor about the AA fellowship. Would she say don't call them - they're too busy or they are never home when you need them. Or maybe she would say they don't seem too eager to help anyone or perhaps something like "There's only a few who care enough to give the very best".

Area News Toledo, Group

### GRATITUDE

My feelings of gratitude are very hard to express. I have talked to many others who have the same problem. I feel that the words I use are very inadequate.

AA has been the saving of my life and my family. If I had continued the way I was, I am pretty sure I would be dead by now, or maybe worse. The love that I have received from the many friends I have now is beautiful.

I feel that no matter how much I am able to do, will never ever be enough to repay all I have received. Being able to pray every morning for whatever God's will is for me has enabled me to accept, with almost a feeling of joy, my illness.

I talk to others now. They help me and I hope, with Gods help, I am able to be a support to them when they need it. I have only one fear now and that is that I may pick up that first drink. I have been told, and sincerely believe, that as long as I stay close to God and AA this won't happen.

I thank God every day for AA and all the people that make up this great organization. I don't ever want to forget where I came from. I hope God gives me the ability and the words to help the suffering alcoholic whenever I can. Thank you and I love you.

Jackie R.

"You lying no-good bum. You deceived me. Before we were married, you said you were well off."

"I was, but I didn't know it."

### SOMETHING WE CANNOT SEE

There is nothing wrong with being in doubt, if it is an honest doubt. The fellow who says he doesn't know what keeps him sober is a million times better off than the fellow who thinks he is solely responsible for his sobriety. The man in doubt will seek an honest answer - the truth. No one who honestly and sincerely seeks the truth, will fail to find it. That's A.A.

The Missing Link  
via The Twelfth Step

— Be a Bulletin Booster —

### ANOTHER POINT OF VIEW

In last months Bulletin, there was quite a list of reasons as to why or why not some could or could not be an AA member. This is of course a reprint of an article originally published in 1968 or 1958, (I forget which) and reaffirmed in 1972, by AA World Services. I'll tell you one thing, you can sure as heck tell that Bill Wilson didn't write it. For you see whenever Bill addressed himself to a matter of individual group decision-making he always included the advice that each group was free to do as it saw best, since they were in fact (not just theory) autonomous. Does anyone really think that having some pothead or pill freak sitting across the hall from them will close down AA as a Whole? I tend to doubt it, you should see some of my friends who are so-called "pure" alcoholics., If we can survive them, we can survive anything. Tradition Three clearly states membership requirement and I'd certainly recommend the reading of Tradition Five whenever we start talking about "genuine alcoholic history".

More importantly, we have to begin looking at the facts of life in our society. I'm not going to bore you with the current hospital findings . . . you should know that more than half those coming into treatment have drug problems. Some with heavy alcohol usage, some with light. Everybody drank too much. Its just a question of which problem is the greatest. The central fact in our situation, however is simply this . . . Its already being done and being done successfully. I would venture to guess that few of us do not know of some one, two or more who brought a drug problem to our meetings, shared in the love and caring that takes place within our program, faltered through the steps, sought a relationship with god . . . as they understand him . . . and then got sober, (yes, thats the right word.) What the heck should we do? Develop some past-posted sort of lie detector test or maybe ask them to bring in a several year old blood sample for lab tests or make them swear on a bible that they were indeed drunk enough . . . Would witnesses help? Would you have let me in? how about you . . . would you have gotten in? Who among us is going to research the "genuine alcoholic history". Who is going to cast the first sober pill-popper out to die? Or do we just condemn the newly arrived, suffering individual. AND lets not kid ourselves, they die.

To those of you who don't want these "un-qualified" fine . . . send them on out of your group, but be kind enough to send them to those of us in AA who differ in our ability to determine just who god will allow to survive . . . we'll take them. We have no choice. To AA World Services, with respect, I offer a quote from the works of the Mahatma, Gandhi, "There go my people, I must hurry and catch up with them, for I am their leader".

Terry W.  
Bay West Discussion

Coybow: Hey, you dummy, you're putting the saddle on backwards!"

Dude: "Yeah, you think you're so smart. "You don't know which way I'm going to go."

**AA CENTRAL BULLETIN**  
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# IS A.A. GOING TO LAST?

by Dr. E.M. Jellinek

In 1939 I was engaged in a critical review of the alcoholism literature. Among readings were some true gems and an overwhelming number of papers ranging from mediocre to frankly crank productions.

One day that year, I found on my desk a book with a yellow and red dust cover. Its title was "Alcoholics Anonymous."

With a sigh I picked it up and said to myself: "Some more crank stuff." But I had hardly read a few pages when I realized I had one of the precious gems before me.

A few months later, I met Bill W. and soon after that, I met Alcoholics Anonymous in person. Since then I have achieved a fair attendance record in the meetings of the fellowship. I became addicted to Alcoholics Anonymous. At a conference of ministers where I was giving a talk, the chairman said of me, "Half of his friends are ministers and the other half are alcoholics."

In the course of the years, I have been asked many questions by my A.A. friends and I have tried to answer them to the best of my ability, and the "best" was often not particularly good.

One of the frequently recurring questions was and remain: "Is A.A. going to last, or is it going to vanish as the Washingtonian Movement did?"

The answer to this question is that the example of the Washingtonians has nothing to do with the prognostication of the life span of A.A. The former had little more to offer than a pair of pants, sometimes a bed to sleep in, a few dollars, perhaps a job and a little encouragement. It did not provide the fundamentals of a new life for the individual with a drinking problem. Alcoholics Anonymous, on the other hand has evolved a philosophy of life full of valid motivations, rich in highly relevant principles and ethical values - a philosophy of life which can be extended beyond the confines of the alcoholic population. This feature of A.A. suffices as a basis for a long - a very long - survival. If there is a danger in the present and the future, the peril comes from another aspect. As the alcoholic goes through the painful process of achieving humility, he unloads of pride and grandiosity could accumulate on the shoulders of this splendid Fellowship, and it could lead to feelings of omniscience and omnipotence.

May God grant you the wisdom to steer your ship clear of these dangerous cliffs.

1960 Reprinted with permission of the Grapevine in the Winner's Circle  
\* \* \* \* \*

\* \* \* \* \*

REMEMBER - "NOTHING IS SO BAD A DRINK WON'T MAKE IT WORSE!"

# MIRROR! MIRROR!

As I looked in the mirror the other day, I thought "It's quite a change from the way it used to be."

This may sound a little conceited, but I saw a person who used to have such blood-shot eyes that my boss threatened to put a tourniquet on my neck. I used to see a complexion that was so ruddy I had to lie and say I was out in the sun the day before, even though it had been a very cloudy day.

I saw a person who used to see the hands shake so badly I could hardly shave in the morning. I used to look at that person and swear I would never do that again, only to find out that at the first opportunity I was too weak to resist. I would **practive** to see if I could tell my phoney story of things that happened, or I thought happened, so I could get off the hook for things I had done, or failed to do, because I had been drunk the night before. The picture was of a person who just didn't know how to live.

The other day I saw an unbelievable transformation. I saw a person who had learned the Serenity Prayer - "to accept the things I cannot change." You see, I have only so much to work with in the "looks" department, but I saw clearer eyes, a complexion that was tanned from the SUN, a person who was not trying to run other people's lives, and a person, who, I believe, was less phony. I saw a person who was not trying to cover past mistakes and I sensed a degree of serenity that I had never known in the past. I saw a person who was living day by day, not having to make a bunch of excuses. I saw a complete transformation, even a change in physical countenance which, I believe, reflects an inner peace. I saw a person who now has friends who are truly concerned about me for what, or who, I am, and seem to need me.

I have found a power greater than that which was reflected back from that mirror - God, and the AA program.

I think it is good for me to tell how it was, how it is now, and what the program has done for me. It may help someone who still suffers from this common malady.

Ken G.  
Silver Dollar

## 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.



## WHEN IS 'BREAKING MY ANONYMITY' NOT AN ANONYMITY BREAK?

When you tell your story to a sick newcomer who has asked for A.A. help, is that an "anonymity break"? When you stand before A.A. Groups and say, "My name is Joe and I am an alcoholic," is that an anonymity break? Generally no.

Most of us feel, though, that getting your name, picture, and A.A. story printed for personal profit or fame is a violation of our 11th Tradition.

But there are many difficult borderline cases. For example: "Our Group mails out a bulletin showing the complete names of all incoming speakers, and the names and telephone numbers of our officers. This is only for use by A.A.'s of course. Is this OK?"-Brooklyn.

"Don't you think it's time for A.A. to drop anonymity? It was necessary in the early days, but not now. I don't care who knows I'm sober."-Texas.

Each one is different. At G.S.O. we make no judgments on "wrong" or "right" in such matters. Nevertheless, experience, checked each year with your Delegates, suggests some guidelines. With the headline "When is "breaking my anonymity" NOT an anonymity break?" they are:

**1. The word "anonymous" in our name is a promise of Anonymity.**

Most of us do not want to cater to the cruel stigma unjustly attached by ignorant people to the disease of alcoholism. But we have to face the fact that the stigma exists, and that people suffer from it.

Therefore to those who have trouble with their drinking, who feel ashamed and guilty about it, who are afraid people will find out, we say "Come on in. We understand, because we have been there. We'll try to help, and we promise you the private refuge of anonymity."

**2. We demonstrate that promise by keeping strict anonymity for ourselves and everyone else in A.A. at the public level.**

For the press, radio, TV, films, or meetings open to the nonalcoholic public, we never reveal last names or any other indentifying facts about any A.A. member.

We do not put "A.A." on envelopes sent through the mails. In material to be posted on A.A. bulletin boards, and printed A.A. programs which the general public might see, we omit last names and identifying titles of all members. Television shows and news photographs do not show A.A. members' faces. In news stories, we are identified by first name and last initial only.

**3. We don't think it's a good idea to drum up business for A.A. with testimonials from celebrities.**

Occasionally someone asks, "Don't big spectacular anonymity breaks help 'carry the message,' and encourage people to come into A.A.?"

They probably do. But they also keep people out. Some stay out for fear their anonymity will be broken, too. Others hear the anonymity-breaker's story, then say, "I'm not that bad." Others may not like the sober life or brand of A.A. exhibited by the anonymity-breaker. And, of course, if the anonymity-breaker later gets drunk, how does it make A.A. look?

**4. Within A.A. itself we quit being ashamed of our illness, and freely exchange our full names.**

We keep address books of A.A. names and telephone numbers, and we publish a confidential A.A. World Directory- *all so we can keep in touch with, and help, each other.*

**5. In personal, private, face-to-face relationships with nonalcoholics we are not ashamed to say we are recovered, or recovering, alcoholics. Besides, this often helps carry the message to others.**

This in no way violates our Tradition about *public* anonymity. When you tell the facts about yourself, privately, it's not an anonymity break.

Besides, passing on our experience, strength and hope to other alcoholics is too important to let **any** fear of discovery or stigma stand in our way. If Bill and Dr. Bob had said "People wouldn't understand," and hadn't passed the message on, where would we all be?

**6. We do NOT hide our alcoholism in guilty secrecy out of fear and shame. That would actually strengthen even further the cruel stigma that unfortunately surrounds the victims of our illness.**

We remain anonymous in public for two reasons: (1) our promise of privacy to the still-suffering alcoholic and his family, and (2) a spiritual reason, summed up in Tradition 12, or in the world *humility*.

**7. With anonymity, we renounce personal prestige for our A.A. recovery and work, and place the emphasis on our principles-the Power that really heals us-not on our personal selves.**

That's why Dr. Bob, discouraging plans for a massive A.A. memorial mausoleum, said, "I want to just get buried like anybody else." That's why Bill turned down the dream of his life, an LL.D degree from one of the worlds mightiest, proudest universities. Those two men set the example for all of us.

For the good of A.A. as a whole, then, and for every alcoholic in it (or on his way to it), don't you think we need to keep thinking deeply and spiritually about anonymity for a long time to come?

Far more people in A.A. *keep* their anonymity than break it. hundreds of thousands, both famous and obscure, work actively, unashamedly-and privately-in A.A.

I hope you join me in the Amen Corner, by George

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.

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Harry D., Founder and Editor 1892-1968

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VOL. 39 JULY 1981 No. 10

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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.

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CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
AUGUST 4th, 1981 - 8:00 P.M.  
OLD STONE CHURCH-PUBLIC SQUARE  
CLEVELAND, OHIO  
BE INFORMED  
GROUP REPRESENTATIVES WELCOME

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25TH OHIO STATE CONFERENCE  
AUGUST 7, 8, 9, 1981  
COLUMBUS, OHIO  
UNIVERSITY HILTON  
3110 OLENTANGY RIVER ROAD  
REGISTRATION 12:00-BANQUET \$12.00  
OHIO STATE GENERAL SERVICES  
CONFERENCE P.O. BOX 2131  
COLUMBUS, OHIO 43216

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NEW GROUP  
THURSDAY CLOSED MEN'S GROUP  
7105 LORAIN AVE.  
CLEVELAND, OHIO  
FIRST MEETING AUGUST 6, 1981  
8:00 P.M.

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2nd Anniversary  
CUYAHOGA HILLS GROUP  
Cuyahoga Hills Boys School  
(Ohio Youth Commission)  
4321 Green Road  
Warrensville Township

September 3, 1981 8:00 p.m.  
Bring Covered Dish

Please call Dave G. (226-5551) for information

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EVERY PROBLEM FACED CANNOT  
BE SOLVED BUT NO PROBLEM CAN  
BE SOLVED UNTIL IT'S FACED.

## IN MEMORIAM

TO THE FAMILY AND FRIENDS OF THOSE LISTED  
WE EXTEND OUR HEARTFELT AND SINCERE SYM-  
PATHY WITH THE EARNEST PRAYER THAT THEIR  
BEREAVEMENT MAY BE TEMPTED BY REFLECTIVE  
THOUGHTS UPON HAPPINESS SHARED:

HARRY "CHINK" E FROS, A LONG TIME ACTIVE  
MEMBER OF THE FELLOWSHIP. FORMER  
SECRETARY OF THE MISTLETOE GROUP.

GEO. THOMAS, A ACTIVE MEMBER OF OUR  
FELLOWSHIP AT FRESH START #1 and #2 WAS KILL-  
ED JUNE 20, 1981

## FIVE MEN-FIVE MISTAKES

The news headline was interesting. It said, Five Men  
Make Five Mistakes! One man struck a match to see if  
the gasoline tank in his car was really empty. IT  
WASN'T!

One man patted a strange bulldog on the head to see  
if he was affectionate. HE WASN'T!

One many speeded up to see if he could beat the train  
to the crossing. HE COULDN'T!

One man touched an electric wire to see if it was  
charged. IT WAS!

One man took a drink, after a long period of sobriety  
to see if he could control it again and do it his way in-  
stead of the AA Way. HE COULDN'T!

The feeling of again being able to "handle'it" is bound  
to come in our AA life - if we let it. I recall this thought  
crossing my mind a few times in the very early years of  
my sobriety. The more meetings I went to, the more  
times I had a chance to hear that it just doesn't work!  
Many others tried it for me.

We can also get the feeling, after a while, that we  
have "done our bit." We have attended meetings, done  
all kinds of Twelfth Step work, served on committees,  
attended monthly general meetings. We begin to feel  
we're safe now so we start watching TV, staying home  
and taking it easier. Let's let the younger members  
"carry the ball." It will be good for them, we kid  
ourselves into thinking.

We have seen this situation happen time and time  
again. The forgetful one has completely forgotten the  
nature of his illness. He has forgotten that he has a ter-  
minal illness and before long the struggle starts all over  
again. The grip of alcohol become stronger than ever  
before — and if we don't know, we've heard how tough  
it is to make a second or third come-back.

What we should remember is what really counts  
about attending meetings. That is just being present and  
bringing our own best spirit and attitude with us. Our  
dislikes really don't count as they are born out of  
selfishness, no doubt. We should keep in mind Tradi-  
tion One "Our common welfare should come first:  
Personal recovery depends upon AA unity." Unity can  
come about only if we put our insignificant self right in-  
to the service of our group, for without the group, we  
may not live. Complacency is out and activity is IN!

Bud G.

Silver Dollar

ALWAYS . CAREFUL . TO . INVESTIGATE . OTHERS . NEEDS



### LAST AT THE CROSS, FIRST AT THE TOMB\*

It began simply. She stayed in the background, afraid and still feeling sort of left out. Any why not: as she and the others like her did the routine kitchen tasks; he was, maybe this time, learning to get sober • stay sober. Through this new "spiritual experience". Not the familiar prayer programs of the past though, no minister, no priest to give the pledge. Though they had tried, often enough, Lord knows. Failed too. Each and all of them. He wouldn't stop. . .or maybe couldn't.

Now hopes were rising again, a week, a month, some almost a year without drinking. To be honest, more than half were out drinking again. A few in that front room had been in and out half-a-dozen times but, something brought them back. Certainly not the fear if God. That had been washed out of them by the whiskey long ago. At least it was more than the hang-over anguish. . .solved with a drink.

Two were running things: Bill, from New York City. brash, certain, even preachy when on the "sell" and Dr. Bob, bedrock firm, as quiet as Bill was loud, a believer. They started this, whatever it was and ran it too. They made up the rules as they went along, with a reason and a half for every drinking excuse imaginable. It seemed easy for them, not the getting sober part — the helping part, probably because they had been there too. They had no shame about them either. The stories they shared were as bad or worse than anything she'd lived through with her husband these past years. Thats what was making this different. He was feeling as part of something. They, all of them, understood the fear and the self loathing and the need to drink (or at least claimed to). Since she admittedly did not understand it, any of it, she could only hope, pray . . .and make some coffee.

Something began to take shape out in the kitchen though. While the men debated God's finger and human tenacity • decided to leave the founding spiritual group's wing • argued over what were to become steps and submission, the women ran out of small talk. At first they had talked of children, clothes, cooking, and the like, but after so many nights together it became impossible not to put aside the training of a lifetime and share the burden. Not in a complaining fashion, although that happened from time-to-time. More often in such a way as to help someone new. . .whose husband was getting the same treatment out front. It worked too; and in the working a greater understanding came about. By helping this new one come to grips with her own inability to pray away or nag away the drink from the drunk, the older ones reinforced the certainty that there could be an answer to her own fears. . . known and unknown. And then, the ultimate evidence. One lady in the group did what none had done before. She came alone.

SHE CAME ALONE. . .he was drunk someplace. . . again. After all had seemed so sure that he would not

be. A complete return to the tricks of the past, The job was gone, the new-found respect so eagerly granted by friends and family-gone in the tip of a glass. Perhaps for good. But she came that night anyway. She wanted this for herself. . .not for him. She longed for his sobriety of course, and would never quit doing so. Something else was needed though, she could not go back to just waiting. Her friends in the kitchen understood and helped.

We don't know know her name of course. What happened that night seemed so natural that no one took note of it. Too, it happened again, soon, and often. The strength shared from these experiences quickly spread throughout all of them, shoring up the hope and faith already so vividly afloat.

Alanon was born-that one night, when one woman came to believe. . .

Terry W.

Bay West Discussion

\*From the title of a poem by Mary Baker Eddy

### ABOUT SELF-PITY

Pity is a feeling for the suffering of others. Self-pity is a gross misuse of this worthy feeling. It is an extreme form of self-centeredness which retards our spiritual growth.

There are many reasons for self-pity and they are all bad. Those who are daily addicts to this insidious poison lead unhappy lives and stand little chance for success in A.A. or elsewhere. To be filled with commiseration, compassion and sympathy for ourselves is an inferior feeling born of emotional instability. It stifles A.A. growth. Self-pity is the brother of resentment. It is childish rebellion against God, people and circumstances.

Appreciation and gratitude are the antidotes for its poison!

The Twelfth Step

Remember the turtle • He never makes any progress till he sticks his neck out.

#### ARE YOU PLANNING TO MOVE?

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It will help you end it will help us.



## TO ALL SECRETARIES

For the next several months, your group will be receiving the Central *Bulletin* free of course, with a few subscription blanks.

We hope that you will announce to your group that the Central Bulletin is need of subscription as well as articles.

The *Bulletin* is the oldest publication in A.A. has been helpful to thousands of men and women over the years, in maintaining their sobriety.

The articles for the bulletin, gives us the chance to share our strength, and hope and experience with each other.

## DRY DRUNK

There is only one thing that I know of that's worse than a wet drunk and that's a dry drunk.

No matter how long you have been sober, they will lip in on you. When I had a wet drunk, I was happy for a short period of time and patted everything that was patable, but with a dry drunk I get moody, irritable, interested in nothing patable or otherwise.

There are hundreds of so-called explanations for a dry drunk. A wet drunk, we know is the chemical reaction to alcohol, but a dry drunk is yourself and there are signs of its approach. Those signs you must dig out for yourself and take action the same as you did when the temptation of a drink came.

If you are on the right track of sobriety by going to your regular AA meeting, you will have an easier time weeding out the cause. My signs are a dark gloomy day and I start to scratching myself in places too many to mention. Then I'm not happy and can find fault with everything whether it moves or not. Those used to be the signs, when I was drinking, that I thought could be kicked out by old man alcohol, but thank God and A.A., I know better now.

Then what do I do about this miserable life I'm living. The answer is - you have to do something about it or you will get drunk and add misery to misery.

In A.A. we all know we have the Twelve Steps. I can always find the cause of my dry drunks in one of the Steps and I start working on it and for over thirty years now, it has put me back to a happy human being.

No matter how bad your dry drunk is, a way down eep you want to laugh. Work it to the surface - no matter how much pain it may give you. I never forget that saying, "Cry and you cry alone. Laugh and the whole world laughs with you.

## WILL AA SURVIVE?

During the most recent Pacific Regional Forum in Phoenix, Arizona, Dr. Milton Maxwell, chairman of the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous, shared the following comments in his closing remarks: . . . "I believe the reason why AA has become such a universal program is that it comes to grips with the universal experience of self-centeredness. The AA way means a change in the way we think of ourselves, a growing self-acceptance, self-esteem. A means of change in how we relate to other people. We find ourselves in helping other people. And the AA way helps us to change the way we relate to life and to a power greater than ourselves.

"In AA we also learn to accept differences. To be sure, there is a tendency of some AA members to go to the "letter" of the Traditions, rather than the spirit - to become narrow and rigid - to insist that AA must run in their particular way. AA is made up of many different kinds of people. There are many pathways by which people grow and learn to practice the program, many ways of running our groups. I believe it is important to the future of AA that we respect these differences and that this respect continues to exist. Such freedom, I believe, is a basic ingredient of the AA Way of Life."

Dr. Maxwell shared that he once wondered, as some people still do, "Will AA really survive?" This no longer concerns him, however, and he told us why that was so:

"We live in a larger society characterized by competitive striving for status, for recognition, for power, for material things. And AA has a recovery program which is really based upon the opposite values - the values of growing in the direction of a non-self-centered way of life. Basically, that is what we mean by "spiritual values." AA also has a collective life - its Traditions, its structure - which is remarkable in harmony with the un-self-centered way of life. Our Traditions and structure support the basic recovery program. There is no confusion of ends and means. There is a singleness of purpose. There is an internal harmony - of programs, of principles and practices which stand in striking contrast of the operations of most organizations and agencies in our society.

"No human organization lasts forever. We know that. Nevertheless, it does appear to me that AA, with its Traditions, its structure and the nature of its recovery program, has tremendous assets for facing the future. These three Legacies are very, very, important. They are unique. They are the best assurance we have for our future."



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Harry D., Founder and Editor 1892-1968

VOL. 39 AUGUST 1981 NO. 11

THE CLEVELAND DISTRICT OFFICE WILL  
RE-OPEN ON SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 1981  
9 A.M. to 1 P.M.

2nd Anniversary

### CUYAHOGA HILLS GROUP

Cuyahoga Hills Boys School  
(Ohio-Youth Commission)

4321 Green Road

Warrensville Township

September 3, 1981 8:00 p.m.

Bring Covered Dish

Please call Dave G. (226-5551) for information

CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 1, 1981 - 8:00 P.M.  
OLD STONE CHURCH-PUBLIC SQUARE  
CLEVELAND, OHIO  
BE INFORMED  
GROUP REPRESENTATIVES WELCOME

AREA WIDE MEETING  
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 1981  
200 p.m.  
ST. MALACHI SCHOOL HALL  
2401 WASHINGTON STREET  
SPEAKERS: CHARLES & MARY K.  
A.A. & AL-ANON  
COFFEE — GOOD FELLOWSHIP

REGIONAL FORUM  
Sept. 25, 26th & 27th, 1981  
RAMADA INN, AKRON, OHIO

### THE WORD IS DIFFERENCE. . .

Good relations with others are not possible unless we learn to accept differences. We are all different in gathering knowledge about life, we walk different paths. We are never successful in attempting to squeeze others into our own mold. When our mind contains enough air and space and light to let others be themselves and to recognize the individual differences, the result is not separation but greater closeness.

To whom it may concern:

I was at a meeting Sunday morning and the acting chairperson (who is still qualifying) stated, "I am a recovering alcoholic"!

Lets face it, there are an enormous amount of young people that are coming into the fellowship today, and the people are not being honest with themselves.

This past Saturday night I was at a meeting and again the chairman stood up and said he was a "recovering alcoholic." He has two months in the fellowship.

To me, this is not right at all. I have eight months in the fellowship and I feel that a person is no where near recovering process until after at least their first year.

What I am trying to get across to you, is that Alcoholics Anonymous is on a route of being watered down! You just do not know who can be trusted or who is being honest with you anymore.

I wish there were *someway* that your committee could vote on a time limit in reference to being "recovering." This way it would keep the phonies mouths shut!

I am 25 years old, what is the fellowship going to be like when I am 55. From my stand point, polluted! Thank you, Have a nice day, and God bless you.

S.E. area member.

### MY FAVORITE (TRUE) STORY

from "Inland Empire Newsletter", Colton, CA

As far as your drinking is concerned, you either are and alcoholic or you are not. If you're not an alcoholic, you don't have anything to worry about, but if you are an alcoholic then you have two things to worry about. You will have to do something about your drinking or you will do nothing about it. If you do something about your drinking, like joining AA and getting active, then you don't have anything to worry about. If you don't do anything about your drinking, then you have two things to worry about, you will either go insane or you will die. If you go insane then you won't have anything to worry about, but if you die, then you will have two things to worry about, you will either go to heaven or you will go to hell. If you go to heaven, then you won't have anything to worry about, but if you go to hell, then you have one big thing to worry about and that is where in hell you get another drink.

Anonymous

*God help me to remember that nothing is going to happen to me today that you and I together can't handle.*

FREEDOM IS THE RIGHT TO BE  
WRONG NOT THE RIGHT TO DO  
WRONG



## RESPECT

One of the most difficult and elusive things to regain once a person has lost it, is respect of people whose respect he once spurned.

People on the whole are inclined to be tolerant, and it is upon that very tolerance that we gambled during our alcoholic careers.

Our ability to make new friends easily made us unaware of the fact that our treachery to society's formulae of behavior" would eventually catch up with us and we would have to pay the horrible price of being ignored and snubbed, gossiped about and being ostracized.

At first we laughed it off and gradually resentment and bitterness caused us to increase our consumption of alcohol to escape the conviction in the innermost recesses of our mind and conscience that we were really at fault and that we should correct our ways.

When we finally came to realize that our way was the wrong way we shuddered at the wreckage we had left in the wake of our folly. How could we ever regain that which we had lost? Our loved ones — our cherished friends whose tolerance we had stretched to the breaking point — could we ever, ever reestablish their faith in our promises to mend our ways and become stable factors in society, instead of liabilities?

We had to find a way, and through AA we found it. And in finding it we realized that when we started developing our own self-respect we gradually were earning the respect of others, possibly not as rapidly as we wished it — but it came gradually. Sometimes it came reluctantly, as if the memory of past abuses of that confidence and respect which we ordinarily could and did demand was to poignant to forgive and forget.

And in the strengthening of our purpose to lick our alcoholic problem by observing the "mechanics" of AA, we suddenly realized that what we craved most throughout our career was to be liked and respected by our fellow men.

We finally realized that in order to receive the respect of others we had to act decently, conform to moral and social laws and to learn to contribute something of ourselves to society. This was contrary to our egocentric minds, but what we learned through bitter experience was that we had to train our thoughts until they became normal and natural.

We have learned our lesson. Now we can properly appreciate how delicate social acceptance is. We want the respect of others more than anything else in the world. For with it comes peace of mind, contentment and happiness.

But to secure this respect we must first gain our own self-respect. We can gain that only by religiously following the Daily Plan as laid out by AA.

With Gods help, we can succeed.

Editor Note: This article appeared in September 1944 Central Bulletin and was authored by our late Founder and Editor who passed away August 21, 1968.

## THERE ARE NO MUSTS?

April's issue of "Footsteps" suggested that we could get active in the program by taking time to put down our experience, strength and hope in an effort to share with the Cincinnati Fellowship.

I was reminded of the statement I have heard over and over again during my years in the program, "There are no musts in A.A." I guess that in my early sobriety, I needed to believe that for the simple reason, my mind was fogged so many years I could not accept discipline without reservation and rationalization. I stayed sober, because I went to meetings and I didn't drink. I had no idea these were a *must*, for me.

My mind began to clear and I was able to retain some of what I read. At the urging of my sponsor, I began to study the Big Book. I could see, through sober eyes, statements like, "we had to," "we could not," and "must." I questioned my sponsor, and she told me to that I was at a turning point in my sobriety.

She asked me to try to become willing to look at the possibility that maybe there were some things I *must* do. She asked me to pray for an open mind and willingness. She *suggested* that it was my confused thinking, my ability to rationalize and compromise that enabled my drinking. And, she added, if that were true, it would be necessary for me to experience a complete change in my thinking. She suggested that I could do that through the application of the 12 Steps. I began to see, then, there maybe some *musts* in my A.A. program.

I'm grateful today for her "suggestions" The Big Book says, "Here are the steps we took." (past tense.) The results, therefore are not based on theory, but actual and sustained action, which demands rigorous self-honesty, willingness and effort on my part.

My sponsor, bless her heart, slipped me my musts in small bites that I could swallow. I came, I came to and I came to believe that if I were willing to settle for less than happy sobriety and a well ordered life, then I can truly say there are no musts. . .and the -only one who can decide that is me.

Thanks Footsteps for the opportunity to share a *must* of my program, "I must give it away or I can't keep it."

### 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.



## THE TWO A'S

To us in the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous, the two letters "A.A.," have become the most important two letters in the alphabet. They have come to mean the difference between living a normal, complete, relatively happy life or dying a slow, miserable agonizing death.

Webster defines ACCEPTANCE as the act of taking a or receiving; a belief in something. He defines ACTION as the doing of something; the developing of events.

I'd like to try to equate these two letters. "A.A.," with the two words, "ACTION" and "ACCEPTANCE." I'll put ACCEPTANCE first, not because I feel it is the most important but because I believe that without ACCEPTANCE it would be difficult to take ACTION.

Acceptance means accepting the fact, without any reservation, that we are powerless over alcohol. It means accepting the fact that without A.A. our lives will be unmanageable. Acceptance means being willing for the rest of our lives, though only one day at a time, to do everything we can to maintain sobriety, to attend meetings, and to help the alcoholic who still suffers.

Acceptance means that whatever fate we think awaits us, however dismal the day may seem, we know that a drink of alcohol is poison to us; and for us to live a normal life we must stay away from that first drink.

Acceptance means being willing to turn our lives over to a Power greater than ourselves, believing that His will for us is the best for us.

Acceptance means trying to work the twelve suggested steps to the best of our ability. . . through these steps we learn to rebuild our lives to fit sobriety, using the steps as a guideline for the understanding and faith necessary to work this program.

Acceptance means trying to identify with the new man or woman entering A.A. It means trying to let the new person know we do understand, we can be their friend and are willing to help if they want help.

Acceptance is the realization that for us there is only one way to live a total, happy, serene life and that this is through the teachings and philosophies that the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous can offer the alcoholic

Now, after we have accepted these things, what is the next thing we must try to do? ACTION. ACTION is the doing of something. . . the manner or method of performing.

Action, to me, is the key to the answer why some of us find sobriety and peace of mind and why some of us never attain any reasonable amount of sobriety.

Action means going to meetings. Regular attendance at AA meetings can never be stressed too much. It has

been said over and over that those who attend meetings regularly stay sober, and that those who don't get drunk.

Action means reaching for a hoe after we have prayed for a harvest. It means being willing to do and doing whatever is necessary to protect this gift of sobriety which we receive every twenty-four hours.

Action means that after we have accepted the fact that we are powerless over alcohol and that our lives are unmanageable, we become willing to try and work the twelve suggested steps of our program.

Action means asking God, as we understand Him, to help us each and every day and to thank Him each and every night.

Action is remembering to be forever grateful for our sobriety. One of the many ways to show our gratitude for this gift of sobriety is to be ever willing to give it to the suffering alcoholic who wants it.

Let us not forget the two A's. . . **Acceptance—Action. . . Alcoholics Anonymous**, the world-wide fellowship that has saved the lives, hopes, and dreams of many, many people throughout the world.

*The above talk given by the Chicago delegate, Bill to the General Service Conference in New York, April 1969.*

## AVENUE OF ESCAPE

You know, we have just come to the conclusion that a fellow who takes that first drink (after having been in the program), does not take the drink because of an overwhelming obsession for a drink. The desire for a drink, just for the sake of a drink, has little or nothing to do with it. The fellow takes the drink because it is an avenue of escape from something. He knows darn well he doesn't need a drink, but he also knows that drink is going to enable him to let down the barriers to a course of action, he would like to **persue**. . . a course his better judgment forbids him while he is sober. Likewise, the drink will let him escape the accusing finger of his conscience if he has already pursued a course of action which he realizes he cannot honestly condone.

So, the guy gets drunk and bleats out a pitiful lament over an uncontrollable urge for the taste of bourbon. A pathetic excuse; a cover-up as transparent as milady's hose. What we should do is get to the root of the trouble. Eliminate that part of our thinking, or the offending course of action, which are the cause of our disturbances. All we have to do is be honest. All dishonest people end up as failures and dishonest people are always so pitifully transparent.

The Missing Link



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 September 1981 No. 12

CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
OCTOBER 6th, 1981 - 8:00 P.M.  
OLD STONE CHURCH-PUBLIC SQUARE  
CLEVELAND, OHIO

BE INFORMED  
GROUP REPRESENTATIVES WELCOME

G.S.R. THIRD LEGACY MEETING  
OCTOBER 18th, 1981-2:00 P.M.

AMERICAN LEGION HALL  
Routes 82 & 21  
Brecksville, Ohio

ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING  
Wednesday, October 21, 1981

8:00 p.m.  
Old Stone Church  
Memorial Hall  
Public Square  
Cleveland, Ohio

## GRATITUDE SUNDAY

NOVEMBER 15, 1981  
KAY S. ■ AKRON  
2:00 P.M.

ST. BEDE VENERABLE CHURCH  
9114 LAKESHORE BLVD. RT. 283  
MENTOR OHIO

## FRESH AIR FOR NON-SMOKERS AT NEW BEREA GROUP; STARTS OCT. 16

Today, there are more and more **A.A.s** who have quit smoking or who for health or other reasons prefer not to breathe smoky air at A.A. meetings.

For that reason, to **accomodate A.As** for whom tobacco smoke is a problem, a new, open, mixed **NO SMOKING A.A.** group is being started.

Meeting place will be the Berea Methodist Church at 170 Seminary Street; corner of Spring Street. There is ample parking on Seminary Street, on Spring and in the church parking lot which is directly across from the church. The group, tentatively named the "Fresh Air" Group, will meet on Friday evening at 8:00 PM.

The first meeting, Friday evening, October 16 will be partly an organization meeting. All non-smoking **A.As** are welcome to come and be co-founders. Please come and help "FRESH AIR" get started.

Bob L.,  
Berea

## THERE ARE NO LEADERS IN A.A. . . THAT'S WHY IT WORKS

Governments, all governments, from the smallest sparsely populated parish to the largest and strongest federal government, are monuments to humanity unable to trust itself.

The very premise of government is one of theoretical self and individual protection. Protection against what? Protection against other human beings; with the possible exception of certain remote savage tribes who are banded together through a mutual fear of wild animals. And in most cases, even then the primary fear is of each other. A community, however small, without laws, is lawless. And lawlessness ALWAYS implies ruthlessness.

Each member of A.A. should read the above over carefully and with considerable thought before going any further in this piece for A.A. is without law. It makes no attempt, outside of a few suggested principles, to run anyone's life. It has no clearly defined leadership such as is seen in other organizations and no format as to procedure. Yet, it functions as the most important thing in most of our lives, performing as a basis of life itself.

The thing I like about A.A. is that it is for human beings, as such. There are no poses to strike; there are no songs to be sung' there is no set facial expression required when referring to it. You can be saint or sinner. You can laugh or you can cry. All without hysteria, sacrifice or mysterious incantations. If you have any hair left after your fearful battle with alcohol, you can take it down at any meeting and no man will point his finger at you, for the disease of alcoholism takes us all in.

I know a person who drank too much because of his depressing poverty. I know a man who drank too much because his wealth gave him too much time on his hands. I know a man who drank too much because his job required too much from him. I know a man who drank too much because his business was making more money than he had ever seen before, I know a man who drank because his business was going to the dogs. Now you think one up. Better make it good, though, because so far as alcoholics are concerned, there is nothing new under the sun.

To my pet theory that governments are monuments of distrust, let me add this: A.A. is without "government" because its basis is TRUST. The day anyone suggests anything other than our present status of self rule, based on the importance of any given occasion, is the day A.A. will start to fail. "THE PROGRAM" is the group. The group is formed by mutual, understood trusts. The moment government, as such, starts to show itself, the necessity for protection against ourselves will arise. Trust will fall to the wayside and A.A. will fall apart.

Chit Chat

To Whom It May Concern:

RE: Letter from S.E. area member

The letter referred to above made my whole day. I loved the idea of a rule of time when you could say you're "recovering". We here in upstate New York are having a similar controversy. Here, we have people who are saying that they have recovered.

You know I've only got six years of sobriety but I believe one thing: what the Big Book tells me. It says that it was written by RECOVERED ALCOHOLICS and that "those who do not recover are people who cannot or will not completely give themselves to this simple program". The Book also says, "if you want what we have. . .", what I have may be recovery, recovering, or still sick. I can stand up at a meeting and say my name and that I am six foot four and have blond hair and blue eyes. I'm sure both the newcomer and the old timer can see that I'm only five foot seven with red hair and green eyes. I cannot base my program or anyone elses on what is said, but how one lives their lives. Take your time before judging who is what. Observe how they act, listen to what they say - if you want what they have (not what they say - it's easy to talk the talk, but hard to walk the walk), ask them how they got it and do what they did. Don't get hung up on words. When you're 55 the program may be polluted - but YOU don't have to be. May peace be with you.

One Black Stallion Court  
Middletown, N.Y.

WHO'S SHAKING NOW?

A man rushed excitedly into a bar and yelled, "A woman just fainted outside! Can I get a shot of brandy?"

Instantly, the bartender filled a glass and handed it to the man, saying, "It's on the house."

The stranger grabbed the glass, downed its contents and, handed it back to the bartender.

"Thanks," he sighed. "I always get shaky when I see **somebody faint.**"

— Be a Bulletin Booster —

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THE GROUP

Alcoholics in AA achieve and maintain their sobriety through the group-beginning with the 12th step call made on them by members of the group and continuing through group meetings. In such meetings we share our experience, and grow in understanding of the nature of our problem and of how to use the program to lead the kind of life we longed for in the days-or years-of our compulsive drinking.

The group, thus, is the core of Alcoholics Anonymous. It should be remembered, as the 5th Tradition puts it, that "each group has but one primary purpose: to help the alcoholic who still suffers."

This purpose cannot be overstressed, for it is a corollary and a reaffirmation of one of the wonders of AA-that we keep our sobriety by "giving it away"-by helping others to stay sober.

Experience bears out the practical wisdom of this Tradition; some groups have been formed, composed of members of a given profession, or persons with similarity of interests; these, and other groups, for other reasons, have tended to become ingrown and fail to seek or add new members. Often they run into trouble.

In keeping with the stated purpose of the group, ideally, everyone in the group will regard himself as sponsoring the newcomer-and gladly take on all the aspects of 12th step work that this implies: Seeing that the new member gets to the meeting. . .bearing with him through the first difficult weeks-or months-as the cobwebs clear from his brain and as he comes to view his problems through the eyes of AA. . .of trying to explain to the newcomer's wife or parents or other relatives the **nature** of alcoholism, and suggesting how they can help him to set out on the road to a happy, useful sobriety.

Until such time as the sponsor is suggested, or chosen by the newcomer, the group, by collectively acting as his sponsor, can help him immeasurably by providing a thorough grounding in the basics of AA. This help will take many forms-group meetings, kaffee klatsches, phone calls, making sure he reads the Big Book.

One apparently insignificant way to help the newcomer feel he belongs is to see that he or she participates actively in group affairs as quickly as possible (remember when just being able to pick up a coffee cup, or set it down without clatter, was a triumph?).

Even the person who has asked for help to get sober will sometimes misconstrue the proffers of help by members. It is assumed that group discussions will take care to point out the AA is not a leading agency, employment service, or marriage **counsellor.**

LIVE ONE DAY AT A TIME  
AND MAKE IT A MASTERPIECE

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

That was another rewarding experience recently, making a "Twelfth Step Call" on a patient at a local hospital. First, it was rewarding to know that an internist had recognized a possible booze problem in a patient and had enlisted the help of AA. This is the cooperation we must continue to cultivate with the people in the medical profession.

Secondly, it was rewarding to me, because it gave me a chance to think back about my own life, a while back, when I was in this man's position. So already it was a "successful" twelfth step call no matter what the outcome.

We didn't "sign our man up as an AA member" that day, but we did recognize that our visit got him thinking. We planted the seed! The patient said he had no idea why he was in the hospital. That sounded sort of familiar. He said that booze had never been a problem for him. He didn't mention that his business had just gone through bankruptcy. He did mention, though, that a couple of years ago he just plain quit drinking for a whole year. He said that it didn't even bother him during that time. The remark to him, "I wonder why we try to control something that isn't out of control?" also gave him something to think about.

On the way home, the question "why do they suffer so long?" came to my mind. Why, indeed! Why did I suffer so long? I'll never know the answer to that question, of course, but I do think about it once in a while. My need for booze got so desperately severe that I didn't dare quit. I couldn't quit or I'd have come apart. Or, so I truly thought!

The good news I learned was that I was wrong. I could quit and did quit. . .with the help of a lot of people. Then AA entered in to help me learn that there was a beautiful way to live without having to drink. I never, never, want to get back in that fix that I once was in!

That makes me think of a gal I talked to the other day. I asked how her brother, who had been in treatment earlier this year, was getting along. She said he was getting along fine. When I asked if he was involving himself in AA, I was told that he was making it just fine on his own. What a gambler that man is - and gambling with the only life he's got!

I honestly felt sorry for him, although I didn't tell her of my feelings. I know how easy it is to slip back to our old thoughts and way of living. I've seen those who, after a period of sobriety, slowly drift back to taking life for granted again. Soon it's forgotten what booze has done to their lives. Step by step they finally climb back up into the driver's seat. The next thing we hear is the big CRASH!

So, thank God, for these reminders I have again been given. They will help me to remember to try my best to continue to live the AA way- not my way!

Bud G.  
Silver Dollar

### SELF PITY

In daily living, even after years of being on the program, we so easily can fall victim to the devastating character defect of self-pity. How quickly this defect can get us back into justifying any negative action we may take.

Have you listened to anyone who has been sober a few years and then "fallen off?" You will get quite a run down on self-pity and all the reasons for it.

In working with others, it is one of the first defects one can spot when a person is getting off the beam. The sad part of this problem is that it is most difficult to recognize in one's own sober living, therefore it makes it so difficult to deal with.

I can recall, in my own case, how filled with self-pity I became, and how the little spiritual progress I had attained, disappered. It was not until I came back to AA and started to work the program that I was able to recognize and deal with this defect.

What still bothers me to this day is that if I don't continue to work the program, I can quickly lapse into a fit of self-pity. It should prove to me that I need to get back to basics.

The Twelve Steps avoid all mention of self-pity, which goes hand in hand with blaming others. The Steps tell us how to recover, "Make a searching and fearless inventory or ourselves," then, "being willing to have God remove all these defects of character." The steps outline a course of action that is time-proven, and if we follow that course, it will not fail. We have proof positive!

It seems really hard for me, at times, to turn this self-pity around to gratitude. When I was drinking, I was filled with self-pity as an everyday occurrence. I just didn't know how to cope with it soberly, so I drank. Drinking became my only solution. But now, even though I have the program for recovery, just for the asking, I still have some difficulty at times using these simple tools. I must realize that our program isn't there "just for the asking", but rather, "just for the using."

Ken G.  
Silver Dollar

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



## KEEP COMING BACK

I believe that interpersonal relationships present more problems for the alcoholic than anything else. For some reason difficulties with another person, especially someone close to us, effect us strongly. Conflicts with another person can result in such emotions as anger, hurt feelings, remorse and frustration.

One idea that has helped me, when I choose to apply it, is an extension of Step One. Step One reads, "We admitted we were powerless over alcohol, that our lives had become unmanageable." With a small substitution, this step can be applied to relationship with a loved one. When I admit that I am powerless over other people, I am less likely to let other people upset me.

I can express my feelings or my opinion to another person, but I am powerless over their reaction to what I say. I cannot force another person to share my point of view. Realizing my powerlessness helps me to avoid expending my energies in a useless activity. Pleading or arguing with someone to try to influence someone simply increases my frustration. While I reserve the right to express my feelings, I'm better off if I don't expect the person involved to respond the way I want them to.

I am better off if I don't have any expectations of others. If I express love to someone, that doesn't mean they are going to respond in kind. If I tell someone I don't like their behavior that doesn't mean they are going to change it for me. I am better off if I conduct myself according to the dictates of my own conscience and not for the response of others. Realizing I am powerless over another individual helps me to practice "Live and Let Live" and helps me to be more comfortable in general.

Pick-Me-Up Kansas

## WHAT CAN I GIVE TO A.A.?

I can attend meetings often. I can read the Big Book every day. I can take responsibility for the well-being of AA. I can do what is asked of me gladly. I can stay sober, one day at a time. And, although I give it all away, it will never leave me and I will be the chief beneficiary.

## WE ARE MISSING THE SILVER PLATTER

If anyone in our area got the program served to them on a silver platter please return the platter. There seem to be some others who want it served to them the same way. What, no platter, no program? Shame on us.

## ROTATION - A SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLE

The great majority of groups follow the principle of rotation, changing officers at regular intervals (usually every six months or so - except for the G.S.R., whose two-year terms is in gear with the rest of the service structure).

This practice strengthens group life, by calling on new people with new ideas. It also strengthens individual sobriety by keeping us closer to humility. Rotation means that problems with personalities don't have time to crop up, and that no one member swollen with power, or resentful at being imposed upon. Rotation brings the opportunity for all to participate in the joys and rewards of giving service.

But, officer rotation time can also usher in a period of confusion. It has been found that giving members jobs solely to help them stay sober does not work. Instead, the group's welfare is of primary concern in choosing officers. Few groups have rigid sobriety requirements but the majority have found that a reasonable period of continuous sobriety (from a few months to a year) is helpful, and most choose members who have demonstrated a willingness and an availability to serve.

What do we do when officers won't rotate? Power-drivers have been an AA institution from the beginning. Indeed, Bill W. often confessed that his own urge to control - and his being voted down - was a source of Traditions One and Two. So it is not surprising that some groups have officers who seek to control rather than to serve. It is important to remember that the Traditions do work. Tradition Two tell us: "Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern." Usually the matter can be solved when one or more responsible members take the "governors" aside for a quiet talk. AA's at a recent Regional Forum asked for a consensus on non-rotating leaders with the answer being a terse and to the point: "Vote them out".

(Excerpts from Box 4-5-9)

## TRADITIONS

How well do we know them? How often do we study them? They are quite important to our total program. It is disturbing at times to be at a meeting and realize that there are so many who really have no idea of the meaning of the traditions. We take the steps to sobriety. We use the traditions so that the steps will always be available to those who come after us. Why not plan a little study time for the traditions. Oddly enough, there a lot of answers to problems in them too.



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Harry D.. Founder and Editor 1892-1968

Vol. 40

October 1981

No. 1

CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
 NOVEMBER 3rd, 1981 - 8:00 P.M.  
 OLD STONE CHURCH - PUBLIC SQUARE  
 CLEVELAND, OHIO  
 BE INFORMED  
 GROUP REPRESENTATIVES WELCOME

### GRATITUDE SUNDAY

NOVEMBER 15, 1981  
 KAY S. • AKRON  
 2:00 P.M.

ST. BEDE VENERABLE CHURCH  
 9114 LAKESHORE BLVD. RT. 283  
 MENTOR OHIO

WEST SIDE MORNING GROUP  
 THANKSGIVING MORNING  
 November 26th, Ed A., Lorain, O.  
 11 A.M. --Cash Prizes-Coffee  
 Light Lunch-Parking at Funeral  
 Homes-Bollinger & Martens

AREA WIDE MEETING  
 SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6th, 1981  
 2:00 p.m.  
 ST. MALACHI SCHOOL HALL  
 2401 WASHINGTON STREET  
 Speaker: Dick P.

SOUTHWEST SUNDAY GROUP  
 18TH ANNIVERSARY  
 SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6th, 1981  
 BEREA HIGH SCHOOL - CAFETERIA  
 CORNER OF BAGLEY & EASTLAND RDS.  
 BEREA, OHIO • 8:30 P.M.  
 SPEAKER: JOHN V. - SO. BERLIN, MASS.  
 EVERYONE WELCOME

THE CLEVELAND DISTRICT OFFICE  
 WILL BE CLOSED ON SATURDAYS,  
 EFFECTIVE NOVEMBER 7th, 1981  
 UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

"Where did you get that pretty red hair? a small girl was asked.

"I think I got from Daddy," she replied. "Mommy still has hers."

### IN MEMORIAM

Gene Collier • secretary of the Calvary Group with 17 years of Active Sobriety passed away Oct. 2, 1981. Our sympathy to the family.

Sophie Lejeune, active member of Pearl Group and other groups. Died September 27, 1981. Our condolence to the family.

Father Walter Tulley, active member of our fellowship and the Mentor Group. We will all miss him. Our deepest sympathy to the family.

Clarence Liley, member of the Seven Hill's Men and Parmatown Men's Groups, passed away suddenly October 1, 1981.

### THOUGHTS WHILE SHAVING

No one among us has the power to change the world. we don't even have the power to change another person. This is not to say that the world, and an awful lot of people in it, don't have need for some change. The point is, we, as individuals, are quite powerless to change it.

By the same token, we can't sober up another person and make that person accept and live by the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous. If some desire isn't there, nothing much is apt to happen.

What we can do, though, is be a good example. We can show that life is worth living •sober! We can show that our daily living. We can be helpful to others by giving them our compassion and understanding.

Herein lies two of the biggest reasons for our continuing association with A.A. Our presence at meetings will show new members that they, too, can get sober just as we have done. They, too, can live a life without booze and be reasonably happy doing so. It is possible! It can be done, We are doing it.

Then we can show and give them understanding of the predicament they are in. We can explain how we got out of that same hell, in which they now find themselves. We can give them hope! Hope that the A.A. program can work for them also. The hope that by their application of the 12 Steps of A.A. in their lives, they, too, can find sobriety and peace of mind.

By our example of sober living, we can, hopefully, give a newcomer a desire to stick out those first few tough weeks and months in our program. We must remind the newcomer, as well as ourselves, that we do have the power of decision. This is one faculty for which we should be very grateful. No one can take this from us without our permission. We can decide how we will meet life. We can decide to drink or not to drink, but decide, we must! To not make a decision in this instance is making a decision.

If a person is feeling that the A.A. program is not working for him, it's very possible because he has passed over Step Three. We must make that decision. There is no way we can avoid it and find success and peace of mind in a sober life. We must make that decision and reaffirm it on a daily basis if necessary.

Be grateful for your power of decision • a power that no one can take from you. It's yours, all yours!

Bud G. Silver Dollar

### THE ALCOHOLIC PARADOX

The alcoholic represents many things to many people. He is the worlds supreme paradox. He goes to a bar, knowing that he won't find what he is looking for. He is looking for happiness and freedom from fear, but he only finds despair.

Yet, he will trade his freedom of choice for a drink. He searches frantically for courage in a bottle, but he finds only hopelessness - but yet, he drinks.

He knows from experience that alcohol makes the poor man rich in fancy for a short time and that it makes a wealthy drunkard poor in fact. The alcoholic drinks because he must, and not because he likes it. He drinks before dinner to ease the tensions of the day. He drinks a pint before bedtime to escape the pressure of tomorrow.

He is in love with himself, yet he tries to kill himself. He wants to be free, but he rushes headlong into a self-made prison. When he is sober he wants to drink. When he is drunk, he prays for sobriety. He gets "high" in the evening so that he can be low in the morning. He wants the beauty of life, yet he seeks the sordid and the ugly.

The strange paradox of the alcoholic is that he thinks that the only way he can feel better is by drinking the liquid that will make him feel worse. He seeks to inflate his ego with the whisky bottle, but he succeeds only in shriveling his soul in the bitter gall of remorse. Watch him! He will start all his bouts with the dignity of a king and wind up fawning like a clown.

And so he goes on his incredible, paradoxical way, leaving behind in human wreckage all those he had loved. Down the road he stumbles in a stupor of oblivion, staggering until he drowns himself in a two ounce whisky glass . . . or by the grace of God, he finds himself in the doorway of A.A.

Whaakey, Surrey, London, England

Now is the time to give your subscription gift of the Central Bulletin to a friend in A.A.

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### THE FOUR ABSOLUTES

Way back in the early days of A.A. great emphasis was on daily plan of checking ourselves, on the Four Absolutes:

HONESTY    PURITY    LOVE    UNSELFISHNESS

and the need for reaching the heights in each to become socially acceptable once more regaining faith, trust, respect of our word which we had forfeited. Let's take another look at these four qualities, and re-evaluate them . . .

**HONESTY:** Involved elimination of lying, evasion, keeping promises, developing and holding trust, reliability and fidelity of purpose. No more double-talk and half-truths.

**PURITY:** Purity in thought, motive, intent, means ridding ourselves of the modern customs of revelling in telling off-color stories, wallowing in the mire of; lecherously evil thoughts, use of foul and obscene language.

**LOVE:** With a deep sense of gratitude nurtured in our hearts, in having freedom of that bondage in compulsive drinking, we overlook character defects in others and then practice compassion with charity in carrying the message to others.

**UNSELFISHNESS:** By nature, everyone is instinctively selfish and self-centered, to having little regard for the rights of others. A.A. changes these defects by proving, that we can only retain the great gift of sobriety if we share it generously with others. If we don't, it will lose its importance and value; it will be taken from us.

Chit Chat

### HUMILITY, THE MOST MISUNDERSTOOD VIRTUE

To many A.A.'s the word "humble" evokes a picture of a plainly dressed, self-deprecating person, who will admit to the possession of no talent, who always takes the last place and is a doormat for everyone. This is not a true picture of a humble person.

If you are looking for a person who has a true humility in the fellowship of A.A., look for a person who is at ease with God, with himself, and with his fellow alcoholics. He does not flatter the wealthy or famous. He has a sense of humor because he can laugh at himself. He has a great tolerance and understanding with the ignorance and stupidity of others because he knows where his wisdom comes from. He is generous with his time, talents, and material things because he knows he must answer to God for the use of Gods gifts. He is compassionate and patient towards slippers because he is aware that he has had so much more grace than they had and used it poorly.

His prayer and spiritual life are strong because he knows how he needs God.

From High & Dry via Oregon Newsletter

### BACKGROUND

### SIGN POSTS

What's his background? This question is often asked by good citizens who are asked to vote for a certain candidate or when a person **applies** for a responsible position. When we are told that we must have a major operation, we want to know the background of the doctor who is going to perform that operation. Likewise, when we apply for a bank loan, the bank will investigate our credit background before they grant the loan.

Every individual leaves behind him a background which cannot be ignored. Behind each man and woman is the sum total of this contribution or debt to the world and they will be judged by the world accordingly. We are often told to forget the past and it is good not to dwell overly on our past mistakes, but we should strive to leave a good background behind us for even the judgment of God will take into account our past.

The things in the background that mold and influence our life today are both of the past and the future. The Founders of A.A. set the background for this fellowship and made it what it is today. The Twelve Steps, the Twelve Traditions, the A.A. principles, all the A.A. literature and the group meetings are made available to us by men, who devoted their lives to worthwhile things and enduring undertakings. They left behind them their dreams, their thoughts and their hopes, so that we who follow can go forward hopefully.

We who have lost our freedom of choice through the excessive use of alcohol and have found our lost freedom again through A.A., should choose a background that will reflect the kind of image others will want to emulate. The pitiful members of A.A. are those who in their living elect to chart their own course, and the tragic ones are those who deliberately turn their backs on those who are trying to help them.

Human advances have not been brought about by men with mediocre backgrounds; they have been brought about by men with vital sparks of action. The knowledge that we have a choice to leave behind us a background of love and service, should inspire us to spread the gospel of human sympathy. Since love is best expressed in service, what better background can we leave than that of helping someone less fortunate than we are, to maintain a normal way of life.

### NO SECRET AT ALL

Oftentimes the newcomer or the **fella** who is still having trouble asks, "What is the secret of sobriety?" And it is revealed for all in the beginning of Chapter Five in the Big Book. "Rarely have we seen a person fail who has thoroughly followed our path'.

Many countries when at war blank out all their road signs when an enemy invades their country, which renders those signs of no assistance to them.

When I read of this a thought occurred to me that it is not only countries that blank out their road signs during a war but **alcoholics** also blank and block out the signs of our disease. The signs of alcoholism are everywhere, all around us. They are read about in our daily papers, we encounter them staggering down streets, we see them pulled out of automobile wrecks on streets and highways. They are seen in prisons and insane asylums and are noticeable on the haggard and worried faces of wives, husbands, mothers and fathers and other family members. These signs so evident are completely ignored by the still suffering alcoholic. They deliberately try to deceive themselves by willfully ignoring the disastrous ending to which a life of drunkenness can lead.

Those of us now in A.A., rationalized within ourselves that the end of our road would be different and not end in disaster. We, like those still at war with the bottle, were also once enticed to travel that alcoholic road, that road of lust, dishonesty and envy, by the promise of pleasure and gaiety, but concealed from us was the tragedy of such a life.

Those of us that traveled that road of drunkenness dared not take an honest and proper view as that would have destroyed the temporary thrill and pleasure we sought. The signs that the alcoholic blanks out will lead him only to proverty, broken health, physical and moral degradation.

The A.A. road may be a little rough to travel and involve some pain and sacrifice but in the end, true sobriety and happiness can be attained, and as we know, it surely is worth the effort. Once our war was over and we cleaned off the road signs, the way to travel was pointed out to us and we were able to reach our goal. When we follow the signposts of A.A., the Twelve Steps and A.A. principles, we grow in character and stature and we are instilled with a confidence that we can live a sober life full of joy and peace of mind. Thank God our war is over.

**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.



## HOW'S MY SOBRIETY?

How's my sobriety? I haven't asked myself that question for a long time • too long a time. I'm forgetting Step Ten again, I know. Personal inventory on a daily basis is so important. If I forget this for one day, it's easier to forget it again, and then again . . . and I've been doing just that.

All of the Twelve Steps must be an important part of my life. They must be my way of life! I do believe that if I will pay special attention to Step Ten, that all the rest of the Steps will be somewhat easier to live by.

It's a battle, though, attempting to live a day at a time by our program of living. It is so easy, so very easy, to let our character defects pop out like little blisters. If they go unattended, they will grow bigger and bigger until it will be too late to do anything about them myself. I'll end up needing help from someone else. Then I could be back where I started from. . .

Self-pity - that's a dandy for me. How simple to feel sorry for myself - and so often for such insignificant reasons. The problem, though, is to recognize this feeling - in time! I've read more than once that self-pity is one of the greatest causes or excuses for getting drunk - after any length of sobriety that one may have had. Time seems to make no difference.

Dishonesty is another of the defects that must be sat on hard. This dishonesty isn't just the kind that won't stop us from picking someone's pocket or put our hand in the boss's cash register. Dishonesty enters into our daily decision making in so many ways and seemingly in important things. This can go right down to purposefully going through a stop sign. I must strive for honesty of thought and honesty of action. This must be my goal.

Then impatience, resentment, jealousy, envy, procrastination, negative thinking, criticizing - these should all be a part of my daily moral inventory. They must be a part of my daily inventory!

It gets easy to "mouth" these defects of character and mention them from time to time at a meeting without really thinking of them in depth. I must more often take them one at a time, in solitude, and ask myself how I'm **doing!** It is going to hurt, perhaps, but the more often I do it, the less painful it should be if I'm "working the program."

So - how's my sobriety? Just fair, I guess I must answer, at the present. That's sure not good enough! Just being sober isn't enough either for me. I certainly want more than that and I know that there is more to be had. God, help me to see what is necessary to do to improve it!

Bud G.  
Silver Dollar

## TO ALL SECRETARIES

For the next several months, your group will be receiving the Central *Bulletin* free of course, with a few subscription blanks.

We hope that you will announce to your group that the Central *Bulletin* is need of subscription as well as articles.

The *Bulletin* is the oldest publication in A.A. has been helpful to thousands of men and women over the years, in maintaining their sobriety.

The articles for the bulletin, gives us the chance to share our strength, and hope and experience with each other.

## HAVE YOU A SPONSOR?

What can be done for the alcoholic who is a newcomer in A.A., who has suffered one **traumatic** experience after another, one failure after another, who is desperately willing to reconstruct his life, yet unable to do it himself? How can hope be instilled in him, to replace despair? How can a recovering alcoholic find calm and something that was never in him before? — patience. How can a person who has repeatedly failed all his life be convinced that things **will** get better, especially when he will not even be in control of his own life?

Like everything else in A.A., the answer is simple. The key to success for the alcoholic, to repairs for an emotionally mangled life, lies in A.A. sponsorship. Sponsorship by its very nature demands complete honesty and gut-level communication between the sponsor and the newcomer.

I speak from my own observations, but mostly from my own experience. I do believe Gods will is being projected through my sponsor. I thank God that my sponsor has intervned in my life when I started straying, especially when I was doing something that could interfere with someone else's way of life. At many of these interventions, I objected vehemently, but I later accepted the fact that I was sick.

I would not stand a chance alone. In the past, I did everything recommended by A.A. except getting a sponsor, and for a long time I stood frustrated and baffled, wondering what had gone wrong.

When I drank, I had a drinking problem that I could not handle. When I stopped drinking, I had a living problem that I could not cope with — I had no idea even where to begin. But I am stepping along now, and those steps feel a lot more secure with the help of my sponsor.

L.W., Syracuse, N.Y.  
January 1975 Grapevine



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Harry D., Founder and Editor 1892-1968

Vol. 40 November 1981 No. 2

CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
DECEMBER 1st., 1981 — 8:00 P.M.  
OLD STONE CHURCH • PUBLIC SQUARE  
CLEVELAND, OHIO  
BE INFORMED  
GROUP REPRESENTATIVES WELCOME

AREA WIDE MEETING  
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6th, 1981  
2:00 p.m.  
ST. MALACHI SCHOOL HALL  
2401 WASHINGTON STREET  
Speaker: Dick P.

SOUTHWEST SUNDAY GROUP  
18TH ANNIVERSARY  
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6th, 1981  
BEREA HIGH SCHOOL • CAFETERIA  
CORNER OF BAGLEY & EASTLAND RDS.  
BEREA, OHIO • 8:30 P.M.  
SPEAKER: JOHN V. • SO. BERLIN, MASS.  
EVERYONE WELCOME

#### IN MEMORIAM

**Tony Wysor, 36 year** member of our fellowship. Passed away Nov. 6, 1981. Tony was very active in Elyria & Cleveland area. Our sympathy to his two nieces.

#### OUR PRIMARY PURPOSE . . .

Let's never forget that AA's PRIMARY AND SOLE purpose is to help us stay sober and to "CARRY THE MESSAGE TO THE ALCOHOLIC WHO STILL SUFFERS." AA is for an alcoholic • every alcoholic • and **may** be his only hope for life and sanity, as it was ours. The ability of each recovering alcoholic to identify himself with AA and help others to recover, is a gift from GOD • and our neglect, disdain, and rejection in discharging this obligation of gratitude must certainly place our own sobriety and happiness in jeopardy. Let's not forget from whence we came, and make sure we do our best to give every alcoholic, who still suffers, every opportunity through our dedicated willingness to help; talk with them and walk with them • DON'T JUST POINT THE WAY.

#### RETURN TO SOCIAL DRINKING?

Once you're a pickle you can  
never again be a cucumber

ALWAYS • CAREFUL • To • INVESTIGATE • OTHERS • NEEDS

From: Concerned AA Members;

I am writing you on behalf of many others as well as myself who were in attendance at a Saturday-night AA meeting. The lead was very disquieting and was in no way a good representative of AA. I realize that anonymity should always be respected; however, in this case, I feel the name of the individual should be disclosed to you. His name is I am sure of his home group;

His lead was completely out of place at any meeting of AA. He told anyone who was cross-dependent that he or she "does not belong in AA." He said **that** a person will a pill/drug problem should not consider himself/herself a member of AA. He said "those people" should go to a doctor with their problems! Hell, a doctor is where I got a hold of my first of many addicting pills! He also inferred that the younger members of AA were only there because the courts or schools sent them. He said, in so-many words, that the young people don't belong in AA because they haven't "hit bottom yet."

He said, over and over again, that pill-dependent people should not be in attendance at AA meetings. I'm glad I'm not a new person because if I had heard that when I came around AA, I would have gone right back out and used more pills. Alcohol was indeed my "drug of choice," but I would have gladly gone out and found more pills, pot, or whatever when I was told I couldn't drink. (In fact, I heard some of the above-mentioned kind of talk when I first came around • so, I ended up getting hooked on Valium which then led me to drinking again.)

I feel people should be reprimanded. He has no business saying who belongs in AA and who doesn't. He has no right to judge others and their programs. He acts like he founded AA and that he wrote the "big book." Thank God he didn't!

During the Saturday-night meeting to which I referring, several people got up and left. Many others became extremely upset and even started questioning if **they did** belong in AA? That's just "swell." He literally sent people out the door • hopefully he didn't send them to the "drug store."

He is a very angry, hostile person. Even his comments at meetings upset many people. I know the chairperson on Saturday was fit to be tied that **he** had asked to lead. Of course, it wasn't the chairperson's fault. How was he to know that this would act so intolerably?

I certainly hope you can set this person straight. He should start working on **his** program • a little humility would be a start. He shouldn't express opinions when they will harm others. He is **not** working the AA program as I understand it should be worked. He acted as though people should be worked. He acted as though people should take a written test and pass "inspection" before they dare to appear at an AA meeting.

Can this be stopped? Can you help the members of AA by talking to this tyrant?

Sincerely,  
Anonymous



### ENTHUSIASM

Why do some **A.A.'s** seemingly get so much more from the program than the rest of us? Invariably you'll find the chap drinking deepest at the A.A. well of living is the busiest, the most enthusiastic member, a guy whose enthusiasm hasn't ebbed even though the "honeymoon" period is far behind him. He's the chap who's probably the busiest also, doing things to help with no thought of self reward, with no thought of praise or thanks. He wants to help others and seeks ways to do it. Invariably, too, you'll find the enthusiastic A.A. has a firm conviction based on faith. The word "enthusiasm" is derived from the Greek "**en-Theos**," meaning "in God" or "inspired by God." When a man gets the God of his understanding working on his side, he gets on fire about things. How can the rest of us get that way? John Wesley taught that the only way to have faith is to tell yourself you have faith, and practice **having** faith until you do have it. If we want enthusiasm, we **must** act as if we already had it. If we sluggards in the fellowship will take a deep breath and stop telling ourselves we don't like the things we have to do, and start telling ourselves we're mighty enthusiastic about it, chances are we'll get them done, capably too, in no time at all.

### GIVING

#### "The Way to a Spiritual Way of Life"

Most **A.A.'s have** noted the astonishing sources of energy that seem available to those active A.A. members who enjoy or find meaning in what they are doing. In giving, sharing and helping other alcoholics in this new way of life.

They have done away with the false fronts of their alcoholic life, have m-discovered the things they understand and really believe in and have put their heart and soul in doing so.

They are capable of accepting love and friendship and capable of giving it. To them the joys, sufferings and problems of their A.A. friends are a part of their own life. The love and the friendship of the fellowship of A.A. dissolved the shell that isolated them in their drinking days.

They have found a spiritual way of life without haloes or wings. They have learned to give of themselves and seek nothing in return.

At one time or another you've heard a member or A.A. say, "I wish I could get the spiritual part of the A.A. program".

In a very real sense the beginning of a spiritual way of life in A.A. is a "gradual takeover" or "changeover" by GOD, as you understand him, without the loss of personal freedom in any way. Our *Blindness* is replaced with *light*, *weakness* with *strength*, *selfishness* with *unselfishness* and *hate* with love. It makes you realize that it is not just a dream beyond your reach-it is a reality, available to everyone who wants it.

#### DO YOU WANT IT?

Paul R.  
Warren, Ohio

### 3rd STEP

Recently, I stood in the middle of my kitchen floor and prayed, "God help me," as I frequently do, and as I learned to do some twenty years ago when I got sober in A.A. But on this occasion, the prayer was inspired by the galling, gnawing incessant outrage I felt at a problem that has threatened to overwhelm me for the past fifteen years. "It's unfair," I said, and I realized as I said it that I sounded like my fourteen-year-old daughter.

"What are you going to do about it?" a little inner voice asked.

"Do?" I replied. "What I've always been taught to do in A.A. I'm going to confess it."

And this I proceeded to do, with an A.A. member who was then a guest in my home. We both agreed that it was unfair. In this mood, I returned to my kitchen and again said, "God, help me."

At that instant, the telephone rang. It was another member of A.A. and she, too, was finding life "unfair." I agreed, and as I attempted to show her that the answer to her **problem** lay in the acceptance of the Third Step, in surrender, in turning her will and her life over to the care of God, I found the answer to my own problem. I thought I had surrendered it, but I had merely refused to look at it — I had swept it under the rug.

Surrender is not a repressive thing; it's an active opening up of one's inner self; it's saying — and **meaning**— "I'll take my chances with life. There is no guarantee that I'm going to make it, but I'm going to face it, and I'm going to do the best I can with what I've got."

The A.A. way of life is not easy; we were never told that it would be. But I have found it to be the most exhilarating, the most exciting mode of existence that I can possibly imagine. I have found in A.A. all that I ever sought in drinking. I can choose to believe in myself today, in my own thinking and my own feelings. I can choose to live today. I can live in the light of that choice today. If I make mistakes (as I frequently do), I can say I'm sorry and learn from that mistake — and each time I make a mistake, I learn a new truth. But truth is not an absolute, and I have a long way to go before I sleep.

G.L., Elizabethtown, Ky.

Footsteps  
Cincinnati, Oh.

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New Address .....

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

It will help you and it will help us.



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

Vol. XXXX - No. 3

## 12 TRADITIONS

### GIVE US A WAY OF LIFE

Along with the 12 Steps, ". . . if practiced as a way of life, can expel the obsession to drink and enable the sufferer to become happily and usefully whole."

Something I have heard since I began in AA is that "We get what we need in AA if we work the AA Program-and we need exactly what we get." No matter what personality said it, I came to believe this principle is true. If we didn't get what we need, AA wouldn't be alive.

Our Twelve Traditions not only protect AA as a whole, thus guarantee our sobriety, our very lives, but they also meet our basic human needs! Many of us have only looked towards the Steps to 'get sober' and grow. Our Traditions are a personal matter to each one of us . . . they really are an inspired, time-tested set of basic guidelines which won't fail us unless we fail to use them. They help us shape our attitudes in living with ourselves in the world, just as they have helped AA as a whole operate the way it has since their **recorcing**.

### SHORTCOMINGS

Step Seven is one of those steps that I need to work on every day.

I am thankful today that I am more aware of my shortcomings. I need to work on them as I see them and ask God's help for help in over-coming them. That is, one day at a time.

One of my problems lately has been putting my cares aside and going to sleep. One of my simple solutions is "Asking myself what more I can do about it now." If there is nothing I can do, I turn it over until another day and go to sleep. It's a way of laying my cares in God's hands.

The Little Red Book says we need to reconcile to God's way of doing business and a total willingness to let Him work out His plan for our lives, and then believe that God can and will take over all our cares. I can't think of a better way to strengthen our faith.

There is nothing outstanding about our prayers to God, but it is a simple affair in which we have nothing to lose and everything to gain, Sobriety, Sanity, Peace of mind, and a chance of happiness for ourselves and for our families.

In working our Twelve Steps, we don't only benefit, but so do those people around us.

Surrendering our defects is an intelligent act of us alcoholics to replace fear and weakness with spiritual courage and understanding.

We need to daily ask God to remove our shortcomings!

Love you all,  
Esther G.

## TO CONCERNED A.A. MEMBERS

This is in answer to the article concerning a lead in which the speaker let his feelings be known about pill/drug people who are coming around A.A. I not only AGREE with him 100%, I admire his courage just as much. It is too bad you didn't have his courage or you would have stood up and told him face to face how you felt . . . but you lacked conviction. Instead you wrote a letter asking someone else to set him straight.

This is a program for alcoholics. The first step of A.A. and the third Tradition talk only of alcoholics and alcoholism - not one word of pills or drugs. There is a big difference between chemical dependency and alcohol dependency. As an alcoholic I can only identify with alcoholics. I have never been high on pills or any chemical, just BOOZE.

You stated that he is not working the A.A. program as you understood it. He is an alcoholic and you must be a pill head. That is the difference between you two. This is an individual program. No two of us has the same interpretation of the Twelve Steps and no two of us has the same concept of a Higher Power. He hurt your feelings and made some others take an inventory. Good for him! Now is the time for you to sit down and take an honest inventory and find out just what you are.

Neal C.,  
Thursday Closed Men's Group

## HATS OFF TO A.A.!

As a member of the business community for the last twenty years, I have learned well how to flatter for profit, manipulate for a sale, and practice reserved honesty. I have formed "fast partnerships and slow deceptions." The skills were well learned and I used them all.

However, when I got into A.A., I learned to practice new principles. I saw others who knew my background, and while theirs was the same, they didn't seem to be living the same lies that I was. They had a certain something that I sensed was different. I doubted that I could use "it" successfully, but I did want what they had, so I began a little at a time to "experiment" with the new methods. To my shock, my business relationships became more solid and I felt better about my co-workers and myself as time and trial progressed. I resolved, no more games for me!

I know now, that if I had not been encouraged to leave my "hat" outside the door, I would not have stayed sober long. The added benefit of feeling better about myself would not have entered my mind without the reminders of some good A.A.'s, my Higher Power, and a lot of meetings.

Many thanks to the fellowship for all. I tip my hat to you, but I'll leave it outside the door of A.A.

Anon.  
Columbus Newsletter



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Harry D.. Founder and Editor 1892-1968

o . December, 1981 No. 3

**CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**January 5, 1982 - 8:00 P.M.**

OLD STONE CHURCH - PUBLIC SQUARE  
 CLEVELAND, OHIO  
 BE INFORMED  
 GROUP REPRESENTATIVES WELCOME

**THIRTY-FIRST ANNUAL**  
**DINNER-DANCE**

**MAY 1ST, 1982 - 12.50 PER PERSON**  
**TICKETS GO ON SALE TUESDAY**  
**JANUARY 26, 1982**

**AT THE ADVISORY MEETING TO BE HELD AT**  
**OLD STONE CHURCH - PUBLIC SQUARE.**  
**CLEVELAND, OHIO — 8:00 P.M.**

**G.S.R. THIRD LEGACY MEETING**  
**JANUARY 17, 1982 — 9:00 A.M.**

**AMERICAN LEGION HALL**  
**ROUTES 82 & 21 — BRECKSVILLE, OHIO**

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**TUESDAY, JANUARY 26, 1981 - 8:00 P.M.**  
**OLD STONE CHURCH — PUBLIC SQUARE**  
**CLEVELAND, OHIO. SALE OF TICKETS**  
**FOR INTERGROUP DINNER-DANCE.**

## THE CHALLENGE

Life is a continual adjustment to everyday living and events, be they favorable or otherwise, that allows one to maintain a sound mental outlook, so vital in promoting judicious objectivity.

Should one permit the unfavorable to hold sway, progress will fail to be challenged and much impeded. Utopia is an apparition in the mind of the dreamer. The acceptance of reality in hand with one's ability, is a sound basis toward achievement and progress.

## REGULAR OR UNLEADED?

A wife was telling a neighbor that her husband, while they were on vacation, had mistakenly swallowed a glass of gasoline, thinking it was gin.

"Didn't it make him awfully sick?" asked the friend.

"Not too much, was the reply. "But instead of hiccupping, he honked."

## "THANK YOU, GOD, FOR MY SOBRIETY"

Thank you, God, for my sobriety! I'm glad this feeling of thankfulness has existed throughout this year and through this past several years and not just now at this particular Thanksgiving time.

I truly have so much to be thankful for and mostly I am thankful for having this belief, itself, that I need Alcoholics Anonymous in order to keep it all!

Without that belief, I could easily drift away like so many do and have done and then suffer the consequences as so many have. God forbid, I pray!

So far, I have never gone to an AA meeting that I wasn't glad I have attended nor have I ever made a 12th Step call for which I was sorry that I had embarked on. They all make me say - "Thank God for my sobriety."

Recently I had a call from Arizona from a young fellow who reminded me that I was his sponsor. This reminder almost made me wince, for, indeed, what had I been able to do for him these last three years while he has been "dinging" around with AA. I thought about this while listening to him tell me that it really wasn't booze that was his problem - but rather "other things." He did, though, think that the AA program could help him solve those "other problems." In fact, he read me a passage out of the Twenty-Four Hours A Day book over the telephone, so he did have that little jewel with him.

I couldn't tell him that he was an alcoholic, even though he was convinced that he was, the last time I talked to him. That, of course, must be his own decision. I suggested that we not worry too much about definitions and labels. For myself, booze gave me nothing but trouble so my simple solution has been - no booze. It has been working for me. However, we can't stay sober just be "deciding" or by "thinking" that we will. We need to cultivate sobriety and keep it alive through activity in the Fellowship.

I decided that I can't do anything for him other than listen to him, show that I care for him, pray for him -and stay sober myself. I must continue to try to make the AA program attractive and not get any thoughts that any of my personal qualities, such as they may be, are going to be responsible for bringing anyone into AA, much less keep him here. It takes more than a pat on the back and a few pleasant phrases about the joys of sobriety to cause a newcomer to accept this way of life as his way of life. The program, not the sponsor, must be the focal point. It is our job to make the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous attractive and to explain, in detail, the program to the newcomer, both by word and by deed!

This is my challenge. This is our challenge! I feel confident that we are equal to the task, if we will just try!

Bud G.

Silver Dollar

### KEEP IT SIMPLE

Shorty was a serious chap - serious in his thinking, serious in his drinking, serious in his efforts to **crystalize** the A.A. program in his mind. Early in his contact with A.A. he discovered there weren't answers to all questions, but Shorty felt he had to have answers and set out to get them.

Particularly did he work on the spiritual phase. he talked for hours on end with his sponsor and other A.A.'s. He read avidly - "Peace of Mind," "Varieties of Religious Experiences," and many other books. He argued with himself. An engineer by profession, he wasn't willing to accept anything unless he could prove it.

Three months went by. Shorty was still struggling with Shorty, and a mighty battle it was, to him. He gave himself all the arguments that there is a Power greater than he. But he could not prove it to his satisfaction. One night, wide awake in his bed in the dark, the old argument was going on. "It can't be," he told himself. "Why can't it?" "Well, it just can't be," "But give me a reason," "There isn't any reason." "Then why not accept on faith and give it a whirl?" "I can't. "Why not?" "No reason, I just can't - say!" That argument is about as stupid as the ones my wife gives me when she can't win any other way,.

Shorty's load lifted that night. No blinding flash of light swept over him, but the argument was over. He'd given in. His solution was as simple as that.

Here's how

As each member introduced himself with his first name and the fact that he was an alcoholic, to which was added: "And I haven't found it necessary to take a drink for six (or eight or whatever) years."

Along came Joe, who stated: "My name is Joe, I'm an alcoholic and I haven't found it necessary to drink for three years."

"Hold it, Joe," said Al, from across the room. "I saw you staggering out of Sam's Bar just last night!"

"I know," said Al. "But it wasn't necessary."

### Be a Bulletin Booster

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### 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 socialities-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.

### AA THOUGHT FOR THE DAY . . .

If we're going to stay sober, we've got to learn to want something else more than we want to drink. When we first came into AA, we couldn't imagine wanting anything else so much or more than drinking. So we had to stop drinking on faith, on faith that some day we really would want something else more than drinking. But after we've been in AA for a while, we learn that a sober life can really be enjoyed. We learn how nice it is to get along well with our family at home, how nice it is to do our work well at the office, how nice it is to try to help others. Have I found that when I keep sober, everything goes well for me?

### I DIDN'T HAVE A DIME

Have you ever wondered just who you are, or hasn't your life been up to par?

Using alcohol and/or drugs, you will feel, that finding yourself is a raw deal.

If your mind and vision seem to be impaired, there are people in the world who really do care.

Through Alcoholics Anonymous and a little time, you can be any kind of person you have in mind.

If you can't seem to quit on your own, it takes a phone call from any nearby phone.

Ralph L.  
Bedford Wednesday  
Night Group

### STINKING THINKING

It seems to me that there are a number of alcoholics that come into A.A. but never get serious about their drinking problem and refuse to admit that they are alcoholics. But, everytime they get into serious trouble, due to drinking, they will evidence no reluctance to turn the whole **sorbid** mess over to a "Power greater than themselves," and never make an honest effort to help that Higher Power clean up their messed up life. They still want to give God orders, rather than report for duty and they refuse to listen to the simple fact that we have to turn our will over to a Power greater than ourselves, if we want to live a normal life again.

This is a simple operating principle and most of us cannot appreciate its potency. As soon as we begin to learn about the program, some want to make it complicated and revert to their old ways of thinking. No doubt, if we searched our innermost selves, we would find that our own will caused this STINKING THINKING that messed up our lives.

It appears too, that when we are capable of meeting problems, they come to us to be solved, and they keep on coming until they are solved. This serves to keep the knowledge we have acquired in good working order through continual practice, thereby, using good common sense, we make progress.

Our Big Book sets a pattern and tells us how to use it. Perhaps the reason everything else failed in our search for sobriety or the answer to our drinking problem, was the fact that all we found was, "what we should do," but we were not shown, "how to do it." At the A.A. meetings we are given tools and are shown how to use them, and in using the pattern and the tools, we build character that will stand up under all adversities.

There is no point in trying to put the blame on anything or anyone but ourselves. Dishonest reasoning will build a lack of interest in the program and a willingness to understand it. Mental and moral reservations as well as the desire to keep on drinking are the things that cause our STINKING THINKING.

Knowing the theory is fine but unless we look for every opportunity in our daily actions and learn to apply them, we will not benefit and grow. Having sobriety is one thing, enjoying it is another. There is unlimited opportunity to demonstrate the principles as laid down in the Twelve Steps in daily contact with our families and business associates.

When we begin our day with a prayer for guidance, we cannot help but find opportunity to be of service; to counsel one in trouble; to show consideration to others. In this manner, we are going about our Father's business and not just giving lip service.

When we got into trouble because of our drinking, our constant wish was, "God restore me to sanity and normalcy." This prayer should make us hesitate to excuse ourselves for STINKING THINKING. Either we face life as normal, sober people or hide and find solace in the bottle. An honest drunk is more to be admired than a lying dry.

Ed B.

Akron Intergroup news

### SHOULD I CALL?

He came in at the stroke of eight. The tables were full. I didn't see him talk to anyone as he took a seat on the side of the room. I said to myself, "I'll have to talk to him after the meeting."

When I looked around for him after the meeting, he was gone. We had been attending the same small discussion group Thursday nights. But I hadn't seen him at the last couple I'd attended.

I like the guy. I identify with him. What he has said makes sense. But is something wrong? This time, he passed when he was called upon.

Should I phone him just to chat? Would he resent it? Would I resent his resenting it? I've seldom "bothered" other people. But something was said at the meeting last night about people and loving and having friends and not being alone anymore. An that's gotten me to thinking. What am I afraid of? Of being rebuffed?

Should I wait? After all, I may see him on Thursday, tomorrow night. Maybe he's been busy or out of town or going to other meetings. Why do I think he may be having problems? Am I reading something into his behavior that isn't there? Why do I debate with myself? Is it because this is truly my first outreach since I've been back to A.A. this time?

He gave me his card. I know the number. If he didn't want anyone to call him, would he have done that? . . .

Well, I've gone ahead and called. He said he'd been real busy and was busy in the evenings. He said he had needed the Tuesday night meeting said he'd see me Thursday night. He thanked me for calling.

Maybe the next time will be easier. It's tough to feel you don't have a friend in the world. I don't know that I would want me for a friend. But A.A. has shown me what to do. It is up to me to figure out how to do it. Meetings are the key-the workshop for human relations. It was a lonesome drunk. I'm no longer drunk. Maybe I'll no longer be lonesome if I keep reaching out.

G.J., El Paso, Texas  
May 1979 Grapevine

Guy: "Is my face dirty or is it my imagination?"

Gal: "Your face is clean, but I don't know about your imagination."

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