

# THE NIGHT CAP

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- Day or Night -

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## ANOTHER MILESTONE PASSED

AA in San Antonio celebrated its 7th anniversary during the first week of April, 1952. At the Tuesday city-wide open meeting in the West Wing of Municipal Auditorium on April 1, the principal speaker was Esther E. of Dallas, who is reputed to hold the longest continuous sobriety of any woman in Texas. Esther pioneered with Bishop Everett H. Jones for the 1st A.A. group in San Antonio.

Saturday night, April 5, Kotsie Keith's orchestra furnished the music for a dance in Bolivar Hall at La Villita for a city-wide A.A. dance and entertainment from 9 P.M. till midnight.

-- AA --

On Saturday, March 15, at 2 P.M., a meeting of officers, delegates and committeemen of the Southwest Texas Regional A.A. Conference was held in the Gunter Hotel.

The meeting was held at the request of Chairman Ira P. of Corpus Christi, of the Texas State AA Convention, Arrangements Committee.

Present at this meeting were Roy G., of Austin, chairman for groups and delegate to the General Service Conference from the Southwest Texas Regional Conference; State Committeemen Sam H., of Hondo, Calvert F. and Dorothy H., both of San Antonio, and several local AA members.

Plans and arrangements for the State AA convention to be held in Corpus Christi Friday, Saturday and Sunday, June 13, 14, and 15, were discussed.

It was decided at this meeting that a business session of the Southwest Texas AA Regional Conference would be held at Corpus Christi at the same time as the Texas AA Convention.

Those intending to attend the Corpus Christi affair are advised to make their hotel reservations early and be sure to get confirmation of them as there will probably be a shortage of rooms there during the

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## INTERPRETATION OF THE 12 STEPS

### STEP NO. 3:

Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.

This is the beginning of a new way of thinking: the beginning of a new way of life that you hear AAs talk so much about. Most of us have come to AA with a grave misunderstanding concerning that power greater than ourselves. We have an impression of God that has come from someone else. Somewhere, from 'way back, in the course of our early religious training, there has come a picture of a revengeful God - punishment sometime or somewhere for everything that we have done that is not just exactly right in accordance with someone else's conception. We think of God as someone to be afraid of, not someone to be friendly with or ask help of. This is the beginning of our conception of God as a father, a protector, a guide, one with whom nothing is impossible.

This is our own conception of that power greater than ourselves, not someone else's conception. And remember, that the step says that we only make a decision.

It takes practice to do this. This is the one step that you and I will need to practice all the rest of our lives. For just when we begin to think that we have been able to turn our lives over to that greater power, suddenly, even unbeknownst to us, we begin to manage things again--- that is when we begin to have trouble. This is the beginning of the practice that makes it possible for us to live 24 hours at a time and we have only made a decision.

We have convinced ourselves that so many people have had such phenomenal success and we see examples all around us every day that maybe we are not so smart after all. Maybe these people have had an experience that we have not yet had.

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DIRECTORY OF AA ACTIVITIES

Call Fannin 2523 for information regarding any AA activities in San Antonio and the Southwest Texas Region.

MONDAY

San Antonio Suburban, State Hospital and Industrial Groups, 8 P.M. Group 12 Discussion.

TUESDAY

City-wide meeting in West Wing of the Municipal Auditorium, 8 P.M., under sponsorship of the San Antonio Central Committee of Alcoholics Anonymous. Open to the public. Women's Group, 6:30 P.M., 614 Avenue E.

WEDNESDAY

Alamo Heights, Collins Gardens and Highland Park Groups, 8 P.M. Group 12 Discussion Meeting, 8 P.M. Highland Park Group meetings open.

THURSDAY

Olmos Park and Earl Groups, 8 P.M. (Earl Group is for colored people - meets at 614 Avenue E.)

FRIDAY

Downtown Group 12, 8 P.M.  
Downtown Group meets in Sahara Clubrooms. Family Group meets at 8 P.M. Friday in Sahara Clubrooms.  
Group 12 meets in Club 12 Clubrooms. Family Group meets at 8 P.M. in Club 12 Clubrooms.

SATURDAY

Industrial Group, 8 P.M. Open to the public. Meets at 614 Avenue E.

SUNDAY

Downtown Group Discussion meeting, 4:30 P.M. Industrial Group, 8 P.M.

CORPUS CHRISTI

Downtown Group, meets at Civic Center Tuesday. Open meeting. Friday, closed meeting.

Family Group meeting Club 10, 146 Tompkins Street, Monday, closed.

Family Group, Friday - Open.

Alamo Group, 607 Kinney Street. Monday closed, Wednesday closed. Friday open. Family Group.

AUSTIN TEXAS GROUP

Tuesday, 8 P.M., open meeting. Thurs. State Hospital. Friday, closed. Family Group, both at 8 P.M.

THE TWELVE TRADITIONS OF AA

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon AA unity
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority - a loving God as he may express himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants -- they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking.
4. Each group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose - to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.
6. An AA group ought never endorse, finance or lend the AA name to any related facility or outside enterprise lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary spiritual aim.
7. Every AA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ social workers.
9. AA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the AA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles above personalities.

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Olive B is confined to her home by an illness. Now is the time to send those get well cards. We all pray for her speedy recovery.

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AN INTERPRETATION OF THE TWELVE STEPS

(Cont'd from Page 1)

This is one of the hardest things to accomplish in the program of AA. We must be constantly aware of it everyday and we must constantly practice it every day. This is probably the step on which we need more help from our fellows than on any other. I formerly had a deep conviction that there was no such thing as will power; at least we know that will power alone will not get the job done. You can make up your mind never to take another drink, grit your teeth and hang on; you are never going to take another drink if it kills you. Sheer will power will not work for the chances are that you will take the drink or it will kill you. The book, Alcoholics Anonymous, tells us that this step is the proper use of the will...turn that will power over to a greater power than ourselves and ask Him to use it as He best sees fit. You and I have managed this business of our lives for so many years that it takes practice - constant practice. Don't think for a minute that you and I can make this decision and then have it happen all at once. This is the business of living 24 hours a day - this is the business of being able to get by one day at a time without having to take a drink, to lead a happy and satisfactory life. This is the step that gives us more confidence, more security, more peace, more of everything that we want in a new way of life almost than any other step in the program.

What about this conception of a power greater than ourselves? What is it? What does He look like? What does He do? How does He do it? It makes no difference how He does it, or what He looks like. My own conception is that of a companion, someone who keeps me company all day so that I never am alone with my problems. I have help always. Never is there to be any punishment if I make a mistake, just so I acknowledge that mistake and ask Him for help to do something to correct it.

God As We Understand Him - - that is the solution to the problem. This is our own conception. Nobody else's. Think of a day of life in which no matter what we do, somebody else takes the responsibility for our activities. If we can walk in

faith and belief somebody else will take the responsibility for our activities... for in reality we make few mistakes. Constant thought of this power is bound to bring faith and conviction. If we cannot get that faith, then there is nothing left to do but to pray for it. "THY WILL BE DONE" - not mine. This is a simple answer all day to the angers, fears, hatreds and resentments that you and I as individuals are unable to manage by ourselves and without help. Once again, all we have to do is to make that decision. There is no one thing in our lives quite so difficult as to make decisions.

It is not important that we get this today. We can think about this today and we can ask for help for it today. We can keep it constantly in our minds because this is the answer to all of the problems in our lives. The drinking problem is incidental. There are a thousand reasons why you and I drink and they are all subconscious and we cannot do anything about them if we do not know what they are - except through AA. Here we never need to know why we drink... all we are interested in is the solution, and answer to the problem. The answer to the drinking problem is emotional growth, spiritual growth and we have no way of getting it but here. This is the beginning of a conviction that there is a power greater than ourselves.

There is a little prayer that I have used every morning since I discovered it that puts me in a frame of mind to accept this turning of my will over to that power greater than myself to manage only for the day - one day at a time. I have used this every morning for the past five years; it cuts me down to size. It puts me in a position to be truly humble. It makes me realize that no day can I manage in accordance with my own will and my own selfish desires. I hope it may be as useful to someone else as it has been to me. Every day, every hour, Father, I breathe in Thy life-giving power: power to love, power to be pure, power to be well, power to endure.

- SAM McC.

WE OWE SO MUCH TO OTHERS

I wonder how many of us ever stop to think how much we owe to others? I am sure that most everyone, like myself, never takes time out to think much about what we owe to others. I am just as sure that most everyone, like myself, takes plenty of time thinking about what others owe to us. If we would just reverse that school of thought, I am sure that we all would find this world to be a much nicer place in which to live.

When I take time out to think how much I owe to others, it amazes me just how deeply in debt I am. All of my friends and loved ones have been very tolerant with me during my periods of alcoholism and addiction. And when I have returned to this hospital for treatment, the personnel have been tolerant, and have tried to be understanding. The patients whom I have known here have always welcomed me with a smile, and never with a word of censure. The members of the AA group here have accepted me back without one word of condemnation. And when I stop to think and say to myself, "What have I ever done for these people, the personnel, the patients who have been my friends, the members of the AA group?" I find that I do owe so much to them all.

And last, but by no means least, how much do I owe to my wife who has been so devoted, and patient, and understanding and always ready to start again, and with never a word of censure, but always with kind words of cheer and encouragement.

Indeed, my debt to her is staggering, and if I lived a perfect life for the next 100 years, I could never repay her in full for all that she has so unselfishly done for me. Such devotion and such love as she has shown for me is amazing, and I would say that it was beyond belief if I had not been the recipient of such loyal devotion and affection -- and all in the face of the fact that I have been an alcoholic and an addict for years. Indeed, I owe much to her, but I am sure that a person with such a lovely character as my wife possesses, would want in return only my love and devotion, and my living a life of sobriety and abstinence. Wouldn't I be a pretty small fellow if I did not make a sincere effort to try to do that -- to try to do

anything to please her, and bring her happiness?

When I think of how much I owe to others, it strengthens my resolve to embrace as much as possible all of the philosophy of the AA program, and to utter a daily prayer to the Higher Power to give me the strength to live a life of sobriety and abstinence so that I can begin to pay the enormous debt that I owe to others.

---Bob B.--- In The Key

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ANOTHER MILESTONE PASSED

(Cont'd from Page 1)

vacation season. If you aren't too proud you should advise the hotel that you are attending the AA convention in their city, as each Hotel has promised to set aside a quota of rooms for the convention.

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BIRTHDAYS FOR APRIL

- 1 YEAR: Zelda A., Lucille D., Aubrey DeW. Al. L., George McK., Gaston R.  
 2 YEARS: Col. R. M. G.; Walter S.  
 3 YEARS: Mona S.  
 4 YEARS: William F. G., Sharp McC.  
 5 YEARS: Harry W. M.

\* \* \* \*

A woman member of AA who lives in a \$50,000 mansion in Bridgeport, Conn., was granted a divorce recently from her husband. She told the judge that her husband did not take her membership in AA seriously, that he placed bottles of whiskey prominently in every room of her home. The judge was most sympathetic: he awarded her a handsome alimony settlement, custody of her son, and occupancy of the home. The judge gave the husband custody of three oriental rugs which, it seemed, he cherished dearly.

- AA -

"It might be later than you think."

FOLLOWING IS A REPRINT FROM THE CENTRAL BULLETIN, CLEVELAND, OHIO, AA ORGAN:

"If we are truly seeking social security in its real sense, we can find it in diligently attending meetings and listening with open minds. This practice of keeping an open and receptive mind is difficult for many of us to master, but master it we must if we would grow."

The following is one of those dividends which was heard at an AA meeting:

"God in His wisdom has selected this group of men (and women) to be the purveyors of His Goodness. In selecting them through whom to bring about this phenomenon, He went not to the proud, the mighty, the famous or the brilliant. He went to the humble, to the sick, to the unfortunate--He went right to the drunkard, the so-called weakling of this world.

"Well might He have said to us: Into your weak and feeble hands I have entrusted a power beyond estimate. To you has been given that which has been denied the most learned of your fellows. Not to scientists or statesmen, not to wives or mothers, not even to My priests or ministers have I given this gift of healing other alcoholics which I entrust to you.

"It must be used unselfishly. It carries with it grave responsibility. No day can be too long, no demands upon your time can be too urgent, no case too pitiable, no task too hard, no effort too great. It must be used with tolerance for I have restricted its application to no race, no creed and no denomination. Personal criticism you must expect, lack of appreciation will be common, ridicule will be your lot--Success will not always attend your efforts in your work with other alcoholics. You must be prepared for adversity, for what men call adversity is the ladder you must use to ascend the rungs toward spiritual perfection. And remember, in the exercise of this power, I shall not exact of you beyond your capabilities.

"You are not selected because of exceptional talents, and be careful always if success attends your efforts, not to

ascribe to personal superiority, that to which you can lay claim only by virtue of My gift.

"If I had wanted learned men to accomplish this mission, the power would have been entrusted to the physician and the scientist. If I had wanted eloquent men, there would have been many anxious for the assignment, for talk is the easiest used of all talents with which I have endowed mankind. If I had wanted scholarly men, the world is filled with better qualified men than you who would have been available.

"You were selected because you have been the outcasts of the world, and your long experience as drunkards has made or should make you humbly alert to the cries of distress that come from the lonely hearts of alcoholics everywhere. Keep in mind the admission you made on the day of your entrance into AA, namely, that you are powerless and that it was only with your willingness to turn your life and will into My keeping, that relief came to you."

---AA---

AA CANNOT BE TAUGHT

One cannot teach AA, if you can get that in your mind and heart, much of your frustration will vanish. No one can teach it - and no one can learn it. That's right ... no one can learn release and recovery - in the generally understood meaning of that term.

If recovery could be "taught", the problem would have been resolved hundreds of years ago. Think it over! How, then, is release effected? By an incredibly simple technique of absorption. One absorbs the basic spiritual truths which lead to recovery in the same manner as a sponge absorbs dampness from its surroundings. Hence, the first matter is to create a healing, a recovery climate. The ingredients are infinite patience, deep charity, much tolerance, personal humility, and time . . . and more time. Neither Mother Nature nor Almighty God can be hurried.

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