

The NIGHT CAP

Published monthly by the San Antonio Central Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous in the interest of greater unity of members in local and Southwest Texas area groups.

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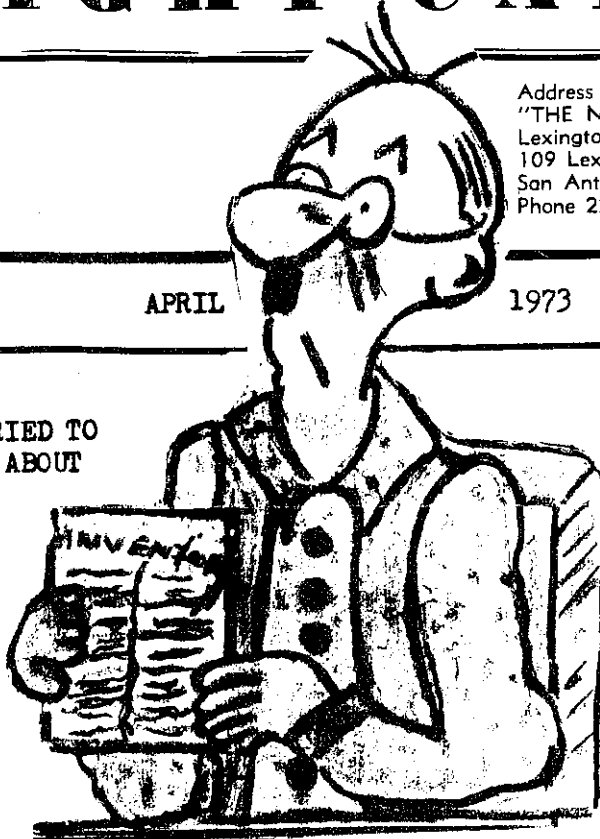
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NUMBER TWELVE

TIME AFTER TIME NEWCOMERS HAVE TRIED TO KEEP TO THEMSELVES CERTAIN FACTS ABOUT THEIR LIVES. TRYING TO AVOID THIS HUMBLING EXPERIENCE, THEY HAVE TURNED TO EASIER METHODS. ALMOST INVARIABLY THEY GOT DRUNK...

--ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS



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AN INTERPRETATION OF THE 12 STEPS

STEP FOUR: MADE A SEARCHING AND FEARLESS MORAL INVENTORY OF OURSELVES...

Few of us realize when we approach AA and find an individual who, probably for the first time, says "I understand," that in reality we have made a start at unburdening ourselves of the pent-up fears, frustrations, anxiety and guilt that we have carried within us for so long. The AA member will pave the way by first telling his story, and we will be amazed at his frankness and the sharing of his experience. This is only the beginning of the openness, so necessary for our recovery.

As we progress, using the indispensables of Willingness, Honesty and Open-mindedness, we come to Step Four, where we really take a good look at ourselves. Why do we do this? To quote from the book Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions: "Step Four is our vigorous and painstaking effort to discover what these liabilities in each of us have been and are. We want to find exactly how, when and where our natural desires have warped us. We wish to look squarely at the unhappiness this has caused others and ourselves. By discovering what our emotional deformities are, we can move toward their correction. Without a willing and persistent effort to do this, there can be little sobriety or contentment for us. Without a searching and fearless moral inventory, most of us have found that the faith which really works in daily living is still out of reach."

When do we take this step? When we can honestly and soberly face ourselves. Surely not in the distant future, for this is a program of daily sobriety and daily living-- living

comfortably with ourselves, with God as we understand Him, and with our fellow man. How do we go about it? We write it all down, so that in the light of day we may correct those defects we attributed to other people and circumstances. Many guidelines are available, or in the absence of a guideline, we may write the true story of our lives, leaving out nothing and telling it as it is.

If we will not take the Fourth Step, we cannot take the Fifth, Sixth, Seventh, Eighth or Ninth. This is half of the Program, and we cannot live on half-measures. They availed us nothing.

-- Bill O.

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BUGABOOS

When writing out my inventory I became discouraged by my horrendous past. The bugaboos of depression, self-pity, and discouragement set in to the point that the Inventory Step had defeated its purpose. I was wallowing in my own hopelessness. I could not see past Step Four to Five, Six, and Seven. I had failed to remember that the drinking was but a symptom of my own wrong thinking.

In truth the Inventory had pointed up what basic attitudes so influenced my behavior that I could not face reality and had to live my life in a bottle. The Step showed me who I really was. Only by knowing who and what I was could I hope to do something about it. Suddenly hope dawned and I knew that all things were possible.

Had I been aware of the word "forgiveness" as I took the Step, I might not have fallen into the trap of self-pity, for to me remembering the word "forgiveness" puts the Step into its proper perspective and allows a natural flow into Steps Five, Six and Seven.

-- Beth J.

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COCKTAIL RECIPE

Take: 1 (One) Drink
Wake the neighbors
Start horsing around.

-- Big Book John

FORGIVENESS

It is always hard for a person to forgive an injury....

It is hard to forgive an injury and hard to forgive the person who injured us. But I venture to say that you will discover the person hardest to forgive is yourself. A very bitter form of hatred is self-hatred. It is the cause of many suicides. Usually we do not realize that hatred of self is just as wicked as hatred of one's neighbor, and, if you hate yourself, you hate somebody whom God loves. Furthermore, self-hatred ravages your soul just as completely as does your hatred of an enemy.

Self-hatred is not repentance, it is a form of cruelty upon one's self and in which, the psychiatrist assures us, some people take morbid delight. It is utterly wrong, utterly childish and utterly unprofitable.

"Forgive one another" -- that includes yourself.

-- Chit Chat

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JUDGE: "My good man, it is alcohol and alcohol alone that is the cause of all your problems and is solely responsible for your present condition."

DRUNK: "Thanks, your honor. You're the first guy who didn't say it was all my fault!"



GROUP NEWS

THE GOLIAD GROUP, 104 Avondale, will hold its monthly Barbecue on Sunday, April 15, at 6:00 PM.

THE DOWNTOWN GROUP, Sahara Club, 809 East Euclid, reminds you of its "Poor Boy Bingo" each Saturday night at 8:00 and its dinner the first Sunday of each month at 1:00 PM.

THE HAVEN, 1640 West Woodlawn -- The monthly dinners have been discontinued until the month of May, when we hope to have the parking lot paved, fair weather, and facilities for outdoor eating.

GROUP 12, Club 12, 102 Thames, now has an Al-anon Beginners' meeting running currently with the AA Beginners' meeting on Sundays at 4:00 PM.

5th Chapter is now co-educational! The ladies now include the gentlemen on Tuesdays at 8:15 PM for a Closed Discussion Meeting.

Bingo: Come to Club 12 on Saturday, April 28 Dinner (\$1.50 for adults and \$1.00 for children) will be served at 7:00 PM, followed by Bingo.

Bridge: Party Bridge is played each Friday after the meeting. Everyone is welcome.

HARMONY GROUP, 2208 N. Zarzamora, holds Closed Meetings each Thursday. Al-anon meetings are also held on Thursdays. An Open Speakers' Meeting is presented each Saturday

FORT SAM HOUSTON GROUP is in a new location, Bldg. 1115, Ft. Sam Houston, two buildings from the Community House. Facilities include a huge meeting room, lounge area, rooms for AA, Al-anon, Alateen, and Alatoms, all of whom meet each Thursday. An Open Speakers' Meeting is held on Mondays.

TWENTY-FOUR HOUR GROUP, Twenty-four Hour Club 1203 Fredericksburg Rd. -- Good news from 24 Hour Group! We are now having monthly dinners at 1:00 PM on the last Sunday of each month, followed by Bingo. Join us for good food and games.

FRONTIER GROUP The Frontier Group wishes to express its appreciation to the Institutions/Rehabilitation Committee of the Central Service Office for so faithfully arranging with the Group to host the Saturday night meetings in the past, and also to thank all of the Groups for their help. We are pleased to announce that the officers of the Frontier Group will arrange programs for the Saturday night meetings beginning in April.

- AA -

Alcoholics Anonymous enjoys the distinction of having a higher percentage of recoveries than any other "Treatment". This in the face of the fact that AA gets 'em only after all the other recovery treatments have failed. It cost nothing to become a fellow in the AA fellowship. And after you have learned the new way of life taught in AA you still owe nothing; not even loyalty, if you don't feel the urge to give it.

A COLLECTION OF SUPERLATIVES

- The Greatest Sin -- Fear
- The Best Day -- Today
- The Greatest Deceiver -- One who Deceives himself
- The Most Expensive Indulgence -- Hate
- The Cheapest, Stupidest & Easiest Thing to Do-- Find Fault
- The greatest Troublemaker -- Talking too Much
- The Best Part of Anyone's Religion -- Gentleness & Cheerfulness
- The Meanest Feeling -- Jealousy
- The Greatest Need -- Common Sense
- The Best Gift to Give or Receive -- Forgiveness

28TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

A.A. in San Antonio will celebrate its 28th Birthday Thursday April 12. The Party will be at the Anacacho Room in the St. Anthony Hotel at 7:30 PM. Tickets are \$6.50 each. Arthur C. will be the M.C. and Big John from Brownwood will be the speaker.

Fine food, beautiful people, a good program ... but most of all, a celebrating of twenty-eight years of life for the alcoholic in this area. If you have not purchased your ticket, do it to-day! EVERYBODY COME and help make our 28th Anniversary one to remember!

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FLASHBACK TO: the April 1952 Nightcap....

A.A. 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 the 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 AA Group in San Antonio.

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PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOP

Don't forget the pre-conference workshop to be held Saturday, March 31, and Sunday, April 1, at the Quality Inn, 10803 Austin Highway, in San Antonio. Registration is in the lobby at 8:30 AM. The opening session will be at 9:00. There will be a Lunch Break at 12:00 noon (no planned meal). The afternoon session will run from 1:30 PM until 4:45 PM. Dinner, by reservation only, will be at 6:30 PM at a cost of \$4.00 per person. The evening session begins at 8:00 PM. On Sunday, there will be a 9:00 AM morning session. Workshop leaders are Elves S., Delegate, Tony F., Alternate; Carl H., Conference Chairman; Kate R., Fred H., Eve S., and Gene D. The session leaders will conduct open discussion on subjects and topics on the agenda of the General Service Conference in New York. Committee Members will report on activities in their respective areas. See you there!

RAMBLING 'ROUND THE AREA

Thanks to Marilyn H. for the news from Victoria and Port Lavaca....

"Skeeter" S., Port Lavaca Group, is recovering at home from open heart surgery and doing great. Don H. has recently returned to Victoria and is working as a counselor with the Alcoholic Recovery Program here. This program is under the M.H.M.R. office in this area, which serves seven counties. Welcome back, Don! Roy T. of the El Campo Group passed away on March 2, 1973. The Southwest Area Conference will be held at the Holiday Inn in Victoria, Texas, the second weekend in October; that's the 12th, 13th, and 14th of October, 1973. Mark it on your calendar right now.

FUNNIES

Once had a friend who used to be known as the town drunk. That doesn't sound like much till you realize he lived in New York City.

There's no sense in advertising your troubles. There's no market for them.

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WANT AD

WANTED: by your NIGHTCAP! How 'bout some news and articles from you other cities, towns, and districts? ? ?

THOUGHTS ON "TO KEEP IT, GIVE IT AWAY!"
IN AL-ANON

My empty hand is a handshake
When I clasp your hand in mine.
Then, you become part of me
Forever.

A smile soon fades with none to share.
It must be given to you --
A friend -- A stranger --
To return a thousandfold
To be given again and again,
Over and over.

A "thank you" unspoken
Is not an appreciation
It withers and dies when no one knows.
And love is a nothing
Until I love

You -- And you-- And God!
-- Lola L.

JUST A LITTLE GLASS OF WINE

It began about six years ago-- until then alcohol had no part in my life. I was not even a so-called social drinker. It never occurred to me that a drink would help anything.

About this time I became extremely tense and there was no sleeping at night. The doctor suggested that a little wine before bedtime might help my insomnia. I had no knowledge of drinking and what its effect might be on me. So in all innocence, with a little glass of wine before bed, I opened the door to hell for me and my family.

It didn't take long to go from a little wine to a lot, and within a year I had blown my mind and was in the psychiatric ward. After six months there, I was no better and the doctors wanted to commit me to the State Hospital for an indefinite stay. My husband insisted on another doctor and a different hospital where perhaps I could be helped. Here I stayed for three years during which time I had thirty or more shock treatments. I was finally released in the custody of my husband as still ill, but harmless.

At home I felt nothing except a terrible fear. I wouldn't go out of the house or answer the phone. I didn't feel safe, even with my own family. I felt completely shut-off from every living human being in this world. There was one thing that I did that puzzled me. Every little while, day and night, I would go to the refrigerator and open the door as though I were looking for something. I had no idea what it was I wanted until one night my husband happened to ask me if I missed my glass of wine at night. The shock treatments had blotted out the past, but at that moment I realized that I had been searching for wine. The thought sent me into a panic! For nearly two years I fought against my craving with all that was left in me, but it was not enough-- to drink or not to drink, and I always drank.

I had to be immersed in utter darkness before I could find the light. Little did I know that the very thing that started my downward path (the little glass of wine) would be the thing God would use to save my sanity and lead me to AA. I didn't want to drink, but I couldn't stop. It got so bad that I finally decided to call the doctor and have him lock me up. I still wasn't sleeping, even with my glasses of wine, so I would watch television until it went off for the night. On that night the last thing that was flashed on the screen was AA's telephone number. The next day instead of calling the doctor, I called AA, and within an hour two beautiful ladies were at my home and hope was back in my heart.

At the close of my first year in AA, I feel privileged to share my story as an expression of gratitude to all you wonderful people who opened the door of life to me and have given me the tools with which to rebuild my life. AA is a tremendous program. It does work. There is a Higher Power and that Higher Power does help if we will but humbly ask.

--LaRee M.



PUBLIC INFORMATION ACTIVITIES

On February 22 Vic E. spoke to a Social Action Group at Randolph AFB. Abel G. talked to a sociology class at San Antonio College on March 1.

In the past three months three radio spot announcements, two of thirty seconds' length and one of ten seconds, in behalf of Alcoholics Anonymous have been distributed to thirteen radio stations. One ten second television spot with a color slide of the Central Office address and phone number was given to four major television stations.

Most of the media have responded favorably to AA's request for public service time. We have received notices from WOAI-TV and KTSA radio that \$510 and \$200 worth of time have been donated respectively to our project.

At the March meeting of the Public Information Committee, it was decided to purchase a thirty second videotape to be placed with our three local TV stations on a thirty day rotating basis.

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YOUR CENTRAL OFFICE

How can I help AA stay alive? What can I do? I belong now. I am not alone anymore- I want to continue being a part of this beautiful fellowship. I've felt this way- Have you? Here are some literature suggestions:

1. IF YOU ARE A PROFESSIONAL AA WANTS TO WORK WITH YOU
2. PROFILE OF AN AA MEETING
3. THE CO-FOUNDERS OF AA
4. A BRIEF GUIDE TO AA

These are a few of many literature pamphlets supplied by your Central Office. This is what your Buck-a-Month contribution gives you!

-- Jeannie W.

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GENERAL SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES

Meeting will be held Sunday, April 8, 7:00 PM at Club 12.

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MONTHLY INTERGROUP MEETING

Jack C., from Austin, formerly of Lubbock, will speak at the Intergroup Meeting on Sunday, April 8, at 8:15 PM at Club 12. The Haven Group will host the meeting.

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NEW MEETING DIRECTORY

The Central Office is in the process of revising the Meeting Directory. Any changes in Group meetings should be reported now. Call Corinne at the Central Office, 226-2164.

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BIG BOOK'S BOOK MOBILE

Need some hardback literature? Don't want to make a trip to the Central Office? Get it through Big Book John! All proceeds from the sale of the literature go to the Central Office.

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IN MEMORIAM:

Sam McC. -- March, 1973
Matt W. -- March, 1973

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"He was right, it seems, who said that Life is what you make it. It's not so much what happens as the Way in which you take it."

Doubt whom you will, but never doubt yourself.

--Bovee

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Current Meeting Directory dated May, 1972 is available from Groups or the Central Service Office and is changed as follows: (All meetings will be held at 8:15 PM unless otherwise noted.)

FT. SAM HOUSTON

Open Speakers meetings are held Mondays. Closed Discussion meetings - Thursdays.

Alanon, Alateen and Alatot meetings - Thursdays.

OPEN DOOR

Discontinued Thursday meetings. Holding Open Discussion meetings - Fridays.

GRUPO UNIDAD

New Group holding Open Speaker meetings, Saturdays. Address: 311 N. W. 24th St.

PILGRIM

Discontinued Wednesday night meetings. Holding Open Discussion meetings Sundays.

BREES

New Group holding Closed Discussion meetings Thursdays. Birthday last Thursday in month. Open meeting. Address: Sunset Ridge Church of Christ, 2367 Brees.

Al-Anon meetings are held Thursdays.

BROADWAY

New Group holding Open Discussion meetings, Saturdays. Address: Christ Lutheran Church, 6720 Broadway.

NORTHEAST

New Group holding Open Discussion meetings, Saturdays. Address: John Calvin Presbyterian Church, 8102 Midcrown.

WELCOME

Meetings discontinued.

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SERENITY

Closed Discussion meetings are held Tuesdays 7:00 PM and Open Speaker meetings are held on Fridays - regular time.

NORTHWEST

Closed Discussion meetings are held Mondays.

Al-Anon meetings are held Mondays.

VALLEY HI

Closed Discussion meetings - Tuesdays. Birthday last Tuesday in month, - Open meeting:

Al-Anon meetings Tuesdays.

Al-Ateen meetings Tuesdays.

GROUP 12

Al-Anon Beginners' Meeting 4 PM Sundays in conjunction with AA Beginners' Meeting.

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LET'S WATCH OURSELVES

Any man can spoil himself for himself. He can allow himself to grow so sensitive that he lives in constant pain. He can nurse his grudges until they are an intolerable burden. He can think himself insulted until he is apt to be. He can believe that the world is against him until it is. He can imagine troubles until they are real. He can hold so many under suspicion that no one believes in him. He can insult his friends until they are no longer friends. He can think himself so important that no one else does. He can become so wrapped up in himself that he becomes very small. He can have such a good opinion of himself that no one else enjoys his friendship. In fact, he becomes so unhappy with himself that he probably goes out to get a drink to forget himself.

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"I AM RESPONSIBLE"

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ME AND "3"

Never had I doubted God and his omnipotence but I just didn't get around to giving it a second-look. It was like I know there is a law of gravity, a speed of light, a speed of sound and a uniqueness about all things in that they have a different chemical or organic makeup. These were only things that were. But today, I have learned that God is life, God is love and God is law, and that I somehow can see, feel and know it so.

In this fellowship I learned God is transcendent - proof is - the rhythm of the four seasons and regularity of day and night, etc., etc. Also, that He is immanent - involved with His world and all human affairs. Being pragmatic, I begin to ask myself - "When a Power is of such greatness, who am I to think that I am capable of really taking charge of anything?" - I have yet to come up with a satisfactory answer but, I am still looking with hope that I will be able to abandon myself to my God.

Somehow, I have accepted the fact that my Higher Power has given me a free will and wants me to use it to keep myself happy and joyous. In my opinion, God wants me to be in control of my own mind and yet he will remain in complete charge. This reminds me of coach-and-quarterback relationship; The coach expects the quarterback to run the team by calling the plays that he (the quarterback) has come to believe will lead to a win; however, he demands that when difficulties develop that the signal-caller return to the sidelines for needed assistance.

When I become willing (determined is a better word for me), it seems to make it much easier for me to turn my will and my life over to the care of God, as I understand Him.

My way has been "God, let me know your will and then I'll let you know if I want to go along with it." Now, I am working on His way - that is, to commit my will to Him, though sight unseen. This decision has been made, but I suppose I will never know for sure when the action is completed. Is this what we mean by "we claim spiritual progress rather than spiritual perfection"?

HAVE A GOOD 24

Frost U.

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S M I L E

W I T H U S

Did you hear about the alky who swapped his beer belly for a coffee pot?

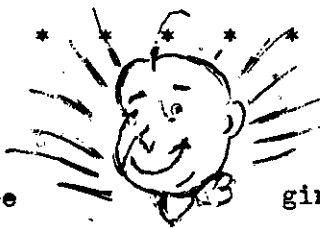
" " " " " " " " " "

A newcomer at a closed meeting wanted to know how he could be sure he had hit bottom. One of the gal members told him, "That's a difficult question to answer because our bottoms are different."

" " " " " " " " " "

Don't wait for a shower. Take one.

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My girl friend was a very bright girl - always lit!

" " " " " " " " " "

If you're ready for the hair off the dog that bit you -- How about the bear that walked into a bar and roared for a Martini. The surprised bartender just stared, so the bear bellowed out his order again, adding, "How much?" "Ten dollars," said the bartender. "What's the matter," asked the bear as he upended his glass, "haven't you ever seen a bear in a bar before?" "No," replied the bartender. "Well," said the bear, "at these prices, you're not going to see another one, either."

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