

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 South-west Texas Area groups.

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VOLUME THREE

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I-O-V-E - THE 4TH ABSOLUTE....

(For this Holiday Season, 1975, Love, the final Absolute in Fred M.'s series is most appropriate and is, perhaps, the most important one of all. For if we truly love, it must surely follow that Honesty, Purity and Unselfishness will be achieved. ed)

Did you ever ask, or hear a question that caused you to think for days, even weeks. Questions that have no easy answers are often the key to the truth. However, in this series on the Four Absolutes, we are concerned with questions we should be asking our selves throughout life. The integrity of our answers may determine the quality of our lives, even the continuance of our sobriety. A good question to ask ourselves is "Is it ugly, or is it beautiful?" We're experts on life's ugliness. We have only tasted a little of its beauty, but we are hungry for more. Love IS beauty.

Coming from the depths of fear, physical agony, mental torture and spiritual starvation, we feel totally unloved, poisoned by resentments, impregnated with self-pity and devoured by a warped ego, which along with alcohol has brought us to blindness. In A. A. we receive love and understanding from strangers, and we make progress as we in turn give these to new strangers. For us, love is inspiring from the start, even in kindergarten, where some of us still are. In giving love, we receive love. But the joy of receiving can never match the thrill of giving. When we consider that the mission of love which is ours may never be experienced by the non-alcoholic, we have a new reason for gratitude.

Few indeed are privileged to have the rich experience of being God's Helpers in the gift of a second life. We reach our 12th Step when we give love to the new man who is poor today, as we were poor in our alcoholic yesterdays. Love is the poor man's beginning toward God. Anyone who is too proud to know he is poor, has already turned away from God, with or without alcohol. But if he has a drinking problem, we can show him the way through our love, understanding and experience. When we live only for our own sobriety, we again become beggars, dressed in spiritual rags, blind once again with the dust of pride and self. Soon, we shall be starving again with such hunger that we may lose our sobriety, and finally turn and devour ourselves.

Love is giving of ourselves, else our progress is completely lost. Each of us own the gift of this second life of sobriety we have to every human being we meet in the eternal presence of God, especially to the alcoholic who still suffers. Not to give of ourselves in return brings desolation and a new poverty to the sober alcoholic.

When we offer love, we offer our lives. Are we prepared to give it? When another offers us love, he offers his life. Have we the grace to receive it? When love is offered, God is there. Have we received Him? The will to love is God's will; have we taken the Third Step? Again, ask, "Is it ugly, or is it beautiful?" If it truly is beautiful, then it is the way of love. It is the way of A. A., and it is the will of God - as we understand Him.

Fred M. Weslaco

Love by its presence, like God by His, makes everything not necessarily clear or right or even good, but acceptable. Whereas in its absence, as in His, there is no hope.

Virgilia peterson

CENTRAL SERVICE OFFICE NEWSREFERRALS

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We're getting lots of calls from schools and colleges for speakers, also from lots of students for writing papers on alcoholism and Alcoholics Anonymous.

THE CENTRAL SERVICE OFFICE COMMITTEE will meet on Sunday, December 14, at Club 12, 102 Thames, 7 PM. This is an important meeting. Please attend.

HOSPITAL COMMITTEE

Gladys H. and Sue W. were in charge of the A. A. literature booth on October 31, at the Health Fair on Aging held at Joe Freeman Coliseum, and sponsored by ACCOG. Participation was real great. By the end of the Fair, every piece of lit... GONE!
Sue W.

Frost U. and Charlie McM. arranged for an exhibit of AA literature at the University of Texas School of Nursing held in August, a 3-day seminar in Psychiatric nursing.

Anyone interested in doing volunteer work at the V. A. Hospital Alcohol Unit is urged to contact Charlie at - 696-9660, Ext. 247. Applicants are reminded that, while working as a volunteer, he or she does not represent AA. Eg. Charlie represents the American Red Cross.
Charlie McM.

P. I. C. REPORT

The following AA members carried the message October 15 through November 15:

SAC - Rick C., VFW - John Q., UTSA - Hal and Sue S. Lady of the Lake - Bob S. & Marilyn J. Jefferson Hi - Eloise C.

Arrangements have been made, announcements sent concerning AA to Radio Station KCOR for airing in Spanish. Radio KUKA conducted in Spanish an interview on the resources of AA. Members participating:

(CONTINUED.....MIDDLE OF THIS PAGE)

IN MEMORIAM

Betty Ruth S. died November 13,
Wife of Rex S.
Edward Bruce S. died November 15,
Brother of Frank S.

Our deepest sympathy to their families.

The yearly calendar books that Roy Akers Funeral Home donates to AA every year are now in the office. Jean W. will bring them to the Dec. GSR meeting, for distribution to the groups.

*S*T*A*R*R*

The Southwest Texas Area Round Robin will hold its last meeting for 1975, December 14th, Club 12, at 8:15 PM, immediately following the CSOC meeting. Corpus Christi Groups will bring the same great message as last year, we're sure, or even a better one! Attendance was great at our November STARR. Let's make this one a record. Mona S. is Chairman. Come!

CONTINUED.....P.I.C. REPORT

KUKA interview...Ben A., Adrian H., Pete H., Juan R. and Nancy M. on November 11.

On Radio KEDA, a taped interview with Ben A. was aired on November 6. Ben has also spent many hours contacting numerous radio and TV stations in support of the AA program. As soon as results are available, they will be passed on to the Night Cap.

Requests for AA members to take part in seven (7) additional non-alcoholic meetings have been received, and all these will be filled by December 15, 1975.

You can see from this report that the members of our Fellowship are really out carrying the message of AA. Many, many thanks and deep gratitude goes to these dedicated people.

Sincerely, P. I. C

When you see a guy with a gleam in his eye, and a permanent grin on his pan, You can lay two to one that this son-of-a-gun is a Twelfth Steppin' A A man!

PUBLISHING QUALIFICATIONS EXPLAINED

Occasionally the Night Cap editor is asked to print items on activities of Clubs, agencies, alcohol-oriented retreats and other organizations working in the field of alcoholism but not affiliated with A. A. In some cases and AA group holds meetings on the premises of these organizations. In such cases, the editor informs the person submitting the news item for publication that only activities which are a part of the AA program (Group AA activities) can be published in the Night Cap. When this occurs, the Central Service Office Administrative Board is accused of running the whole show, or the editor is accused of being high-handed.

Nothing could be further from the truth. The decision on what can, or cannot be published in the Night Cap was made by GSRs from all groups present, who were assembled in a regular GSR meeting at Club 12 on February 10, 1974. The following is a verbatim quote from the minutes of that meeting:

"Preston S., Chairman, then presented for the group conscience the subject of what articles and publications would appear in the Night Cap. This subject was brought about by the publication of a National Council luncheon which had appeared in the Night Cap. Preston stated the Board's recommendation that "activities" not part of the AA program NOT be published in the Night Cap. The Chairman then opened this subject for discussion and voting. After much discussion, the motion to approve the Board's recommendation was voted affirmative. The group (GSRs) then voted to accept articles and publications presented to Night Cap by Ala-nons and Ala-teens.

Jim B. Recording Secretary, CSOC "

By the above action the Central Service Office Administrative Board was functioning under General Service Office guidelines, within the 12 Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous.

If any person in AA does not like the way something is being done by the Central Service Office, the thing to do is to discuss the matter with their group's GSR. The GSR can then bring the suggestion to the Central Service Office Committee Board for consideration and possible change. This is the A. A. way -- working through the Group Conscience.

Preston S.

THOUGHTS ON THE 12 TRADITIONS

In Tradition One, I am told how to stay well and, to my surprise, it dawns on me I have received the first gentle whisper which nudges me along the path to humility.

Tradition Two tells me who God is, where He is, and what He does. It says, "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." God expresses Himself in a specific location - my conscience. That is good news to me. I have wondered for years where and who God was and what He did. I now understand what was meant so long ago by the command: "Be still and know that I am God."

In the last half of this Tradition Two, I read and I find the second whisper toward humility. "Our leaders (you and I) are but trusted servants; they do not govern." I love the clarity and force of that simple word, "BUT", and as a leader I am but a trusted servant. I need not govern. Thank God! I have been a dubiously trusted leader who felt that he MUST govern...for too long. Now I may be relieved of all that. As God may express Himself in my conscience and the group conscience is all I have to worry about. I am His, and your, trusted servant who governs no one.

Gred M.

A THOUGHT FOR A BAD DAY..... WOULD YOU RATHER MAKE A TWELFTH^H STEP, CALL.....
OR BE ONE? Gayle McA.

ELECTIONS FOR DISTRICT # 1

Elections for Area District Committee members and Alternates for District #1 (San Antonio) will be held at the GSR meeting December 14, 1975, at 7:00 PM in Club 12. The District is divided into four (4) sectors as follows:

Sector A: Alamo Heights, Brees, Broadway, Mary Mont, Northeast, Northwood, Reliance, Sunset, Windcrest, Happy Hour, Sharing and Universal City.

Sector B: Downtown, Fort Sam Houston, Goliad, Highlands, Hope, Laurel Heights, Pilgrim, Reality, State Hospital, Serenity, Stepping Stones, and Eastside Group, if reactivated.

Sector C: El Carmen, El Sol, Frontier, Grupo Unidad, Guidance, Santa Fe, St. Agnes, Traditions, Valley-Hi, Wesley and Woodlawn Heights.

Sector D: Audie Murphy VA Hospital, Audubon, Group 12, Harmony, North San Pedro, Northwest, Pride, The Haven, Trinity, Twenty-four Hour and Villa Rosa.

Each Sector should elect a District Committee member and an Alternate. Qualification for District Committee members are set forth in the A. A. Service Manual.

Raul M.

"SITUATIONS WHICH USED TO BAFFLE US.."

Recently, one of our San Marcos AA brothers delivered to Seguin Larry S., a shaky alkie from the creek-bed under the railroad tracks in that fiar City. Adrian, the Padrino of the MONTANA GROUP, immediately went to work trying to instruct Larry on the principles contained in the 12 Steps of AA. Saturday and Sunday pass. It looks like Padrino is doing for Larry what nine years of research have not done for this hapless drunk.

But Monday comes. Larry's right leg starts swelling. His hot shoots up to 104½ degrees! What's going on? Adrian gets pretty caliente himself. We've never had any experience with Thrombophlebitis. An inexpensive ambulance is needed immediately, but our Half-Way House is broke! Padrino helps the sagging body into his tiny car, heads for the Fire Station. The Firemen can't help! So he speeds to his last friend in the body-hauling business - PALMERS FUNERAL HOME!

By now Larry is in a very hot and painful state, slumped over, just clinging to life. Adrian skids to a stop, pats him on the shoulder, saying, "Hang in there old podner!" and hits the ground, running. Awhile later, Larry moans, raises his head and slowly looks out the car window, sees the Funeral Home sign and snaps to attention pronto. "Oh, that cotton-pickin' Adrian," he groans, "he's brought me here just to save them the trouble of picking up my body at LaCasita!" His hot changes to freezing. But escape? No way.

The conclusion of this story? All good. Mr. Palmer immediately dispatched Larry in an ambulance to Bexar County Hospital. Emergency techniques stopped blood clots from reaching his heart or lungs. Later, he's shipped to Audie Mucphy VA Hospital, his blood thinned, and he's shipped back to "LaCasita," where Larry and Adrian are back drilling on the principles contained in the 12 Steps of AA. All the doctors said if he'd been 2-3 hours in getting help, we might have no Larry S. with us today.

Consider the quote from Page 84 of the Big Book: "We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us...."

Merry Christmas

F-E-L-I-Z N-A-V-I-D-A-D

'Tis the night before Christmas and all through the Casa
Not a creature is stirring. Caramba! Que' pasa?
The stockings are hanging con mucho cuidado
In hopes that St. Nicholas will feel obligado
To leave a few cosas aqui and alli
For Chico y Chica (y something for me).
Los ninos are snuggled all safe in their camas
(Some in vestidos and some in pajamas).
Their little cabezas all full of good things
They're esperando que' Santa will bring.

But Santa esta at the corner saloon,
May borracho since midafternoon.
Mama' is sitting beside la ventana
Shining her rolling pin para mañana and
When Santa returns to his home zigzagueando,
Lit up like the Star Spangled Banner, cantando.
The mama will send him to bed con a right;
Merry Christmas a todos y a todos - good night!

Author unknown



zy
New Year 1976

SOUTHWEST TEXAS AREA NEWS

The SAN ANTONIO STATE HOSPITAL AA GROUP will hold its Christmas Party, December 15, in the auditorium. A regular Monday night meeting, of only one short talk, will be held at 7:00 PM, dinner immediately after.

Gifts for both men and women are needed. GIFT BOXES for the patients will be left at The HAVEN, GOLIAD, 24-HOUR SERVICE CENTER and CLUB 12 for your convenience, or bring your gifts to the party early.

Anyone wishing to donate Pies, cakes, cookies or other sweets, please bring them to THE HAVEN BY 3:00 PM - MONDAY, Dec. 15. Any other foods donated will be prepared at the HAVEN. COME and share in the fun and fellowship. Show these alcoholic patients we care about them.

CRISIS DOES NOT CREATE CHARACTER;; IT REVEALS IT. Bishop Sheen

OPEN HOUSE

THE HAVEN will hold Open House throughout Christmas Day. Food and refreshments will be served to all comers.

On New Year's Eve there will be an open meeting, starting at 8:15 PM and running continuously through the night until 3 AM. EVERYONE IS INVITED TO COME AND JOIN WITH us for a SOBER, SANE and SAFE NEW YEAR, '76.

The 24-HOUR SERVICE CENTER will hold Open House all Christmas Week, through New Year Day. Turkey and/or Ham with the trimmings will be served Christmas, chips, dips, cold cuts, etc. New Year's day.

Any donations of food items will be appreciated. Canned goods and other foods you donate will be prepared by and at the 24-Hour Center. For further information on our needs, call: 24-Hour- 732-0282.

CONTINUED.....

AREA GROUP NEWSOPEN HOUSE

THE GOLIAD GROUP will hold open house on Christmas Day. Dinner consisting of all sorts of goodies, including Turkey and Trimmings will be served at 1:00 PM. All are welcome to come be with us.

COMMUNITY INFORMATION MEETING

You, your friends and families are cordially invited to a "Community Meeting" on Alcoholics Anonymous to be held December 18, at 8:00 PM, Main Post Office Bldg., Room 641. Chairman will be E. McG, with Speakers: Frank S. Reality Group, Mary L., Downtown Group, and A. R. Alanon - Group 12. A movie on alcoholism will be shown after the meeting. Please come. Ben

REGULAR MONTHLY EVENTS

GOLIAD GROUP - NO monthly dinner due to Christmas Day open house.

GROUP 12 - NO monthly dinner due to our Open House all Christmas week.

24 HOUR GROUP - WILL HOLD ITS MONTHLY DINNER ON DECEMBER 28, at 1:00 PM. Games party afterwards. COME JOIN US!

NO BLACK AA GROUPS

I was asked to send Night Cap news about the black groups in San Antonio. At the present time, there is not an active group in San Antonio that is predominantly black. But I can assure you AA is being accepted by the blacks in our City.
M. L. B.

PRIDE GROUP (NEW)-meets Mondays at 8:15 PM at Kerper House, 1639 W. Mistletoe, Open discussion.

The name was suggested by Willie A. and adopted by vote. PRIDE through sobriety. PRIDE through humility. A person may lose to excessive drinking, money, family, freedom, friends, go all the way to the bottom of society. But somewhere there must lie a small spark of self-respect - PRIDE. If this person will only try the AA program, striving to stay sober through the Fellowship will turn him into a proud being. So, PRIDE through sobriety is the motto of this Group. Dorman K.

OPEN HOUSE

Open House, sponsored by all groups, including Alanons, meeting at Club 12 will be held at Club 12 during the Holidays, from December 24 through January 1, from 12 Noon to 6:00 PM. Everyone come join us for fun and fellowship - and food.

A special SPEAKERS meeting will be observed on Christmas Eve, beginning at 8:15 PM.

Also at Club 12 there will be a gala New Year's Eve dance, starting at 8:00 PM.

A NEW RIO GRANDE VALLE GROUP has been formed at Brownsville. Meets in the new Valley Community Hospital, Conference Rm #1, located on Hwy. 802, intersection of 77-83 Expressway North. Meetings: Closed-7:00 PM Tuesdays - Open 1:00 PM Sundays.

The KERRVILLE VA HOSPITAL GROUP changed meeting nights to FRIDAY at 7 PM. Open discussion. Since beginning a five-per-week Alcoholism Therapy sessions a few weeks ago, greater interest and better patient attendance at the AA meetings has been noted. We still need more attendance from non-patient AA members. Hal F. GSR

THE KERRVILLE GROUP has added a 9:00 A.M. meeting to its schedule. All meetings are open discussion, held at 720 Tivy Street. GSRs of the NEW DISTRICT 5 of the Southwest Area elected Ann S., KERRVILLE SERENITY GROUP as District Committee Chairman. Hal F., VA HOSPITAL GROUP as Alternate.

Hill Country ALANONS now have another meeting, the ONE-DAY-AT-A-TIME GROUP, which holds meetings each Tuesday, 720 Tivy at 9:30 A. M. Fran F. GSR

THE VILLA ROSA GROUP WILL CELEBRATE ITS 4TH ANNIVERSARY ON JANUARY 13, 1975, in the Auditorium of Villa Rosa Hospital. Speaker will be Fred M. Weslaco, Texas. Food and refreshments will be served after the meeting which starts at 8:15 PM. WATCH FOR MORE DETAILS IN A VILLA ROSA FLYER IN JANUARY.

JUDGMENT SEATS FOR ALCOHOLICS, HAVE A WAY OF TURNING INTO BAR STOOLS...

Anon

BORDER CONFERENCE

We welcome you to our 1st Annual FIESTA DE AA, December 5-7, 1975, Del Rio, Texas. Have an entire week-end of Sharing. All meetings will be held at HOTEL ROSWELL, in the Land of Mañana. It's different. Fine speakers from Venice, Cal., Waurika, Okla., Center Point, Texas, Prince Albert, SK, Canada, etc. Fine chairmen, too. Make Rm. reservations direct to: RIO MANOR, HOLIDAY INN, RAMADA INN. ROSWELL HOTEL is already booked solid. Conference Registration fee \$10. Mail to P. O. Box 1442, Del Rio 78840. A week-end spent on the Mexican Border is one to be remembered. Come see! No tequila pero mucho cafe! This is our chance to give back some of what we have received from you.

CALLEN GROUP

WE WANT YOU TO "COME", Share our "13TH" A. A. ANNIVERSARY..GOOD FELLOWSHIP, GOOD SPEAKERS, GOOD REFRESHMENTS. COME EARLY!
 WHEN: DECEMBER 11, 1975 - 8--9:30 PM.
 WHERE: 11222LEOPARD STREET - GRACE METHO DIST CHURCH
 WHAT: HELP US CELEBRATE OUR ANNIVERSARY
 WHO: CHAIRPERSON, JOANNE
 SPEAKERS: DeeDee S.
 Port Lavaca
 Skeeter S.

12th NATIONAL AA WOMENS CONFERENCE, EL Tropicana Motor Hotel, San Antonio, Texas. February 20-22, 1976. Write Conference Chairman, Box 6454, San Antonio, 78209.

LET GO - LET GOD

Each of us will have come a long way when we can approach every activity in our lives with the prayer: "God grant me (not only the other person) the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can (mostly me), and the wisdom to know the difference." Just for today - twenty-four hours.

I used to wonder why my prayers were not answered. Now I can see that they were completely selfish, that I was not ready, spiritually, for them to be answered. How could I expect answers to my prayers when I was filled with enmity, self-pity, and resentments? But "right answers" do come when you put your mind on "being" rather than "getting."

Substitute love for enmity, praise for criticism, and forgiveness in place of resentment. Take your hands entirely off of any other person's life. Turn that problem over to God. Then begin to do something about your own life. Your life will change in direct proportion to the honest effort you make to change it.

The change in me and my attitudes came very gradually. I had to learn to control my angry tongue. I had to put aside doubts that everything would turn out for the best. Over and over, I had to remind myself, "In the hands of a Power greater than I am; things will work out." I can only live my own life, letting those around me do likewise. And I must not expect too much too soon. Anon

This item appeared in the PEOPLE, ETC. COLUMN of the Sunday, November 2, 1975, SAN ANTONIO LIGHT:

"Question: A friend told me that an electric coffeepot exists which costs \$10,000, but frankly, I don't believe him. Is he right, or am I?"

ANSWER: He is. The giant coffeepot actually cost \$12,000 and is reputed to be capable of brewing more than 580,000 cups per day. *Ironically, it was specially designed to serve the annual convention of Alcoholics Anonymous."

*Why "ironically"? My Webster's defines the word "irony" as: A sarcastic or humorous manner of discourse in which... "That's very good" means "That's very bad." This guy'd better go to a shrink to straighten the kink in his think. Right? ed.

Probably 2 pages & somewhere?