

THE NIGHT CAP

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AN INTERPRETATION OF THE TWELVE STEPS

Step Three: "Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood him."

Short of the decision involved in the First or "admission" Step, this is probably the most important decision any alcoholic may be called upon to make. The alcoholic must here recognize that the code of self-sufficiency which dominated his life throughout his years of drinking is no longer adequate to his continued sobriety and peace of mind. This Step involves humility, without which peace of mind is impossible. It may be possible to continue egocentric, and still remain "dry" but without true humility, peace of mind is unthinkable. The alcoholic has but to review the months prior to his affiliation with A. A. and for a moment to contemplate the wreckage of those awful days to be convinced that he is physically and mentally incapable of managing his life and destiny.

There may have been a time, when, in the words of the poet Henley, he was "the master of his fate; the captain of (his) soul." These beautiful and inspiring words no longer apply to him, for he is an alcoholic - a sick person. In order to recover, in order to arrest the disease of alcoholism, he must accept the treatment necessary to recovery. Here, more than physical recovery is involved. Happiness, the most precious possession of the human soul - is at stake. Without happiness, without peace of mind, we may as well return to drink - for in the foggy world of alcoholic phantasy, there is a certain amount of transitory tranquility.

In taking this Step, there must be complete surrender of self. We now humbly turn our will and our lives over to the care of the Omnipotent Force which gave us being. If this Step is taken without reservation, the result is relief from worry and inner strife - "Peace that Passeth all understanding."

. . . Merrill L. "Doc" F.

TIME CHANGE ON LAREDO MEET FROM MARCH 14 TO MARCH 21. . .

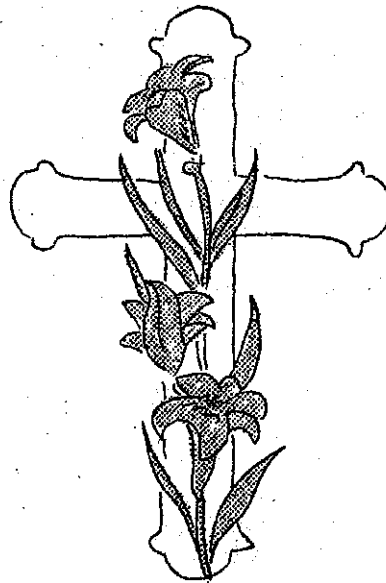
A meeting of representatives from all groups comprising the Southwest Texas A. A. Regional Conference will be held at 4 P.M., Saturday, March 21st in the Pan-American Room of the Plaza Hotel in Laredo, Texas, for the purpose of transacting such business that may properly come before it.

The time and place of this meeting has been changed by the Secretary and group action of the Laredo group, from March 14th to March 21st on account of conflicting with the annual "Border Olympics" who take over all hotel rooms and places to hold meetings.

Also, an open A. A. meeting will be held at 8 P.M., at the same time and place.

"What a wonderful world this would be if we all did as well today as we expect to do tomorrow."

Easter



NOTHING

WORKS "It's no use. Nothing
 * works. I've tried 'em all.
 * Sure, you say God has
 * power to enable a man to
 stop drinking. Then why
 doesn't He use it?"

Let me send the question right back at you - why don't YOU use it?

Put it this way. You have a lamp. It's in good order; there's a new bulb in it; all you need to do is push the button if you want to enjoy the light that the lamp will provide.

But until you plug the cord in to the socket where the electricity is connected, you will get no light. All you have is a lamp. Without the power behind that socket, unless you connect it up, nothing happens.

The power is there all the time, day or night, immediately available from tremendous generators able to supply power to a billion such lamps. But until you - you yourself - make the connection, that lamp stands unlighted, useless.

That much effort you have to make. Nobody can do that for you. Once the connection is made, however, you will get the light.

God has the only power which can bring light into the darkness of your alcoholic nightmare. God puts us on our own here. He has power waiting for us, if only we will make the simple effort of reaching for it. Day and night He waits for us with all the love and power that is His alone. We try everything else and wonder why nothing works.

"That's all very interesting, but it can't happen to me," you say. It can't? Most assuredly it can - as it has happened to thousands of others, many of them far more troubled and discouraged than you.

We alcoholics are greatest "Putter-offers" on earth, aren't we? Why not connect up now? You'll find the nearest AA a good "electrician."

Adapted From "War Cry"

* * * * *

- ..A paradox is two places to park a boat.
- ..The hardest thing to give is . . . in!
- ..Great men never feel great...small men never feel small.

L I T T L E T H I N G S...

We alcoholics have one common trait that has brought us to grief more often than any other single cause. It is our incurable bent for doing everything in the "grand manner." We are prone to make even the simplest act a "production." We are ever alert to those chances which will enable us to mount our white charger and, with trumpets sounding, set forth on deeds of derring-do. Despite the fact that, more often than not, we wind up in Alice-In-Wonderland fiasco, without plumes bebraggled and our tokus in the dust, we never give up our belief in our own prowess.

It is because of this failing that our salvation lies in the little things. The road back, for us, is in little daily acts of kindness and consideration for others; little thoughts of cheer and hope, little goals of goodness that we can reach without strain. Only thru the little things can we attain the genuine humility which enables us to surrender to the help and guidance of a Higher Power - to tap the only proven source for the strength we need to live the new pattern of our lives. It is in the doing of these little things that we can build true confidence in ourselves, the quality which will be so vital in facing up to our new responsibilities.

Should these little things seem insignificant, each by itself, consider the strength of many of them fused into a solid whole in the course of only one day's living. These things any one of us can do - in his thinking, in simple daily acts. Little things, which when multiplied by dozens, scores, or hundreds, can become an irresistible force for good in any surroundings.

... PEN POINTERS

* * * * *

THE FIRST TRADITION OF THE
 TWELVE TRADITIONS OF AA IS:
 "OUR COMMON WELFARE SHOULD COME
 FIRST."
 PERSONAL RECOVERY DEPENDS UPON
 A. A. UNITY



* * * * *

A. A. Central Office at 919 Travis Building has been operating since September, 1949, and serves approximately 500,000 people in this area. The office is also the Southwest Texas A. A. regional office with 36 affiliated groups, and is the headquarters for the 1953 Texas State Convention of A. A. to be held here in June.

The office last year had 4952 phone calls for miscellaneous information and service; 1806 visitors called in person. Made hospital arrangements with state and general hospitals for 114 patients which admit A.A.-sponsored patients. This does not include the patients placed in local clinics and hospitals.

The Central Committee sponsored a weekly educational program every Tuesday evening in the west wing of the Municipal Auditorium at which 3504 persons attended during 1952.

There are ten groups of A. A. in San Antonio with meetings every night in the week and Sunday morning and afternoon. This number includes a group for colored people and one for women.

Three clubhouses are open daily.

* * * * *

Of all the causes which conspire to blind man's erring judgment, and misguide the mind, what the weak head with strongest bias rules, is pride -- the never failing vice of fools.

- Anon.

* * * * *

10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual experience as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and practice these principles in all our affairs.

M A R C H 1 9 5 3
B I R T H D A Y S

- 2 Years: Gene G.
4 Years: Abe G., Jack L., E.M.
"Doc" W.
5 Years: Frank B., Sgt. C. H.
M., Dr. Joe C. M.,
Glenna W.
8 Years: Grace D.
10 Years: Jack C.

HERE ARE THE STEPS WE TOOK
WHICH ARE SUGGESTED AS
A PROGRAM OF RECOVERY.

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol -- that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

DIRECTORY OF AA ACTIVITIES

Call F-2523 for information of any AA activity in San Antonio and Southwest Texas.

MONDAY

State Hospital, Professional.

TUESDAY

City-wide meeting in the West Wing of Municipal Auditorium, 8:15 P.M. under sponsorship of San Antonio Central Committee of Alcoholics Anonymous. Open to the public. Women's group meets at 6:30 P.M. at 614 Avenue E.

WEDNESDAY

Club 12, Collins Gardens, High, and Groups

THURSDAY

Olmos Park, Earl, Industrial and Fulton Center Groups.

FRIDAY

Downtown and Club 12 Groups. Family Groups meet at same time and places.

SATURDAY

Industrial Group, 614 Avenue E. Open to public.

SUNDAY

Industrial, 11 AM. Downtown, 4:30

C O R P U S C H R I S T I

Downtown Group meets at Civic Center - Tuesday, Open. Friday, Closed. Family Group meets Friday. Club 10 meets at 146 Tompkins St. Monday, closed. Friday, open. Family group meets Monday. Alano Group meets at 607 Kinney St. Monday, closed. Friday, open. Family Group meets Monday.

A U S T I N

Austin Group meets at 608 N. 7th St. Tuesday, open. Thursday, State Hospital. Friday, closed. Sunday, closed. Family Group meets Friday.

H O N D O

Seco Club meets at DeMontel Hall Saturdays at 8 p.m. Mail PO Box 338. Phone day: 25; night: 353-J.

K E R R V I L L E: Meets Thursdays

S E G U I N: Meets Fridays

B O E R N E: Meets Mondays

COCKINESS

I do not know whether this expression is in common use amongst AA groups or not. We use it in our group as the antonym of Humility, and we apply it to the member who says: "AA is all right in the initial stages, but I've got beyond that now." Or, "You'll never catch me taking another drink as long as I live. I've got it beaten." And so on ad nauseam. When you hear any of these expressions, look out. The red flag is up. And in measurable time, the man who says it has gone on what, in all probability, is the juiciest bat of his life. And all AA members who have slipped know that the depression and remorse...having once known the true way of life...is incomparably worse than any previous hangover. I have proved this out personally. After fourteen months of sober, happy life, I began to slip. At first it was only mental. I still continued to go to meetings, open and closed, but in my mind I had a nebulous, barely formed thought that I could manage very well without all this talk and discussion. Was it so very necessary that I should rely on a Supreme Being? Must I watch every P and Q? Surely I could live my life without having to plan it out in twenty-four hour dollops?

The time came when I had a really bad case of Cockiness. From that to the first drink was as easy as falling off a log, and the circumstances in which I took that first drink don't matter in the very least. Suffice it to say that I went on quite an adequate bender; so much so, in fact, that it took me over a week in hospital to get back into decent physical shape. ... To me, this break-out was, I feel, necessary to cure me of over-confidence, an over-confidence that was engendered by my

(Continued on Page 5)

SOME MYTHS ABOUT DRINK....
AND SOME TRUTHS

For more than half the population of this country the bottle is the refuge from tensions, frustrations, anxieties and neuroses of modern life. Unfortunately it is only too obvious that the refuge houses beasts of its own.

...research has exploded many popular myths about alcohol. It has shown that:

Alcohol is not a stimulant; it is an anesthetic. Chloroform and ether, properly administered, have the same effect....because it anesthetizes the conscious control of judgment centers of the brain ... it gives an illusory feeling of stimulation....Physiologically the drinker is actually depressed.

Alcoholics Anonymous is by far the best publicized and most recommended means of alcoholic therapy. ... AA's, with the added advantage that all its members are ex-alcoholic, ... know every trick, every deception, every rationalization of the alcoholic...Churchmen of all faiths are among AA's ardent boosters, and the physicians and scientists who treat alcoholism rely on it, too. It is currently reclaiming more alcoholics than all of the "forcible" techniques put together.

What can be done for the alcoholic for whom all treatments have failed? He must try again. All therapists can cite cases where the patient failed the first time, or the second, only to succeed on the third or fourth attempt. There is a wonderful exultation that comes to a man when he meets head-on the problem he has been fleeing and finds that through his own ability he can conquer it.

- Condensed from Park East,
L. Klingman

* * * * *

Introducing the new deacon to his slightly deaf father, a young man said:

"Pop, this is the new deacon."

"New Dealer?" queried the father in surprise.

"No, no; not New Dealer -- New deacon," repeated the lad. "He's a son of a bishop."

The father nodded wisely.

"They all are," he signed.

- "The Brighter Side"

When nature first created man, monkey and bull, she endowed man with 40 years of life, the monkey with 40 and the bull with 20.

The man wanted more, and the monkey and the bull volunteered to help him out.

"Twenty's enough for me," said the monk.

"And I'll give him ten of mine," said the bull.

And thus it came about that man's life runs to 70 years on the average, and is divided into these three periods:

First forty years: normal living;
 next twenty: monkey business;
 last ten: shooting the bull.

- "Stolen"

If thy morals make thee dreary,
 depend upon it, they are wrong.

- Robert L. Stevenson

(COCKINESS - Concluded fr Page 4)
 not adhering close enough to the Twelve Steps to Recovery. So, with personal experience, I suggest we avoid Cockiness like the plague; and if we ever feel the symptoms ...Get out the Big Book.

- John B. in "The Road Back"



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