

THE NIGHT CAP

PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE
OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS IN SAN ANTONIO

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Number One

AN INTERPRETATION OF THE 12 STEPS

STEP TEN: "Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it."

This Step reminds us of the practical necessity of keeping the spiritually therapeutic Step Four ever before us. An inventory in this instance must be a perpetual inventory. The "arrested" alcoholic treads a narrow path, and any deviation from the way pointed by the A. A. program may well trip him. This Step tends to strengthen the humility we gradually acquire by practicing the principles of Alcoholics Anonymous.

- Merrill L. "Doc" F.



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FAITH VERSUS FEAR

BIRTHDAYS FOR OCTOBER, 1953

- 1 Year: Bee M., Tom P.
- 2 Years: George C.
- 3 Years: Arthur T.
- 4 Years: A. M. F., Clyde W.
- 7 Years: Nedra M.
- 8 Years: Zoe C.

The Night Cap is starting its fourth year with this issue.

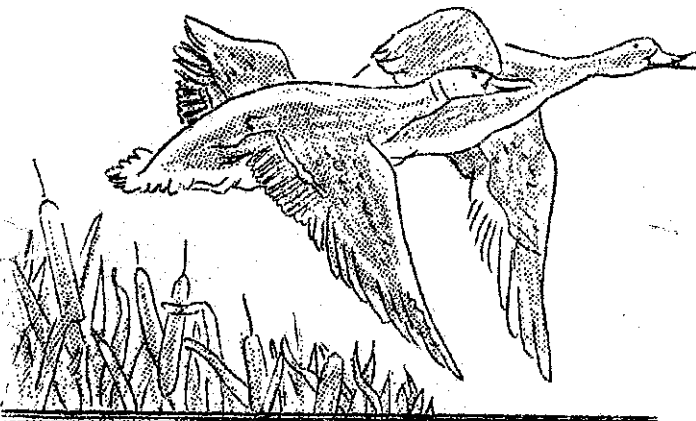
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You need not be haunted by fear. Your religion can help you. It acts as a medicine, releasing power in your mind, the power of faith which drives away fear.

That the technique of faith eliminates fear many can testify. "The first time I jumped from a plane," a paratrooper told me, "everything in me resisted. All there was between death and me was a piece of cord and a little patch of silk; but when I actually found out for myself that the patch of silk would hold me, I had the most marvelous feeling of exultation in all my life. I wasn't afraid of anything and the release from fear filled me with exquisite delight. I really did not want to come down; I was actually happy."

Fear defeats us because we are unwilling to put our trust in what we regard as an ethereal thing, namely, faith in God, but like the paratrooper, when we leap out, trusting to faith, we find that this mystic and apparently fragile thing holds us up.

(Continued page 2)



(Continued from Page 1)

This is an important truth but I must confess that it took me years to learn it and even longer to be willing to practice it. Strange how we can have at hand the formula that can mean so much, yet we will not take this attitude: "I will do all that I can about any problem. Beyond that I shall trust in God and know my faith will hold me up."

The second ingredient in the medicine against fear is love. Love is one of the most misunderstood and misused words in the English language. Hollywood and current fiction have made of it a sticky, even questionable sentiment. It has been made synonymous with sex. But love is not that at all. It is a strong, dominant, curative emotion or force. It is the power by which we make transference to other people and through which they help us. It is also the power by which we make transference to God, through which God loving us, gives us strength and power. "Perfect love casteth out fear," because perfect love is complete trust.

Love is the natural, naive, basic relation that a human being should have with God. When he does, he can move through this world unafraid. He believes that someone is with him who loves him. He knows that he can trust this someone to protect and watch over him.

If you really want to know how to live, associate with children. If you have none of your own, borrow some - - Trust God, believing He will see you through. This is a simple dogma of Christianity but it is one of the most neglected and unused. Develop a simple childlike trust in God and see how your problem of fear clears up.

From: "A Guide To Confident Living"
- Dr. Norman Vincent Peale
Copyright, 1948, by
Prentice-Hall, New York
11, N. Y. \$2.75

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Occupation is the necessary basis of all enjoyment.

- Leigh Hunt

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.
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.

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THE SUCKER'S GAME

by

A. B. in Alky Argot

* * *

You stand at the bar, and brag what you are,
With your billfold loose in your hand.
And out of it spills twenty dollar bills,
You're the biggest shot in the land.

And the stories you tell, and you laugh
'What the hell! Life is just a joke'
Till home you roll like a rat to its hole,
Dead drunk, not so wise, and broke.

For you're just a louse, playing the game
of the house,
And it always ends up the same;
When you fool with booze, you're a cinch
to lose,
It's strictly a sucker's game.

You're feeling great, when you stay up late,
Just 'having fun with the boys' -
And the whisky flows down as you burn up
the town,
Full of crap, corruption and noise.

And you're feeling gay in a stupid way,
And you mumble, "Say, this is swell!"
And you sweetly sing of some heavenly thing
As you stumble your way into hell.

And you meet some chick who looks
pretty slick,
To your foggy alcoholic mind.
But you can bet your hat she's an alley cat,
Who makes a play for any Tom, any time.

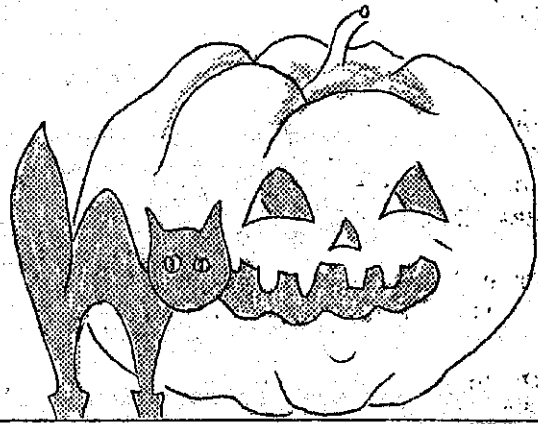
And you wine and dine; you're feeling
sublime,
As you dream of the love just ahead.
So she spends your dough, and sneaks off
slow,
And you - take the Journal to bed.

So come on you schmoe, pick up your dough,
And climb down off that stool.
In your room on your knees, pray -
God, please,
Have mercy on me a fool.

Clean out my heart, give me a new start,
And, say, if only you can,
Give me some sense, give me some guts,
And the will to be a man.

Though I've done a lot with all I've got,
I'm sorry just the same.
A new life I'll choose and to hell with
the booze,

TIVE OUT THE SUCKER'S GAME.



In Sydney, Australia, Robert Clifford, 29, was arrested after a short fling at an up-to-date racket. Four times he obtained work, then telephoned "anonymously" to warn the employer that he had just taken on a Communist. Each firm sacked him at once with a week's pay in lieu of notice.

- United Nations World

HAVE YOU GROWN WEARY . . .

of looking for any signs of promise in this dull mass of fellow men and withdrawn yourself into some luxury of self culture, feeling as if what you had and were was too good to be wasted upon such creatures as the poor and sick?

You must be rescued from this proud conceit, not simply by counting yourself lower, but by valuing more highly the spiritual natures of these fellow men. You must value them as He values them, Who gave His life for them, before you can be as humble in their presence as He was and be their servant as He was.

Only he who puts on the garment of humility finds how worthily it clothes his life. Only he who dedicates himself to the spiritual service of his brethren, simply because his Master tells him they are worth it, comes to know how rich those natures of his brethren are, how richly they are worth the total giving of himself to them.

Patrick, suffering from a toothache, got enough nerve to visit his dentist, but lost it again when he was about to get into the chair. The dentist gave him a tot of whiskey; then a second; then a third. "Got your courage now?" he asked. Pat growled: "Touch me now, I dare yuh."

THE DRIVING FORCE
BEHIND A. A.

The driving force behind A.A. is spiritual. The primary aim is spiritual. I wish I could paint a word portrait of the spiritual side of the A. A. program that would be a simple presentation to a newcomer so that the old concepts of religion, which have apparently been a stumbling block to so many, would become a logical something that would invite rather than repel. It is a moral program, and all moral laws are based on spiritual laws. I believe that in the spiritual side alone exists the answer to our problem. However, we all seem to have the same idea at first; that by accepting the spiritual side of the A. A. program we will become "Bible-Thumpers," -- kind of holier-than-thou guys, etc., and be required to live a very restricted life. Experience has proven otherwise; it is exactly the opposite; we find freedom completely.

I suppose that this word "God" is a rather fearsome and terrifying word to many at first. That is one of the reasons for A. A. referring to Him as the Higher Power or the Power Greater than ourselves, but each of us forms our own conception of Him. Specking for myself, I do not try to visualize Him for then I limit Him and I cannot do that. My conception is that He is joy unbounded; that He is a vast expanse of ceaseless motion, penetrating and transcending all things, a ceaseless motion, but with all things subject to intelligent direction and control, law and order. Such a scheme of things, so finely timed and ordered, could not have happened by accident.

My mind refuses to accept the belief that such a beautiful scheme came out of chaos, such as atheists and agnostics accept. Oh no, that's too easy. But this I do know; that my way of running things against the stream of creative motion going on around me wouldn't work. I never have been nor ever will be big enough to make it work. I've been knocked down to my knees scores of times, but despite the many knock-downs, I would try over and over again and again to make my will work when it was contrary to the Will of God. The result; My life has been one of continual conflict, frustration and failure --

(Continued Col.2,above)➤

Reach for a Smile

Here in the dark and dismal grave
A wretched drunk reposes;
His love of flowers killed him:
Gosh, how he loved Four Roses.

* * *

What wonderful stuff is liquor, in
magic all things it surpasses; for
nothing on earth can quicker turn
its drinkers from men to asses.

* * *

"Whenever I pass the church, I always
pay it a visit, so that when they
carry me in, the Lord won't say:
'WHO IS IT.'"

* * *

Sounds beautiful -- "The kiss of the
hops" -- But listen to
"The Hiss of the Cops."

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a sordid failure when it could have been so worthwhile. And I don't believe there is any individual big enough to oppose the Will of God and stay on his feet, so to speak. We must let this Power Greater than ourselves run through us rather than against us. And the parable of the Prodigal Son should give us much hope. We must attune ourselves to the Will of the Higher Power. That is the basis of the A. A. teachings.

By the simple act of giving this will of ours, which through years of experience has let us down, over to the care of this Greater Power, or God, we get back into the stream of positive thinking of the constructive and Creative Power Who runs this scheme of things.

- Charles W.
in "The Key"

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