

# THE NIGHT CAP

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OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS IN SAN ANTONIO

ADDRESS ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO: POST OFFICE BOX 644, SAN ANTONIO 6, TEXAS

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Number Twelve

## AN INTERPRETATION OF THE 12 STEPS

STEP #9: "Made direct amends to such people whenever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others."

This step is of great importance. It requires, on our part, real discernment. We must remember that though a thing may be true we are under no obligation to tell it to anyone. We have adopted a new way of life, and it is inherent to this new approach to the business of living that we exercise care not to injure others. Usually, our paths were strewn with wreckage, with heartache, with the bitter fruit of tragedy. We have no right, even at the expense of our own peace of mind, to bring suffering upon others. There are perhaps events in our sordid pasts, things which if discovered by certain persons would bring them grief and unhappiness. These things we should clear up through Step Five.

So much for discernment and discretion. We should not lose sight of the necessity of making direct amends whenever it is possible to do so without injuring others.

Merrill L. "Doc" F.

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## BIRTHDAYS FOR SEPTEMBER, 1953...

- 1 Year: Mary Lyle B., Darmon B. G.
- 2 Years: Mose P., Margaret S.
- 3 Years: Sam N.
- 4 Years: Ralph Q., Kate R.
- 5 Years: Julius C., John B. C.
- 7 Years: Harold P.

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# SOUTHWEST REGIONAL

# A. A.

# CONVENTION

OCTOBER 16, 17, 18 . . . . . 1953

HARLINGEN, TEXAS

HEADQUARTERS: Little Creek Motel  
Air-Conditioned Cabins -  
Swimming Pool  
Plenty of Parking Space  
GOOD FOOD!

THEME TO BE "EASY DOES IT"

Grass Root A. A. Just Like At Home!

Closed Meeting for Women A.A.'s ...  
Saturday Afternoon Trip to  
Old Mexico for N.A.A. women.

REGISTRATION FEE:  
A.A.'s - \$7.50 - includes  
banquet and everything.  
N.A.A.'s - \$5.00, plus \$1.50  
for Mexican luncheon.

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## THE CASE OF THE DRUNKEN DUCKS . . .

Leave us consider the case of the inebriated ducks of Francois Lake, British Columbia, and the effect that their fall from grace may have on the entire duck family.

These ducks, 50 in number, had  
(Cont'd on Page Three)

C R I T I C A L, O R C O R R E C T

No one who takes an active part in A.A. is going to be exempt from criticism. The more he does, the more he may expect it. And, paradoxically the less he does, the more he may expect it. Even those who do nothing at all come in for rebuke.

We are engaged in an effort with people the very nature of whom makes it seem quite natural to appraise one another, and more particularly our individual performance.

Because of this and the influence some have on others (whether they like it or not) these persons can expect to be called to account for their actions and utterances. It is a disturbing thought but nevertheless, everyone of us, for our own sake, should not assume to be above criticism or attempt to suppress honest opinion.

We in A.A., more than anywhere else have room for this valuable safety factor. It is only too true, were it really possible to smother the opinions of others, they would think their own thoughts and find ways to pass them on.

However, before any of us presume to criticize, we should make sure of one thing, and that is, we should know something about the matter we propose to advance or the subject we would discuss. Too many in A.A. seem to delight in debating the utterances of those members who enjoy "permanent sobriety", while they themselves know nothing of it. Sobriety is the first fruit of A.A. Have these people the right to tell you how to preserve that fruit which they have not yet tasted?

We should make sure that we are not blindly stampeded into echoing their opinions, or prompted by possible resentment, envy or perhaps even ignorance, into joining these cliques to obstruct the guidance and leadership of those who have permanent sobriety to carry on to others.

(Cont'd on Page Four)

THE HELL BOUND TRAIN

A skid-row bum on a bar-room floor,  
Had drunk so much he could drink  
no more,  
So he fell asleep with a troubled  
brain  
And he dreamed that he rode on a  
Hell-Bound-Train.  
The engine with human blood was  
damp  
And headlight was a brimstone lamp.  
An imp for fuel was shoveling bones  
And the furnace roared with a mil-  
lion groans.  
The tank was filled with lager beer  
And the devil himself was the  
engineer.  
The passengers were a mixed-up crew,  
Churchmen, Baptist, Catholic & Jew,  
Rich men, poor men, beggars in rags,  
Pretty young girls and wrinkled old  
"hags"  
Black men, yellow men, red & white  
Chained together, a fearful sight.  
The train rushed on at a terrible  
pace  
And sulphur fumes burned hands and  
face.  
Brighter and brighter the lightn-  
ing flashed  
And louder and louder the thunder  
crashed.  
Hotter and hotter the air became  
And clothes were scorched from each  
shrieking flame.  
Then came a fearful, ear-splitting  
yell  
And the devil screamed the next  
stop was hell.  
T'was then the passengers cried in  
pain.  
And begged the devil to stop the  
train.  
But he laughed and he roared and  
danced in glee.  
He jeered and mocked at their  
misery:  
My friends you've bought seats on  
this road  
And I've got to go through with  
this awful load.  
You've bullied the weak and starved  
the poor  
And tramps you've turned from your  
door.  
You've mocked at God in your hell-  
born pride.

(Cont'd on Page Five)

THE CASE OF THE DRUNKEN DUCKS  
(Cont'd from Page 1)

the misfortune, or good luck, depending on the point of view, to come across a moonshiner's still just at the time he'd dumped out a load of mash. The captivating aroma enticed the ducks to investigate further. They all took a billful, said AAAHHH! Not, hic, bad! ! and went to it with the result that pretty soon they were all as tight as a pawnbroker's heart.

In no shape to make their way back to their home on the lake, several miles away, and sleep off the effects of their binge, they all zig-zagged out into the open field. Police officers (Ah! The plot thickens) cruising in the vicinity, observed the ducks behaving in a very unducklike manner. Some of them lay on their backs, waving their big feet in the air, and others were engaged in most uninhibited antics imaginable, for all the world like people at a cocktail party, once it gets going good. Overhead more ducks were peering down trying to discover what all the moonshines were about.

The cops, we know, are experts when it comes to knowing what a plastered individual looks like when they see one, whether it's a duck or a human, went looking for the still, leaving the ducks to nurse their hangovers as best they could.

I don't think the thing will end there, though. It may very well result in unethical duck hunters abandoning their old-fashioned wooden decoys, and using the ducks with a snootful to lure sober, high-flying, well-minded ducks to their doom.

These sober ducks, viewing the goings on below, will notice that, disreputable or not, their pals seem to be having a pretty hilarious time down there, and they will look into be in the ~~sun~~ <sup>sun</sup> ~~sun~~ <sup>sun</sup>. From then on,  
(Cont'd Next Issue. The All

EIGHT WAYS TO CONQUER  
S E L F P I T Y

1. Develop "emotional maturity." An emotionally mature person is one who is decent, kind, humble, unselfish, and able to take the disappointments and hard knocks of life without being thrown out of stride.
2. Do positive instead of negative thinking by (a) looking for the good instead of the bad in other people; and (b) concentrating several times a day on the many things you have to be thankful for.
3. Don't exaggerate yourself, your troubles, or your problems. Most of the things about which people feel sorry for themselves have little to do with the important values of life.
4. Don't be oversensitive. Very few people are intentionally cruel, and those are emotionally ill. You should pity them, not yourself, if they say or do unkind things.
5. Develop a sense of humor. If you don't take yourself too seriously you won't feel so sorry for yourself. But be sure your humor is not of the kind which hurts others.
6. Do not let failures of the past or fears of the future interfere with your doing your very best today. Cultivate a "life in daylight compartments."
7. Don't be idle. Work is the best narcotic for most emotional disturbances, including self-pity.
8. Have faith. Man's experience throughout history shows that those people are happiest who have faith in themselves, and God.

-(Continued from First Column)-

living in an apartment house, who hearing loud sounds of rollicking and frolicking from the apartment across the hall, go to complain, remain to join enthusiastically in the festivities and wind up singing -louder than anybody.

MORAL: Don't let a 'slipee' with a snootful be a decoy for those night lights. Continue to Carry the other Alcoholics. Remem-

Critical Or Correct ..... Cont'd

It is much easier to be critical than correct. This we A.A.'s all know full well. Let's therefore, be correct first in the matter of our conduct and our sobriety. We may then presume to pass on something which we ourselves possess. Even then, if we wish to indulge in imprudent criticism of others, we should be prepared for criticism ourselves.

(Hal O'R, in A. A. Grapevine)

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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.

\*\*\* AA \*\*\*

Taxes could be worse. Suppose we had to pay on what we think we are worth!

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FROM THE BIG BOOK

We finally saw that faith in some kind of a God was a part of our make-up, just as much as the feeling we have for a friend. Sometimes we had to search fearlessly. But He was there. He was as much a fact as we were. We found the Great Reality deep down within us. In the last analysis it is only there that He may be found.

Many of us said to our Maker, as we understood him: "God, I offer myself to Thee - to build with me and to do with me as Thou wilt. Relieve me of bondage of self, that I may better do Thy will. Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of Thy power, Thy love, and Thy way of life. May I do Thy will always!"

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A A T R E A T M E N T

W O R K S B E S T !

Of all the known treatment for alcoholism, that of Alcoholics Anonymous stands out as the most dramatic, most effective and most available for the greatest numbers. It is uniquely endowed with the ways of lending inspiration and guidance to those needing and wanting help. Men and women from all walks of life have found sobriety and a happier, more productive existence through their association with this group.

There is no cost, merely an honest desire to do something about one's uncontrolled drinking and disordered living. AA can help those caught in the alcoholic trap, as well as those in danger of being trapped.

It is the AA policy to respond promptly and eagerly to every call for help. However, the group can do little unless the alcoholic honestly...

THE HELL-BOUND TRAIN  
(Continued)

You've plundered, cheated, you've  
sworn and lied,  
You've swindled, murdered, robbed  
and stole,  
Not one hasn't perjured his soul  
So you've paid full fare and I'll  
carry you through,  
If there's one don't belong I'd like  
to know who.  
And this is the time I'm not a liar  
So I'll land you all in a lake of  
fire,  
There your flesh will burn in flames  
That roar and sizzle your wretched  
frames."  
Then the Bum awoke with a startled  
cry,  
His clothes were wet and his hair  
stood high  
And he prayed right there  
For fully an hour to be saved from  
hell  
And the devil's power  
And his prayers and vows  
Were not in vain  
For he ne'r more rode  
On the Hell-Bound train.

- Author Unknown

The little girl was praying by her  
bedside: "Dear Lord, please send  
Mother a mink coat because she  
wants one very badly; and please  
send Daddy a new car because he is  
such a nice man; and please send  
me a bicycle because I want one more  
than anything else in the world.  
And please, Dear Lord, take good  
care of yourself, because if any-  
thing happens to you, we're all  
sunk!"

Repentance was perhaps best defined  
by a small girl: "It's to be sorry  
enough to quit."

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Malice drinks one-half of its own  
poison.

- Seneca

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We enjoy thoroughly only the  
pleasure that we give - Dumas

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BAD WILL BE THE DAY for every man  
when he becomes absolutely content  
with the life he is living, with  
the thoughts he is thinking, with  
the deeds he is doing, when there  
is not forever beating on the  
doors of his soul some great de-  
sire to do something larger, which  
he knows he was meant and made to  
do because he is still, in spite  
of all, the child of God.

(Phillips Brooks)

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THE WORLD PAYS

Sometimes a man works all his  
life, grows old, and never gets  
the things he planned to get, and  
never knows the reason why. Yet  
the reasons are simple. Too often  
he thinks only in terms of getting.  
Too often he only takes; he seldom  
gives. This is a life of giving and  
getting, but the element of giving  
comes first.

Then, the vast majority of men  
never think of mastering their jobs.  
They never try to do their work in  
a way that is better than just  
common. Too many do their work in  
volume and kind just to "get by."  
That is why the things in life they  
have been expecting never come.

You see, the world pays for the  
amount and kind of work we do; pays  
less for this kind, pays more for  
that kind; and pays with fair ex-  
actness. And when it finds we do  
a fiery, thinking job, it pays us  
well and pays us regularly, and  
adds, in time, the extras. But if  
it finds we do our work carelessly,  
or casually, or grudgingly, as if  
it weren't worth the doing, we get  
paid in kind - we never get the  
things we wanted.

The world pays for masterpieces,  
and has no patience with lesser  
things. Knowing that, many men  
succeed, become master craftsmen,  
famed machinists, chemists, accoun-  
tants, executives, wizards - all  
famed in work that others do medi-  
ocrely.

- Sunshine Magazine



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