



# Sobriety Variety



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## **Top Ten Reasons Why AA Could Never Work for Me**

I fell on my head and a few marbles came loose. Will I ever get better? When I speak at AA meetings, I carry note cards in my pocket just in case I need a structured way to convey the AA message. It's my "Top Ten" reasons for how AA couldn't possibly work for me when I first came in and how those reasons turned out to be false. Some of them sound a little silly. They are meant to be so, but I am deadly serious.

### **AA can't work because...**

#### **Ten. I'm different.**

I'm too young, too cynical, too Mexican, too Jewish. I had one guy tell me that Mexicans can't get sober. This made me terribly resentful, so I set out to prove him wrong. "I'll stay

sober. I'll show him!" So I did.

#### **Nine. I'm not good enough.**

My sponsor called me a true Architect of Adversity. I lied so much that even alcoholics couldn't stand me for long, but I found one way to tell the truth. Whenever I shared in a meeting I would tell a few truths: "I'm not reading the Big Book. I'm not calling my sponsor, I'm not working the steps. About the only thing I am doing is coming to meetings and I am miserable! If you want what I have, that's what you have to do!"

It wasn't much of a message, but it was honest. Apparently it was honest enough. I stayed sober.

#### **Eight. I don't hear my story.**

I still don't hear it much, but I remember how I felt. An old fat guy with a bulbous nose told us how he got drunk, hit a street car seven times and then threw up on his mother-in-law. I laughed. Why? I wasn't married. I had never even SEEN a street car. But I understood how he felt. As he explained what he was thinking at the time, I remember saying to myself, "That's how I think too!" I stayed sober.

#### **Seven. I have never been arrested.**

It was no great feat. In those days the police only arrested you if you had hit something. Otherwise they made you walk home. But the police have become nicer to me

now. It's funny how much they have changed now that I'm not driving past the station drunk any more. I'm sober.

#### **Six. I don't have a sponsor.**

My best stuff comes from Ed, my first sponsor. He fired me. That saved my life, but I didn't know it then. I spent a long time trying to replace him before I realized that he had taught me the basics. Now I needed to take the action.

"Take what you need and leave the rest" implies that I am the one responsible for my sobriety. When I look back to see what worked for me, I realize that I collected the phone numbers of the winners in AA, designated one of them as my "sponsor" and called him first when I had a question or needed a sounding board. I stay sober today by having a list of people I know I can call when I'm ready to take action.

#### **Five. I read the Big Book wrong.**

My sponsor told me to read the book, so I did.. my way. I skimmed it, took the 12-steps in a single evening and skipped chapters I believed did not apply to me. Later, when I thought the Big Book might require closer study, I would read a page and when I got to the next, I realized could not remember the previous.

I pulled out a binder filled with blank paper and began to copy the

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Big Book word-for-word by hand. This forced me to concentrate on each word. By the time I got through Chapter Three, something clicked and I could read it and remember it.

**Four.** *I complain too much.*

When I told an AA buddy that I had this character defect, he said, "But you don't complain!" I told him I WANT to complain, but since I know this is my defect, I work hard to do it only when it is of value to my Higher Power, family or others. So at work, I would help my boss by complaining to our vendors when they failed to deliver on time. My boss loved me because he didn't want to be the bad guy, but I didn't mind. It gave me my outlet for my character defect that helped rather than hurt. I stayed sober.

**Three.** *I know better.*

I still fall into this trap and it is a dangerous one. So I try hard to soften it's effect. When I shoot off my mouth, I try to do so anonymously. When I am praised I say thank you and then drop the subject.

I no longer know what is best for everyone else, but I have discovered a few things about myself. As long as I limit my talk to what I know about myself, I don't have to worry about getting it right about you. By doing this, I manage to stay sober.

**Two.** *I don't pray enough.*

I was desperate for a drink so I phoned Ed to ask him what to do. Ed told me to get down on my knees and pray. I shouted into the phone, "But I'm at a gas station!" He replied, "So put down a few paper towels." That's what I did. I prayed in that dirty gas station toilet with paper towels strewn all over the floor. It helped. I stayed sober.

## Sign Up Now!!!!



Answer the Intergroup *HOTLINE* phones  
from your home (or cell phone)\*

One night per quarter - 6:00 PM to 8:00 AM

**OR**

Sat. or Sun. day time - 8:00 AM TO 8:00 PM

Sat. or Sun. night time - 8:00 PM TO 8:00 AM

\*Calls will be forwarded to your phone from the Intergroup office.

The service commitment is one night per quarter (every three months).

Requirements for this valuable service work are:

- 1) Six (6) months of continuous sobriety
- 2) Have taken AA's Twelve Steps
- 3) Familiar with the seventh chapter of the Big Book
- 4) Willing to make the above commitment for one (1) Year

**ALSO**

Work the phone desk at the Intergroup Office

Three hour shift between 9:00 AM and 6:00 PM., M-F

Call Clint Ritter at (512)448-9017

From 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM

**One.** *I haven't hurt enough.*

Ed took me into a small garden in front of the office to explain something to me. When you come to AA you must hit bottom, but this "bottom" is different for each individual. Ed was convinced that I hadn't hit mine yet. He said, "I'm going to have to let you go with love." Then he kicked me out of AA. He told me not to come back until I was ready. I left him, went to my apartment, closed all the drapes and put a knife to my wrist.

I paused, and at that moment I was overcome with and overwhelming sense of the presence of G-d. It was what Bill W. used to call his "white

flash" moment. In those few moments I realized that my Higher Power had stepped in to give me a small jump start. I'm not sure why. I certainly didn't deserve it. Perhaps He thought I fit into His plan somehow. I still don't know but I promised that I would never try to kill myself again.

I was a young man at that time. Since it was clear I had many years ahead of me, I thought I might as well give this AA program stuff a real try.

So I did.

*My name is no secret but as per tradition, I am anonymous in print, so call me Israel.*

## December Volunteers at Intergroup

<b>Office:</b>	Leslie Ann D.	Craig W.	Tom B.	Karen M.	Beth B.
Chad	Jenni	Scotty H.	David B.	Suzannah	Craig W.
Robert G.	Charlie F.	Gene C.	Will C.	Paul B./Julie A.	Danny/Tonya
"Pete"	Debra		Chris F.	Laurie W.	Cory
Monica	Billy C.	<b>Hotline:</b>	Jim/Jeannie	Laurie W.	Scotty H.
Roland P.	John B.	Linda F.	Chris W.	Leslie/Kelly	Shelley C.
Marty C.	Jeff B.	Janna	Dave B.	Patrick C.	Kathy/Dan L.
Jim H.	Herb A.	Patty T.	Roland P.	Jeff P.	Tom K.
Morna N.	Javier	Patrick G.	Milford P.	Mike R.	Barb S.
Ian M.	Rolando	Karen K./Randy R.	Gordon K.	Irby G.	

## Monthly Meetings at Intergroup

- *Treatment Facilities Committee*, 1st Monday at 7:00 PM
- *Correctional Facilities Committee*, 1st Monday at 7:00 PM
- *Intergroup Reps*, 2nd Monday at 6:30 PM
- *Grapevine Committee*, 2nd Saturday at 2:00 PM
- *Board of Trustees*, 3rd Thursday at 6:30 PM



## AA History - The old Akron reading list for A.A. beginners

(A *Manual for Alcoholics Anonymous: THE AKRON MANUAL*, published by the Akron group in late 1939 or early 1940, with Dr. Bob's approval we must assume, gives a list at the end of recommended readings for newcomers to A.A., so that they

might better understand the spiritual aspects of the program. "The following literature," the pamphlet says, "has helped many members of Alcoholics Anonymous.")

### *Alcoholics Anonymous (the Big Book).*

### *The Holy Bible.*

(The Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5-7, the letter of James, 1 Corinthians 13, and Psalms 23 and 91 were all mentioned earlier in the pamphlet. These were favorite passages, particularly the Sermon on the Mount, for early twentieth century classical Protestant liberals. The enormously popular book by Adolf Harnack, *What Is Christianity?* was a major liberal Protestant manifesto. Christianity was about the simple teaching of the historical Jesus, as shown especially in passages like the Sermon on the Mount, not about

## Recovery Jones



*When I get as bad as that, I'll go to AA!*

<http://www.recoveryjonescartoons.com/>

complex doctrines and dogmas cast in pagan Greek philosophical terms. These terms appear nowhere in the Bible, Harnack said, and were a later medieval distortion. Real Christianity was not about saying the right technical doctrinal words, but about showing love and

## December 2005 Donations From Area AA Groups

Bridge to Shore - \$430

Lost Pines - \$125

NA24 - \$50

Georgetown - \$300

Lakeway (Emmaus) - \$50

Dry Creek - \$52

R.R. Big Book - \$11

Liars Club - \$20

Keep 1<sup>st</sup> Things 1<sup>st</sup> - \$262

Westlake - \$500

Hilltoppers - \$200

Allandale - \$40

New Beginnings - \$81

Into Action (Lockhart) - \$90

Lake Travis Serenity - \$150

Northland - \$340

Bluff Springs - \$40

Liar's Club N. (Spider House) - \$269

Fri. Nite (Austin) - \$50

**Total: \$3,274**

compassion towards our fellow human beings. As the Letter of James said, "Faith without works is dead." *The Upper Room*, which was the meditational book most often used by early A.A.'s before Richmond Walker's Twenty-Four Hour book came along in 1948, was published by the classical Protestant liberals and was a good statement of their fundamental principles: starting the day with prayer and meditation, with short Bible verses for each day's reading that stressed dependence on God as our loving Father and walking with Jesus and his love in our hearts, God-consciousness, doing good, and showing love to everyone around us.)

*The Greatest Thing in the World*,  
**Henry Drummond.**

*The Unchanging Friend*, a series  
(**Bruce Publishing Co.,  
Milwaukee.**)

*As a Man Thinketh*, **James Allen.**

*The Sermon on the Mount*, **Emmet  
Fox (Harper Bros.).**

*The Self You Have to Live With*,  
**Winfred Rhoades.**

*Psychology of Christian  
Personality*, **Ernest M. Ligon**

*Abundant Living*, **E. Stanley  
Jones.**

*The Man Nobody Knows*, **Bruce  
Barton.**

From... <http://hindsfoot.org> and  
*Glenn C.*

### **HCIA Birthday Club – New Members December 2005**

**Charlie W. – NA24  
Paul (Winnie) W. - Bluebonnet**

### **New Office Hours**

We will be open from 9AM to 6PM, M-F and will continue to be closed on weekends and most major holidays. The M-F phone desk shifts for office volunteers is 9AM to Noon; Noon to 3PM; and 3PM to 6PM. The M-F Hotline shift will run from 6PM to 8AM. Saturday, Sunday and holiday Hotline shifts will run from 8AM to 8PM (day shift) and 8PM to 8AM (night shift).

### **Contact us**

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