



Sobriety Variety



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A Thought on Prayer

A newcomer asked, "I just started praying and reading *The Word*, but whenever I pray, I think of drinking. Someone told me that means I'm going to drink again. Is that true? Why do I have these thoughts?"

Good question. I had the same problem with sex. I never was much of a religious person, but after time in the program, I tried praying regularly. When I did, base thoughts intruded into the more virtuous themes of my prayers. My most pure and sincere efforts at prayer would be interrupted by crude thoughts... the most intrusive being sexual ones.

I use the *24 Hours a Day* book from **Hazelden**. Even though it is not AA approved literature, it was the only daily reflections book available when I came into the program and I still value it. Each page is formatted with a **Thought for the Day** then **Meditation for the Day** then **Prayer for the Day**. I read a page when I need to focus my thoughts, but I read it backwards! I'll tell you why in a

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moment. First, here is one day's page "backwards" as I read it...

May 3rd

Prayer for the Day

I pray that I may hold no resentments. I pray that my mind be washed clean of all past hates and fears.

Meditation for the Day

I must overcome myself before I can truly forgive other people for injuries done to me [...] I must overcome my selfishness. I must cease trying to forgive those who fretted and wronged me. [...] I must aim at overcoming myself in my daily life and then I will find there is nothing in me that remembers injury, because the only thing injured, my selfishness, is gone.

Thought for the Day

AA teaches us to take it easy. We learn how relax and to stop worrying about the past, or the future, to give up our resentments, and hates and tempers, to stop being critical of people, and to try to help them instead. That's what 'Easy Does It' means [...]

I read it "backwards" from the normal page layout because I believe that prayer is "talking" to my Higher Power, meditation is "listening" for the answer, and thought is turning the meditation into an active part of the mind. It is putting the "answer" into action.

Remember... prayer first, meditation second and the thought

Helpful Hints for Sponsors

- The most impressive thing we have to offer the newcomer is our example of a sober, happy and purposeful life.
- Alcoholics minimize their drinking in front of relatives so see them privately if possible.
- If he needs hospital care, help him get it by making arrangements.
- Tell your story and get him to tell his. Don't evangelize.
- Stress anonymity. Label alcoholism as a disease.
- Leave AA literature if he is interested. Suggest that he call after he reads it.
- Don't push. Let him ask.
- He should know the program is spiritual but not religious.
- Don't ignore the family.
- Review chapter 7 of the Big Book before visiting.
- Be friendly but don't baby. Be worthy of his trust.
- Teach him the value of 12 step living and reliance on God's help for recovery. He should not lean upon you too heavily or he may fail to develop a strong enough AA program to succeed.

- Summarized from... *The Little Red Book: An Orthodox Interpretation of the 12 Steps of AA (Not AA approved)*

comes third. Oddly enough, this order gives us a clue as to where these intrusive thoughts come from as we begin prayer in earnest. As we pray, we are asking our Higher Power for an answer. Even before we form the question, the answer comes and our mind takes action.

I find it nearly impossible during prayer to free myself from intrusive thoughts for any more than a few minutes, but why would I want to? These thoughts are messages from my Higher Power. They reflect the things that He wants me to work on.

If I am thinking of sex while I am praying, it is because I need to work on my sex-relations. That rings true. In my life as an active alcoholic my girlfriends never broke up with me. They escaped. I had a lot to correct in that area and my Higher Power was telling me it was time.

As I worked through the steps and made my amends, the sexual thoughts were replaced by other intrusive thoughts. There was more action to take until now, after many years, the most intrusive thoughts are bills, which are simple worries rather than on-going problems. The hurts I have caused others are acted upon quickly so they rarely fester long enough to become an intrusive issue.

If you are praying, reading or simply looking in the mirror for an answer and you are having thoughts of drinking, you are in the right place. You have been given a special gift, a message from your Higher Power and you need to act. You have taken the first step. You are an alcoholic.

Welcome to AA.

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

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



Monthly Meetings at Intergroup

- *Intergroup Reps*, 2nd Monday at 6:30 PM
- *Board of Trustees*, 3rd Thursday at 6:30 PM



AA History – The Akron Guide to the Twelve Steps

A Guide to the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous

(Continued from last month)

THIRD STEP

Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.

ONCE having come to believe there is a Power greater than ourselves, it is not too difficult to turn our lives over to that Power.

It was explained in the Second Step

April Volunteers at Intergroup

Office:

Leslie Ann D. Roland P.
 Dennis "Pete" P. John B.
 Rachel B. Tom
 Jim H. Elise B.
 Malyna Jenny W.
 Monica L. Scotty H.
 John P. Rosie
 Gene C.
 Robert G.
 Marty C.

Hotline:

Randy R. Jeff P. Nancy N. Bobby Q.
 Kathleen M. Deb J. Billy C. Gayle B.
 Barb S. Ian M. Joe Mc F. Joe B.
 Charles H. Ruth F. Lee A. Gary H.
 Marty C. Gary B. John P. Gene C.
 Beth B. Carol M. Alex H. Harlan O.
 Barb H. Ed B. John B. Jeff P.
 Rick L. Linda F. John G. BOSCO
 Connie/Mike Drew W. Tom K. Kelly F.
 Dennis "Pete" P. Scotty H. Tommy B.

that as rugged individualists we were rank failures. Forever looking into the future, we were forever disappointed when our plans failed. It is at this point that the Day by Day, or the Twenty-Four Hour plan comes to our assistance.

We have found that by giving up planning, by letting each day take care of itself -- and it always will -- we have been able to keep sober. We can't control the future. The past is done and can't be returned. And so if we can do a good job this day we are doing the best we possibly can. We start the day by deciding to stay sober for just twenty-four hours. We ask assistance from God to stay sober for that brief period. And when the day ends we thank God for the help He has given us. And on the next day and the next we follow the same program.

This is the first step in turning our will and our lives over to

God as we understand Him. From this small beginning we develop until we find we are no longer headstrong, we are no longer trying

to run our own lives and making a sorry job of it.

Recovery Jones



You're cured!

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

FOURTH STEP

Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

AGAIN we come to a step that requires courage. One of our chief reasons for drinking was to escape from ourselves. We were afraid of our own thoughts and knew we could escape from them through alcohol. We were afraid to face facts. We were afraid of our jobs, afraid of our families, afraid of responsibility. And we were afraid of thinking about them.

So having fortified ourselves by taking the major hurdles embodied in the first three steps, we find the time has come to actually do something definite about our problem. So very much like a bather diving into an icy lake we plunge into

April 2006 Donations From Area AA Groups

Bridge to Shore - \$415	Tarrytown - \$100	Wimberley - \$50
Dripping Springs - \$240	Turning Point - \$184	Hilltoppers - \$200
Western Trails - \$150	Into Action (Lockhart) - \$30	Friday Nite Alive - \$40
North Austin 24 - \$50	Renegade Ducks - \$50	Legacies (Bastrop) - \$10
East Austin - \$120	Lighthouse - \$100	
Westlake - \$675	Allandale - \$20	Total: \$2,434

an inventory of ourselves.

And what do we find? We have been dishonest. We have lied. We have cheated. We have broken hearts. We have stolen. We have slandered others. We have indulged in extra-marital activities. We have cursed God and man. We have broken faith. We have smashed most of the laws of God and man. In all, we find that we are pretty sorry, miserable individuals, and every one of these facts can be traced back to alcohol.

To continue the inventory, we consider our physical selves, finding that health is impaired, memory is faulty, appearance is becoming more careless and slovenly, finances are at a low ebb. And having honestly taken ourselves apart we wonder how on earth people have put up with us all this time.

It is a brave act to dissect ourselves thus. But we are fully compensated in the great feeling of satisfaction we experience in having at last squarely faced an issue. No man in his right senses wants to continue in this manner when he finds out what is wrong with him, so we logically come to the Fifth Step.

The full text can be found at:

<http://hindsfoot.org/Akr12.html>

The first AA group to be formed in Akron, Ohio used spiritual materials they could find from various religious groups of the time. Much of the AA-related material in those days was not considered religious per se though nowadays we would see it as overtly so. That is how I read the history. Your mileage may vary.

[Your editor]



HCIA Birthday Club New Members

April 2006

Brent B. - 18 yrs.
Elise B. - 3 yrs.
Steven H. - 7 yrs.

Contact us

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