



Sobriety Variety



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No Kids. No Kidding. But...

As I became sober and more stable, I wasn't sure what the future would bring but I was certain of one thing, no children. My childhood had been a bad one so I resolved to never put a child through something like that.

My father wasn't prepared to raise children. Something was wrong with him and his disability was reflected in his poor parenting in some areas. I paid the price as a child.

Learning my lesson from AA, I stopped blaming my father for his mistakes. As an adult, I could do something about myself if I chose to do so. Blaming him robbed me of my opportunity to live well, so I stopped blaming and started living.

Nevertheless, I was certain I could never be a good parent, having never had a good model and having demonstrated clearly in my alcoholism that I had some serious problems to work through. It seemed only right to remain childless. It was only fair.

But children are important for building a better world. I had worked so hard to do the world harm through my alcoholism. Now I needed to work for its good. How better than to give children a happy life? I became a clown.

I believe there is an automatic place in Heaven for a clown. Just the sight of a clown brings a smile to the face. It brings joy into the world. I wanted children to be happy so they might have a brighter childhood than I did. Happier children make a better world for the future. I stepped up and volunteered.

My wife saw an ad in the paper, "Clown College." She signed up. I signed up the next semester and took the course. We went out together to children's hospitals, and old folks homes.

As we entered one hospital to visit the children, I noticed an alcohol and drug rehab floor. I turned to my wife and smiled. We hit the button as we entered the elevator. The 4th floor.

We entered rehab in full clown regalia. My flaming red hair streamed behind me as I rushed in. Big floppy shoes preceded me as I tromped from room to room, squeaking and squawking. The nurses were delighted and never questioned us. I startled alcoholics and addicts as I burst into

The Prayer of St. Francis

Lord, make me a channel of thy peace,

- that where there is hatred, I may bring love;
- that where there is wrong, I may bring the spirit of forgiveness;
- that where there is discord, I may bring harmony;
- that where there is error, I may bring truth;
- that where there is doubt, I may bring faith;
- that where there is despair, I may bring hope;
- that where there are shadows, I may bring light;
- that where there is sadness, I may bring joy.

Lord, grant that I may seek rather to comfort than to be comforted;

- to understand, than to be understood;
- to love, than to be loved.

For it is by self-forgetting that one finds.

It is by forgiving that one is forgiven.

It is by dying that one awakens to Eternal Life.

-- *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, page 99.

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their rooms. They must have been wondering if this wasn't one more wet-brain hallucination. I laughed and told them I was a real alcoholic. I encouraged them with these words, "Just stay sober and you can be like me!" I laughed a hearty laugh and leapt into the next room. It was so much fun.

Months later, I entered an AA meeting in my "civilian" clothes and a man sought me out.

"Are you the clown?"

"Yeah. That's me."

"I was in rehab when you showed up a couple of months ago. You helped me."

I remembered him. He had just come in. He looked nearly dead. I wasn't even sure he had seen me. Yet I hadn't hesitated. He got the same high jinx as everyone else. I'm glad he found it encouraging.

My friends got the clowning bug. It never really came to much for most of them, but it was a chance for them to get out of themselves a few hours and do something for others... to be a different person... a better person.

My friend had been depressed so I told him about the clowning class. He showed up but he seemed out of place. Maybe it was a mistake. I didn't see him in AA for a long while. I thought, "Maybe he went out", but then I spotted him. He told me how much the clowning class had helped him. His enthusiasm was encouraging. What I had given him came back to me that day. It taught me a good lesson. What goes around comes around and that means good things too.

In time I changed my mind about kids. I had a better attitude I had something to give children. AA and

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

the idea of "giving back" taught me how.

My son is entering college this fall. I am grateful. AA made it possible.

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



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)

TENTH STEP

Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

WE FIND in AA that after a few months of sobriety, after the

July Volunteers at Intergroup

Office:

Roland P. John B.
 Monica L. Michelle J.
 Scotty H. Rachel W.
 John P. Pam R.
 Laura H. Eileen B.
 Gene C.
 Patty G.
 Robert G.
 Dennis "Pete" P.
 Marty C.

Hotline:

Charlotte J. Beth W. Scotty H.
 Joe McF. Gene C. Beth B.
 Angela E. Harlan O. Mark L.
 Tom K. Carol M. Will C.
 BOSCO Jeff P. Randy R.
 Alex H. Nancy N. Shawn
 Adrienne Gordon K. Kathleen M.
 Barb S. Paul B. David B.
 Chris F. Dave H. Tommy B.
 Rick L. Dennis "Pete" P.

alcohol is completely out of our systems, our problems are more mental than physical. It is very likely that a psychic quirk scarred us on our drinking careers in the first place. It has been the rule rather than the exception in AA that as long as a person thinks straight he remains sober. When he goes back to the old alcoholic way of thinking, he gets drunk.

There are certain luxuries common to the average person that an alcoholic cannot afford. He cannot afford resentment, nor self pity. He cannot afford envy nor greed. He cannot afford dishonesty of any kind. He cannot afford procrastination, putting off till tomorrow what should be done today. He cannot afford to do anything that will cause him regret or disturb his peace of mind later. And so we must keep our thinking straight and clear. We must recognize that our enemy is alcohol, and that enemy is lurking to slay us on the slightest excuse, at the

slightest opening.

And so it is important that we continue to take personal inventory.

Perhaps we find ourselves criticizing some other member's method of staying sober. Instead, admire him for doing a fine job, whatever his method. Perhaps you resent something a leader has said. Forget it, it will be your turn to lead before long, and you will probably offend someone yourself. Perhaps you don't think your boss is advancing you fast enough. Just how long have you deserved to be advanced?

This list could be prolonged by thousands of words. But by this time you have advanced far enough in this new way of living to recognize what is good and what is harmful to you.

So, take time off occasionally to check up. Are you doing your best? If you are, don't worry. You are making progress.

ELEVENTH STEP

Sought through prayer and

Recovery Jones



He stops in time... he hopes.

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

July Donations From Area AA Groups

| | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Bridge to Shore - \$470 | Lost Pines (Bastrop) - \$63 | Lighthouse - \$50 | Northland - \$632 |
| Firemakers - \$250 | Into Action (Lockhart) - \$30 | Whitehouse (Georgetown) - \$500 | Allandale - \$40 |
| Liar's Club South - \$69 | Living Faith - \$80 | Western Trails - \$125 | The Turning Point - \$171 |
| Keep 1 st Things 1 st - \$158 | Giddings - \$65 | North Austin 24 - \$100 | South Austin BB Group - \$190 |
| Central - \$91 | Mustard Seed - \$78 | Round Rock Big Book - \$11 | Westlake - \$350 |
| Dripping Springs - \$278 | Emmaus - \$113 | Hilltoppers - \$200 | |
| Friday Rush Hour - \$25 | Friday Nite Alive (Kingsland) - \$100 | Salvation Group - \$7 | Total: \$4,246 |

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 it out.

WHAT HAVE I to meditate about? This will be answered within a very few days after you have become associated with AA. For the first time in your life you are giving of yourself, and for the first time in your life you will find that good is repaid with good. You will waken in the morning with clear head and eye. You will not be tortured with fears of what you did the night before. People will go out of their way to be cordial, kind and helpful. Happiness will shine in the faces of your loved ones. You will be free from fear, each day will add to your contentedness, you will not be dodging into alleys and crossing streets to avoid moral and physical creditors, you are beginning to have the power to help others. Surely, you have much for meditation.

When you meditate on this new way of living you cannot but realize that there is a God above, guiding you through each successive day and night. As you become more conscious of this you will seem to better understand this Guiding Power. Before long you will find it is easy to pray. But if it doesn't come

easily, don't let it worry you.

Even churchmen will admit that prayer as we commonly hear it is phrased in language stilted and archaic. The Thee and Thou form has been used since the days of King James when the present version of the Bible was written. If you don't like it don't use it. It is not hard to say before retiring, "Thank you, God, for keeping me sober today." Nor is it hard to say in the morning, "Please, God, guide me in the path of sobriety and decent and useful living this coming day." Make your talks with your Guiding Power a personal thing. Give thanks for help and ask for assistance as though you were addressing your earthly father. Your sincerity is what counts, not the form of language you use. And be certain that the God to whom you pray will make it easier for you to work out your own salvation.

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

July 2006

Barbara L. - Suburban - 6 years

Gary B. - 29 years

Kathleen M. - Turning Point - 23 years

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