

Sobriety Variety



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Hello Jeff...

Recently on KLBJ 590 AM Radio, Jeff Ward dedicated an hour to an issue and presented it as an AA issue... specifically, some AA group outside of Texas was suing their state for an exception to their state-wide smoking ban. Their argument was that such a smoking ban would cause many alcoholics to drink if they could never smoke in a meeting. Jeff presented this issue as if AA was speaking officially. I wrote the following email to Jeff Ward, explaining that AA takes no position on outside issues.

Hello Jeff:

I've been listening to your show today (Mon Oct 23). I am a member of AA and have been sober since Nov 14, 1977. I am also the editor of the Austin AA Newsletter. Thus, I can speak from experience.

Alcoholics Anonymous takes no position on outside issues. Since a smoking ban is an outside issue, AA takes no official position. Individual

Contents	
Sign Up Now!!!!	2
Monthly Meetings at Intergroup	2
AA History	. 2
Volunteer List	3
Recovery Jones	3
Donation List	4
Contact us	4
HCIA Birthday Club	4

members of AA can take whatever position they would like, pro or con, but officially, the organization cannot take a position. Anyone who tries to speak for all of AA, including me, and says anything other than that, is speaking only for himself.

Background: AA does not own anything (almost nothing that is). *Individual members own things* and some members join together to create small groups which may buy things. But they do so as individuals and not as AA as a whole. Thus, a group of AA members might buy a building and use it for AA meetings, but AA does not own the building. AA does not run the building. AA is in no way associated with the building, except that an AA meeting will pay rent for the meeting room just as it would if it rented a room at a church, or community recreation room. This allows AA to abandon any material good that might cause difficulties.... like legal difficulties.

This suggests something very odd. When the police show up to ask who is in charge, all you will hear is laughter because no one is in charge... except G-d. When legal experts try to sue AA they will find that no one can sue an AA meeting. They can only sue individuals.

Perfectionism

There is a difference between striving for excellence and striving for perfection. The first is attainable, gratifying and healthy. The second is unattainable and frustrating.

Perfectionism is exhausting and it is not what good organization is all about. Good organization has to do with making things "sufficient to the need" while perfectionism is, by definition, "excessive to the need."

Perfectionism can lead to procrastination. Ask yourself this question if you suspect perfectionism is rearing its ugly head: "Is the amount of time and effort I'm putting into this task warranted by the potential payoff?"

If the answer is "No," then readjust your goals. Bring your efforts and the payoff into alignment.

-- from The Story Bin http://www.storybin.com/words/wor ds105.shtml

Added: February 06, 2000

In a real sense... AA does not exist except as an organization in New York. Otherwise, we are individuals doing our best to stay sober and checking in with the home office occasionally... maybe, but more likely the New York office has no earthly idea whatsoever whether an AA meeting exists or not and probably could not care less.

Our job is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to stay sober. That's hard enough.

I am glad to answer any further question you may have.

Good show Jeff.

I am an alcoholic and an Orthodox Jew.

Jeff never responded. Perhaps there was no need to respond. The issue passed. But I'm not sure it's an issue.

I got sober in the Los Angeles area. Since most buildings do not not allow smoking, AA meetings run an hour and a half. We added a reading of Chapter 3, the short form of the 12 Traditions, and a ten minute cigarette break in the middle of the meeting.

It works. It really does.

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

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 ... or 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

AA History – Early Akron Recommended Reading List

"...the following literature has helped many members of Alcoholics Anonymous..."

- Alcoholics Anonymous (Works Publishing Company).
- The Holy Bible
- 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 (Macmillan Co.).
- Abundant Living, E. Stanley Jones.
- The Man Nobody Knows, Bruce Barton."

[The following are continuing comments from the article "The Early Akron Recommended Reading List: The Works It Contained and their Significance for Understanding Early Akron A.A. by Glenn C. (South Bend, Indiana). - editor]

EMMET FOX, The Sermon on the Mount, is still well known to A.A. people today. He was a major representative of an American

October Volunteers at Intergroup

Jimmy F. Richard K. Bill U. Donita T. Office: Hotline: Gordon K. Billy C. John P. Sandra H. Heather St. J. Marty C. Kevin M. Marty C. John B. Bryan H. Carolyn C. Joel

Bill H. Gordon D. Tonya B-R Danny/Tonya Jim H.

Roland P. Robert G. Mary Jo B. Chris W. Jenny W.

Chet Mc Leslie Ann D. Jennifer E. Gene C. Dave E.

Gene C. Pam R. Cheryl F. Patty T. Ryan P.

Dennis "Pete" P. Chris F. Deb J. Dennis/Deanie

Mark K. Pam R. Charlotte Ed B.

Patty G. Adrianne Pat K. Gary H.

Karin Christa D. Billy C. Milford P.

religious movement called New Thought, which was connected to, but also different from, Mary Baker Eddy's Christian Science movement.

Among present-day American religious denominations, Unity Church is the largest group using that basic kind of approach. Emmet Fox's position was strongly Christian in its orientation, although the kind of Protestantism he represented was clearly in the liberal camp.

Please note that nineteenth and early twentieth-century New Thought was most definitely NOT the same as "New Age," which was a late twentieth-century movement [...]

E. STANLEY JONES,

Abundant Living (first came out in 1942, 156 pages long). Chapter 6-10 is one of the best discussions of prayer that I have ever read. He ends up that section with a discussion of guidance and entering the

Divine Silence. If Richmond Walker did not read this book, he read something in that tradition (there were similar kinds of material in The Upper Room for

Recovery Jones
(www.recoveryjonescartoons.com)



"Could I get the person behind the pole to come up and share?"

example). At any rate, this book helps enormously in understanding more of what Walker was doing in his selection and modification, in the fine print sections of Twenty-

Four Hours a Day, of various passages from God Calling by Two Listeners.

Chapter 6 of E. Stanley Jones' book begins with a section on "Prayer is Surrender," and Chapter 8 is entitled "The Morning Quiet Time." Jones gives a good deal of detail on what we are supposed to be doing during this Morning Quiet Time, including talking about the role of the subconscious in the process, how to deal with the problem of "wandering thoughts," and what to do when we are confronted with what the medieval tradition called aridity (where it doesn't "feel" like we are in real contact with God, and where we have extraordinary difficulty forcing ourselves to pray at all). On both of these latter issues, I suspect that he as

October Donations From Area AA Groups

Bridge to Shore - \$625 Sat. AM Serenity - \$67 Krausse Springs (Spicewood) - \$200

The Turning Point - \$200 Western Trails - \$150 Dripping Springs - \$254

1825 Group - \$25 Llano - \$100 Live and Let Live - \$821

Into Action (Lockhart) - \$30 Northland - \$231 Monday Rush Hour - \$50

Kempner - \$25 Gattis School Rd. Group - \$16 Allandale - \$40

Keep 1st Things 1st - \$175 Hilltoppers - \$100 Coming Home - \$398

Central - \$75 Friday Night Alive - \$42 **Total:** \$3,624

a Methodist had read John Wesley's Standard Sermons, including especially Wesley's sermons on "Wandering Thoughts" and "Heaviness through Manifold Temptations."

John Wesley in the 1740's was one of the two major theoreticians of the modern evangelical movement during its beginning years. He was an Anglican priest who taught theology and classics at Oxford University in England for a number of years, but ended up becoming a traveling revival preacher who founded the Methodist movement [...] Yet he and Jonathan Edwards (the other major formative evangelical thinker of the 1730's and 40's) both made skillful use of the work of the seventeenth-century British empiricist John Locke, who invented modern psychology, and both of them knew that a knowledge of psychology was necessary for understanding how to preach the gospel effectively and produce real moral change in people's lives. It is totally incorrect to believe that good evangelical theology and modern psychology are opposed to one another. What gave the evangelical movement so much power during its early period was its use of the best psychology of its period.

John Locke had discovered not only

the basic principles of behavioral psychology and operant conditioning, but had also discovered the way early childhood traumas could continue to influence adult behavior in negative ways. And he also made the first serious studies of the profoundly psychologically disturbed who were confined in insane asylums and discovered "the inner logic of insanity" which affected these people.

Wesley, who knew Locke's work forwards and backwards, was the first person I have read in the modern period who used the term "psychotherapy" - - though of course as a teacher of classics at Oxford University, it was used by him in the original Greek form as psyches therapeia (!!!) Wesley said that good psychotherapy (which meant "the healing of the soul") was what true scriptural Christianity was actually about. [...]

Around fifty years ago, Protestant seminaries all over the country began putting people on their faculties with professional degrees in psychology and psychotherapy to teach counseling techniques to their students. [...] most Christian pastors in the United States today know that there is no conflict between good spirituality and good

psychotherapy.

[AA-related material in the formative days was not considered religious per se though nowadays we would see it as so. Your mileage may vary. - editor]

HCIA Birthday Club New Members

October 2006

Brent D. - Lost Pines (Bastrop) - 12 Years

Judy B. - Austin - 33 years

Contact us

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