



Good News



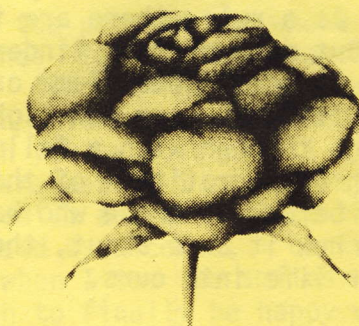
JANUARY
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AND THE DAY CAME
WHEN THE RISK TO REMAIN,
CLOSED IN A BUD,
BECAME MORE PAINFUL
THAN THE RISK IT TOOK TO BLOSSOM.



A flower first buds gradually opening to a full mature blossom.

We alcoholics are given the opportunity in Alcoholics Anonymous to begin to bud (begin a new life), gradually becoming open minded (honest) and a chance to come to full maturity in sobriety.

*January is a beautiful month wherever we are to stop and evaluate the quality of our sobriety. It is time right now to see how we are growing. It is time right now to get involved in service. There are many ways to carry our message. There are many out there suffering. Let us each one become responsible individuals and try to give away what we have so generously been given,
FREEDOM FROM ALCOHOL.*

IF YOU'VE HAD A SLIP . . .

If you've had a slip and you're back, you don't have to be consumed with shame. The important things are 1) that you are back and 2) that you realize you made some mistakes in the program. If you've had two slips and you're back, the same things apply and you should be aware that you may be establishing a negative pattern. If you keep on having slips and you're back, face up to it: You're doing something wrong; and you're headed for disaster. A recovered alcoholic is not supposed to have slips. When you're listening to a speaker talk about a slip, listen for the cause: skipping meetings; not joining a group, not speaking; not getting into the steps, or whatever. You can learn from a negative example, but don't learn the wrong thing: Slips are not a part of the AA program of recovery any more than a second heart attack is part of the recovery from the first. Those who've made it back again can tell you how it gets worse. And then there are those who don't make it back.

edited from DRY RUN

POWER AT WORK - Albert Schweitzer

I do not believe that we can put into anyone ideas which are not in him already. As a rule, there are in everyone all sorts of ideas, ready like tinder. But much of this tinder catches fire, or catches it successfully, only when it meets some flame or spark from outside, i.e., from some other person. Often too, our own light goes out, and is rekindled by some experience we go through with a fellowman. Thus we have each of us, cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flames within us. If we had before us those who have thus been a blessing to us, and could tell them how it came about, they would be amazed to learn what passed over from their life into ours.

Similarly, not one of us knows what effect his life produces, and what he gives to others; that is hidden from us and must remain so, though we are often allowed to see some little fraction of it, so that we may not lose courage. The way in which power works is a mystery.

* * * * *

Parrots are smart, but owls are wise said the teacher. "Does anyone know why?" "I do" said a smiling student. "Parrots talk. Owls listen."

Teacher: *"Johnny, spell straight."*

Johnny: *"S T R A I G H T."*

Teacher: *"Very good. Now, what does it mean?"*

Johnny: *"Without soda or water!"*

Americans are getting stronger. Twenty years ago it took two people to carry \$10 worth of groceries. Today a child can do it.

FROM A GRATEFUL INMATE OF VACAVILLE - David B.

Some guys ask me if AA is like group therapy. I tell them that AA is better than group therapy because in AA there isn't a doctor or therapist asking you questions or trying to understand your problems. In AA, a person becomes his own doctor or therapist and there isn't any middle man. In therapy, the doctor or therapist doesn't really know or feel what you have gone through but in AA everyone has felt the pain both physical and emotional that surrounds an alcoholic. We are all alcoholics and united in our efforts to stay sober and understand ourselves better.

When I was drinking booze, my life was completely out of control. I couldn't use good judgement or even common sense. There was no way I could obey the laws of society so after breaking enough laws, I ended up right here in the garbage can of society. I joined AA in this prison out of desperation. I was still drinking pruno last February and I was planning to escape again. This proved to me that as long as I drank alcohol, I would never know how to accept the things I couldn't change and I would never be at peace with myself or with anyone else.

Since I've joined AA and have been active in the program, my whole life has changed for the best, and for a lot of reasons. The biggest reason I know I'm a better person is that I'm sober today. Also, I feel at peace with myself and I'm comfortable with every person in this room, even though I don't know everyone. I still feel comfortable with you because when I listen to your stories how alcohol made your lives unmanageable, I can see my own life and when I see each person come up to this podium and talk about the heartaches and disappointments in their lives caused by alcohol, I can remember my own heartaches and disappointments. And when I see the smiles on the faces of some of us who have recovered enough to finally be happy with ourselves, then I feel my own happiness even more.

And for the guys in this room who are new to AA and have doubts if this program can help you, please keep coming back and follow this simple way. You are going to feel just like most of us do right now - a lot happier - a lot wiser - and so grateful.

* * * * *

THE GREAT THING IN THIS WORLD IS NOT SO MUCH WHERE WE ARE, BUT IN WHAT DIRECTION WE ARE MOVING.

Oliver Wendell Holmes

THOUGH WE TRAVEL THE WORLD OVER TO FIND THE BEAUTIFUL, WE MUST CARRY IT WITH US OR WE FIND IT NOT.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

What really hurts, said the drunk as he staggered to his feet for the third time, is that my wife thinks I'm here in the bar having fun.

WHAT WE IN AA CAN DO FOR THE ALCOHOLIC OUTSIDE THE PROGRAM by Dean K.

(continued from the December 1979 issue)

Once an Area or District CPC Committee has been formed, it is recommended that a survey be made of the kinds and numbers of local resources offering help for the alcoholic - what the present relationship of each with AA is; whether it could be improved; and in general helpful information for individual committee members to follow up.

When this list has been made, committee members should -

1. Make an initial contact by phone, letter, or face-to-face;
2. Offer to come and talk about AA, sharing what AA can and cannot do;
3. Offer to take the professional to an open AA meeting;
4. Provide AA literature describing the AA program; and
5. Stress AA's willingness to cooperate as a community resource to help the alcoholic outside the program to recover.

Here are some illustrations how this has been done: In one area the CPC Committee sent form letters to professionals. If there was no response, a member made a personal contact. A meeting then was set up with two or three CPC members and three or four professionals to commence communication. Another Area CPC Committee set up a class on AA at an Institute of Technology including a discussion of AA's history, structure, 12 Steps and 12 Traditions and two members telling "how it works" for them. A question and answer session followed and those attending were asked to fill out an evaluation sheet. Another Area sent letters to doctors and hospital administrators, which resulted in classes about AA at selected hospitals for the staffs. One Area CPC Committee formed a squad of five members, who each visited ten clergymen by appointment, resulting in 12-Step calls.

While it is true the Delegate is responsible for public information and cooperation with the professional community within his Area, experience has shown such committees are better placed within the Central Office and/or Intergroup structure. Requests for public information (particularly AA speakers at non-AA meetings), and contacts with local professionals generally, are funneled through the central office; thus the responsibility naturally falls within that jurisdiction. In California's Northern Coastal Area it has been found the most effective system is forming local PI and CPC committees through Intergroup, with assistance from the Area PI/CPC Committee, which meets once each month at a central location - thus allowing a wide sharing of experience throughout the Area, and providing some direction and uniformity. Also there is a potential source of monies from two sources - the Intergroup and the Area General Service Committee.

(to be concluded next month)

CNCA FALL ASSEMBLY AND THE AA FILM - Dean K.

The Northern Coastal General Service Fall Assembly, held at Saratoga in November, proved to be the largest attended Area Assembly on record in Northern California. Some 500 individuals registered, and attendance at the showing of the new AA film, "Alcoholics Anonymous - An Inside View," was estimated at over 800 people. Phyllis M, of AA's General Service Office, was delightful in her morning sharing session, and even more rewarding in the evening, when she told "what it used to be like, what happened, and what it's like now."

The general consensus of the audience was a hearty approval of the AA film. An Analysis of the 400 evaluation questionnaires returned indicates that:

291 rated the film from excellent to good - just slightly less than two-thirds
311 agreed that the film showed what being an AA member is really like
325 said they would tell a friend, either who has a drinking problem or who knows someone who has a drinking problem, to see the film.
277 recommended that the film be shown on television.

The greater majority of the viewers found the film informative, realistic, believable; many thought it was important, enjoyable, effective and hopeful.

There were frequent comments that the sound track was not too clear, and many mentioned that the segment on AA's history would be better without the full-face pictures of Dr. Bob and Bill, AA's co-founders.

This AA movie is now available (on weekly loan or long-term lease basis) to professional agencies, programs, and people who have a direct interest in helping sick alcoholics. The loan and lease agreements stipulate that the film must be used on the premises of agencies renting it and only for their own purposes. No admission fees should be charged explicitly for a screening, and TV showing is not permitted. Nor may it be copied or loaned to other agencies.

* * * * *

Papa rabbit, nibbling thoughtfully at his evening carrot, noticed that his son was in a very jovial mood.

"What makes Peter so happy?" he asked.

Mama rabbit explained, "He had a very good time in school today. He learned to multiply."

UmmHumm!! Football season is the only time of year when a guy can walk down the street with a girl on one arm and a blanket on the other without everybody raising their eyebrows.



COMING ATTRACTIONS

- Jan. 24 8:00 pm Sharing Session, St. Dunston's Hall, Corner of El Camino Real and Hermosa, Millbrae, CA (across from Safeway). Topics to be discussed: Workshop for Secretaries
Responsibility of Group Officers
Loyalty and Home Group.
- Feb. 2 3rd Annual Unity Day, American Legion Hall, 2020 Plymouth Rd., Stockton, CA. Registration to begin at noon. Tickets: \$5.50.
3:30 Speaker: Model T George of Modesto, CA
Film "Inside View of AA"
5:30 Buffet Dinner
Evening Speaker: Ruth M of Bellflower, CA
9 pm to midnight: Disco Dance
- Feb. 29 - 13th Annual Pacific Region Alcoholics Anonymous Service Assembly,
Mar. 2 Anaheim, CA. Inquiries: PRAASA, P.O. Box 105, Riverside, CA 92502. See below.
- Feb. 8 - 8th Annual All California Young People in AA Round Up, Sheraton
10 Inn, Fresno, CA. Inquiries: P.O. Box 12042, Fresno, CA 93776
- Mar. 7 - Northern California Council of AA Annual Spring Conference,
9 Monterey Conference Center, Monterey, CA. Send advance registration of \$2 and/or inquiries to Treasurer, N.C.C., 166 Geary St., Room 804, San Francisco, CA 94108

PRAASA TO BE IN ANAHEIM - from the FRESNO PIPELINE

What on earth is PRAASA? It's the Pacific Region AA Service Assembly that is held once a year. AA in the U.S. and Canada is divided into eight regions. The eight regions contain 91 areas. Our area belongs to the Pacific Region which includes nine states --- Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah and Washington. Each state constitutes one area except California which has five areas. The Pacific Region totals 13 areas. Each year in the month of March, the PRAASA is held in one of the areas. We are fortunate that the assembly to be held Feb. 29 through March 2, 1980, will be in Anaheim, CA so that many of us will not have to go a great distance to attend. In a sense, the Regional Assembly is a pre-conference assembly in that the agenda topics to be discussed in New York at the General Service Conference are presented and discussed at the Regional Assembly.

This is a wonderful opportunity to broaden your horizons and meet and share with AA members from other parts of the region.

THERE'S MORE TO IT THAN TALK - from CENTRAL BULLETIN

No man can consider himself a real member of AA just because he doesn't drink. There is such a thing as having a sober body and a mind that retain its drunken stupidity. The body will express lip service to the AA program but the mind still wallows in an alcoholic quagmire.

The physical sobriety is used only as a cloak to cover the same corruptive thinking and conniving that was always present in the mind. Dishonesty of thought and action is just as vicious in the sober man as in the drunken man. In fact it has a more foul odor in the sober man, because the sober man has not the excuse of befuddled judgment.

Anyone addicted to this form of hypocrisy is still controlled by alcoholic thinking. He still retains his false pride, his complete selfishness, his super-ego. He seeks no advice and rejects any that might be offered. His moral and ethical standards are fabricated on a loom built to suit his own perverted specifications. The cloak he weaves is transparent as daylight. No one is deceived except the deceiver....and even he must have his moments when he must admit life is a sham.

The solution for this problem is the same as it is for all of us: "We practice these principles in ALL of our affairs."

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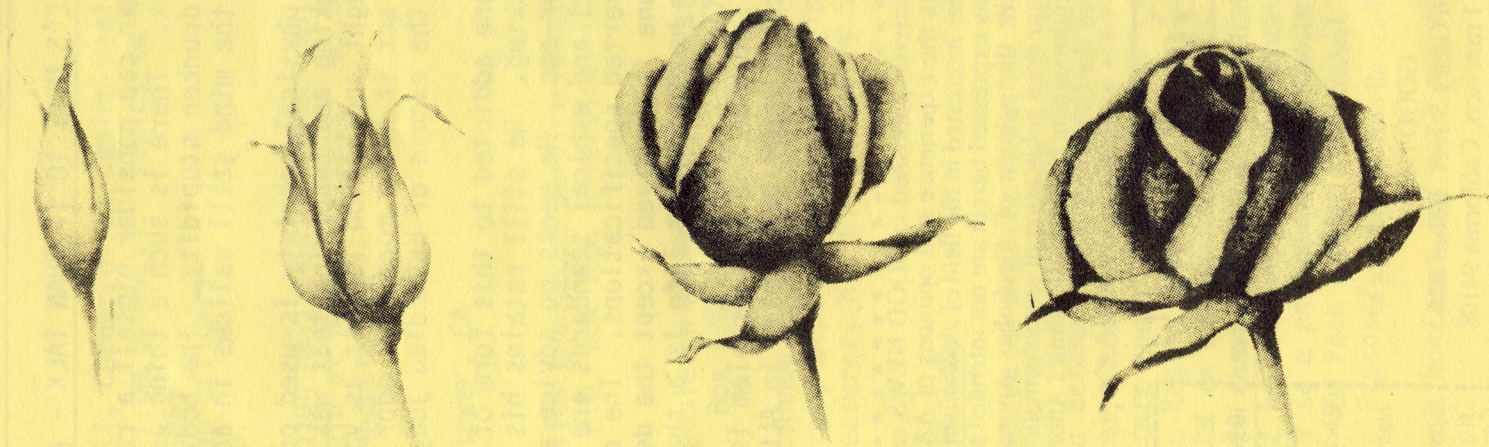
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