



GOOD NEWS



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Happy New Year!!

Some Thoughts for the New Year

Vision Beyond Today

Vision is, I think, the ability to make good estimates, both for the immediate and for the more distant future. Some might feel this sort of striving to be heresy against "One day at a time." But that valuable principle really refers to our mental and emotional lives and means chiefly that we are not foolishly to repine over the past nor wishfully to daydream about the future.

As individuals and as a fellowship, we shall surely suffer if we cast the whole job of planning for tomorrow onto a fatuous idea of providence. God's real providence has endowed us human beings with a considerable capability for foresight, and He evidently expects us to use it. Of course, we shall often miscalculate the future in whole or in part, but that is better than to refuse to think at all.

TWELVE CONCEPTS

Freedom to Choose

Looking back, we see that our freedom to choose badly was not, after all, a very real freedom.

When we chose because we "must," this was not a free choice, either. But it got us started in the right direction.

When we chose because we "ought to," we were really doing better. This time we were earning some freedom, making ourselves ready for more.

But when, now and then, we could gladly make right choices without rebellion, hold-out, or conflict, then we had our first view of what perfect freedom under God's will could be like.

GRAPEVINE, DECEMBER 1957

Write, Right Now

Wouldn't you like to see your story or ideas in print in the **Good News**? Now is the time! Sit down now with your PC or typewriter or even with your pen and paper. We need to hear from you. Your support is our fuel.

GOOD NEWS EDITOR, RON J.

A New Life

Is sobriety all that we are to expect of a spiritual awakening? No, sobriety is only a bare beginning; it is only the first gift of the first awakening. If more gifts are to be received, our awakening has to go on. As it does go on, we find

(See THOUGHTS, Page Five)

Fresno Gang Readies For Spring Conference

The 46th Annual Spring Conference of NCCAA will be held on March 12 thru 14, 1993 at the Fresno Convention Center at 700 "M" Street in Fresno. Many fine hotels and motels will be available but the Holiday Inn Center Plaza will be the host hotel. They will hold a block of rooms for us until February 26, 1993. Their phone number is (209)268-1000. Please mention NCCAA when you register at your favorite hotel or motel as we may get credit for occupied rooms which will help defray our expenses.

Flyers are available that list the excellent speakers and events of this fun-filled weekend. Please pre-register for the conference by sending \$5.00 to the NCCAA Treasurer at 1540 Market Street, Room 150, San Francisco, CA 94102. Your badge will be waiting when you arrive at the conference.

Music for the dance on Saturday night will be provided by a local group "Shake the Handle," who have agreed to provide suitable, danceable music with appeal to a variety of listeners.

Our counterparts in Al-Anon will be meeting at the Piccadilly Inn at the Airport. Programs for the Al-Anon activities will be available at the information table at our conference.

We will be electing a Council Treasurer at this conference. Nominations will be accepted at the Steering Committee Meeting on Saturday morning, when nominations will be closed and the election will take place at the Open Delegates Meeting on Saturday afternoon.

News From The Chairperson

"TRUDGING TOGETHER"

Excitement is mounting as our Fresno Conference approaches. I have been working with our four speakers on their travel arrangements, and they are all wonderfully enthusiastic about the opportunity to share with us. Forty-six people have been asked to participate with them in the nine big meetings that are offered beginning Friday afternoon at 3:30 and ending Sunday afternoon at 1:00. Besides these meetings, marathon meetings in both English and Spanish are held.

Happy New Year! For some reason, I have found myself thinking a lot about sponsorship this first month of 1993. I continue to work closely with my sponsor after more than eighteen years of sobriety, and I am more grateful than words can express for our relationship. I, also, have the privilege of sharing in the lives of the women that I sponsor. And what a gift this is!

Recently, I participated in a workshop on sponsorship at the Pacific Region Forum in Santa Clara. A number of important ideas were shared, and I would like to pass them on. I was the recorder for the workshop, so I have a copy of the things that were shared that were important.

Service sponsorship is vitally important, and a service sponsor needs to be well grounded in recovery. A strong foundation in recovery is needed to serve effectively. Defects of character tend to be more magnified in service committee work; therefore, it is necessary to stick to the simplicity of basic recovery sponsorship. We cannot afford to get so immersed in service work that we forget where we came from and why we are doing what we are doing. You cannot pass on what you do not have. It is important to have worked the Steps of recovery before you sponsor others or do service committee work.

A sponsor guides the sponsee to a spiritual awakening through the Twelve Steps of recovery, helping him/her to uncover, discover and discard the wreckage of the past. What the sponsee does or does not do with his/her life is an outside issue (ie. date or not date, stay married or divorce, etc.). No attempt should be made to control a sponsee's life. Expectations placed on another human being always lead to emotional upheaval. Step Three reminds us that we turn our will and our lives (plural) over to the care of God... Which means that God's kids are His problem and not ours. Friendship between the sponsor and the sponsee is healthy when there is proper balance and perspective. A sponsor's own sponsor can be very helpful when emotions get tangled!

The most slippery place in the AA world lies between the doors of
(See CHAIRPERSON, Page Three)

Tradition

The following facts are revealed in *Pass It On*: Bill W. was not the sole author of the experience from which the Traditions came. However he was the one who culled meaning from that experience. The meanings derived by Bill became the backbone of Tradition. He had the talent to capitalize on his own experience, the experience of the Fellowship, and the mistakes of earlier institutions.

The Traditions are neither laws nor regulations. They protect us from laws and regulations. *AA Comes Of Age* reveals the following: In 1950 Bill realized that, for the future, AA could no longer depend upon the authority and influence of its pioneers for unity. Henceforth, it would have to rely on spiritual principles as set forth in the Traditions. The *12 x 12* calls unity our most cherished quality upon which our lives depend. It declares that the Traditions contain not a single "don't," that they repeatedly say "We ought" but never "You must."

What about change? In the February, 1961 *Grapevine*, Bill endorsed AA's need for change and growth. But he warned against tampering with our basics. He cited AA's belief that the Steps and Traditions represent the approximate truths we need. He added that we need not alter our truths but that we surely can improve their application. We can step up the practice of these principles in all our affairs.

No Traditions study is complete without a study of the Service Concepts. The latter serve as a sequel to

(See TRADITIONS, Page Three)

GOOD NEWS

Newsletter of the

Northern California Council
of Alcoholics Anonymous

Articles of interest to our readers are welcomed and may be mailed to the editor at:

Post Office Box 64090,
Sunnyvale CA 94088-4090

Deadline Guidelines (Not Set in Stone)

December 10 for January-February
February 10 for March-April
April 10 for May-June
June 10 for July-August
August 10 for September-October
October 10 for November-December

Good News Policy The Good News is the newspaper of the Northern California Council of Alcoholics Anonymous and therefore is a vehicle for you, the members and supporters of the Council to express your views. The views expressed here are those of the writers, and are not intended to represent the opinion of Alcoholics Anonymous or NCCAA as a whole, nor do they necessarily reflect the views of the staff of the Good News.

If you would like to contribute articles to the Good News, we welcome your participation. The guidelines are as follows: "It (Good News) reports the activities of the Council, Hospital and Institution Committee, General Service, and other articles of interest to AA members. News is written about the conferences for the benefit of members unable to attend. News of activities of the Groups in Northern California may also be included."

Tradition

(Continued from Page Two)

the 12 x 12, especially as regard term, "trusted servant." Unity and Service go hand in hand. Tradition deflates prosperity, money and prestige. Service insures stewardship over prudent resources. Tradition applies to each group. Service directs Tradition to AA as a whole. Tradition articulates the group to our common welfare. Service articulates our totality to the welfare of each group. The Traditions are valid for any two or three who use the AA name. They are just as valid for committees, conferences and conventions.

FRANK B., Napa, CA

No More Raffles for NCCAA

At the Redding Summer Conference there will be no raffle!

Because of changes in the California State law, the officers of NCCAA have decided not to have any more raffles. Instead, there will be free drawings. A free drawing differs from a raffle in that tickets are not sold but are given away free. If a person receiving tickets so desires, he/she may make a donation, usually about one dollar for every three tickets although there is no obligation. Anyone who cannot afford, or does not wish to make, a donation for any reason does not have to but still receives one ticket. Prizes are given out to ticket holders whose numbers are drawn.

At future Conferences, we will still have our familiar ticket committee members with their hats and aprons, but they will not be selling raffle tickets. They will be giving away Free Drawing tickets. Of course, you may make a donation if you so desire.

From the Chairperson

(Continued from Page Two)

the treatment or correctional facility and the doors of Alcoholics Anonymous. Temporary sponsorship cards are successful as are meetings taken into the institutions where you meet the prospective newcomers where they are and do not wait for them to come to you. Temporary sponsorship is important in a homegroup, too. Slips that a newcomer can fill out are used responsibly and effectively, and homegroup members are vigilant in seeking out newcomers and making them feel welcome.

A busy sponsor must learn to budget his/hertime effectively. There needs to be a balance in the number of people you sponsor. If you spread yourself too thin, you are no good to anyone. It is important to care about the people you sponsor, to communicate effectively, to set up guidelines

and to have a regular schedule with each sponsee if it is appropriate. Sponsees new to AA are often in high drama and need to learn, with unconditional love from the sponsor, the difference between things that are trivial and things that are important.

The words "hiring" and "firing" in relationship to sponsorship have no place in Alcoholics Anonymous. They do not fit into our AA way of life; they are simply inappropriate. There is no ownership in sponsorship. Needs change and people change. In simplest terms, sponsorship is the sharing of one alcoholic with another, letting the chips fall where they may. The relationship should always remain spiritually anonymous.

Luv,

DIANE O., Saratoga, CA

How it works...

Rational Geographic?

Looking back at the last eight and a half years, I'm amazed that I've stayed sober in spite of my periodic fits of insanity. Take my move to San Francisco for example.

I received a job offer that entailed moving from my hometown of Minneapolis to San Francisco after 18 months of sobriety. I can remember so vividly my enthusiasm for the move. New surroundings, new career, new romances, etc., all contributed to my desire to get out of the monotony of Minneapolis and set up shop in the City by the Bay. The grass would surely be greener there!

I drove out of San Francisco International Airport on a sunny November afternoon not at all like what I had left in Minnesota. My mind raced with ideas of what to do with the abundant freedom of my first afternoon and evening. I decided to throw on a sportcoat and drive up to the wharf where I would surely be inundated with opportunities to meet

women and begin some new romances. My mind raced as I unpacked my suitcase at the hotel. I figured I would check out the phone book for some leads as to where I might begin my adventure. I opened the cover, and there, much to my surprise I read:

Police

Fire

Ambulance

Alcoholics Anonymous

My heart sank as reason caught up with passion. Why? Why did I have to see that listing? I began to hear the words of sponsors and fellow AA's: "Make sure you get to meetings out there!" "You don't want to throw away everything you've worked for in AA. Get involved." "Moving is a great opportunity to slip-be careful."

I reluctantly dialed the phone. The voice of an older woman answered. She was so glad I called. And (See How it Works...Page Four)

How it Works...

wouldn't you know, there was a meeting just a mile down the road that night at Sequoia Hospital. By this time, all the smoldering ashes of my passion to get out and experience San Francisco were gone. The city would still be there tomorrow. First things first. Get to a meeting.

A week later I was sitting in a bagel shop on Union Street with the San Francisco Examiner and a city map. I was searching desperately through the confusing ads for the right place to live. A woman and her daughter sat at the next table. The mother leaned over and said, "You must be new in town." I looked at her and quipped, "You must be a psychic!" (There weren't a lot of natives in there with a map and the classified ads.) I lightened up a bit and asked her if she had any suggestions on locating an apartment. She told me to lose the newspaper and circled three areas for me to scour for rental signs. I was on my way. I found a place to live that afternoon.

As I walked down Union Street one afternoon, I walked by a store called the Enchanted Crystal. I looked in as I passed. After a few more steps I realized that the woman in the store was the same woman who had helped me at the bagel shop. I backtracked and we met once again. Her name was Sylvia. After giving me a tour of the store, she announced that she was adopting me. She thought I could use some motherly advice. She promptly invited me to dinner for the following evening. I accepted.

I walked into Sylvia's apartment and was struck by the aroma. I looked at her in disbelief and said, "Baked chicken, green beans, white rice and cream of mushroom soup as gravy?" I couldn't believe it. My mother often prepared the exact meal for me in Minnesota. Weird! Coincidence? All miracles aside, when it's time to eat, it's time to eat.

After dinner Sylvia mentioned

(Continued from Page Three) that her son had been away for quite a while due to a chemical problem. I told her that I had been sober for eighteen months. Sylvia's face lit up. She stood up and announced there was a great little meeting on Steiner and Union that started in twenty minutes. As I walked out the door, she took a framed picture off her wall and said, "Here's something for those bare walls." I thanked her and hustled down the hill.

As I walked up Union Street I began to fantasize. Mercedes, BMW, Porsche, Rolls Royce. Wow! What beautiful cars! As I strolled past bar after bar I could hear the carryings on of the patrons. Gee, they sounded like they were having a great time. I couldn't believe the beautiful women, the high heels, the sexy clothes. The voices were at it again in my head. For a nanosecond I realized what was happening. My mind shifted back to my obsession. I spotted a striking blonde about two blocks ahead of me. I hoped she was window shopping so that I might catch up to her without breaking into an all out sprint. She wore a short black mink jacket, black leather miniskirt and high heels. Of course in my mind we had already

been in a relationship for an eternity by the time I hit the curb. I caught up with her just as she turned to go in the door at St. Mary's Episcopal Church. She was going to the AA meeting! What a coincidence.

The meeting was huge by Minnesota standards. I made a beeline for the coffeepot. The woman I followed in handed me a cup of coffee and introduced herself. She asked where I was from. Ironically she and I had grown up within a mile of each other in Minnesota! The tapes in my head began to wane. The emptiness of my frantic obsession collided immediately with the reality and sanity of AA. What was God (previously ignored in this dramatic turn of events) trying to tell me?

I couldn't take it anymore! After the break and before the speaker began, the secretary asked if there was any new business. Involuntarily I found myself up on my feet. I announced my name, affliction and recent move to the area. I explained that I was walking to the meeting, I realized just how slippery a place I was in. I would prefer to have contacts to rely on before I needed them. I was amazed at what I heard coming out of my own mouth!

At the end of the meeting, I had no less than thirty phone numbers of
(See How It..., Next Page)

FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR GOOD NEWS—1992

BALANCE IN BANK JAN. 1, 1992		\$290.30
Deposits from subscriptions	\$583.00	
Subsidy from NCCAA	\$450.00	
TOTAL INCOME		\$1323.30
EXPENSES		
P.O. Box Rental	\$49.00	
Bulk Rate Permit	\$75.00	
Printing	\$707.47	
Mailing Costs	\$169.96	
Editors Reimbursement	\$23.77	
Rubber Stamp	\$15.13	
Bank Charge (Deposit Slips)	\$4.09	
TOTAL EXPENSES		\$1044.42
BALANCE IN BANK DEC. 31, 1992		\$278.88
TOTAL COPIES MAILED LAST ISSUE	281	
TOTAL CURRENT SUBSCRIBERS	225	
EXCHANGES AND COMPLEMENTARY COPIES	56	

How It . . .

(From Page Four)

people willing to be there for me if I needed them. And I have needed them. Many moves and meetings later I'm sober and still keep in touch with many of those people that I met that night.

I understand now what they mean when they say, "No matter where I go, there I am." I'm grateful that no matter where I go I find AA if I'm willing to look. I believe God was clearly doing for me what I could not do for myself.

Have a safe trip!

DREW E.

(From MYRUS, Minneapolis, MN)

Thoughts

(Continued From Page One)

that bit by bit we can discard the old life—the one that did not work—for a new life that can and does work under any conditions whatever.

Regardless of worldly success or failure, regardless of pain or joy, regardless of sickness or health or even death itself, a new life of endless possibilities can be lived if we are willing to continue our awakening, through the practice of AA's Twelve Steps.

GRAPEVINE, MAY 1960

NCCAA CONFERENCE DATES
1993 Conferences
FRESNO - March 12, 13, 14
REDDING - June 25, 26, 27
STOCKTON - October 8, 9, 10
1994 Conferences
OAKLAND - March 25, 26, 27
MONTEREY - June 24, 25, 26
MODESTO - October 7, 8, 9
1995 Conferences
FRESNO - March 10, 11, 12
SAN MATEO - June 2, 3, 4
SACRAMENTO - Oct. 6, 7, 8
MARK YOUR CALENDARS

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA COUNCIL OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

January 1, 1992 - December 31, 1992

INCOME

Balance on hand as of Jan. 1, 1992	\$20,897.10
Monterey Conference Income (1992)	\$23,578.82
Santa Rosa Conference Income	\$14,791.53
Contribution Young People's Conf. Comm.	\$306.15
San Jose Conference Income	\$16,349.78
Redding Hotel Refund	\$231.92
TOTAL INCOME	<u>\$55,258.20</u>

EXPENSES

Monterey Conference Expenses (1992)	\$9,607.17
Santa Rosa Conference Expenses	\$13,367.42
San Jose Conference Expenses (1992)	\$13,334.43
Fresno Conference Expense	\$2,519.20
Oakland Conference Expense	\$900.00
Redding Conference Expense	\$1,518.77
Stockton Conference Expense	\$250.00
Chairman's Expenses (Alex McE.)	\$95.30
Chairman's Expenses (Diane O.)	\$433.48
Treasurer's Expenses	\$345.69
Coastal Secretary's Expenses	\$0.00
Interior Secretary's Expenses (Linda M.)	\$57.44
Interior Secretary's Expenses (John G.)	\$167.00
Phone Expense	\$1,014.11
Conference Badges	\$1,133.12
S. F. Central Office	\$225.00
Good News	\$450.00
Bank Charges	\$42.77
Delegate Ribbons	\$290.93
Non-Profit Status Filing Fee	\$10.00
Finance Committee	\$15.00
Purpose & Structure Booklet	\$31.12
Contributions GSO, New York	\$10,347.35
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>\$56,155.30</u>

Balance on Hand December 31, 1992	<u>\$20,000.00</u>
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