



Good News



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RESPONSIBILITY - NOT A FOUR-LETTER WORD

The word "responsibility" is a word of many letters. For me, the definition of the word is another word of many letters, "opportunities", as used in this text means "spiritual opportunities", with no implication to the four letter word "work".

When I say I am an Alcoholic, I am also making a commitment and automatically assuming certain responsibilities to AA as a whole. As a member of Alcoholics Anonymous it is my responsibility to uphold the structure and principles, and preserve the traditions and our heritage. A responsible person is answerable, reliable, dependable, and acts in a responsible manner. I feel a responsibility to my home group, to make 12 step calls, to make sure the doors are always open, to attend its meetings regularly. In my group, I am also responsible for sponsoring and helping the newcomer develop and grow by guiding them into action, to give freely what has been given freely. Therefore, it is my responsibility to learn something about the program so I have something to give away. Being responsible is to get involved, which takes personal sacrifices. My responsibility lies to the old-timer also. They lend a stabilizing influence in their sharing. I also must share my gift of faith with others and offer my services, depending upon what particular talents I may have. There is a need for all of us.

In this new sober life, I will be presented with responsibilities to the world, as a good citizen. Our 12th step refers to this. As a sober citizen I am ready to accept these responsibilities outside of AA, such as in my home and to my loved ones, job, church, neighborhood, and associates. I have a moral responsibility to use the 12 steps as a tool to recovery and to accept the AA program for moral regeneration. Sober, I can take full responsibility in my dealings with others. I can make decisions and take the responsibility for my actions and for any damage to others.

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RESPONSIBILITY -- continued from Page 1

"Easy Does It", is no excuse for avoiding responsibilities.
"Keep it Simple", does not mean to be ineffective.
"Let It Begin With Me", speaks for itself.

The results of "spiritual opportunities are "spiritual experiences".

Le Juene D. - Pinole

* * * * *

If we bar the door to change, we do indeed shut out life,
and loose the freedom to follow our own stars.

KOIT FM - S.F., CA.

* * * * *

Two drunks staggered out of the bar
and one looked up in the sky and says
to the other, "It's really late, the sun
is rising."

The second drunk said, "No, you're
crazy. It's the moon setting."

Just then another drunk passes by so
they decide to ask him which it was.

"Gosh, I don't know. I don't live
around here!"

* * * * *

The pod will not grow in the shadows of the tree. It has to
roll away, free.

WHAT THE TWELVE TRADITIONS MEAN

The Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous are, pragmatically a list of the mistakes the Society made during its growth. Representing the distilled experience of AA's past, the Traditions are the basic principles by which members work together collectively and relate as a whole to the world (Unity). Bill W. said that by adhering to these principles, "AA cannot possibly be split apart by politics, religious differences, money, professionalism, public controversy -- or by old-timers who take a notion to be big shots".

The Twelve Traditions were first published in 1946 in the AA Grapevine and got a mixed reception. Only AA Groups in dire trouble took them seriously. Others "were obviously bored" as they listened to Bill expound on these tenets. Many a group wrote him letters which said in effect, "Bill, we'd love to have you come and speak. Tell us where you used to hide your bottles...how you finally sobered up. But please don't talk anymore about those damned Traditions."

Time has changed all that. The average AA member, hopefully, knows that the chain of recovery in the Fellowship is only as strong as its weakest link. Thus, few would deliberately exploit or tamper with the principles embodied in the Traditions realizing they are the key to the Unity, functioning, and even the survival of AA.

Here are the Traditions, with a capsule explanation of each:

1. "Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on AA unity." (The group must survive or the individual will not.)
2. "For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority - a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern." The collective voice of the group is the "law" and the "leader" --not any one person.
3. "The only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking." Alcoholics become members when they say they are.
4. "Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole." The group, like the individual, necessarily conforms to principles which guarantee survival.

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WHAT THE TWELVE TRADITIONS MEAN -- cont. from Page 3

5. "Each group has but one primary purpose -- to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers." It is the great paradox of AA that members can seldom keep sobriety, unless we give it away.
6. "An AA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the AA name to any related facility or outside enterprise lest problems of money, property or prestige divert us from our primary purpose." AA cannot be all things to all people, nor should we try.
7. "Every AA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions." John D. Rockefeller said, "Money would spoil it all," knowing that whoever pays the piper calls the tune.
8. "Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers." One-to-one work with fellow alcoholics is never paid for, but AA could not function without full-time service workers as well.
9. "AA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve." The aim of our services is to bring sobriety within the reach of all who want it.
10. "Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the AA name ought never be drawn into public controversy." AA does not take sides, ever, in public controversy.
11. "Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films." Personal ambition has no place in AA. We seek publicity for AA principles, not AA member
12. "Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions ever reminding us to place principles before personalities." Subordinating personal aims to the common good is the essence of all Twelve Traditions and the greatest safeguard AA has.

HOSPITAL & INSTITUTION COMMITTEE - NCCAA

When we speak of Hospital & Institutions, we are directly relating to the 9th Tradition: "AA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve."

The spark of hospital work was set into action by Bill W. and Dr. Bob when they realized they found for themselves a way to help one another, but spiritually knew that they must try to help others -- thus they searched the hospitals and found our 3rd member. (1935 - "AA Comes of Age", pg. 72).

It wasn't until 1942 when then Warden of San Quentin, Clinton Duffy, looked over files and having knowledge from being in and around San Quentin many years, found that most of the inmates were there behind alcohol - perhaps he read the Jack Alexander Saturday Evening Post article, but however or whatever, he contacted Warren T. from Richmond - and along with an inmate named Ricardo, the first institution meeting was held, with success.

In June 1946, meetings were requested at Folsom. The doors were open and our work was cut out for us.

By 1947, Northern California Council of Alcoholics Anonymous was established for communication to New York, before there was a General Service Office, as we know it today. These facts are important to set the history of Hospital & Institution Committee in Northern California. For in the Purpose, Structure, Function of Northern California Council of Alcoholics Anonymous, it clearly states:

"This Committee bears the tremendous task of bringing the message to those unfortunates in Hospitals and Penal Institutions. It operates as a separate committee, entirely self-controlled, but as a part of the Northern California Council."

"At the time of publication of this pamphlet there are over 300 AA members serving in the work of this committee and more are needed. Over 70 institutions are being serviced daily or weekly and the workers travel over 3,000 miles each week in carrying the message. "(Today, 1981, there

HOSPITAL & INSTITUTION - cont. from Page 5

are 151 facility meetings covered by some 2500 AA members and still more are needed).

In the early days, groups from different cities took the responsibility to cover the meetings in the first two prisons, Folsom and San Quentin. But as is natural, egos got in the way and coming meeting night, sometimes several groups of people from different fellowships would show up and since we all are anxious to carry THE message--arguments, even fist fights were the order of the night. For this reason, Hospital & Institution had to become organized. First, it would give a foundation to permit the committee to continue ad infinitum. Members come and go, but the committee continues. Second, the problems which may arise at the facilities are resolved within the framework of the committee. The facility administrators have one focal point to turn to in such cases, rather than seeking individuals unable to speak for or to any problem. In turn, committee members may seek assistance and advice for problems encountered in their particular facility, with the knowledge that the combined committee experience will have faced and solved just such a problem in the past. Thus, no one is entirely alone in the overall effort to serve. Areas of responsibility had to come into effect such as General Chairman, Regional Chairman, Area Chairman, coordinators, contact chairmen and others, as more prisons, jails, juvenile hall, honor farms, alcohol treatment centers, city and community psychiatric hospitals were opening the locked doors to Alcoholics Anonymous.

For further information on our structure, ask your area chairman or anyone involved in Hospital & Institution work to see our "pink" pamphlet structure.

Next comes literature - how were we to provide all the needed literature? Big books, 12 and 12, As Bill Sees It, AA Comes of Age, and all Conference-approved literature, dealing with RECOVERY. At first individuals provided it, but as our responsibilities in facilities increased, so did the need for literature. Once again, the intelligence of the recovering alcoholic came upon an idea -- why not pass around a can at group meetings with an explanation the pennies, nickles, dimes, quarters dropped into the can was for the literature for patients and inmates. Good idea! But how to make the cans more meaningful to groups?

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HOSPITAL & INSTITUTION - cont. from Page 6

"Paint them Pink" -- so we now have our "pink cans" which are passed separate from the Groups 7th Tradition and on a voluntary basis -- it works. Today our budget for literature is \$19,500 and is being met by all you who want to contribute to this type of 12 Step work.

The last 8 years we have participated in an All State Hospital & Institution Committee Conference. This conference is held each May and the purpose has been and is now, to give AA members the opportunity to meet with professionals in various fields once a year to learn how we can cooperate with them in helping the alcoholics who are confined in institutions and hospital treatment facilities.

In closing, look around your group, the fellowship, in area, in districts and all of Alcoholics Anonymous to listen, meet and hear from people who first heard the message, "This message of recovery through the Hospital & Institution Committee. For as Bill W. said, "If the service is needed, there is only one question -- keep it we must -- else those who haven't heard may die".

Pat S., Historian
Northern California Hospital & Institution Committee

"I'm very sorry but I can't diagnose your trouble, Mahoney. I think it must be drink."

"Don't worry about it, Dr. Kelly. I'll come back when you're sober."

The Fresno Pipeline - Fresno, Ca.

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA COUNCIL OF
ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

Do you know what Zone you are in?
Do you know who your Zone Chairman is?
Be a part of - get involved.....

See the June issue of Good News for a
message from your Zone Chairman.

12-ZONES
NO. CALIF. COUNCIL
OF
ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS



JAN. 1965

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NCCAA ZONE D COMMITTEE MEETING

The meeting will be held at the Alano Triangle Club, 300 A Street, Hayward, CA, at 11:00 A.M., Saturday, April 18th. All NCCAA delegates in Zone D are urged to attend, but the meeting is open to all AA members.

Joanne P., Hayward, CA.

NCCAA ZONE K COMMITTEE MEETING

Zone K Delegates will hold a meeting Saturday, May 2nd, at 10:30 A.M., in Tracy -- 2531 Holly Drive; Tracy Fellowship is Host.

Each group is entitled to two voting Delegates. The purpose of Zone Meetings is to give members a better picture of the workings of our Northern California Council of AA and to discuss matters affecting our NCC Conferences.

Delegates are urged to attend. As with all service activities, all members are welcome.

Catherine S., Stockton, CA.

NCCAA ZONES A, B, C, E, F, G, H, J AND M

Again, where are you???????

Deadline for next issue is May 10, 1981.

Please call your meetings and give delegates of NCCAA a chance to be a part of. Write to me directly, and I will be glad to send you Avery labels for your announcement of meetings. It is another nice way to carry the message.

Gloria P. Editor

COMING ATTRACTIONS (Continued)

May 16 Redding AA's 31st Anniversary
 2:00 P.M. - Speaker Meeting, Sally A., San Carlos, CA
 3:30 P.M. - Speaker Meeting, Barbara & John D.,
 El Cerrito, CA
 6:00 P.M. - Catered Dinner - BBQ ribs
 Adults - \$5 Children - \$3
 8:00 P.M. - Speaker Meeting - Gene D., Myrtleedale, CA
 Senior Citizens Hall, 2000 Benton Drive
 Redding, CA

May 23 CNCA Post-Conference Assembly
Marriott Hotel
 Banquet Saturday night - Reservations \$14
 (Banquet limited to 300 people)
 20 Commercial Boulevard
 Novato, CA

REMEMBER - "IF WHAT YOU'RE DOING ISN'T WORKING, TRY SOMETHING ELSE!"

* * * * *

Police sargeant about to give a breath
 test to a drunk: "Have you ever seen a
 machine that tells you when you've had
 too much to drink?"

Drunk: "Seen one?" "Hell, I've been
 married to one for 23 years."

* * * * *

New Bride: "The two things that I
 cook best are meat loaf and apple pie."

New Groom: "Is that so?" "Which one
 is this?"

All from the Silver Dollar - Fargo, N.D.

SPONSORS ARE PEOPLE, TOO

Have you done something for your sponsor lately? That can be a difficult assignment sometimes, especially if your sponsors are people of great Humility. Often times, it seems I have seen anger on one of my sponsor's face and learned later, it was hurt for one of my thoughtless remarks or actions. They have spent months, days and hours, not to count the emotional and physical strain on themselves, just so that I may have the desperately needed one-to-one sponsorship. Outside of God, they have helped me more than my priest, doctor, beloved family, and never too expect anything in return. Over the months I have learned to do little things for them because they devote most of their time to SERVICE in Alcoholics Anonymous. This is also a part of Step 12.

During the hectic holiday season when my problems seemed at times to look like mountains, I turned to God more. Their faces seemed weary and I talked to God to watch over them and my problems seemed to become smaller. If your sponsors are very active in Service, try to do something in that area to help them. If you aren't in service, they usually will be glad to show you the way.

Yes, Sponsors should be solid in their emotional and spiritual sobriety. But like all the rest of us, they need friends, love, understanding and compassion. Above all, I try to show my sponsors RESPECT because they have earned it by becoming responsible members of AA.

Why not start today and show them some respect. The old saying "Action speaks louder than words" works. With God's help I can do something for my sponsors to make their load lighter. My sponsors have given me "Tough Love" and it's because they care so much for me. So, God, when I get so wrapped up in my unmanageable life, make me stop and do something for my sponsor. They need friends, too.

Anonymous., - Turlock, CA

A DRUNK STAGGERED UP TO THE BAR AND ASKED THE BARTENDER FOR SOMETHING ICE COLD AND FULL OF GIN.
THE BARTENDER TOLD HIM TO TAKE HIS WIFE.

ALL GROUPS' DAY

The East Bay Intergroup and Central Office have announced their All Groups' Day, scheduled for Saturday, April 25, 1981, at the Haight School, Santa Clara and Chestnut Streets, Alameda, CA. This annual All Groups' Day, which is presented each year by these bodies, is to celebrate the anniversary of Alcoholics Anonymous in the East Bay. The first AA Group was established in April 1941, so that this year marks the 40th Anniversary of AA in the East Bay.

Registration will commence at 11:30A.M. on April 25. The opening meeting at 1:20 P.M. features Walt G, Oakland, AA speaker; Marie D, Pinole, Al-Anon speaker; and Susie L, Alameda, Alateen speaker. Beginning at 2:00 P.M., the audience will break up into seven separate discussion groups as follows: "Honesty," led by Mary L, Lady "A," and Allen R, Rockridge; "Open-Mindedness," led by James W and Jeannie R, Berkeley; "Willingness," led by Yvonne D, Concord; a Spanish-speaking group, led by Miguel P, Fruitvale Latinos; a Young Peoples group, led by Patick B, Sunday Discussion, and Kim M, Berkeley; also, an Al-Anon Group, led by Charles M, Hayward (ODAT), and an Alateen Group, led by Miguel P, Jr., Oakland.

A Father Martin film, "Alcoholism in the Family," will be screened at 4:00 P.M. A potluck dinner will be served at 5:30 P.M. in the adjoining church social hall, followed by an hour's entertainment provided by the "Memory Songsters" at 6:30 P.M. At 8:00 P.M. there will be an Open Speaker Meeting, featuring Ted H, from Palos Verdes, CA.

The General Chairman for this event is Del M, Special Events Chairman for the Intergroup. He may be reached at 415-653-4300. He will be assisted by the following AA members: Program Chairman, Bob C, Montclair Group; Publicity, Elaine S, Montclair; Registration, Ken D, Lincoln Square; Food Chairman, Hugh B, Montclair; Floor Manager, Frank P, Montclair; Raffle, Vern R, and members of Island Fellowship; Finance, Bill B, Fridayneters Group. The coffee bar will be managed by members of the Clinton Group; and there will be an Alateen snack bar. Important! Child care will be provided from Noon to 10:00 P.M. All Groups' Day is open to all AA members, their families and friends. All are urged to attend.

NCC CORNER

My thanks to LeRoy P. and his committee in Fresno for a job well done. It was a great conference.

The action taken by the Steering Committee and the Delegate Committee were:

- A. Raising the yearly price of subscriptions to the GOOD NEWS by 50 cents, thus making the regular subscription \$3.50 per copy, 2 to 9 copies will be \$3.00, 10 or more will be \$2.50 and Outside the U.S. will now be \$4.00. It was necessary to do this in order to keep up with rising costs by the U.S. Post Office and other inflationary costs.
- B. Adding two subscriptions to the Grapevine as part of our raffle at the conferences.
- C. Delegates to take back to their groups, the concept of adding a fourth conference per year in the future.

Remember, our Annual Summer Conference will be held on June 5th, 6th, and 7th, in Stockton at the Fairgrounds. The Friday night Kickoff Speaker will be Sybil C., L.A., CA., Saturday Night Speaker is Holly M., Ann Arbor, Mich. and Sunday Speaker is Milton M. of Van Nuys. We're looking forward to seeing you all there.

With AA Love,
Merilyn W., NCC Secretary

There was a lush who was driving home along a country road, weaving slightly from side to side. In his weaving, he forced a car, driven by a minister, into the ditch. The lush then stopped, ambled back to the minister and asked, "Are you all right?"

"Of course," the minister replied.

"God was riding with me."

"Gee!" said the lush. "You'd better let him ride with me. He could get himself killed riding with you."

FROM THE MAIL BAG

Rollin Wheeler, former editor of the GOOD NEWS for 11 years til 1969, passed away in Sept. of 1980. We did not hear of this til January of 1981. He had worked very hard on the GOOD NEWS, doubling the subscriptions from 800 to 1900. We are sorry he is gone.

Jim A., S.F., CA

Walter Runyon of San Francisco died on Feb. 3, 1981. He had almost 10 years continuous sobriety and was very active in servi work.

Pete & Marialice M., S.F., CA

I enjoy your sense of humor and the fact that you're not so damned serious, I know our program means Life or Death to many of us, but I have found a great deal of real natural fun in living.

Constance P., S.F., CA

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