



Good News



NOVEMBER-
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By the Northern California Council of Alcoholics Anonymous

1982

The Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.
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.
3. The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose - to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.
6. An A.A. group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought never be drawn into 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.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

Why It Works

A.A.'s Twelve Traditions were drawn and first put to paper in 1946. Ours is not the usual success story; rather it is the story of how, under God's grace, an unsuspected strength has arisen out of great weakness; of how, under threats of disunity and collapse, world-wide unity and brotherhood have been forged. In the course of this experience we have evolved a set of traditional principles by which we live and work together and relate ourselves as a fellowship to the world around us. These principles are called the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous.

They represent the distilled experience of our past, and we rely on them to carry us in Unity through the challenges and dangers which the future may bring.

The Traditions guarantee the equality of all members and the

independence of all groups -- They show how we may best relate ourselves to each other and to the world outside. They indicate how we can best function in harmony as a great whole.

For the sake of the welfare of our entire society, the Traditions ask that every individual and every group and every area in A.A. shall lay aside all desires, ambitions, and untoward actions that could bring serious division among us or lose for us the confidence of the world at large.

The Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous symbolize the sacrificial character of our life together and they are the greatest force for Unity that we know.

Take Tradition One: It says that "Our common welfare should

Take Tradition One: It says cont'd page 2

Fall Conference Success

John Sutter may have found gold in Sacramento in the mid nineteenth century, but hundreds of recovering alcoholics found something more precious than that in mid-October when the convened in the Capitol City for the annual Fall Conference of the Northern California Council of A.A.

It was, as usual, an inspiring convocation and a testimonial that "our program works."

Bob E. of Dana Point, California, a former U.S. Marine Corps Colonel, kicked it off Friday night in a gripping message that shared his experience, strength and hope with an appreciative group of first nighters.

Saturday, a General Service Speaker Meeting heard from Doc C. of Redding. Annette F. of Fresno chaired a workshop

Why It Works cont'd

that "Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity." Probably no society sets a higher value on the personal welfare of the individual member than does A.A. But long ago we found that the common welfare had to come first; without it there could be mighty little personal welfare.

Pride and fear and anger - these are the prime enemies of our common welfare. True brotherhood, harmony, and love, fortified by clear insights and right practices, are the only answers. And the purpose of A.A.'s traditional principles is to bring these forces to the top and keep them there. Only then can our common welfare be served; only then can A.A.'s unity become permanent.

In the Twelve and Twelve Bill wrote: "The unity of Alcoholics Anonymous is the most cherished quality our society has. Our lives, the lives of all to come, depends squarely upon it. We stay whole, or A.A. dies. Without unity, the heart of A.A. would cease to beat, our world arteries would no longer carry the life-giving grace of God, His gift to us would be spent aimlessly. Back again in their caves, alcoholics would reproach us and say, "What a great thing A.A. might have been." "The A.A. member has to conform to the principles of recovery. His life actually depends upon obedience to spiritual principles. If he deviates too far, the penalty is sure and swift; he sickens and dies. At first he goes along because he must, but later he discovers a way of life he really wants to live. Moreover, he finds he cannot keep this priceless gift unless he gives it away. Neither he

nor anybody else can survive unless he carries the A.A. message. The moment this Twelfth Step work forms a group, another discovery is made - that most individuals cannot recover unless there IS a group. Realization dawns that he is but a small part of a great whole; that no personal sacrifice is too great for the preservation of the fellowship. He learns that the clamor of desires and ambitions within him must be silenced whenever these could damage the group. It becomes plain that the group must survive or the individual will not.

Thus has it been with A.A. By faith and by works we have been able to build upon the lessons of an incredible experience. These live today in the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous, which-God willing-shall sustain us in unity for so long as He may need us."

One of the 1973 General Service Conference agenda topics was, "What is unique about A.A.?" There are many answers to this question. But in thinking on this subject one thought comes to mind. This alcoholic is deeply grateful to those men who have passed along the answers we need so that we might survive in Alcoholics Anonymous-so that we might further serve Alcoholics Anonymous. A lot of mental horsepower has been generated and expended - to define what is unique about A.A. - I would like to submit that what is unique in our society is our obedience to the Traditions - other than that - I don't see what we have going for us that is so unusual. We have proven once again that by spiritual means - large numbers of drunks can recover - but the Washing-

tonians proved that - and the Oxford Group proved that. Churches right now are proving it every day, so what do we have that is really unusual? What do we have that is really unique? I think it is our obedience to the Traditions - it is even more unique, in that we chose voluntarily to submit ourselves to these restraints.

The Twelve Traditions are not a bunch of things that were set up by "them" and handed down to us saying "this is what you are going to do - or else." The Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous are a re-counting of all the mistakes that almost tore our Fellowship to bits, and we voluntarily accept these restraints - I believe that this is what is truly unique in Alcoholics Anonymous.

When speaking about the Traditions, we are speaking about the thing that means our life or death - I cannot live without A.A. We have to be, in spite of ourselves, responsible - responsible for us. In spite of me, I have to be responsible and responsibility is what the Traditions are about.

Why the Traditions? Simply to provide us a manner and a direction so that our society can survive- and if our society survives, we are going to live- and if we live, we are going to learn to love one another, out of the growth, the spiritual growth the Traditions give us, and when we love one another we learn to serve - when we serve we guarantee that A.A. will be here in the future to carry out its mission in carrying the message to those alcoholics yet to come.

cont'd page 3

It Works cont'd

The Traditions are an extension of the Twelve Steps - I can't separate the two - I don't believe I can take the Unity, the survival of A.A. for granted.

The Twelfth Step, "Having ing had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs."

How we practice these principles is shown to us in the Twelve Traditions. The Traditions are the method and the means, the manner and the direction for doing so.

The Twelve Steps of Recovery are "How it Works" and The Twelve Traditions are "Why it Works."

Conference cont'd

on "the Group".

Delegates at their meeting voted to try a "Marathon Workshop" at the Fresno Conference next March 18, 19 and 20. It was agreed that the event, sometimes referred to as an "Alkathon", would be conditioned on three criteria:

1. That the event not be held during the time main speaker meetings are being held.
2. That the events be self-supporting and not be a financial liability to the conference.
3. That there be a place available for the meetings at or near the conference site.

The measure passed unanimously and was proposed by Pat of Fresno, who pointed out such participation meetings are of great value to newcomers. The new persons main concern is "not taking that first drink today" and they often do not understand at that point in their so-

briety, the workings of H & I and General Service, he said. It also gives new folks an opportunity to make new friends from other communities, it was explained.

The delegates also:

1. Agreed to purchase a used electric typewriter for approximately \$500 for use in typing up the Good News. It will be loaned to the paper, but the title will remain with the Council.

2. Agreed to purchase a raffle ticket dispenser for use at council conferences.

3. Learned that Lejuene D. of Pinole and Larry of San Francisco are retiring as delegates.

Percy F. of Sacramento chaired the afternoon Hospital and Institutions Meeting at which Jerome Lackner, M.D., a non-alcoholic speaker, described the medical aspects of our disease, and Joe C. of Redwood City, told of his recovery and the important role H & I work has played in it.

Enthusiasm was the key note of the Young Peoples meeting as speaker after speaker took the mike to express gratitude to Alcoholics Anonymous for sobriety -- abstinence ranging from five days to more than 25 years.

Something new was featured at the Conference, and it was as welcome as topping on an ice cream sundae. Alameda All Groups entertained with the "Saga of Susie Souse", a musical trip into "what it was like, what happened, and what it's like now." The audience was moved both to laughter and tears by the talented performance of the group as it portrayed poor Susie's plight, surrender and renewal -- something with which we all can identify.

Tom G. of Winnipeg capped the Saturday night meeting with his story and the day

ended with a dance in the Metropolitan Room.

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Bill S. of Stockton moderated a panel on "Service - What's it all about" on Sunday morning. "Steps 1,2,3, the Ego Deflators" was the topic of a workshop led by Ilene S. of Salinas at the same hour.

The Conference concluded with a closing speech by Hugh D. of Chatsworth, former Navy man, who shared his story with his fellow A.A.'s

Editor

San Jose Helps Hearing Impaired

Alcoholics Anonymous has been a life-saving fellowship for more than one million men and women since 1935.

Now the message of recovery can, and is being carried to a different segment of the community. AA for the deaf and hard of hearing is a reality at last. The problem for the deaf and hearing impaired has been one of monumental proportion. They cannot use the telephone as we do to call for help and talk to a sober member of AA.

In a pioneering attempt to make AA available to this sector, a few central offices around the U.S. have installed equipment (TTY-TTD) to allow the deaf person to call for help or information. This allows the deaf person to use a "printout" screen with the phone to communicate with a member of our fellowship.

Such a device is now operating in the San Jose Central Office. In addition to this, a meeting for the deaf is already established in San Jose. The group, called cont'd page 4

Unity, A Theme For AA

Let it begin with you. Your group and your trusted servants, that it may spread throughout the fellowship with understanding and cooperation to carry the message which is our Primary Purpose.

How do we get there from here?

You have heard it so many times it is like background music, "Get Involved."

How do you start?

Begin by attending your group's business meetings. Honestly, they are important to a healthy group. Help your fellow members elect and instruct trusted servants.

A group needs a representative and an alternate for every facet of service. Once you have elected these people to represent you, help them by providing time for reports of their activities. Ask questions, give them your support and your ideas. Find out what it is all about, be informed. They cannot represent you unless they know what you want.

Your group needs a General Service Representative, a H. & I. Representative, an N.C.C. Representative, a P.I. and C.P.C. Representative, a delegate to Central Office or Intergroup, and alternates for each of these. Some of these may be unfamiliar to you, and you may question

Men don't marry women on 25 dollars a week anymore -- a girl must be making at least ten times that much.

the value of so many representatives. I can only suggest you take some time and attend some of the workshops that are being held in this area.

Your G.S. Rep.- your voice and link to AA as a whole.

Your H. & I. Rep.-your hand inside to those who are confined.

Your P.I. Rep.-your image to the public. The AA program is not anonymous, the members are.

Your C.P.C. Rep.-your guide to professionals who must deal with the alcoholic.

Your Central Office or Intergroup delegate is the link to the everyday work house of AA. Your teleservice, your literature, your meeting schedules, and much more.

Those same services that are being carried on in the traditional manner by those few dedicated members who accept the responsibility for us all. It is quite a load to carry. They do need your help.

Sacramento has a workshop which is held on the last Saturday of every month from 9:30 to 11:30 AM at the Primary Purpose Hall, 1125 Eye St. This group is at present studying the AA Service Manual. If you wish to join the group, you can obtain a copy of the Service Manual at the Central Office in Sacramento. The December '82 meeting will be held on the 3rd Saturday because of Christmas.

Goldie F.
So. Sacramento

**A little praise
goes a long way.
But it's the tiny
morsel of scandal
that really travels.**

Hearing cont'd

"Seeing What You Say" meets each Sunday at 8:00 pm at 5331 Dent Avenue. It is an open meeting. There is also a meeting in the United Presbyterian Church in the Meridian Ave., Koosier Rd. Area. This meeting is signed for the deaf and hearing impaired.

The San Jose based group expects to grow and improve as time goes along.

Telephone calls to our Central Office, 408-297-3555 during regular business hours will soon put a sober twelfth stepper in contact with the caller on our TTY.

Mike E.
San Jose

THE METHOD OF COMMUNICATION EMPLOYED BY GOD, IS LOVE.

Bill B.
Stockton

Jack B. of Modesto, retired Electronics Engineer went into the hospital October 25th for extensive testing of his heart which may result in a three way bypass.

Jack experienced his first major heart attack in 1979 and was in ICU for one week at that time. He has been on daily Nitro since that time and was forced to retire in June of this year because of heart problems.

Jack has been a faithful contributor to the Good News Newspaper and we would like to send our prayers to him now.

California's Northern Coastal Area Election Assembly

The CNCA Election Assembly will be November 13, 1982 at I.E.S. Hall, 1401 East Santa Clara St. San Jose. It is important that all qualified General Service Representatives, District Committee Members, District Chairpersons, and Area Officers register.

The guest for the day and our evening speaker will be our newly elected Pacific Regional Trustee, Natalie S. from Washington.

A potluck dinner will be served at approximately 5:30 pm and the speaker will begin at 7:00.

Lejeune D.

Every AA Group Should have GOOD NEWS on their FREE literature table.

Has YOUR group? WHY NOT?

On The Lighter Side

At a party a woman remarked to her husband, "That's the fifth time you've gone back for more punch. Doesn't it embarrass you at all?"

"No," he answered, "I keep telling them it's for you."

The train thundered on its way as the conductor talked with a man who was a regular rider. "Did you get home all right last night, sir?"

"Why, yes. Why do you ask?"

"Well, when you got up and gave your seat to that lady last night, you were the only two in the car."

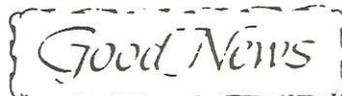


Deadline The 15th

A deadline means just that! The Good News deadline is the 15th of each even month. Any mail received after 5pm on the 15th cannot be included in the next issue, nor can any news be telephoned in after that time. Deadline for the Jan.-Feb. issue is December 15th. Let's hear from you!

In Memoriam

Clinton T. Duffy, former Warden of San Quentin Prison, who with the aid of the San Francisco groups, started the first AA group behind prison walls in 1942, passed away October 12, 1982 at the age of 84.



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