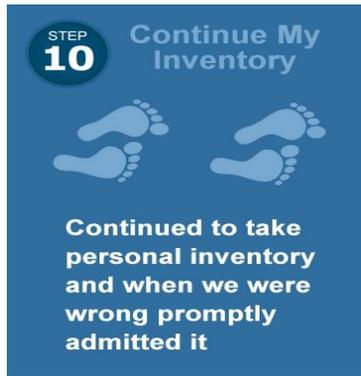


The Message

“What we really have is a daily reprieve contingent on the maintenance of our spiritual condition.”

I started working Step 10 shortly after coming into the program. I didn't want to add anything else to what I knew was going to be my long Step 4 list, so if I hurt someone by word or deed, I tried to take care of it right away.

I was in the middle of a divorce when I first summed by resentment and fear. Step 10 tells along with dishonesty and selfishness. This of these character defects, I am in danger of tional hangover, just like I used to get physi- tive emotions. So, I had to, and continue to bring up a topic of concern at a meeting and needed to call my sponsor whenever I was tive thoughts fester into a resentment. What particularly troubled. I usually write a letter Higher Power what I am thinking and feeling. the problem more clearly, and I usually get



came into the program, and I was con- me I have to watch out for these feelings is because if I let myself slip back into any picking up a drink. I can also get an emo- cal hangovers, from all the excess nega- have to, “do things differently”. I could be open to hearing the spiritual solution. I disturbed rather than letting those nega- works for me now is to write when I am to God, and I do not hold back. I tell my It helps to get it out of my head. I can see great relief.

I was one of the lucky ones who was relieved of the compulsion to drink when I came into the program. Step 10 tells me that I will be in a position of neutrality when it comes to alcohol and this is how it has been for me. I am not bothered around alcohol as long as I am in fit spiritual condition. Step 10 also tells me I will cease fighting anything or anyone. This took quite a while for me because there was the ex-husband and his new wife. I had to follow the directions in the Big Book to pray for them to have all the good things in their life that I wanted in mine. This eventually worked, and I was able to treat them as I wanted to be treated.

I had to learn to respond instead of react. I thought I had no choice in the matter. If something negative happened - I reacted doing the same thing over and over. With time, working the steps slowly changed my behavior. I had to look at me and why I was disturbed rather than blaming the other person.

Stress was the reason I drank in the first place - I wanted those feelings to go away. I had to learn to feel stress at home or at work without turning to alcohol to drown those feelings. I had to look at why I got annoyed so often. “Was it because I was judging others?” “Was I selfishly wanting everything to go my way?” “Was I stressed because I wanted everything to be perfect?” “Was I expecting too much of others and then getting resentful?” I used Step 10 to figure out the underlying reasons for my feelings.

I have gone through many ups and downs in the years I have been sober. Highs like getting married again, and lows like losing that husband to death. Highs like the birth of my grandchildren, and lows like getting sick and ending up in the hospital. Step 10 helps me with living life on life's terms - highs and lows. Step 10 keeps me on the beam - always needing to look for how to change myself and my attitudes with God's help. That is all I can really change. Working Step 10 keeps me close to God as I see I can do little on my own. I am eternally grateful to the program of Alcoholics Anonymous. It has changed my life.

Kathy R.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S GROUP (YPG) The current iteration of our group has been going strong since July of 2011! However, “old-timers” may remember several previous meetings of the same name throughout the decades. AA meetings, like their members, can be like “phoenixes rising from the ashes”. We currently meet Tuesdays and Fridays at 7pm at St. Paul's Methodist Church right behind Lake Ella. Our Tuesday meeting is a closed meeting with discussion, centering on a topic from As Bill Sees It. Our Friday meeting is an open meeting, starting with a 30 minute lead given by a speaker on their topic of choice followed by open discussion. We tend to average about 15 people on Tuesdays and 35 on Fridays. “*We are not a glum lot!*” Every Friday, after the meeting, all are welcome to join us for food and fellowship at (Cont. on back)

The “**Primary Purpose**” of Intergroup 5 is to assist AA groups in District 5 to carry the AA message to the alcoholic who still suffers. These functions are: (1) Providing a 24 hour “**Hotline**” service; (2) Making available **free pamphlets (to individuals and groups)** and **AA literature for purchase**; (3) Maintaining a **website** that provides information on **meetings, events**, etc. related to AA; and (4) Publishing a **newsletter** for groups in the AA community. Please submit an article for this newsletter at intergroup5.org - Editor: message@intergroup5.org

YPG (Continued from front page)

a near-by restaurant. We even have a service position, the "cliquebuster" for organizing our weekly dinnertime fellowshiping. We also have an "Activities Coordinator" to plan monthly activities like roller-skating, camping, bowling, and so on. Many attendees to Founder's Day may fondly remember the skits some of our members put on about the AA traditions and business meetings. For those that did not attend - the power went out, appropriate for a bunch of powerless drunks, and the skits were performed with iPhones for spotlights, no microphones, and laughter all around. Last year, we held a talent show, hosting fellow YPAA members from around the state and in our area. Many talented AA's sang, played the piano and guitar, rapped, and danced. One attendee even came from Texas for food, fun, fellowship, and, of course, a meeting!

We are proud to have an active service community. We have the usual host of positions (GSR rep, Intergroup rep, treasurer, secretary, archives, PI/CPC, etc.) as well as positions rotated monthly (chairperson, coffee maker, greeter, and others already mentioned). Many of our members have declared that a service position early on kept them showing up long enough to find a new way of living in these rooms of AA.

By and large though, we are just another group of alcoholics recovering together. We cherish our unity, and like many, we believe sobriety to be worth celebrating. We celebrate AA birthdays at the end of each month. We also mark our group's anniversary every autumn with a big potluck and speaker meeting. Feel free to join us this year! Don't let our name keep you away, all are welcome regardless of age. As one fellow attendee likes to note, he's still "young in spirit", and more importantly, a fellow alcoholic.

Paul Z.

Words on the Wall Become Words to Live By!

Here's another favorite "slogan" article... I was already familiar with the slogan before coming to AA as meaning "Work first, then play." I have always struggled with procrastination. I want things to be perfect! When I realize things can never be perfect, many tasks seem too daunting to even begin. When I finally accepted the fact that giving up drinking was the first thing I should do to improve my life, "First Things First" took on a much different meaning. For example, losing weight, my number one previous goal, wasn't going to happen when I was logging an extra 600-800 empty calories a day from wine!

At one of my first meetings, someone gave me the advice to just not drink! For the better part of nearly 20 years, I had been checking out every night with alcohol to forget my problems and all the overwhelming ways I was falling short of perfection. I had to find other ways of dealing with my feelings. Now, I come home from work, say the serenity prayer, and lay down for half an hour. I get up and have a cup of coffee which gives me an evening ritual that is not wine! A bath with lavender oil is more relaxing than you might think. I'm developing a relationship with my higher power and practicing prayer and meditation.

I have worked through Steps 1, 2, and 3, but it has taken me months to even start the 4th Step. I had collected so many resentments over the years that I didn't want to even start going through them. It would take forever! But, with my sponsor's help, I realized that it really was going to take forever if I didn't start! I've now begun chipping away at all those resentments.

By putting "First Things First", with God's help, I now have 6 months of sobriety. As a working mom, I will still become stressed and overwhelmed at times. But, I now have spiritual tools to use, including putting "First Things First" and letting go of the need for perfection.

Jessica L.

Landmarks in AA History:

There are many significant people, places, and dates from the early days:

- 1934 Summer. Dr. William Silkworth pronounces Bill W. a hopeless alcoholic.

- 1934 August. Oxford Groups sober up Ebby T., a friend of Bill's.

- 1934 Nov. Ebby visits Bill and tells him his story.

- 1934 Dec. Bill's "burning bush" spiritual experience in Towns Hospital

that releases him from his alcoholism.

- 1934 Dec. - 1935 May. Bill works with alcoholics, but fails to sober any of them.

- 1935 May. Dr. Bob & Bill meet in Akron.

- 1935 June 10. Dr. Bob has his last drink. **Alcoholics Anonymous founded.**

Dr. Bob and Bill knew that working with other alcoholics would keep them sober. Bill said, "Yes, but, where can we find any alcoholics?" Dr. Bob knew that there was always a "batch" down at the Akron City Hospital. Dr. Bob said, "I'll call them up and see what they've got." Two days later, Dr. Bob and Bill were looking into the face of the first "man on the bed". It was old Bill D., AA number 3. Bill D. experienced a "dawn of hope" after their visit. A few days later, Bill D. walked out of that hospital a free man, and he never took a drink again. The spark that was to flare into the first AA group had been struck.

(Adapted from AA Comes of Age, 1957)

Please suggest AA historical topics for future articles. Editor: message@intergroup5.org

