



PROMISES

JULY & AUGUST 2016

Editor's Note

Over the past couple of months, I have been diligently working on reshaping my values. Throughout my thirteen year drinking career, I lost sight of what was important to me in life. By envisioning how my life could be more preferable, I am able to connect my values to my goals.

The benefit of knowing my values is to gain clarity and focus. My newfound values act as my compass to put me back on course every single day. I am eternally grateful for the gift of sobriety that allows me to look more closely toward my true self.

In fellowship,
Nicole F.

Not a Glum Lot

Randall's drinking had cost him a series of jobs, but he was finally employed as a warehouse forklift operator. One day, he lost control of the forklift and damaged \$5,000 of merchandise. The boss said he was going to withhold ten percent of each of his paychecks until the damage was paid off. **"Finally!" Randall said, "Job security!"** [Grapevine, March 2010]

Just a Thought

If you settle for your wildest dreams, you will be selling yourself short.

Recovery is an Inside Job

Jim M. [January 30, 1971]

You may have participated in the debate: recovering/recovered. Does the former suggest it is more humble and necessary for the diminishment of our ego than the latter? I like to think the latter is more honest I have come to believe one recovers that which was always there, but not realized. I was in need of something that was in me, but not available, because of my drinking.

I am traveling, in company with my fellows to my happy destiny. The events of my sober life are miraculous to this recovered drunk. I have recovered the person I lost with that first drink of alcohol at age 13. The program has provided the tools, and environment for me to grow up, and recover myself- the kind of person God intended me to be in the beginning. Not perfect, not necessarily someone everyone likes, or approves of, but the person the God of my understanding approves of.

I now have a totally comfortable relationship with the God of my understanding, and we travel together wherever He leads, with all my new friends, from everywhere.

Humility Inscription

from a Plaque on Dr. Bob's Desk

"Perpetual quietness of heart. It is to have no trouble. It is never to be fretted or vexed, irritable or sore; to wonder at nothing that is done to me, to feel nothing done against me.

"It is to be at rest when nobody praises me, and when I am blamed or despised, it is to have a blessed home in myself where I can go in and shut the door and pray to my Father in secret and be at peace, as in a deep sea of calmness, when all around and about is seeming trouble. "

Traditions

[written by Bill W.]

7. Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

In the first years of A.A. we had no money problems. We met in homes where our womenfolk made sandwiches and coffee. If an individual A.A. wished to grubstake a fellow alcoholic, he did so. It was purely his own affair.

We had no group funds, hence no group money troubles. And it must be recorded that many an old-time A.A. wishes we could now return to those early days of halcyon simplicity.

[Grapevine, 1946]

8. Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.

Could this vast and vital face-to-face effort ever be professionalized or even organized? Most emphatically, it could not. The few efforts to professionalize straight "12th Step" work have always failed quickly.

Today, no A.A. will tolerate the idea of paid "A.A. Therapists" or "organizers". Nor does any A.A. like to be told just how he must handle that new prospect of his. No, this great life-giving stream can never be dammed up by paid do-gooders or professionals.

[Grapevine, July 1946]

Spotlight on Steps

7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.

Taking Positive Action & Examining Motives

Amy P. [July 13, 2008]

In my early weeks of sobriety, I began to awaken to the mess I had made of my life and to the hard fact I had caused pain to those immediately around me. There was one person in particular that I felt an immediate need to "make amends" to. The way that I treated this person and destroyed our relationship felt unbearable. I shared these feelings at a meeting and mentioned that I wanted to do something- even though I was nowhere near Steps Eight and Nine. A woman that I always listened closely to and greatly admired, caught me after the meeting. She stressed the importance of taking the Steps in order and not jumping ahead. She also explained that my motives were not in the nature of the Steps that I so wanted to be ready to take.

I came to understand my motives in that moment were not far from the motives of any active or non-recovering drunk. I wanted to feel better. I did not want to attempt to repair or take heartfelt honest action to amend the harms that I had done this person or for what I had taken from their life. I wanted off the hook.

Part of the reason that I did not have the correct motives was simply that I did not yet know how to be that person. I was lacking the building blocks beyond the first one or two Steps and the gradual spiritual awakening that occurred and reshaped me as I continued to rigorously work this program. I listened to and followed the suggestions from my sponsor and others in the program, stayed active in service, and used the Steps more and more in my daily life. I was growing and changing (and still am) into the person I am supposed to be.

In Step Seven, we humbly ask our Higher Power to remove our shortcomings. A time came in my sobriety that I had taken a thorough inventory, shared it with my sponsor, and examined many of my character defects. Only by asking my Higher Power to remove them and then taking positive action to continue to live rightly, did I become that person who was able to make true amends. I believe a true amends cannot be ego driven and therefore could only have been done once I had the ability to honestly look at the nature of my wrongs. This would be impossible for me to have accomplish without the humility that comes from Step Seven.

The names of persons that I had harmed may not have differed much from a list I would have written in the beginning, but the nature of the damages done surely had- along with my reasons to make amends to these people. Only through a clear heart with far fewer self-serving motives could I begin to carry out Step Eight and see what it meant by becoming willing to make amends to those I had harmed. Without Seven, the meaning of ability to execute Eight is nonexistent.

July Celebrants

- ✦ Brian S. 7 years [TGIF]
- ✦ Carol S. 1 year [KISS]
- ✦ Dave H. 26 years [Living Sober]
- ✦ Donna R. 2 years [TGIF]
- ✦ Jim P. 30 years [Mondex Group]
- ✦ Joan M. 18 years [Womens Acceptance]
- ✦ Karen D. 12 years [Womens Acceptance]
- ✦ Lori S. 1 year [TGIF]
- ✦ Lulu 29 years [KISS & Mondex Group]
- ✦ Maria F. 35 years [TGIF]
- ✦ Maryanne 1 year [TGIF]
- ✦ Pat P. 29 years [Living Sober]
- ✦ Robin H. 11 years [Womens Acceptance]
- ✦ Tom H. 7 years [Nomad]
- ✦ William E. 9 years [Jump Start]

Belated May & June Celebrants

- ✦ Billy W. 26 years [Message Group]
- ✦ Darren M. 9 years [Lucky to be Here]
- ✦ Jack M. 40 years [TGIF]
- ✦ Lee 3 years [Lucky to be Here]
- ✦ Leon S. 21 years [Lucky to be Here]
- ✦ Maura M. 40 years [Message Group]
- ✦ Meg P. 4 years [KISS]
- ✦ Mirella M. 12 years [KISS]
- ✦ Richard C. 9 years [Message Group]
- ✦ Stacey B. 4 years [TGIF]
- ✦ Tom M. 1 year [TGIF]
- ✦ Virginia M. 20 years [Stepping Sisters]

August Celebrants

- ✦ Art O'N. 40 years [Steps to Serenity]
- ✦ Dan H. 3 years [Nomad]
- ✦ Dave M. 34 years [Monday Night Live]
- ✦ David S. 3 years [TGIF]
- ✦ George A. 32 years [Jump Start]
- ✦ Ian R. 2 years [Living Sober]
- ✦ James D. 8 years [TGIF]
- ✦ Joe C. 29 years [Steps to Serenity & TGIF]
- ✦ John Mac. 37 years [TGIF]
- ✦ John N. 30 years [Came to Believe]
- ✦ John S. 50 years [Came to Believe]
- ✦ Karen I. 28 years [Steps to Serenity]
- ✦ Ken W. 4 years [Mondex Group]
- ✦ Lenny 1 year [Jump Start]
- ✦ Mike B. 15 years [Living Sober]
- ✦ Peter F. 27 years [Lucky to be Here]
- ✦ Richard L. 24 years [Steps to Serenity]
- ✦ Rick M. 7 years [Steps to Serenity]

prayer & meditation:*seventh step prayer*

 *my creator* 
 I AM NOW WILLING THAT YOU SHOULD
 HAVE ALL OF ME, *good & bad.*
 I PRAY THAT YOU NOW REMOVE FROM ME
 EVERY SINGLE *defect* OF CHARACTER
 WHICH STANDS IN THE WAY OF MY
usefulness TO YOU & MY FELLOWS.
 GRANT ME *strength,* AS I GO OUT FROM
 HERE TO DO YOUR BIDDING.

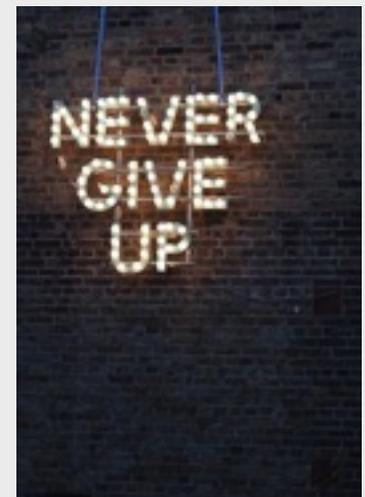
Intergroup & District 22

Intergroup meets the first Monday of each month & District 22 meets the last Monday. Florida Hospital-Flagler, Lind Educational Center, Room C at 6:30pm.

Literature & medallions

Don H. can be reached at 386-986-3659 or by email hoodyfour@aol.com

*When you are
 down
 to NOTHING,
 God is
 UP
 to something.*



One Chip Wonder

A member from South Florida shares his experience, strength, & hope with Humility & Brotherly Love

John R. [February 21, 2006]

My name is John and I am an Alcoholic; I came into the 12 Step House in Ft Lauderdale after completing the County Addiction Program for 30 days. I had heard of AA, but had never attended a meeting. I am a low bottom Alcoholic and in 2006, I was squatting in an abandoned house where I would lay on a filthy mattress in darkness with a lump in my throat and a hurt in my soul that wouldn't go away - until I could muster up enough courage to hit the streets and "escape" one more time. I was filthy and not showering for weeks at a time; terrified to be seen by another human being, ashamed and hopeless.

My higher power works through others and by a chain of miraculous events I ended up in treatment and at my first AA meeting brought into the facility by the Broward County Institutions Committee! Words and phrases like Humility and Brotherly Love were foreign and rarely used (if ever) as part of my day to day vocabulary. I believe my Step 2 solidified at my first AA meeting - Joey F brought the meeting in and he shared about what his life was like before AA, what happened to him in AA, and what his life was like now. A light of hope was sparked that day! I have one white chip in AA and I was told I never had to get another one - permanent sobriety could be mine IF....

I sought AA and the 12 Steps through strong sponsorship and strong involvement in AA and service - I still do! I was on a mission to acquire a deeper understanding of what you all were talking about - I remember asking an old timer how they defined humility; they told me *"An honest regret for harms done, a genuine gratitude for blessings received, and a willingness to try for better things tomorrow will be the permanent assets we shall seek."* I

remember getting very emotional when he told me this, but my pride wouldn't let me shed a tear. He told me it was in the 12x12 in the chapter "Step 10." I went back to my sober house- found it, read it, and cried. That honesty was the key to freedom. Admitting to God, to myself, and another human being the exact nature of my wrongs was my first real practice of humility that I could recall. Thank God for sponsorship and the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous!

Practicing these principles in all my affairs has become a working part of my mind! (Progress not perfection - I still fall short, thank God for step 10!) with that, I am able to love people, give of myself daily and embrace the love that I found in AA! I am so grateful and beyond blessed to be given this way of life - GIVEN - without merit, I didn't earn it, so many don't get it, but I did. With that said, I will keep coming back!

"It works, it really does."



Dr. Bob's Farewell Talk

Our Twelve Steps, when simmered down to the last, resolve themselves into the words "love" and "service." We understand what love is, and we understand what service is. So let's bear those two things in mind.

Let us also remember to guard that erring member the tongue, and if we must use it, let's use it with kindness and consideration and tolerance.

And one more thing: None of us would be here today if somebody hadn't taken time to explain things to us, to give us a little pat on the back, to take us to a meeting or two, to do numerous little kind and thoughtful acts in our behalf. So let us never get such a degree of smug complacency that we're not willing to extend, or attempt to extend, to our less fortunate brothers that help which has been so beneficial to us.

[Dr. Bob, July 1950, First International Convention in Cleveland, Ohio]

Into Action

Suggestion: Ask your home group if you could be a greeter! Simple, but efficient way to be "in" AA, not "outside" of AA.

Local A.A. History

In 1986, after repeated suggestions from Volusia Intergroup, Flagler County groups formed their own Intergroup.