



August 2016

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The Scoop

God Given Alcoholics Anonymous

By: Francis., A.A. 2016

Alcohol. So fun and joyous
Solves all problems that leave us at
stray
All booze is glorious
All problems gone and away

Be who we aspire to be in the
world
Alcohol blooms our personalities
In aftermath we hurled
Forgetting all rationalities

Across the invisible line we pass
An obsession of craving arises
Nerves once calm, can't seem to
relax
Emotionally draining ourselves with
devastating surprises

Alcoholics Anonymous is my
solution
God Given opened my eyes, Alcohol
execution

The BEST THINGS are not....THINGS !! I am an Alcoholic I am an Alcoholic

By Valerie R., A.A. 1977

It was the DUI that made it
happen. It wasn't my fault. I had never
been arrested before. I was only 3

blocks from home. My mom bailed me
out by 2 a.m. and finally let the
babysitter go home. I spent the entire
weekend in the library trying to prove
that the result of my breathalyzer was
wrong.....but I couldn't. I had broken
the law. I HAD BROKEN THE LAW,
and had to go to court.

I called the Alcoholics
Anonymous Central Office in the San
Fernando Valley. The man who
answered was kind. I told him about
my friend, who had a problem, and
wanted to know where those meetings
were. (I had heard about AA meetings.)
He told me about "Radford". It was in
Studio City on Radford Avenue. I told
him I would tell my friend. I hung up. I
wondered if he knew I had no friend; it
was really me. I had a problem.

I didn't know what the
problem was, but knew I had one. I
went to the meeting the next day, and
wondered why I was there. You see, I
was NOT an alcoholic. The other
people all said they were alcoholics. I
really did not fit in. I was a nice girl
who went to church every Sunday.
How could I be an alcoholic? My
concept of an alcoholic was a homeless
man who had alcohol in a brown bag. I
didn't do that. I wasn't that bad.

It was 30 days later. I was at an
AA meeting, and I was going to take a
chip from the stage. At that meeting
you went on the stage to the podium. I
looked at Mike R. who was leading the
meeting. He told me to say, "I am
Valerie, and I am an Alcoholic". For
me, this was very important. I had
achieved 30 days of continued sobriety;
weekends, holidays, birthdays, and days
and nights, too. They say there are no

big deals in AA, but this was a big deal for me.

When they called the chip-takers, I got in the line to go on the big stage. When it was time I walked to Mike R. I opened my mouth and said “I am Valerie, I...I...I...um”, I am Valerie...I...um...well....um...”, “I am Valerie.....” At this point I started to cry and couldn’t get it out.....I guess I wasn’t sure....or maybe I was sure, but couldn’t say it out loud. Mike started to mouth the words. He was trying to help me. I took a deep breath, and relaxed. I looked right into Mike’s eyes, and got close to the microphone.

I looked out at the crowd of people and saw the faces of those who were newer than I, and for whom I had somehow become an inspiration. I realized how many people were supporting me. I said, “I am Valerie. I am an Alcoholic”.



"I know you don't want anything to upset your serenity dear, but the house is on fire."

Similarities vs. Differences

As an alcoholic, I am often fascinated by other alcoholics’ worries over similarities and differences among us. I don’t know how many times I have heard “look for the similarities, not the differences.” Well, we are people that normally wouldn’t mix. That’s not because we are so similar, but because we are so different.

I personally enjoy listening to the differences. The reason is that I

cannot, no matter how long I live, experience everything mentally, emotionally, physically, or spiritually, good or bad, drunk or sober. Nor do I want to. Someplace along the way I have to admit I don’t understand what someone is going or has gone through. From the families we were raised in, the areas we lived, worked and drank, to the bottoms we hit can range widely. No matter what my ego tells me, I do not have the necessary “depth and weight” in every arena.

The great thing of Alcoholics Anonymous is I don’t have to, there are plenty of people in the program that have the depth and weight in areas I don’t. When someone new comes into the program I may not necessarily relate to them or them to me, but I usually know someone who he or she can. If I don’t know, I can ask around until I find someone that new person has a better chance with. It isn’t difficult to see how this works.

A number of years ago working with a newcomer, he looked me straight in the eye and said, “You don’t understand. You’ve never been to the penitentiary.” I didn’t blink an eye but looked right back at him and said, “You’re right, I don’t understand.” What I did is asked him to talk to a friend I knew before writing off AA as to being any help to him. He went and heard my friend speak at a meeting. When I asked him what he then thought, he responded “How did you know?” I said I didn’t, but my friend did. By the way, this can work in reverse, too.

If someone hasn’t gone down the ladder as far as you have and they give you that “I’m not that bad,” statement or look, introduce them to someone who wasn’t “that bad.” Avoid the yets, he or she may be years away from them, or the feelings, many may need the experience they don’t currently have or will ever have. But, another alcoholic that stopped where they are

now or sooner could be their ticket to avoiding the mess that may come much later in their drinking, if ever.

In my early days of being sober, I was on my way out from all the differences and war stories I was hearing. I felt so far removed from these I was becoming certain I wasn’t an alcoholic. But one person asked me to go to one more meeting the following week to listen to an old timer with 44 years. I figured why not, he’ll have the wildest story in AA and I’ll be out of here. One more week of being sober wouldn’t hurt me. The old timer introduced himself as the original high bottom drunk in AA. He got sober in 1940 so I would guess his claim was fairly true. I was finally able to see my alcoholism from someone who stopped higher up the ladder than I was. For that I am grateful, not just for the few similarities but for the many differences as well.

*Paul E. – A.A. 1984
(August 2013 Issue)*

Step 8

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

Steps Eight and Nine are concerned with personal relations. First, we take a look backward and try to discover where we have been at fault; next we make a vigorous attempt to repair the damage we have done; and third, having thus cleaned away the debris of the past, we consider how, with our newfound knowledge of ourselves, we may develop the best possible relations with every human being we know.

This is a very large order. It is a task which we may perform with increasing skill, but never really finish. Learning how to live in the greatest peace, partnership, and brotherhood

with all men and women, of whatever description, is a moving and fascinating adventure. Every A.A. has found that he can make a little headway in this new adventure of living until he first backtracks and really makes an accurate and unsparing survey of the human wreckage he has left in his wake. To a degree, he has already done this when taking moral inventory, but now the time has come when he ought to redouble his efforts to see how many people he has hurt, and in what ways. This reopening of emotional wounds, some old, some perhaps forgotten, and some still painfully festering, will at first look a purposeless and pointless piece of surgery. But if a willing start is made, then the great advantages of doing this will so quickly reveal themselves that the pain will be lessened as one obstacle after another melts away.

The obstacles, however, are very real. The first, and one of the most difficult, has to do with forgiveness. The moment we ponder a twisted or broken relationship with another person, our emotions go on the defensive. To escape looking at the wrongs we have done another, we resentfully focus on the wrong he has done us. This is especially true if he has, in fact, behaved badly at all. Triumphantly we seize upon his misbehavior as the perfect excuse for minimizing or forgetting our own.

Right here we need to fetch ourselves up sharply. It doesn't make much sense when a real tosspot calls a kettle black. Let's remember that alcoholics are not the only ones bedeviled by sick emotions. Moreover, it is usually a fact that our behavior when drinking has aggravated the defects of others. We've repeatedly strained the patience of our best friends to a snapping point, and have brought out the very worst in those who didn't think much of us to begin with. In many

instances we are really dealing with fellow sufferers, people whose woes we have increased. If we are now about to ask forgiveness for ourselves, why shouldn't we start out by forgiving them, one and all?

8th Tradition

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

Alcoholics Anonymous will never have a professional class. We have gained some understanding of the ancient words “Freely ye have received, freely give.” We have discovered that at the point of professionalism, money and spirituality do not mix. Almost no recovery from alcoholism has ever been brought about by the world's best professionals, whether medical or religious. We do not decry professionalism in other fields, but we accept the sober fact that it does not work for us. Every time we have tried to professionalize our Twelfth Step, the result has been exactly the same: Our single purpose has been defeated.

Alcoholics simply will not listen to a paid twelfth-stepper. Almost from the beginning, we have been positive that face-to-face work with the alcoholic who suffers could be based only on the desire to help and be helped. When an A.A. talks for money, whether at a meeting or to a single newcomer, it can have a very bad effect on him, too. The money motive compromises him and everything he says and does for his prospect. This has always been so obvious that only a very few A.A.'s have ever worked the Twelfth Step for a fee.

Despite this uncertainty, it is nevertheless true that few subjects have been the cause of more contention

within our Fellowship than professionalism. Caretakers who swept doors, cooks who fried hamburgers, secretaries in offices, authors writing books—all these we have seen hotly assailed because they were, as their critics angrily remarked, “making money out of A.A.” Ignoring the facts that these were not Twelfth Step jobs at all, the critics attacked A.A.

professionals these workers of ours who were often doing thankless tasks that no one else could or would do. Even great furors were provoked when A.A. members began to run rest homes and farms for alcoholics, when some hired out of corporations as personnel men in charge of the alcoholic problem in industry, when others entered the field of alcohol education. In all these instances, and more, it was claimed that A.A. knowledge and experience were being sold for money, hence these people, too, were professional.

At last, however, a plain line of cleavage could be seen between professionalism and non-professionalism. When we had agreed that the Twelfth Step couldn't be sold for money, we had been wise. But when we had declared that our fellowship couldn't hire service workers nor could any A.A. member carry our knowledge into other fields, we were taking counsel of fear, fear which today has been largely dispelled in the light of experiences.

Alcoholic Joke:

A husband and wife were sitting in their living room.

The wife said, “Just so you know, I never want to live in a vegetative state, dependent on some machine and fluids from a bottle. If that ever happens, just pull the plug.”

Her husband got up, unplugged the TV, and threw out all of her beer.-
Tim, May 2006

8th Tradition

Daily Reflections excerpt on the 8th Step

Page 223: *At the moment we are trying to put our lives in order. But this is not an end in itself.*

Alcoholics Anonymous, p. 77

How easily I can become misdirected in approaching the Eighth Step! I wish to be free, somehow transformed by my Sixth and Seventh Step work. Now, more than ever, I am vulnerable to my own self-interest and hidden agenda. I am careful to remember that self-satisfaction, which sometimes comes through the spoken forgiveness of those I have harmed, is not my true objective. I become willing to make amends, knowing that through this process I am mended and made fit to move forward, to know and desire God's will for me.

GETTING WELL

Very deep, sometimes quite forgotten, damaging emotional conflicts persist below the level of consciousness.

-TWELVE STEPS AND TWELVE TRADITIONS, pp. 79-80

Only through positive action can I remove the remains of guilt and shame brought on by alcohol. Throughout my misadventures when I drank, my friends would say, "Why are you doing this? You're only hurting yourself." Little did I know how true those words were. Although I harmed others, some of my behavior caused grave wounds to my soul. Step Eight provides me with a way of forgiving myself. I alleviate much of the hidden damage when I make my list of those I have hurt. In making amends, I free myself of burdens, thus contributing to my healing.

Daily Reflections excerpt on the

Page 339: *People who symbolize causes and ideas fill a deep human need. We of A.A. do not question that. But we do have to soberly face the fact that being in the public eye is hazardous, especially for us.*

Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, p. 181

As a recovered alcoholic I must make an effort to put into practice the principles of the A.A. program, which are founded on honesty, truth and humility. While I was drinking I was constantly trying to be in the limelight. Now that I am conscious of my mistakes and of my former lack of integrity, it would not be honest to seek prestige, even for the justifiable purpose of promoting the A.A. message of recovery. Is the publicity that centers around the A.A. Fellowship and the miracles it produces not worth much more? Why not let the people around us appreciate by themselves the changes that A.A. has brought in us, for that will be a far better recommendation for the Fellowship than any I could make.

As Bill Sees It (*Letters from Bill W.*)

Page 1 – Personality Change

"It has often been said of A.A. that we are interested only in alcoholism. That is not true. We have to get over drinking in order to stay alive. But anyone who knows the alcoholic personality by firsthand contact knows that no true alky ever stops drinking permanently without undergoing a profound personality change."

A Letter from Bill W., 1940

Eighth Concept:

Calendar Events

August 13th

Fish Fry

1pm – 7pm @ Alano Club

Speaker meeting immediately following.

October 9th

Annual Oldtimer's Meeting

Noon @ Palmdale Bingo Hall

Luncheon, Oldtimer's Sharing Experience, Strength, & Hope & Raffle Prizes! Get your tickets EARLY from your Intergroup Rep or Central Office!

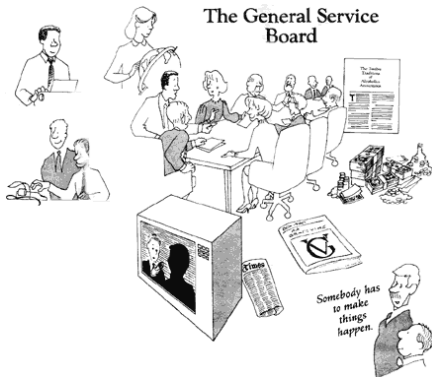
The Trustees of the General Service Board act in two primary capacities: (a) With respect to the larger matters of over-all policy and finance, they are the principal planners and administrators. They and their primary committees directly manage these affairs. (b) But with respect to our separately incorporated and constantly active services, the relation of the Trustees is mainly that of full stock ownership and of custodial oversight which they exercise through their ability to elect all directors of these entities



ALCOHOLIC JOKE:

The tipsy captain of an old freighter saw what looked like the light of another ship on a collision course with his. He signaled, "Change your course ten degrees to the east," but the reply came back directing him to turn ten degrees

1985



Quotable Quotes

Word Game

E	X	W	D	K	F	O	R	T	I	F	Y	H
S	K	O	J	J	L	R	Q	G	Y	T	G	T
W	T	S	T	E	A	D	F	A	S	T	B	K
O	P	Q	N	C	W	Y	N	M	U	T	K	K
L	A	G	Q	O	D	Z	M	E	R	E	O	F
L	T	N	C	N	I	N	Q	N	V	G	U	F
E	I	I	K	S	A	T	R	D	E	A	Q	W
F	E	N	T	T	U	J	A	S	Y	K	W	T
A	N	R	U	R	I	R	B	L	Y	C	K	B
I	C	A	D	U	T	G	G	L	E	E	K	G
H	E	E	G	C	X	U	Y	E	O	R	V	Z
F	U	L	G	T	M	I	C	X	R	W	J	C
X	J	S	G	B	H	Z	J	J	K	Y	D	N

Editor's Note: Thank you for new submissions from our new writers. I look forward to reading about new experiences of A.A. Hope everyone stays involved and keeps sharing their experience, strength, and hope.