



January  
1980

NEWSLETTER OF INTERGROUP OF WESTERN NORTH  
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AND A "MUSTY" NEW YEAR TO YOU!

We have often heard the flat statement: "There are no musts in AA." This is true only in the sense that the AA 12 Steps are neither an enforceable body of the law within our legal structure, nor a sentence imposable by force.

Usually, we apply the phrase as a sop to our egos. The simple reason is our minds have not been completely cleared of the reservations and fuzzy rationalization that bar external discipline.

So, by twisting our thinking a bit, we can claim, "There are no musts," but only in the sense that no one can change our thinking through force. If it is our screwy and confused thinking that makes us drink, and makes our lives unmanageable, and if the way we change this type of thinking to make our lives manageable is through application of the 12 Steps, then there are a lot of musts, and we must needs become "musty."

The odds for ensuring life manageability are enhanced by the increased effort we employ to put the AA principles into practice in our daily lives. The BIG BOOK says, "These are the steps we took" (past tense). Thus, the results are based not on some hazy theory but on sustained action sparked by the demands of rigorous honesty, willingness and effort.

If we are willing to settle for less than happy, sober, well-ordered lives, then we can say truly there are no musts. Of course, the only one who can decide whether there are no musts is you. You are the guy/gal who must abide by your decision to suffer further, or live the wonderful new way of life offered us through total acceptance of AA principles. (Thanks to "High and Dry" - Seattle)

## CONTRIBUTIONS:

Individuals--Fred H., Neil D., LeRoy and Mary B.,  
Jim D., Ed D., Paul and Jane B., Dorothy P.

Groups--Hendersonville, Fletcher, Traditional, West  
Asheville, Victoria, Cullowhee Valley, Blue Ridge.

AA

This is acceptance? Store owner to man who has just made a  
purchase: "And if you're not 100 percent satisfied, may  
God grant you the wisdom to accept the things you cannot  
change." (Thanks to "Chalk Talk Newsletter")

AA

For clock watchers: "No one is wholly bad. Even a clock  
that has stopped running is right twice a day."  
(Thanks to "Here's How", Chicago)

AA

A ponderable: "Isn't it much easier to stay sober than to  
get sober?" (Thanks to C.A.T.C. News)

AA

SON: "Dad, what's pessimist?"

FATHER: "A pessimist is someone who complains about the  
noise--even when opportunity knocks at his door!"

AA

## HUMILITY

It is sometimes said that humility is the most elusive  
Christian virtue, for to be truly humble one must be unaware  
of being so. In his autobiography, Ben Franklin quaintly  
shows the elusiveness of this virtue. He tells of writing  
down a list of moral qualities he desired to possess and of  
examining his conduct daily to see if he was succeeding in  
his expression of them. He was told by a Quaker friend that  
he lacked humility; so he added it to his list. But  
Franklin never felt that he acquired the reality of this  
virtue. He found pride hard to put down, and he came to  
the conclusion that if he could conceive of overcoming it,  
he would probably be proud of his humility. Pride is the  
opposite of humility and is the chief obstacle to one's  
expressing true humility as Benjamin Franklin's exposition  
of it shows. Pride is so inherent in the carnal mind that  
mortals are likely to feel ashamed if they have nothing  
to be proud of. But often it has been this very lack that  
has been effectual in bringing to light the capacities of  
Spirit which man reflects effortlessly.

## THOUGHTS

It seems a pity that there are members of AA, who upon hearing the word "Service," stiffen up, get nervous and jumpy and maybe break into a sweat and say they don't want any part of that politics or business. Could it be that they just don't want to take on any responsibility in repayment for what they are getting from the fellowship?

Could be! Many of us have been known to have been selfish and lazy in the past, but we should be trying to correct those defects in our character.

Perhaps the real reason why so many men and women fail to take an active part in AA is because they just don't understand how this activity will help keep them sober. It will, you see! All one need do is look around at those people who are taking these responsibilities seriously. They're sober.

Dr. Bob, in his brief remarks before the First International AA Convention in Cleveland said, "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 this in mind."

When a member says he doesn't want any part of service, he is pleading guilty to an awful lot of ignorance. This member doesn't realize that he has been dependent on AA service for quite some time. How did he find an AA meeting? Perhaps through a friend, his doctor or pastor. Perhaps it was while in a treatment center. A basic part of our service effort has worked for years to tell people what AA is and how to reach it. This must be passed on and we can't do it by just smugly sitting in "our" little meeting. We must be "givers", too, and not just "takers." If all we have is "takers", the well just might go dry!

Alcoholics Anonymous is built on the foundation of love and service. The meetings are the golden links in a chain that binds our worldwide fellowship, where real love and service are put into action.

As individuals we have a responsibility to our group and in turn our group has a like responsibility to be an active part in this worldwide fellowship. How else will we survive?

Our own little group could conceivably disappear - dissolve or fade away. Some people do go back to drinking, move away or die. What would we do if we went to "our" own little meeting and found we were all alone? To whom would we turn?

If your group does not have a Group Service Representative (GSR) attending our State Assembly meetings, you are short-changing yourselves. Your own AA group and every group in North Dakota is the poorer for this neglect?

Bud G.



## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

JANUARY	GROUP	YEARS
Lou L.	Traditional	9
Margie C.	Haw Creek	4
Sally J.	Blue Ridge	3
Don K.	Hendersonville	3
Al E.	Tryon	7
Ben J.	Cherokee	8
Gilmore C.	Victoria	10
Mike M.	Victoria	6
Sherrill McG	Beginners (Dec.27, '79)	1



These are actual quotations taken from police records as drivers are asked to describe their accidents.

Man Driver: The indirect cause of this accident was a little guy in a small car with a big mouth.

Woman Driver: I had been shopping for plants all day and was on my way home. As I reached an intersection a hedge sprang up obscuring my vision. I did not see the other car.

AA

After a patient underwent an operation and came out of the anesthesia, he asked a nurse: "How come all the shades on the windows are pulled down?"

The nurse answered: "The house across the street is on fire, and we didn't want you to wake up thinking that the operation had been a failure.

AA

We, in AA, are most certainly among the "fortunate few." We have come to believe that a power greater than ourselves could return us to a normal way of life. We have learned that with His help we can face the problems of today- without any booze! We have learned that our lives could again become worthwhile, both to ourselves and to others. We are learning the art of giving and of loving. The desire to help is growing within us and we are gaining in our ability to share. How very much we have to be thankful and grateful for. Let's not fail to pass it on!



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