

So, here's a look at some suggested basics:

1. Responsibility is the first principle of good sponsorship. The sponsor is the one who assumes responsibility for the person seeking help. If one is unable to devote the time and attention essential to good sponsorship, one should not undertake, at least without a strong co-sponsor, such an assignment.

(The book, Alcoholics Anonymous, says: "Practical experience shows us that nothing will so insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics.")

2. Sponsorship must be approached with a most serious attitude. A.A. is a life or death matter to the alcoholic seeking help. If we fail, the new person has been denied the good chance he/she could have had with another sponsor. Prepare yourself for the first call on a prospect by rereading the chapter in the Big Book, "Working with Others."

3. Visit the new prospect as soon as possible after he/she calls for help. Presenting the Recovery Program at the psychological moment may be the factor that saves his life.

4. On your first visit, tell the prospective A.A., frankly and simply, some of your own story -- with enough pauses that he/she may chime in with personal experiences and reactions. Explain how A.A. works, but keep your presentation brief and simple. Do not wear out your welcome. When the prospect becomes restless take your leave, making an appointment to visit again as soon as practicable.

5. In presenting the program, don't thrust your personal views upon him. Tell him about the A.A. program as it is presented in the book, and let him do his own interpreting, especially in regard to the spiritual aspects. He will get the views of many A.A.s, in addition to yours, at meetings and in conversations. Out of all that, with what guidance you can give him, he will find a way to apply A.A. principles to his own life problems.

6. Be prepared to sacrifice much of your time for a considerable period to give the prospect the greatest possible chance. Make yourself available to him daily for counsel and companionship.

7. Accompany the prospect to meetings elsewhere, as well as to meetings of your own local group. He has the right to be made acquainted with the full facilities for recovery.

8. See that the prospect becomes acquainted with many other A.A.'s to provide a broad picture of the A.A. program and the opportunity to apply its principles. -- Make the prospect your friend. Give of yourself without stint in trying to help him. Invite him to your home, preferably for a meal.

(The book says: "Helping others is the foundation stone of your recovery. A kindly act once in a while is not enough. You have to act the Good Samaritan every day if need be. It may mean the loss of many nights' sleep, great interference with your pleasures, interruptions to your business. It may mean sharing your money and your home, counseling frantic wives and relatives, innumerable visits to police courts, sanitariums, hospitals, jails. Your telephone may jangle any time of day or night...")

9. See that your prospect immediately gets a copy of the book, Alcoholics Anonymous. It is best that he buy a copy. Ownership of the book once was a virtual symbol of A.A. membership. Regular reading and rereading of the book is recommended practice for every A.A. as a tool of recovery.

10. Do not take on, in your enthusiasm, more prospects than you can properly handle. A.A. is strong medicine. It affords the recovered alcoholic a unique opportunity to serve his fellowman. The temptation to run up a big score of saved souls is strong. But one new member a year well-sponsored is a better result than 50 given the once-over lightly.

11. Emphasize the importance of regular attendance at meetings by precept and example. Even if you have grown careless about going to meetings, it is your responsibility to accompany the prospect to several such (and this may save you from a relapse.)

12. Many calls for help come first to the Intergroup office. From there they are relayed to local groups or members for action. If you accept an assignment to make a first call on a prospect, see that a report on the result is relayed back to Intergroup for records purposes or possible alternative approaches. (Thanks to Chicago Metropolitan Rotating Committee.)

More Than a Quest for Sobriety

In Part II of Bill's talk, "Carrying the Message in '55" -- we ran Part I in the July issue -- our co-founder says that "... AA is something more than a quest for sobriety, because we cannot have sobriety unless we solve the problem of life, which is essentially the problem of living and working together." In this issue, you'll read articles by several AAs who are experiencing their living and working problems: A divorced mother is able to raise her children and to let go of old resentments and self-pity when she finds that what happens to her life gives her "A Chance to Learn" and grow rather than an excuse to complain or drink. And a woman involved in service sees that, like sobriety, service is "Not Something I Did, But Something We Did." And a husband and father understands his powerlessness over his family and everything else when he works his program, because no one else can work his program for him, nor can he work anybody else's.

Doc Tackled Life And Death At The Bottom Of The Bottle

Doc had personality. He was short, about 40, with hair that shone like coal, a smooth rosy complexion and hazel eyes that seemed to lock, almost indecently, with the eyes of his patients. He was as excited about his illness as he was about theirs.

They matched. Doc was an alcoholic. He had an office in an old Lake Shore Drive house in Chicago. It looked as though it had been built of penitentiary stone. He lived there with Muriel in a pseudo-French provincial apartment on the top floor, but he counseled drunks on the second floor.

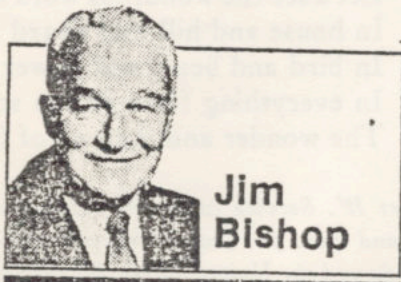
Doc was good. Anyone who can tap 300 patients for fees and not be a doctor is good. Most of them were men and women of means who were ashamed to attend Alcoholics Anonymous meetings. He straightened out some bankers, a few judges, authors and a lot of nervous politicians.

I wrote an article about Doc. He was one of the first to take alcoholism out of the gutters and place it in the clinic, where it belongs. As a drunk, he spent time in every third two-bit jail and most of the sanitarium. He staggered through a whole war without knowing it.

He got sick of being sick. When he sobered, Doc enrolled at Northwestern University and majored in psychotherapy. It didn't make him a doctor, but it taught him a lot about the psychology of boozing.

He always started treatment telling stories about himself. He told them that when he drank, he became impatient. On the third or fourth day, he would take a fresh fifth and smash the neck on a kitchen sink and guzzle. He didn't have time to unscrew the cap. This put a lot of bad boys and girls at ease.

Sometimes he was cruel. When a patient felt he could handle a drink, Doc shoved him into the nearest saloon. Wives wept and begged him not to do it, but he said the patient must be taught that he can never handle a drink.



Jim
Bishop

The system worked; he earned a lot of money. He was 42 when he met Muriel. She was 18 and admired Doc more than she loved him. It might have worked except that Doc couldn't talk about anything but alcoholism.

She wanted nightclubs, dancing, movies and summer sailing on Lake Michigan. When Doc wasn't busy with patients, he was reading papers on alcoholism, disagreeing with most of them.

I asked him under what circumstances an arrested drinker would return to the bottle. "That's easy," he said. "Just give him an insoluble problem."

"Like what?"

"Like he has a terminal illness. Like he's behind in the rent and gets fired. Like someone threatens his life. Like sudden bankruptcy. Any severe and chronic pain which he cannot reduce."

Now and then, Doc came to mind. I worried about him. His word was excellent and his practice was flourishing. But he acted as though he had invented alcoholism. He brooked no disagreements. Doc lost some patients

Sometime later I was at a luncheon in New York; a Chicago reporter told me Doc was dead. Dead?

"Yeah," he said, "a maid came to the house to clean up. He scared the hell out of her. He was standing in the middle of the office with long strings of blood hanging from his chin. He didn't say anything; just stood there."

"She was terrified, but she had enough sense to call an ambulance from Passavant Hospital. They couldn't do much. He was bleeding internally. Doc died in the emergency room."

I was stunned. "Did anybody look for a bottle with the neck broken off?"

The reporter nodded. "Funny you should say that. After he died, the cops found a half-empty bottle on his desk. The neck was on the floor. That guy was drinking slivers of glass."

It ruined the lunch for me.

"How did Muriel take it?" I asked.

"Muriel? You mean Doc's wife? She left him a week before he died."

The insoluble problem.

CHARLOTTE OBSERVER 5-26-80

EVERYBODY SOMEBODY ANYBODY NOBODY

There were once four people who lived in proximity of each other. Their names were Edward Everybody, Sam Somebody, Arthur Anybody and Nellie Nobody. They were without question, very odd people and it was difficult to understand them, their habits, the way they lived and how they carried on and did things. Their manner of living was shameful, to say the least, and they were of little help within the community.

SOMEBODY was always talking about his neighbors and EVERYBODY was afraid to do anything about it because SOMEBODY might find out. But ANYBODY would know what EVERYBODY was sore about, so they felt he was getting what he deserved.

It really wasn't a very friendly neighborhood. For example, there was the time ANYBODY'S house caught on fire. EVERYBODY thought that SOMEBODY had called the fire department. SOMEBODY thought that EVERYBODY would call them but as it turned out, NOBODY called in and ANYBODY suffered a tremendous loss.

All four of these characters belonged to the same church and were expected to play a part in church affairs. Now however, EVERYBODY usually went fishing on Sunday. ANYBODY wanted to worship on this day but not being very friendly himself, was inclined to believe that SOMEBODY would not speak to him, so, NOBODY went to church.

NOBODY, truthfully, was the only half-decent one of the four. NOBODY was very faithful and NOBODY took up the Sunday offering. NOBODY did the visitation, in fact, everything that needed to be done in church, NOBODY did.

It came about that they needed a Sunday school teacher. EVERYBODY thought that SOMEBODY would teach but there wasn't ANYBODY that would do it. So, guess, who finally did it? That's right...NOBODY.

Which of the four finally found their way into heaven? NOBODY!

A lesson can here be learned from these four. It shouldn't take ANYBODY very long to figure out that if EVERYBODY would just do their little bit and not leave it all for SOMEBODY else to do, NOBODY would have to write an article like this to get a BODY off the seat of their pants.

The Passerby

THE WONDERER

ROBERT W. SERVICE

I wish that I could understand
The moving marvel of my Hand;
I watch my fingers turn and twist,
The supple bending of my wrist,
The dainty touch of finger-tip,
The steel intensity of grip;
A tool of exquisite design,
With pride I think: "It's mine! It's mine!"

Then there's the wonder of my eyes,
Where hills and houses, seas and skies,
In waves of light converge and pass,
And print themselves as on a glass.
Line, form and color live in me;
I am the Beauty that I see;
Ah! I could write a book of size
About the wonder of my Eyes.

What of the wonder of my Heart,
That plays so faithfully its part?
I hear it running sound and sweet;
It does not seem to miss a beat;
Between the cradle and the grave
It never falters, stanch and brave.
Alas! I wish I had the art
To tell the wonder of my Heart.

Then oh! but how can I explain
The wondrous wonder of my Brain?
That marvelous machine that brings
All consciousness of wonderings;

That lets me from myself leap out
And watch my body walk about;
It's hopeless—all my words are vain
To tell the wonder of my Brain.

But do not think, O patient friend,
Who reads these stanzas to the end,
That I myself would glorify. . . .
You're just as wonderful as I,
And all creation in our view
Is quite as marvelous as you.
Come, let us on the sea-shore stand
And wonder at a grain of sand;
And then into the meadow pass
And marvel at a blade of grass;
Or cast our vision high and far
And thrill with wonder at a star;
A host of stars—night's holy tent
Huge glittering with wonderment.

If wonder is in great and small,
Then what of Him who made it all?
In eyes and brain and heart and limb
Let's see the wondrous work of Him.
In house and hill and sward and sea,
In bird and beast and flower and tree,
In everything from sun to sod,
The wonder and the awe of God.

Robert W. Service came from Scotland to Canada when he was twenty and spent five years wandering through the wilds and the cities of Canada and the United States. He then became a clerk in a Canadian bank and began to write the wilderness songs that have made him popular. Kipling is his favorite poet and his model. He says, "Kipling comes first with me. He is the greatest of modern writers to my mind. I only wish I could write in his class."

THE SERENITY PRAYER -- ITS SOURCE

Just before Ruth (Bill W.'s secretary) left, a news clipping whose content was to become famous was called to our attention by a New York member, newsman Jack. It was an obituary notice from a New York newspaper. Underneath a routine account of the one who had died there appeared these words: "God grant us serenity to accept the things we cannot change, courage to change the things we can, and wisdom to know the difference."

Never had we seen so much A.A. in so few words. While I was admiring the prayer and wondering how to use it, friend Howard walked into the office. Confirming our own ideas, he exclaimed, "We ought to print this on cards and drop one into every piece of mail that goes out of here. I'll pay for the first printing." For several years afterward, we followed his suggestion, and with amazing speed the Serenity Prayer came into general use and took its place alongside our two other favorites, the Lord's Prayer and the Prayer of St. Francis.

No one can tell for sure who first wrote the Serenity Prayer. Some say it came from the early Greeks; others think it was from the pen of an anonymous English poet; still others claim it was written by an American naval officer; Jack Alexander, who once researched the matter, attributes it to the Rev. Reinhold Niebuhr of the Union Theological Seminary. Anyhow, we have the prayer and it is said thousands of times daily. We count its writer among our great benefactors. (Quoted from "Alcoholics Anonymous come of Age.")

More on the Serenity Prayer

The origin of the Alcoholics Anonymous Serenity Prayer has long been a topic of discussion among A.A. members. Many, of course, know its origin:

The prayer was shortened from the original version, which was actually the ending of a longer prayer written by Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr of the Union Theological Seminary in New York City. Two years after Dr. Niebuhr wrote the prayer his close friend and neighbor, Dr. Howard Robbins, asked permission to use the last line in a book published in 1934.

It came to the attention of an A.A. member in 1939 when it appeared in The New York Times. He liked it so well he brought it to the Veasey Street office to show Bill W. After Bill had read the little prayer to the staff, it was adopted in a slightly shortened form. It fit the need of A.A. perfectly. Cards were printed and passed around. Thus, the little prayer became an integral part of the A.A. movement.

The original version, as written by Dr. Niebuhr, was: "God, give me the serenity to accept things which cannot be changed; give me courage to change things which must be changed; and the wisdom to distinguish one from the other." (Thanks to "The Story," Winter issue, 1978/79)



AUGUST
1980

NEWSLETTER OF INTERGROUP OF WESTERN NORTH
CAROLINA, 107 PARKWAY OFFICE BUILDING,
ASHEVILLE, N.C. 28801*** PHONE 704-254-8539

FINANCIAL NEWS

The following groups sent in contributions to the Intergroup during the month of July 1980. Tryon, Hendersonville, Brevard, Fletcher, West Asheville, Traditional, Last Resort (Franklin), Victoria, Serenity (Franklin), and Blue Ridge for a total of \$257.08. Individuals include Ed D., Cecil D., Ted F., Neil D., Fred H., Anne S., Dorothy P., Maxine Y., and Dorothy L., for a total of \$144.00. Intergroup wants to thank the groups and individuals for their help and we want to assure you that this will be used to carry the message to it's fullest.

AA

All you people who missed the Victoria-Mustard Seed meeting held Sunday, July 27 can never guess just how much was in store for you. Gertrude B. from Raleigh, NC delivered one of the best messages we have heard. The food was the best possible and in such abundance. The fellowship was the greatest. Sorry that you were unable to attend.

AA

Upcoming events include the District Meeting in September hosted by the Blue Ridge Group and in October hosted by Hendersonville Group. And of course, the Fellowship by the Sea in Myrtle Beach in October. Please keep note of the happenings around Districts 7 and 8 especially. We have found that you can't beat good communication, be wherever you are.

A Spiritual Program



Send your favorite stories, quips, and news clips

A new man learns about a day at a time through "Blind Faith," and a non-believer decides she has nothing to lose if she prays, and in the middle of fear is granted "Instant Belief" when the fear is lifted. Another AA, struggling with the Fourth and Fifth Steps, realizes at depth the spiritual nature of self-examination and of sharing when she takes her "Fifth Step" and joins the human race.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Hi!



AUGUST	GROUP	YEARS
Bennett J.	Brevard	29
Jim B.	Sylva	29
Dorothy P.	Fletcher	11
Alan O.	Bakersville	9
Anne L.	Bakersville	4
John T.	Madison County	5
Ernie G.	Victoria	4
Dean H.	Canton	3
Joe R.	Traditional	2



Congratulations to the above wonderful people and to those of you that we have not received the information to include in this bulletin.

KEEP THE CARDS, LETTERS AND TELEPHONE CALLS COMING FOLKS!! (AND MAY WE ADD) MORE FREQUENT AND BY THE 25th OF THE MONTH.

INFO: Fred (Sarge) H. has been elected GSR (General Service Representative) from the Haw Creek Group. We know that Fred will carry out the duties of this office to his very best and able manner.

NEW INTERGROUP OFFICERS

David R. Chairman
 Jean W. Vice Chairman
 Fred E. Secretary
 Hugh C. Treasurer

NEXT INTERGROUP MEETING
 SUNDAY, AUGUST 17th AT
 3:00 PM ROOM 107 Parkway
 Office Bldg., Asheville, NC

MAN TO PSYCHIATRIST: "Can I marry an octopus?"

PSYCHIATRIST: "No, you can't."

MAN: "Please tell me how can I get rid of 8 engagement rings?"

SON: "Dad, what's a pessimist?"

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



A schoolboy sheepishly handed a very bad report card to his pharmacist-father.

The pharmacist looked at the card and signed it with an "X".

Puzzled, the little boy asked: "Why did you write an 'X' to sign my report card?"

The pharmacist replied: "With your very poor grades, your teacher won't believe that you have a father who can read or write!"