



DECEMBER  
1980

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



UP-COMING EVENTS

DECEMBER 11, 1980 The Fletcher group will celebrate their fourth anniversary beginning at 7:00 P.M. by having a variety of foods for all to enjoy followed by an open AA meeting at 8:00 P.M. (As John says, "You all come!")

DECEMBER 12,13,14, 1980 Southeastern Regional Form will be held in Atlanta, Ga. Inquire around for people who may have reservation cards. This is GSO coming to us.

DECEMBER 16, 1980 Open meeting at Traditional group and Christmas party. Party begins at 7:00 P.M. and following at 8:00 P.M. open AA meeting.

Also on this date the Tryon group invites you to their Christmas party at 7:00 P.M. and meeting at 8:00 P.M.

DECEMBER 21, 1980 A G.S.R. meeting has been called by Ed D., the newly elected District 7 State Committeeman at 2:00 P.M. at the Intergroup Office, 107 Parkway Office Bldg., Asheville for all G.S.R.'s in all groups of District 7. This is a very important meeting and you are urged to attend.

DECEMBER 31, 1980 (NEW YEARS EVE) Blue Ridge group will host a New Years party beginning at 9:00 P.M. You are invited to trip the "light fantastie" and welcome in the beginning of 1981.

JANUARY 9,10.12, 1980 The Tar Heel Mid-Winter Conference will be held at a new place. This is the Mission Valley Inn and Conference Center, Raleigh, N.C. We are giving you advance notice so that for further information you may write Conference Chairman, P.O. Box 18412, Raleigh, N.C. 27619.

PEOPLE WHO TELL YOU never to let little things bother you have never tried sleeping in a room with a mosquito.

-Katherine Chandler, quoted by Red O'Donnell in Nashville *Banner*

**Gratitude is not only the greatest of virtues, but the parent of all the others (Marcus Tullius Cicero).**

B E L I E V E ! ! !

Everyone with an alcoholic problem can be helped through the practice and use of the A.A. principles if he will but believe that he can. Believing is of the utmost importance in A.A. Webster defines the word "belief" as: "An approval by the mind to the truth of a declaration or proposition on the grounds of evidence apart from personal knowledge." In our first efforts to accept A.A. we would be fortunate to have a sincere belief that what has helped so many thousands of others with the same problem as ours must contain, at least, possibilities of help for us.

If belief is not enough, and it is evidence that you wish, all you need to do is look around you at any meeting, multiply this number by the thousands of A.A.s throughout the world, and you have your evidence. Believe that through A.A. we can be helped with our drinking problems and we have made an excellent start on the road to recovery. Believing a thing often makes it so. We must believe in ourselves -- believe that we have it within our power, through A.A., to conquer our drinking problem.

We cannot make it work if we do not believe it will. We must believe that all of the steps of the program are designed to be of assistance to us. We must believe that regular attendance at meetings is of vital importance, both as a constant reminder that we are alcoholics, and as a source of rejuvenation of our endeavors to remain sober. Many of the thoughts we think -- many of our ideas -- are not ours at all, or those of our own origination. We are also molded by the thoughts of others; by what we hear at our meetings; in reading the Big Book, or in conversations with other A.A.s. These thoughts we get from outside sources are retained and eventually become our own, and we work them into our plan of life as we live it. (Thanks to Dick M., Chicago, in "Here's How")

Dear Ann: I knew when I read the letter for "The Sho-Me State" that it was written by someone who didn't know much about alcoholism. He started by saying, "If alcoholism is a disease, it's the only disease that is bottled and sold, contracted by the will of man, needs a license to keep going, produces revenue for the government, is spread by advertising, causes violent death on the highways," etc. Please print my rebuttal. Those misconceptions could be dangerous.

(Cont.)

Dear Ann: (Cont.)

Recently I have been educating myself and other family members in an effort to cope with an alcoholic spouse. I would like to analyze the points made by "Show-Me State."

1. As for alcoholism being bottled and sold: alcoholism comes in people, not in bottles. (Diabetes does not come in a candy bar.)
  2. The disease does not require a license to keep it going. Alcohol has always been easy to get, with or without a license. The disease will always be around.
  3. Alcoholism is not contracted through lack of will power. It represents the combination of a physical sensitivity or allergy to alcohol, plus a mental obsession with drinking that cannot be controlled by will power alone.
  4. Mental illness provokes crime. Is this also contracted by the will of man?
  5. Accidents happen as a result of other illnesses. (There are a lot of sick people on the road.) Alcoholism itself can result in violent death.
  6. Alcoholism is not caused by a germ or virus, nor is heart disease, kidney disease or mental illness.
  7. Lung diseases are also spread by advertising.
- It is important the public be educated that alcoholism is a disease, so that the afflicted can recognize it as such and seek the help they need. (Thanks to Ann Landers.)

### Thinkle Peep He's Drunk

It occurred to me not to use this story because it is so old, but my son read it and laughed till the tears ran and I thought this new generation of readers may not have read it yet.

It came, oddly enough, from the Rev. R. E. McClure who penned an assurance that he has never been in this shape and cannot confirm reaction to the situation. "But I can imagine!" he added.

The story read like this:

"I had twelve bottles of whisky in my cellar and was told by my wife to empty the contents of each and every bottle down the sink -- or else! So I said I would and proceeded with the unpleasant task."

"I withdrew the cork from the first bottle and poured the contents down the sink with the exception of one glass of whisky which I drank."

"I extracted the cork from the third bottle and poured the whisky down the sink, which I drank."

"I pulled the cork from the fourth bottle down the sink

(Cont.)

and poured the bottle down the glass which I drank."

"I pulled the bottle from the cork of the next and drank the sink out of it, and then threw the rest down the glass.

"I pulled the sink out of the next glass and poured the cork down the bottle. Then I corked the sink with the glass, bottled the drink, and drank the pour."

"When I had everything emptied, I steadied the house with one hand, counted the glasses, corks, bottles and sinks with the other which were 29, and as the houses came by, I counted them again and finally had all the houses

"I'm not under the affluence of incohol, but some thinkle peep I am. I'm not half so thunk as you might drink, and I fool so feelish I don't know who is me, and the drunker I stand here the longer I get."

(Thanks to Bob Terrell in "Fun Is Where You Find It!")

### Needless Worry

Some of your hurts you have cured,  
And the sharpest you still have survived;  
But what torments of grief you endured  
From evils which never arrived!  
(Thanks to Ralph Waldo Emerson)

The drunk, feeling miserable, called to make an appointment with his doctor. The nurse told him that the waiting list was three weeks long. "But I may be dead by then," groaned the drinker. "That's all right," replied the nurse, "you can always cancel the appointment."  
(Thanks to "The Story" -- Spring 1979)

**We first make our habits, and  
then our habits make us** (John  
Dryden).

The word is GENEROUS . . . .

When we first give thought to the elements that make a person generous, we may think of one who freely shares his money and material possessions with those who are less fortunate. To be a truly generous person requires much more than this. To be generous is to be open to all life. We can be generous with our time, our knowledge, our service, and whatever talent and ability we possess. Generosity is a quality that is rewarding and rewarded. Our generosity has a direct bearing on the quality of our life. Nothing is gained by foolishly depleting all our resources, but much is gained by becoming genuinely generous.

THANK "SILVER DOLLAR"

REMEMBER - "NOTHING IS SO BAD A DRINK WON'T MAKE IT WORSE!"

THE PROPER SPIRIT

Most of us who have attended meetings with some regularity have heard this familiar statement repeated many times at AA meetings. "This is a selfish program," - which is partially true. However, to the new person, it is confusing and particularly when he sees his AA friends, giving so much without asking for anything in return.

What really makes this so-called selfish program difficult to explain to the new person is when he hears his AA friends talk about the midnight telephone calls, the Twelve Step calls, the hundred mile round trip to speak at another AA meeting, and the five dollar bill handed to someone under the table, whom is in need. What makes it more confusing is that the people who are sharing with others seem to get a sense of satisfaction every time they go out and help another human being.

In our drinking days, most of us were great sharers as long as it was the other fellow's share. We had to depend on others to share with us because we didn't have anything to support our drinking habit. We added up every penny and nickel to see if we had enough to buy a cheap bottle of wine and if we didn't, we would beg or steal, for many of us came into AA with the habit of counting our pennies and nickels. Some of us became so conservative with our money that we palmed our dime and dropped it silently in the basket, but it looked strange among the dollars and the sight of that dime gave us a feeling of guilt.

As we continued going to meetings and watched our AA friends contributing generously to every AA cause, our dimes gradually became quarters, eventually half-dollars and finally dollars. Today we can look back over the past years and see how the AA principles are working out, and how our association with our AA friends was actually the thing which broke the chain of our selfish attitude and opened the door to a sober and a better life.

Perhaps the real reason why our selfish program is difficult to explain is because it has to be lived, and as we live it, a day at a time, the mystery of our AA principles unfold, slowly but surely, and gradually we begin to understand that it is in sharing that we receive. In the measure in which we share with others, our own burdens become lighter. In measuring up to life's demands, our character will grow in widening sympathy and deep understanding.

There is no question to the meaning of sharing with others. Everytime we share something with another human being, we add something to our spiritual and moral bank account, enabling us to draw on our spiritual savings account when extra demands are made upon our moral courage. During an emergency is not the time to start our bank account as it must be in the bank when we need it.

Yes, this is a selfish program and perhaps it will never change, but we must change our attitude from the spirit of grabbing for ourselves, to the spirit of sharing with others. This is the spirit that we need to carry the message to another sick alcoholic; this is the spirit which keeps the General Service open; this is the spirit which keeps the hand of AA always there, when anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, and for that, this is the spirit that is responsible.

(Edward B. in Akron Intergroup News)

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"AA WON'T OPEN THE GATES OF HEAVEN TO LET YOU IN, BUT -  
IT WILL OPEN THE GATES OF HELL TO LET YOU OUT!"

Old truck driver asked the waitress for a glass of water.  
"To drink?" asked the waitress. "No, I do a high diving act," answered the driver.  
So MANY TANGLES in life are ultimately hopeless that we have no appropriate sword other than laughter.  
-Gordon W. Allport, quoted by Paul Lafitte in *The Person in Psychology* (Humanities)

Hejaz Commentator

ATTRACTION VS. PROMOTION - THE DIFFERENCE?

The two parts of the Eleventh Tradition - on public relations policy and on anonymity - are closely connected.

The public should know about AA. In particular, the millions of alcoholics who will get sober in the Fellowship in the next 20 years are almost all alive now, and still part of the public. To come to us, they will need to know about us, and it is our Twelfth Step obligation to see that they do. In fact, the better their understanding of their disease and of AA, the sooner they may come.

The public relations side of our Twelfth Step is underscored by our 1974 and 1977 surveys. We learned that more than half our present membership heard about AA from public sources - institutions, the press, doctors, ministers, etc. - and less than half directly from an AA source. We learned this again, for Bill had pointed it out long ago.

Certainly, one reason AA is so respected today is the regard third parties express for the effectiveness of our program, rather than what we say about ourselves. In the long form of the Eleventh Tradition, our founders said, "There is never need to praise ourselves. We feel it better to let our friends recommend us." As far back as the Jack Alexander article in a 1941 Saturday Evening Post, this idea has contributed to our growth.

Our latest survey of public information committees indicates that almost 90% have found the media cooperative in carrying our message. But for the success of this activity, it is essential that our non-AA friends relay our message truly, without distortion. That knowledge can come only from us, through (1) public information work and (2) the example of our personal sobriety.

In "AA Comes of Age," the connection between our public relations policy and our anonymity principle is very clear. Bill gives many examples of individuals whose egos got tangled up with their Twelfth Step work. The danger to the Fellowship was that society, seeing our program personified by individuals driven by a desire for public recognition, would come to attribute those characteristics to all of us and would lose belief in our message. So much for promotion.

The attractive thing about our Fellowship, as far as society is concerned, is the hope it offers for the alleviation of the disruption caused by alcoholics. How universal this hope can be has just been underscored by our new 1977 survey. The increase in youthful alcoholism is being followed by an increase in young people joining our Fellowship. This message must be fully presented through our public relations efforts.

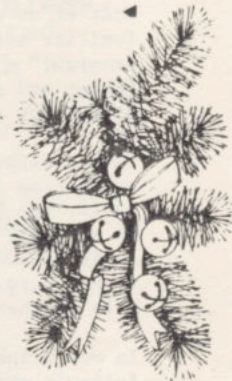
A sober alcoholic is our most potent message to the still-suffering one, while persistent evangelism would drive him away. Just so, the record of our Fellowship, honestly and thoroughly presented, can enlist all segments of society in the alcoholic's behalf, while a promoter's zeal could alienate them.

The difference between promotion and attraction is the difference between trying to push a product at the public and truly letting the product sell itself. It's the difference between the outside world's way and the AA way.

(A presentation from Final Report of  
The 23th General Service Conference)

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EDITOR'S NOTE: The 1980 Survey is now underway.



Merry  
Christmas



WHY DID THEY FAIL???

One hundred and forty years ago, a group of 6 alcoholics met in Baltimore on the morning of April 2, 1840 to form a society that could easily become what Alcoholics Anonymous is today. On that Sunday morning, in the Chase Tavern (then at Liberty and Fayette Streets), they laid down the principles of successful sobriety in a way that had never been done before. It might be well for us to take a look at their record, and see what went wrong - for wrong it went, and the Washington Society went from 6 to 250,000 to no members in a brief ten years. Their passing is marked only by one tiny volume in the Pratt Library, so rare and fragile that it does not circulate and a clipping in "The Sun" of March 3, 1940.

Their program was startlingly like ours in most respects. The principles, as described in John Zug's little book of 1842, were simplicity, drunkenness a disease rather than a vice; just one glass makes you drunk; experience as a guide; alcoholism the entrance requirement; common sense and common honesty, and action. Their motto -- "Let every man be present and every man bring a man." Meetings were open, with speakers and discussion; those who slipped were gladly re-admitted. Neutrality in politics and religion were stressed, and there was no criticism of those members who remained in the liquor trade. Their pledge, signed on joining, promised only total abstinence.

With a program like that, how could they fail? Their program resembled ours in almost every respect. Compare our Prologues "Sobriety for ourselves; help for other alcoholics who desire it; amends for past wrongs; humility honesty, tolerance; and spiritual growth". Perhaps they were weak in spiritual growth. They welcomed ministers only as men, not as preachers, and specified sober speeches rather than sermons. However, churches were the normal meeting places, and it is unlikely that some of the wide spread spiritual re-birth of the times did not rub off. Their weakness was a subtle one, but as fatal as the famous inability of the Maginot Line forts to protect themselves from the rear; they lacked anonymity, and so had no internal defense. From the first meeting, full names were public knowledge; their first anniversary was celebrated with a public parade and personal publicity was easy and plentiful. This led naturally, to mushroom growth and a membership of 250,000 by 1842. It also attracted the attention of every zealous prohibitionist and "temperance" worker, and many unhealthy alliances were formed.

Humility did not last long under these conditions; nor did tolerance; political neutrality was forgotten, and the whole emphasis shifted from sobriety to legislation. With the triumph of the main prohibition law in 1849, the movement was spent, and ran down, never to rise again.

We could do the same! Let no one think that Bill W. waved a magic wand when he supplied the missing ingredient and named us ANONYMOUS. Each of us bears equal responsibility in maintaining this defense against internal disintegration, with a few indiscreet "big-shots" we would be perfectly aimed for the whirlpool in which the Washingtonians drowned. It has been remarked lately that some people grow with responsibility, while others just swell! This certainly is equally true for 1840 and 1930, except that modern communication makes swelling faster and easier now.

(Central Office, Ventura County, Oxnard, CA.)

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"The average alcoholic damages the lives of five people when he gives up drinking: his loan shark, his bartender, his lawyer, his automobile body shop man, and his drinking buddy."

The Grapevine



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

NAME	GROUP	YEARS
John S.	Traditional	2
Jo H.	Traditional	7
Bob B.	Traditional	4
Starling R.	Victoria	3
Vernon W.	West Asheville	6
Mary B.	Fletcher	8
Bob H.	Fletcher	9
Scotty C.	Sylva	4
Gerald P.	Sylva	3
Bill F.	Sylva	2
Shorty Y.	Brevard	8
Jack P.	Brevard	4
George K.	Brevard	3
Corky M. (Haw Creek)	November 1980	6



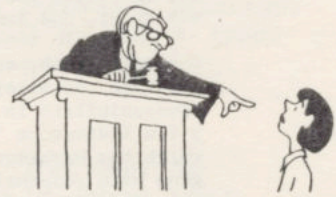
Next Intergroup Meeting Sunday, Jan. 18, 1981  
 at Parkway Office Bldg., Asheville, N.C.  
 3:00 P.M.

AA

The department store was having a fantastic sale on sweaters, and the sportswear section was jammed with customers. The phone rang in the mail-order department and a voice asked for "one light blue cardigan, size medium."

The clerk writing the order asked, "To what name and address shall we send it?"

"Never mind sending it," said the voice. "Just bring it to the front of the store. I'm in a phone booth here."



*The Oregon Freemason*



*New Year Greetings  
 From Across  
 the Miles*



**IF YOU FIND MISTAKES**

In this publication, please consider that they are there for a purpose. We publish something for everyone, and some people are always looking for mistakes!!!