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The national monthly journal of Alcoholics Anonymous, devoted to those seeking further knowledge on the problem of alcoholism, with the hope that it will help all alcoholics everywhere. Individual opinions expressed here are not, necessarily, those of A.A. as a whole.

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Traditions Stressed by Bill in Memphis Talk

URGING all members of Alcoholics Anonymous to strive for humility before success and for unity before fame, Bill W., speaking before the third annual Southeastern Regional Convention in Memphis, Tenn., on September 19, reviewed the 12 suggested traditions for the organization.

Pointing out that the success of A.A.

FRISCO FAMILY GROUP SUMS UP PURPOSES

Work of the San Francisco, Cal., Family Group as a vital link between the alcoholic and the non-alcoholic has been summed up in a "Statement of Aims and Purposes."

"Recognizing that we are members of this A.A. Family Club because of our close relationship to and love for a member of A.A.," the statement goes on to say that the club members resolve to live in an exemplary spiritual manner, to eliminate fear or worry over the problem of alcoholism and instead gain "guidance and strength through our Creator," to assist and encourage the alcoholic to follow all of the 12 Steps by following them themselves, to eliminate faults and habits in themselves which may hinder the maintenance of sobriety and to develop an intelligent understanding of all phases of the program and activities of A.A.

Further resolutions include giving sympathetic understanding to the alcoholic to enable him to maintain sobriety of thought, purpose and habit, giving active spiritual and material support to families of the group and others who are in any emergency due to alcoholism, pledging mutual assistance by calling on group members when necessary, meeting weekly for free exchange of ideas and inspiration, and making voluntary contribution weekly to assist some individual in combatting alcoholism.

could be "heady wine and a serious problem," Bill reminded members that as alcoholics "we are a people who could not exist at all except for the grace of God."

Here are the highlights of the talk as given to the A.A. *Grapevine* in advance of the Memphis meeting:

"Some years ago, Dr. Bob and I, among others, did a lot of traveling and speaking at A.A. Groups the length and breadth of the country. Alcoholics Anonymous was just starting its astonishing growth. There was concern whether we could successfully expand so fast. Widely separated clusters of A.A.s were making their uncertain start, often too far from the original few groups to get much direct help. Many had to rely wholly on literature and letters.

"To meet this seeming emergency, the few of us who could do so got out among the new groups. We wanted to bring our experience and encouragement directly to the incoming thousands who were still unsure; we wanted them to feel a part of the growing whole; we wanted them to see that A.A. had nothing to do with geography; that it would work for them under any conditions whatever. We wished to foster a sound growth and the spirit of unity. So a few of us traveled much.

"Times have changed. As everyone knows, A.A. has since exceeded our wildest expectations. Speaking for Dr. Bob and myself, we feel that we oldsters need not take the prominent roles we once did. A.A. leadership is becoming, happily and healthily, a rotating matter. And besides,

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Norwegian Group Among New Ones

From July 1st to August 14th, the following new groups registered with the Central Office:

NORWAY—LillibroDrobak.

CANADA—Camrose and Red Deer, both Alberta; Kamloops, British Columbia; Brantford and Kinsway Group (Toronto) both Ontario; Moncton, New Brunswick.

ALABAMA—Brewton, Fairhope and Wetumpka.

ARKANSAS—Warren.

CALIFORNIA—Benicia, Camp Meeker, Cathedral, Glendale Central Group, East Bay Group of Long Beach, Los Gatos, Crescenta Valley Group (Montrose), Group No. 2 in Sacramento, San Bernardino Women's Group, San Jose Men's Group, Southern Marin Group (Sausalito), Taft, Trona, Twenty Nine Palms.

COLORADO—Pike's Peak Group (Colorado Springs).

CONNECTICUT—Greater New Haven Group, Wallingford.

FLORIDA—Belle Glade, Murray Hill Group of Jacksonville, Miami Beach, Coral Way Group of Miami, Panama, West Palm Beach.

GEORGIA—Athens, Cairo, LaFayette.

ILLINOIS—Christopher, Macomb.

KANSAS—Mission, Salina.

LOUISIANA—Welch.

MARYLAND—Annapolis, Cumberland.

MASSACHUSETTS—East Milton, Taunton.

MICHIGAN—Alpena.

MISSISSIPPI—Grenada.

MISSOURI—Camdenton, Rocket Group of St. Louis.

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Alcoholics Anonymous

Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.

The only requirement for membership is an honest desire to stop drinking. A.A. has no dues or fees. It is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy, and neither endorses nor opposes any causes. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and to help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

The A.A. Program of Recovery is incorporated in The 12 Steps. The A.A. book of experience, Alcoholics Anonymous, and other literature, including The 12 Points of Tradition, are available through any group or the Central Office, P.O. Box 459, Grand Central Annex, New York 17, N.Y.

DAILY INVENTORY SHOWS UP ASSETS

From Chicago, Ill.

If I kept a diary—and I do not—there might be an entry in it something like this:

April 2, 1942: For the first time, I admit I am powerless over alcohol. I know now I can't safely ever take another drink. I have decided to turn my will and my life over to God, without reservation. I have seen tonight—in one hall—600 other men and women afflicted as I am. They are leading happy respected lives. If they can find joy in sobriety, so can I. By my voluntary presence at this meeting, I have told them I want to lead a life of continued sobriety. The odds are greatly in my favor. Many times before I have tried to quit drinking and each time failed miserably. If there's any intelligence left in me, I'll follow their example, abide by their advice—because they are successful.

That, I believe, is what I might have written when I came into A.A. But how has it worked out during the past five years? Were my admissions and decisions made then enough to keep me sober and happy?

The answer is very definitely "No," because the A.A. Program is not a sign-up-and-forget affair. It isn't a one-time inoculation against all the ills that may come in the future. It isn't a college in which degrees are conferred or one that boasts a single graduate. Rather, it is a continuous daily program of living, and I have observed that the happiest and most successful A.A.s are those who take a perhaps brief but *daily* refresher course.

Every one of the 12 Steps is of course vital, but I believe the Step that has been of greatest help to me is the 10th, which reads: *Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.*

For me, that personal inventory must be daily. At the end of each day, I try to review at least the highlights of the day. If anything, especially good or especially bad has happened to me I won't have to dig too deeply. It will be right out there in clear view for me to tackle as I will.

As entries on the wrong side of the ledger loom up, I can at least see where I was mistaken and decide what must be done to not only correct the error, but to avoid repetition of it. Bemoaning isn't going to help one bit. Self-reproach is silly unless I use it constructively and try to use the mistakes of today to make a better day tomorrow.

In this personal inventory there are bound to
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EDITORIAL

On the 12th Step . . .

"Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of those Steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs."

Now comes the last Step in the Program of Recovery. We will consider the two aspects of this Step: (1) *we tried to carry this message to alcoholics* and (2) *to practice these principles in all our affairs.*

Our own peculiar personal histories as alcoholics make us singularly fitted to perform the first part of this Step. Indeed, it is the fact that we are alcoholics in the process of recovery that makes us effective at all. Where medicine and the ministry have failed, A.A. often has been successful because the prospect somehow felt a "bond of understanding."

In carrying this message to other alcoholics we must remember that we are carriers of information, not reformers. If the prospect indicates that he has no desire to stop drinking, we should let him alone. We cannot force a person to stop drinking. We shouldn't try.

However, if the prospect convinces us that he has a real desire to get well, we should be prepared to go to any lengths to help him. Sometimes the indirect approach is better. Tell the prospect your *own story*. See to it that he has a chance to read the book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*. Take him to a meeting and see that he has an opportunity to talk with other members.

In talking A.A. with the new man, use common sense. If you do, he has a much better chance of getting well. If he is in a hospital, for example, and very jittery—be kind and sympathetic but use discretion about how long you stay. Remember that A.A.s do not moralize or preach. We simply give information about ourselves.

Above all, don't get discouraged. There's an old saying around A.A. that your prospect never gets well *when you want him to*. This saying isn't always true but there's a lot in it. You might remember that 12th Step work always helps *you* regardless of the success or failure of your prospect.

Think of your own experience. Did you get well because of another person? Of course not. You got well because of A.A.; its 12 steps; its Program of Recovery. Your sponsor merely brought the message to you.

The second part of this things is by far the most important part of the program. How many of us practice these principles in all our affairs? You guessed it. Too few of us.

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WHY CAN'T WE JOIN A.A., TOO?

Dear A.A.s:

Dr. Bob and I have a problem. We'd like to share it frankly with you.

In actuality, A.A. has a score of "founders," men and women without whose special contributions A.A. might never have been. But somehow the title, "founder," seems to have attached itself almost solely to Dr. Bob and me—a phenomenon due perhaps to the general lack of information about our early days. This sentiment, though it prompts A.A.s to set us somewhat apart from the whole, is deeply touching to us both. We surely have more reasons for gratitude than anyone in the world. But we are beginning to ask ourselves if this over-emphasis will be good for A.A. in the long run. Is so much sentiment for "the founders" entirely wise?

Perhaps we A.A.s can become a new kind of human society. To a degree hitherto unknown, A.A. may be able to function upon the power of its own fundamental principles rather than upon the prestige or inspiration of a highly personalized leadership. Thus the whole can become of transcending importance over any part; continued unity and success can then mostly depend upon God as we understand him working vitally in thousands of hearts rather than a few.

Deep down, I think we A.A.s have begun to sense this magnificent possibility. The widening conviction that active leadership ought to be transitory and rotating; that each A.A. group with respect to its own affairs needs be accountable only to its own conscience; that our committees and boards are really servants, not officials; that we, as a movement, ought to remain poor, so avoiding the risks of disrupting wealth; that as individual members of A.A. we should remain anonymous before the general public—these are the signs and portents of a unique future. Such concepts certainly leave little room for a prestige-clothed leadership.

"But," some will say, "how shall we make such a vision actually work when most societies have to rely so greatly on management, money, and heavily-publicized leadership exercising powerful personal suasion?" Yet incredibly, we are beginning to see our vision come alive. Even though we persist in looking with misgiving on any large accumulation of money or personal prestige in the name of Alcoholics Anonymous, we do continue to grow despite the absence of those sometimes unstable factors upon which other human endeavors must so often depend.

Why is this possible? Is it because we are a superior people? Well, hardly! Far from being better than average, we are surely much more fallible. Strangely enough, our group strength seems to stem from our individual and

ever potential weakness. We are alcoholics. Even though now recovered, we are never too far removed from the possibility of fresh personal disaster. Each knows he must observe a high degree of honesty, humility, and tolerance, or else drink again. For us of A.A. to drink is to die; to love God and fellow man is to live.

Under such potent conditions the impossible has become possible. When each A.A.'s life literally depends upon his unselfish service to others, when false pride, self-pity, or unhealthy self-seeking is almost certain to be unmercifully chastised by John Barleycorn, he needs but a minimum of man-made rules or inspired leaders to hold him on the right course. Nor for long is he apt to continue anything harmful to A.A. unity. He knows so well that we A.A.s shall have to hang together—or else hang separately! At first living the spiritual life because he must, he presently lives it because he wants to. Such is the truly providential circumstance in which we all find ourselves; that is why we are beginning to see new values in A.A. We perceive in our midst a *spiritual realm* which can be little disturbed by the distractions of wealth or self-serving egocentricity.

Against this background let's have another look at Dr. Bob and me. Seemingly, the larger A.A. grows, the more our particular part in its creation and continuance tends to be emphasized. Our status remains exceptional. Nearly all other early A.A.s have long since slipped over to the

"sidelines" where, if they have retained the confidence of all, they are frequently consulted. By common consent they have become unofficial coaches, reservoirs of longer experience, to be sought out in the pinches. Their Alma Mater is now served by new teams. These too will have their day on the field, then finally retire. This is, we think, as it ought to be.

Dr. Bob and I feel this sound doctrine should apply to us as well. There seems no good reason to make an exception of "the founders." the more we early members continuously occupy the center of the A.A. stage the more we shall set risky precedents for a highly personalized and permanent leadership. To insure well A.A.'s future, is this not the very thing we should carefully avoid? Of course, Dr. Bob and I do not want to ignore any special responsibility remaining still upon us. Quite the contrary; our principal mission today is probably that of helping A.A. form a sound tradition. But how, for example, can we advocate the traditional principle of rotating leadership if we allow the belief to grow that we ought to be permanent exceptions ourselves? Of course, we cannot.

Take, for instance, my own situation. It is known that my health is recently improved; that I'm going to a large regional conference. Instantly come warm but most urgent invitations to speak at gatherings all over North America. Most A.A.s being good salesmen, the pressure on me is truly enormous.

While it's a wonderful feeling to be so much wanted, these bids do leave me in the middle of an acute dilemma—a real heart-breaker. How, in fairness, can I speak at ten anniversary dinners and refuse 90; how can I make special recordings or telephone talks for all these occasions? Or, again, how can I respond to all the mail I receive; how can I advise hundreds of individuals and groups about their special problems? It is a physical impossibility. Even though I could somehow accomplish all these things, and so remain in the center of A.A. affairs indefinitely, would that be best for A.A. in the long run? Surely you will agree it would not.

So the problem of Dr. Bob and me comes down to this: We shall somehow have to decide just what few things we are still specially fitted to do for A.A. and, within the limits of our health, set about them.

For my part, I feel I ought to do much more writing: more A.A. *Grapevine* pieces, more pamphlets and possibly a new book dealing with the vital matter of A.A. unity. This material ought to be widely informative of our developing tradi-

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Texans Travel Far To Get Their A.A.

A.A.s of West Texas are adding to the stock of tall tales which grow up so naturally around the Lone Star state, our correspondent at San Angelo reports.

"In a land where there is plenty of room for everyone to breathe deeply all the time, Texas A.A.s think nothing of driving 100 miles to attend meetings," the correspondent writes. "One rugged individualist of our group drives 165 miles each way to meet and mingle with his fellow alcoholics. Others, fortunate enough to be with city groups, pile into cars for the weekend and carry the message to struggling bands 400 miles from the home base."

"Of course, this is the state where 'take it easy' originated. The loose-limbed amble of the A.A. is a natural for West Texans, whose only commuter's clock is the slow roll of the seasons. With the livestock watered and turned out on the range, a 200-mile trip once a week to attend meetings is regarded as only one step in the 12—a philosophy which suits the ranchers so well that they believe Bill and Dr. Bob are Texans who happened to be born in the East."

Editorial

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Fact is, many entirely overlook the second part of this Step. Recently, a member looked at us queerly when we mentioned part two of the 12th Step. *He had never thought of it.*

To practice A.A. principles in all our affairs requires growth and full-scale adoption of every phase of the program. Those who accomplish it are A.A.'s happiest and most serene members. They are finding peace of mind. They have humility without humbleness. They have true tolerance and gratitude.

It isn't possible to tell you how to practice A.A.'s principles in your life but we know the payoff is tremendous!

Finally, a word about our conception of 12th Step work. Although it is generally associated with active help for the sick alcoholic, it doesn't have to be. We believe 12th Step work is any work, direct or indirect, that helps other alcoholics to recover. The volunteer workers; the group secretaries; the members who perform the service of providing refreshments at meetings; the man who takes time out from his business to mail 100 post cards for the group—all are doing 12th Step work just as surely as if they were visiting drunks in hospitals, jails, sanatoriums or homes.

YALE PLAN ON ALCOHOLISM:

(Editor's Note: The Yale Plan on Alcoholism is the name which has now been adopted to describe the overall activities outlined in this article. This new name, and the story of all the activities for which it stands, have not yet been released to the public press. The A.A. Grapevine was given this pre-release story in response to its request for an article on the National Committee for Education on Alcoholism which is an integral part of the Yale Plan on Alcoholism. This is the third article in a series of reports on some of the various research projects, studies, investigations, and educational programs pertaining to alcoholism now being carried on throughout the country.)

Three years ago this month the National Committee for Education on Alcoholism was officially launched. An instantaneous response greeted the new organization throughout the country. This response was particularly strong from A.A. members. They apparently were deeply interested in this untried venture which was in no way connected with A.A. and yet whose efforts were to be directed toward the same problem, of alcoholism, in a different field of action.

To clarify this statement still further, A.A., as every member knows, concerns itself wholly with alcoholics who want help and with developing its own program of recovery. This could technically be called "a method of treatment." The National Committee for Education on Alcoholism, on the other hand, took up the challenge of a broader field of action—the whole general public of non-alcoholics—and set out, three years ago this month, to develop its own program of education and community action. This could be called "a method of teaching."

In those early days the working relationship between the N.C.E.A. and A.A. was very close, of necessity. Much of the interest in education of the general public came from A.A. members all over the country, and they often wrote the A.A. Central Office, requesting the services, both lectures and literature, of the N.C.E.A. They were frequently not quite clear as to the relationship of the two groups, and perhaps assumed that the N.C.E.A. was an offshoot, or even a part of, A.A.

The Yale sponsorship of the N.C.E.A., with all that that meant in scientific background and material, in direction and support, both moral and financial, was not well understood. Today it is still not well enough understood.

It is partly for this reason, then, that on this, its third birthday, the N.C.E.A. is releasing, through the A.A. *Grapevine*, the story of its strengthened and tightened relationship with the group at Yale University. At the same time it is hoped to clarify its relationship with A.A.: to make closer the friendly cooperation which has always existed, and to make clearer the completely *separate* identities of the two organizations.

The membership of A.A. is made up entirely and exclusively of alcoholics.

The membership of the N.C.E.A., and of its

present 25 local affiliates, is overwhelmingly made up of non-alcoholics.

The two memberships are working toward the same goal: the rehabilitation of alcoholics. But they are approaching this goal from completely different angles: A.A. directly, through working with alcoholics themselves (a "method of treatment"); and the N.C.E.A. indirectly, through working with the non-alcoholic public (a "method of teaching"). This dual effort could be described as a pincer movement on the problem of alcoholism, with promise of all the effectiveness such a method of attack usually has. For this "teaching" is designed to create an environment in which alcoholics can recognize their condition without shame, and seek treatment, or help. And they usually seek that help in A.A. Further, this "teaching" is designed to spur the non-alcoholic public to the promotion of further facilities for that treatment and help—facilities which A.A. itself has always sought, too often in vain, to assist its groups in their efforts.

I

The Yale Plan came into being piece by piece, starting many, many years ago without any name at all, as one small bit among a multitude of research projects in physiology, under one of Yale University's greatest scientists, Yandell Henderson. It continued as one of many projects going on under the direction of his successor as director of Yale's Laboratory of Applied Physiology, Dr. Howard W. Haggard. The early alcohol research under Henderson, and at first under Haggard, was confined to physiology: the effects of alcohol on the body.

Many similar and related experiments and studies have been carried out over the years by scientists everywhere: usually on rats, sometimes as studies of human beings, in hospitals and in dissecting rooms. It was Dr. Haggard who first saw the need for expanding alcohol research into the field of alcoholism, and who began adding to the laboratory staff, researchers in other fields besides physiology. This expansion began in the 1930's. By now it has reached a point where it has given birth to the Yale Plan, of which it, too, is an integral and vital part.

We quote here some extracts from a speech by one of the members of this Yale Plan Research Division. He is also a member of other divisions of the overall plan, and is connected

National Committee Undertakes Job of Educating Public on Subject

with outside activities in this field as well: Dr. Selden Bacon, Assistant Professor of Sociology of Yale University, Chairman of the Commission on Alcoholism of the State of Connecticut, and Secretary-Treasurer of the N.C.E.A.

In his speech before the annual convention of representatives and executive secretaries of local Committees for Education on Alcoholism, held at Yale on August 2nd last, Dr. Bacon described the Yale Plan as follows:

"The Yale Plan on Alcoholism is divided into six major divisions. They occasionally overlap as to function; all of them overlap in relation to personnel. The first division is *Research* and is subdivided into three parts: (a) physiological research (b) social, psychological, legal, and historical research, and (c), (really an adjunct of a and b), bibliographical, technical and translating services. I start here because this is the core, the cornerstone of the whole business . . . Our research is our production line . . . The physiological research is directly under Dr. Haggard . . . The other research is under the general direction of Professor Jellinek, who is quite likely to do research in any field . . . One of the most important of research jobs is a constant checking of *all* research in the field of alcohol studies . . . This . . . means collecting everything of any relevance of a serious nature, abstracting it, and classifying it so that it can be used . . . You will find . . . here . . . all the studies, in any of the major languages, of the last 10 years. You will find most of the studies of the last 75 years . . . I need hardly add that this is a bibliography that cannot be matched or even haltingly approached anywhere in the world . . ."

"The second large division of the Yale Plan is . . . *Publications*. The *Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, the *Lay Supplements*, the *Memoirs*, the book, *Alcohol, Science and Society*, and reprints of many, many articles . . . Under this division too, are all the materials prepared by and for the National Committee for Education on Alcoholism, pamphlets, leaflets, reprints,

etc. Other books available here are Volume I of *Chronic Alcoholism* and *Alcohol Explored . . .*"

"The third large division is the Summer School of Alcohol Studies, whoso Director is Dr. E. M. Jellinek . . . The fourth division is the Yale Plan Clinic . . . This is a diagnostic and treatment clinic for alcoholics . . . It is also a pilot plant, a service center and a research center . . . It is a potential training center for personnel for other clinics everywhere."

"The fifth division is the N.C.E.A., which will be dealt with later, and the sixth division . . . is *Administration and Finance*. This concerns the administration and financing of the entire program . . . and also what may be called liaison with other groups. This division is under the personal direction of Dr. Haggard . . ."

II

When the National Committee for Education on Alcoholism was launched in October, 1944, the overall title for all the work being done at Yale, or by their representatives, had not been coined. The actual relationship, however, has existed from the beginning. It was the specific job of the "division for education and community action" (the N.C.E.A.), to condense, rephrase in popular language, and spread far and wide news of the findings and activities of the other divisions. And to launch, wherever possible, a program of community action designed to further spread these facts, and to promote and establish facilities which could help solve the problem of alcoholism on a national scale.

The first step taken was to find a formula which would condense the basic facts into words and phrases that would be easily understood and easily remembered by everyone who heard them. This resulted in what is called N.C.E.A.'s three concepts:

1. *Alcoholism is a disease, and the alcoholic a sick person.*
2. *The alcoholic can be helped and is worth helping.*

3, *This is a public health problem, and therefore a public responsibility.*

All N.C.E.A. publicity, all N.C.E.A. speeches, all N.C.E.A. literature, carry this slogan. And it has taken hold, as recent figures indicate.

Last year Dr. John Riley of Rutgers University, made a survey of public opinion on alcoholism. He included public knowledge of A.A. in his questions. His findings indicate that:

40% of the adult population know the name, *Alcoholics Anonymous*,

but only

16% of the adult population know the *function of A.A.*

36% of the adult population said that alcoholism is a disease

whereas 4 years ago, only

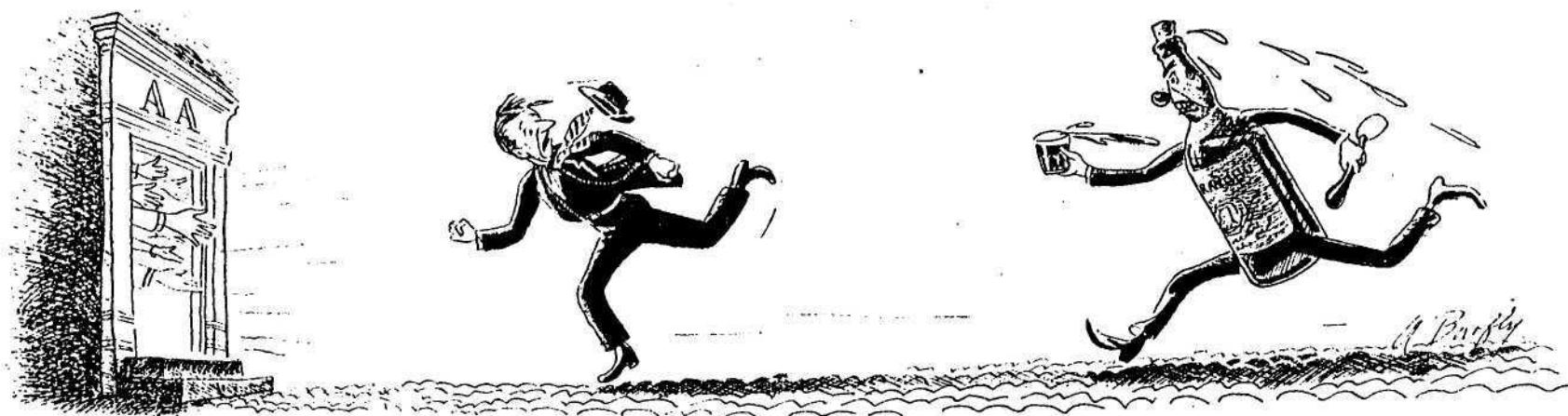
5 to 6% believed that alcoholism was a disease.

According to these figures, then the N.C.E.A. campaign of education of the public has helped to change the opinion of more than 30% of the adult population—or nearly one-third.

N.C.E.A. methods of reaching the public have included the use of all possible means of communication: the press, national publications, radio, movies, lectures and literature. Almost every national magazine has published something on alcoholism in these last three years. The overwhelming majority of these articles have been prepared and written with the active assistance of the N.C.E.A. staff. They furnish background material, advice, active editorial work, and original signed articles. The staff also aided in production of two movies released during the same period: the *March of Time* film "Problem Drinkers," and "Smash-Up."

The N.C.E.A. now has five field representatives on its staff, in addition to its executive director, and a growing number of volunteers on its National Speakers Bureau. The executive director alone has given over 300 talks before audiences totalling 100,000 people. The other speakers between them have at least equalled that, although

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The Pleasures of Reading

The Sleeper Cliff by David Davidson (Random House, \$3)

Lieutenant Andrew Cooper, who fought the war in Brooklyn, half an hour by subway from his own home, finds himself in Munich, a month after the last shot has been fired. He is one of a group of American officers assigned to reconstruct the newspapers of Bavaria and his duties consist of finding German newspapermen, trustworthy enough to edit these papers. He learns about a man named Lorenz, well known for his liberal editorials during the dangerous days of Nazi tyranny, and determines to locate him.

Side by side with this quest is Cooper's search into his own soul for the extent of his courage. He needs desperately to prove to himself that he possesses courage at all, for there were two incidents in his boyhood, when, in the face of danger, he turned tail and ran. In his rather prosaic life since then he has never been called upon to show any special degree of bravery and he enlisted in the hope of finding out, once and for all, if he were all coward, or if under fire, valour would be born.

As he tells himself frankly: "I am afraid. I have always been afraid, afraid of an almost unbelievable number of things; afraid of high places, afraid of fists, afraid of third rails, afraid of dogs and horses, afraid of firearms, afraid of knives and razor blades, afraid of deep water and shattered glass, afraid of automobiles, afraid of fire and the dark, afraid in some form or other of everything in the world."

Adam Lorenz is a man of Cooper's own age and the more he learns about him, the more convinced he becomes that they are enough alike to be two facets of a dual personality; Lorenz the hero and himself the craven. The search becomes an obsession and he carries it on regardless of the disapproval, and against the direct orders of his superior officer.

In the course of running down clues, Cooper meets and falls in love with Brigitte, the missing man's beautiful and lonely young wife.

A strange romance develops. Brigitte recognizes the young American's complete identification with her vanished husband and knows that he is really searching for his other self—the self who will show him what courage is and how it can be proved. Both realize that the consummation of their strong, mutual attachment depends entirely on Lorenz's reappearance, or the final proof of his death.

The book is full of interesting data on post-war Germany and the characters live and breathe. One suffers with Herr Wolfrat, a "good" German of honest convictions, who was forced to knuckle under to the Nazis to save his job and keep his family from want. One gets terrifying glimpses of Nazi punishment and torture, or fortitude that could withstand this for incredibly long periods, only to break at last.

Mr. Davidson's presentation of his story is honest and his manner of writing is fresh and very readable. With the exception of Brigitte, who is perhaps purposely idealized, none of his main characters are all black or all white. He rounds out his plot and makes his point at the end by convincing us that we are all, the best and the worst of us, half-hero, half-coward.—M.N., New York City.

Daily Inventory Shows Up Assets — (Continued from Page 2)

be some good and comforting entries. And I think it's a wise thing to dwell a bit on the pleasant things, too. Activities that are good deserve to be enlarged upon and it's all to the good if we build good works into permanent habits.

I like to look on a personal inventory pretty much as a storekeeper regards his inventory of merchandise. He has certain items that enjoy a good turnover and are profitable for him to handle. He builds up his stock of those items. Other merchandise he handles may be shoddy or otherwise undesirable. These items not only take up a lot of valuable space on his shelves; they occupy space he should allot to profitable merchandise. The undesirable items grow stale

and outmoded—they may even injure his reputation. The wise merchant discards such goods as being unworthy and replaces them with products he is proud to display.

Now, my personal inventory undoubtedly includes such items as selfishness, impatience, laziness, anger and a dozen other very undesirable things. In taking a daily inventory I can see where they cropped up in the day's business. More than that, I can see how they cropped up and if I'm learning anything at all, I'll try my best to avoid the occasions of such mental mishaps.

On the other hand, it's possible that I have tried to do some good during the day—perhaps

exercised a little self-control or restraint when the going was tough. Perhaps I've been a little more tolerant today than I was yesterday. Maybe I've benefited by keeping my big mouth shut when my natural inclination would be to tell somebody off.

All these things belong on the right side of the ledger and as I look at them in my personal inventory, I know I want to keep them on my shelves and to enlarge my stock.

As I say, I generally take my inventory at the end of the day—and follow it up with a little prayer of thanks for the good things that have come to me during the day—and the not-so-good things I've managed to avoid.

It's not in the cards for me to take the 1st Step just once and say, "O. K., I've admitted I can't drink **any** more. That's **that**." I can't do that. I can't skim over any Step and regard it as being finished, for there is no conclusion to A.A. it would be like an attempt to give up eating entirely after one full meal.

In addition to this daily "examination of conscience" or inventory, I find the regular meetings most helpful. As a matter of fact, I believe they're actually *vital* if I am to get the full benefits and flavor of the program. In regular attendance over five years, never once have I come away from a meeting without learning something really worthwhile and helpful.

Personal visits with A.A.s are not only helpful, they're a lot of fun.

During my first year in A.A. another member and I had coffee together practically every day and I found his counsel and example always an inspiration. In the building where I work now there are a number of other members and we meet for a cup of coffee or lunch at least once during the day. These daily contacts are mighty valuable and unquestionably have helped each of us over some rough roads. Even though A.A. itself is not mentioned (which is rare!) the things we discuss are approached from sane viewpoints and with patience. By each others' example we try to see life and its problems through eyes other than our own; and even when we don't see eye to eye, we can disagree without being disagreeable.

Along with the daily inventory, I try to keep always in mind the last phrase of the last Step in The A.A. program: ". . . and practice these principles in all our affairs." I firmly believe that A.A. should be a part of my daily program of living and often like to recall Henry Van Dyke's prayer poem:

"Let me find it in my heart to say
When vagrant wishes beckon me astray—
This is my work, my blessing, not my doom.
Of all by whom this work might be done
I can best do it, in the right way."

—L.J.R.

Group Meetings Benefit by Exchange of Ideas

Here begins a new feature in *The A.A. Grapevine* which will be continued each month if it proves to be helpful in conducting group meeting discussions.

Well established groups in the large centers rarely lack for a variety of discussion topics. The continuous influx of new members with new questions, experiences, case histories and personalities, or with variations of the old, familiar questions, provide a constant stimulation. Some groups, however, due partly to population limitations whose membership stays fairly constant, and new groups just getting started, may find great value and aid in suggested discussion topics.

Experience indicates that it is not so much the size of the group that determines the virility and variety of the discussion meetings, as it is the type of meeting being held. The set program type of meeting for which speakers are selected in advance generates its own topics. Many groups, however, also hold discussion meetings for which there may or may not be a leader and for which no particular program of subjects is laid out in advance. This type of meeting can also furnish lively and invaluable discussion, even without advance preparation provided it includes self-starting members who get the discussion under way and keep it rolling.

The experience of a number of groups has been that a list of topics to draw upon for discussion is helpful in providing both stimulus and direction to the conversation.

The purpose of this group meeting page is to present various topics which different groups have found to be good material for discussion meetings.

Why Can't We Join A.A., Too?

(Continued from Page 3)

tion and of the little understood A.A. General Service Center. Occasionally I would like to appear at the larger regional gatherings for the purpose of discussing these matters with as many A.A.s as possible.

Over the next two or three years it will be desirable to broaden the base of our General Service Center here at New York so that it can include a yearly meeting of out-of-town A.A.s with the trustees of *The Alcoholic Foundation*, the A.A. General Office staff, and *The A.A. Grapevine* editors, this to be called The General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous. To help construct such a conference will be a real task which may eventually require us to visit a number of our large A.A. centers the country over.

DISCUSSION OUTLINE PROVIDED BY TWIN CITIES MIDWAY GROUP

One of the groups which has given considerable thought to the discussion type of meeting is the Twin Cities Midway Group in St. Paul, Minn., which has prepared "A Series of Outlines for Squad Meetings" in that area.

As stated in the foreword of the outline, the group stresses that, "These pages are not intended to be A.A. gospel but only as help for those who say, 'I'd like to take part in meetings but I don't know what to talk about or what to say!'"

The Midway outline is presented only as a sort of skeleton of ideas for "the convenience of each group in adding or substituting its own angles and ideas."

"A good meeting," the foreword states, "is one in which sound theory is illuminated by the practical and personal. These outlines are intended to provide only the skeleton for a helpful meeting; the blood and sinew must come from the individual experience of each member. . . ."

"The measure of a meeting leader's success is the extent to which he gets others to add their personal thoughts, angles and experiences to the rough framework of the assigned topic. At each meeting the subject of the next meeting should be announced and possibly sketched out with a few questions for individual consideration between meetings."

One of the first suggested topics presented in the Midway Outline is: "Admitting the fact that

you are an alcoholic." Following this statement of the topic, 11 sub-points are listed for discussion as follows:

1. We were unwilling to admit that we were alcoholics.
2. Had you been thinking that you were an alcoholic for some time but were not quite ready to give up?
3. Vain attempts to drink like other people.
4. Making a normal drinker out of an alcoholic. Can this be accomplished?
5. Obsession for control.
6. Fully concede to ourselves that we were alcoholics.
7. Being an alcoholic is nothing to be ashamed of.
8. Does admitting we are alcoholics clear up our troubles and problems or must further action be taken?
9. The hopelessness and futility of life as we had been living it.
10. Coming into A.A. we are upon a life-and-death errand.
11. Suggestions for stimulating discussion.

In subsequent issues, four topics—or enough to carry through a month of weekly meetings—will be presented on this page. Suggestions for topics which have been found to be productive of lively and useful discussion are invited from all groups.

How Do You Do It?

THE A.A. GRAPEVINE invites an exchange of ideas and experience on this page relating to the different types of group meetings to be found throughout A.A.

Do you have squad meetings for small, intimate get-togethers? Do you, have a leader or moderator for these, or is discussion purely spontaneous, originating without plan from anyone present?

Do you plan your discussions in advance?

Just how do you do it, and what are the various types of meetings you hold?

Your experience may be very helpful to other groups. Send THE A.A. GRAPEVINE an outline of how you do it in your group. Address the Group Meeting Editor.

For the good of A.A. as a whole these seem the things most needful to be done. If these projects are ever to be finished, I'm sure we can do little else. To succeed we shall need real freedom of decision and few diversions. Hence, we beg your whole-hearted cooperation.

Though these assignments are still before us, Dr. Bob and I are now going to confess a deep yearning. As private citizens of A.A., we shall

often wish to come and go among you like other people, without any special attention. And while we would like always to keep the wonderful satisfaction of having been among the originators, we hope you will begin to think of us as early A.A.s only, not as "founders."

So, can't we join A.A., too?

As Ever,
Bill

Memphis Convention

(Continued from Page 1)

our literature, a generous press, and thousands of new travelers are carrying A.A. to every corner of the world.

"Yet there does remain a problem—a *serious* problem, in whose solution A.A.s will expect us oldsters to occasionally take a hand. That is the problem of *success* itself. Always a heady wine, success may sometimes cause us to forget that each of us lives on borrowed time; we may forget that we are a people who cannot exist at all, but for the Grace of God. The wine of forgetfulness might make us dream that Alcoholics Anonymous was *our* success rather than *God's* will. The very malignancy which once tore us apart personally, could again commence to rend us as groups. False pride might lead us to controversy, to claims of power and prestige, to bickerings over property, money, and personal authority. We would not be human if these illnesses didn't sometimes attack us."

"Therefore, many of us think today the main problem of Alcoholics Anonymous is this: How, as a movement, shall we maintain our humility—and so our unity—in the face of what the world calls a great triumph? Perhaps we need not look far afield for an answer. We need only adapt and apply to our group life those principles upon which each of us has founded his own recovery. If humility can expel the obsessions to drink alcohol, then surely humility can be our antidote for that subtle wine called success."

Bill then went on to explain in detail the 12 Points of Tradition, first printed in an article in the April, 1946, issue of *The A.A. Grapevine*:

"Two years ago my old friends urged that I try to sum up our experience of living and working together; that I try to state those definite principles of group conduct which had then quite clearly emerged from a decade of strenuous trial and error. In the spirit of our original 12 Steps, and strictly within the ample proofs of our experience, I made the following tentative attempt: 12 Points to Assure Our Future, An Alcoholics Anonymous Tradition of Relations. (Recently revised in the light of later experience):

"Our A.A. experience has taught us that:

"1.—Each member of Alcoholics Anonymous is but a small part of a great whole. A.A. must continue to live or most of us will surely die. Hence our common welfare comes first. But individual welfare follows close afterward.

"2.—For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience.

"3.—Our membership ought to include all who suffer alcoholism. Hence we may refuse none who wish to recover. Nor ought A.A. membership ever depend upon money or conformity.

Any two or three alcoholics gathered together for sobriety may call themselves an A.A. group, provided, of course, that, as a group, they have no other affiliation.

"4.—With respect to its own affairs, each A.A. group should be responsible to no other authority than its own conscience. But when its plans concern the welfare of neighboring groups also, those groups ought to be consulted. And no group, regional committee or individual, should ever take any action that might greatly affect A.A. as a whole without conferring with the Trustees of The Alcoholic Foundation. On such issues our common welfare is paramount.

"5.—Each Alcoholics Anonymous group ought to be a spiritual entity *having but one primary purpose*—that of carrying its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

"6.—Problems of money, property, and authority may easily divert us from our primary spiritual aim. We think, therefore, that any considerable property of genuine use to A.A. should be separately incorporated and managed, thus dividing the material from the spiritual. An A.A. group, as such, should never go into business. Secondary aids to A.A., such as clubs or hospitals which require much property or administration ought to be incorporated and so set apart that, if necessary, they can be freely discarded by the groups. Hence, such facilities ought not to use the A.A. name. Their management should be the sole responsibility of those people who financially support them. For clubs, A.A. managers are usually preferred. But hospitals, as well as other places of recuperation, ought to be well outside A.A.—and medically supervised. While an A.A. group may cooperate with anyone, such cooperation ought never go so far as affiliation or endorsement, actual or implied. An A.A. group can bind itself to no one.

"7.—The A.A. groups themselves ought to be fully supported by the voluntary contributions of their own members. We think that each group should soon achieve this ideal; that any public solicitation of funds using the name of Alcoholics Anonymous is highly dangerous, whether by groups, clubs, hospitals, or other outside agencies; that acceptance of large gifts from any source or of contributions carrying any obligation whatever, is unwise. Then, too, we view with much concern those A.A. treasuries which continue, beyond prudent reserves, to accumulate funds for no stated A.A. purpose. Experience has often warned us that nothing can so surely destroy our spiritual heritage as futile disputes over property, money, and authority.

"8.—Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever non-professional. We define professionalism as the occupation of counseling alcoholics for fees or hire. But we may employ alcoholics where they are going to perform those services for which we might otherwise have to engage

non-alcoholics. Such special services may be well recompensed. But our usual A.A. 12th Step work is never to be paid for.

"9.—Each A.A. group needs the least possible organization. Rotating leadership is the best. The small group may elect its secretary, the large group its rotating committee, and the groups of a large metropolitan area their Central or Intergroup Committee, which often employs a full-time secretary. The Trustees of The Alcoholic Foundation are, in effect, our General Service Committee. They are the custodians of our A.A. tradition and the receivers of voluntary A.A. contributions by which we maintain the A.A. General Service Office at New York. They are authorized by the groups to handle our over-all public relations and they guarantee the integrity of our principal newspaper, *The A.A. Grapevine*. All such representatives are to be guided in the spirit of service, for true leaders in A.A. are but trusted and experienced servants of the whole. They derive no real authority from their titles; they do not govern. Universal respect is the key to their usefulness.

"10.—No A.A. group or member should ever, in such a way as to implicate A.A., express any opinion on outside controversial issues—particularly those of politics, alcohol reform, or sectarian religion. The Alcoholics Anonymous groups oppose no one. Concerning such matters they can express no views whatever.

"11.—Our relations with the general public should be characterized by personal anonymity. We think A.A. ought to avoid sensational advertising. Our names and pictures as A.A. members ought not be broadcast, filmed, or publicly printed. Our public relations should be guided by the principle of attraction rather than promotion. There is never need to praise ourselves. We feel it better to let our friends recommend us.

"12.—And finally, we of Alcoholics Anonymous believe that the principle of anonymity has an immense spiritual significance. It reminds us that we are to place principles before personalities; that we are actually to practice a genuine humility. This to the end that our great blessings may never spoil us; that we shall forever live in thankful contemplation of Him Who presides over us all.

"I hope the day will soon arrive when each A.A. is just as conscious of the A.A. Traditions as he now is of the Recovery Program.

"To sum up: For thousands of alcoholics yet to come, A.A. does have an answer. But there is one condition. We must, at all costs, preserve our essential unity; it must be made unbreakably secure. Without permanent unity there can be little lasting recovery for anyone. Hence our future absolutely depends upon the creation and observance of a sound group tradition. First things will always need to be first: *humility* before *success*, and *unity* before *fame*."

A.A.'s Country-Wide News Circuit

Busy Around Boston—Boston, Mass., isn't known as "The Hub" for nothing—at least if A.A. activities mean anything. Meeting places in the metropolitan area are rapidly expanding. According to the Central Service Committee, the newest offspring are at Waltham, with sessions every Thursday night at the USO hall, and at Medford, where meetings are Tuesday nights at Colonial hall, while another group is getting under way in Wakefield. . . The Salem (Mass.) Group reports that 44 members chartered a bus to attend a Braves game in Boston while on another occasion two chartered busses and many private cars took members and guests to Canobie Lake Park, Salem, N. H., where there was a softball game between old-timers and new members and other entertainment. . . September affairs included a clambake sponsored by the South Shore Groups at the Braintree Rod and Gun Club and an outing sponsored by the Woburn, Mass., Group at Johnson's Grove, Burlington, where there was a catered dinner, with steamed clams and corn available all afternoon for the heavy eaters, a program of sports and entertainment for the members' children. . . An article written by Bill Cunningham, *Boston Herald* columnist, dealing with A.A., brought many inquiries and phone calls to the Boston Central Office at 30 Huntington Avenue with an average of 10 new persons a day coming into the office for the three weeks following publication, for literature and contact with the nearest group. . . A recent affair which sent many A.A.s away on an overnight trip was the establishment of a new group at North Conway, N.H., well-known resort. The opening session was at Mitchell's Ski Ranch, Kearsarge, N. H., with members from various groups in Massachusetts, and New Hampshire lending support. . . The Portsmouth, N. H., Group had a gala picnic recently at Perkins Cove, Ogunquit, Me. . . The Central Service Committee, which sponsors the All-Group meetings every Wednesday night at 30 Huntington Avenue, Boston, has been trying out a program at which old-timers are chairmen and round up their own speakers. Previously individual groups ran these sessions, but the old-timers have been doing a good job. . . The secretary of Central Service has had so many calls from the Boston City Hospital for A.A.s to visit, and for additional help in carrying out work with the Boston Psychopathic Hospital, that an appeal has been made for more volunteers from the Greater Boston groups. . . Two large open meetings, designed to inform the community of A.A. activities and directed at giving help to

those wanting it, were held in Malden and Norwood during September. On Sept. 12 the Malden Group, on its first anniversary, held a big meeting at Rotary Hall in that city while the Norwood Group welcomed many visitors with special speakers at K. of C. Hall on Sept. 26. . . Some of the Greater Boston groups have moved to larger meeting places. The Arlington Group now meets at Spanish War Veterans hall, which is the old town hall, Arlington Center, on Friday nights. Worcester No. 2 Group has changed to CIO Hall, 74 Main Street, third floor, on Thursday nights. . . Another newcomer to the Greater Boston groups during the summer was East Milton, which holds sessions Sunday nights at Ellsworth hall. . . The Manchester, N. H., Group now meets at the Franklin Congregational Church on Tuesday nights, starting at 8 instead of 8:30. . . Record attendances were set at two unusual Wednesday night all-group meetings at 30 Huntington Avenue, one a "Women's Night" with the women taking over the whole affair, and another the "Mr. and Mrs. Alcoholic Night" with married couples as the speakers.

Spreading the Word—The Lampasas, Tex., Group, recently organized, is doing all it can to let people in the locality know about A.A. The nine members recently staged an open meeting at the court house, with Dr. David Wade, prominent Austin psychiatrist, as the main speaker and five other speakers, all alcoholics, from other towns.

Into Another Prison — Firmly convinced "A.A. has come to stay" at Stillwater, Minn., Prison, our reporter there says the first meeting of eight members was held recently under the sponsorship of Warden L. F. Utrecht and the guidance of members of the Midwest Council on Alcoholism, Inc. By the time the third meeting was held there were 17 members and several more applications on file. Meetings are every Saturday afternoon from 1:30 to 3:30 with A.A.s from Minneapolis, St. Paul and Stillwater in charge. The fourth Saturday meeting will be conducted by inmates. "We are not proud of our status as a prison group," the reporter writes, "but we are extremely grateful to the warden and the outside groups who have made and will continue to make these meetings possible. Physically and mentally there is little to distinguish between the alcoholic who occupies a cell and the one in a penthouse. Each is a sick man, each must meet and master the same tragic reality—he can't take that first drink. Of course, the

alcoholic in prison can't get his first drink but that doesn't eliminate his craving, nor his desire to get drunk and shut out the reality he must face each day, nor the fear that is constantly with him—"Can I leave it alone once I get out?" We sincerely believe that A.A. philosophy is the answer to his problem." The group hopes to publish its own paper soon. Its first printed matter is an attractively gotten-up commemoration of the first meeting.

Speakers Exchanged—In the interest of getting varied views and opinions the Austin, Tex., Group has inaugurated an exchange of speakers among neighboring groups. Austin has sent at least two speakers to talk at Waco, Houston, Lampasas and San Marcos. The Waco Group recently sent two members to the Tuesday open session at Austin and the idea is proving so mutually beneficial that other groups are expected to join the "speakers' circuit" soon.

News from Newark—Judging from the variety of activities, past and planned, the publication of the Alanon Association of Newark, N. J., is well named *The News*. Included in the September issue are announcement of a bowling season, report of a Monte Carlo Night, a venture in sound moving pictures, a corn cob and hot dog party, a series of games, a fall dance, a "Monster Ball," rehearsals for the second annual "Show Boat," a contemporary art exhibit and tea as well as a report of the regular monthly inter-group meeting and announcement of the first annual New Jersey Inter-Group banquet to be held at the Terrace Ball Room October 16.

Growth Fast and Good—The San Angelo, Tex., Group believes it has duplicated in less than a year the phenomenal growth of A.A. in the nation. From four "founding fathers" in November, 1946, membership has grown to around 75 with new prospects almost every day and a surprisingly low number of slips. It is a matter of chest-thumping pride that the majority of members "get it" and maintain sobriety after the first contact. Spark plug in the first hard days was Dan W., at whose home the first meetings were held with his wife serving coffee and cake. In March, 1947, the club rented an office and club rooms in a downtown office building. Closed meetings are now held in the club rooms with open meetings in the ballroom of the Cactus Hotel. At the present rate of growth larger club

(Continued on next page)

quarters will be necessary soon. The San Angelo Group has acted as parent to groups in Menard, Brady and Coleman with detachments of old-timers driving regularly to meetings in these towns. In May, 1947, the group sponsored publication of "The Doctor's Letter" by Dr. Andy T. of Seminole, Tex. This letter was given wide circulation and was reprinted in the July 1947 issue of *The A.A. Grapevine*.

We're the Prize!—To help the A.A. program in Washington, D. C., a raffle is held at each Friday night meeting with the two winners each receiving a year's subscription to *The A.A. Grapevine*.

Ship Comes In—First issues of *The Derelict Schooner* have drifted into our office. Appropriately headed with the picture of a listing ship, the Jacksonville (Fla.) Group's publication carries a lively assortment of news, ideas and remarks in four long mimeographed pages.

Meeting Interests Public—The Roanoke, Va., Group was well pleased by the number of interested citizens and A.A.s from Charleston, W. Va., Martinsville, Charlottesville and St. Petersburg, Fla., who attended an open meeting held recently at the Lee Junior High School. The two local papers, *The Times* and *The World-News* and three radio stations, WDBJ, WROV and WSL were also most helpful in publicizing the meeting. In the past several months members have been asked to address the ministers' conference and speakers have been requested for Bible classes. Although the Roanoke Group is fairly new it now has a membership of about 40 with meetings on Mondays and Fridays in the YMCA at 8 P. M.

Prison Group Grows—The first session of the A.A. Group at Montana State Hospital, Warm Springs, Mont., had only three members but there are now 40. The hospital secretary who conducted the first meetings reports he has now turned the programs over to the inmates themselves and that they are as "sincere a bunch of fellows as I've met from Chicago to San Francisco at A.A. meetings."

Commission Named—Governor Robert F. Bradford of Massachusetts has appointed a commission on alcoholism which will serve for four years and report annually. The commission is unpaid, will make a continuous study of methods of treating alcoholism and other practices relative to the problems arising from alcoholism in the Commonwealth, and is empowered to request any information necessary for its work from all departments, boards, offices or other commissions of the Commonwealth. Named to posts were Dr. Sarah M. Jordan, Marblehead; Dr. Robert Fleming, Boston; Dr. J. Morrison Faulkner, Brook-

line, Arthur F. Desmond, Brookline, and George C. Wiswell, Winchester.

Clam Bake on Anniversary—The Corning-Addison Group marked its first anniversary by playing host to New York State groups recently at Seneca Lake. A member's estate on the west side of the lake offered plenty of space for Softball, quoits, swimming, boating and other games. The crowd of about 75 found a large tent with tables and chairs, soft drinks, cold cuts, cheese and cold clams ready for afternoon enjoyment. Dinner was served after an afternoon of games with hot clam broth, chicken, sweet and Irish potatoes, carrots, hot rolls, sliced tomatoes, steamed clams in butter, iced watermelon and plenty of coffee.

Barbecue for Visitors—"The general idea was visitation with neighboring groups who have helped us immeasurably in establishing this completely happy little group of 14 and our wives," the St. Mary's, Ohio, Group reporter says of the barbecue for visiting members held recently at the shelter house at Lake St. Mary's. Two prominent speakers in the state led afternoon and evening meetings with the rest of the time spent in getting better acquainted.

Anniversaries Celebrated—Recently about 150 attended the third anniversary at Camarillo, Cal., State Hospital. Present were members of the hospital staff, patients, ex-patients, former leaders of the group and visitors. After brief talks cake was served and an informal social hour enjoyed . . . About a year ago six men and one woman alcoholic met at the country home, of one near Vincennes, Ind., to form a group after attending meetings in Evansville for a long period. This year a picnic supper and meeting at the same country home found 22 alcoholics and their families present with all of the first seven there. Seven or eight other regular attendants could not be present. Members of this group come from Bicknell, Bruceville, Oatstown, and Washington, Ind., and Lawrenceville, Ill. . . . First anniversary of the Spencer, Ia., Group was celebrated September 14 at Camp Okoboji-Walther League. The program listed dinner, music, speaking, singing by a quartet and the group, dancing and other entertainment and attendance at the famous Clay County Fair.

Entertain at Banquet—Members of The St. Cloud, Minn., Group were hosts to about 250 A.A.s and their wives from other groups in the state at a banquet at the country club just south of town. L. C. was the principal speaker and an A.A. orchestra furnished music and entertainment.

Prisoners Publish Paper—Active since March 1 the group at the Federal Correctional Institution, Sandstone, Minn., has been allowed

to publish *The A.A. Visitor* twice a month. The pamphlet features editorials which have been widely quoted. Begun through the cooperation of the Minneapolis Group and Warden C. W. Humphrey, the group has followed a program fashioned after the set-up at San Quentin. There is a beginners' class on Monday and Wednesday evenings and a meeting on Sunday which is attended by a visiting group from Minneapolis, St. Paul, Superior, or Duluth.

More New Groups — *The Eye Opener* of Los Angeles, Cal., reports a new group at Torrance with meetings on Saturday, and formation of the Glendale Central Group with meetings every night in the week throughout the Glendale area . . . A group to be called Lake of the Ozark Group with the address, P. O. Box 67, Camdenton, Mo., has been announced. A group from Jefferson City helped get things going.

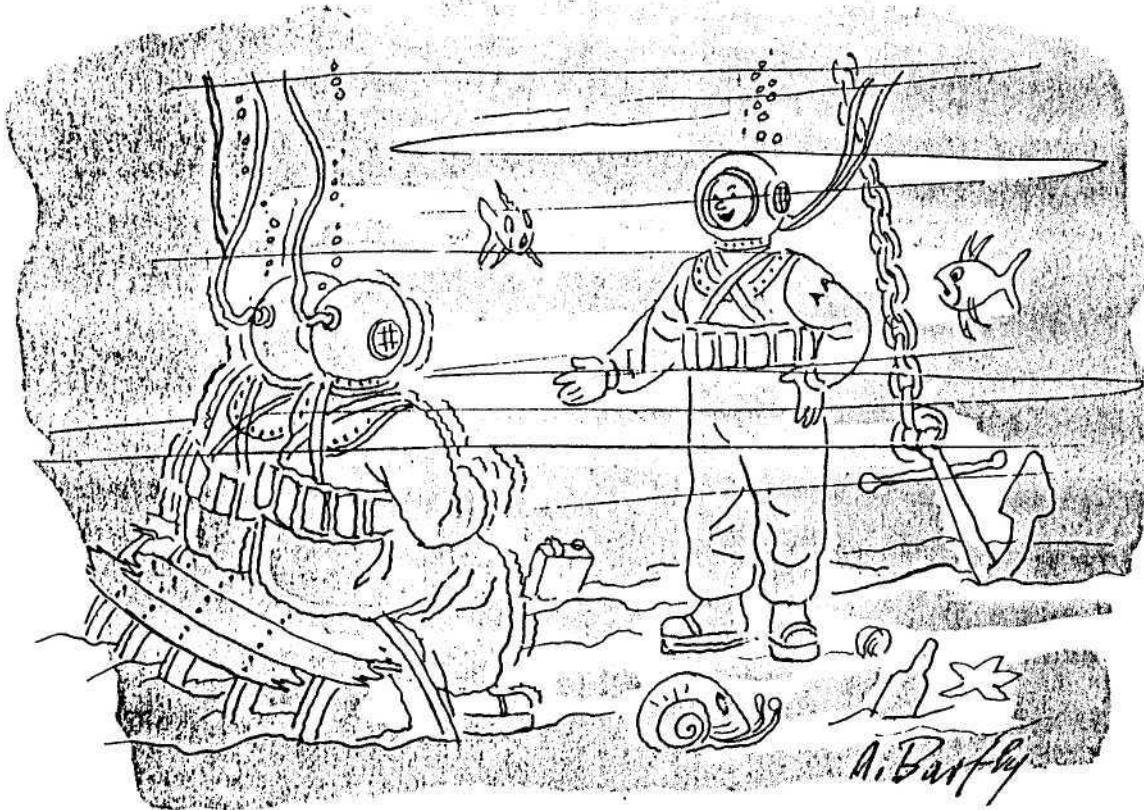
A.A. in Other Papers—the Roswell, N. M. *Morning Dispatch* has recently published under "Sidelights on The News" an article discussing the 12 Steps and telling of the local group . . . Half a column in a recent issue of a Richmond, Cal., paper is devoted to A.A. ideas . . . A Seattle, Wash., paper tells of police plans for a rehabilitation farm for chronic alcoholics with A.A. included among agencies cooperating . . . From Galena, Kans., comes announcement of the opening of the Tri-State Clinic there with Dr. Frank W. James, Galena physician in charge and the Tri-State Group working with him . . . Houston, Tex., papers carried lengthy, favorable advance notices and reports of a talk on A.A. by Dr. Andrew W. Tomb, West Texas physician who told of the organization's work in bringing persons back to useful lives . . . A story of the first annual picnic of the Winona, Minn., Group was carried on the first page of *The Republican* and reported about 50 present.

Report from Stillwater—"We have ten members and are doing fine," happily reports the correspondent at Stillwater, Okla., which has a comparatively young A.A. group.

Ten Los Angeles Groups Stage Round-Robin Picnic

The first annual round-robin picnic given by ten groups centering around the south side of Los Angeles, Cal., was strong on statistics and happiness according to *The A.A. Grapevine's* reporter.

Thirteen picnic committee members agreed that 1,241 adults and children attended, the refreshment group reported 2,319 pop bottles were emptied and 61 gallons of coffee were consumed free, while the entertainment group reported baseball games, tug-of-war, rolling-pin throwing, nail driving, egg tossing races and other contests.



"You can hardly go anywhere nowadays without bumping into an A.A."

VINO VIGNETTES: *Musings from the Backbar*

From Akron, Ohio

My friend Cliff, after seven months of sobriety, miscued, fouled out, sliced into the deep rough, or in plain English, got drunk.

It was sudden. Yesterday he was sober, apparently doing a splendid job without too much difficulty. Today he was looking up at me from a hospital bed—and not looking too well.

"O.K.," I prodded. "What happened? How come?"

"To tell the truth, I don't know," he said, a bit thickly.

And he was telling the truth. He actually didn't know what made him do it. I asked a few more questions.

"I've been trying to walk in the footsteps of Phil J.," Cliff reflected. "Trying mighty hard."

Phil had been a member in A.A. for some six years, and I knew that Cliff admired him enormously. But in that simple sentence he had unwittingly put his finger on his trouble.

He had tried to be like Phil J.

It gave me something for reflection as I lay in bed that night. And I finally came up with an answer. My conversation with Cliff took place nearly five years ago, two years after I

had taken up the A.A. formula for living. And today I find it is still a keystone in my structure of life.

It is simply this:

BE YOURSELF!

When a great figure passes from the public scene—a Lou Gehrig, Enrico Caruso, Abraham Lincoln, John Barrymore, David Belasco—the cry goes up: "Who'll replace him? Who'll be the new Great Man?"

The answer to that is simple. No one! There will be other great ball players, singers, statesmen, etc., but the idol who passed out of the picture will not be replaced. And in a lesser way, no one entirely replaces your first, sweetheart, your favorite teacher, or the good friend of a decade ago.

To use another analogy or two:

Provide 20 housewives with flour, eggs, milk, extracts, sugar, and tell them to bake a cake. They come up with 20 entirely different cakes.

Give 20 composers the same poem and instructions to write a song in the key of G, four-four time, tempo moderate, and you'll get 20 entirely different songs.

In other words, there are no two of us alike.

Sure, we have two arms, two legs, a head and the rest of the physical equipment. *But not two of us think alike or react alike.*

So how can we expect to stay sober on the same precise formula as Phil J., or Joe M., or Harry T., much as we admire each of them?

I count among my good friends in A.A. men who have been sober since the very founding of the organization (I am a member of an Akron Group), and yet if I should try to follow them step by step in sober living, I'd be drunk within a week.

What, then, is the answer?

Simply this: Use the flour, eggs, sugar, milk, etc., provided by A.A. That is, the very fundamentals. And from them mix your own philosophy of life.

Your fundamentals are the 12 Steps and a few assorted odds and ends such as honesty, decency, faith and humility. Then for the details, pick and choose for yourself.

I am frank to admit that I have borrowed, stolen or picked up my own philosophy from half a hundred men and women. I have tried a thousand little odds and ends, and those that have not seemed to fit into my own mental pattern, I have thrown out the window.

For a specific example, I long ago learned that the great majority of so-called "inspirational" writers throw me into a slow burn. I can picture them beating the typewriter with a strict eye on the cash register. So I studiously avoid the literary efforts of the "professional do-gooders."

They remind me vaguely of radio commentators. Along about 8 in the evening I'll hear one say excitedly, "Here's a bulletin just handed me." And as telegraph editor of a newspaper, I read that same bulletin ten hours before.

But don't get me wrong. This is strictly a personal view. Inspirational literature may be exactly the thing that will help you, because what is your meat may be my poison. And, incidentally, I swallowed in inspirational stuff the first six months I was in A.A., until I discovered it was doing me more harm than good.

My sincere advice to the new man is, try everything once. In fact, give it the old college try. If it fits into your personal jig saw puzzle, by all means adopt it. If you find that it is doing no good, or even causing you some misgivings, dump it down the sewer and forget it.

A.A. is so broad in its concepts that there are a hundred general roads to sobriety.

Stick to the 12 Steps and other fundamentals, and form your own philosophy from there.

Above all, don't try to follow strictly in the footsteps of the hypothetical Phil J.

He, my friends, is an entirely different personality and what he digests easily may put you in bed with an acute case of ptomaine poisoning.

—E.W.

THE CLIP SHEET—*Excerpts from the Public Press*

Passaic, N. J., *Herald News*: "A New Jersey congressman who plays an occasional practical joke on his Washington colleagues was feeling gay about a year ago. A capital idea struck him while he was having a few drinks and he proceeded to execute it immediately. Among his acquaintances was a congressman from another state who had become a notorious rummy, the despair of his friends and a nuisance to all whom he met while on his benders. The Jerseyman thought it would be excruciatingly funny to steer the congressman into the arms of Alcoholics Anonymous. He telephoned the rummy: 'This is Alcoholics Anonymous,' he said, disguising his voice. 'We have been watching you, and we think it's about time you joined us.' There was a brief silence on the other end of the wire. Then the rummy spoke. 'I want to thank you for this call,' the rummy said. 'I've been thinking of coming to see you, but I haven't

been able to get up the courage to do so. Maybe you understand how it is. I'm very grateful for your call. I'll come to your next meeting.' The Jersey congressman had heard enough. He hung up, suddenly ashamed of himself for thinking that what he had done would be funny. The other congressman's voice, so plainly sincere, touched him. He kept quiet about his prank. But as time went on, he could not help notice the change which came over his colleague. And eventually he pieced together the rest of the story. The rummy had gone to a meeting of A.A., all right. And he had become a member. From a man who was wrecking his career, he changed overnight to a model of sobriety. It has been a year since the Jerseyman played his prank. His colleague has not touched a drop since."

Hartford, Conn., *The Hartford Courant*: "St. Francis Hospital is to be congratulated for its alertness in organizing a program for combatting alcoholism. It is a realistic recognition of the fact that this is a medical rather than a moral or penological problem. There is nothing in the world so illustrative of futility as the steady stream of men who are locked up for a few days, charged with drunkenness, and later turned out again with the same problems and the same attitudes that brought them into court in the first place. Of course, it would be a mistake to believe that a brief five-day period in a hospital, even under expert medical care, can do more than put the victim back on his feet. No doubt he is strengthened physically by the treatment, and is free from the acute symptoms of his disease. Whatever rehabilitation is to be accomplished must necessarily be done in the follow-up period. At St. Francis this supportive work will be rendered by Alcoholics Anonymous, who have accomplished a great deal of good along these lines."

Saugerties, N. Y., *Telegraph*: "Results of establishing an Alcoholics Anonymous chapter at Wallkill Prison, Ulster County, have been so successful, according to State Commissioner John A. Lyons, that he favors extending A.A. to the rest of the prisons of the state. The Wallkill chapter was started more than two years ago at the suggestion of Dr. Walter M. Wallack, warden, formerly of Albany. With Commissioner Lyons' approval, Dr. Wallack asked the two prison chaplains to discuss with inmates the idea of forming the chapter. In the beginning about a dozen men attended the meetings regularly. Now there are 90, about a fifth of the prison population."

Ain't it the truth?



The "Best Hiding Place" contest goes merrily on as we report a number of ingenious places contributed by our readers. "Never Underestimate the Power of a Woman" could be the title of this report. Oh! Brother, of all the conning . . .

An estimable housewife in Oakland, Calif., reports that she was invariably successful when she put a string around the neck of the bottle and lowered it into the pants leg of her husband's seldom-used trousers! Another lady, now a member of the Montclair Group in New Jersey, hid the bottle in the top of a toy garage in her five-year-old's playroom.

A late report from Brother H.G.H., of Mt. Sterling, Ky., adds honor and glory to the enterprise of the male A.A. Brother H. calls his cache "The Imported Secret Hide-A-Way." Toward the end of his drinking days, H. had his doctor in practically daily attendance. When the doctor arrived, H. would lie quietly in bed to be diagnosed as "another hangover." When the doctor left the room to confer with H's wife, H. would dash out the rear of the house to the doctor's automobile where he had two quarts hidden away under the car seat!

Other odd places: In an unbroken patch of new fallen snow; secured with adhesive tape or Scotch tape to the top of the bureau drawer; among innocent packages in a shipping room, neatly labeled for mailing to a foreign city!

Ron A., of the Victoria, British Columbia Group, has told his wife that the foot-wide flower

pot in his bedroom used to hold a good deal besides the potted palm. Mrs. A. faithfully watered the big plant, and her husband's quart suffered only exterior damage—the water rotted the labels, but never the contents, of the bottles which he hid under the sod. Mr. A. could lift the whole palm out when his thirst

gave him that extra ounce of strength, but Mrs. A. probably never thought of trying. Now that he's been a member of the A.A. Group there for nine months, she can laugh at this, too.

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New Groups (Continued from Page 1)

NEVADA—Fallon, Hawthorne, Donner Trail Group (Verdi).

NEW HAMPSHIRE—North Conway Group (Kearnsarge), Rochester.

NEW JERSEY—Central Group of Newark, East Side Group of Passaic, Penns Grove.

NEW MEXICO—Loving.

NEW YORK—Beacon, Cortlandt, Hispano Group of New York City, Harlem Valley Group (Pawling), Rochester, Southwest Group of Rochester, Wellsville.

NORTH CAROLINA—Kings Mountain, Lincolnton.

OHIO—Barnesville, Pioneers Negro Group of Cleveland, Hamilton, Lima, Portsmouth, Struthers, Wakeman.

OREGON—La Grande, Group No. I in Pendleton.

PENNSYLVANIA—Group No. 2 in Harrisburg, Pocono Pines, Negro Group of Philadelphia.

SOUTH CAROLINA—Andrews, Greenwood, Marion.

SOUTH DAKOTA—Deadwood, Wagner.

TENNESSEE—Cleveland.

TEXAS—Conroe, Oak Cliff Group of Dallas, Mercedes, San Marcos, Seminole.

VIRGINIA—Petersburg.

WEST VIRGINIA—Midtown Group of Charleston.

WISCONSIN—Horicon, Taycheedah.

A.A. ARITHMETIC

From H.G.H., Mt. Sterling, Ky.

10 cents make I dime;
5 dimes make one drink;
10 drinks make I drunk;
I drunk — 10 days.

Ain't it the truth?

Mail Call for All A.A.s at Home or Abroad

Letters to this department are invited on any subject pertinent to A.A. Due to space limitations you are asked to hold your letters to a maximum of 350 words.

Only initials will be published unless the writer authorizes use of his first name as identification for A.A. friends.

The A.A. Grapevine will not divulge the full name of any writer but will forward A.A. communications addressed to the writers of letters published here.—The Editors

Dublin Sends Greetings

From Dublin, Ireland

We have just received our first copies (the August edition) of *The A.A. Grapevine*, and I am writing to say how pleased we are with it. It is really fine and will give us all a lot to think about and talk about.

We are progressing slowly—summer is against indoor meetings, but we hope to make a big push in the darker months. We have about 20 good members, which is hopeful as we haven't yet had our first birthday.

Good luck to you and all your readers from the Dublin Group.—S.M.

Newspaper Aids Organization

From Goshen, Ind.

A unique experiment in the foundation of an A.A. group has been tried in Goshen, Ind., and found successful. The city has a population of approximately 12,000.

Through cooperation of the *Goshen News-Democrat* publisher, a series of six personal experience stories was printed in the newspaper on successive evenings, each accompanied by a box setting forth the purpose of the articles, explaining what A.A. offers and how it could be reached. The stories were local in that they were written by veteran A.A.s, all within a 25-mile radius of Goshen. Regular every-other-day advertising has followed.

Four were present at the first meeting, by which time several letters had been received. Late in August, the group had doubled in size, a half dozen prospects were being interviewed and mail was coming in almost daily.

Original members, who started their contact at Elkhart, Ind., 10 miles away, are pleased to be "on their own," but all Goshenites still attend the Saturday night open meetings in Elkhart. Such an August session, addressed by a mid-western priest who is an A.A., attracted an attendance of 125 persons. The Elkhart Group, now in its third year, has three mid-week gatherings for members and will soon need a fourth.—D.L.B.

Look at the Ledger! from New York City

Recently, while in a sustained, depressed mood, when my alcoholic thinking seemingly made sobriety little worthwhile, and while toying with the idea of a "good bender" (you see I was still honest enough in my thinking not to say I'd like "a drink or two"), I delayed long enough to sit down and compile a list of the following:

Things I have gained from the day I stopped drinking to now.

Things I will undoubtedly or very likely LOSE if I start to drink now.

If you're still honest enough in your thinking to give the true answers to these two items, perhaps you, even as I, will avoid that needless, disastrous slip.—A.A.

12th Step Is Obligation

(Editor's Note: The writer of this letter is the widow of an alcoholic who has given generously of her time to A.A.)

From Detroit, Mich.

It is important that we be faithful to the 12th Step and "carry the message to others." First, there is the Golden Rule, "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you." We know in our time of suffering what it meant to have the word of healing brought to us, and we should crave the wonder of taking it to others. Down through the ages has come the question that stirs our souls: "Am I my brother's keeper?" Had we pondered and answered that question we would have been spared the untold suffering, death and carnage that we are enduring today. We of A.A. know that hatred and resentment make us do terrible things for which we pay a terrible price—and that means hatred of anyone anywhere, for "God has made of one blood all nations of the earth."

A just society can be built only on the foundation of human solidarity. The classification of human beings into categories has produced appalling wreckage. Jesus' scale of values was rooted from principle—God the creator and man the son—so we are of the family of God and our altitudes should be that of brotherly conduct—"Freely thou hast received, freely give." The high trail cannot be traveled alone. Mutual aid is essential if we are to scale the peaks. Comradeship is imperative. Jesus found it so and spent much time in intimacy with the disciples. The fellowship of the twelve as they questioned and listened is the pattern for us. After they had been counselled they were told to "Go ye forth, into all the world; preach the gospel and heal

the sick." The A.A. Program is our gospel; alcoholics are our sick; carrying the message to them is our supreme task.—S.K.

Sincerity Impresses Prisoners

(Editor's Note: The following letter was written by a prisoner, a member of the Riker's Island Group, New York City.)

After my perusal of A.A. literature with the 12 suggested Steps of Recovery and considering my compulsory sobriety, (or perhaps I have found the way to genuine sobriety, who knows!) the desire for sobriety is there as it has been with most of us alcoholics time and time again. However I realize that I must have help from another source in addition to myself, for the flesh is weak and I shall fail.

It is interesting to listen to the A.A.'s humble and open, free and frank confessions, which are both humorous and sad, for it reminds the listener of his or her experience, for if you have up to this time thought that you were just a periodical drunkard you are convinced that you are an alcoholic and that there is no such thing as a periodical. A periodical perhaps suffers more mentally than physically, and he sincerely promises himself and others who are near and dear to him "never again," only to flop, each time a little harder.

After listening to the various experiences of A.A. members I feel like one of them, for they speak my language and they do know the score, making it a double positive that I am an alcoholic screwball with no control of myself after the first drink. It is here that A.A. membership fills a need, by proving to good-time Charlie that he can have fun with his own kind without being "gassed."

The A.A. discussions bring out the subtle schemes an alcoholic uses to get his or her drinks, and they are no more original than the alibis or reasons we give for getting plastered, when we know beforehand that we can't handle it properly. The proof is the many times I and untold others have tried again and again, always ending up behind the eight-ball in one way or other. The only solace and a mighty poor one was that I am not the only one—that there were drunkards from the beginning when man found that there was a kick in "alky."

The informal method of A.A. on the subject of drink gives to the neophyte a conviction that he is among his own kind, people who speak his language and are his friends in his sincere effort to attain sobriety. In addition he is left free to interpret the Supreme Power that per-

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The Yale Plan on Alcoholism Explained

(Continued from Page 5)

they have joined the staff at later intervals. The talks given are of two kinds: those designed to arouse interest in the formation of a local committee, and straight "informational" talks, usually given before professional groups such as social workers, medical societies, etc., or before schools, and certain types of clubs or societies.

There are also a growing number of Institutes on Alcoholism, usually put on through the efforts of N.C.E.A.'s local affiliates, which enlist the services of other members of the Yale Plan in addition to the N.C.E.A. staff. The services, as speakers, of Drs. Haggard, Jellinek and Bacon, as well as members of the Clinic staff, are of course available to affiliates.

A word should be said here about the staff of the National Committee, which now numbers 10 people. Five of them are recovered alcoholics, all of whom recovered through A. A. Five of them are non-alcoholics, and this latter group includes Dr. Bacon, who, as the new Administrative Secretary, has taken on an assistant and a typist, and opened another N.C.E.A. office in the same building that houses most of the Yale Plan in New Haven. This office will handle much of the routine work of the N.C.E.A., dealing with the affairs of local committees *after* affiliation, sending out literature, editing and publishing a projected bulletin, and, most important of all, maintaining a close liaison with the rest of the Divisions of the Yale Plan.

The N.C.E.A. staff members, particularly the recovered alcoholics, realize that the fortunate few—50,000 A.A.s and perhaps a few thousand more who recovered by other means—are as a drop of hope in a bucket of despair and tragedy. They realize too, that that drop can be made to spread its hope faster and further, until the whole bucket of four million excessive drinkers can know hope instead of despair.

The distribution of literature is a large part of its work. There are now 12 pamphlets and reprints, prepared by or for N.C.E.A., which it distributes without charge, except in bulk orders. These cover many phases of the problem of alcoholism, and are also widely distributed by local affiliates. In the last 12 months, N.C.E.A. National Headquarters has sent out 110,000 pieces of this literature.

All of this work, however, is a preliminary to the real core of The N.C.E.A. program: the organizing of local branches to put the Yale Plan into action in their communities. It is hoped one day to have a network of these local committees, comparable to the TB Associations, and doing for alcoholism what they have done and are doing for TB.

At this writing, 25 communities (two of them

state-wide, and one embracing a part of a state) have organized citizens' Committees for Education on Alcoholism, affiliated with N.C.E.A. This means that they have adopted constitutions approved by N.C.E.A., and have agreed to launch N.C.E.A.'s five-point program in their area. This five-point program is as follows:

1. An intensive educational campaign in their area.
2. Securing of hospital facilities for acute cases.
3. Establishment of an Alcoholic Information Center.
4. Establishment of a diagnostic and treatment clinic.
5. Establishment of a rest center for prolonged care, at reasonable cost, or free if necessary.

These 25 communities dot the country, reaching from coast to coast, and from Canada (one is in Vancouver) to our southern borders. Their committees number 100 or more of the leading citizens of the community. They have elected officers, an executive committee, various subcommittees in charge of their various projects, and as soon as financially possible, a full-time paid employee who is their executive secretary. They are autonomous and self-supporting: that is, they conduct their own internal affairs, elect their own officers, and hire their own personnel. And they raise their own funds, using their own choice of methods to do so.

Their chairmen are drawn from varied groups: four of them are judges, three are college presidents, three are doctors, three are clerics (one a Catholic priest, one a Protestant clergyman, one a rabbi), and the rest are businessmen, or, in two cases, women who are civic leaders. None of these chairmen are A.A. members. No elected officers are A.A. members, although every executive committee has one or more members who are also A. A.s. These A.A.s are *not officially representing their A. A. groups*, but are there as individual citizens who have a special interest in and knowledge of alcoholism.

Most local affiliates have active sub-committees on hospitalization. Some of them have made great progress in persuading their local general hospitals to accept acute cases. All of them are working hard at this project.

Fourteen of the local committees have at this date taken their first concrete step: opening an Alcoholic Information Center, under the direction of the executive secretary. Some of these executive secretaries are A.A. members. Some are not: they are trained social workers, welfare or public health workers, or people who have had experience in related fields. One is a retired

police captain. One is a probation officer. One is a woman lawyer, who became interested in the work of her local committee almost by accident. Each of them has some special qualifications which fit them for this work. Each of them attends the Yale School as basic training, and returns each year for the Refresher Course and their own annual convention.

Alcoholic (or Alcoholism) Information Centers are just what their name implies. They are centrally located offices where groups, families, or individuals can go for all extant information, both general and specific, on the subject of alcoholism, and on available treatment facilities for alcoholics. They are *NOT* clinics, and they do *NOT* give either diagnosis or treatment. They tell the inquirer what hospitals will accept acute cases; what doctors will treat, either medically or psychiatrically; what sanitariums give what kind of care and for how much; and—most important of all—how to get in touch with A.A. They work closely with all other agencies, acting as a coordinator of efforts to help a particular case. They of course work most closely with their local A.A. groups, on whom they must depend as the best resource in their community for helping alcoholics.

More generally, Information Centers act as public relations offices for the local committees. They do not sit and wait for the public to ferret them out and discover their functions. They are the center of aggressive educational campaigns: they give out publicity material to the press, prepare radio programs, see that proper literature is in all public libraries (and in school, church and hospital libraries as well), and they distribute a great deal of N.C.E.A. literature to both individuals and groups.

A student writing a thesis can go there for up-to-date material—and many do. Civic, professional, and lay groups can and do go there for speakers on alcoholism, for this is the headquarters for the local committee's Speakers Bureau. They are very busy places, for they work to stimulate further interest among more and more individuals and groups, and then must work to satisfy that newly-aroused interest with sound unbiased information. A.A. groups and members—and their families—often are heavy users of Information Center services, just as Information Centers are heavy users of A.A. services. In short, they complement each other.

In New York City, where there is as yet no local committee to set up and support an Information Center, N.C.E.A. National Headquarters in the N. Y. Academy of Medicine Building serves in this capacity as best it can. It of course also serves as a National Information

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Reference Library: Do You Yearn for Fellowship?

(Editor's Note: The following article is reprinted by permission from the September issue of Guideposts, a non-profit, non-sectarian publication of Guideposts Associates, Inc., Quaker Hill, Pawling, N. Y., subscription \$1 per year. Norman Vincent Peale is editor-in-chief. One section of the September issue was given over to articles and explanations of Alcoholics Anonymous.)

Fellowship

Alcoholics long for fellowship. As humiliations and misbehavior add up, they withdraw from society—from life itself. The cold fog of loneliness closes down. Even then they are pursued by the Four Horsemen: Terror, Bewilderment, Frustration and Despair.

Perhaps you—even though you are not an alcoholic and never will be—are hunted by one or more of the same Four Horsemen. They will make you insecure, unable to enjoy life and finally downright ill. Instead of the disease of alcoholism they may cause ulcers, migraine, insomnia—any one of the hundred afflictions that anxiety and nerves bring.

When an A.A. begins to put new viewpoints into action, he is apt to find it a long tough pull filled with pitfalls. Most A.A.s have the fellowship of others who are striving along the same paths.

Together the A.A.s learn to escape disaster, and shoulder to shoulder commence the common journey, sharing their own experiences, and working together to help someone worse off. When one falls down the others rally to pick him up and encourage him to learn (as they learn themselves) from his slip.

In closed meetings they argue out practical ways to meet special tests or problems that come to each. Rich and poor, educated and illiterate, men and women, of all ages, from all walks of life, they meet and talk openly, in all humility, about how each can build a finer, richer life the A.A. way.

Morale and interest strengthen through this fellowship, the regularity of meetings, and through building up a special list of names and phone numbers that can be called when one feels fearful of some impending blow, rattled over some fool mistake, or just out of sorts and restless.

Pride is put in the checkroom, and half the worry disappears with talk—with sharing. To some people this seems appallingly lacking in self-sufficiency and modest reticence. But if it is more blessed to give, there must be a taker for every giver. To take earnestly and thankfully is a touchstone of humility. All normal men and women must stand graciously on both ends of the line.

Many others could, no doubt, benefit by such a fellowship. Shared burdens are lighter; other



minds throw fresh viewpoint on your problem.

Such groups take courage and prayer to start. One person seeks another in difficulty, through a doctor, a minister, friends or strangers who are distressed. Two find a third. Somehow when the Lord knows you stand ready to help, He sends along your path those who need you—and whom you need.

Yale Plan (Continued from Page 14)

Center—and lately an International one—to all those cities, towns and rural areas where there are as yet not local committees.

It took vision and courage on the part of those scattered individuals, both A.A.s and non-alcoholics, who started local committees in their communities, who dared to fight a wall of indifference hiding an abyss of fear. But their success has been infectious. Each year N.C.E.A.'s local affiliates have doubled in number.

The Yale Plan on Alcoholism is really a co-operative venture. Its staff believes that the vast problem of alcoholism can be solved by the co-operative efforts of all concerned—A.A., the scientists, and the general public.

Would You Believe It?

From Lexington, Ky.

1 month has 30 days;
8 months — 240 days;
1 day has 24 hours;
240 days have 30 x 240 or 7,200 hours
30 members, therefore, would have
216,000 man-hours.

The "24-hour" plan of A. A. Will it work? Darned if I know; I won't say that it WILL but I will say, tho, that it HAS . . . with the Lexington, Kentucky Group.

Although only a little over a year old this group has a total enrollment of probably 75; some have died, others, have moved away and we have lost track of them; some had their curiosity satisfied; some got their wives to stop nagging; some have reached that lowest strata and we never see or hear of them BUT we do have, we KNOW, 30 staunch and true members with an average of at least eight months of sobriety.

These were not "screened"—they were the high and the low; they were the boys who acknowledged they were powerless over alcohol; who came to believe that only a Power greater than themselves could restore them to sanity; who turned their will and their lives over to the care of GOD, as they understood HIM; who made an effort to follow the teachings of the 12 Steps—AND MEANT IT. They were a lot of self-confessed, egotistical drunks. Those boys now have a record of 216,000 man-hours of sobriety BEHIND THEM.

And yet each of them is only 24 hours AHEAD of a drunk BUT they are AHEAD of it and not BEHIND IT. It looks like a photo-finish but I'll take a ticket that it will show in another eight months that each of these will show himself in the "Winner's Circle" and that John Barleycorn will be given the place, or second, position.

IT HAS WORKED.

WILL it? Darned if I know—BUT . . . H.G.H.

Omaha Holds Festival

Two big days of a fall festival were staged by Omaha, Nebr. A.A. Groups Sept. 27 and 28, with programs both Saturday and Sunday.

Registrations were made for hotel or residence reservations, sightseeing tours and church services. There was a dinner and floor show, with no speeches, at the Elks club. Sunday began with a breakfast at the Alano club and the sightseeing tours included a visit to Boys' Town. An A.A. meeting was held Sunday afternoon with speakers from North Platte, Fremont and Grand Island, Nebraska, and Council Bluffs, Ia.

Mail Call

(Continued from Page 13)

flectly operates the universe of which he is a subordinate; hence the ego must accept and be submissive to some Power, something he or she respects, let it be the sun, the moon, the stars or nature as a whole in evolution, whatever you have faith in, but it must be something you respect.

I believe this mental approach erases the "Great-I-am-able-to-take-the-first-drink-and-handle-it" altitude.

One Man's Explanation

From Loving, N. M.

The discourse below was written for A.A. assistance in handling "hard" cases, and for further information to beginners:

Alcoholics Anonymous is a nationwide organization of men who had wrecked or nearly wrecked their lives through liquor, some of whom had already lost their families, friends, jobs, business and health.

1. These men have banded together for their mutual interest in discouraging further drink among them, and the astounding fact remains that while in the company of even one other alcoholic, his craving for drink is diminished, and sometimes lost.

2. Doctors, preachers and law enforcement officers admit that A.A. is the only agency in the world which has accomplished the almost impossible, causing those unfortunates to regain their self-respect, and the respect of their families and friends, by eventually abstaining completely from any alcoholic drink.

3. Do not misunderstand—a man is never cured, he merely attains an arrested state; very

Cut This Out and Mail to:

P. O. Box 328
Grand Central Annex, N. Y. 17, N. Y.

Herewith \$2.50 (\$3 outside the United States) for one year's subscription to *The A.A. Grapevine* (monthly).

For additional subscriptions enclose separate sheet with name and address clearly printed. Make checks payable to *The A.A. Grapevine*.

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Renewal? (please check)

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Note: Subscriptions received prior to October 15 will begin with the November issue.

similar to tubercular cases, which also are never completely cured. It is not unusual for a member to slip due to the craving, or perhaps through a major misfortune, but after he recovers from a week's hard drinking, the teachings he has received from A.A. will be felt and he will return. Do you think he comes back to those men who were his friends in A.A. with a hang dog look on his face? Certainly not. He will try again, and be more successful the next time he tries.

4. In A.A. there is no preaching, no lectures; only friendly discussions. The meetings themselves give a man who is on the verge of "slipping" something to get hold of, something to get his teeth into so to speak. Therefore a man is not likely to go back to that "half-world" of drunken stupor if he attends every meeting he possibly can.

5. It is that mutual understanding among alcoholics which prompts a man to get things off his chest, because he would not think of spilling everything of this nature to anyone else, even his own family, and certainly to no non-drinking friend, as that friend would not understand, no matter how hard he tried.

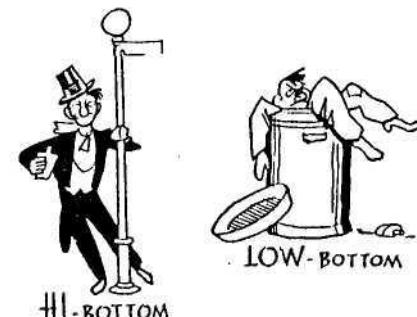
6. A drinker once told me, "I guess it takes a drunk to cure a drunk." Little did he know that he quoted the basic principle of A.A. This is the confidence inspired by association with the finest body of men I have ever known.

7. A non-drinker will ask you, "Why don't you quit?" That question is just as silly as asking a tubercular why he doesn't get well. Alcoholism is strictly a disease, one for which the doctors have found no cure, but A.A. has found a way to cause a man to stop drinking, which is a long step forward.

8. With an alcoholic, the first drink is the dangerous one; after that it is only a question of time for him to consume a pint or more.

9. When a man admits to himself and to another that he can no longer control whisky, that it has got him whipped, that he cannot even take that first drink without going on and on into that half-world, then he is ripe and ready for his first visit to a meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous.—H.B.R.

Bottoms Up!



(Continued from Page 12)

We don't have to tell you how pleased we are with your interest in the contest. Let's have more of the same. Remember to address your letter to the Bottoms Up Editor, *The A.A. Grapevine*, Box 328, Grand Central Annex, New York.

By the way, why not send us some of your other humorous experiences with old demon rum? This is your column and we want to include the funny things that happened to *you*. Send them along to your Bottoms Up Editor.

* * *

A check with your general service office in New York reveals that there are now more than 48,000 members of A.A. in some 1,600 groups! Between 50 and 75 groups are coming into the organization a month!

* * *

A.A.s in New York were happy to meet so many members from other cities last month when the American Legion was in town. The boys in uniform told us that their visit to New York was wonderful. This time they got only one view of the tall buildings; formerly there were three views of everything!

* * *

For some reason or other, an A.A. Group in Mexico City, Mexico, was refused a post office box address which was requested by the general service office. To obtain a box, the group went into one of the city's suburbs. Here, the request was granted. Name of suburb: Non Alco, Mexico! ... The Columbus, Ohio, Group is wondering about the street intersection where it meets. Name of intersection: Gay & High.

A. A. Digest—Excerpts

from Group Publications

The Sahara, Birmingham, Ala.—"Strange as it may seem to an outsider, it is common knowledge in A.A. that one does not have to experience a sudden craving for alcohol in order to fall off the wagon. A strong sense of guilt over some shortcoming or sin will often do the trick just as effectively. A feeling of a need for punishment and guilt are synonymous: one and the same. Mingle with this a fear of the consequences to follow and one has a diabolical poison in his system for which he must seek an antidote in a

hurry. The antidote? Steps 10, 11 and 12 ... if you want additional insurance for your sobriety, the 5th Step will add double indemnity."

The Eye Opener, Los Angeles, Calif.—"After being a member of A.A. for a few months I often find myself wondering, when I hear the word 'dry' used, if there were others who, like myself, were on a 'dry' program. A.A. is not a 'dry' program. There's nothing arid about it; it is life itself—a life that teems with vitality; that is filled with serenity and happiness."