



MID-MISSISSIPPI INTERGROUP

SOBRIETY GAZETTE

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STEP FIVE

“Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.”

ALL OF A.A.'s Twelve Steps ask us to go contrary to our natural desires . . . they all deflate our egos. When it comes to ego deflation, few Steps are harder to take than Five. But scarcely any Step is more necessary to longtime sobriety and peace of mind than this one. A.A. experience has taught us we cannot live alone with our pressing problems and the character defects which cause or aggravate them.

STEP SIX

“Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.”

“THIS is the Step that separates the men from the boys.” So declares a well-loved clergyman who happens to be one of A.A.'s greatest friends. He goes on to explain that any person capable of enough willingness and honesty to try repeatedly Step Six on all his faults—without any reservations whatever—has indeed come a long way spiritually, and is therefore entitled to be called a man who is sincerely trying to grow in the image and likeness of his own Creator.

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The Sobriety Gazette is a publication of Mid-Miss Intergroup. The purpose is to improve communication between local A.A. groups, inform and encourage participation in service opportunities and events that promote sobriety. Opinions expressed do not necessarily indicate endorsement by the Central Office or Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole.

A DECLARATION OF UNITY

This we owe to A.A.'s future; to place our common welfare first; to keep our Fellowship united. For on A.A. unity depend our lives, and the lives of those to come.

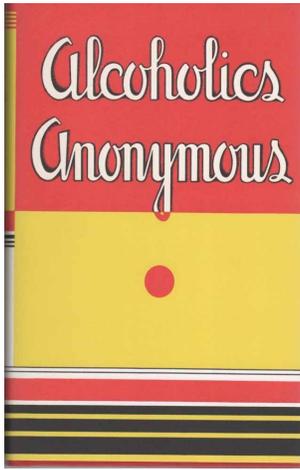
I Am Responsible...

When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. always to be there. And for that: I am responsible

A.A.'s Legacy of Service by Bill W.

Our Twelfth Step—carrying the message—is the basic service that the A.A. Fellowship gives; this is our principal aim and the main reason for our existence. Therefore, A.A. is more than a set of principles; it is a society of alcoholics in action. We must carry the message, else we ourselves can wither and those who haven't been given the truth may die. Hence, an A.A. service is anything whatever that helps us to reach a fellow sufferer—ranging all the way from the Twelfth Step itself to a ten-cent phone call and a cup of coffee, and to A.A.'s General Service Office for national and international action. The sum total of all these services is our Third Legacy of Service. Services include meeting places, hospital cooperation, and intergroup offices; they mean pamphlets, books, and good publicity of almost every description. They call for committees, delegates, trustees, and conferences. And, not to be forgotten, they need voluntary money contributions from within the Fellowship.

BIG BOOK EXCEPTS



Chapter 3 More About Alcoholism (pg 31 & top 32)

Despite all we can say, many who are real alcoholics are not going to believe they are in that class. By every form of self deception and experimentation, they will try to prove themselves exceptions to the rule, therefore nonalcoholic. If anyone who is showing inability to control his drinking can do the right-about face and drink like a gentleman, our hats are off to him. Heaven knows, we have tried hard enough and long enough to drink like other people!

Here are some of the methods we have tried: Drinking beer only, limiting the number of drinks, never drinking alone, never drinking in the morning, drinking only at home, never having it in the house, never drinking during business hours, drinking only at parties, switching from scotch to brandy, drinking only natural wines, agreeing to resign if ever drunk on the job, taking a trip, not taking a trip, swearing off forever (with and without a solemn oath), taking more physical exercise, reading inspirational books, going to health farms and sanitariums, accepting voluntary commitment to asylums—we could increase the list ad infinitum.

We do not like to pronounce any individual as alcoholic, but you can quickly diagnose yourself, Step over to the nearest barroom and try some controlled drinking. Try to drink and stop abruptly. Try it more than once. It will not take long for you to decide, if you are honest with yourself about it. It may be worth a bad case of jitters if you get a full knowledge of your condition.



Daily Reprieve

WHAT WE
REALLY HAVE IS A
DAILY REPRIEVE
CONTINGENT
UPON THE
MAINTENANCE OF
OUR SPIRITUAL
CONDITION.

CARL JUNG

A Swiss psychiatrist and psychotherapist, Carl Gustav Jung (July 26, 1875 – June 6, 1961) presented his view of spirituality as a partial solution for alcoholism to Rowland Hazard. Hazard desperately wanted to get sober but found he could not. Relapsing after a year of treatment under Jung, Hazard returned to Switzerland to inquire from the great physician how a relapse could have happened. Jung declared him hopeless, stating he had never seen an alcoholic of his type recover. Hazard asked if there were any exceptions...

Jung is quoted as saying, "Yes, there is. Exceptions to cases such as yours have been occurring since early times. Here and there, once in a while, alcoholics have had what are called vital spiritual experiences. To me these are phenomena. They appear to be in the nature of huge emotional displacements and rearrangements. Ideas, emotions, and attitudes which were once the guiding forces of the lives of these men are suddenly cast to one side, and a completely new set of conceptions and motives begin to dominate them. In fact, I have been trying to produce some such emotional rearrangement within you. With many individuals the methods which I employed are successful, but I have never been successful with an alcoholic of your description." (Alcoholics Anonymous, page 27)

"But this man still lives and is a free man. He does not need a bodyguard nor is he confined. He can go anywhere on this earth where other free men may go without disaster, provided he remained willing to maintain a certain simple attitude." (Alcoholics Anonymous, page 26)

"I have frequently seen people become neurotic when they content themselves with inadequate or wrong answers to the questions of life. They seek position, marriage, reputation, outward success or money, and remain unhappy and neurotic even when they have attained what they were seeking. Such people are usually confined to too narrow a spiritual horizon. Their life has not sufficient content, sufficient meaning. If they are enabled to develop into more spacious personalities, the neurosis generally disappears."

Dr. Carl G Jung

Memories, Dreams, Interpretations

UNITY DISRUPTED

I will never forget the first time I really understood the meaning of Tradition One and how important our common welfare was to me personally. I was sitting in my home group meeting one morning a little after 7am, not quite awake but aware that I was safe and among friends. These were the people who'd been there for me as I learned how to stay sober and live a life of love and service. Through the sharing of their own experience, I've learned the spiritual principles of the Steps and Traditions.

My home group is a large group that meets six days a week, has a lot of long-term sobriety and a very strong service structure. The monthly home group meetings (what we call business meetings) are often focused on what we can do to better carry the AA message to the newcomer. We celebrate birthdays by giving away AA literature and Grapevine. The minority is respected and encouraged to speak. As a result of this concerted effort to examine ourselves, our group continued to grow and prosper and attract new-comers.

That morning, a fellow (a new face) stood and began to hold forth, to preach really, about the Bible. Suddenly, I was no longer in a meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous but in a revival meeting. I was extremely uncomfortable and fearful. I wanted to say something, to interrupt him, but either I couldn't figure out a way to do it so as not to embarrass him or myself or I didn't have the courage. So I sat there looking at my feet, feeling miserable and hoping that any newcomers in the room would somehow know that this was not the message of AA.

After a few minutes, a member of the group interrupted the man--rather gruffly everyone later agreed and told him that this was an AA meeting and that we really didn't want to hear about the Bible, and he asked him to sit down. The room heaved a silent and collective sigh of relief. Thank goodness someone had thought more of the group, thought more of our common welfare than of his own ego, and had the courage to speak up. There were a few seconds of awkward silence before the chair-person quickly called on someone else and the meeting got back on its normal footing.

Naturally, this incident was a topic of much discussion at the next home group meeting. It provided the basis of a lengthy discussion about Tradition One and how we could deal with disruptive people in the future. We all worried that telling someone that their sharing wasn't appropriate might jeopardize their sobriety. If embarrassed they might go out and drink. Others felt strongly that the welfare of the group as a whole was more important and that we had a responsibility to the newcomer to carry the message of AA. If our group failed in our primary purpose, newcomers would not be attracted to our meetings or worse yet, would not stay.

The result of this discussion was increased unity for the group. Everyone had their say and in the end we agreed that our common welfare as a group must come first. We would do our best to lovingly explain Tradition One to anyone who disrupted the group.

To participate in God's will through the group conscience process was a tremendous spiritual experience to me. I understood that in being a member of AA and of my home group, I was part of something much greater than I was. For this I am truly grateful. The principal of putting AA's welfare above my own self-interests teaches me humility and self-sacrifice. These are principles that do not come naturally to a "me-first" alcoholic. But it's a tremendous way to live.

The Road to a Happy Destiny: Making Amends in Sobriety

It's a full moon out tonight. I'm surprised by the countless spaces between each white line that I see in the middle of the road. It's almost mesmerizing. They illuminate on the stretch before me. I am captivated. All the world is aglow. Time cannot erase the road behind me. I have nothing but the huge open front windshield in front of me. There is only a glimmer of what I left behind in the rear-view mirror and then complete and utter darkness. I want to leave it that way, something that I can peer into every once in awhile just to remind myself where I come from, and then turn my sights on what's right in front of me.

The past is a very hard thing to let go of. Moving past former transgressions and hurts can hold so many alcoholics in limbo, held completely hostage by their own selves. It's hard to remember why the windshield is bigger than the rear view mirror attached to it. Perhaps it's because our Higher Power needs for us to be more focused on what's up ahead rather than what is behind us. The rear view mirror is so small because we need to only take a casual glimpse to ascertain whether anything is coming upon us unexpectedly or not. It's to remind us that it's not so important as to where you have been as it is to where you are going.

I have had to learn that time and time again in recovery and life. The analogy of the mirror and the window was used by a very wise old timer in a meeting where I sat and listened to him share what it was like, what happened, and what it is like now. It impacted me so much that I have carried it through all my days of being drunkless. So how do we make sure that the road behind us doesn't distract us from the view in front of us? It's simple, but not really.

I'd be lying if I told you that it was easy. It is easier in theory than practice. Reality isn't that merciful. We have to clean up the wreckage that we leave behind. If we don't, then we spend our time looking in that rearview mirror waiting for the lights and sirens of our lives to catch up to us. You can be certain they will. I am not about to get pulled over by my past, made to wait on the sideline of my life for what-ever my past deems fit for me as I was trying to haul ass away from it.

So, in recovery I have learned the humble, sometimes very difficult, ego deflating art of amends. It's a chance to make right our wrongs and clear away the wreckage of our past, as the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous states. It is the Big Book of AA that outlined the very way to this new life where I could carry my head high and look the world in the face as I passed. It is step 9 in the 12 step approach to recovery. This is where I shed the layers of guilt and shame associated with my past in one quick swoop. Actually, it wasn't quick. By the time I got around to my amends process in life, I had a lot of past to catch back up with.

Completing them has been a lengthy process. It may take me a lifetime to complete. Some amends I will not be able to complete. I know that I may not be able to complete all of my amends the way that I would like to see them happen. I am blessed to know that today it is not about me. I am able to let God control the outcome and do his work perfectly. As long as I perform his work well I will be placed in a protective bubble from my disease. I didn't get to make amends to my mother the way I had hoped before she passed. It was next to impossible, because I had hit sobriety after her strokes. I did, however, get to spend my final years with her sober and of service to her. I can also become a living amends to her by being the mother to my children that they deserve.

The Road to a Happy Destiny: Continued

I was not always your favorite person. But you probably already know that if you happen to know an alcoholic. With the 12 steps of AA and a really big Higher Power, I have repaired relationships that I thought were ruined. I was able to build new bridges over the ashes from prior bridges I had burnt. Miracles happened only because I became willing to make the amends. With my new found Higher Power and by doing the work, I now know a new freedom that I had never known before. Those are promises that are made to us if we do the work and turn our will over to a power greater than us.

The broken line on the road ahead of me serves to remind me that I am free to pass and switch between lanes as it becomes safe to do so. The spaces between remind me that life is not a perfect line all the time. At times on the road of life I come upon solid straight lines. Oddly enough though, they are on the most winding and twisty parts of the road. I tend to proceed here with greater caution. For me, it is symbolic to how I handle adversity. Often times, it is much better than when I am on the straight and narrow today. On cruise control things get out of control some-times for me, because I take for granted so many things. That's where the line in the road is broken. It's where I need to make the most amends. By paying attention to the road ahead of me through my front window, I am able to navigate sobriety with much less fear and uncertainty. I can sit back and enjoy the ride for what it is.

I've been on the road to sobriety living my new life for some time now. It is a destination I don't believe I will ever arrive at. It's a road trip I will be blessed to continue just so long as I can steer clear of the obstacles in my way. I have tools today to do that. I didn't have those before. So if I break down along the way, I know that the road is still there. I also know that today I have an ever increasing amount of tools to choose from to fix the problem. Making amends to those I have harmed is just one of them. For most of us, our dark past will become our greatest ally. For now, I am trudging my way down the road to my happy destiny. Feel free to join me.

Tami Harper Winn

www.sobergridapp.com

March 31, 2016

ERNIE G. - AA #4 and Dr. Bob's daughter Sue's first husband

The man generally considered AA number 4 was Ernie Galbraith, who first got sober in the summer of 1935, when Bill Wilson was still staying with the Smiths in Akron. Described as a wild, devil-may-care young fellow (page 158 in the Big Book); he had enlisted for a one-year term in the Army when he was only 14 (but could pass for 18).

After getting out of the Army he went to Mexico where he worked for an oil company, then "rode the range" in Texas. He had been married twice and had a son. After returning to Akron he had trouble holding a job because of his drinking. His parents were very religious and belonged to the same church as T. Henry and Clarace Williams of the Oxford Group. It was probably they who told Ernie's parents about how Dr. Bob and Bill Wilson had found a way to quit drinking. They urged Ernie to go to see Dr. Bob and eventually he did. He agreed to be taken to City Hospital where he was tapered off. It took several days, he wrote, "for my head to clear and my nerves to settle." After about six days in the hospital he was visited by Dr. Bob, Bill Wilson and Bill Dotson, who explained their program to him, and he agreed to give it a try. "And it worked," he wrote, "as long as I allowed it to do so." He only "allowed it to do so" for about a year and then "became self-confident and then careless." He went on a seven-month slip. Finally, after seven months of drinking, he went back "unshaven, unkempt, ill-looking, bleary-eyed," and asked for help again. He wrote that he was never lectured about his "seven month failure." Ernie "never really jelled," according to Dr. Bob. Sue remembered that "they didn't quite know what to do with him. He even got to where he wanted to get paid for speaking at meetings." He had periodic relapses, which got worse and worse until the time he died.

Dr. Bob's daughter, Sue, about 17 at the time, said that the first time she saw Ernie he stopped her on the street to ask her how to get to Dr. Smith's house. She pointed out the house, but didn't tell him that she was Sue Smith. Beginning shortly after she finished grade school, Sue had been seeing a boy named Ray Windows. She claims that her parents disapproved of Ray and tried to break them up. Sue believes her father deliberately tried to get her interested in Ernie in order to keep her away from Ray. She didn't like Ernie at first; she thought he was a "smarty." She described him as "stout, with reddish hair and a round face with blue eyes. He was outgoing, the life-of-the-party type. Ernie was single then and he kept coming to the house, and I think my dad got the bright idea that if he could get Ernie to take me out, and he'd pay the way, he might be able to get me away from Ray. We'd go down and get hamburgers, and Dad would buy them. I knew all that, but I didn't realize it was in connection with Ray at the time. Now I think it was. I think Dad was using Ernie, and it backfired on him." When Ray got a job out of town and moved away, "Ernie gradually started to have some appeal," Sue wrote. "He was an older person and he had a good sense of humor. We always had fun. We joked together. He was a real storyteller. He could make my Mom and Dad laugh like nobody I've ever seen, just sitting around the kitchen table, telling stories, and drinking coffee. Like I say, they were pushing me, so I figured they liked him. And that was kind of different." Sue still saw Ray when he would come home for visits, but eventually she broke it off with Ray and married Ernie. Her parents disapproved, perhaps for other reasons as well, but certainly because they knew Ernie was drinking again. He was drunk when he married Sue in September of 1941. Her parents did not attend. Sue said she never told them she was married and believed they had heard about it or read it in the papers. The only witnesses, besides the minister, were Ernie's parents.

Sue had moved out of her parent's home about nine months before, with the admonition from Dr. Bob, "Just remember, young lady, wherever you go, you take yourself with you." Sue said that Ernie continued drinking that time until about 1946, when "the only reason he quit was the doctor thought he had a heart condition, and it scared him to death. I don't think he ever had a heart condition. I don't think he had a heart."

While Sue was somewhat reconciled with her parents, apparently they were never again close. Sue said they didn't visit or send flowers when her children were born. They never said anything to Sue about Ernie, but she believes her father "would talk to other people about him. I heard Dad grew a healthy dislike for him. And Bill -- well, Bill came down one time when Ernie and I were still together, and Bill and I made this tape about A.A. and Dad. But on that tape, Ernie said something to Bill and Bill shot back at him, 'I gave

ERNIE G. - AA #4 and Dr. Bob's daughter Sue's first husband

this tape about A.A. and Dad. But on that tape, Ernie said something to Bill and Bill shot back at him, 'I gave upon you a long time ago, you son of a bitch!' That's right on the tape." Sue and Ernie had two children, a son (Mickey) and a daughter (Bonna). Ernie and Sue divorced about 1965 and he remarried. On June 11, 1969, Bonna shot herself, after first killing her six-year old daughter. She was 23 at the time of her death. Sue claims that Bonna was an alcoholic and was also using "diet pills." Sue wrote, "Ernie never got over it. Bonna died June 11, 1969, and he died two years later to the day, June 11, 1971." Later Sue married her childhood sweetheart, Ray Windows. Ray died August 3, 1989. Sources: "The Children of the Healer, the Story of Dr. Bob's Kids" and "Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimers".

Compiled by Nancy O.

www.silkworth.net

Ernie Galbraith's Story The Seventh Month Slip" in the First Edition of the Big Book

BECOME A FAITHFUL FIVER

“Every AA wants to make sure of his survival from alcoholism, and his well-being afterwards. This is just as it should be. He also wants to do what he can for the survival and well – being of his fellow alcoholics. Therefore he is bound to have a vital interest in the parlance and well-being of AA itself.” Bill W. Language of the Heart, p 166

Faithful fivers are AA members who pledge at least five dollars each month to support their local Central Office. This idea is catching on around the country. The plan came about when we remembered that many of us had spent far more than \$5.00 a month on alcohol during our drinking days. As a Faithful Fiver, you support the efforts of Mid-Mississippi Intergroup to carry the AA message of hope to still-suffering alcoholics. To become a faithful fiver, please send your \$5 monthly donation to the

Mid-Mississippi Intergroup

PO Box 16228
Jackson, MS 39236



CELEBRATING SOBRIETY BIRTHDAYS THIS MONTH



Please email me your sobriety birthdate, so that I can put it in the future editions of the Sobriety Gazette/



PAYPAL FOR MID MISSISSIPPI INTERGROUP

For your convenience we now have the ability to accept PayPal. This is for Individuals, Groups or Faithful Fivers.

Use midmissintergroup@gmail.com to find us

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Web Site

www.midmissintergroup.org

Email us at

midmissintergroup@gmail.com

Office Hours 12:00 pm - 5:30 pm

Tuesday and Friday Curbside only

Need something special call the office for arrangements.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Memorial Day Picnic - May 29,2022 Mayes Lake

State Convention 9475 Hwy 49, Gulfport MS
June 24-26,2022

22nd Annual Unity Convention, Columbus MS.
Email unityconvention@yahoo.com or AA Hot-
line @ (662) 327-8941 May 27-29,2022

Family Day Picnic—Roosevelt State Park, Hwy
135, Morton MS, \$2 to enter park, \$11 swim-
ming & slide 12yrs and up , swimming only 12 yrs
and under \$6 June 4th,

MSCYPAA - August 19-21, 2022

Old Timers Roundup, August 26-28,2022

YOUR TRUSTED SERVANTS

Chair: Steve S.

Treasurer: Karen M

Secretary: Bruce M

Corrections Teresa R

Treatment Centers Sandy S

Office Manager Paxton P

Asst. Office Manager Randy B.

Intergroup Liaison: Kurt J.

IT/Web: Michael R.

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