

Heart to Heart

NOVEMBER 2017

www.aaregina.com

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.

Step 11

"Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God *as we understood Him*, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out."

As the Step reads it states that we seek through "prayer and meditation." When I began getting sober I noticed that many people in the rooms did not pay attention to the "and" and left a specific meditation period out of their program.

The type of meditation that the Big Books talks about is more of a reflective, thinking over things, type of quiet period. This mirrors what most Western religious people in the 1930's knew about meditation and AA's roots in the Protestant Oxford Group. Meditation, as we know it today, was not widely understood, yet, in the United States. But, these early members were onto one of the keys to emotional and spiritual sobriety which Bill W. would focus on later on in his sobriety

There are a number of good suggestions in this section and I suggest that you read and become familiar with this section of the Big Book as you begin your meditation journey. Here are some of the quotes that stand out for me:

"On awakening let us think about the twenty-four hours ahead. We consider our plans for the day. Before we begin, we ask God to direct our thinking, especially asking that it be divorced from self-pity, dishonest or self-seeking motives." Page 86

Yes, morning is considered the best time for meditation before my mind becomes obsessed with the day and my ego begins to run the show.

"Under these conditions we can employ our mental faculties with assurance, for after all God gave us brains to use. Our thought- life will be placed on a much higher plane when our thinking is cleared of wrong motives." page 86

My thinking had become unmanageable and is probably the root cause of many of my troubles. I think many of us are thinkaholics and meditation helps to teach us detachment from our thoughts.

"...we ask God to direct our thinking, especially asking that it be divorced from self-pity, dishonest or self-seeking motives." Page 86

In meditation, I can practice opening myself to my higher power, detaching from my ego, and allowing the divine

therapist some time and space to help heal me in ways that I cannot understand.

"Here we ask God for inspiration, an intuitive thought or a decision. We relax and take it easy. We don't struggle." Page 86

I relax and let go. I am constantly thinking and feeling and doing. How can I access my higher power or the universe if I am never quiet and still.

"We are often surprised how the right answers come after we have tried this for a while. What used to be the hunch or the occasional inspiration gradually becomes a working part of the mind." Page 87

Conscious Contact – at first we experience glimpses of this, but with time, patience and a consistent practice of meditation we can develop a close conscious contact with our higher power. I believe that this is the advance part of this step.

"If circumstances warrant, we ask our wives or friends to join us in morning meditation. If we belong to a religious denomination which requires a definite morning devotion, we attend to that also." Page 87

Group meditations provide a safe haven to discover meditation, to learn different techniques from experienced meditators and to relax into that deep group energy.

"There are many helpful books also. Suggestions about these may be obtained from one's priest, minister, or rabbi. Be quick to see where religious people are right. Make use of what they offer." page 87

I decided to become a Spiritual Explorer on my meditation path to learn about meditation and to begin to understand what my higher power was and how my relationship to that "Creative Intelligence" worked in my life.

"As we go through the day we pause, when agitated or doubtful, and ask for the right thought or action." Page 87

Try doing mini-meditations throughout the day – breath deeply, listen to your breath for several minutes.

"It works – it really does." Page 88

AA Central Office

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Intergroup Contacts

Newsletter

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Treatment Facilities

Treatmentfacilitieschair
@aaregina.com

Well, the first days are the hardest days, don't you worry anymore. When life looks like Fazy Street there is danger at your door.



From the September 1947 magazine.

Editorial:

On the 11th Step. . .

Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understand Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out."

Many A.A.s, including the writer, have found this one of the most difficult of the 12 Steps.

It is easy to believe in a Power greater than ourselves--we have only to think of the inexplicable marvels of the universe--but it is hard to believe that we can interest this Power in our own insignificant needs through the medium of prayer and meditation.

Many of us have heard a newcomer say, "I can believe in His existence all right, but I can't swallow the idea that He will bother with a worm like me, or that He should!"

There's nothing wrong with this attitude; it is the beginning of an arrested alcoholic's true humility, and it leads right into the 11th Step, which may be approached experimentally. It may be approached on the "try it and see" basis.

No one is going to jam prayer and meditation down anyone's throat. It is a job that must be undertaken by the individual from his own desire and his own need. Perhaps he will fumble a little at first. Like every other worthwhile activity in this life, it requires a technique. One's own is the best. One shouldn't be confused by the form of address or even the content of the prayers in church. They are designed to encompass the general congregation. One's

own prayer will be his individual way of consulting God, of stating his simple desire and hope for a better life. And his thanks.

The clue to the whole thing is contained in the very wise phrasing of the Step itself--"*Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God.*" This implies that everyone, to a greater or less degree, has conscious contact with a Higher Power. That is exactly right. It could not be otherwise. All through our lives we have been more or less aware of a part of ourselves which was different from and superior to the obvious phenomena of nature.

Some people call it their better nature; others their will; still others call it that spark of divinity in each one of us which unites us to the whole Divine Principle. Terms are not important so long as we recognize the fact of "our conscious contact with God, as we understand Him." The Step merely suggests that *we improve* that contact.

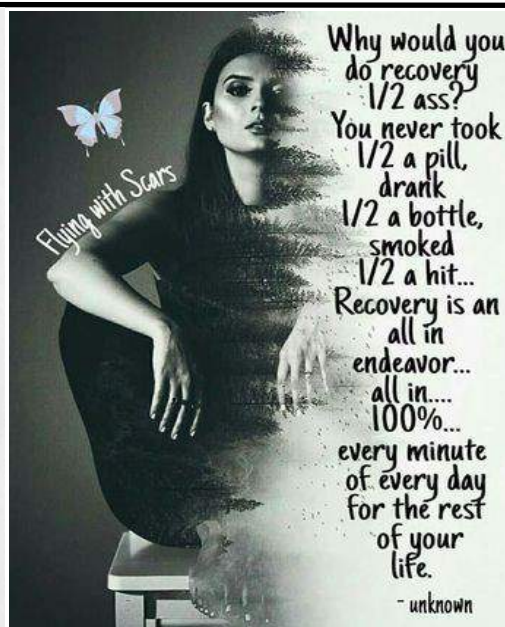
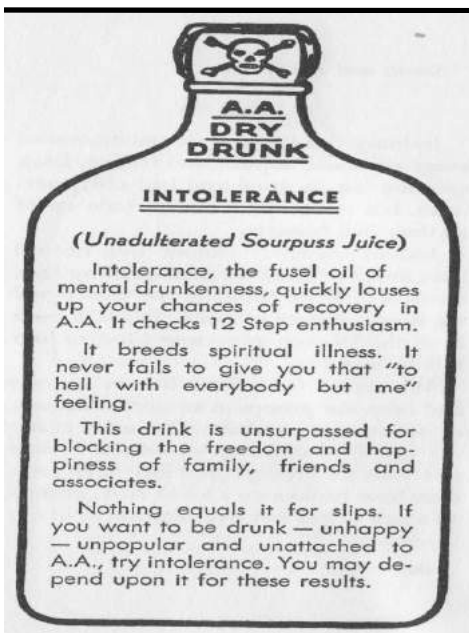
It is helpful to many to think of prayer and meditation as a consultation with the God within us. This makes it easy to reconcile prayer with the exercise of will power, a force which many A.A.s are reluctant to give up. Nor need they give it up. Will power is the motive force which is fueled by prayer and meditation. The Step expresses this idea clearly--"praying only for the knowledge of His will and the *power* to carry that out."

We must not be afraid to ask generously--pray fulsomely--for what we need. We shall be answered generously. It is not the amount of our demands on God that matters, but the love and sincerity and good will behind them.

Try it and see.

-- C.B.

Greenwich Village, New York City



Memories of Alcohol

- I drank for happiness and became unhappy.
- I drank for joy and became miserable.
- I drank for sociability and became argumentative.
- I drank for sophistication and became obnoxious.
- I drank for friendship and made enemies.
- I drank for sleep and woke up tired.
- I drank for strength and felt weak.
- I drank for relaxation and got the shakes.
- I drank for courage and became afraid.
- I drank for confidence and became doubtful.
- I drank to make conversation easier and slurred my speech.
- I drank to feel heavenly and ended up feeling like hell.

PaintedPlum.com

"I first came to the rooms of AA because I felt the heat, not because I saw the light"

From the February 1979 magazine.

Dry But Dishonest

"How truth makes us free is something that we AAs can well understand. It cut the shackles that once bound us to alcohol. It continues to release us from conflicts and miseries. . ." Bill W.

MY NAME is Harry and I am an alcoholic, fifty-five years of age. I did not have the capacity to be honest until the last two and a half years.

I was introduced to the AA program in the early 1950's. My first dry spell lasted six months, and I went back to try some more controlled drinking. You can well imagine what happened. For two more years, I lived a life of hell, of sporadic drinking bouts, each one worse than the last.

At that time in my life, honesty was just a word that meant very little to me. I could not be honest with myself, so naturally I was not honest with anyone else, including God.

At last, I came back to AA asking for help, in July of 1957, and by plain stubbornness, I put in the next seventeen years without a drink.

You will notice that I did not say I put in that many years of AA or sobriety, and I didn't. I just did not drink. Today, in my book, there is a tremendous difference between being dry and having AA and sobriety, especially contented sobriety.

When I look back now at those seventeen years, I realize that most of that period, the last twelve years at least, I was on one big dry drunk. The reason was that I still did not have the guts to be completely honest with myself, with anybody else, or with God.

Oh, I made attempts at the Steps, but only half-heartedly. I could not sit down and write out an honest Step Four, so naturally my Step Five was of the same caliber. I kept telling myself that

certain things need not be written down, much less admitted to in Step Five. Of course, my discontent and unhappiness went on.

I am a married man, and we have a family of five; their lives were going along the same lines as mine at that time. I often wonder now why and how they were able to put up with me all those years. I pray to God every day that they will be able to forgive me in time. In my opinion, a dry drunk continued year after year, as mine was, can cause more hardships and unhappiness, especially to the immediate family, than any drinking bout ever did.

As the years went horribly by, my mental and spiritual life kept, going downhill. I quit going to meetings altogether and let my resentments grow into hatred. I was getting more and more miserable with myself and everyone else. The only time I thought of God was when I wanted something, and I would try bargaining, which you know does not work. I can remember times when I actually stood in the yard and cursed God for everything I could think of. Talk about insanity! I was well on my way.

As you might guess, I ended up drinking again, for almost two years. I hated myself so much that I could hardly look at myself while I shaved. Of course, being honest was completely out. I was sicker in every way than I had ever been in my life. Finally, one morning after a two-day siege of drunkenness and oblivion, God decided to help me (I like to think now) and give me one more chance. I made up my mind to go to a treatment center, and I spent four weeks there.

When I came out of the center, I really felt good and started going back to AA meetings. I would sit and listen, but I wasn't getting much out of them. Things were not going the way I thought they should at home, and I went back to drinking. After that, I would get two weeks in without a drink, sometimes three, but that was it. I kept going to meetings off and on, but nothing seemed to be getting through. Each time I started drinking again, it would be worse, and I was really getting scared of what might happen to me.

One day while all alone, I was reading my Big

Book, the chapter on "How It Works." I came to the line that says, "if they have the capacity to be honest," and something made me stop right there.

Reality struck me square in the face, and I realized then and there, thank God, that I had not been completely honest, and that if I tried again, right from the beginning, maybe my life would be different.

At long last, I got down on my knees with all the humility and honesty that I could find within myself, and I did the first three Steps, with God as I understand Him now.

Since that day, my life has taken on a new meaning. I feel that the word "honesty" is the backbone of AA and my life. I have at last been able to do Steps Four and Five with complete abandon and honesty, and I can't fully describe the relief and freedom that I have felt in the last two and a half years.

Since I honestly turned my will and my life over to the care of God and became willing to accept what He had in store for me, one day at a time, I have found serenity that I had never dreamed of.

I realize now that not being honest was my main problem all those years. I pray to God that there are not too many like me, and I am really sorry for those who are.

I love AA now. It is my whole life, and I feel that I am *in* AA. Before, I was only hanging around. I've heard a lot of people say that it is a tough program. I don't find it that way at all. In fact, I find that the more I work the Steps and try to give AA away, the easier the program is to follow. I try to improve my conscious contact with God every day. I love to do Twelfth Step work, and let it be known that I will go anywhere, anytime to help someone find what I feel I have today.

-- H. C.

Wynyard, Sask.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Harmony Group

Gabriel B. Oct 14. 37years

Rolling Home @ 5:25

Zena B Nov. 16 5 Years

Novalco Group

Darren S. Nov 17, 20 years

One-Way Group

Geoffrey C 5 years 9 Nov 2012

Dwayne H. 31 years 30 November 1986

Curtis S 01 year 15 November 2016

Heartview Group

Kelly Y Nov 15 30 years

Big-Book Study Group

Terry D Nov 3 3 years



MARK YOUR CALENDARS

District and Area 91 Upcoming Events

First Wednesday of the month at 7:30:

Intergroup Meeting, YWCA

Second Wednesday of the month at 7:30:

District Meeting, Mount Olive Lutheran Church.

See aasask.org and aaregina.com for more information



Meeting Changes

Friday Morning – 7:00 am new group – Sobriety First Group meets at Nick's Café – 1005 – 8th Avenue – Closed Meeting.

Tuesday Evening – 8:00 pm Last Chance Group (Open Meeting) meets at Christ Lutheran Church, 4815 Dewdney Avenue. (back door, downstairs). May 1 – October 31st. Nov. 1 – April 30 no meeting.

Sunday at 5:25, Rolling Home on Sunday is a new meeting day at the olde Eureka Club, 1065 Pasqua

New: All Saints Anglican – 142 Massey Road, Sunday 7 – 8 p.m. –

Fellowship Nights

Something's Happening Here

Tuesdays and Fridays 7:00 pm Fellowship, coffee and fun.

PLUS: Catch the Riders with a bunch of sober drunks, gamedays.

Condolences

On behalf of our members, our sincere condolences go out to members who are grieving the loss of a loved one. Our prayers and thoughts are with you.



Intergroup & Office Contributions

The General Service Conference suggests that each group adopts a specific contribution plan according to their financial situation. Once the basic expenses have been taken care of and a "prudent reserve" has been set aside, the group may decide to send money to the service entities as follows:

- 50% Regina Intergroup
- 30% General Service Office
- 10% Area 91
- 10% District Committee

Contributing Groups: July, Aug, Sept

Ramada Sunday at Nine, Harmony Group, Last Chance Group, Hero Group, Home Away from Home Group, Northside Group, Northern Lights, Walsh Acres, Four Aces, Friday Breakfast Group, Vibank Group, Last Chance Group, Tuesday Noon Hour, Fresh Start and Heartview Groups **THANK YOU ALL!**

Regina AA Intergroup Social Committee invites you to the 2nd annual...

Christmas Potluck!

(turkey, stuffing and potatoes supplied by the Social Committee)

Cost: Tradition 7

Where: Eastview Community Centre: 615 6th Ave (we're in the gymnasium this year, so no issues with space!!)

When: doors open 4:30/dinner 5:30-7:30pm - Sunday Dec 3rd 2017

Bring whatever type of food you want to bring (these things always work out). Bring an appetite, and bring someone with you!

Call AA Regina Central office at 306-545-9300 for more info, or email the social committee at scrgina16@gmail.com.

Want to help? Call central office and let us know - leave your contact info.



Opportunities for Service

- 12 Step List Committee
- Regina Round Up Committee
- Social Events Committee
- Treatment Centre Committee
- Corrections Committee

Contact your Intergroup representative or AA Central Office at a.a@saskat.net

Reader Submissions

Wanted!

H2H Editors want to share your experience, strength and hope with others in *your* words and through *your* stories.

What have the Steps, principles, traditions and fellowship meant to **you** on our journey? We're listening.

Free H2H Subscription via email Send request to: h2heditor@aaregina.com

Used Grapevines requested for Correctional Facilities. Please drop off at Central Office