

THE NIGHT CAP

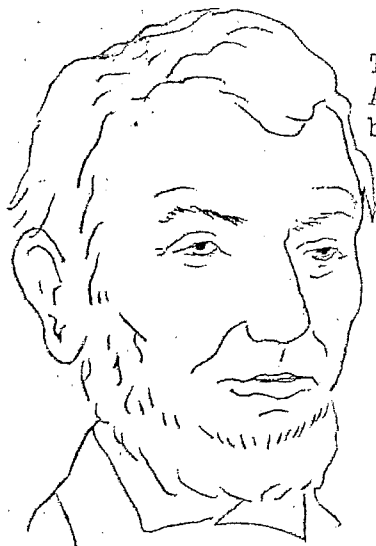
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Number Five



Two famous Americans were born within "stone's throw" of this date. In listing our birthdays (see Page 3), we are also remembering theirs . . . the heritage of all who love this nation.

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AN INTERPRETATION OF THE TWELVE STEPS

Step Two: "Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity."

As stated at the conclusion of our last article, "we are not alone." We may enlist the help of a Power greater than ourselves. Although most A.A.'s call this Power "God," it should be pointed out that Alcoholics Anonymous is not a religious organization. As a matter of fact, it is not an "organization" in the accepted sense of the term. A.A. is a group of men and women from all walks of life drawn together by a common bond of mutual suffering and transmuted by the crucible of the Twelve Steps into a fellowship of brotherhood, of mutual love and understanding, utterly transcending in rapprochement any religion known to man.

Many a heartsick, miserable, drunken man or woman - the writer among them - were at one time repelled by the mistaken assumption that A.A. is some sort of religious sect. Some of us were free and independent thinkers conscientiously unable to confine our thought within the narrow limits of an orthodox creed. The writer has neither the space, nor the inclination to comment on the misty mazes, the palpable obfuscations, of theology. A.A. takes no stand on controversial issues. Your concept of God may be that of
(Cont'd on Page 2)

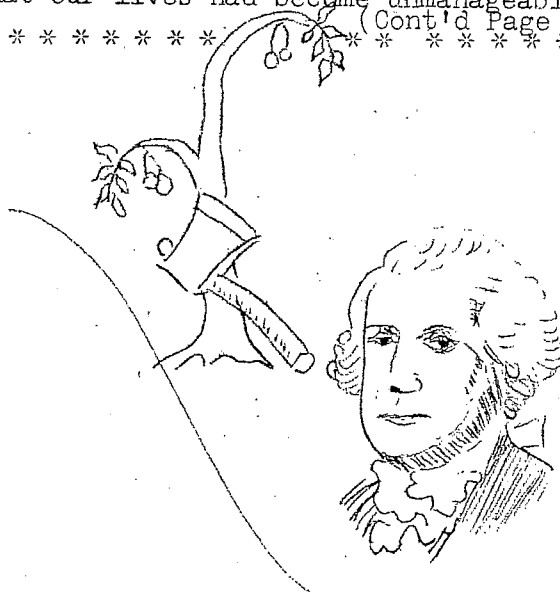
NARCOTICS AND GOOFBALLS

It is our studied conclusion that there is no place in the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous for the narcotic or barbiturate addict. The average alcoholic knows nothing about those additions; therefore can be of little help in giving sympathetic understanding to those victims.

Of the two addictions, we are told that Barbiturates, known to us also by the nicknames of goofballs, yellowjackets, purplejackets, sleeping pills, etc., is the more dangerous or insidious. The U.S. government has several hospitals at strategic locations around the country used exclusively for the treatment of narcotic addicts. These persons are usually compelled to take these treatments, being incarcerated for a determinate or indeterminate length of time.

But, as in the case of the alcoholic, the treatment and cure seem to be two different things. A narcotic addict can be "cured" of his addiction, only to start all over again upon release from the institution.

In some of these hospitals A.A. groups operate, using our Twelve Steps and adding the words "and narcotics" in the first step, making the step read "We admitted we were powerless over alcohol - and narcotics - that our lives had become unmanageable."
(Cont'd Page 2)
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(An Interpretation, continued...)
 a Primitive Baptist, that of a Unitarian, or anywhere between the two extremes. Call this Power "God," call it the "Universal Spirit," call it "Christ," or call it "Conscience." Call it what you will, but have faith that it is a source of unlimited Power, and will - if sought - restore you to sanity. If you want sobriety and all the rewards that go with it, you have but to ask this Power for help and guidance.

You will note the reference to "sanity" in this step. Insanity, however you wish to define it (and there are many definitions) is a legal term. The writer prefers the medical term of "mental illness." Psychiatry has not been able to cure an alcoholic, but psychiatrists are able to diagnose this illness with monotonous regularity. Psychiatrists may disagree as to whether alcoholism is a disease *per se* or a symptom of mental illness, but it is scarcely an issue among them that we alcoholics are, to use a colloquialism, "nuts." If the alcoholic doubts this, let him seriously reflect upon the thousand and one irrational aspects of his behavior. A little honest serious introspection will convince any true alcoholic that he is in dire need of a restoration to sanity.

- Merle "Doc" F.

third accident at about the same time of day in the same block in which three cars were damaged.

He subsequently was dishonorably discharged from the Army for habitual drunkenness. Upon his insistence, the Treasury Department investigated the case thoroughly and it was proved beyond a reasonable doubt that the captain had not been drunk; that the one bottle of beer had reactivated the residue of the sleeping pill (or goofball) and caused him to become overpowered with sleep. The very coincidences of time and place were in his favor.

There is a moral to this story and it is pointed out thus: "Lay off the goofballs. You can join Narcotics Anonymous and arrest your craving for narcotics. But there is no understanding of the goofball user."

(*****)

A Canadian Sage says those who drink before they drive put the quart before the hearse. Then there was the British sportsman who gave up golf at his girl's request - putting his heart before the course.

A friend of mine told me the other day his old man lived to be 90 and never used glasses. But then a lot of people would rather drink from the bottle.

Funny how often a narrow mind and wide mouth go together.....
 Worry is the interest paid on trouble before it falls due.

When we do our best today, we set the stage for doing better tomorrow.

Wisdom is made up of ten parts, nine of which are silence, and the tenth - brevity.

(Narcotics and Goofballs, continued)

These A.A. groups are encouraged by the hospital officials because they have shown a tremendous amount of success. And then there is the other fellowship which operates on the basic lines of A.A. which is named Narcotics Anonymous.

Barbiturates have a tendency to build up a "deposit" in the human system. That is, the system uses only a portion of the pill and a residue is left which may be reactivated by a glass of beer or in other ways and cause the victim to go to sleep at odd times, such as while driving home from work after having had a bottle of beer or a highball.

The victim has every appearance of being drunk and is so accused and convicted in many instances after a traffic mishap. One such case was of a Captain in the U.S. Army who took sleeping pills on the order of his doctor. This captain was in the habit of having a bottle of beer in the afternoon when off duty, before driving his car home. He had an accident one afternoon at 4 o'clock in which another car was damaged. He was permitted to go home, after satisfying the owner of the other car. He had a second accident at about the same time of day in the same block. He was hailed into civil court and fined for drunken driving. Then he had a

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

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- 1 year: Lee R. Jr.
- 2 years: George D., Lavea McC., Witt R., Jerry R.
- 3 years: Emmitte P., Martha S.
- 4 years: Louise D.
- 5 years: Woody A., A.E. "Pop" W.
- 6 years: Earl A., (Mrs) Jay H., W.F. McA.
- 7 years: Arthur C.

AA IN ACTION.....

Jimmie and Pauline G. left San Antonio January 12 for California. They will make their home there.

Jimmie H. moved, with his family, to El Paso where he will spend at least a year. He says maybe they will return to San Antonio, finally. We hope so.

Col. Orlo Q., who underwent major surgery at Brooke General Hospital in December, has put in his appearance around the clubrooms recently. Says they kicked him out of the hospital for recovering.

Jerry C. of the Downtown Group was stricken ill while on his sales route in the Lower Rio Grande Valley January 15 and when this was written hadn't returned home.

A Group of A.A. was organized in Boerne, Texas, January 19. They will meet on Monday evenings. Doc, at F-2523, will tell you where they meet.

Central Office Secretary Doc was confined to his home from Saturday, Jan.17, for a week. Flu was his ailment.

(Directory of AA Activities, continued.)

Group meets Friday. Club 10 meets at 146 Tompkins St. Monday, closed. Friday, open. Family group meets Monday. Alano Group meets at 607 Kinney St. Monday, closed. Friday, open. Family Group meets Monday.

AUSTIN

Austin Group meets at 608 N. Seventh St. Tuesday, open. Thursday, State Hospital. Friday, closed. Sunday, closed. Family Group meets Friday.

HONDO

Seco Club Meets at DeMontel Hall Saturdays at 8 PM. Mail P O Box 338. Phone day: 25; night: 353-J.

KERRVILLE: Meets Thursdays

SEGUIN: Meets Fridays

BOERNE: Meets Mondays

DIRECTORY OF AA ACTIVITIES

Call F-2523 for information of any AA activity in San Antonio and Southwest Texas.

MONDAY

State Hospital, Professional

TUESDAY

City-wide meeting in the West Wing of Municipal Auditorium, 8:15 PM under sponsorship of San Antonio Central Committee of Alcoholics Anonymous. Open to the public. Women's group meets at 6:30 PM at 614 Avenue E.

WEDNESDAY

Club 12, Collins Gardens, Highland Groups.

THURSDAY

Olmos Park, Earl, Industrial and Fulton Center Groups.

FRIDAY

Downtown and Club 12 Groups. Family Groups meet at same time and places.

SATURDAY

Industrial Group, 614 Avenue E. Open to public.

SUNDAY

Industrial, 11 AM.
Downtown, 4:30 PM.

CORPUS CHRISTI

Downtown Group meets at Civic Center - Tuesday, Open. Friday, Closed. Family Group meets Friday. Alano Group meets at 607 Kinney St. Monday, closed. Friday, open.

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BOERNE: Meets Mondays

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HERE ARE THE STEPS WE TOOK, WHICH ARE SUGGESTED AS A PROGRAM OF RECOVERY.....

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol — that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong admitted it.
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.
12. Having had a spiritual experience as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and practice these principles in all our affairs.

- AA -

The sorriest of slaves is he whom John Barleycorn rules.....

A LETTER FROM AN AA WIFE

Dear Reader: When my husband entered AA for the first time there was no doubt in my mind that he was sick and definitely had a disease. He was spiritually ill, too, and a neurotic. There is a relationship between sick souls and sick bodies and an alcoholic is seemingly a hopeless case. They aren't living right or aren't thinking right. To live peacefully with their nerves they should practise their religion. In my husband's drinking days I used to say to him, "What you need is religion and a conscious contact with God and you are drifting away from church and scarcely ever pray. I remember what a busy and prominent Doctor once told me: "When you are a victim of nervous tension, take time out every day to say a prayer and it can be the equivalent of many pills." This man takes his own medicine. A couple of times each day, between his appointments, he sits back in his chair in a relaxed manner and talks to God in his own way. Then he waits a moment until he feels quieted and can go about his work free of tensions. There are many ills that doctors cannot cure and Alcoholism is one of them

- The Arizona Advocate

A MEETING OF REPRESENTATIVES FROM ALL GROUPS COMPRISING THE SOUTHWEST TEXAS A. A. REGIONAL CONFERENCE WILL BE HELD IN THE BALLROOM OF THE HAMILTON HOTEL, LAREDO, TEXAS, SATURDAY AFTERNOON, MARCH 14TH, AT 4:00 P.M.

THE TIME AND PLACE OF THIS MEETING WAS AN ORDER OF BUSINESS AND IS INCORPORATED IN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF REPRESENTATIVES FROM GROUPS COMPRISING THE SOUTHWEST TEXAS A A REGIONAL CONFERENCE HELD AT THE HOTEL ALICE, ALICE, TEXAS, SATURDAY AFTERNOON AT 2:00 PM, AUGUST 2, 1952.

THIS MEETING WILL BE A BUSINESS SESSION FOR THE TRANSACTION OF SUCH BUSINESS THAT MAY PROPERLY COME BEFORE IT.

ALSO A REGULAR A A MEETING WILL BE HELD AT 8:00 PM IN THE BALLROOM OF THE HOTEL WITH A PROGRAM ON THE PROBLEMS OF ALCC-HOLISM.

WILL YOU PLEASE SEE THAT YOUR GROUP SELECTS AT LEAST ONE REPRESENTATIVE WHO WILL ATTEND THIS MEETING.

If you observe a really happy man you will find him building a boat, writing a symphony, educating his son, growing double dahlias in his garden, or looking for dinosaur eggs in the Gobi desert. He will not be searching for happiness as if it were a collar button that has rolled under the radiator. He will not be striving for it as a goal in itself. He will have become aware that he is happy in the course of living life 24 crowded hours of the day.

- W. Beran Wolfe

CUT OUT THE CUSSING

Evidently, in order to secure emphasis, inject humor, or to show that members of Alcoholics Anonymous are "regular," many speakers at both open and closed meetings resort to a liberal use of profanity, or just old-fashioned bar-room "cussin'." Recently, the writer heard an excellent presentation ruined by a display of words that are usually taboo in public speech. Unfortunately, there were several persons present who are quite sympathetic to the "cause," and their reaction to the speaker's vocabulary was far from pleasant. The speaker needed not to debase his word usage, for he has a splendid command of English. Let us remember that the non-alcoholic public is watching our words as well as our actions. It is just as necessary for an AA speaker to observe the conventions in his public utterances as any other speaker. The fact that we are sober does not give us privileges beyond those of other speakers. Vulgarity, profanity and the violation of accepted amenities and conventions certainly cannot add to the effectiveness of the presentation of a spiritual program.

AA * * * * * AA

THE SECRET OF CONTENTMENT

When the world was young, according to an old Hindu religious myth, Brahma gave to man the SECRET OF CONTENTMENT. He had it engraved on a gold tablet and fixed to the trunk of a mighty tree where all men could read, and if they understood, profit thereby.

But in spite of Brahma's thoughtfulness, there was little contentment in the world. There were too many men who sought some special advantage over their brothers; too many cunning men who devised stratagems to mulct the unsuspecting of hard earned sustenance.

At first Brahma ignored the din of bickerings and complaints. Then he became angered by the hypocrisy of the greedy, the selfish, the unscrupulous, the shiftless, the knave, and the thief, when each tried to justify his own reprehensible conduct by some far fetched interpretation of the message on the tablet.

(Continued on Column Two)

Brahma pondered where he could conceal it. If he hid it in the earth, men would dig it out again. Nor could he sink it deep in the ocean because men would dive to its coldest depths to bring it up. But there was one place he could hide it -- one place where most men would fail to look. So he destroyed the tablet of gold and implanted the SECRET OF CONTENTMENT within man himself.

Well he knew the greedy, the selfish, the trickster, and the thief would race from one end of the earth to the other trying to find contentment, but never would they look in their own hearts for it. Only those who deserved to be content would know where to find its secret, and by placing it deep within the hearts of all, he did not deny it to those who were entitled to it.

- The Key

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JOE: What is the secret of success in life?

MOE: I don't know, but I'll bet it's connected with work.

* * * * *

FOOLISH MORTALS

(By Walt Mason)

He used to drink of whiskey, when he was feeling gay and frisky; and when his health was out of plumb, he used to heal himself with rum. In fiery rays of mid July, he tried to cool himself with rye; when winter storms began to toot, he warmed himself with tanglefoot. When children came to cheer his home, from tankards tall he blew the foam; and when friends died, he tried to drown his grief by pouring bugjuice down. Whate'er the crisis or event, it called for Spiritus Frument. And when this pickled guy was dead in that old town he painted red, his poor, sad, weary, heartsick frau must put a mortgage on the cow, to buy a misfit box of pine, in which her old man might recline. And while they laid the stiff away, out in the churchyard cold and gray, the men who kept the grog saloons, with diamonds on them in festoons, were selling booze to other chumps, who took it for the doleful dumps, to keep them cool, to keep them warm, to shield them from the wintry story, for any reason or excuse a foolish mortal can produce.