

EASY DOES IT



FIRST THINGS FIRST

KINGSTON PENITENTIARY

A - A NEWS LETTER

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS.

.....

R.M. Allan, Warden.

September 29th 1951

F.R. Miller, Sponsor.

A.A. has but one purpose...to help the alcoholic if he so wishes, and has an honest desire for a happy, sober life, with a little honest effort on his part.

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THE RETIRING CHAIRMAN -

Having been chairman of the KP A.A. Group for the last two months, I take this opportunity of thanking all for their kind cooperation in helping to make these A.A. meetings a success. During this period we have had the pleasure of hearing A.A. members from "outside" groups tell us how A.A. works for them. This has been very enlightening to us all. We in turn will be able to pass this on to others who have alcoholic problems and it will help us all to lead a life of sobriety and happiness in the near future.

Our first open meeting which was held two weeks ago, was a very happy occasion. Thanks to the efforts of Neil, Ernest, and George, who made this possible. So fellows, if they can do it, we can do it.

Johnny T.

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THE SECRETARY -

The KP A.A. Group came into being with our first meeting held on January 27th 1951 by the efforts of Mr. F.R. Miller, our Sponsor and Classification Officer, and Bill Z., our first secretary (now released). Since its inception it has grown from a membership of ten to twenty-six. Seven have been released and we have been in touch either directly or indirectly with nearly all, and we are pleased to note that most of them are doing well, working and being taken care of by outside groups. We are given post-release advice and know what to expect when we enter the free world. We are sure of a welcome hand by those who are interested in our sobriety, and that is our goal. We here have greatly benefitted by the program because it gives us a much better attitude towards our fellow inmates and gives us strength to build up a better life. We have found our trouble now... it is up to us and the help of a Higher Power...we cannot achieve our ambition alone.

Wasty W.

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A MEMBER -

Briefly expressing my viewpoint in regards to the A.A. Program. At first, about four months ago, I thought A.A. could not be of much benefit to me due to the fact that while serving time here, the problem of keeping sober is automatically removed. However, I became a member and up to the present time have attended seven or eight meetings. The sincerity of the various speakers relating their alcoholic experiences, plus the interest I have taken in trying to follow the program has changed my original attitude.

At present I consider the program of an educational nature. Therefore, while in here I am naturally devoting some of my time towards following the program as outlined. Since doing this, the Twelve Steps all begin to shape up as being a definite purpose to achieving that contented sobriety and better way of living which I believe all alcoholics would like to realize.

In conclusion, I believe the fellowship alone that you can enjoy by being a member of any A.A. group is an asset which you can attain by your own sincerity in following the A.A. program.

Clarence H.

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EDITORIAL -

On numerous occasions I've found myself unconsciously trying to justify my fellow members as we've discussed the various aspects of A.A. Particularly so, due to our present environment...prison, which is naturally considered the end of the road as far as social prestige is concerned. However, keeping in mind all that prison stands for and the men who inhabit these institutions, we speak neither for nor against these places.

Our main interest lies solely in the individual or in the group that gathers at our meetings. We fully realize and understand that there can be no material gain nor extra consideration in any sense by attending these meetings or being affiliated with A.A. We still retain our numbers and toe the line according to institution rules and regulations.

In our truly amateur analysis of our associates, myself included, we try to visualize the past and present lives of the men who at last admit the fact that alcohol has become a major problem for them, and that they are sincerely trying to do something about it. What type of man is he who cannot control his drinking? To us alcoholics he appears as any mother's son who has made repeated mistakes. Yet, finally and most important of all, is sincere in his desire to at least admit his problem, a problem which cannot be beaten by our own efforts, and in the struggle against which, the aid of a Higher Power must be obtained.

The important factor which strikes home with tremendous impact is the fact of the acceptance of a Supreme Being and to acknowledge this belief before a group, in person. It is a small world we live in and we are in constant touch with our neighbour. It takes courage but this is made possible by the sincerity on the part of the individual involved. The fact remains that A.A. is proving a source of encouragement and serenity, which is particularly important in an institution like this.

Hence, how can a person be criticized for at least trying to rehabilitate (mentally) himself. As one listens and looks about him at his fellow members, at the humbleness shown and the ever present willingness to adopt the A.A. tradition, one need not hesitate in following through.

For myself, where everything else has failed, A.A. can and will supply the answer to my many problems.

Wm B.

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- - PLEDGE - -

To share our experiences, strength and hopes
with each other.....to solve our common problems

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THE HIGHER POWER - MY IMPRESSION -

The expression - "spiritual experience" - and - "spiritual awakening" - are used throughout A.A. literature. Upon careful examination they will reveal themselves as a personality change in the alcoholic, which manifest themselves in various forms.

At first, one is given the impression that these changes come about by a sudden religious "about-face". This is not always so, nor is it intended to create the impression that one "sees the light" or becomes a religious Saint. On the contrary, in a good number of cases it may take weeks or even months before the alcoholic will or can accept a Higher Power.

There is a term which causes some to hesitate. "How am I to think of a Higher Power?", "How is it supposed to work?", "What is it?". It would be extremely difficult for a person to describe in detail all these pertinent questions. Our parents taught us to pray to an unseen Power, God. We cannot see this Power. However, we can see the results of a Being which manifests itself every moment of our lives. The heavens above; the flower garden, with its myriad of colours and scents; our very life. We cannot argue these points. As long as this belief can help us to maintain a saner, happier outlook on life, we don't worry too much.

Wm B.

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