



The Triangle

DECEMBER 2016

12TH Step: Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

12TH Tradition: Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

12TH Concept: The Conference shall observe the spirit of AA. tradition, taking care that it never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds and reserve be its prudent financial principle; that it place none of its members in a position of unqualified authority over others; that it reach all important decisions by discussion, vote, and whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; that its actions never be personally punitive nor an incitement to public controversy; that it never perform acts of government, and that, like the Society it serves, it will always remain democratic in thought and action.

Christmas Past, Christmas Present

The Christmas before last was the worst. Four years ago, I gave up 13 years of sobriety to drink and abuse pain medication. For my decision to drink again I was rewarded with a divorce and a business deal that went sour. I had been warned that all the bad things that hadn't happened to me yet would if I went back to drinking but some how I chose to ignore that advice. Who was I to think that the rules of alcoholic drinking did not apply to me?

Thirty years ago when I went to my first AA meeting a few of the old timers said "kid I spilled more booze on my tie than you drank." Many more said, "alcoholism was like an elevator and you could get off before it went to the bottom floor." Of course I decided to listen to the minority and after a year of sobriety and my life getting better I drank for another 10 years. I figured I hadn't lost a wife, a job, or thousands of dollars and most importantly I couldn't drink a fifth a day which seemed to be the minimum for a true alcoholic. Never mind that I wasn't married or employed and I had always been broke. The capacity for alcohol would increase, it is one of the rules of alcoholic drinking.

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~ ANNOUNCEMENTS ~

All are Welcome Group: Our Savior Lutheran, 1640 Genesee St. Utica

- is adding an open discussion meeting Sunday night at 6:30pm – they now meet every night of the week.
- is asking for those with significant time to support the group as it is largely a newcomer meeting.
- would like like to remind the women there is a literature meeting on Sunday afternoons at 1:30p
- would like to announce its December speakers as Randy W. on the 5th and Lorraine E. on the 15th.

Saturday Night Serenity Group: The first Saturday of each month is a speaker meeting. First Assembly of God, 9427 Maynard Drive in Marcy. This month's speaker is Leslie R.

~Just for Fun~



I've joined AA. Can you come back with some coffee?"



"He passed the sobriety test. Now I think he's just showing off."

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Years later, I had been divorced and lost a job and blown lots of money on booze and had all the accidents that go with it. I was depressed and miserable and I realized that the only time I had been happy was as a member of AA. That was the place I learned how to be a decent human being so I came back.

I read the literature and became very active with my home group and my life improved in every way. Then after 12 years of sobriety, I became disenchanted with the discussion meetings that I had been attending, but instead of looking for other meetings, I stopped going. My employment caused me to see many AA members who did not appear to be practicing the 12 Steps in all their affairs. I couldn't believe that they would be worse off drinking. I called other AA members hypocrites, but I who had gained so much from a Program I was now denouncing was the biggest hypocrite of all. I had graduated and it wasn't with a degree of humility.

When I drank again I only had two glasses of wine and I didn't turn into a pumpkin so I thought I must have licked this thing that was more psychological than physical. For a month I would have one or two beers and laugh that I couldn't drink more because I got sleepy. I hate to admit it but I was thinking about being the first guy to comeback and stand up at a meeting to announce that I found a way to drink successfully.

I went from two glasses of wine to three bottles and five or six pain pills. My wife divorced me and so did many of my friends. I was unable to sleep through the night. I would wake from my stupor feeling sick and would drink medicinally to get a couple of hours sleep. All of the things my Higher Power spared me from the first two times now were

beating me into submission because of my self-will.

I was desperate to stop drinking but I couldn't get what had come so easily to me before. I went to meetings and felt they weren't for me and I couldn't stop drinking. I cannot imagine a deeper sense of loneliness and hopelessness than knowing you are an alcoholic and that AA is the only solution for you and yet not connecting with meetings and the program. Suicide was looking like the only way out.

I believe my Higher Power was protecting me because I didn't get a DUI and I didn't physically harm any one but he was also teaching me about the desperation that I had not known before. I needed the education so that this time I would cling to the program like a drowning man would a life preserver.

Pain and progress have led me to love the program and Fellowship that I hated. I celebrated Christmas sober for the first time in four years. I felt love for the first time and began to feel worthy of it. I came to realize that many hurt feelings and anger were the result of my not feeling that I could be loved.

I believe my higher power gave me two chances to join AA with less suffering but I refused the opportunities. The good news is that I made it back and have a new enthusiasm for the program and meetings. This year I look forward to celebrating another sober Christmas and being grateful for the best gift of all, recovery through the program of Alcoholics Anonymous.

—Anonymous, Toledo, Ohio

"Principles to Practice" from Chapters 8 & 9: "To Wives" & "The Family Afterwards"

Page 111, ¶1: "The first principle of success is that you should never be angry."

Page 111, ¶1: "Patience and good temper are most necessary."

Page 115, ¶1: "But you must be on guard not to embarrass or harm..."

Page 115, ¶3: "...it is best not to take sides in any argument..."

Page 115, ¶3: "Use your energies to promote a better understanding all around."

Page 116, ¶0: "...be careful not to be resentful..."

Page 116, ¶3: "Now we try to put spiritual principles to work in every department of our lives."

Page 117, ¶2: "[Faith and sincerity] should be regarded as part of your education, for thus you will be learning to live."

Page 117, ¶3: "Just be careful not to disagree in a resentful or critical spirit."

Page 118, ¶2: "Patience, tolerance, understanding and love are the watchwords. Show him these things in yourself and they will be reflected back to you from him."

Page 118, ¶2: "Live and let live is the rule."

Page 119, ¶0: "When resentful thoughts come, try to pause and count your blessings."

Page 120, ¶3: "If a repetition is to be prevented, place the problem, along with everything else, in God's hands."

Page 122, ¶1: "All members of the family should meet upon the common ground of tolerance, understanding and love."

Page 124, ¶1: "We grow by our willingness to face and rectify errors and convert them into assets."

Page 124, ¶2: "Cling to the thought that, in God's hands, the dark past is the greatest possession you have - the key to life and happiness for others."

part in the new life."

Page 132, ¶1: "We absolutely insist on enjoying life."

Page 132, ¶1: "We try not to indulge in cynicism over the state of the nations, nor do we carry the world's troubles on our shoulders."

Page 132, ¶2: "So we think cheerfulness and laughter make for usefulness."

Page 133, ¶0: "We are sure God wants us to be happy joyous and free."

Page 133, ¶0: "Avoid then, the deliberate manufacture of misery, but if trouble comes, cheerfully capitalize it as an opportunity to demonstrate His omnipotence."

Page 135, ¶1: "Seeing is believing to most families who have lived with a drinker."

(PARAGRAPH "0" SIGNIFIES THE TEXT CARRIED OVER FROM THE PREVIOUS PAGE BEFORE THE START OF FIRST FULL PARAGRAPH)

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