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REALIZATION

Let me walk with the morning in a new sense of goodness. Let me feel the exultant well-being of all a new day can give. May my heart be opened wide to all beauty and wisdom. May I be a chalice, gathering the good from each moment of the day, from each day of the year.

Let me live this day as if it were the only one of its kind. May it hold for me, and for all those whose lives touch mine, a special dream of magnificence—a realization of something perfected in the grandeur of brotherhood and love.

—Grace Sayre

*This is the Day the Lord
hath made
Rejoice in it +
Blessed.*

Editor:
Norman S.

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STEP ONE

"ADMITTED THAT WE WERE POWERLESS OVER DRUGS AND THAT OUR LIVES HAD BECOME UNMANAGEABLE."

Step One is supposedly the beginning of the A. A. Program for one who wishes freedom from drug addiction. Many of us quickly acknowledge the fact that we are powerless over drugs and go on to the other steps. For a lot of us, when released from this hospital, failure is our reward. Why? For one thing, the admission that we are powerless and the fact that we try to work the Twelve Steps here does not necessarily indicate a true, sincere desire to stop using drugs. Therefore, I believe that before the admission of being powerless, we should be certain that it is complete abstinence coupled with a normal happy life that we want most of all. Only this overpowering desire can be the motivation for success in A.A.

Now if we are sure of what we really want, let us look into what powerless stands for. By no means does it mean that if we used heroin can we substitute, say, marijuana. We must realize that although marijuana isn't habit forming in the sense that heroin is, the use of it is motivated by the same reasoning that lead us to heroin. Eventual return is almost certain. Thinking along the lines of complete abstinence from anything that will get us "off the natural," the enormity of Step One can be more easily seen.

At this point many of us ask the question, "What have I then?" Many of us fear facing life's problems when we are in a normal condition. The answer to that question is A.A. We have A.A. to teach us how to live

a life free of drugs, face our problems, and how to be happy while doing it. No false substitution, but rather ourselves elevated to a stage where we can handle life.

A. A. experience has proved that recovery from drug addiction is contingent on:

1. Having a sincere desire to stop using drugs.
2. Admitting and believing in our innermost hearts that we are powerless over drugs.
3. Classifying narcotics as a slow but deadly poison.
4. Considering ourselves as patients in A.A. for treatment.
5. Looking upon drug addiction as an illness of the body, mind and spirit.
6. Making it our business to understand how drugs affect the drug addict.
7. Realize we are true addicts.
8. Learning, practicing and having faith in the Twelve Steps of the A.A. Program.
9. Believing that we can arrest our drug addiction, but that we can never use drugs in any form again.
10. Gaining a layman's knowledge of addiction insofar as it affects our health and mentality.
11. Using this knowledge and understanding of our illness not only to gain abstinence but also guard against the future danger of a return to addiction.
12. Doing this partially by keeping in our minds a mental picture of the unmanageable life drugs demand from us and our powerlessness over it.

---Norman S.

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I have done nothing without the help of God.

---Abraham Lincoln

AN OPEN LETTER

Since the appearance of the article, "The Drug Addicts Who Cure One Another" by Jerome Ellison in the August 7th issue of the Saturday Evening Post, the correspondence at our office has increased. Many wish copies of "The Key."

The mail to date is sufficient to show the predominating patterns of inquiry. Therefore an open letter briefly explaining our Narco Group of Addicts Anonymous should be helpful. It should be stated that the group does not accept gratuities of any kind. If you have sent such, the same will be returned to you. "The Key" is edited by the Narco Group and made available to you through the cooperation and courtesy of the Hospital Administration.

Within the space permitted, it will be necessary to state conclusions somewhat positively without apparently developing the specific premises on which the conclusions are based. Please be open minded in this respect as you read and consider the lines that follow. It may help you to keep in mind that this is one member's opinion, not necessarily that of the Group or of A.A. as a whole.

Our program is patterned after Alcoholics Anonymous. No originality is claimed, or sought. In fact this group was originated by an alcoholic. We lay no claims to curing addiction to any habit forming drugs, nor do we attempt to withdraw drugs from those addicted. This we believe is accomplished only under competent medical supervision.

However, when the necessary withdrawal period has been completed, it is our opinion that the program can

and does, if followed, prevent relapses. Being addicts always in the sense of our high potentiality toward drugs, the possibility of relapse or slips are ever present.

The program of Addicts Anonymous has a policy of considering First things First! The prevention of a relapse becomes the first consideration of our life and for twenty-four hours of the day. This matter is so paramount that we never give it thought for more than ONE DAY at a TIME. On this twenty-four hour basis only, it is possible to work our program successfully.

What is the program of "Addicts Anonymous?" It is the program of Alcoholics Anonymous. The words "Habit forming Drug, or Drugs and Addict" being substituted for "Alcohol and Alcoholics."

This applies to the Twelve Suggested Steps of the Alcoholics Anonymous Group and other printed AA material. Note the application of this in our "Purpose" and "Steps" printed in "The Key."

We are successful in preventing relapses only to the degree in which we increase and develop the program in our daily lives. Regular attendance at meetings of the Group is a MUST. Final emphasis is placed upon the Daily Study and Actual application to ourselves of the Twelve Steps, and reciting our Prayer. The days of application must be consecutive, the steps considered concurrently each twenty-four hour period.

The way of the sincere Addict Anonymous is NOT easy. Our life is not one of good intentions. It is a life of Action with a Purpose; and we have but one purpose: A desire to remain free of all habit forming drugs.

—Dr. Manford S.

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Alcoholics Anonymous

entirely different

SERENITY IS HAPPINESS

Americans take for granted the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Most of us have a basic understanding of what life is and what liberty means. Few of us, however, are in agreement with each other as to the exact meaning of the term "happiness."

In today's world, easy money, easy marriage and easy mayhem are greatly emphasized, even glamorized and idealized to extreme. It is much the same with our outlook on happiness---easy happiness. Little wonder that children grow up thinking of life as one eternal fairy tale in which Prince Charming marries his Lady Fair --- and they live happily ever after.

Too many of us come to expect this type of existence and we are surprised when the fates choose us, of all people, to ignore when the "rights" of happiness are passed around. We worry ourselves into a state of perpetual unhappiness simply because we are not always extremely happy; because we are not always on the crest of some elating experience, some joy, bliss or other state we assume to be synonymous with the term "happiness."

Then it is that we often substitute the false for the real. Instead of genuine social living and down-to-earth sociability, we accept the pseudo-social life of the club, the lounge, the bar or grill as constituting those patterns of social living that make for fraternal happiness. We substitute the cocktail party and other similar relationships for the fellowship of the family circle. We "live it up" and come to call these hazy moments of ego-inflating boisterousness by a name they do not merit; Happiness.

And yet, as we sink deeper into a maze of narcotic pseudo-happiness, we find the feeling that something is amiss; that this is not real happiness. The only thing that will kill this feeling is all-out indulgence---in other words, "narcotic oblivion." We find that such a jolt, a jag, or a bang makes everything rosy. In reality, such actions do not bring happiness; they only serve to relieve us of the awareness that we are not happy.

This search for happiness through drugs has proved a failure for so many men. They were aware of its falseness from the start, but they were overcome by narcotic's powerful addiction. Enough people are becoming aware of the false conceptions about happiness, in general, that we as a nation are beginning to do something about it.

Among our population, as a whole, we find a popular trend we can call the "peace of mind" school. Indeed, volumes have been written on the importance of this subject in obtaining happiness. For those over-active searchers who became addicts in their quest, we have the A. A. movement. A. A. is a well defined and well balanced program, and its key word is not happiness, but the twin brother of happiness, "Sobriety."

A. A.'s work for serenity; they pray for serenity. They have come to know that this is not the natural right of man, but only a gift that a Power greater than themselves can grant. They know that serenity is not a blatant, boisterous series of elations, but a calmness of mind, equanimity of temper, coolness and calmness and composure. Only in such reflective and contemplative moods, the true A.A. comes to know, can man learn to know his God and God's great purpose in this gigantic universe. --From The Eye-O-Pen-Er

MINUTES OF THE MEN'S MEETING
AUGUST 13, 1954

The meeting was opened with the Serenity Prayer recited in unison by the Group. John read the Purpose and Mac read the Twelve Steps. Dr. Manford S., our newly elected Secretary, introduced the following new members; Sal S., John H., Eugene S., William P., John E., and Wesley G. Dr. S. gave the new members a brief resume of the A A Program and urged upon them the necessity for keeping an open mind. He also pointed out that patience has its rewards when trying to grasp the significance of this program.

Dr. McG., who volunteered to give his views on Step Five, began his talk by saying "Step Five is proof of the old saying that admission is good for the soul." He also interestingly brought out that up till this point the A.A. Program was between ourselves and our Higher Power. With Step Five we have the introduction of a third party, the other human being. Dr. McG. gave his ideas on how we should go about choosing a third party with whom we will share our deepest secrets.

Mike G., speaking on steps six, seven, and eight, compared the closeness of Steps Six and Seven. On Step Eight he pointed out that here we must have the willingness to make amends for all of our wrongs. He also stressed the importance of self-honesty and the importance of actually making a list of all the people we had harmed.

Bozo H., for the benefit of the new members, made clear that the reference to God in these steps is elastic according to each individual. "In fact," Bozo said, "Many people substitute the power of the A. A. Program until they develop a better concept of a Higher Power."

Mr. H. also said that he considered the confession of wrongs to another human being one of the most important factors of the A.A. Program.

Nappy R. said that he considered all the efforts of this program worthwhile if we succeed in helping only one member stay free from drug addiction. "However," continued Nappy, "Each and everyone of us can attain this freedom if we couple our desire for it with A A sincerity."

Comments were made by the members and the meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer.

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MINUTES OF THE WOMEN'S MEETING
AUGUST 11, 1954

The meeting was opened with the Serenity Prayer. Thelma read the Purpose and Lee K. read the Twelve Steps. Our Secretary introduced Rev. Hutchins who kindly consented to visit the Group and speak to us.

Rev. Hutchins began by telling us that he had planned on speaking about The Rehabilitation of The Addict but, upon reading the Twelve Steps he decided to speak about Step One and the spiritual side of A. A. The first step, as he sees it, is a step of awareness coupled with decision. He gave as an example the story of a child who went to visit the Capitol with his parents. The child, on approaching the steps of the building, ran ahead of his parents to the top of the flight of stairs. He then turned and seeing his mother and father still at the bottom he began to cry out of fear. The Father spoke to the child and told him it was all right to come down, but the child hesitated and cried some more. Then slowly the child took the first step, then the second, and finally all the steps

running to his father and into his arms laughing. The first step was a large decision for the child to make, but after he had made it the awareness came that it was easy. That applies to the Twelve Steps. The decision to make the first step is hard, but after you make it the awareness comes that the rest might come easier.

After Rev. Hutchin's fine speech there was open discussion and inquiries concerning the spiritual side of A.A. The meeting was closed by Rev. Hutchins leading the Group in the Lord's Prayer.

Elaine S.
Associate Editor

CURRENT AFFAIRS

NEW QUARTERS: Yes, fellows, it's true. Our office has been moved. We are at room W 102. It is light and airy, larger, and roomy enough for our increased staff. Also, the room will accommodate the Steering Committee meetings. The office is for your use, men. Stop by and leave an article for "The Key," or leave a question or suggestion if you have one relative to A.A. A box is kept there for this very purpose.

OUR CO-ORDINATOR: The Executive Secretary of our Group is frequently a person not assigned to the office full time. Such is the present case. Conferences, though short, are constantly necessary with the Security Chief and others of the personnel. This is time consuming, and many times of a trivial nature. It is necessary to expedite A. A. business. Mr. C.E. Morgan of the Rehabilitation Section has been delegated to work with our office. Another step in the right direction. We welcome you, Mr. Morgan; and to the Administration ---- "Thanks a million."

IN THE HOSPITAL: Two members, Warren O. and "Deacon" S., were "treated" to surgery last Monday. Both had a

toe-nail "lifted." No reason now not to have both feet in the program boys.

CONGRATULATIONS: To Dr. Milan C. on his parole, effective in a few days. Are there others we have skipped?

LEAVING: "Senator" C. of Georgia is now in the "Field," having returned home August 19th. A happy time for you, "Senator." Our loss will be another group's gain. Do write us soon. How about twisting your arm for an article for "The Key?"

OUR GROUP: I can't let this issue go to press without expressing my feelings to all about the present group. It's large, it's active, and I believe, sincere. Daily incidents make being your Secretary an even increasing pleasure. Your ready response to all requests in furthering our work together is truly an inspiration. To each and every one who have so willingly responded, I am indebted. Yes, we are banded together to help one another recover and remain free of habit-forming drugs.

---M. S., Secretary

THE MAILBAG: Received a letter from Bryson P., of New Orleans, better known to us as just "Pat." He sends his best wishes for our success as well as regards to all the fellows. Pat had a one-hundred per cent attendance while here and we know he will make the grade. Write us again, Pat, --- remember we are still here.

Several long and informative letters have been received from Betty T. of Santa Monica, Calif. You're doing an excellent job and we are proud of you.

Also a letter from the Ellen P. family of California. Very glad that Bud is making such a success. Happy Birthday! Wish we were there to light the candles! We'll get a letter off to Joanne in the near future; we have faith in her too.

STEERING COMMITTEE: Do you know your committee? If so, fine. If not, meet Roscoe Mc., Bozo H., Dr. James C., Darryl R., Michael G., Warren O., Norman S., and Walter Y.

OUR PURPOSE

This is an informal group of drug addicts banded together to help one another renew their strength in remaining free of drug addiction.

Our precepts are patterned after those of Alcoholics Anonymous, to which all credit is given and precedence is acknowledged. We claim no originality but since we believe that the causes of alcoholism and addiction are basically the same, we wish to apply to our lives the truths and principles which have benefited so many otherwise helpless individuals. We believe that by so doing we may regain and maintain our health and sanity.

It shall be the purpose of this group to endeavor to foster a means of rehabilitation for the addict and to carry a message of hope for the future to those who have become enslaved by the use of habit forming drugs.

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THE TWELVE STEPS OF A. A.

1. We admitted we were powerless over drugs and 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 understand Him.
4. Made a fearless and searching 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 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 whenever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. 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.
12. Having had a spiritual experience (or awakening) as a result of these Steps, we try to carry this message to addicts and alcoholics and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

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GOD, GRANT ME THE SERENITY TO ACCEPT THE THINGS
I CANNOT CHANGE, COURAGE TO CHANGE THE THINGS I
CAN, AND WISDOM TO KNOW THE DIFFERENCE.

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