

The KEY



VOL. XVI,

NO. 4



THE
TWELVE
STEPS

- STEP ONE**—We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.
- STEP TWO**—Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
- STEP THREE**—Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
- STEP FOUR**—Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
- STEP FIVE**—Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
- STEP SIX**—Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
- STEP SEVEN**—Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
- STEP EIGHT**—Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.
- STEP NINE**—Made direct amends to such people whenever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
- STEP TEN**—Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
- STEP ELEVEN**—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.
- STEP TWELVE**—Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics and practice these principles in all our affairs.

The KEY

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

Vol. XVI, No. 3

Fall, 1964

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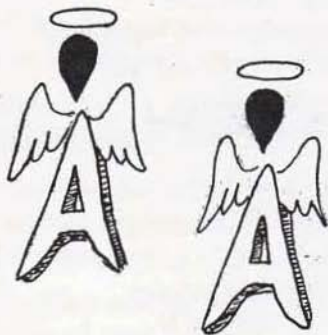
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What A. A. Does

As we addicts begin to climb in the right direction, we trust implicitly, no one. It is often even hard for us to trust and love God; our fear of him is so great. Also, I am reminded of the deep truth of the ancient question: "If a man love not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" We addicts cannot easily love and trust our brother, and relate to a stranger, but we can, even in our despair, open the door of our personality just a little crack, tentatively, to another addict. We do not fear moral condemnation, nor the equally obnoxious saintly, stooping, forgiveness, if it comes from another addict who has lived in the same hell as we have. We can feel a kinship with another human being, and we have been alone so long. So we have "Interpersonal relationship," the essence and firm foundation of A.A.



The next big step toward our health is the gradual loss of that sense of uniqueness most patients have. As we go to A.A. meetings and meet more and more people, suddenly the world is full of addicts. Among society we have been a leper, an unbelievable catastrophe. Even being called an "addictive personality" by another in the same boat does not make us fighting mad. With lots of company, we dare to take inventory, to explore our own personality, to find out our soft spots, to read the danger signals and to recognize and accept a limitation in living that we share with all other true addicts, that we cannot take the first shot, because we are addicts.



For The Addict

In my opinion, as a believer in a living God, there is no significance or dignity for man in a materialistic, Godless world. There comes a time when we must come to grips with our own deepest personal philosophy of life--its ultimate meaning and significance, before we are whole. What that philosophy is, be you Jew or Gentile or what-have-you, is none of my business, but find it for ourselves we must. A.A. helps us find this goal--however we spell it.

Once an addict always an addict! This fact--that total abstinence is for always--brings in its wake another need--the need of continued vigilance, of renewed reminders. If the far-away causes of addiction in our personality have not been removed (and they certainly do not yet know how to do that) then the danger of those old sleeping conflicts being stirred up and reactivated will always remain. This is true--but it doesn't have to be frightening. A.A. is ever available and most of us sense the need for continued fellowship in A.A.



Then something else--something big and wonderful and unbelievable happens as one goes along in A.A. The fight gets easier as the fighter gets stronger. An imperceptible change is seen in us. No one is trying to convert us to anything, but we are changing, spiritually. The A.A. program has no credal affiliation, but it insists that we call upon our God, as we know Him, to help us in our struggle for significance and dignity.

Learning how to live seems unimportant if there is no meaning in living, nothing to live for but the little immediate material joys--no bigness, no significance. If man is just a little blob of protoplasm, mushrooming up to full size and then fading out. wallowing in a sea of self-made miseries and fighting the elements, it all doesn't seem worth-while--it's even hard to see a reason for wanting to stay free of drugs. But we shouldn't be concerned with "Why," but rather with "How To." And this we learn as members of A.A.

---Sara M.



The Inquiring Reporter

A.A. Speaks Out:

Question:

"Do you think it is possible to be a fully effective member of A.A. without accepting the religious aspects of the program."

Answer:

It is my belief that the A. A. program is to help members regain self-confidence, knowledge and understanding of themselves. In doing so, this automatically gives the individual the proper and much needed understanding of people around them and of life itself. Before you can receive, you must be able to give. Understanding? You must have understanding of yourself before you can give the proper understanding to others. Knowledge? You must have knowledge of yourself before you can give knowledge to others. If members of A.A. have not found themselves, and are truly searching, the program will help in many different respects. With the belief that all true things come from within, you must have Faith in yourself before you can actu-

ally have faith in anything-- even God. The A.A. Program, without doubt, will give this if you are honestly and sincerely looking for a better way of life. In gaining or regaining the self-confidence you need to conquer your drug problem, Faith will come. For who other than God gave us life?

---Margaret K.



Answer:

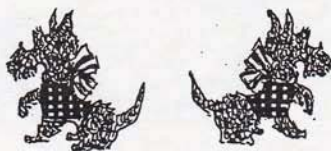
In reply to this question, I, Sadie M., an addict, am living proof that the religious aspect of the A.A. program cannot be denied. I have found I could not live by man's law; how then was I to live by God's? With his supreme powers he applied his commandments in the simplest manner, so all could understand, to know and to live by. And yet, I, a simple specimen of his product, could not even accept this--



and you ask, without the religious aspects, could I be an effective member of A. A.? No, this I could not do. Not I, an addict. My proof of this was my addiction. And this addiction I cannot repeat, for I want the goodness in life, and to accomplish this Goodness, I must first find goodness within Sadie. Who is greater than God for his will of good?---and you ask, do I think it possible to give my all to A. A. without accepting the religious aspects of the program? It would be utterly ridiculous and impossible for me, Sadie, an addict, to do so. You might as well ask me--do I think the possibilities are favorable to abstain from using drugs, yet cling to chances of making a quick dollar. This is far beyond my comprehension. On losing the compulsion to use drugs, I have lost the desire to make a fast dollar. There are no two ways of A. A. or God. Either

you give your all, or you give nothing. To give your all to one, you would have to give your entirety to the other. This is the only way possible to inherit in A. A., The Magnificent Obsession of God's Spiritual Awakening.

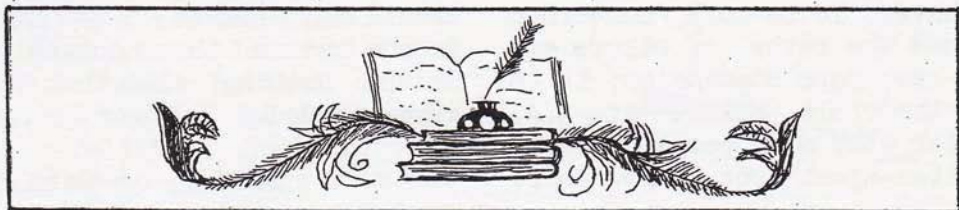
---Sadie M.



Answer:

No, I do not believe one can become an effective member of A.A. without accepting the religious aspects of the program. It is basically a religious program, and in order to fully accept the program one must practice and accept the steps from one to twelve. If this is done you cannot stray from the aspect of religion, for nearly all the steps have some dealings with God as you understand him.

---Inez L.





Answer:

It is my contention that without accepting the religious aspects of the program I cannot be an effective member of A.A. or of society. I feel there is an interior struggle going on within all of us. In the addict it has assumed pathological proportions. It is a kind of struggle which is vividly illustrated in a passage written by Paul to the Romans centuries ago; yet could have been written by an addict and could bear today's date. It reads: "The law, as we know, is something spiritual. I am

Answer:

Personally, I think the spiritual aspects of the program go hand-in-hand with my emotional growth thru A.A.

I am not speaking of conversation to a particular religious concept, but rather accepting I am not wholly capable of being all High Power to myself. This doesn't mean that I am unable to think as an individual, but it is reassuring to believe in a Power greater than myself who has only my best interest at heart, in spite of me, as well as along with me. Also, this enables me to be more effective in helping others who haven't come as far in the program as I have. To be more concerned about the cares of others and to have more compassion, is to me the whole spirit of A.A. After all, all people aren't rotten--just look at yourself!

a thing of flesh and blood, sold into the slavery of sin. My own actions bewilder me; what I do is not what I wish to do, but something which I hate.... Praiseworthy intentions are always ready to hand, but I cannot find my way to the performance of them; it is not the good my will prefers, but the evil my will disapproves that I find myself doing. Inwardly I applaud God's disposition in my lower self, which raises war against disposition of my conscience, and so I am handed over as a captive to that disposition toward sin which my lower self contains. Pitiabile creature that I am, who is to set free from a nature thus doomed to death? Nothing else than the grace of God."

---Sara M.

---Connie M.





Answer:

Let me first begin by saying no one can be a fully effective member of A.A. without accepting the religious aspect of the program. Let me go on to explain why I am of this opinion. The program is based on twelve steps which constitute the very foundation of the program, and to be a fully effective member one must be in accord and agreement with these twelve steps. No where in these steps does it state that we must believe in or worship the God of any specific religion. Instead, it tells us to do things with the God of our choice, the God we

understand and believe in. I think the members of A. A. should give this due consideration and try to understand it. I am not a Christian, therefore I don't believe in a Divine Trinity as taught by their religion. I have my own concept of God and his nature, and I have faith in God as I understand him. No where in the twelve steps of A.A. do I see anything that will conflict with my present belief. On the contrary, the steps are in accord with my religious teachings. So, in my opinion, A.A. is very beneficial and essential to the well-being of any and all addicts who are seeking to solve their drug problems, and relief from those character defects that led to their addiction. I sincerely hope I've made my point clear by answering the above mentioned question to the best of my ability. This is what I consider to be my honest opinion.

---Lawrence S.



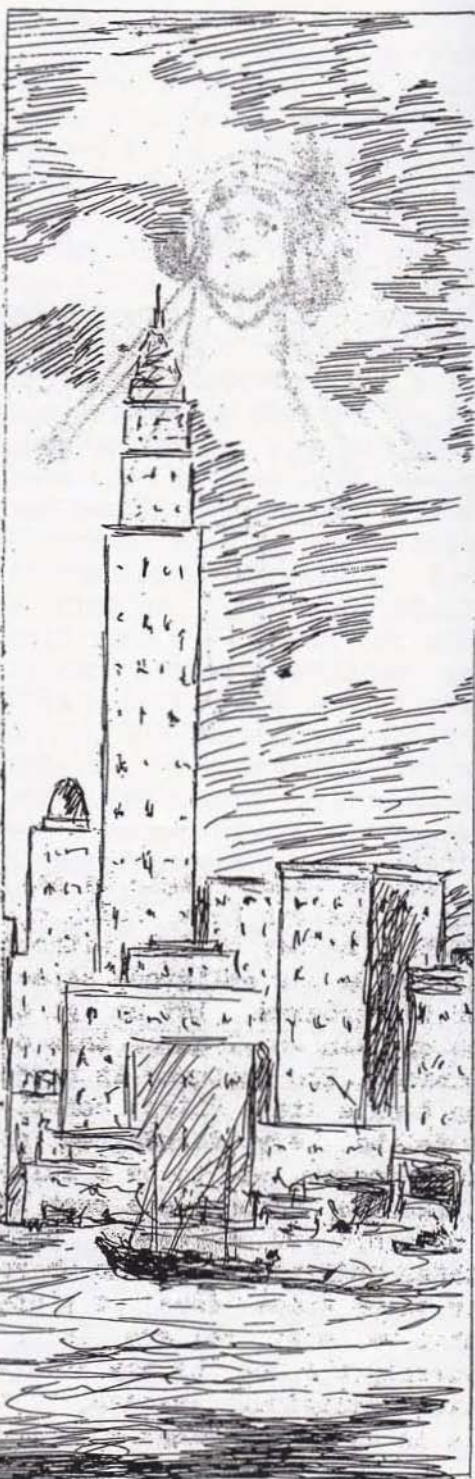
An Addict Speaks

Good evening ladies and gentlemen. My name is Mack C.; my home is in Detroit Michigan, and I'm doing three years for grand larceny which I received in Dayton Ohio, and this is my testimony:

What I'm about to say isn't rare because many of you may have had the same experience. I went to prison in 1956, and on my release date a lady friend met me at the door...it was a beautiful day; I imagine any day is beautiful to one regaining freedom.

I had attempted to get released for Christmas, but my attempts were to no avail. In lieu of this, my mother saved some champagne and prepared a dinner similar to the one they had for Christmas. My family was glad to see me. However, being anxious to see my wife and children, I was unable to eat.

My two daughters said, "Daddy," and jumped into my arms.





The joy I received at that moment is unexplainable, so I won't even try. As I held my two daughters, I saw another little girl standing there holding onto my wife's dress. I remarked, "My! what a pretty little girl. Who is she?" My wife looked at me and reluctantly said, "Yvonne C." I said, "No baby, she can't be mine. I've been in prison almost two years." The look changed on her face as she said, "Well, it was caught in your net."

At that time I had never heard of the Serenity Prayer: "God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change." I accepted this because it was my net, and I had caught many things I needed and a few things I desired in this net.

We are all gifted with blood, breath, and a conscious

mind. Our feelings of sorrow, happiness, joy, and anger, depend on circumstances. Vice is so enchanting, we need only to be offered it once and we will buy. One of my "homies" pointed out that we were real "go-fors." As clever as we were supposed to have been, we went for any story and bought anything. As they say in France, "c'est la vie," that's life.

This is what has charmed me so greatly about the Serenity Prayer; "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."

Many of you might not have received as much out of this prayer as I have. Even in the first two lines I received an education in itself, and now realize that I can't change anything I have no control over. I can't change my immediate environment or my physical appearance, as I certainly can't change any of you. I can change myself and what's inside of me. I can change for the better, and I'm in the process of doing so now. I accept all that I am, and all that is inside me, but in my newly acquired knowledge, I can see the need of a change for the better. I have started on the task of accepting the things I cannot change, and changing the things I can, and knowing the difference.

---Mack C.

Factors in Drug Addiction

Appendix A: Basic Problems, Pluscove from Drug Addiction: Crime or Disease? An interim and final report of the Joint Committee of the A.B.A. and the A.M.A. on Narcotic Drugs.

Medical men have tended to regard drug addiction as a disease or as a symptom of a disturbed or abnormal personality that requires drugs in order to be able to cope with life's problems. Drug addiction may be considered a disease if the focus of attention is the pathologic process in the human organism created by addiction. A healthy human organism does not need morphine or heroin to ward off withdrawal symptoms. The diseased body of an addict, however, requires its daily dosage of drug for the addict to be comfortable. On the other hand, drug addiction is not an accidental process. Individual factors are at work in the determination of who will and who will not become addicted, even in those areas of our cities where the incidence of drug use is high. There are individuals who are exposed to drug use, who through an effort of will, strength of character or force of personality, will never become drug

addicts. There are also some persons who, although once addicted, through will-power, or force of personality and character manage to stay off drugs. It is obvious that character and personality factors are at work in the selection of addicts and in determining which addicts will relapse to the use of drugs once they have been taken off drugs.

Who, then, are the individuals who succumb to drug addiction? What factors of personality, of character, of psychological organization or disorganization distinguishes the drug addict from the non-addict? Can the phenomenon of drug addiction be explained by the disciplines of psychology and psychiatry?

Even the most casual reading of the psychiatric and psychological literature on drug addiction indicates that psychology and psychiatry are still far from satisfactory explanations as to why specific individuals take to drugs, and why others who may be similarly exposed do not take to drugs to resolve their personal problems. Over and over again one reads that drug addiction is an expression of personality disturbance or maladjustment. An individual takes drugs to overcome the shortcomings of personality which make it dif-

difficult for him to cope with the world in which he lives. He needs drugs to enable him to deal with the anxieties and tensions arising from familial conflicts, sexual difficulties and the necessity of growing up and taking one's place in an adult society. A vast majority of drug addict patients, write Vogel, Isbell and Chapman."

"...are fundamentally emotionally immature children like persons who have never made a proper adaptation to the problems of living."

Not all drug addicts, however, fit into a single psychiatric classification or diagnosis. The personality disorders of drug addicts,

"...run the gamut of the standard psychiatric nomenclature from the simple anxiety states to the major psychosis."

Thus, all kinds of people, both normal and abnormal, become drug addicts. This can be seen from the summary by Vogel, Isbell and Chapman of the pioneering work on the classification of drug addicts done by Kolb and Felix.

The kinds of personality disorders which underlie drug addiction have been well described by Kolb and Felix, who list four general personality types:

"The first group is made up of normal persons accidentally addicted. It consists of patients who in the course of an illness have received drugs over an extended period of

time and, following relief of their ailments, have continued the use of drugs. These persons are frequently termed accidental or medical addicts. Such persons are regarded by some authors as constituting a special group of addicts who are different from those persons who began the use of drugs as a result of association with persons who were already addicted. In our experience, all medical addicts have some fundamental emotional problem which causes them to continue the use of drugs beyond the period of medical need. There is, then, no basic difference between medical and non-medical addicts except in the mode of the original contact with the drugs. In persons with stable personalities, social pressure, conscience and well balanced emotional make up negate the pleasure produced by drugs sufficiently to prevent their continued use.

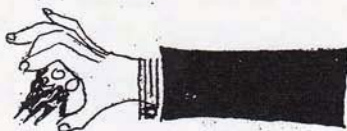
"The second group consists of persons with all kinds of psychoneurotic disorders who, as Felix said, take drugs to relieve whatever symptoms they may have. The manifestation of the neurosis may be anxiety,



an obsession or compulsion of any of the great group of psychosomatic disorders.

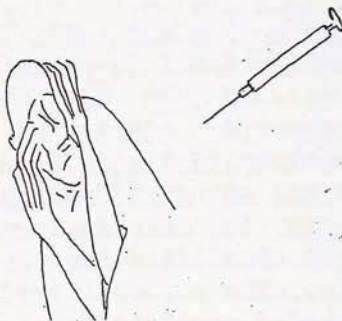
"The third and largest group consists of psychopathic persons, who ordinarily become addicted through contact and association with persons already addicted. They are generally emotionally underdeveloped, aggressive, hostile persons who take drugs merely for pleasure arising from the unconscious relief of inner tensions, as shown by this statement of an addict:

"I was always getting into trouble before I got on drugs, and never could seem to get comfortable; I had to go somewhere and do something all the time. I was always in trouble with the law. Some fellows told me about drugs and how good they made you feel, and I tried them. From then on, I was content, as long as I had my drugs---I didn't care to do anything, but to sit around, talk to my friends occasionally, listen to the radio, and only be concerned with the problem of getting money for drugs. This I usually did by picking pockets or other such petty stuff."



Mal

"The fourth and smallest group is characterized by drug addiction with psychosis. The persons in this group, many of who have borderline mental illness and sometimes frank mental illness, are seemingly able to make a better adjustment while taking drugs. Sometimes it is difficult to esta-



lish the diagnosis and not until drugs are withheld, does the psychosis become apparent.

"There is a category of patients not included in the aforementioned groups. Kolb originally listed these patients with psychopathic diatheses. While it is true that some of these exhibit much of the overt behavior pattern of psychopathic persons, when studied carefully, they usually fall into a milder behavior group, which has characteristics of both the psychoneurotic and psychopathic groups. Included are persons with severe dependency problems, withdrawn schizoid types, emotionally immature adults, as well as those suffering with the milder degrees of maladjustment

and inadaptiveness to the complications of living. Felix stated that marginal adjustment to life before becoming acquainted with narcotics, they felt an exhilaration and a sense of relief comparable to the solution of a difficult problem or the shaking off a heavy responsibility. Many of them also felt an increase in efficiency which, in some cases, appeared to have been actual improvement. "In general, persons who have been able to make a satisfactory adjustment to life, whose adaptive patterns of behavior have been inadequate, frequently find in morphine, much as the tired businessman finds in the pre-prandial cocktail, a means of return to normal. This is a false situation which may be recognized by the drug addict. Our studies indicate that pa-



A consideration of the aforementioned classifications provide specific explanations for drug addiction. Large numbers of individuals fitting into the categories of psychopathic diathesis, psychopathic personality or psychoneurosis, never take drugs as a means of resolving their personality difficulties or emotional problems. One begins to see the wisdom of Dr. Wiklers observation:

"The attractiveness of morphine for certain individuals seems to be related to some of its remarkable pharmacologic properties, namely, its effectiveness in reducing such anxiety as is associated with fear of pain, anger and sexual urges, without seriously impairing the sensorium or the effectiveness of internalized controls on behavior. The intensity of this attraction is enhanced greatly for such individuals as have been unable to gratify these needs by other means, be they normal, neurotic or psychopathic..."

"...the degree of attractiveness of morphine is related to personality structure but not necessarily to neurosis or psychopathy as such..."



tients who have made a marginal degree of emotional adjustment to life, and then have begun to use drugs, lose some of their normal adaptive patterns of adjustment. This regression in personality represents the greatest danger of drug addiction."

Differences Among Addicts

This notion that the use of opiates is a highly individualized process and is not necessarily related to mental pathology is also expressed by Gerard and Kornetsky in their study on "Adolescent Opiate Addiction." They diagnosed thirty narcotic addicts and thirty non-addicts of roughly similar background and status. The writers conclude as follows: "...The psychologic and psychiatric data of the study indicated that the addicts exceeded in the controls in personality malfunction to a statistically significant and clinically impressive extent. These findings support the hypothesis that youths living in urban areas where illicit opiate use is widespread do not become addicted independently of psychiatric pathology. The data also indicated that the converse need not be true; as youths who exhibit personality malfunction similar to that of addicts need not become addicted. As the writers pointed out previously, becoming an opiate addict is a highly individualized process which can be understood only in the context of the individual's personality structure, past life situation and present interactions which the significant figures of his familial and peer groups." The addict as



Winick points out: "... is responding to personality problems of great complexity. The drug addict is a person with certain personality characteristics who happens to have selected this way of coping with his problems for a variety of reasons, of which he is usually unaware. Not the least of these reasons is his access to a social group in which drug use was both practiced and valued. He takes one drug rather than another because it provides satisfaction for him. Other people with exactly the same kind of personality substratum never become addicts and select other means of expression for the basic conflicts."

The Situation

The common problem, yours,
mine, everyone's,
Is--not to fancy what were
fair in life
Provided it could be,--but,
finding first
What may be, then find how
to make it fair
Up to our means: a very dif-
ferent thing!

---Robert Browning

The Best Boy

This is the story of a man who came to jail and found it difficult to write home to his mother. One day he received a letter from his mother asking why he had not written to her. She went on to tell him that if being ashamed of what he had done was the reason, he should not feel this way because no matter what he had done, he was still her best boy. This, of course, made the man feel very good, but her calling him her best boy couldn't quite register with him. After kicking this around in his mind for a few days, he decided to look back on his past life and see if she was justified to call him this.

He was thirty-four years old and the youngest of three children. Besides him there was a brother and an older sister. His mother and father were separated when he was six months old, and she was the sole support of the family. When he was a young boy he could always remember his mother telling them of the need for education, good manners and other character traits she felt were so necessary to gain the smallest measure of success in life. Whenever they didn't measure up to these standards she would call their attention to it, pointing out the hardships they

might cause. The sister, who was the oldest, was often told by the mother that she was too scary and shy to get along, and if she were to make a mark in life she would have to change.

In every family there is always one child who is a sure thing not to succeed. In his family his brother was picked for this unenviable position. The mother always figured he would give her the most trouble because he was so mischievous. Once he was thrown out of school for vandalism and it took the N.A.A.C.P. to get him reinstated.

Now we'll go to the best boy. From the abilities he showed as a child, he had to be chosen as the one most likely to succeed. His mother said he possessed several good qualities. Among these were four that she considered as being very necessary to succeed. First of all, she considered him as being fearless; that he wasn't afraid of anything; second, he would travel the furthest; he didn't need the protection and familiarity of home to make good; third, he was the most convincing, she believed that once he started talking he could convince anyone. Why, if he had been present when Manhattan was bought from the Indians,

he could have bought it for five dollars, with a dollar down and the rest at a quarter a week. Most important of all, he would be the one to make the most serious accomplishment in life. It was said that by the time he was thirty-five years old, his course in life would already be set.

He certainly agreed that he was fearless, after all, he started using drugs fully knowing the outcome of such a practice. Definitely he had traveled the farthest; here he was a thousand miles away from home and doing quite well without the familiarity and protection of home. Anyone would agree that he was convincing; he had convinced a federal agent there was no need to worry, the dope he sold him would stand a four-to-one cut--and it did. The lab technician stated so at his trial, and they haven't been wrong in twenty years.

As for a serious accomplishment, all would agree that he had attained this before his thirty-fifth birthday. Here he was in jail serving five years with no chance for parole; and you certainly can't dispute this as being a serious accomplishment.

In contrast, his brother and sister live decent and successful lives. His only mark of success would be his ironical application to his mother's predictions.

---Jesse A.

The Scene

I am a female addict--an example of my blind faith and disillusionment brings to mind this particular incident: I had this guy--my man--who was forever professing his love for me--how prepared he was to stand beside me at all cost. . . One morning we heard a rattling at the door of the apartment where we lived. Together we crept to the door--he with gun in hand--thinking there were burglars. We peeped through the keyhole and then backed away. The Police!! He ran from the door and I ran after him yelling, "Baby, what are we going to do?" Never stopping for a moment until he was dressed, he answered, "Well Mama, I don't know what you are going to do, but I'm going to jump out of the window." The window was on the second floor, but he jumped and I followed.

---Anonymous

And the wild regrets, and
the bloody sweats,
None know so well as I:
For he who lives more lives
than one
More deaths than one must
die,

---Oscar Wilde

A.A. News

Lexington, Kentucky

Fall, 1964

As the newly assigned Associate Editor of the Key magazine, it is a pleasure to report on the many interesting events and related news that make up the A.A. picture here at Narcana.

In order to get a better insight into the A.A. steering committee operation, I attended a committee meeting by invitation on July 11. My purpose was to get a behind-the-scenes view of their operations. The meeting was called to order at 4:15 P.M. by Milton F. the committee chairman. The first order of business was to give the members their assignment for the week. Certain members were detailed to address new patients in the receiving unit (W.T.) about the A.A. program in the Hospital. The meeting then moved on to the various reports such as; Treasury, Planning, etc. Each member has to make both oral and written reports concerning specified duties. If any member has a desire to introduce a new ruling, or a change in present operations, he must make a motion to this effect. After the motion is made it is up to the committee to take a vote. In order for it to be-

come a new law, it must be passed by a majority.

After having a bird's-eye view of the committee in action, I was not surprised at the smoothness and constructive operations of subsequent A.A. events. I was more than impressed by the sincere efforts of this group. If anyone has the false impression that this A.A. program is being played by ear, he is mistaken. You can rest assured that your steering committee is working diligently to make your A.A. group work specifically for you. The only other ingredient necessary for success is your undivided cooperation.

Quotable Quotes

A woman who says she can read her man like a book rarely does; instead of skipping what she doesn't like, she goes over and over it.

Once we assuage our conscience by calling something a necessary evil, it begins to look more and more necessary and less and less evil.

At the joint meeting on July 16th, I recorded a few of the many interesting speeches given by the members. The following excerpts will give you an insight of the particular mood that was shared by all.

We were first presented with a farewell speech by Charlie B. As usual he supplied us with plenty of food for thought. He also expressed his appreciation for all the help he received from the A.A. program here at the Hospital. I'm sure I speak for the group when I say, we have lost a very good member, and we wish Charlie all the luck in the world.

In making his first speech before the mixed group, Teddy H. impressed us all with his cool demeanor. The main point he tried to put across was a desire to pick up the pieces and straighten the mess he has made of his life.

Mona R., a relative newcomer to the group, told a story with a new twist. She described herself as an addict who didn't like drugs and was only happy when sick. This is a startling revelation, but the lives of drug addicts are usually replete with irony. In addition, she has come to realize A.A. is a means to give her a better insight into life.

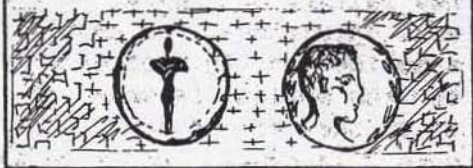
As usual, I was impressed by Sadie M. In her spell-binding manner, she discussed her intention to stay away, not only from drugs, but from any

one who doesn't feel as she does on the subject of drugs. This is part of her plan to reshape her life, so as to be with her children, who she has come to realize are nearest and dearest to her.

Although not as exciting as the male meetings, the mixed meetings, as a rule, produce very constructive thoughts, desires, and informative talks. This recalling of past experiences and expressions in life will surely help the members to return to society and lead more fruitful lives.

The Key Award

THE KEY AWARD for outstanding achievement in the art of Multiloquence, goes to Leonard B. Runner-up award, goes to Arthur B. As the result of a forty-three minute oration concerning interesting events in his past life, Arthur B. led early in the contest. But Leonard B. would not be denied. With a supreme effort he displaced Arthur B. with a fifty minute flow of words. Although both speeches were lacking in brevity, they were outstanding in informative value.



A Common Problem

It is obvious to the public that the drug addict's main problem is his inability to cope with his compulsion to use drugs. However, a deeper analysis of the situation reveals addiction to be a symptom of a wide variety of physiological and psychological disturbances—in plain words—an SOS from a body or mind in desperate need of help. Curbing these maladjustments is a major victory in an addict's struggle to resume a normal existence, once his addiction has been halted by treatment of one kind or another. But what of the problem many of us face after conquering these basic faults.

Recently at an A.A. meeting for the male unit, I heard several members criticize a fellow member of an idea he expressed concerning his complete rehabilitation. The man remarked he had never earned a living by lawful means. He went on to name the various methods he had mastered in order to gain the material things he desired. Among the techniques he stated were picking pockets, plus the age old pimp game and other devious methods so often glamorized by the lawless breed. Having never worked, he confessed his intention of not seeking employment unless he was threatened

with imprisonment for failing to work. Contrary to some members belief that this man didn't need, or really want A.A., I was of the opinion that here was a person in dire need of help. Taking this member's statement of not desiring to change unless threatened with prison. I came to the conclusion that his fear could become a dominating force stimulating an unconscious desire to change.

Realizing the peculiar way we humans often have of trying to convince ourselves that something which goes against our nature is true, I began to think his main problem is not knowing how to accept a change. All this brought to mind an article I had recently read in the Daily Word, a religious publication. Knowing all of us are in need of changing, I suggest paying strict attention to this article.

"ACCEPT CHANGES GRACIOUSLY."

Oftentimes it seems that changes are thrust upon us. When this happens, we may not accept them easily and graciously. While we may not outwardly refuse to make a change, we may inwardly resist to the extent that we do not reap the good that is in it for us. Barriers of resistance rise up in us and make changes doubly hard. We must

overcome our resistance and look for the good that is in the change. If it is necessary to make changes in our work or in our way of life, let us remember to be loving and gracious about them. Changes may not be easy for us, but we can be co-operative and willing to accept them. No change or experience is devoid of good. When we are loving and gracious and co-operate with the law of goodness, our loving co-operation reveals benefits that are unlimited.

Sincerity Award

The winner of the Key Award for Sincerity, goes to Margaret K.; for showing an unwillingness to embellish or exaggerate her position. On the male side, the Key Award goes to Lawrence S.; for stressing a revelation of what he feels concerning the religious aspects of the program.

It is my honest opinion that the aforesaid members have shown earnestness and devotion to the A.A. program, as well as genuineness of outward expression. Future awards will be made in forthcoming editions.

---Jesse A.



Turnabout is Fair Play

At a recent A.A. meeting, jointly chaired by Bootsie F. and Virginia K., open season was declared on the female speakers. This was supposed to provide the girls with a chance to explain their views more completely. I can safely assume, girls, that you will be glad when your chance comes to put the fellows on the same grill.

LANE B. SPEAKS

The first speaker for the meeting was Lane B. He stated that he believed he was the only person he knew of who received money from home if he promised not to return. When he receives letters from his folks, they ask him where he intends to go when he is released; never inquiring if he intends to return home. At times his mother has asked the question; "Just what have I given birth to? I don't understand why he does everything to harm himself?" Most of his family considers him as some sort of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.

He confessed even though he looks slick, he is very frustrated and confused, and believes that he has reached the turning point in his life. If coming to A.A. can be of any

assistance, he is all for it, because it has helped others and he is need of help.

Ladies' Reply

Eleanor S. said she considers staying off drugs a twenty-four-hour-a-day job. She plans on using two weapons to accomplish this task. Her strongest motivation to do right is the love she has for her baby; knowing if she doesn't straighten up she will lose her child. She admits that AA is a crutch for her to lean on, but sums up her position this way: "It is better to use a crutch than to wind up in a wheelchair."

Margaret K. was asked to explain why she now considered herself strong enough to fight her drug problem. She emphasized that self-confidence was lacking all the other times she tried to stay off drugs. There was no question concerning her new found self-confidence, that she wasn't able to answer. With all the questions fired at her, it was evident she was secure, and really believed in her ability to maintain her new attitudes in the future.

I feel the idea of a question period at the end of a speech is a good one. I might add, the mixed meetings invariably produce more explicit and precise expression on the part of speakers and audience alike. I'm hoping this is agreeable to everyone.

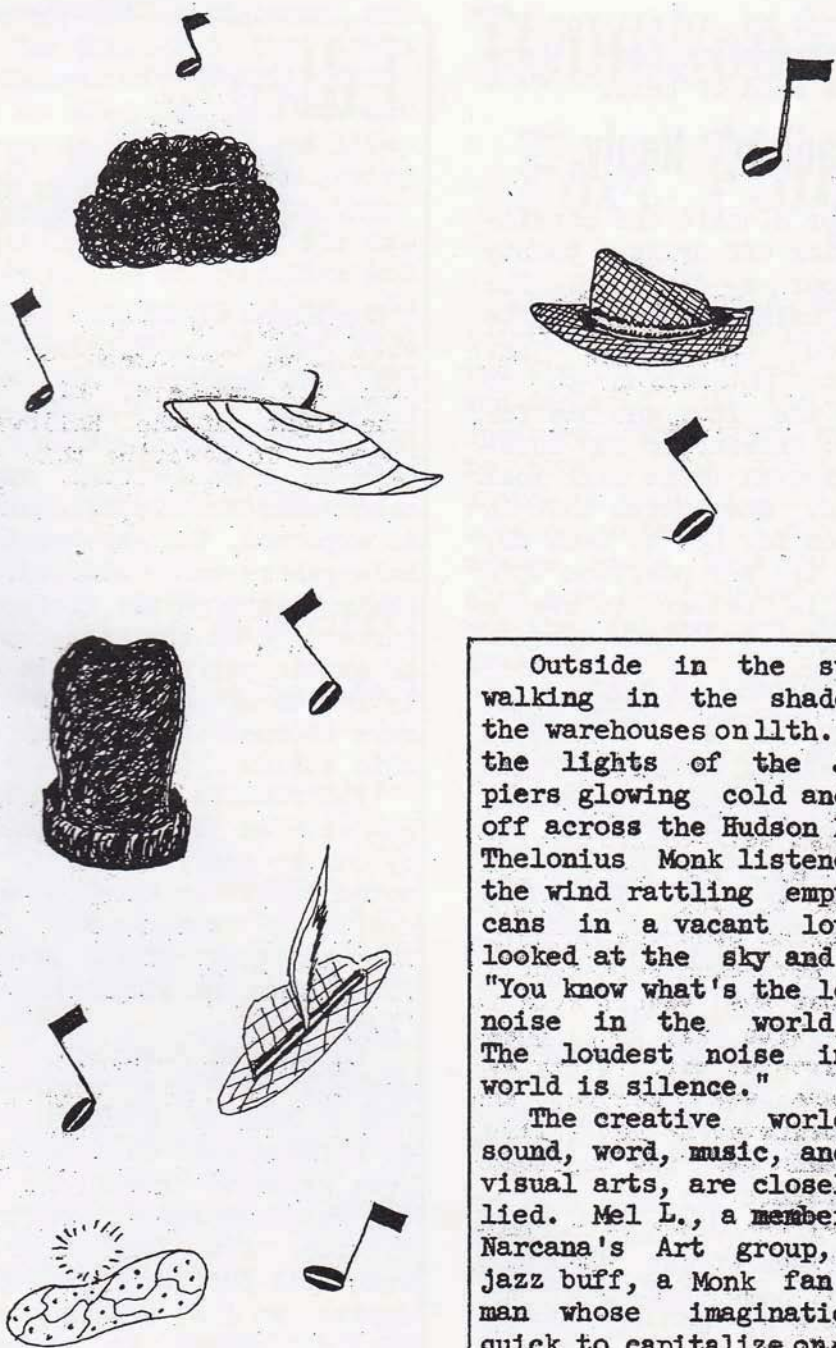
Editors Notebook

The night of October 29th. will long be remembered by all A.A. members; this was the night of the Halloween party. To describe this affair as a gala social success would not be sufficient. As expected, the gay-hearted male gentry were attired in their best party clothes. Surrounded by the fragrance of exotic perfume, the lovely ladies of the fellowship were adorned in an array of chic styles.

The festive occasion began with an opening speech by our sponsor, Mr. S. He noted that an area of socializing is necessary for the reshaping of our lives. In closing, he simply added, "Have fun."

An air of nostalgia was present as this memorable night came to a close. It is affairs such as this that best serve to remind us of the void created by drug addiction. I'm sure this event will further create the desire we A.A. members possess to return to society as enlightened citizens of our respective communities.

---Your Editor, Jesse A.

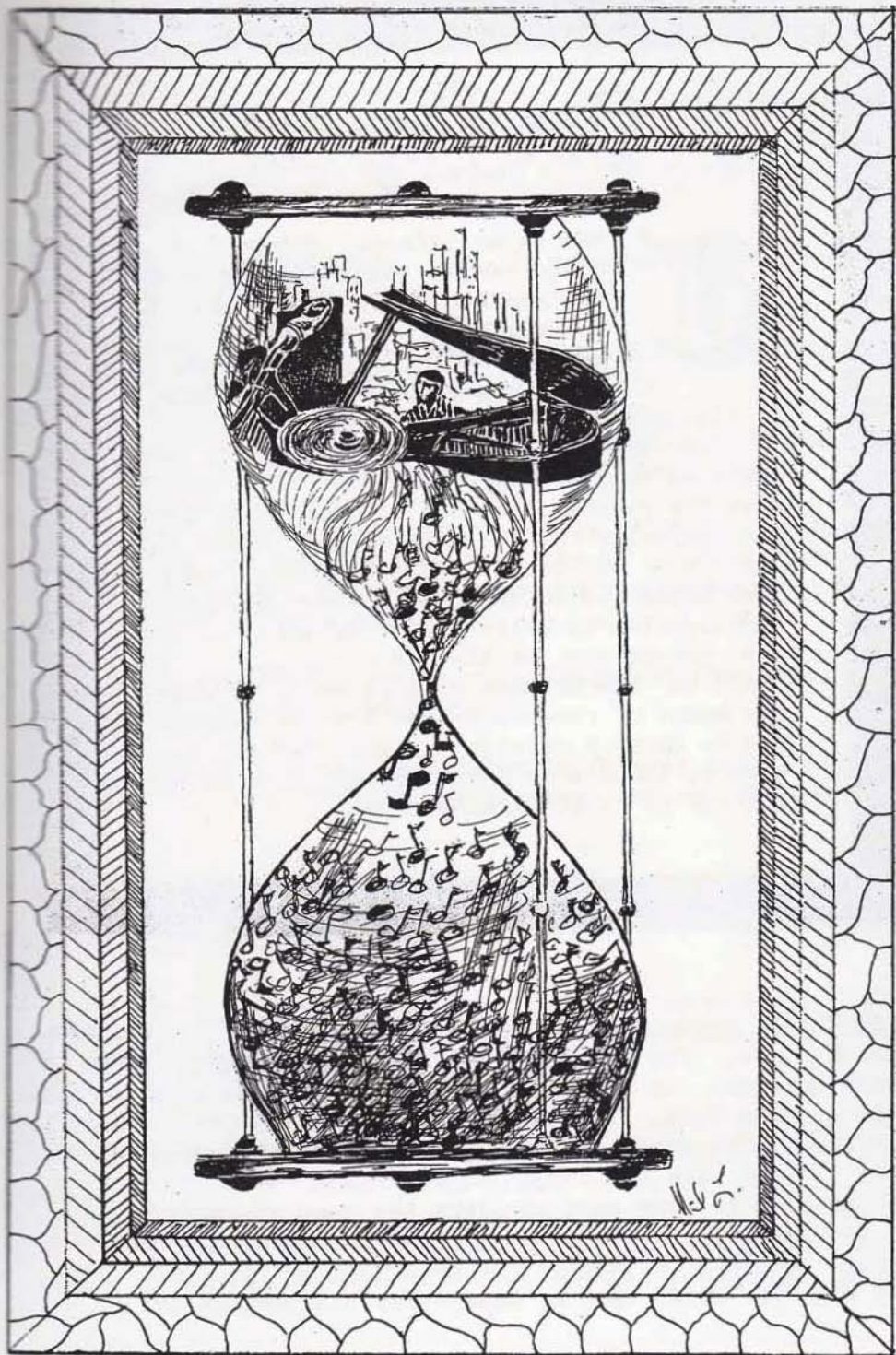


Mel L.

Outside in the street, walking in the shadows of the warehouses on 11th. Ave., the lights of the Jersey piers glowing cold and far-off across the Hudson River, Thelonius Monk listened to the wind rattling empty tin cans in a vacant lot. He looked at the sky and said: "You know what's the loudest noise in the world, man? The loudest noise in the world is silence."

The creative worlds of sound, word, music, and the visual arts, are closely allied. Mel L., a member of Narcana's Art group, is a jazz buff, a Monk fan and a man whose imagination is quick to capitalize on chance stimuli. The result: A Jazz Portfolio by Mel L.

---Jesse A.



Our Purpose

This is an informal group of addicts banded together to help one another renew our strength in remaining free of drug and alcohol addiction. . . . Our precepts are patterned after those of Alcoholics Anonymous, to which all credit is given and precedence 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 doing so we may regain our health and sanity. . . . It shall be the purpose of this group to foster 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.

Oh lord I taste not the blood of bitterness, but the sweet wine of life. For my faith in thee has brought forth the Divine Goodness in my soul. Therefore no bitterness can be derived from this. Thou hast reared me from but a child to walk among the weeds of life. Has thou not given me the seeds to sow and the tools to cultivate the crop? I ask nothing else of thee save to light the road ahead, for I cannot see the way. I reach out to receive thy wisdom that I be strong. Out of the depths of hell I come to thee, O God, with but four words upon my lips---Thy Will Be Done....

---James T.

Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on AA unity.

For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority. . . a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.

The only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop using drugs.

Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole.

Each group has but one primary purpose. . . to carry its message to the addict who still suffers.

An AA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend its AA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.

Every AA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

Addicts Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.

AA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.

Addicts Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the AA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.

Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films.

Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

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