

POWERLESS

How much is said in this simple word. At least, in recovery, we know that the reason things sometimes seem to go wrong, unfairly and against all logic, has a lot to do with our limitations of vision and personal power. The thing I could never have predicted or even suspected before passing through the doors opened to me through the Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous is that the sense of personal helplessness doesn't go away or even lessen with clean time and the process of recovery. Acceptance can give me peace. The 'tools' of N.A. can help me become more effective. Powerlessness is more like a fact to me today that I have learned to live with than a sneaky way of getting over on a hopeless scene to a point of advantage.

In the beginning, it seemed to me as if what the people on the program had found had found was a way to be powerful 'among themselves' or a pack to run with that gave them power. This may have been a part of the attraction in the beginning but mainly, I just wanted some relief. A place out of the cold of what I had known before.

Surely, we appear to be more powerful to others. We are generally warm happy, attractive people to non-addicts after we have been clean awhile. They can't see into us except for the instances of spiritual insight from what I've seen. I guess we can appear that way to other members too, from time to time. As we know, however, alone we are either nothing or at most, not much. Our travesties of self will only weave nets which trap us in plots where it is hard for us to get help for ourselves. Even those who love us cannot find a way. N.A. throws the game and the responsibility for asking for and making ready to receive help back on me. All I can do is share the fact that I need it.

It's not that I've become weaker since getting with N.A. I've become better at not wasting so much time in butting my head against a brick wall. I can avoid my areas of total powerlessness and apply myself in areas which seem to be God's will for me. It may appear differently to others but that's how it is with me.

One of the saddest things that can happen in my new way of living is to see some addict convinced of their powerlessness and surrendered to the truth of the first Step of N.A. do OK for a while and relax on their laurels at some point as if the rules didn't apply to them. We know if we're staying clean today that there is some force for good alive and doing good things in our lives. We're sure not doing it. The best we can do is stay clean, go to meetings and follow the directions God gives us in the Twelve Steps, through others and in our daily lives. When we stop seeing ourselves as the instruments of a power greater and gooder than ourselves, we fall into an area of great risk and powerlessness. Just the same as the using will attract us sometimes because we are addicts. The quest for personal power will attract us. This whole thing is further made difficult and confusing if others put us on a pedestal. We need always remember who we are, what we are, and where we came from if we expect to stay clean and aspire to happiness. The way we stay clean today came from many sources. It is the slow and painfully accumulated wisdom of the ages. It has been passed on in its essentials from person to person. The truth is hard to put into words sometimes. If you see God as all loving and all powerful, you know what I am trying to say here. The facts of God's love for us can accumulate indefinitely for us but the temptation to take it back and run our own lives again is always there. Only through applying spiritual principles to our lives among which is giving credit where credit is due can we expect a change for the better. The instant we try to take personal credit for what only God can do, we fall into pain. Hopefully we don't have to fall very far. The miracles we see around us and the miracles we experience clean can go on forever a day at a time but we must not try to take credit for them in all honesty. There is a difference between the instrument and the hand which guides it and gives it strength.