



THE ROAD BACK

MAY / JUNE 2020
Issue No. 428

**Courage to Speak in this
Moment of Change**

286,640

564,225

Editorial

Although things are changing and 'normality' is returning, we must remember we are still living through the greatest social upheaval of modern times. Most of us have been confined to our homes and a short 2k radius for the last number of weeks. Thankfully, this is now beginning to change, and we can now begin to move further out. Many of us are returning to work in factories and shops and other businesses. Having just grown used being away from workplaces and to being at home, we now have to contend with the 'Return to Work' protocol and the new set of difficulties that brings with it. We are living through a remarkable moment of change and we all have to adapt to the 'New Normal.' Whatever happens during the coming months, we of AA need to be adaptable to change. This is often a difficult thing for AA members. Having all led turbulent lives while drinking, when we begin to get sober we like things to be predictable and steady. It is often difficult for us to accept that change is inevitable. The choice we face is not whether to reject change but to consider how we will adapt and accept the changes that are happening anyway. We all need to find the Courage to Speak in this Moment of Change. A global event such as the COVID-19 Coronavirus brings uncertainty and fear, and these can be added to by the spread of misinformation and various sorts of theories. Our Fellowship can be in danger of being poisoned by false beliefs and false information. We can all help to "Keep it Simple" by continuing to be open and honest in all our dealings, thus avoiding being part of the problem. We in AA are indeed fortunate to have a programme that demands 'rigorous honesty.' If we continue to do the 'next right thing' then AA will stay well, and if AA stays well then we all will stay well.

Our articles are beginning to reflect the times that we are living through and a number of items in this issue deal with this. It is good to see members are interested in sharing their experience, strength, and hope with us about this. Thank you for your contributions to your magazine, your 'Meeting in Print.'

Our Fellowship is healthy and strong and will survive these strange times as it has survived everything that has happened during the last 85 years. COVID-19 Coronavirus has brought unexpected difficulties and AA has responded well to these.

GSO is again fully operational, with the staff having returned to work on June 8th.

Continued good wishes and good health to you all,

The Road Back Editorial Team



UNITY | SERVICE | RECOVERY

THE ROAD BACK



A meeting in print

Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.

The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for AA membership; we are self supporting through our own contributions. AA is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy; neither endorses nor opposes any causes.

Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

The Road Back is published every two months by General Service Conference, Alcoholics Anonymous of Ireland. Unit 2, Block C, Santry Business Park, Swords Road, Dublin 9, Ireland. Telephone: (01) 842 0700

Up to date information on forthcoming Conventions and One Day Events can be viewed on our website at www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie

Contents

Editorial	2
Contents	3
Isolation	4
Without Help it is too much	4
Heard at Meetings	5
Staying Sober during the lockdown	6
Where's the Miracle?	7
I cannot change the wind	8
AA Humour	10
Poem - <i>My Hidden Side</i>	11
Bobby's Story	12
Wisdom of the Rooms	13
Plodding the Road to Happy Destiny	14
Toward Reality	15
Haven't you had Enough	16
On the First Step	17
Learning the Tools	18
The Hoper	18
Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions	19



Isolation

The world the way it is at the minute. Due to the unfortunate happenings in the world today the whole nation is in lockdown. We have and are all experiencing this together. I know it is a hard time for many. However, on a lighter note and my side of this situation, how I am feeling at this moment of time is:

No matter how hard I try to make things around the world better and get rid of this beastly virus, I cannot - except follow the rule of isolation. As a member of AA and, as with many of us out there, I have experienced isolation, - so what's new? But heigh-ho it is totally different now when one is aware! Actually, with all the technology that we have today, I am enjoying the online meetings. I live alone in an apartment with an adequate lounge, however, this morning I

had 48 people in it! Now isn't that just brilliant. What a wonderful Fellowship we have. How can we ever be lonely?

What a wonderful Fellowship we have. How can we ever be lonely?

I was thinking when lockdown was announced for us all to obey, I thought I have never had a lockdown before, however, I had many lock ins, alone in my lounge. I wonder how many more of us had the same thoughts. I am so grateful for the Fellowship and members from all over the world. From a 'Sober for today Buddy'.

*J.
Share June 2020*

Without Help it is too Much

Past is past, done is done; my new life has just begun. Every single day is bright. I am now creating Love and Light. Love and Life.

The sky has moods of many kinds, look at it. The blue sky stands for calmness' the raging thunder is the angry spirits arguing. The rain at night, stands for sad dreams. The rain at dawn Are the angels crying.

The rainbow calling off the sadness call out the peace.

Heard at Meetings

“ Change my mind
about drinking, about
doing, about thinking ”

“ My sobriety depends on
what I think and do; not
on what anyone else
thinks or does ”

“ 24 hours is the world
record for sobriety ”

“ Ethyl Alcohol is a stronger
drug than Heroin ”

“ God is doing it – once
you get out of his way ”

“ There’s many a slip ‘twixt
the cup and the lip ”

“ Fear can hold you
prisoner – Hope can set
you free ”

“ Big shots, small shots –
one shot, we’re all shot ”

“ Prepare for the worst –
Hope for the best ”

“ Hold on, whatever is
going on ”

Staying Sober During the Lockdown

Like a lot of members that I have heard, I was worried at the beginning of this crisis about how I was going to stay sober. What will I do now if there's no meetings to go to? How will I cope? What'll happen to AA? I was riddled with worries that weren't really worries at all but just more of my old anxieties coming back to haunt me.

I am six years sober now, thanks to AA and my Higher Power. I realise now that I had no need to be concerned. I phoned members; members phoned me. I was in touch regularly with my sponsor. Everything was fine. I was told early on in my recovery that the Twelve Steps were a programme for living, and that I could survive whatever life threw at me. I believed what I was told.

Now, I know that what I was told is true because I have survived this strange time. Up to today, I survived one day at a time. With the help of my programme and my AA friends I know I can keep going. As well as talking to members I learned some new ways to help my sobriety.

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Until a few months ago I had never even heard of things like zoom or skype or whatsapp. Today I am almost an expert on these. I was told that groups were starting up online meetings. I have no computer and didn't pay much attention to this. But my sponsor explained to me that I could go to a meeting using only my phone. He talked me through the steps to opening a whatsapp and checking in to a meeting.

Now I go to three meetings a week and I don't even have to leave my house. The wife and children know not to disturb me when I'm in the bedroom of an evening because I'm probably at a meeting. The secretary opens the meeting and reads the preamble. Someone else reads from the Big Book and someone does the chair, like at a real meeting. It is a real meeting, just online, and I talk to my AA friends after the meeting for a

few minutes. I would rather be there with other members for the cup of tea or coffee.

We can't meet new members like we could before, but I hope we will soon be able to do this again. I am very grateful to AA, to my friends and to my Higher Power for having these different ways to keep sober during the Coronavirus emergency.

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the Coronavirus emergency.

The phone has been a lifesaver for me, letting me stay in touch with my AA friends. There haven't even been any rows at home even though we are all thrown together every day. When I was drinking there were rows every day.

Now I can go for a walk with my wife and kids and we are all getting on really well together. I'm even learning to cook a bit and the garden never looked so well. I'm a grateful sober member of AA and I thank God every day for helping me to find this way of life.

Anon

Where's the Miracle?

In AA I often hear, "Don't give up five minutes before the miracle." But most of the important and astounding things that have happened to me in the last eighteen years of sobriety in AA have been slow in coming and impossible to recognise or appreciate until they took place.

However, there was one exception. That is the miracle that comes with Step Two.

One day, after nine months of attending meetings and staying dry. I was standing alone in our meeting room just beneath where the Twelve Steps hung on the wall. I looked up and my eyes fell on Step Two.

As I read "Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity," I suddenly realised that I no longer had any desire to drink. I couldn't even remember when I had last thought of alcohol. The obsession which had controlled my whole life for twenty-five years had simply vanished. AA works.

DD. Fort Worth Texas
(AA Grapevine Step by Step)



I cannot change the wind

I'm writing this, three weeks into a national lockdown, with a further three weeks just having been announced. I'm surprised at how nonplussed I feel about it all. I feel as though I've more or less adapted. But I am lucky: I have a job, I have a home, none of my family or friends have been affected by Covid-19. I'm healthy and don't fall into the vulnerable category. I can get to online meetings.

This lockdown has been a time of reflection. My overriding feelings since it started are of relief and gratitude. Relief, because I now have a choice not to drink. Gratitude because, a day at a time, supported by this Programme, I'm able to live a sober, productive, and contented life. And I now have too many positive things going on in my life to risk a drink over. I simply have too much to lose. Remembering this on a daily basis keeps me out of the enticing pity pool I visit every so often. Although the big push this lockdown has been on physical measures like social distancing, I'm encouraged to see the spotlight on mental health. For me, that way is where true danger lies. Early on in recovery, I

heard someone say, "My disease will tell me I haven't got it." and "My head's out to get me." As I've grown in sobriety, I have found these things to be true. All it takes is for little anchors to be lost, or become dislodged and the voices of madness start becoming louder.

I've learned a few things during this lockdown about what I need to do to protect my sobriety. First, my routine matters. Even though I'm working from home, the nature of my work has changed, which has affected my routine. I'm working at different, longer hours, which initially, shook me out of kilter. I have since put boundaries in place to avoid working crazily long weeks. I've built self-care into my routine. So that's taking physical exercise every day, trying to keep my meditation practice going daily (I don't always manage it), eating well and sticking to a regular sleep routine. I've been doing more in the garden, which has helped calm any creeping tension. And allowing time for chilling out (making a dent in those box sets) and being creative.

Second, keeping connected. Even though I was a bit skeptical

about online meetings (and ok they're not as great as the real thing) I factor them into my routine. They are medicine and I need that regular reminder that sobriety is worth working for... and that my head will play tricks with me if I don't take my medicine. I'm in regular touch with my sponsor and sponsees. I speak more to family at the moment, some of whom are vulnerable. Before this pandemic, I had a strained relationship with some of them. While things will never be hunky dory between us, we have talked much more frequently during this crisis.

Third, continuing to do service. Even though I can't get to my home group, I've looked for ways to help others during this crisis.

Even though I can't get to my home group, I've looked for ways to help others during this crisis.

Donating to a foodbank, asking my elderly neighbours if they need help. Running errands for friends and family in need. Writing articles for SHARE magazine. The last thing is being aware of that most brilliant of acronyms: HALT. When I'm ever hungry, angry, lonely, or tired I stop and think, "What can I do about this?" Sometimes I just have to accept

that's how I am at that moment, there might be nothing I can do. But I try to remember that even if I'm having a bad day I can reset at any time. Even if that doesn't work, tomorrow is another day and chances are I'll feel differently about things then.

But I try to remember that even if I'm having a bad day I can reset at any time.

The Daily Reflections says, "*I know today that if I cannot change the wind, I can adjust my sail.*" (1st November, p.314). In my experience, I have found this to be true.

A couple of weeks ago, someone who doesn't know I'm in recovery asked me, "Oh, don't you find you start drinking earlier in the day?" To which my reply was, "I don't drink.". It brought home to me how this lockdown would really have provided me with THE perfect excuse to drink. What an absolute disaster it would have been. Thanks to AA, even during this strange and scary time, I can find moments of serenity and peace. AA has taught me - and continues to teach me - how to adjust my sail.

Anonymous
(Share Magazine June 2020)

AA Humour

A long time AA member named Joe R has lived to a very old age and one morning God appears to him, as Joe lies in bed.

Joe: What have you come for God?

God: Well Joe, I've come with some good news and some bad news, what do you want first?

Joe (being an optimist): I like to start the morning with good news

God: I have come to tell you that we have AA meetings in heaven

Joe: Alright - that's great! So what's the bad news?

God: You're chairing tonight's meeting....

A man in a hot air balloon realized he was lost. He saw a person on the ground and yelled down to him, "Can you help me? I don't know where I am." The man replied, "Sure, I'll help you. You are in a hot air balloon hovering 30 feet above the ground...between 40 and 41 degrees North latitude and between 59 & 60 degrees West longitude."

"Wow, you must be an AA sponsor", said the man in the balloon. "I am", said the man, "but what gave me away?"

"Well", answered the balloonist, "everything you told me is technically right but I am still lost. Frankly you're not much help at all and you might even have delayed my trip."

"You must be an AA sponsee", replied the man. The man in the balloon was amazed and said, "I am, but how did you know?"

The man on the ground said, "Well, you don't know where you are or where you're going. You have risen to where you are due to a lot of hot air. You are expecting other people to solve your problems and the fact is that you are in exactly the same position you were in before we met, but, somehow now IT'S MY FAULT!"

AA is like an adjustable wrench. It fits every nut.

My name is K, and I am an alcoholic.

I have recently come into recovery and I am currently confined to my home due to coronavirus. I have written down my thoughts and feelings during this isolation period in poem form. It is a reflection of my life in recovery in lockdown.

My Hidden Side

**My hidden side is lurking.
It wants me to die.
It wants me to hate myself.
It wants to hurt me and make me cry.**

**My hidden side is ferocious.
It will not give me peace.
It tortures me all day long.
I beg it, please, cease.**

**My hidden side wants me alone.
It wants me on my knees.
Not to pray to my Higher Power.
But to feed my disease.**

**My hidden side wants to keep it secret.
To suffer and to moan.
It wants me drinking all day long.
It wants me to die alone.**

**My hidden side will not win.
I refuse to keep it concealed.
I will walk head on towards it.
I will stay strong in battlefield.**

**My hidden side is no longer hidden.
And I feel a sense of peace.
I live my true reality, as God intended.
One of his masterpiece.**

K.

Third Legacy Group, Dungannon

Bobby's Story

My name is Bobby, I am a recovered alcoholic. Alive, clean, well, and sober today, thanks to the AA way of life and the loving God that led me to AA. I am not cured of alcoholism, neither have my defects been eliminated. They have been removed but they have not gone.

I drank because of the serious flaws in my personality. Fear, anger, over sensitivity and selfishness. These are very powerful forces in my makeup. They make me insecure unable to handle reality, fill me with negative thoughts. This is a very lonely existence.

Drinking alcohol made me feel like a social being and it seemed to even out often to eliminate these defects. Eventually after a period of 6 years, alcohol failed to work on these defects, but I still had to have it.

Finally, I was reduced to zero values. Getting money using the money to buy drink. Nothing else mattered. I had no ambitions hopes, responsibilities. I sept rough. I did not eat properly. I was paranoid and suicidal in the end.

I was in the process of attempting to steal money from a poor box at the end of a drunk when I found the pamphlet Who Me? Almost immediately I was given

hope and I contacted the person whose name was on the pamphlet. He took me to my first meeting on the 31st of August 1976 and I have not had a drink since that date.

Today I realise that not taking the 1st drink is the single most important thing in my life. It prevents the craving for more alcohol and allows me to use the experience strength and hope of others to work the other 11½ Steps on my defects.

The 12 Steps are a 100% successful short-term solution to an insolvable long-term problem, my alcoholism. I was told that if I did 5 things on a regular basis. I would experience a life beyond my wildest dreams. The 5 things were so simple when I heard them that I scoffed at them. Today these 5 things eliminate the power of FEAR, ANGER, PRIDE, OVERSENSITIVITY and give me the power to do good. They are.

1. Read a little of the Big Book every Day.
2. Get a sponsor and use him to grow spiritually.
3. Pray daily.
4. Give service to AA.
5. Have an anchor group and go to meetings.

When I fail to embrace these 5 actions, I am on the way back to the insanity of alcoholism.

The God I believe in today is the God I believed in ten years ago. I know my H.P. is full of love for me. The promises of Step 2 on p63 and the promises of Step 9 on p83 are available to me through these 5 actions. The dry drunk described on p52 is what I become when I move away from these 5 simple actions.

Dr Bob in Feb. 1937 wrote a 6-word prescription for recovery from alcoholism on his doctor prescription.

1. Trust God.
2. Clean house

3. Help others.

I have a good leisure life today. I am at a conference phone call AA closed meeting every night in the Covid-19 lockdown. I eat well, sleep well. I am reasonably healthy. I pray. I exercise, walk the dogs. Enjoy the company of others, bring joy to the life of others, and I work the Steps on my defects as best I can with the help of a sponsor.

Life is good thanks to AA

B.
Clonmel

Wisdom of the Rooms

In the old days, it was hard to keep my story straight. As my drinking increased, my omissions turned into half-truths, and these turned into little white lies. After a while, I couldn't recognise the truth anymore. As I became disconnected from people and myself, my very reality changed, and my sanity disappeared. After living in this dark abyss, I finally surrendered and entered the program of AA.

As I began to get sober, I started in on the overwhelming task of unravelling the massive knot of lies, stories, and deceptive behaviour I had engaged in. I felt shame, anger, and remorse as I painfully made my way back to my true self, which had been buried beneath the disease of

alcoholism. I used the tools of "uncover, discover, and discard," and after many inventories I finally saw the light ahead.

The road back to sanity began with the words "rigorous honesty." Although seemingly straightforward, the challenge I had was in coming to believe that, of myself, I was enough – that if I spoke my truth, I would be accepted. The miracle is that the truth really did set me free, and the more honest I was, the more peaceful and serene I became. Today, If I'm feeling uncomfortable, I look to where my honesty may be lacking. As soon as I become genuine again, my sanity is restored

Credit - thewisdomoftherooms.com

Plodding the Road to Happy Destiny

If I was to be truly honest with myself, my first drink would have been at about 14. My parents were out, and I was listening to their new stereo system via these funky headphones. The household didn't have a lot of money, so this was kind of a big deal. However, in said stereo cabinet was a bottle of Bristol cream which, while I was being naughty anyway, seemed like a good idea to try.

I still remember the warm glow and sense of contentment that embraced my entire body. It was wonderful. Over the next few weeks when my parents were out at weekends, I had a few more sips. While the feeling wasn't as amazing as he first time, it was still very relaxing. However, this had to stop for fear of my parents finding out. As they rarely drank, I hoped they wouldn't notice the levels of the bottles going down – my upbringing was quite a tyrannical and not necessarily a happy one, although I now know my parents were doing their best.

It was two more years before I had another drink at a party. It was wine and I didn't mind spirits but didn't like the feeling

of the room spinning and feeling queasy. Alcohol was not for me, or so I thought.

Life moved on. The man I married had alcoholic parents, happy ones but none the less alcoholic and with my alcoholic grandfather, who died in an institution, I guess a recipe for disaster was in the making.

In my thirties alcohol consumption led to a few cuts and scrapes and the start of getting myself into some not so appropriate situations for a married woman. I had gone from being socially intimidated to being the life of the party (after trimming while getting ready to go out), and being dragged home, while abusing my husband for dragging me away. Around my every forties after four children, the third being quite disabled, and a stressful business, alcohol became my coping/numbing mechanism.

Before long, it was my best friend, my partner in every crime. By 43 I was starting to have major anxiety bouts. I was sick with everything in creation, but not once did I relate any of it to alcohol.

I was sick with everything in creation, but not once did I relate any of it to alcohol.

This came to a head with one hospital visit too many when I ended up having an interview with CADS. I had no idea who they were and found myself on a waiting list for detox.

This went smoothly enough. However, I got home and two nights later (I didn't have a programme at this stage), at home and all the hassles that came with it, I opened the fridge to see 1/3 bottle of wine, which of course I drank. Annoyed with myself I got myself to a meeting and managed to get 18 months of sobriety up.

Sadly, this pattern has gone on for the last 9 years because I did not have the three sides of the Triangle working, and my sobriety

walk was totally out of balance. I was Queen of slipping.

Today I am pleased to say I am rocking up to a year of sobriety where I have amazing direction and teachings from a sponsor with strong sobriety, a Big Book and knowledge of AA that pulls me up at every turn when she can see ego is taking over. I am so grateful for this. I have learnt how different it is to be walking the AA path doing service, regular meetings, and seeing my sponsor at the same time every week and I do homework, no matter what. Life is still tough, as my family are always looking out for that next hidden bottle, but they now share and talk with me and actually want me to be in their lives.

With working the programme (all of it, not just the parts I want to) I am at Step 9 and will just keep on plodding the road to happy destiny to a life better than the one I had before.

MS.

“Toward Reality”

The beginning of maturing for me was becoming willing to try to face the realities of my own life, a day at a time, and letting go of my childhood fantasies of living happily ever after in a perfect world made up of perfect people.”

NEW YORK, NEW YORK, APRIL 1980

Haven't You Had Enough?

As I sat in my chair and looked around the room. I thought to myself that there was no way I belonged with these people. So, what if I drank a little more than my friends? An alcoholic I was not. I was too young.

I started drinking at the age of eleven. When I drank, I became funny and beautiful, and it seemed to me I had friends. But somewhere along the way I crossed an invisible line. And drinking was no longer something I could choose. My friends had begun to say, "Haven't You had enough?" But as drunk as I was, I had just started.

My self-esteem vanished. I was no one. Only with a guy said I was beautiful, did I even think, "Maybe I'm alright."

I hated the sight of what I'd become. I started to isolate. I became suicidal. My parents, not knowing that I was drinking, didn't know what to do with a depressed teenager.

Then I found tequila, and during my last year of drinking, I never drew a sober breath. I drank to the point of no friends and no

self-worth. No one could trust me, not even my parents. The next day, I was in a thirty-day treatment program. That day sobriety began. It was March 21, 1988. I was thirteen years old.

Today, I know who I am. Very proudly in my meetings I announce that I am an alcoholic. I pray daily, even just to ask my Higher Power (whom I choose to call God) to walk with me that day. He has never left me, even when I have left him. I'm active in AA – shaking hands, chairing meetings, making coffee, reading, reading and sharing my experience, strength, and hope. I try to live the Twelve Steps of AA. I've found that they apply to my every situation in life since I still have to learn to live on life's terms.

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live on life's terms.**

Every one of us in AA is a miracle. The gratitude I have is just to be

breathing today... I was so close to dying. And although I have a lot of "yets" out there, I have true friends who love me. All I need to do is call them and go to meetings, work my program, and for today the "yets" won't come.

So, I write this to thank all of you for keeping the AA program strong and giving me a chance to continue my sobriety today.

A.C.

*Raleigh, North Carolina, August
1999*

(AA Grapevine In your Own Words)

On the First Step

November 1944

The first of the Twelve Steps in the creed or philosophy of alcoholics Anonymous is, "We admitted we were powerless over alcohol - that our lives had become unmanageable." By Such an admission any alcoholic, provided he is sincere, has achieved his first success on the road to well-being.

Such an admission is usually very difficult for the alcoholic to make. The very nature of his disease makes him shun the knowledge of his inability to cope with the problems of everyday life. Hence his desire for something that will rapidly create whatever he thinks he lacks as an individual. With a few drinks under his belt he can fashion the most wonderful dreams about himself. These dreams can become his real characteristics - but only when

he recognises that he must dominate alcohol rather than have alcohol dominate him.

The sincerity with which the newcomer takes the First Step is the gauge by which his recovery through AA can be measured.

Over the years the alcoholic develops a three-dimensional ability at picture building, which is a kind way of saying that alcoholics are adapt liars. So that by really taking the First Step - admitting freely and without reservation that he is an alcoholic - a person starts to build a new pattern of thoughts. The whole, at last, is fabricated from truth rather than wishful thinking of fantasy.

J.B.

*New York, New York
Grapevine Step by Step*

Up to date information about Online meetings available on our website at www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie

Learning the Tools

I'm seventeen years old and a slowly recovering alcoholic. I started drinking to get away from my family and rebel against my parents' expectations and rules. After a few years of being out of control of my parents, I was placed on probation for unruliness.

When I was sixteen, treatment was the last resort for my rebellious behaviour. While in treatment, I learned a lot about the disease of alcoholism and was introduced to Alcoholics Anonymous, but I didn't acquire the tools to stay sober. I went back to my old friends and places, thinking I could deal with them. I stopped going to AA meetings. It took two weeks to get back to where I was before and continue the downhill slide, but at a faster pace.

I entered a long-term treatment centre at the age of seventeen. I was shown and began to be aware of my problems with

alcohol and what alcohol had cost me.

I was shown and began to be aware of my problems with alcohol and what alcohol had cost me.

I also became willing to admit that I was powerless over alcohol and that there was a Higher Power and others who could help me.

Today I'm learning the tools and I continue to go to meetings regularly. I talk to my sponsor frequently. I meet and talk to sober people every day, people who are willing to share their experience, strength, and hope with me. I'm very grateful for the people God has put in my life; I don't know where I'd be without all of them. God gives me the gift of each day and I need to accept it as it comes.

"The Hoper"

Hope is tremendous progress for someone who once was 'hopeless'.

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA, APRIL 1990

The Twelve Steps

1. We admitted we were powerless over 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 understood Him.
4. Made a searching and fearless 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 all 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 wherever 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 understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics and practice these principles in all our affairs.

The Twelve Traditions

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.
2. 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.
3. The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose - to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.
6. An A.A. Group ought never endorse, finance or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centres may employ special workers.
9. A.A., as such, ought never be organised; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. 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.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.





We, *The Road Back* Editorial Team, look forward to hearing from you with your stories, snippets of amusing things overheard at meetings, indeed anything that carries a message of sobriety to our readership.

Your contributions can be emailed to:
roadback@alcoholicsanonymous.ie

or posted to:
Alcoholics Anonymous
Unit 2, Block C
Santry Business Park
Swords Road
Dublin 9

Up to date information on forthcoming Conventions and One Day Events can be viewed on our website at
www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie