

THE ROAD BACK



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HOPE

Editorial

“Hope springs eternal in the human breast.” At last, we are beginning to see some light at the end of the long COVID tunnel. While at times it felt as if we were living in endless night, we can begin to feel hopeful that the end is in sight. It will certainly take some time before normality returns fully to our lives. If you are reading this editorial you can feel grateful that you made it this far. Many did not. At this point, we all probably know someone who became a victim of the pandemic, who didn’t make it through. Our thoughts, prayers, and our sympathies are with all of those who lost a loved one to this illness.

Spring is a time of rebirth, new growth, and hope. Hope that life will continue to flourish and evolve. We in AA wake up each day with the hope that today will be a good day for us. We begin by asking for help not to pick up the first drink and we move on from there. Each of us has our favourite way of beginning each day, our little routines of prayer, meditation, and gratitude. For us, every day is a new beginning. Each day brings the opportunity to grow a little, to improve our contact with our higher power, to help a fellow-traveller who may be struggling. How lucky we are to be granted a daily opportunity to improve the quality of our sobriety.

While the global pandemic may not be over yet, there is now hope that new vaccines will limit its march across the world and eventually tame its relentless spread. So it is with us in AA. In the AA programme of the 12 Steps, in our literature and in our meetings, we have found a vaccine for our personal pandemic, the inner disease that is our alcoholism. As long as we practise this simple programme on a daily basis we are guaranteed a reprieve from our illness, and we are promised a life we would not have believed possible while we were still drinking. The rampant pandemic of our alcoholism that infected everything it came in contact with – our families, our friends, our jobs – was finally tamed when we admitted our powerlessness and gave ourselves to this simple programme.

As we move on to the next stage, not yet revealed to us, we wish each and every one of you, those already in our wonderful fellowship and those yet to join us, the peace and serenity that are to be found by adherence to this simple programme.

The Road Back Editorial Team



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.

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

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The Strength of these Rooms

Hi everyone; my name is R., and I am an alcoholic. I have 13 months of sobriety. If you had told me last year that I would be standing up in front of a room of sober alcoholics talking about my drinking I wouldn't have believed you. The plans I had for myself about 13 months ago were of turning to ashes and dust. I just wanted to end it but part of me didn't and that's how I ended up here.

I am hanging in because I hear from the older, sober members and I see how you are living your life and that keeps me wanting to come back.

My story is one of a functioning alcoholic, until I really wasn't, for over 40 years. Before I started drinking, I never felt right in my skin. I found a sense of belonging and the drinking became a persona of mine because I identified with fellow outcasts. I have long discovered that if you scratch the surface of anybody in a pub, you'll find that underneath that persona of happiness and "aren't we having a great time" there is a lot of misery. I was no different; give me an opportunity to bang on about being a victim and I was right there.

As my drinking progressed, I became more and more isolated

until I lost jobs and friendships. It was all starting to go away from me until I ended up by myself in my house with red wine and a massive death wish. I became sick and tired of being sick and tired and the self-pity I had couldn't take me to the point of ending it. So, I found my way into a rehab and that's where it started turning around.

I became sick and tired of being sick and tired and the self-pity

In rehab I heard that it was all about keeping my recovery going through attending AA meetings. I have kept up with frequent meetings and I do know that the obsession to drink has gone. I'm glad I no longer live with this band of noise in my head that was always about alcohol and smoking too. I was always thinking how much alcohol have I got in the house? If I was going to a party, it was a dilemma about how much to take in. If I bought a slab of beer, I would only take in six and then go back out for more so that it did not look like I was drinking too much. I can't even remember what went on at parties because I was always

wondering about how much booze was in the bathtub. It hasn't been an easy run in the 13 months I have been around. I don't want to drink but I am looking at where I am at. A lot of my drinking was about self-medicating mental health issues, and I am in that place of who I am without the alcohol and I have had to acknowledge that there is a lot of grieving around that as well. I am determined to keep coming to meetings, to keep listening to you because

my head wants to tell me that it wasn't that bad, and I have to be wary of that voice. Every day when I wake up, I am so grateful for not having a hangover. I get strength in these rooms. It is great to be in a room of sober alcoholics; much more than active alcoholics - pubs aren't fun. So, I will keep on coming back and I am so grateful to you all for being here.

R. AA

(February 2020 Issue of The News Magazine)

Loneliness & Isolation

Loneliness and isolation are familiar states to most of us. We often protected our insecurities by hiding out, believing that we'd survive if others didn't know who we really were. But we discovered that our insecurities multiplied.

The remedy is people—talking to people, exposing our insecurities to them, risking, risking, risking.

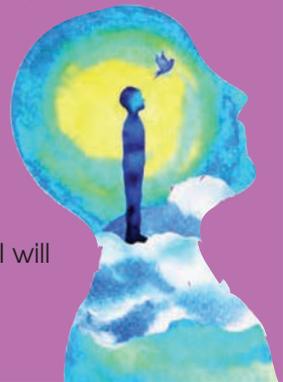
Sharing our mutual vulnerabilities helps us see how fully alike we are. Our most hated shortcoming is not unique, and that brings relief. It's so easy to feel utterly shamed in isolation. Hearing another say "I understand. I struggle with ... too," lifts the shame, the dread, the burden of silence. The program has taught us that secrets make us sick, and the longer we protect them, the greater are our struggles.

The program promises fulfilment, serenity, achievement when we willingly share our lives.

Each day we can lighten our burdens and help another lighten theirs, too.

I will be alert today to the needs of others. I will risk sharing. I will be a purveyor of tranquility.

A., West Cork



Whose Recovery is it

My first experience of Rooms was in February 2019 while in rehab – three days sober, second time in rehab. I’d never been interested in AA due to the God reputation it has! The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions banners behind the chair kind of backed that up – having words related to God in most of the statements. The day I got home from rehab I dutifully went to a meeting which was a little daunting – 29 days sober walking into a small local meeting where everyone knew everyone else. It had always been a group of us from the rehab, going into these massive West London meetings. The welcome was very friendly, much more so than in the large London meetings. Did a few meetings a week, shared a bit, didn’t see the point of repeating the same old readings every meeting and what the hell was the point of the 15-minute break, why not just do the extra 15 minutes and move on. Didn’t read the book or anything else, just kept coming back.

I stayed sober long enough to get my two-month chip, just before waking up in hospital after drinking two litres of vodka and a packet of sleeping tablets. I have no knowledge of anything after starting the vodka, it was certainly not a premeditated suicide attempt, but I’m told they could not get an output from me for two hours so I guess

that means it was close to being suicide. Over the next nine months I continued to go to AA but struggled to string together much more than a month sober at a time. Just going to meetings and sharing didn’t work to keep me sober. After five or six months I got a sponsor, I chose an old timer who had successfully sponsored many people, but I never progressed beyond reading bits of the Big Book with him. After about nine months in the Fellowship had yet another relapse – this one was major, waking up in a police station with criminal charges. After that I had a hardened resolve to progress with the Steps. The Higher Power required for Step Two made starting even Step One (which I’d admitted years ago) difficult. I wasn’t working and had time, I was doing between two and four meetings a day. Over the next month or so I came to see my way of resolving my Higher Power and became desperate to commence with my Steps. But for one reason or another my original sponsor still made no progress on my Steps. Then early in lockdown I had a massive relapse which again resulted in police cells and criminal charges.

This was the final straw, I parted ways with my original sponsor and asked someone I’d only seen in the wonderful video conference meetings to be my sponsor. He gave me his ‘rules’

to be sponsored by him. I almost bit his hand off - the 'rules' made absolute sense to me. So later that day we had a chat on the phone so he could get to know a bit about me. After the call he sent me what he wanted me to do on a daily basis, a reading to do, a daily journal etc and also the work he wanted me to do towards Step One. I followed the instructions and completed them overnight (the wonders of insomnia). Then a couple of days later we had another chat and finished off with the Step One prayer, and finally, after 15 months of going to meetings but only a week or two of actually working the Programme, Step One was completed.

I never once thought of, let alone wanted, a drink

I then received the work required for Step Two. Did that over the next couple of days, had a chat and Step Two was done. No 'Road to Damascus' moment or bolt of lightning, but just felt a lot better - thought it was just the relief of finally getting progress on the Steps. Received the work required for Step Three, had my divorce settlement coming up so expected it to take a bit longer. The day before the Financial Dispute Resolution meeting was scheduled, I had a lot of questions to answer for my solicitor, but in between those I did the Step Four work, which probably helped keep my

head straight. The following day came the dreaded meeting, most of the day was spent on the phone to my solicitor and barrister, with a bit of virtual time in court. Net result was nil - the day ended up with no progress. A few weeks previously I'd have been yelling, shouting, swearing, breaking things, even before I drank. Where I'd have ended up after that I dread to think!!! But, throughout the whole day, I never once thought of, let alone wanted, a drink.

Over the following weekend things got very stressful again, I even had to go out to the shops in the afternoon - picked up some bits for breakfast, ordered my fags and despite the booze being behind the counter I didn't even think about a drink let alone crave a drink. I've still got all the consequences to deal with - the operations are indefinitely delayed, the sciatica and arthritis are getting worse, currently the divorce looks like it will go to a final hearing, over six months away, with high financial costs. I'm on 18 months' probation, six months alcohol treatment, with two criminal cases outstanding - one which may result in the loss of my driving licence!

But today I have the serenity to accept the things I cannot change and feel a lot better about everything - the last thing I want to do is have a drink and hope that will continue, one day at a time.

AL

(Share Magazine September 2020)



Isolation and Structure

My name is 'M', and I am an alcoholic. Before coming to Alcoholics Anonymous I lived in fear, blackout, and isolation. I drank in darkened rooms alone, I pushed family, friends, and well-intentioned do-gooders away. I had fear around people, shop assistants, making telephone calls and any form of conversation or conflict. My drinking escalated to where I became so far removed from reality, I lived in constant blackout isolation. I had no structure to my day, I woke up either drunk, hung over or dreading the consequences of the days before. My life had no path, no structure -just self-centred fear, wrapped with resentment and self-pity.

**My life had no path,
no structure -just self-
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self-pity**

After getting to an AA meeting I was given a daily plan of action - wake up and pray for a sober day, review my gratitude list, read the Big Book, call newcomers like me and call my sponsor on time. After doing these few simple suggestions I woke up -I felt some hope, I started to recognise my alcoholism and reading the Big Book educated me around the

disease I suffered with. I had a structured day, I set my alarm in the morning and went to bed at the same time nearly every night. I had something to do, I committed myself to AA and my home group, attending three meetings a week. I had a purpose. I worked the Steps and now live in the last three. I still maintain my sobriety by sticking to the simple suggestions and structure my sponsor gave me. I keep it simple; I stick close to my home group meetings and will attend other meetings if only for the newcomer.

**After doing these few
simple suggestions I
woke up -I felt some
hope, I started to
recognise my alcoholism**

At this current time, I know I need to maintain my sobriety by keeping my daily structure, setting that alarm, keeping it simple, taking longer on my suggestions and developing my relationship with my Higher Power. Reaching out to the newcomer the best way I can. I no longer fear the company of others or myself. My gratitude for AA and my home group lies with the actions I put into it.

MW

*Road to Recovery, Plymouth
(Share Magazine September 2020)*

A Meditation

Meditation is a special grace
A gift from the allness of pure space
A state in which all things appear
A dimensionless beingness a uni-sphere

It surely happens when the self's away
Where the egoic world cannot hold sway
For silence 'tween the notes there has to be
To allow the music that sets the spirit free

When am I up for parole with the hope of release?
Incarcerated here by my thoughts and fears
What rehabilitation do I now need
To qualify for the freedom for which my spirit bleeds?

In my search for meditation I only push it away
For meditation's a paradox, all effort's a delay
My psyche needs cleaning my sins washed away
It may take many lifetimes for my debts to repay

My disposition is not right I'm not spiritually evolved
To be graced with the esteem of the ethereal sound
But this inverted pride when turned on its head
Is just another imagined identity, again I'm misled

I cannot think myself into meditation
It's a place free of thought
It includes everything there
Yet no-thing is caught

My problem is simple, it's this notion of self
Meditation cannot be where a meditator dwells
Please stop the distraction I appeal to myself
Help me to freedom, I'll let go of all else

The simple's not easy it thwarts the egoic me
Letting go is openness, grabbing and holding I'm never free
It's clear what needs happening, be it knowing or not
See it for what it is, and let no-thingness work.

LOB

(Attributed to the impersonal consciousness)



Experience Strength and Hope

My name is S. and I'm an alcoholic. I grew up in Ireland in a very normal household. I never saw any alcoholism in my childhood, my parents didn't even drink. We had a bar and I remember as a young child being fascinated with the bar it was a manly space and guys would come in and drink a large bottle of Guinness and maybe a whiskey with it, lean on the counter and talk about manly things. They smoked cigarettes and I couldn't wait to join them. I took a drink around the same time as a lot of my friends around the young teenage years. We were doing normal things that normal guys do, a few bottles of beer behind the hedge on the way to a teenage disco and it gave me the ability to talk to girls, to dance, to fit in. I never really liked the taste but I really liked the effects and I suppose I took every opportunity I got to take a drink but that wasn't often because we didn't have much money and we had parents. When I left school, I went to college and my drinking took off. I could drink on a Monday lunchtime or on Wednesday evening, there was always company to drink with. I never realised it but even at this time alcohol started to make

decisions for me. It had taken sports from my life as I couldn't train or discipline myself and because I was partying so much I failed my exams and then I got a job for the summer so I didn't retake my exams. I now had a job and money and I got used to being able to fund my life, I thought myself very grown up. Eventually I did go back to college, but I changed course to an easier course where I wouldn't have to study so I could drink away.

**I was drinking daily,
I was justifying
everything by saying
"I work hard, and I
play hard"**

I got a job in the west of Ireland and there, things really escalated, I was drinking daily, I was justifying everything by saying "I work hard, and I play hard". I was very accepting of the drinking life, there were plenty of blackouts, hangovers, broken promises, broken relationships, broken hearts but I accepted everything. I just thought it was all part of life but then the consequences began to become more serious.

I began to get arrested, sacked, evicted, among other things but none of these things stopped me drinking.

I couldn't remember the sequence of events; things were very hazy and there was an awful lot about my behaviour that I didn't like. I started doing something that I know today as "geographical", moving to a new place with different people so I could leave problems behind me and every time I moved the same thing happened. I'd have a new job, a new girlfriend and a new town, everything would work for a while, I'd behave myself but then I'd start to drink as I only know how and the trouble would start and everything I had built up I'd pull down around my ears. I did this a number of times in my 20s and I always blamed other people. I never blamed myself and I never ever blamed alcohol. At the age of 27 I ended up very drunk one night after being ejected from a local nightclub I was drinking alone in a bar in which I worked. I was drinking a pint of Guinness and I fell off the stool and split my head open on a flagstone floor. I knew, somehow that the game was up, and I rang an ambulance to come and get me. That was my last drink to date. Plenty of more serious things had happened to me previous to this but this was my "moment of clarity".

Sometime after this I went to a doctor and told him about my

drinking. He gave me the number of a member of Alcoholics Anonymous. Reluctantly I made the phone call, and I didn't realise it at the time, but this was the greatest decision that I ever made. I remember nothing about my first meeting, only that I was there, and I went to another one, the date was the 29th of February 1996.

I owe Alcoholics Anonymous my life; it has shown me how to live a worthwhile life

Today I have a great life, full of potential and possibilities. I've done lots of things in sobriety, I've got married, I moved to Spain and moved back to Ireland, I have taken jobs, I have left jobs, I've taken holidays, I've climbed mountains and I have even jumped out of an aeroplane. I owe Alcoholics Anonymous my life; it has shown me how to live a worthwhile life with the full knowledge of my place within the world. I hope to have many more sober years ahead of me, living life on life's terms, one day at a time.

If alcohol is costing you more money, maybe this could work for you too, don't be afraid to make the first step. I was, but the hand of fellowship is always out.

SW

Book Review

Living Sober

For many, and most of us perhaps, the very action of going to our first meeting was possibly the most daunting prospect, and most courageous decision, we have ever contemplated. We admitted defeat, and to paraphrase The AA big book, "We finally admitted that alcohol had us licked"

Equally newcomers are presented with The AA banners, The 12 steps and the 12 Traditions, along with a series of seemingly simple quotes, Easy Does it, Think ThinkThink, First Things First.... These often confront the newcomer along with The Serenity Prayer.

These suggestions, bi-lines and ideas are not only strange, but the language is hardly "current" and speaks of an earlier age in what seems like formal, if not a foreign sounding language too. How best to navigate this new territory, which is how to stay sober on a daily basis?

All too frequently the newcomer may ask him/herself when listening to the sharing of those who have been sober a while "it's all very well for you". All of us as newcomers have doubtless asked similar questions in those early days.

Often, the AA Big Book and the information in each chapter

initially may seem "out of reach" in terms of how it might help in establishing a new way of living. Living Sober is a practical primer, a comprehensive set of actions that successfully assist the newcomer to navigate how they can stay sober.

Living Sober is a practical primer, a comprehensive set of actions that successfully assist the newcomer to navigate how they can stay sober.

In the absence of a drink, on a daily basis, the newcomer is still confronted with the simple fact that everything about their lives must be prefaced by abstinence from alcohol, and the fact that old ideas behaviours no longer work. They must change everything and nothing.

Much of what is written is a new blueprint for "Self-Care" for those in early sobriety, laid out sequentially in plain language, and the information can be simply understood and applied. At my own home group, Living

Sober is frequently bought by group members and gifted to the newcomer, allowing the newcomer to “become part of” and longer term is a very useful and vital tool to assist the newcomer to stay sober on a daily basis providing a sound basis for early and on-going sobriety.

Living Sober also provides a very important link between older group members providing both a discussion point and a sharing point for both.

RP
(Mainstay October/November 2020)

The 12 steps for Dummies

1 - 3 Give Up

4 - 6 Clean Up

7 - 9 Make up

10 - 12 Grow Up



Heard at Meetings

“ If I don't fit into AA, I don't fit into life ”

“ Yield to all and you will soon have nothing to yield ”

“ My Higher Power can move mountains - I just need to bring a shovel.
Ever Grateful & Recovering Daily ”

“ The best product to invest in is your sobriety ”

“ Never allow fear to be your master ”

“ I am an alcoholic, I'm human...I forget... I need AA ”

“ That one 'Shot' is a killer ”

“ Never allow myself to think I'm smarter than alcohol ”

“ You can stop...whatever is not helping you ”

Miracles do happen

MMy name is T., and I'm an alcoholic. My sobriety date is April 22nd 2014. After 30 years of drinking, I came to Alcoholic Anonymous ready to admit defeat, and was in a complete mess physically, mentally and spiritually.

My life up until then had been a series of terrific highs and many, many, many terrible low's. I suppose if I'm honest, my two wonderful children are pretty much all I could show on the positive side, for a 30-year stint as an active alcoholic. I'm certainly not one for ever giving up on anything, but alcohol eventually had me beat. At those early meetings, I must have seen and heard something that kept me coming back. And certainly, those now familiar phases, didn't at the time really mean anything to me. Phrases like, 'Keep coming back' and 'give it away to keep it' we're all I seemed to hear. To be honest, they did get a bit boring and repetitive. I may have even felt a little sorry for those poor souls repeatedly saying the same things, seemingly at every meeting I went to. I was not an easy customer to deal with. Selfishness and self-seeking should have been tattooed on my forehead. My story is really about how not to get sober. I did in AA, what I've done all my life and took the most painful, dangerous and stupid road

possible. I'm quite frankly, my own worst enemy. Because I just won't listen. I never have. And for anyone out there who's new around, don't copy what I did in those first 8 years of sobriety. It was without a doubt, the most painful, degrading, humiliating and utterly stupid journey to take. But the one good thing I did do, yes just one, that eventually was my savvier and probably saved my life, was to 'keep coming back'. I'm 6 years sober now as I did have 2 years prior to that but drank. in those dark, dark, years I just existed. That's all.

My story is really about how not to get sober. I did in AA, what I've done all my life and took the most painful, dangerous and stupid road possible. I'm quite frankly, my own worst enemy

I did everything I was told not to do. I broke all the 'rules'. I rubbished any advice I was given. I was, to be honest, looking back, a complete nightmare. But do you know what, no one ever gave up on me. I completely wore out any sponsor I had. I



was a one-woman destruction machine. I suppose AA became my own personal dating site. Not a good idea, but that's what I did. I went through the steps, but to be honest, my heart and soul were elsewhere. I went through the steps many times with many people. Well meaning, salt of the earth, wonderful AA members.

But, alas, I just wasn't ready. I joined a home group, I did all the service, I became secretary, I sat up the front all tidy and looking good, arranging the lighting and all the scenery. But inside I was dead. I had so many sponsors in that time, but just didn't like being told what to do. I had found the power I needed to stop drinking, but that was all. Underneath I was just a dry drunk. I sat in the rooms all serene and humble, but underneath, I was a time bomb waiting to go off. I just never knew what it was all about to be frank. Life in AA was not dissimilar to my drinking life.

Everyone else seemed to have the rule book except Tina. Everyone else seemed to be getting on with life, moving forward and achieving, except Tina. It was life repeatedly itself. But I did keep coming back as I knew my options were limited. And there was nowhere else to go. Please, anyone out there, who's going through the same, don't give up until the miracle happens. And I'm so glad I didn't. Just before lockdown, I was in one of my regular meetings. And something happened. Eight long years it took me, and I'd hit my

emotional and spiritual Rock bottom that was my higher power moment. I met the person who was to change my life around. I was ready to listen. I was ready to do as I was told. My way was just not working and hadn't been for years and years I was so desperate to have a happy and healthy sobriety and to eventually have a contented life, I threw in the towel. I'm not proud of my journey, I'm not happy with the pain and misery I caused. I'm not good at making the right decisions, but for the first time in my life I reached out honestly and asked for help. Best decision I've ever made.

'When the patients ready, the teacher will appear. And that's the night, in that meeting, my life started.

And My life started with a very simple question. 'Will you be my sponsor?' I'd had so many previous sponsors. This time I felt different. The key to my willingness was inside of me. And I just unlocked the door to a new freedom and a new happiness. I was sick and tired of being sick and tired. I was desperate to have a happy strong, contented sobriety. After 8 years sitting in meeting after meeting, I just wanted a happy contented life. My new sponsor took me through the 12 steps, slowly, methodically, and in a way I could understand. And if I couldn't understand anything, we went over each step time after time after time, until I fully understood each step before I moved onto the



next one. Nothing I could see would make me feel good on a continuous basis'. This was the first lesson I was taken through and it started me on a long and spiritually strong journey. Painful at times but essential for my recovery. Relationships, jewellery, clothes, alcohol and watches were all things I'd used all my life to fulfil the emptiness inside of me. Nothing had made me feel good and fulfilled continuously. It's what I felt inside that I now realised really counted, towards a sober, safe and spiritually strong future. I'd lived in a blurred bewildered world. I'd started a programme of change that I was finally enthusiastic about. I don't know who, what or why the invisible switch of hope was finally switched on. But it did. At long last I phoned my sponsor daily, as agreed. I was at last eager to learn, to write and to soak up all there was to know about the 12 steps. I was like a child with a big new sponge. The more I soaked up about sobriety, the steps and my new spiritual journey, the more I wanted. I was set homework every evening. And I wrote and wrote and wrote. And the next evening I wrote and wrote and wrote some more. What had changed this time going through the steps, I just don't know. In step 3, I went to my dad's grave and honestly asked for help for the first time in my life. I prayed and reached out for help. And on that warm summer's day, with powder blue skies, at my Dads grave, for the

first time ever, I had a conscious contact with a higher power. I had in the words of Bill W, I had arrived. I had been reborn. Finally , at long last , I wasn't alone. I felt a calmness and a strength inside I'd never experienced before I was now walking hand in hand with my creator, with my higher power. It had been a long, long journey. Such a painful, destructive, stupid journey. But I'd got there. Finally, all those lost years I'd felt inadequate, less than and nothing were over. I was now a part of Alcoholics Anonymous. We went through the 12 steps, word for word. I just loved and lived every bit of the 12 step recovery program. I've made a commitment to my higher power. And I knew as long as I keep focused on my recovery, all will be ok.

And 'just for today' it's ok.

10 months on, I speak to my sponsor every day.

I love the changes my new sobriety has brought into my life.

And I never want to go back to the grey and unvarnished years.

Please god, keep guiding me.

Keep prodding me to keep going.

And above all keep keeping it simple for me.

You never gave up on me.

So, I'm not going to give up on you.

You gave me a second, and then a third chance of a changed life.

And believe me, miracles really do happen.

T., Bristol.

Home group. Staplehill Steps and Traditions Group.

The Twelve Steps in Plain English

1. Alcohol will kill me.
2. There's a Power that wants me to live.
3. Do I want to live or die? (if you want to die, stop here)
4. Write about how I got to where I am.
5. Tell another person all about me (let god listen).
6. Want to change.
7. Ask a power greater than me to help me change.
8. Write down who I've hurt.
9. Fix what I can without hurting anyone else.
10. Accept that I'm human and will screw up. Fix it immediately.
11. Ask a power greater than me to show me how to live.
12. Keep doing 1 and pass it on.

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

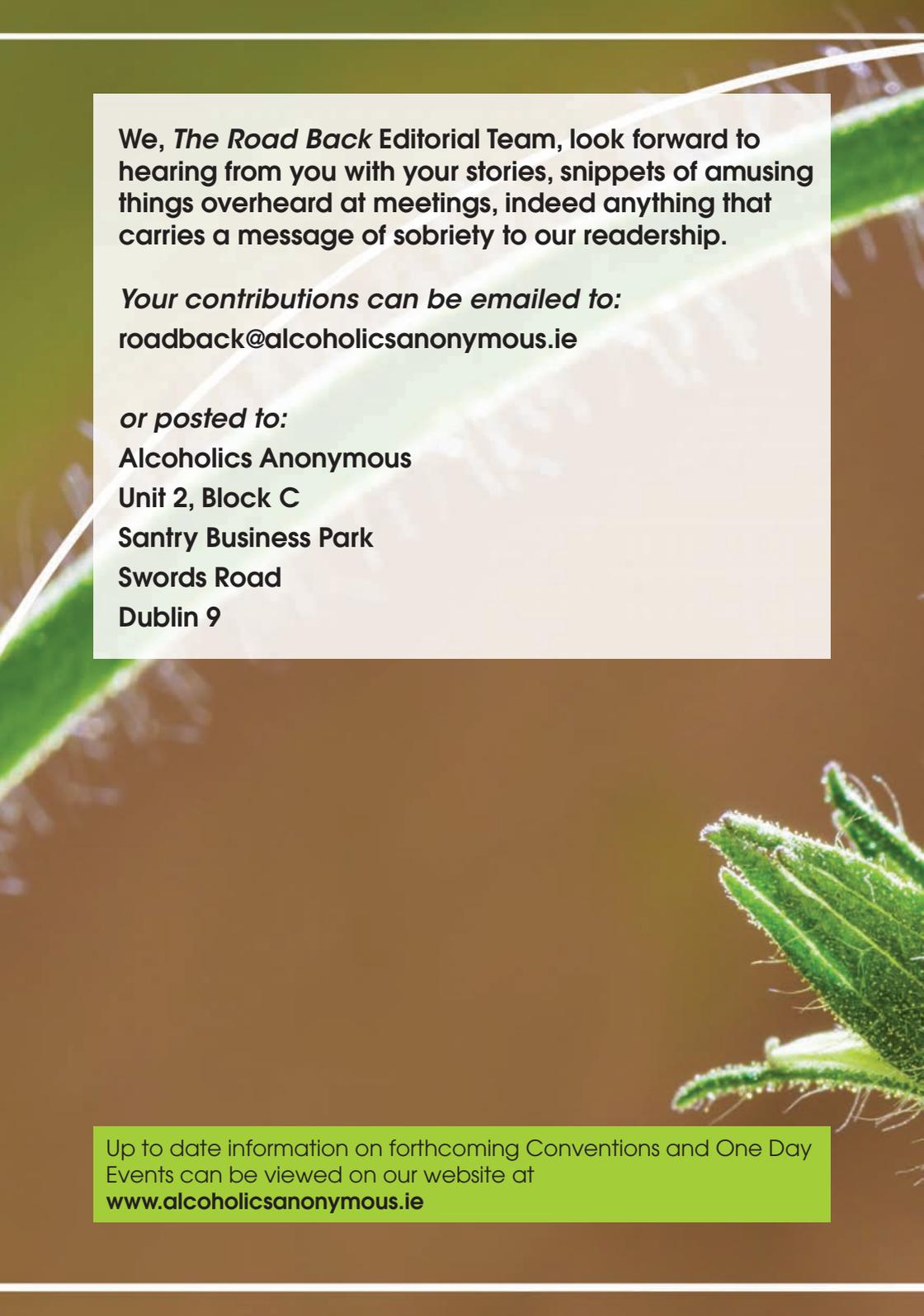
The Twelve Steps

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