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The Road Back

Jan/Feb 2019 - Issue 420

Step



Nine

“First we will wish to be reasonably certain that we are on the A.A. beam. Then we are ready to go to these people, to tell them what A.A. is, and what we are trying to do. Against this background we can freely admit the damage we have done and make our apologies. We can pay, or promise to pay, whatever obligations, financial or otherwise, we owe. The generous response of most people to such quiet sincerity will often astonish us. Even our severest and most justified critics will frequently meet us more than halfway on the first trial”

(Twelve & Twelve page 84 & 85)

A word from the Editor

In days gone by 'domestic economies' were a dominant feature of family life. Clothes were recycled in the family and eventually after being 'worn out fully', were given over to the 'ragman' who called every so often and rewarded the contribution of the handful of rags with a trinket or small toy.

Clothes were regularly mended and patched, often using contrasting materials which added colour and eccentricity to the garment. There was even an imaginative comic strip feature at the time of a schoolboy who had a magic patch on his trousers.

The mending of socks was a regular feature in households and it is something that is rarely if ever done today in our 'throw-away' world. My own mother wasn't a star pupil when it came to needlework. However, she more than compensated when mending socks. Be it the heel or the toe she darned those holes with a mend that was stronger than the original sock fabric itself.

I fondly recall the homeliness of the handiwork with kindly sentiment especially when I think of our Step Nine. It can often be the case that the 'amend' makes for a far stonger bond in the relationship going forward.

Step Nine is where we set right our side of the street. It is a further Step in the surrender process and another Step in the execution of our Step Three i.e. 'to be relieved of the bondage of self'.

This Step stresses the prerequisite for prudence and making amends may not

always be prudent in certain circumstances. However, this caveat is not meant as a rationalization to defer action where it is called for.

"None of us goes out to play bad golf" was one response from a businessman to whom I approached on my amends mission. I had offered to make restitution for an order which I had reneged upon.

To be greeted in such a fashion restores one's faith in the human race. There are good, fine people out there and responses of such like show a wonderful attitude and a very healthy disposition if not a most forgiving spirituality.

We AAs have much to learn from 'ordinary' people. In making our approaches for this step we adopt a similar attitude to drink. We are neither cocky nor afraid. While we are neither servile nor scraping to anyone neither are we there to take 'vicarious' pleasure.

As per our Big Book our Twelve Promises begin to reveal themselves after Step Nine. Curiously it is only after Step Nine that the BB reveals that by this time we will have been restored to sanity!

Step Nine allows us to look the world in the eye and yet walk humbly under God. Love and tolerance is our code. We stop fighting anyone or anything. We quit the debating society. And when we react emotionally we are wrong!

*A thousand goodnesses to you and
yours for 2019*

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) 8420700

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Issue 420 January/February 2019

Step Nine

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Photos courtesy of Ken O'S

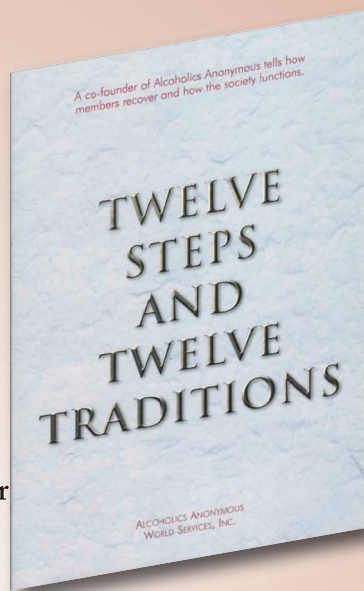
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The Twelve and Twelve Extracts

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Step Nine

“Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.”



A summary of Step Nine in the Contents Page of the Twelve and Twelve.

A tranquil mind is the first requisite for good judgment.

Good timing is important in making amends.

What is courage?

Prudence means taking calculated chances.

Amends begin when we join A.A.

Peace of mind cannot be bought at the expense of others.

Need for discretion.

Readiness to take consequences of our past and to take responsibility for well-being of others is spirit of Step Nine.

A SHARING ON STEP 9

“Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.”

How can I make amends when I am walking around with so much guilt for what I had done in my past? Wait! Do not rush in and try to make amends. I could cause more pain to those I am making amends to.

I have not had a drink since I came to Alcoholics Anonymous. Miracles do happen in AA and I am very grateful that I have been given the gift of sobriety. I have a home group which today is the Ballygarrett Group of Alcoholics Anonymous. The home group has been very good for me ever since I went to my first AA meeting there.

In the first few years of AA I did a lot of meetings. One Friday night on my arrival an ‘Old Timer’ said to me “What’s the matter with your toes son”? I replied “there is nothing wrong with my toes”. The ‘Old Timer’ then said “Well get your head up. You’re sober aren’t you?” This experience made me look at myself and I remembered what I had heard at the meetings and read in my ‘Big Book’ i.e. that being of help to others

and my sharing my past is the key that releases me from all the guilt I felt for most of my life.

I was already with my third AA sponsor, who is still in my life today. I re-looked at my Step 8 list (which, for me is the preparation Step to plan making amends).

At home my wife and two young children seemed a lot happier with me not drinking. My wife had heard me say sorry so many times before and then soon after I would be doing the same thing that I had apologised for. When I am genuine about making amends I get a good feeling inside. I eventually stopped saying sorry. At home I stopped my childish behavior. I started to be supportive even though I sometimes lost my way. I began to share with my wife instead of running away. I still made mistakes at home. The feeling of being a failure and beating myself up stopped. We went on family holidays. I even came third in a ‘Drag Contest’. There were twenty entrants. I was delighted. My sponsor said “Thank God you didn’t win it. We would never have heard the last of it!” Altered Attitudes and Action are key. This is a program of action. Am I the same person at home as I am in the AA rooms? My message in making amends means more than

just saying sorry.

My parents separated when I was young and I never saw my mother again alive. I was able to attend her funeral. I had discovered that my mum was in hospital dying and I arranged to visit her the next day. An hour later I got a phone call to say she had died. I was very upset. I was angry. It was a Monday night and I went to an AA meeting. I did not share. After the meeting I spoke to a lady member who went to the same meetings as I did. I shared with her what had happened. She suggested I write a letter to her. I replied "But she is dead." She said "just write the letter". I went home and wrote it. When I read what I had written I could see it was like a little boy writing to his mum. When I went to my mum's funeral in the Roman Catholic Church next to the RC school where I attended as a boy. The priest spoke to me and my brother and told us that he had known our mum for twenty years and did not know that she had three sons. He had only met my three sisters. My eldest brother chose not to attend my mother's funeral. I placed the letter that I had written to my mum on top of her coffin just before it was lowered into the ground.

Step Nine is an essential part of my

recovery. When I look in the mirror each morning I no longer see my head bowed. I have freedom. One Day At A Time I continue on my 'Sobriety Road'. I have shared my experience strength and hope and thank Alcoholics Anonymous for continuing to be there for me.

Love in Fellowship (Ireland)

Declaration of Unity

*This we owe to A.A.'s future:
To place our common welfare first;
To keep our fellowship united.
For on A.A. unity depend our lives;
and the lives of those to come.*



Responsibility Declaration

I am responsible.
When anyone, anywhere,
reaches out for help,
I want the hand of AA always to be there.
And for that: I am responsible.

Extract from “Dry Drunk”

(Compliments of The Grapevine June 2017)

Fortunately I had been around AA just enough to see that it worked. I saw people who had their lives transformed. I joined a home group and looked around for someone who had what I wanted, and asked him to sponsor me. We started right back at Step 1 and went through the Steps and the Big Book. This was the first time in 6 years I realized Step 1 has two parts. I knew I was powerless over alcohol (that one was too many and 48 was not enough) but hadn't noticed the dash that follows, and then, “that our lives had become unmanageable.” I always thought I should dig in and solve my problems myself. I didn't know trying to run my life by self-will is the same as unmanageability.

When my sponsor and I got to the Step 9, I had a lot of amends to make, mostly financial. I owed a lot of people, businesses and financial institutions a lot of money. Through my sponsor, AA, and God, I made a repayment plan for everyone and today I am 80% paid off. The one person I couldn't pay off was my mother. I “borrowed” a lot of money from her and she was so old there would not be time to pay her back. But what I did do was to be there for her, helping her to live independently. My mother passed away last Christmas at the age of 93. Because of AA I had the privilege of making a proper living amends to my mother and I felt at peace knowing I did the best I could.

When I finished the Steps with my sponsor, I asked him: “What do I do now?” He said: “Now we take this message to the suffering alcoholic.” I have had the privilege to sponsor a bunch of guys, lead meetings in detox centers and prisons,

serve as Intergroup Chairperson and Social Committee Chairperson. I speak whenever I am asked, and unless I have another commitment, I never refuse a service request.

Over the last 5 years, I have used the principles of the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions in all my affairs, and my life has transformed beyond my wildest dreams. The lady I met when I was living at the cottage is still my wife, and together we are building a beautiful life. I started up another company 2 years ago, running it on the basis of the 12 Traditions of AA. Finally, I have let go of the need to “run it all myself”, and the success of this business is beyond my wildest dreams.

I now understand that, when I let God look after everything outside of me and I look after accepting that, my life gets better. Life run on self will never work for me, but when I let go and let God, everything works out.

-- Mark R.

Barrie, Ontario

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Finding myself (extract)

Compliments of The Grapevine Jan 2019

An emotional journey to find her birth mother revealed a beautiful truth of her own

Then I quit drinking and went to AA. In sobriety, I have learned to do things differently. I have learned a lot from my past experiences. This time I decided that I did not want to show up out of the blue again and drop a bomb on my birth mother's doorstep. So I asked a cousin of mine who was still in contact with her to let her know that I would like to reconnect.

She was agreeable and seemed happy that I was willing to meet.

Our initial conversation was nice. She sounded well and, for the moment, sane. She has emphysema and likely doesn't have much longer left to live, I was told. She asked me if I wanted to come visit, and I said yes. We decided that my birthday would be a good time to meet, so I bought a ticket and hoped for the best.

Before I even began the process of going to see her again, I fully accepted that she is not a well person. I knew what the risks were, given my previous experience. I am a very different person than I was before I got sober. I have the Steps and the Fellowship of AA to thank for that. I can look at my mother from a place of love, compassion and forgiveness. I knew I might be opening up old wounds again, but I felt ready and prepared no matter the outcome. I wanted the door to be open.

Since speaking to her, I have received two letters. The first letter said she was not ready to meet me. The second letter said not to come at all. The trip was off.

I read those words with no surprise. Yes, there was a feeling of disappointment. Yes, I felt bad that she might die and we will never be able to see or embrace one another again. Yes, I felt rejection—yet again. But there were also feelings of acceptance. And for some reason, this time I felt OK. Something had changed. I had done my part. I accepted and I forgave. The door remains open to her.

I am currently at a place in my recovery where I'm trying to figure out who the hell I am. I still have no idea, really. Am I a product of my birth mother? Am I a product of my adoptive family? I want to know what makes me me. My biological

mother is not well. Am I just like her?

Then one rainy Friday afternoon, the miracle happened. I was in my bedroom meditating, asking God to help me heal. I needed an answer. I needed some direction and help to find myself. "Who am I?" I asked.

And then the answer came. It was loud and abundantly clear. God could have come down from heaven himself and handed me the memo: "I created you. You come from me."

In that moment, I understood this to mean that I am not a product of anyone else but God. God created me, exactly as God wanted me to be. God chose my experiences to form me into the person that I am. God personally handcrafted me and has been molding me every day of my existence. Before my birth mother, before my adoptive parents and before me, there was God. That is the direct link to who I am, and that is what I have been overlooking in this quest to find myself. And what I now know is that I get to choose. I don't have to be like my birth mother. I don't have to share her fate. I get to cocreate what God made me to be. I get to choose whether I drink or I am sober. I get to choose whether to love or to resent. I can choose to be the person that I want to be.

The question of who I am cannot be answered because the truth is ... I am always evolving. And the answer to what I've been seeking all of my life has finally been revealed ... I know where I really come from. That's the true gift in my life.

-- Tereson D.

New Orleans, Louisiana

Blindfolded

I was traveling on a journey. the Lone Ranger
A journey of the will as a stranger
Got tagged and labelled with a heavy moniker
Of being an out-and-out, absolute head banger
Looking like a wood pecker without a beak
Banging of doors and units over the kitchen sink
Unstable and unable to focus and think
Viewing the damage done and not being able to see the drink
That cool clear 'wash-away your troubles' powerful punch
Taken anytime including breakfast, dinner and lunch
Cunningly holding onto my heart and caressing my soul
Its power all consuming - the ultimate control
Flickering a multitude of switches, baffling me and everyone
And when it's finished, then all is lost and it has won.

DAMIAN B (2017)

GROUPS PURCHASE OF LITERATURE

The purchase of our literature through GSO and CSO helps us remain self-supporting through our own contributions. The matter is considered under Warranty 2 of Article 12 of the Twelve Concepts of World Service.

“Some of us have another concern, and this is related to the so called book “profits”. The fact that A.A. Headquarters and most of the groups sell books for more than they cost is thought to be spiritually bad, but is this sort of non commercial book income really profit after all? Bill goes on to say ”In my view it is not, this set income to the group sent to A.A.’s General Service is actually the sum of a great many contributions which the book buyers make to the general welfare of A.A. The certain and continuous solvency of our services rest squarely upon these contributions.

Warranty 2 of Article 12, Twelve Concepts.

The Twelve and Twelve - references to 'Happy' and 'Happiness' continued..

But whenever we had to choose between character and comfort, the character-building was lost in the dust of our chase after what we thought was happiness. Seldom did we look at character-building as something desirable in itself, something we would like to strive for whether our instinctual needs were met or not. We never thought of making honesty, tolerance, and true love of man and God the daily basis of living.

Page 72

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Sarcastically he asked, 'How much does your scheme cost?'

I was thankful I could tell him, 'Nothing at all.'

His next question: 'What are you getting out of it?'

"Of course, my answer was 'My own sobriety and a mighty happy life.'"

Still dubious, he demanded, 'Do you really mean the only reason you are here is to try and help me and to help yourself?'

'Yes,' I said. 'That's absolutely all there is to it. There's no angle.'

Pg 152 Tradition Five

∞∞∞∞∞

Since recovery from alcoholism is life itself to us, it is imperative that we preserve in full strength our means of survival.

Maybe this sounds as though the alcoholics in A.A. had suddenly gone peaceable, and become one great big happy family. Of course, this isn't so at all. Human beings that we are, we squabble. Before we leveled off a bit,

Pg. 177 Tradition Ten

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Yes, there is a substitute and it is vastly more than that. It is a fellowship in Alcoholics Anonymous.

There you will find release from care, boredom and worry. Your imagination will be fired. Life will mean something at last. The most satisfactory years of your existence lie ahead. Thus we find the fellowship, and so will you.....

Abandon yourself to God as you understand God. Admit your faults to Him and to your fellows. Clear away the wreckage of your past. Give freely of what you find and join us. We shall be with you in the Fellowship of the Spirit, and you will surely meet some of us as you trudge the Road of Happy Destiny.

May God bless you and keep you-until then.

Chapter 11, A Vision For You

A Psalm of Life

Tell me not, in mournful numbers,
Life is but an empty dream!
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
And things are not what they seem.

Life is real! Life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal;
Dust thou art, to dust returnest,
Was not spoken of the soul.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,
Is our destined end or way;
But to act, that each to-morrow
Find us farther than to-day.

Art is long, and Time is fleeting,
And our hearts, though stout and brave,
Still, like muffled drums, are beating
Funeral marches to the grave.

In the world's broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of Life,
Be not like dumb, driven cattle!
Be a hero in the strife!

Trust no Future, howe'er pleasant!
Let the dead Past bury its dead!
Act,—act in the living Present!
Heart within, and God o'erhead!

Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time;

Footprints, that perhaps another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing, shall take heart again.

Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait.

By

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Step Nine. Feeling Hope

I think Step Nine was the most impactful Step I did as I worked through them. Each one is important and has its own place but for me it's only been the practice of inventory taking that has had great impact. Learning to recognise my character defects is work in progress but making amends, directly was an enormous event. Not that anyone reacted badly or even particularly looked surprised, but it was the effect it had on me. That clearing away the wreckage of the past was well overdue and I was sick of carrying my 'sorry's' around with me. It was time for action.

With my dad it had to be short as our relationship was so bad he could barely stand being in the room with me. I simply said "I'm sorry that communication between us has been so bad" and since then it hasn't been. Such is the power of this programme. My mum cried, my sister raged a bit and the rest were pretty underwhelming except that I felt better. In fact by the time I got to the end of the list I felt like a blank piece of paper and ready to start anew. I'd done everything I could and it was time to move on. I felt HOPE and I'm not prone to that ...

I pass on these tips as they have been invaluable: I was warned that my ego would reassert itself at some stage and sure enough before each amend, as I walked towards the person concerned, my head was saying, "You weren't that bad, you don't need to do this." So I did what my friend Lynn had suggested and prayed for the humility

to carry out the amend. It worked. I also made amends to my dead grandparents by writing a letter and sitting by their graves. Reading out where I had failed as a granddaughter. I then burnt the letters and planted flowers over the ashes so that I could see something beautiful grow out of my efforts.

It is still the Step that moves me most when I hear others' experiences of it. There is nothing like watching others recover their relationships and it invariably makes me weep with joy.

CAROL, Norfolk

(Compliments AA Share magazine, UK,

Sept 2018)

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A Letter From My Brother

Hi,

My name is Alex. I celebrated my fifth sober birthday a few weeks ago. My life has changed completely from being a hopeless and obnoxious drunk to a man who has regained his self-respect thanks to the Fellowship of AA.

I have a twin brother who is in poor health and who suffered much from my alcoholism although he himself does not have the problem. Before celebrating my birthday meeting my brother handed me the enclosed letter which was read out at my group. There was a lot of emotion that day and I'd now like to share it with you.

Alex, Parkhead Recovery Discussion (Ravel Row), Glasgow

Dear Brother,

Everywhere you look nowadays you see youngsters celebrating with fist bumps but for two auld codgers like us, I'm going to stick with tradition and give you a massive high FIVE in celebration and recognition of your phenomenal achievement of five years of sobriety.

Some people say that in life there's no point in looking back because you can't change the past however, my own view is that in order for someone to chart their progress they have to occasionally briefly glance over their shoulder just to remind themselves of the person they once were and in your circumstance Alex contrast that with the loving, caring, considerate and compassionate brother you have become.

As much as this letter is about congratulating you for your amazing achievement of reaching five years of sobriety and the continued hard work you do on yourself every day, it's also a letter of recognition that five years ago I got my brother Alex back which has had a huge positive ripple effect on my own life.

Alex, five years ago you faced up to some of your biggest fears and responsibilities. You took the biggest step of your life by putting your trust and faith in others. You allowed yourself to be guided and supported through some of the most challenging times of your life. You listened and you found inspiration and friendship in others which in terms of admiration and respect I don't think I could ever put into words. However, I think the most incredible part of your journey Alex is that within five years of sobriety you have achieved the ultimate

goal which is to be able to extend that same warm friendship, that much needed support and guidance, but most importantly that positive energy and inspiration you now give to others who are now taking that life changing first step.

Always remember Alex if you change yourself you'll change your world, if you change how you think then you'll change how you feel and what actions you take and so the world around you will also change. Changing yourself changes everything.

I know I don't tell you often Alex but given that five years of sobriety is such a significant milestone I want you to know how proud I am of the person you have now become. How proud I am about the compassion you show to others but most of all how proud I am to be called your brother.

Happy 5th Birthday,

R

(Compliments The Roundabout AA Magazine, Scotland)



ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

62nd All Ireland Convention



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26th - 28th April 2019



- Theme -
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Tel: 00353 1 8420700

*"When I am willing to do the right thing I am rewarded with
an inner peace no amount of liquor could ever provide. When I
am unwilling to do the right thing, I become restless, irritable,
and discontent. It is always my choice."*

— Alcoholics Anonymous, 3rd Edition —

p.317 (My Chance to Live)

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The Road Back

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Heard at Meetings

The 'dint of the drink' nearly killed me.

∞∞∞∞∞

My drinking was like the old 'hay
baler'.. click, click, click and then bang!

∞∞∞∞∞

The pilot light is always on!

∞∞∞∞∞

I was wired all wrong and then tried to
get a plumber to fix me.

∞∞∞∞∞

Seven days without a meeting can
make a person very weak.

∞∞∞∞∞

'We can do it' is stonger than

'I can do it'.

∞∞∞∞∞

The Power behind me is stronger than
the challenge in front of me.

∞∞∞∞∞

"Our problems arise out of ourselves."

Chapter 5

∞∞∞∞∞

My head is out to get me.

∞∞∞∞∞

'And I'll finish with this.....'

∞∞∞∞∞

This way of life is a great bargain.

∞∞∞∞∞

"The most satisfactory years of your life
lie ahead, thus we find the Fellowship
and so will you".. A Vision for you, B.B.

∞∞∞∞∞

"Many meetings - many chances

Few meetings - few chances

No meetings - no chance"

∞∞∞∞∞

It's like growing up all over again.

∞∞∞∞∞

This, for me, is the easier softer way

∞∞∞∞∞



Delirium Tremens

Quare dreams come crowding in
from scarcity of talk
and multiplicity
of senseless words –
deficiency of alcohol
along the flow of blood.

The eye of fever-stare
comes from behind
a splintered mirror
on the wall.

Transfusion
of red blood
through veins of clinging
shadows in the night –
a cold and lifeless
obscuration.

My curse upon
the day
when I was spawned
into a world of murkiness –
a planet of the universe
where dimness
and disorder
hold their sway.

And the light of sun
is sometimes
as the dead of night.

Vincent O'D, Rabeny.

You Weren't that Bad!

When it came to doing my Ninth Step I wrote to my ex-boss who was retired and not in great health. I had since moved to another part of the country. I wrote apologising sincerely for being a 'thorn in his side'. I apologised for being an embarrassment to other staff also. I was drinking lights out. I had missed work, gone on sick leave, borrowed money (which I obtained with a recommendation from him to his own bank mind you), the list goes on.

I spent the money with prodigal abandon, drank daily, cut ties with a beautiful kind girl and compromised my core values. I still regret the hurt I caused. I was a shameful wreck when I came to AA. My parents were both alive and were alarmed at my spend-thrift ways and unmanageable life.

My boss had written me a glowing reference when I agreed to resign at the time. I was less than two years in the job. The first year was a model one and then all hell broke loose. My drinking was to continue on and off for another ten years. In the last four years of drinking it deteriorated rapidly. I spent borrowed money at an alarming rate and it was only by 'coincidence' that I came to learn of AA. After a woeful 'convincer' I returned in sheer desperation and have stayed sober ever since.

I visited a retired work colleague years later on the same Step Nine mission and she was very comforting and consoling. They felt, she said, that I was being too hard on myself, that I wasn't that bad. Maybe they understood the disease more than I gave them credit for.

Looking back I see where they were coming from and I know that retrospection is always a debatable perspective. However, I knew deep down how badly I felt about matters and that was what was important. I do see in hindsight that it was myself I had gravely harmed the most and I had a dreadful persecution complex for the longest time.

The exercise of repair and reconciliation of Step Nine was a very healthy one for me. I'm not a religious person but I am familiar with the word atonement or as I like to read it 'at-one-ment'. And that 'One' is God.

I thank the Fellowship and the great members that were there for me, the RECOVERY programme of the 12 Steps and above all my Higher Power. I got a great deal in this and am ever so grateful. I honestly can't imagine where I would have ended up if it hadn't been for the saving grace of this way of life. My work, my life, my friends in AA and my family are a great source of happiness to me but I know AA itself has to be the most important thing in my life for everything else to find balance.

A Most Grateful Alcoholic

*"Please, Lord, teach us to laugh
again; but God don't let us forget
that we cried."*

What leads most people into debt?

Trying to catch up with people who are already there.

...

I started out with nothing and I still have most of it.

...

For as long as I can remember I've had amnesia.

...

I don't suffer from insanity, I enjoy every minute of it.

...

"I never want to belong to a club that would have me as a member."

(Groucho Marx)

...

A young lady comes back from a date looking sad. She says to her mother 'Tom proposed to me.' 'Then why are you so sad' asks her mother. 'Because he also told me he was an atheist' says the girl. 'He doesn't even believe in hell'. Her mother replies, 'Marry him anyway. Between the two of us we'll show him how wrong he is.'

...

Judge to woman, 'On what grounds do you want to divorce your husband?' 'Adultery' says the woman. 'On what evidence' queries the judge. 'I'm certain he's not the father of my fourth child.'

...

What has four legs and flies? A dead horse.

...

Sir Francis Drake circumcised the world using a 40-foot clipper.

...

**A little stool in the circus
will hold the weight of an
elephant for the triangle is the
strongest of shapes.**

**Remove one leg of the stool and it
collapses. Similarly with our**

Three Legacies...

Unity, Recovery and Service

**Remove any one of them and the
Structure collapses.**

Text Service for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

A text-messaging service for the Deaf and
Hard of Hearing is now available at GSO.

Contact, by text only,
087 1460387

*'Each day, somewhere in
the world, recovery begins when
one alcoholic talks with another
alcoholic, sharing experience,
strength and hope'*

Our Singleness of Purpose

This is a closed meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous. In support of A.A.'s singleness of purpose, attendance at closed meetings is limited to persons who have a desire to stop drinking. If you think you have a problem with alcohol, you are welcome to attend this meeting. We ask that when discussing our problems, we confine ourselves to those problems as they relate to alcoholism.

Some A.A. Acronyms

AA = Absolute Abstinence

ABC = Acceptance, Belief, Change

HOPE = Hearing Other Peoples'
Experience

ISM = Incredibly Short Memory

KISS = Keeping It Simple Spiritually

RUN + I = RUIN

SOB = Sober Old B

SOBRIETY = Stay Off Booze
Recovery Is Everything To You



APPROVED FORTHCOMING MINI CONVENTIONS AND ONE DAY EVENTS



ALL IRELAND CONVENTION 2019

26th-28th April 2019	62nd All Ireland Convention	The Great Northern Hotel, Bundoran, Co. Donegal. Theme: The 12 Steps
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FORTHCOMING CONVENTIONS IN IRELAND

DATES	AREA	VENUE/THEME
25th-27th January 2019	Waterford Area Convention 2019	Woodland Hotel, Waterford City. Theme: "Just for Today, The Gift of Living"
8th-10th February 2019	Wexford Area 14 AA Convention	Clayton Whites Hotel, Wexford. Theme: Keep it Simple
22nd-24th February 2019	Limerick Areas Annual Convention 2019	The Castletroy Park Hotel, Limerick. Theme: 'Unity'
8th-10 March 2019	Sligo/North Leitrim Area Convention	The Clayton Hotel, Clarion Road, Ballytivnan, Sligo, F91 N8EF. Theme: I am Responsible
8th-10 March 2019	Cork City Area Convention	The Blarney Woollen Mills Hotel, Blarney, Co. Cork. Theme: Pass It On
31st May-2nd June 2019	Galway East Area Convention	Raheen Woods Hotel, Athenry, Co. Galway. Theme: First Things First

ONE DAY EVENTS IN IRELAND

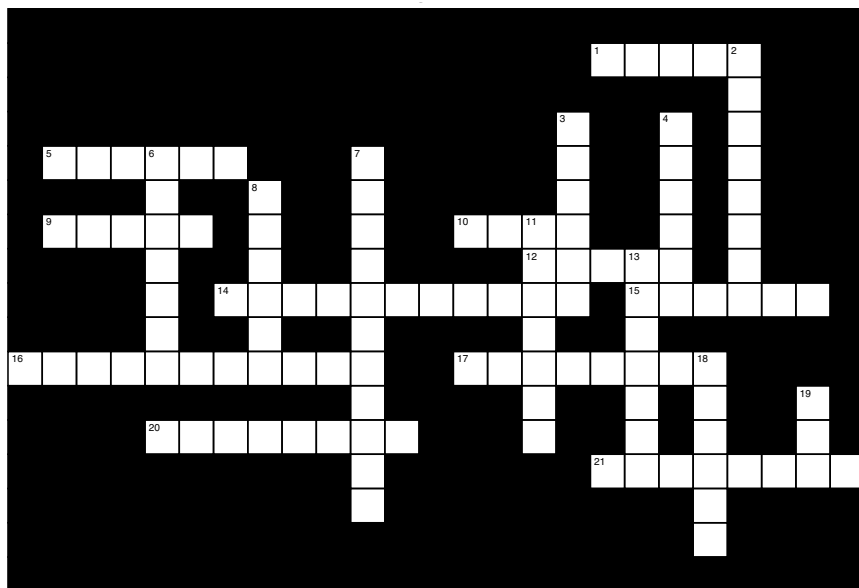
DATES	AREA	VENUE/THEME
19th January 2019	Tyrone Area Day of Gratitude	Silverbirch Hotel, Omagh, Co. Tyrone. Registration from 10.30am. Event starts at 11.30am

FORTHCOMING CONVENTIONS ABROAD

DATES	COUNTRY	VENUE/THEME
25th-27th January 2019	Lanzarote & Fuerteventura 10th International AA Convention	Occidental Lanzarote Mar Hotel, Avenida del Mar 5, Costa Teguisse 35508, Lanzarote, Canary Islands, Spain
22nd-24th March 2019	AA Highland Gathering in Scotland	Jury's Inn Hotel, Inverness, Scotland. Theme: Acceptance is the Key
26th-28th April 2019	7th Int. Convention in El Albir, Alicante, Spain	Hotel Kaktus, Albir Beach, Costa Blanca, Spain
16th-19th May 2019	25th International Convention in Greece	Grand Bleu Beach Resort, Eretria Beach, 34008 Evia Island, Greece
10th-13th October 2019	3rd Annual Biarritz Int. Convention in France	Belambra Club, Anglet-Biarritz, Prom. Des Sources, 64600 Anglet, France

The Big Challenge Crossword 420

Test your knowledge of our literature.



Across

1. "we are there to off our side of the street"
Big Book, 4th Edition p.77)
5. details of this extra marital adventuring might injure your spouse
9. There go I but for the of God
10. "Faith without works is" (Big Book, 4th Edition)
12. "make me am instrument of your"
14. "There will be those to whom we can make only partial" (12 & 12)
15. "we must be sure to remember that we cannot buy our own peace of mind at the expense of" (12 & 12)
16. "The temptation to skip the more and dreaded meetings that still remain may be great" (12 & 12)
17. There are twelve of these listed after Step Nine.
20. often mistaken for 'whenever' possible
21. "and have tried to possess ourselves of the right in which to proceed" (12 & 12)

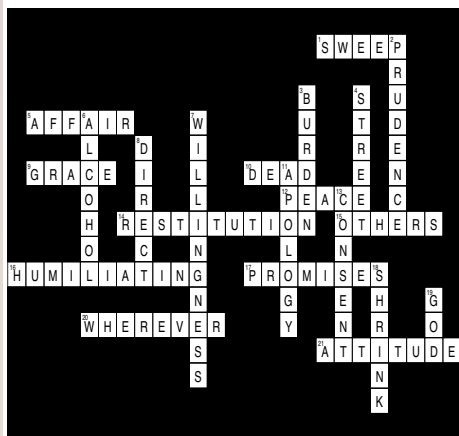
Down

2. "Good judgement, a careful sense of timing, courage and" (12 & 12)
3. "It does not lighten our when we recklessly make the crosses of others heavier" (12 & 12)
4. "Our design for living is not a one-way" (Big Book, 4th Edition p. 81)
6. "we would go to ny length for victory over" (Big Book, 4th Edition p.76)
7. "But all of them do require a complete to make amends"
8. unswerving amends!
11. making amends often confused with this
13. "Before taking drastic action which might implicate other people we secure their" (Big Book, P. 80 4th. Edition)
18. "We must not at anything" (Big Book 4th Edition p.79)
19. "let go, let ..."

**Check out our newly launched
AA website:
www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie
(also a useful aid for some
crossword solutions)**

Crossword 420 solution on page 22

Answers to Crossword 420 on page 21



*(The Promises appear after Step Nine
in the Big Book)*

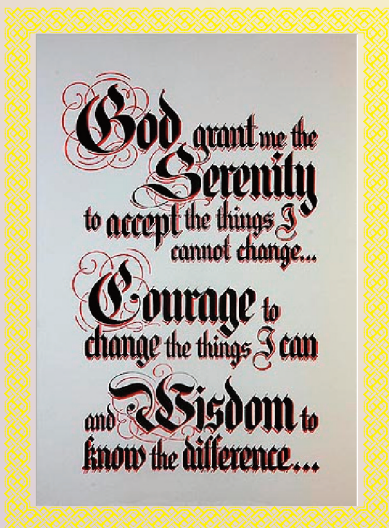
If we are painstaking about this phase of our development, we will be amazed before we are half way through . . .

“Many of us felt that we had plenty of character. There was a tremendous urge to cease forever. Yet we found it impossible. This is the baffling feature of alcoholism as we know it – this utter inability to leave it alone, no matter how great the necessity or the wish.”
p.34 (BB)

1. We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness.
2. We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it.
3. We will comprehend the word serenity.
4. We will know peace.
5. No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others.
6. That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear.
7. We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows.
8. Self-seeking will slip away.
9. Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change.
10. Fear of people and of economic insecurity will leave us.
11. We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us.
12. We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.

Are these extravagant promises? We think not. They are being fulfilled among us - sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly. They will always materialize if we work for them.

*Alcoholics Anonymous, 4th edition, pp. 83-84,
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THE TWELVE STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

- 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 to practice these principles in all our affairs.

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THE TWELVE TRADITIONS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

- 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 nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
- 9.** A.A., as such, ought never be organized; 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.

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Next issue:

Step Ten

March - April 2019 – Issue 421



Your invitation to share at our meeting between meetings.

Just like membership of our Fellowship, you don't have to be a special type of alcoholic to write for *The Road Back*.

Whether you are a newcomer or an old timer we need to hear your experience strength and hope.

Putting pen to paper (or by email) can enhance your sobriety and that of the whole Fellowship. You don't need to be a polished writer either, spelling and grammar can be amended if necessary. You can write a few lines or a few pages.

Remember *The Road Back* is your magazine, your meeting in print.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Please share your experience strength and hope with us on the following topics:

Step Ten

March/April 2019

Articles should be submitted by February 8th 2019 for issue 421

Step Eleven

May/June 2019

Articles should be submitted by April 5th 2019 for issue 422

Please mark your mail with the relevant Issue and email to –

roadback@alcoholicsanonymous.ie

or post to:

Alcoholics Anonymous

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