

The Road Back

Sept/Oct 2018 - Issue 418

Step Seven



Humility

Humility is perpetual quietness of heart. It is to have no trouble. It is never to be fretted or vexed, irritable or sore; to wonder at nothing that is done to me, to feel nothing done against me. It is to be at rest when nobody praises me, and when I am blamed or despised, it is to have a blessed home in myself where I can go in and shut the door and kneel to my Father in secret and be at peace, as in a deep sea of calmness, when all around and about is seeming trouble.

(Inscription on desk plaque of Dr. Bob's)

A word from the Editor

If one were in prison and were sent the instructions to break free one would not deviate from the instructions.

However compliance appears not to exist in the DNA programming of the alcoholic! We are prognosticators and procrastinators! Our traits of defiance, belligerence and acrimonious engagement seem to set us apart from our fellows. Our recovery programme is as tailor-made as it can be for our disease of defiance.

We invariably make our ego-shaped world as spiritually proofed as we can. We intoxicate ourselves. In some countries of the East, alcohol is defined as poison. The meaning of words often reveal themselves in the breakdown of the words themselves... such as the word intoxicate... to literally poison ourselves.

AA is not anti-drink. The chapter "A Vision for You" clearly demonstrates a great sense of appreciation for those of us who enjoyed a social drink before they crossed the invisible line. But we know that "alcohol is a subtle foe". We cannot stay in mourning too long for the friend that died and became the enemy that turned upon us so relentlessly... becoming the rapacious creditor that robbed us of almost everything. We need to remember that our past was all necessary for the present we now enjoy.

When the poultice of near boiling water and bread soda was applied to the whittle long ago there were tears and fears. However under the assurances of our parents we surrendered to the treatment "for our own good" and the proof of the pudding was in the eating. The end result was that the infection

and swelling went as per "what it said on the tin".

So happily for us our alcoholism is not "God proofed". The chink in our armour eventually allows His grace to permeate through.

'Look to the light, even for the moment you cannot see and believe more deeply'. Here we need to trust. We made our decision in Step Three. In Step Seven we continue to co-operate with the implementation of that decision.

We need to revisit the frame of mind we were in when we wanted this so badly that we were prepared to go to any lengths to get it.

For most of us our awakening in the program is of the educational variety. It happens over time. Steps Six and Seven are very necessary sequential steps towards this awakening.

Here are the Steps we took. Action is key. We need to do, through co-operation.

The Seventh Step Prayer (see page 22) is not for our own aggrandizement but as in Step Three, it is that we be better placed to know and do the will of our Higher Power.

Therefore we surrender to "The Great Reality". "Let Go and Let God" is our mantra.

How good we feel after a bath or a shower. And how indescribable it is when we experience that clean feeling within.

Wishing you all the peace of the programme.

Yours in Fellowship and Service.

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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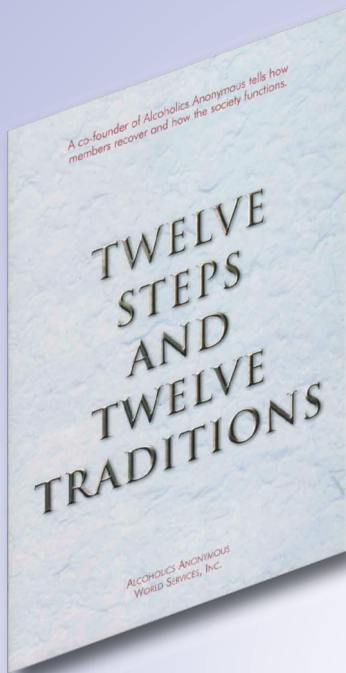
Step Seven

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The Twelve and Twelve Extracts

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Step Seven

“Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.”

*A paraphrasing of Step Seven on the Contents Page of the
Twelve and Twelve.*

What is humility? What can it mean to us? The avenue to true freedom of the human spirit. Necessary aid to survival. Value of ego-puncturing. Failure and misery transformed by humility. Strength from weakness. Pain is the admission price to new life. Self-centered fear chief activator of defects. Step Seven is change in attitude which permits us to move out of ourselves toward God.

Note

The step opens with these words (on the next page): 'Since this Step so specifically concerns itself with humility, we should pause here to consider what humility is...' Curiously, the Step doesn't address that issue. It does say what the basic ingredient of humility is on p. 72: 'a desire to seek and do God's will', but one may need to go back to Step 5 (p. 58) for a definition: 'it amounts to a clear recognition of what and who we really are, followed by a sincere attempt to become what we could be'. So for a more complete definition one might add the line on p. 72 i.e. '... become what we could be, based on a desire to seek and do God's will'.

...Still goaded by sheer necessity, we reluctantly come to grips with those serious character flaws that made problem drinkers of us in the first place, flaws which must be dealt with to prevent a retreat into alcoholism once again. We will want to be rid of some of these defects, but in some instances this will appear to be an impossible job from which we recoil. And we cling with a passionate persistence to others which are just as disturbing to our equilibrium, because we still enjoy them too much.

How can we possibly summon the resolution and the willingness to get rid of such overwhelming compulsions and desires?

....Refusing to place God first, we had deprived ourselves of His help. But now the words "Of myself I am nothing, the Father doeth the works" began to carry bright promise and meaning.

.....As we approach the actual taking of Step Seven, it might be well if we A.A.'s inquire once more just what our deeper objectives are. Each of us would like to live at peace with himself and with his fellows. We

would like to be assured that the grace of God can do for us what we cannot do for ourselves. We have seen that character defects based upon shortsighted or unworthy desires are the obstacles that block our path toward these objectives. We now clearly see that we have been making unreasonable demands upon ourselves, upon others, and upon God.

The chief activator of our defects has been self-centered fear, primarily fear that we would lose something we already possessed or would fail to get something we demanded. Living upon a basis of unsatisfied demands, we were in a state of continual disturbance and frustration.

Therefore, no peace was to be had unless we could find a means of reducing these demands. The difference between a demand and a simple request is plain to anyone.

The Seventh Step is where we make the change in our attitude which permits us, with humility as our guide, to move out from ourselves toward others and toward God.

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God grant me the
Serenity

to accept the things I
cannot change...

Courage to
change the things I can

and **Wisdom** to
know the difference...

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

DESIDERATA

Go placidly amid the noise and haste,
and remember what peace there may be in silence.
As far as possible, without surrender,
be on good terms with all persons.

Speak your truth quietly and clearly;
and listen to others,
even to the dull and ignorant;
they too have their story.

Avoid loud and aggressive persons;
they are vexations to the spirit.

If you compare yourself with others,
you may become vain or bitter,
for always there will be greater
and lesser persons than yourself.

Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans.
Keep interested in your own career, however humble,
it's a real possession in the changing fortunes of time.

Exercise caution in your business affairs,
for the world is full of trickery.
But let this not blind you to what virtue there is;
many persons strive for high ideals,
and everywhere life is full of heroism.

Be yourself.
Especially do not feign affection.
Neither be cynical about love;

for in the face of all aridity and disenchantment,
it is as perennial as the grass.

Take kindly the counsel of the years,
gracefully surrendering the things of youth.

Nurture strength of spirit
to shield you in sudden misfortune.
But do not distress yourself with dark imaginings.
Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness.

Beyond a wholesome discipline,
be gentle with yourself.

You are a child of the universe
no less than the trees and the stars;
you have a right to be here.
And whether or not it is clear to you,
no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should.

Therefore be at peace with God,
whatever you conceive him to be.
And whatever your labors and aspirations,
in the noisy confusion of life,
keep peace in your soul.

With all its sham, drudgery and broken dreams,
it is still a beautiful world.
Be cheerful.
Strive to be happy.

*"Desiderata" was written in 1927 by Max
Ehrmann (1872-1945)*

Step Seven

Seven is a number that signifies a stage of completeness. The Seventh Step Prayer encapsulates the essence of the Step for me as an alcoholic. I had been reminded that “deflation of ego at depth” was necessary back in Chapter Three and that the process of ego surrender continues in this Step. The humility is for me necessary also. I had been compromised and humiliated by my active alcoholism and my untreated alcoholism for years in the Fellowship and yet the hand of Destiny was altogether evident in retrospect.

The happenings of both substance and worth in my life would not, I feel, have occurred without the earlier mishaps, the fumbings and apparent floundering of my earlier years in recovery which were marked by many challenges. Separation, followed by divorce, a number of relationships, a bust up in work.... from crisis to crisis without a drink... but all necessary for me to be where I am today.

They often say in AA s/he never waited for the miracle to happen. I cannot say I'm glad of my life's history and given the new perspective I now have in sobriety and having realized that touchstone of spiritual progress I wouldn't have had it any other way to have what I have now. Don't misunderstand me ... I wouldn't wish to hurt another human being but I wouldn't wish my pain and suffering any less for the price of my sobriety today. So I'm glad I kept coming back.

“A healthy regret for harms done” the Big Book says and also that “we shall not regret the past”. All angles seem to be covered here. Balance is forever the key.

Humiliation had to precede humility in

my case. Only for humiliation I know I wouldn't have been ready to see the need for help, to accept my powerlessness not alone over drink but over the machinations of my mind and the ‘slings and arrows’ of life itself.



They say that a true friend is someone who knows all about you and loves you anyway. The Big Book has varying descriptions of our relationship with our Higher Power. These include the impersonal energy of electricity... happy to fry your rashers or burn your butt! It makes no difference to the energy how we use it but it makes a difference to us. We have to plug in to it firstly and then use it to good purpose in our lives. Another relationship that it likens it too is the employer and we as its agents. Being all powerful it provides for all we need and we as it agents seek and do its will. Fundamentally we learn that this amounts to doing what's in front of us... the next best thing if we can. I am mindful also of what appears under the passage on acceptance... “that nothing, absolutely nothing happens in God's world by mistake”. This suggests the notion of an all-knowing, all-powerful, all-present and all-loving God. The old notion that we are made in the image and likeness of God is echoed in the other likeness that AA uses i.e. that of a Father and we as His children. Most ideas are simple our Book tells us, as a human being with human failings I take

to the latter relationship. For this alcoholic who had a very torrid time with the relationship with his own father I can see where this analogy might get skewed. Happily through recovery in AA... meetings, steps, members, sponsorship, expanding the realm of spiritual knowledge and developing a measure of inner growth, the relationship between me and my father was healed and made all the richer through me changing. In later years the roles were reversed with me becoming almost like a parent to my old dad. The statement in Chapter Five i.e. "That One is God, May you find Him now" holds so much for me. That great revelation that the Big Book speaks of is truly inspired..." the Great Reality is within".

AA also gave me the "new pair of glasses" to see things differently to be able to look back and forgive myself and my dad also. We can only be who we are at any given time. I leaned that I was not the one to judge... judgement only being a measure of myself and not the other person!

To have faith and trust in a Higher Power was very difficult for the cynic I had become. ... and it is said that scratch the surface of a cynic and you'll find a failed idealist! Only when I saw the impossibility of my wretched state in all dimensions of my life, was I prepared to surrender to this Power greater than myself.

To conclude... when I reflect on Step Seven and on my own lot... and how I am being asked to surrender all the obstacles to my own spiritual evolution... I am forever reminded of the Parable of the Prodigal Son and in particular how both Emmet Fox and

Chuck C retell it. I see the hopelessness, helplessness, haplessness of my condition and think about my Father's house, with a sense of deep sorrow for myself and my life ... I hear the call of home from within me, a home that doesn't judge or condemn me, a home that welcomes me and rejoices in my return, a home that offers me sanctuary and helps me recover my dignity and self-respect, a home that declares me the son of my Father again, a home that allows me to come home to myself ... That home is the Spiritual Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous.

As the Twelfth Promise revealed to me "God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves."

Anonymous

∞∞∞∞∞∞



Don't Forget

In AA Steps Six and Seven are sometimes referred to as the "Forgotten Steps."

Their aim is to guide me in cultivating willingness and exercising humility in removing my defects of character. After Steps Four and Five this sounded like a piece of the proverbial cake. A metaphorical cake I still find hard to fully digest! More about cake later.

The question that helps me is: "Why keep hold of those traits that have caused myself and others so much pain?" I had already identified my defects in Step Four and admitted them in Five. Now for the long haul. Can I try - at least try, to be a better person? To realize that my defects aren't completely removed but that it is within my power to control my reactions. To strive to help others and to stay the course. These are the things that make life a more fruitful journey for myself and others.

My understanding is that instincts are, to a greater extent, built in. For example a baby crying because it is hungry and knowing how to receive milk. A bird being nudged from its nest for the first time and flying. Anger and fear for example can be legitimate in certain circumstances. The caveman becoming angry because his tribe is threatened. Fear of a mammoth chasing him is also entirely understandable.

Anger when being caught up in traffic and then obsessing about it for days isn't healthy. Fear which paralyses and results in myself not applying for jobs or taking a considered risks can be suffocating and non productive. These can be called defects (grown from instincts) and could

lead to my existing rather than living.

In the modern world there are many invitations to explore my defects. Well known stores selling cakes, stating "serves six" - I'll never understand that one! Buying a car that goes from 0-60 faster than I could pick up a piece of cake is either an invitation to a quick death or a useful tool if handled appropriately. So, it's not the issues in life that disturb me. The answer lies in how I view those issues. Now, where's that Ferrari...

JOHN.

(courtesy of Share magazine, AA, UK)

The Man In the Glass

*

When you get what you want in your struggle for self
And the world makes you king for a day,
Just go to a mirror and look at yourself
And see what THAT man has to say.

For it isn't your father or mother or wife
Who judgement upon you must pass;
The fellow whose verdict counts most in your life
Is the one staring back from the glass.

Some people may think you're a straight-shootin' chum
And call you a wonderful guy,
But the man in the glass says you're only a bum
If you can't look him straight in the eye.

He's the fellow to please, never mind all the rest,
For he's with you right up to the end,
And you've passed your most dangerous, difficult test
If the man in the glass is your friend.

You may fool the whole world down the pathway of life
And get pats on your back as you pass,
But your final reward will be heartaches and tears
If you've cheated the man in the glass.

*

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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- Theme -

THE 12 STEPS



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"Through my years of darkness, some spark of spirit remained in me, helped me survive until I found my way into A.A. Then, nurtured by the program, that inner spirit grew, deepened, until it filled the emptiness I had so long felt inside. Step by step I moved to a spiritual awakening. Step by step I cleared up the past and got on with the present."

— Alcoholics Anonymous, Alcoholics Anonymous, 4th Edition —

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The Road Back

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A Spiritual Malady

(As I See It)

My understanding of the illness of alcoholism is that I have a physical allergy, a mental obsession and a spiritual malady. The allergy means that when I drink alcohol it sets off a craving in my body for more alcohol. I have an abnormal reaction to alcohol: abnormal in the sense that someone who does not have the illness of alcoholism does not have this reaction - they do not have a physical craving for more drink when they drink. If I don't lift the first drink it's impossible for me to get drunk. The mental obsession means that when I am off the drink and completely sober the idea of a drink will come into my head and that idea will overrule any rational thinking which would argue that since I've got an abnormal reaction to drink, taking a drink is definitely not a good idea. I've got a body that can't handle drink and a head that is convinced, despite lots of strong evidence to the contrary, that it can. So although it is absolutely true that if I don't lift the first drink I won't get drunk, my best reasoning and my willpower are not enough to stop me taking the first drink.

Looking back at my experience when drinking I can see that this is the case for me. So far so straightforward: I have no control over the craving for more drink when I start drinking and I have no control over my head when it tells me to drink. I'm powerless over alcohol. Understanding the spiritual malady was not so straightforward for me. I would

hear at meetings 'untreated alcoholism', 'dry drunk', 'internal unmanageability', 'the ism'. Did these words apply to me? Was it the spiritual malady they were talking about? I wasn't drinking. Was my alcoholism untreated, waiting patiently to grab me and catapult me into death or insanity or to sentence me to a long drawn-out grim suicide by instalments? Was my behaviour just like when I was drinking but without the drink? Was my thinking and the way I felt unmanageable? Was I restless, irritable and discontent, not drinking but not happy? 'Yes' was the short answer to all that.

So what is this internal condition that I have and what can I do about it? My stinking thinking, feeling bad about myself, feeling hard done by and not grateful, waking up anxious and/or not looking forward to the day with any enthusiasm, not caring about others, being critical and judgemental of myself and others, all this and more is how my spiritual malady shows itself in me. These are manifestations of my malady but the actual nature of my spiritual malady, as I understand it, is that I'm disconnected and separate from my inner inherent goodness. I've heard others say that for them the spiritual malady is being separate from God as they understand it. Being disconnected and separate from means I feel the way I've described, treat people badly and have no peace of mind. How then do I reconnect with my inner goodness? I do so by living AA's Twelve Step Programme in my life and in particular by continuing to do Steps 10, 11 and 12.

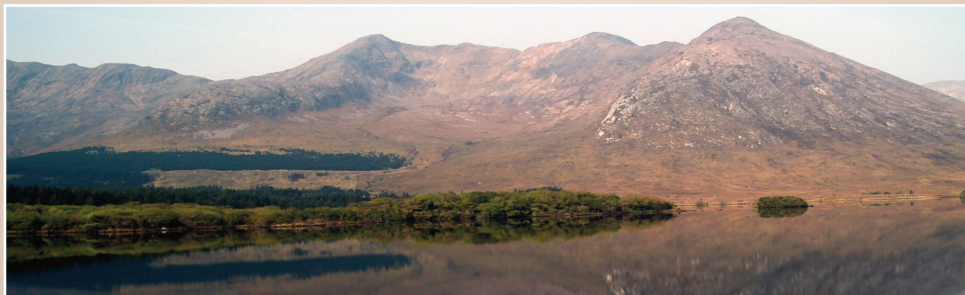
By doing a Step Four inventory I found out about my fears and resentments. By looking at the harms I did to others I could address the guilt I felt. I could look closely at the exact nature of my wrongs and character defects. All of that was blocking me off from and keeping me separate from my goodness. If I'm consumed by fear, resentment or guilt there's no room for goodness in my heart and my head will be like a washing machine on spin cycle that might pause for a little while I sleep but will start up again as soon as I wake up. By letting go of my fears and resentments and by working on my shortcomings I can get back to the goodness that was always there in me. If I don't know what my spiritual malady is and if I don't do something about it, it will take me back to drinking. Just because I've stopped drinking doesn't mean that my spiritual malady has gone away. If anything, it's more obvious without the dark curtain of active alcoholism to hide behind. I can no longer blame the way I felt or what I did on drink. If I don't reconnect and stay reconnected one day at a time, the manifestations I spoke about earlier will rear their heads as my selfishness and self-centredness run riot. It's then just a short distance from that to the mental obsession kicking in, telling me

that a drink's a good idea and then I'll lift the first drink, the allergy will be activated and be off and running once again. Living life on life's terms, not drinking no matter what is happening round about me involves, for me, dealing with the symptoms of my spiritual malady by staying connected and not separate from what keeps me well. I like that EGO can stand for 'Easing God Out' (or in my case goodness).

Over the years I've used various things to try and treat my spiritual malady and before AA got me sober I was using alcohol to treat my alcoholism. Only the Programme actually worked for me. Everything else I tried, after an initial short-lived easing of the emotional pain, only made it worse. If I remove whatever I happen to be using to treat the symptoms of my spiritual malady I will, without the Programme, find something else that's not good for me to take the edge off how I'm feeling. AA's Programme of Recovery, as long as I continue to work it in my life, will keep me connected and in so doing will give me the sense of ease and comfort I was always looking for.

Liz, Glasgow

(Courtesy Roundabout Magazine AA Scotland)



Heard at Meetings

Those who don't go to meetings
invariably get drunk.

∞∞

We can go to bed like Doris Day and
wake up like Myra Hindley!

∞∞

My head can go from tiddlywinks to
mass murder in minutes!

∞∞

Everything is as it supposed to be.
Embrace it.

∞∞

Being miserable is an option, and so is
being happy.

∞∞

Pick up the phone before you pick up a
drink.

(Telephone Therapy)

∞∞

Quitting is the easy part. It's staying on
the path that's hard."

∞∞

The old dog for the hard road and the
pup for the puddle.

∞∞

I get what I need in
AA not necessarily
what I want!

∞∞

Life begins when you are ready to step
out of your comfort zone.

∞∞

"My head is out to get me"

∞∞

If you start treating yourself right,
others will do the same.

∞∞

The worst day sober is still always
better than the best day drunk.

∞∞

Keep coming *until you want to come.*

∞∞

Stop focusing on why you are addicted
to alcohol. Instead, focus on what you
can do about it.

∞∞

The Big Book means something new to
me every time I read it.

∞∞

Daily sobriety = Daily vigilance.



THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM

(This worldly lady helped to develop A.A. in Chicago and thus passed her keys to many.)

from Personal Stories - 2nd Ed. Big Book

pages 304-312

I didn't dare hope I might find for myself all that these people had found, but if I could acquire some small part of their intriguing quality of living-and sobriety-that would be enough.

Shortly after I returned to Chicago, my doctor, encouraged by the results of my contact with A.A., sent us two more of his alcoholic patients. By the latter part of September 1939, we had a nucleus of six and held our first official group meeting.

I had a tough pull back to normal good health. It has been so many years since I had not relied on some artificial crutch, either alcohol or sedatives. Letting go of everything at once was both painful and terrifying. I could never have accomplished this alone. It took the help, understanding and wonderful companionship that was given so freely to me by my "ex-alkie" friends. This and the program of recovery embodied in the Twelve Steps. In learning to practice these steps in my daily living I began to acquire faith and a philosophy to live by. Whole new vistas were opened up for me, new avenues of experience to be explored, and life began to take on color and interest. In time, I found myself looking forward to each new day with pleasurable anticipation.

A.A. is not a plan for recovery that can be finished and done with. It is a way of life, and the challenge contained in its principles is great enough to keep any human being striving for as long as he lives. We do not, cannot, out-grow this plan. As arrested alcoholics, we must have a program for living that allows for limitless expansion. Keeping one foot in front of the other is essential for maintaining our arrestment. Others may idle in a retrogressive groove without too much

danger, but retrogression can spell death for us. However, this isn't as rough as it sounds, as we do become grateful for the necessity that makes us toe the line, for we find that we are more than compensated for a consistent effort by the countless dividends we receive.

A complete change takes place in our approach to life. Where we used to run from responsibility, we find ourselves accepting it with gratitude that we can successfully shoulder it. Instead of wanting to escape some perplexing problem, we experience a thrill of challenge in the opportunity it affords for another application of A.A. techniques, and we find ourselves tackling it with surprising vigor.

The last fifteen years of my life have been rich and meaningful. I have had my share of problems, heartaches and disappointments, because that is life, but also I have known a great deal of joy, and a peace that is the handmaiden of an inner freedom. I have a wealth of friends and, with my A.A. friends, an unusual quality of fellowship. For, to these people, I am truly related. First, through mutual pain and despair, and later through mutual objectives and new-found faith and hope. And, as the years go by, working together, sharing our experiences with one another, and also sharing a mutual trust, understanding and love-without strings, without obligation—we acquire relationships that are unique and priceless.

There is no more "aloneness," with that awful ache, so deep in the heart of every alcoholic that nothing, before, could ever reach it. That ache is gone and never need return again.

Now there is a sense of belonging, of being wanted and needed and loved. In return for a bottle and a hangover, we have been given the Keys of the Kingdom.

∞∞∞∞∞∞

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

I was trying to explain puns to my kleptomaniac friend today,
but she kept taking things literally.

...

My Czech mate is surprisingly bad at chess.

...

What do you get hanging off banana trees? Sore arms.

...

What's a duck's favourite dip? Quackamole.

...

What did the Buddhist ask the hot dog vendor?

"Make me one with everything."

...

Why do you never see elephants hiding in trees?

Because they're so good at it.

...

Had a rough day, and then somebody went and ripped the front and back
pages out of my dictionary. It just goes from bad to worse.

...

Dad: I've just been diagnosed with Tom Jones syndrome.

Mum: Is it common? Dad: It's not unusual.

...

Used to run an anti-gravity machine business. Never got off the ground.

...

Why do crabs never give to charity? Because they're shellfish.

...

I went to buy some camouflage trousers the other day
but I couldn't find any.

A Vision For You

Big Book page 164

Our book is meant to be suggestive only. We realize we know only a little. God will constantly disclose more to you and to us. Ask Him in your morning meditation what you can do each day for the man who is still sick. The answers will come, if your own house is in order. But obviously you cannot transmit something you haven't got. See to it that your relationship with Him is right, and great events will come to pass for you and countless others. This is the Great Fact for us.

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.

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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

ASAP - Always Say A Prayer

ASK - Ass-Saving Kit

BAR- Beware Alcoholic Ruin

BEST- Been Enjoying Sobriety Today

BS - Before Sobriety

CALM - Creating A Loving Me

CAN'T - Carry A Negative Thought

CHANGE - Can Help Attract New
Gifts and Energy



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 MINI CONVENTIONS IN IRELAND

DATES	AREA	VENUE/THEME
31st August - 2nd September 2018	Tipperary Area Convention	The Clonmel Park Hotel, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary. Theme: I Am Responsible
12th-14th October 2018	Donegal Area Convention	Mount Errigal Hotel, Ramelton Road, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal. Phone: 074 22700. Website: www.mounterrighal.com
18th-21st October 2018	Clare Area Convention	The Auburn Lodge Hotel, Ennis, Co. Clare. Theme: One Day At A Time
9th-11th November 2018	Kerry Area 53rd AA Convention	The Brandon Hotel, Tralee, Co. Kerry. Theme: "Just For Today"
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

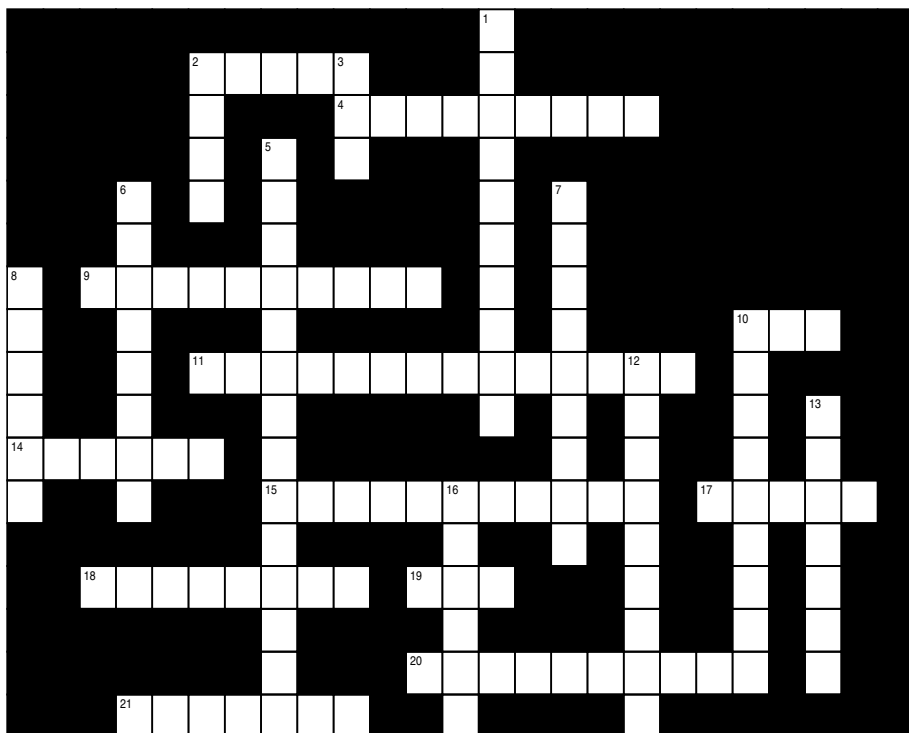
ONE DAY EVENTS IN IRELAND

DATES	AREA	VENUE/THEME
18th November 2018	Belfast Area Day of Gratitude	Ramada Encore, 20 Talbot Street, Belfast, Co. Antrim, BT1 2LD. Theme: "Keep it in the Day"

FORTHCOMING CONVENTIONS ABROAD

DATES	COUNTRY	VENUE/THEME
11th-14th October 2018	K.I.S.S. English Speaking AA Convention in Greece	Pandrossos Hotel, Parikia, Paros Island, Greece
12th-14th October 2018	2nd Biarritz AA Convention in France	Radisson Blu Hotel, Cote des Basques, 64200 Biarritz, France. Theme: A Vision For You
17th-21st October 2018	Costa Brava AA Convention	Golden Bahia Hotel & Spa, Tossa de Mar (Girona), Catalonia, Spain. Theme: Love and Service
16th-18th November 2018	Costa del Sol Convention 2018 in Spain	IPV Palace Hotel, Fuengirola, Spain
25th-27th January 2019	Fuerteventura 10th International AA Convention	Occidental Lanzarote Mar Hotel, Avenida del Mar 5, Costa Teguise 35508, Lanzarote, Canary Islands, Spain

The Big Challenge Crossword 418



Across

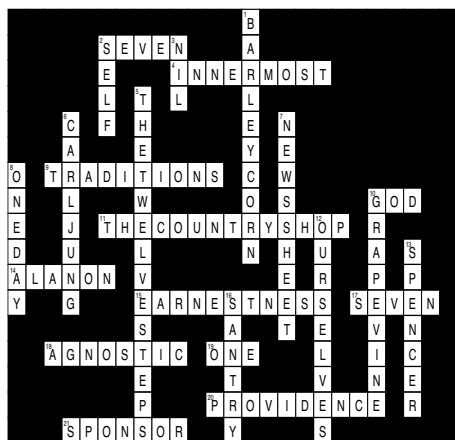
2. In this Step "we humbly ask Him to remove our shortcomings"
4. "We had to concede to our selves"
9. "AA's Twelve..... apply to the life of the Fellowship itself"
10. Tradition Two, "For our Group purpose there is one ultimate authority, a loving"
11. Where the first AA group in Ireland held its meetings.
14. The worldwide fellowship for spouses and families of alcoholics
15. "With all the at our command"
17. The max number of Trustees on the Board of AA in Ireland
18. A person who believes that nothing is known or can be known of the existence or nature of God
19. "That ... is God, may you find Him now"
20. "Only an act of can expel the obsession to drink"
21. A sponsee's mentor is called a

Down

1. Alcohol is referred to as John in Step 1 of the Twelve and Twelve.
2. "Relieve me of the bondage of"
3. "The result was ... until we let go absolutely"
5. The theme for the 2019 All-Ireland Convention
6. Roland H. was admitted to his clinic in Switzerland.
7. The name of our news letter
8. We are learning to live without alcohol at a time
10. The International Magazine for AA is called the
12. "Our problems arise out of"
13. "..... dismissal prior to investigation" Herbert.....
16. The location of GSO in Dublin

The newly launched AA website:
www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie
is also a useful aid for some
crossword answers.

Crossword solution on page 22



THE SEVENTH STEP PRAYER

My Creator, I am now willing that
You should have all of me, good
and bad.

I pray that You now remove from
me every single defect of character
which stands in the way of my
usefulness to You and my fellows.

Grant me strength, as I go out
from here, to do Your bidding.

Amen

(The Big Book)



The AA Promises

*(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 . . .

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 Eight

November - December 2018 – Issue 419



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.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

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

Step Eight

November/December 2018

Articles should be submitted by October 5th 2018 for issue 419

Step Nine

January/February 2019

Articles should be submitted by December 7th. 2018 for issue 420

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

roadback@alcoholicsanonymous.ie

or post to:

Alcoholics Anonymous

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