

The **MESSENGER**

Middle Tennessee Central Office Intergroup

**JANUARY
2013**

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Unmanageable Lives

**Sober, we can cope,
but the world around us doesn't always cooperate**

IN THE FIRST of AA's Twelve Steps of recovery, the dilemma seen by AA newcomers is set out: "Look what you people have done to us! You have convinced us that we are alcoholics *and* that our lives are unmanageable."

What separates the alcoholic's life from the nonalcoholic's life in this regard is that the alcoholic has a self-prescribed, temporary cure for the unmanageability of his life--booze. Aha, we say, but we're in AA and have found that it's possible to stay away from the first drink for twenty-four hours by asking for help and getting to meetings. Presto! We won't pick up that temporary cure. Right? Just maybe, very maybe.

There's an old story around law schools about how the law got started. A man moves to a new continent or a new island, builds a house, and plants his crops. He has no need for laws. It is only when a second man moves onto the island that there arises an immediate need for a third man. In the Old West, they called him the lawman. As soon as the second man arrives, some rules are needed as to how the two men will live with each other, and a neutral third man is needed to see that the first two follow their own rules.

The lesson of the story is that so long as there are more than one of us on this earth, our lives will be unmanageable to some extent. Other

folks aren't always or even often going to do what we think they ought to do. People don't like having their lives manipulated by others, and alcoholics are among the world's great manipulators, or at least would-be manipulators.

Studies indicate that, by and large, alcoholics are a bright lot, regardless of the amount of formal education any one of us might have. Many of us managed to con our way through some parts of our lives, and most tended to do reasonably well at whatever it was that we did for a living, for so long as booze allowed us to. These same characteristics reinforced our impression that if only we could get sober, and stay sober, the world would be putty in our hands. Unfortunately, the world is made of firmer stuff.

To make matters worse, Mother Nature has a great deal to say about the manageability of our lives. She'll snow us in or rain us out, without even a smile. Somehow, the old gal can get her hands on our most modest plans--a cookout, a day at the beach, or a little golf with friends. Mother Nature is definitely not manageable, even less manageable than the people and objects around us.

Those objects bear mentioning, too. In addition to the laws of men and the laws of nature, there are also Murphy's laws. Nobody seems to know who Murphy was, but his first

(Continued on page 2)

Unmanageable Lives (con't)

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law is: If anything can go wrong, it will. So long as we own or want the things the world has to offer, Murphy's laws will apply--to our houses, cars, lawn mowers, electrical and water supplies, just about everything.

Some of Murphy's other laws are: A dropped tool will land where it can do the most damage (also known as the law of selective gravitation); all warranty and guarantee clauses will become void just before the last payment is made; the instruction manual will get thrown out about a week before the first time the thing breaks down; and finally, left to themselves, things usually go from bad to worse! Murphy may not have known about alcoholism, but he sure knew about unmanageability.

In the face of traffic officers, thunderstorms, and Murphy's laws, alcoholics still bound through life convinced that it's all manageable. There are no medals for their persistence, for, in truth, large chunks of everybody's life are unmanageable at best, drunk or sober, alcoholic or nonalcoholic.

Lest we think the unmanageability of life is all bad, it isn't. Sometimes unmanageability comes bearing gifts. We win a sweepstakes and are faced with the temptation, of a spending spree. Alcoholics have been known to get promoted unexpectedly, sometimes when a boss is let go because of a drinking problem. And then there are the leftovers from our drinking days, some of which can suddenly turn our way--a criminal charge dropped, a wife who has a change of heart, a decent job opportunity when we have been convinced we were unemployable.

For the nonalcoholic, an unmanageable world and life may mean frustration, fear, anger, sometimes even mental illness, and sometimes great cause for celebration. For the alcoholic, unmanageability carries also the very real danger of death. That is why AA literature calls the high emotions that result from the unmanageability of life the "dubious luxuries" of non-alcoholics. Emotional sprees, high or low, lead us to believe we can or must fall back on our own resources.

In every day of every life, there can be a series of broken shoelaces or a winning ticket, an ankle-deep rainfall or a new car, a speeding ticket or a long-feared criminal charge that is favorably resolved. Perhaps the world should be posted: "Laws at Work--Natural, Man-Made, Murphy's, and Pure Luck." For the alcoholic, there should be a second sign: "Danger --Obsession Ahead!"

The unmanageable aspect is part of day-to-day living and carries in it the trigger for the alcoholic's obsession with drink. All the laws that are at work in the world are going to make every life unmanageable to one degree or another from time to time. But for the alcoholic, there is not only an additional danger, but also an additional opportunity. AA offers us a program of recovery from our past feelings about the unmanageability of life, a program that can put life's unmanageability into perspective. That's more than most of the rest of the people in the world have going for them when they find their lives have become unmanageable.

*J. F. - Wellesley, Massachusetts - Oct 1978
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*I hit the Control key...
so why am I not in control?*

"The alcoholic slip is not a symptom of a psychotic condition. There's nothing screwy about it at all. The patient simply didn't follow directions."

*William Duncan Silkworth, MD, January 1947
From: "Slips and Human Nature"
Best of Grapevine, Volume 1*

Several years ago, my sponsor, Michael, told me about a meeting he and another friend of ours had started and "asked" me if I would like to be a part of it. The meeting was at the home of Steve S., an AA whom I'd seen at a few meetings, and was being held at noon every Wednesday. Steve was relatively young --in his early 40s--and had been sober for just about a year when he learned he had a progressive neuromuscular disorder, the first stages of which confined him to a wheelchair.

I would like to say that I enthusiastically jumped at the chance to carry the message to someone who was nearly home-bound. However, few things could be further from the truth. My first thoughts were of myself and what an inconvenience it would be for me. Thoughts like: I work from home and Steve's place isn't really very close. It's right in the middle of the workday. Think of the money I'll lose by being away. Couldn't someone else do it? ran through my mind. Thankfully I had learned a little bit about restraint of tongue and pen in my time in AA and chose not to give voice to those thoughts (although I scribbled many of them in my journal). Like so many other things my sponsor has suggested, I begrudgingly agreed to be there when I could.

I didn't even consider until much later how difficult it must be to be confined to a wheelchair, facing a future that--from a purely physical standpoint at least--was as grim as one could imagine, or how lonely it must be to be stuck at home with only a caretaker for company. And this was all during Steve's early sobriety, too.

There was no way of knowing at the time how that meeting would grow and evolve over the next six years--and change all of us for the better. I think it would be accurate to say that the cumulative effect of those Wednesday meetings has been the most profound and enlightening of my 22 years in AA, and possibly my entire life.

Steve--or Siggy, as he liked to be called--had a naturally outgoing personality and made friends as easily as anyone I've ever met. He always greeted us with his huge, trademark smile, and it was easy to see he was delighted to have us over. It didn't take long for that feeling to become mutual.

We dubbed the meeting the "Siggy One Group" and referred to it as "the best damn meeting this side of the Mississippi." It was a men's meeting--or, as we liked to joke, "No gurls allowed"--and could go from being vulgarly irreverent to shockingly sublime in the blink of an eye. A depth of sharing and an openness and transparency developed among that group of guys that I've not experienced in any other group setting. One meeting in particular is memorable. A member of our group shared, in tears, about learning that his wife had been diagnosed with cancer and that their dog had gotten sick and died. The level of acceptance and love in that room was healing and inspiring for us all.

Because of space limitations, it was a small group--there were usually between three and six attendees. Once, this past summer, it was Steve and me. He was bedridden then and unable to talk, so I read from the Big Book and "Twelve and Twelve" and then sat in the silence between readings, presumably to allow his spirit

to communicate with mine. I've had very few of what I would call "spiritual experiences" during my time in AA. however, that day sure seemed like one.

It was also this past summer that Jeff, who was Steve's sponsor, shared with us a truly inspiring story. Apparently when Steve first learned of his illness and was given an idea of what to expect, he told Jeff that he was going to do whatever it took to say clean and sober throughout the ordeal. In my view, if any recovered alcoholic ever had a legitimate reason for drinking again, it was Steve. Last August, while confined to his bed and unable to speak, he celebrated eight years of sobriety.

During the last few months, Steve's health deteriorated ever more rapidly. Save for the occasional smiles, which were priceless to us by then, he was unable to communicate at all. It was extremely difficult to watch a friend suffer like that. Then one Monday I got the call from Michael saying that Stephen had passed away peacefully that morning. Even though we knew it was inevitable, and I was happy that Steve was relieved of his suffering, I was stunned beyond words.

Over the next few days, I offered up many prayers for Stephen, his family and all of the members of the Siggy One Group. And on Wednesday, at around noon, I found myself nearly overwhelmed with the emotions of having said goodbye to a dear friend and the tremendous appreciation for the gift of the fellowship of the spirit.

As I recall how much I struggled with the idea of attending that meeting in the early days, and weigh the effort (a couple of hours a week) with what was gained (immeasurable), it becomes once again obvious that I don't know what's best for me. I'd be happy to tell you what I want, but I don't know what I need. My life is no more manageable by me today than it was when I first got sober in AA. Yet if I can remember to ask for God's grace to help me get out of my own way, and give up the business of managing my own life, I'll have a shot at experiencing the joy of good living that our literature talks about. That's an invaluable lesson, thanks to Steve and the rest of the guys at the Siggy One meeting.

JOE S. - Shawnee, Kan. - Sept 2009
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"Hope can be pretty damn contagious."

Eugene, Ore., July 2002

From: "The Hate-and-Pain Guy"
I Am Responsible: The Hand of AA

PROMISES—PROMISES

I can remember being about 4 months sober and just barely being able to hear the 9th step promises one more time. I heard them, but I can tell you I wasn't seeing or feeling them for myself. I had the topic for the meeting; are the promises really true? I say "I think not" every time the question is asked "are these extravagant promises?" But I am not sure I really believe that the promises are ever going to happen for me.

I was so used to "making things happen" in my life; or at least I thought. When I got extremely upset about how I was being treated or not getting the raise or promotion I deserved, I drank, sure, but then I got that "They can't keep a good girl down" attitude and I was off again, rearranging the stage to fit my plan. But now, now I had surrendered in a way I had never known before, and well, to be honest, things just were not moving fast enough for me.

I even made sure my sponsor knew that my progress through the steps seemed a little slow for me. I mean when was "I" going to get the promises I have been working for? After all, I made it through Christmas AND New Years without a drink. Surely there was a special reward for that. Yes, I was grateful that at some point the desire to drink had been taken, but what about the feeling of uselessness and self pity? I still had plenty of that. Self seeking certainly hadn't slipped away...duh...that was obvious by my question. I certainly did still regret the past and definitely wanted to shut the door on it. So when, when would I see the 9th step promises come to fruition?

A friend in the program shared one night about the 4th and 5th step and the aspect of "being amazed before you were half way through." Ok, I thought, I'll hang on a little longer. My sponsor told me to make a gratitude list. I was grateful that my grandchildren would not see me drunk and that I was not hung over every morning. I was certainly grateful that my family and friends were supportive. I was grateful I was, at the very least, willing to do what was suggested in the program of

recovery.

As I continued to work the steps with my sponsor, something happened, I can't tell you the day, but something changed. A power greater than myself had lifted me to a peace and serenity in my life I have never, never experienced. I was filled with compassion for others who suffered like I had. I wanted everyone to work the steps to see the fulfillment of the 9th step promises.

On page 84 and 85 of the Big Book, the tenth step promise says; And we have ceased fighting anything or anyone, even alcohol. For by this time sanity will have returned. We will seldom be interested in liquor. If tempted we recoil from it as from a hot flame. We react sanely and normally, we will find that this has happened automatically. We will see that our new attitude toward liquor has been given us without any thought or effort on our part. It just comes! That is the MIRACLE of it. We feel as though we had been placed in a position of neutrality safe and protected. We have not even sworn off. Instead, the problem has been removed. It does not exist for us. We are neither cocky nor are we afraid. That is our experience. That is how we react... so long as we keep in fit spiritual condition.

Oh so I get it... the action on my part keeps me in fit spiritual condition, which keeps me sober. I am so grateful for the tools of the AA program. I always have a number I can call, I always have my Big Book, I can always hit my knees, I can always find a meeting and, when I remember to use these tools, I can always start my day over, no matter what time it is. If you are as miserable as I was and are willing to go to any length, you will see the promises come true in your own life, I promise!

Lou C.—Mt Juliet, TN

CENTRAL OFFICE OFFICERS	NAME	PHONE #
Chairperson	Cynthia S	407.468.5641
Vice Chairperson	Michael A	615.497.6617
Secretary	Lois B	615.579.7303
Treasurer	Don R	931.239.1523
Public Information/Cooperation with the Professional Community	Al C	615.883.4553
Corrections	Nancy C Jody C	530.218.8176 931.319.3446
Treatment	Jon T	804.306.6256
Archives	Don D	615.525.7643
Central Office Manager	Charles C	615.832.1136
Central Office Bookkeeper	David	615.832.1136

FIRST TUESDAY OF EVERY MONTH: District 32 Meeting

When:
6:30pm – 7:30pm

Where:
Central Office
Conference Room

176
Thompson
Lane

FIRST TUESDAY OF EVERY MONTH: District 35 Meeting

When:
6:30pm – 7:30pm

Where:
5925 O'Brien Ave

SECOND TUESDAY OF EVERY MONTH:

**Intergroup Meeting
(Central Office)**

When:
5:45pm – 6:45pm

Where:

Central Office
Conference Room

176 Thompson Lane

Tradition One:

"Our common welfare should come first; common welfare depends on AA unity."

The word 'unity' seems to leap out from the above sentence. Considering the tremendously vital importance of our group unanimity it would appear that the remaining Eleven Traditions were specifically designed to solidify and encourage this practical concept. Just as the Twelve Steps coagulate us as sober members of the AA fellowship, our Twelve Traditional values unify our groups as they maintain their role in helping us get started, then keeping us on the beam. Without said cohesion our fellowship would have become quite a diverse and erratic – and probably nonfunctional – mixture after these nearly seventy-seven years of existence.

In regards to AA fellowship, I personally take two views:

First - there exists the '**Fellowship**;' This includes any and all alcoholics who have a desire to stop drinking. Certain

of these members may choose not to take the Big Book program of action seriously, may have little or no interest in AAs Twelve Step process or volunteering for service work, and may even attend meetings weeks or months apart. Yet, so long as they maintain sobriety, they are welcome and considered *full-fledged* members of the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous and are treated with all due respect.

Second - there are those members who exist in the **Fellowship of the Spirit**. This majority, each in their own way, become involved in the many diverse activities that AA has to offer, which are too numerous to mention is this short article; yet, the knowledge of, and adherence to, the Twelve Step process from the Big Book looms large in my mind when it come to AA unity.

Bill W. writes about AA's common solution on page 17: "*The tremendous*

fact for everyone of us is that we have discovered a common solution. We have a way out on which we can absolutely agree, and upon which we can join in brotherly and harmonious action. This is the great news this book carries to those who suffer from alcoholism." The fact that we join in *brotherly and harmonious action*, marks for me a high point of AA unity. I personally enjoy the *fellowship of the spirit* members who engage in what I call "AA Speak," or "Big Book Speak." When my AA friends speak in page numbers, AA clichés, or historical AA events, I feel right at home. You might say in the *fellowship of the spirit*! For yours truly, this style of AA unity is manna from Heaven.

Clarence S., founder of Cleveland's first AA Group (1939), pronounced that unity is when one drunk gets mad at another drunk in his group and goes out and starts his own meeting. Clarence quipped: "*We had a lot of 'unity' in Cleveland during those early days.*"

Bob S., Richmond, In

Astucia Professional**Conocía todos los trucos para beber en su lugar de trabajo**

Mi vida alcohólica tuvo etapas de felicidad, infelicidad, pero, sobre todo, estuvo siempre marcada por un deseo de beber a cualquier hora y en cualquier lugar.

Fue así como convertí mi lugar de trabajo en un lugar para beber y de diversión. Compraba licor antes de entrar a trabajar y lo repartía con los compañeros que trabajaban conmigo.

Por una gran suerte del destino, me tocó trabajar en una compañía en la que empecé como barrendero y gracias a la ayuda de una buena persona pude aprender acerca de la preparación de colores en la industria de la imprenta.

Después de adquirir un poco de experiencia, fui de compañía en compañía, ganando más dinero y hundiéndome en alcohol.

Fue así como llegué a mi última oferta de trabajo.

Me contrataron con un buen sueldo, prestaciones laborales y con el reconocimiento de ser un trabajador con experiencia.

Yo bebía todos los días y llegaba al trabajo siempre con resaca. Mi superior y jefe inmediato era un judío ortodoxo liberal que conocía mi capacidad profesional y también mi problema con la bebida.

Un día me llamó a su oficina para decirme que estaba al tanto de mi consumo de alcohol dentro de la empresa y que eso era inaceptable. Me propuso que respetara esa regla y que al final de la jornada él me llevaría a tomar unos tragos y luego me conduciría a mi casa.

Era muy curioso entrar a los bares con él a mi lado, tomar unos tragos bajo la mirada atónita de los presentes y marcharnos.

Me dejaba en la puerta de mi casa y me decía que

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Astucia Professional (con't)*(Continued from page 5)*

esto lo íbamos a hacer todos los días para controlar mi forma de beber. Apenas lo veía alejarse yo salía y seguía bebiendo hasta el amanecer. Esto continuó hasta que volví a introducir alcohol a la empresa.

Por mi culpa, la disciplina y la vigilancia se endurecieron, ahora nuestros maletines eran revisados cada día.

Una tarde, no aguanté más y mandé a traer un paquete de cervezas. Me lo dejaron en la banqueta de la calle, pero tenía el problema de cómo ingresarlo. Mi desesperación me hizo correr a traerlo, pero alguien me vio. Se movilizaron para agarrarme con las manos en la masa, pero en una centellada de viveza, me metí en la oficina de mi jefe y escondí el paquete de cervezas en una gaveta de su escritorio.

Salí de la empresa con la satisfacción de haberlos engañado a todos y me fui a continuar bebiendo.

Al día siguiente, un viernes, nos juntaron a todos los empleados y con todos los honores me despidieron de la empresa como un perro.

En mi última borrachera caí en el hospital y al salir me acordé de mi amigo que dos años atrás, había dejado de beber por medio de un grupo de Alcohólicos Anónimos. Llegué a una reunión un 15 de mayo y desde esa fecha no he bebido.

Fueron ocho años los que pasé con el recuerdo de esa empresa, hasta que se produjo algo fantástico.

Ya en sobriedad, caminando por una calle del Boro Park, encontré a ese jefe estacionando su carro. Me saludó y observándome fijamente y con un poco de asombro me preguntó que si seguía bebiendo. Le dije que no y de inmediato me concedió una entrevista en la empresa.

Tal vez por desconfianza o por prueba me citó tres veces antes de contratarme de nuevo a trabajar en la empresa.

A mí, la sobriedad me ha devuelto mi trabajo.

—*Samuel H., Brooklyn, Nueva York*
Reprinted with permission: AAGrapevine La Vida

EVENTS**NEW YEAR'S EVE DANCE**

December 31, 2012

7pm to 1am

Guest Speaker—Todd W @ 8pm

Bring finger foods / desserts to share

\$10 donations encouraged

**Location: First United Methodist Church
 217 East Main St.
 Hendersonville, TN 37075**

Proceeds to benefit Middle Tennessee Combined District's Facilitation of the 4th Quarter Voting Assembly in October 2013.

After the Great Britain Beer Festival, in London, all the brewery presidents decided to go out for a beer.

The guy from Corona sits down and says, "Hey Senor, I would like the world's best beer, a Corona." The bartender dusts off a bottle from the shelf and gives it to him.

The guy from Budweiser says, "I'd like the best beer in the world, give me 'The King Of Beers', a Budweiser." The bartender gives him one.

The guy from Coors says, "I'd like the only beer made with Rocky Mountain spring water, give me a Coors." He gets it.

The guy from Guinness sits down and says, "Give me a Coke." The bartender is a little taken aback, but gives him what he ordered.

The other brewery presidents look over at him and ask "Why aren't you drinking a Guinness?" and the Guinness president replies, "Well, I figured if you guys aren't drinking beer, neither would I."

MEETINGS—NEW—MOVED—CHANGES—CANCELLED**NEW**

37046	College Grove United Methodist Church 8568 Horton Hwy College Grove Tue & Thur 6:30am OD
37061	Erin AA Lockharts Chapel Methodist Church 2385 Hwy 149 Erin Tues & Thurs 7pm OD
37064	Road to Recovery Fellowship Bible Church 1725 Columbia Ave Suite 100 Rm 102 Franklin Tues 8p CD
37066	G-AA 107 College St Gallatin Mon & Fri 8pm Sun 7pm OD
37067	Cool Springs Newcomers Bradford Hlth Svcs 1897 Gen George Patton Dr Franklin Mon & Wed 7pm CD/Beg
37076	Women's BB Study Hermitage Pres Church 4401 Lebanon Rd Hermitage Sat 3pm
37082	Comfort Zone Oak Street House 335 Oak street Kingston Springs Wed Noon
37115	Serenity House 102 Harris St. Madison TT Wed 8pm
37127	Back to the Big Book 4321 Woodbury Pike Murfreesboro Sat 8:30am BB/CD
37138	Open Speaker 1216 Hadley Ave, Old Hickory, United Methodist Church - Sat - 8:05pm
37148	Portland Unity Fri 6:30pm
37172	Robertson County 208B 8th Ave East - Springfield - Wed 7pm CD
37174	S.O.S. Womens Mtg Peace Lutheran Church 726 Beechcroft Rd Springhill Mon & Fri 10am BB
37206	Eastside Women's Eastwood Christian Church 1601 Eastland Ave Tues 6:30pm
37211	Safe Place Oasis Church 7533 Lords Chapel Dr Tue & Thurs 6:30pm OD
37211	Steel Magnolia Women's Last Stop Club 2122 Utopia Sun 10am CD/WM
37211	The Spiritual Giants Club 62 329 Peachtree St M-W-Sa - 6pm

MOVED

37027	Drunks in the Park 7105 Crossroads Blvd #107 Brentwood
37075	New Life - Good Shepherd Meth Church, 525 New Shackle Island Rd Hendersonville
37211	Saturday Eyeopener Club 62 323 Peachtree Nashville 9am OD
37221	Twenty Four Bellevue Pres Church 100 Cross Timers @ Hwy 70

CHANGES

37013	Higher Powered Fri 8pm
37174	Women's AA Mtg name change S.O.S. (Sisters of Sobriety)
37204	Vine Hill Vine Hill Towers 625 Benton Ave Thurs 9am now 4pm

CANCELLED

37027	Prime Time - Tues night
37027	Drunks in the Park Tues 6:30
37066	Turning Point
37086	LaVergne Solutions Saturday
37087	Lebanon By the Book Mon 6:30pm
37172	Robertson County Wed & Sun night
37203	Rarely Fail
37212	Natchez Trace Thurs Noon
38501	Cookeville Weekend Recovery Thurs 6pm

A man was walking through a rather seedy section of town, when a bum walked up to him and asked the man for two dollars.

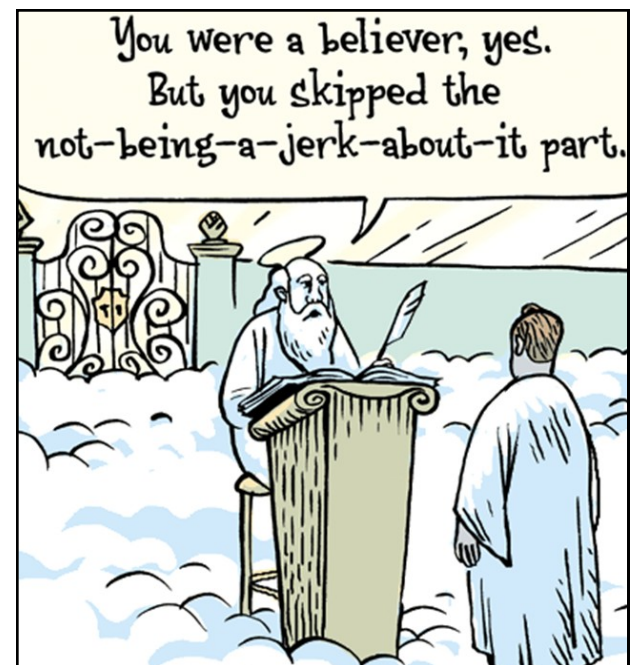
The man asked, "Will you buy booze?"

The bum replied, "No."

Then the man asked, "Will you gamble it away?"

The bum said, "No."

Then the man asked the bum, "Will you come home with me so my wife can see what happens to a man who doesn't drink or gamble?"



"Uh, I don't think you can add the liquor store as a dependent..."

My name is Steven J. I am grateful to be practicing the principles of the twelve step program of recovery. Through these suggested steps, I am now living a clean and sober life. However, the process did not happen overnight for me. I had to surrender completely and admit that I was powerless over drugs and alcohol. It was not easy, but looking back, I realize it was totally necessary.

I was first introduced to AA at the Harbors at Brentwood in 1995. The center is no longer there, but will always be an important part of my story. It was there I learned I could get to know God as I understand him – as a power greater than me that could restore my sanity. For so many years, all I ever knew was a God that my parents told me about. I realize now that It's only when you go through something yourself that you really know who God is to you.

At that time, I was not honest with myself. I was doing the right thing for the wrong reasons. I was trying to change my life to please everybody else. I was doing it for my wife, the kids, church and for other family members. As a result, I relapsed after about 30 days. After that, I stopped for a little while, but I always started back. I didn't realize what was really going on. I had to reach a point of desperation. I had to really hit rock bottom to seek help.

After another 10 years of active addiction, stopping only to start again, a failed marriage, and a diagnosis that sent me to a mental institution, I began to reach that bottom point. I was diagnosed with schizo-effective disorder and placed on medication to treat this illness. I was suicidal and didn't want to live. This made me want to leave the hard drugs alone, but I was still smoking marijuana and drinking wine coolers. I never really liked the way hard liquor tasted and I didn't like to get drunk. Well, after a while that changed. I started liking the way vodka and brandy made me feel but could not seem to control the amount I drank. Eventually, I got to the point where I could not enjoy a meal or properly digest any thing that I ate. After losing 4 pints of blood, I was admitted to the hospital in April 2012, where I received a blood transfusion.

This really woke me up to the fact that if I didn't do something, I was going to die in my addictions. I stayed in the hospital for 3 nights and 4 days. I remember two of the nurses there praying with me and for me. I didn't know if I was going to make it. All I knew is that I didn't want to continue trying to live like that. When I was released, I asked God to help me stay clean and sober. God directed me back to the fellowship and this time I was doing it for myself. I wanted to live a better life. I started to read every book Dr. Bob and Bill wrote on alcoholism. I became willing to try something new because everything that I tried in the past, just didn't work. Now I'm involved in the fellowship by attending meetings, doing service work, chairing meetings and working with a sponsor. I am now celebrating almost 9 months of continuous sobriety, including nights and weekends. For me, this is truly a miracle because I remember when I couldn't even stay clean for as long as 9 days. I really had to get honest with myself, clean house, trust in the God of my understanding and reach out to help others.

The truth of the matter is all I have is today, and just for today with the help of God, I choose to live sober. For me, recovery is vital and must come first. All of the promises of the program are starting to come true in my life. I'm not only getting to know who I am without the drugs and alcohol, I'm also learning to love myself clean and sober without hiding who I am from others. There is so much more that I could say, but words really cannot express it all. Today, I consider myself a recovering alcoholic. I am truly grateful to be learning how to live life in the sunlight of the spirit. I literally had to admit defeat and surrender it all and ever since I've done that, God has been doing for me what I could never do for myself. Maybe someone else can be encouraged by my story of recovery. I truly believe that the best is still yet to come. And most importantly, if this can happen for me, it can also happen for others. I am proof that it does work when you work it, and you'll live if you do. Sincerely grateful.

Steven J—Nashville, TN

Truth

A world where truth does not shine is a world filled with fog and cobwebs,
a gray miasma through which we run blind and lost and terrified,
tripping over roots we do not see, dodging the threat of looming shapes,
separated from our fellows in the dripping, fear-filled darkness. . .
The world of truth is the world of what is. It is here. It is now. It is what is.

- The Best of the Grapevine [Vol. 1], pp. 134-35

To people familiar with endless drives for charitable funds, AA presented a strange and refreshing spectacle. . . They pointed out that the irresponsible had become responsible, and that by making financial independence part of its tradition, AA had revived an ideal that its era had almost forgotten.

- Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, p. 165

Group	Mo Amt	YTD Amt	Group	Mo Amt	YTD Amt	Group	Mo Amt	YTD Amt
21ST AVEUNE		210	GLADEVILLE GRATITUDE	110	170	PULASKI		35
24 HOUR		160	GOODLETTSVILLE A.A.	99	549	RAY OF HOPE		200
ANONYMOUS GROUPS	26	1,124	GRATEFUL ALIVE		341	REBOS (SOBER)		307
ANY LENGTHS		150	GRATITUDE		113	RIDGETOP BASICS		134
BACK DOOR AA		100	HAPPY HOUR		180	ROAD OF HAPPY DESTINY		60
BACK ROOM		5,093	HARDING ROAD		650	ROBERT E. LEE WOMEN'S		150
BACK TO BASICS		25	HENDERSONVILLE BIG BOOK		50	SANGO SOLUTIONS		55
BAR NONE		100	HERMITAGE		150	SAT NIGHT ALIVE MEETING	30	330
BELLEVUE	250	524	HIGH NOON		725	SEARCH FOR SERENITY	330	450
WINNERS AND BEGINNERS	25	155	HILLSBORO ROAD		1,390	SEEKING SANITY		1,166
BIKERS IN RECOVERY	40	391	HILLWOOD FAMILY	200	200	SERENITY		550
BRENTWOOD FULL MOON		600	IBI-UBU		325	SHADE TREE		2,222
BY THE BOOK (LEBANON)		25	KEEP IT SIMPLE BELLEVUE	45	789	SISTERS OF FAITH		75
BY THE BOOK (DICKSON)		151	KEY TO SOBRIETY		86	SMOKE FREE-Sobriety 1st	45	212
CAME TO BELIEVE		75	KICKOFF'S NOT TILL NOON		283	SMYRNA GRATITUDE	100	1,100
CELEBRATE SERENITY		123	LAFAYETTE NEW HOPE		75	SUNDAY NIGHT BUNCH		300
CHICKEN PLUCKER'S		250	LAMBDA		150	TEMPLE HILLS		150
CLARKSVILLE		50	LAST CALL		25	THE BASEMENT BUNCH		200
CLUB 62 UNITY		12	LATE LUNCH BUNCH	315	1,777	THE HUT		40
COLUMBIA	20	220	LAVERGNE SOLUTIONS		175	THE STRAGGLERS	25	125
COMFORT ZONE		500	LAWRENCEBURG	40	80	THE UNITED		400
COMMUNICATIONS		157	LET IT HAPPEN		50	THE WAY OUT		950
COOKEVILLE		150	LIFE SAVERS		250	TRUDGING THE ROAD		200
COOL SPRINGS NEWCOMERS		51	LINDEN		100	TURNING POINT		704
CROSSVILLE NON-SMK STEP		71	LIVING BY THE PRINT		300	VALLEYVIEW ASHLAND CITY		160
DAILY REPRIEVE		146	LIVING IN THE NOW		35	WANGL		128
DAVIDSON RD		4,100	LOVE AND LAUGHTER		25	WAVERLY		120
DAVIDSON RD WOMEN'S		241	MADE A DECISION	130	130	WEEKENDERS		100
DEKALB CTY FRIENDSHIP	450	450	MCMINNVILLE		100	WEST MEADE		200
DICKSON AA	125	125	MID-DAY BREAK	240	1,370	WEST NASHVILLE		210
DISTRICT 9		30	MT JULIET FELLOWSHIP	200	325	WESTMINSTER		676
DONELSON YET		105	MURFREESBORO		52	WHITE HOUSE		160
DOWNTOWN LUNCH	166	446	MUSIC CITY HAPPY HOUR		100	WINNERS AND BEGINNERS		256
DOWNTOWN y		70	MUSIC ROW		300	WOMEN IN THE SOLUTION	83	283
DROP THE ROCK		100	MUSTARD SEED	50	550	WOMEN'S AA		30
DRUNKS IN THE PARK		674	NATCHEZ TRACE MEETING		220	WOMEN'S SPEAKER MEETING		115
EAST SIDE SATURDAY		750	NEEDED MEETING CLOSED		144	WOODBURY		780
EASY DOES IT		130	NIPPERS CORNER MEETING		28	YOUNG GUNS		92
EVERY NIGHT AT 6		339	NORTH BORO		50	YOUNG TIMERS		90
FAIRFIELD GLADE		114	NORTHSIDE, CLARKSVILLE		225			
FAYETTEVILLE	70	110	OUT TO BREAKFAST		60			
FIRST THINGS FIRST	133	636	OUT TO LUNCH BUNCH		445			
FIVE & FIVE	216	1,225	P.O.P.		400			
FRANKLIN	266	1,751	PAY DAY		75			
FRANKLIN WOMEN'S		150	PEACHTREE		50			
FREE TO BE		596	PORTLAND UNITY		60			
G.O.D. (GRP OF DRUNKS)		300	PRIMARY PURPOSE	20	265			

	Mo Amt	YTD Amt
TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS	3,849	50,563

NOVEMBER 2012 FINANCIALS

	NOVEMBER ACTUALS	CURRENT MONTH BUDGET	ACTUALS TO BUDGET- VARIANCE	NOVEMBER Y-T-D ACTUALS	CURRENT Y-T-D BUDGET	ACTUALS TO BUDGET- VARIANCE
INCOME						
LITERATURE SALES	7,913	12,435	(4,522)	129,781	136,784	(7,003)
COST OF GOODS SOLD						
LITERATURE	(5,577)	(8,333)	2,756	(89,561)	(91,667)	2,106
FREIGHT	(34)	-	(34)	(362)	-	(362)
DIRECTORY	(197)	(438)	241	(2,048)	(4,813)	2,765
TOTAL COST OF GOODS SOLD	(5,808)	(8,771)	2,963	(91,970)	(96,479)	4,509
GROSS PROFIT - LITERATURE	2,105	3,664	(1,559)	37,810	40,304	(2,494)
OTHER INCOME						
COFFEE	-	-	-	-	-	-
GROUP	4,105	4,667	(561)	50,809	53,292	(2,483)
INDIVIDUAL	627	292	335	9,191	3,208	5,983
MESSENGER	-	208	(208)	1,155	2,292	(1,137)
SPECIAL EVENTS	1,980	333	1,647	1,980	3,667	(1,687)
INTEREST	4	17	(13)	87	183	(96)
TOTAL OTHER INCOME	6,716	5,517	1,200	63,222	62,642	580
TOTAL INCOME	8,822	9,181	(359)	101,032	102,947	(1,914)
EXPENSES						
CASUAL LABOR	-	150	(150)	1,050	1,650	(600)
PAYROLL	3,861	4,122	(261)	48,202	47,218	984
LEGAL & PROFESSIONAL	145	155	(10)	1,585	1,710	(125)
SALES TAX EXPENSE	(9)	-	(9)	(3)	-	(3)
RENT	2,255	2,197	58	24,609	24,168	441
PRINTING	272	413	(141)	3,347	4,538	(1,190)
PAYROLL TAXES	295	314	(19)	3,610	3,593	17
MAINTENANCE	91	74	17	878	816	62
TELEPHONE & FAX	486	475	11	5,318	5,225	93
ANSWERING SERVICE	-	191	(191)	1,806	2,096	(289)
POSTAGE	73	100	(27)	1,458	1,100	358
OFFICE SUPPLIES	99	167	(68)	2,013	1,833	179
BANK SERVICE CHARGES	-	-	-	68	-	68
COMPUTER PROJECT	106	83	22	929	917	13
INTERGROUP EXPENSE	-	83	(83)	280	916	(636)
INSURANCE	-	175	(175)	1,695	1,925	(820)
SPECIAL EVENTS / FUNCTIONS	711	167	545	817	1,833	(1,017)
REPAIR & MAINTENANCE	-	-	-	44	-	44
TRAVEL	79	274	(195)	1,770	3,015	(1,246)
DEPRECIATION	-	42	(42)	272	458	(187)
OVER/UNDER	-	-	-	(57)	-	(57)
TOTAL EXPENSES	8,464	9,180	(717)	99,691	103,011	(3,320)
NET INCOME	358	0	358	1,341	(64)	1,406

BRENTWOOD FULL MOON

Carolyn W	01.02.08
Dave R	01.05.00
Debbie D	01.10.12
Den L	01.19.82
Donna C	01.08.00
Jerry F	01.26.91
Josh K	01.25.12
Mark H	01.03.08
Michael A	01.23.07
Phil B	01.04.08
Richard D	01.17.99
Sarina W	01.23.07
Steve H	01.15.10

DAILY REPRIEVE

Jay D 01.30.78

DONELSON YET

Chris S	01.13.09
Denise S	01.18.95
Joan B	01.11.91
Walter L	

EASY DOES IT

Beth	01.12.08
David H	01.16.93
David P	01.26.92
Dottie	01.31.04
George M	01.22.11
Jeri	01.06.64

FELLOWSHIP

April M	01.15.10
Frances S	01.01.00
Gary W	01.30.12
Rudy S	01.02.01

GRATEFUL ALIVE

Alan S	01.26.11
Curt P	01.23.82
Don G	01.13.82
Neil B	01.21.11
Sam E	01.02.05
Scott E	01.06.89

KEEP IT SIMPLE

Bruce D	01.28.05
Cheryl H	01.01.04
Dave F	01.11.05
Edward S	01.07.99
Greg T	01.23.07
Ike H	01.19.12

KEEP IT SIMPLE (cont)

Janet P	01.03.12
Lee B	01.21.89
Marju R	01.19.12
Ram D	01.10.09
Shawn B	01.02.12
Steve B	01.09.03

LATE LUNCH BUNCH

Greg Z	01.18.11
Mo R	01.07.10
Teressa H	01.25.08

MT JULIET FELLOWSHIP

Ronnie W	01.17.05
Stanley N	01.19.04

NIPPERS CORNER

Cindy M	01.26.11
"B"	01.08.91
Tom W	01.10.93
Loren F	01.27.11

PORTLAND UNITY

Dave P	01.25.10
Randall H	01.15.11

REBOS

Bob E	01.15.08
Gary W	01.30.12
Jay S	01.07.12
Leslie K	01.12.10
Pete B	01.28.12
Randy S	01.30.12

ROBERT E LEE WOMEN'S

Ginger L	01.07.12
Julie H	01.24.09
Kate K	01.27.12
Melanie V	01.02.03
Tanya N	01.23.04

SEEKING SANITY

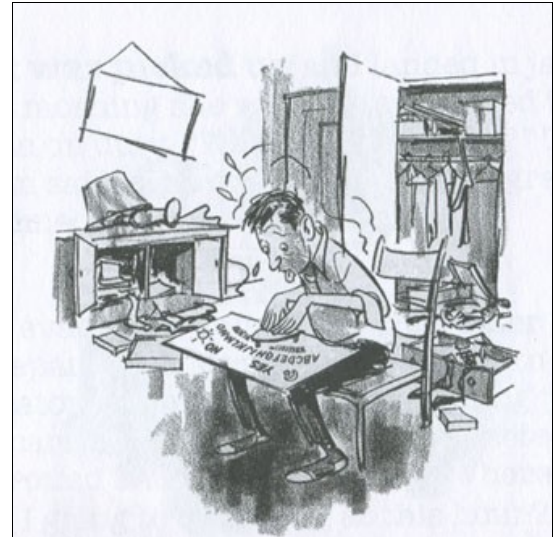
Beth M	01.12.08
Ed M	01.12.94
Jennifer H	01.19.12
Jim T	01.19.07
Kay B	01.18.12
Lori K	01.11.10
Michelle T	01.29.09
Rex L	01.28.98
Sean D	01.26.09
Terry W	01.01.98
Tom B	01.04.12

SHADE TREE

Arthur C	01.31.10
Barclay R	01.01.90
Brandon L	01.27.05
Brent R	01.31.01
Brian D	01.19.??
Cameron E	01.01.10
Claire B	01.31.05
Conrad R	01.14.75
Cora A	01.22.08
Danielle C	01.19.08
Dave F	01.11.05
Dave H	01.13.05
David F	01.27.05
David S	01.01.06
Ed A	01.13.09
Jim E	01.26.94
Jim H	01.01.09
Jim P	01.30.04
John B	01.12.01
Joshua C	01.02.08
Karen R	01.16.06
Kellie N	01.07.10
Kendra B	01.22.08
Kimberly N	01.29.99
Lisa B	01.14.08
Marsha R	01.05.09
Michael J	01.01.10
Mike K	01.05.06
Pamela D	01.01.03
Penny Mc	01.05.09
Rick T	01.11.05
Ricky A	01.20.06
Russell S	01.01.06
Scott M	01.16.10
Sharon H	01.11.10
Steve B	09.09.03
Terry W	01.01.98
Wayne H	01.17.06
Wendy N	01.11.05

SMYRNA GRATITUDE

Amelia L	01.??.??
Brad W	01.14.12
Byron O	01.28.00
Cecilia M	01.21.06
Chad	01.15.10
Connie	01.13.10
David M	01.26.11
David T	01.05.11
Diane W	01.12.11
Ed R	01.06.07
HG C	01.01.94
JD M	01.01.10
Julie	01.27.05
Justin T	01.01.10
Kell C	01.05.02
Peggy J	01.14.06
Rick A	01.01.12



"It keeps coming up with the same letters: AA."

It's your Anniversary!

Many AA members across the country share their Anniversary by giving a dollar or two, for each year of their sobriety to their Intergroup Office. This insures that the same help that they received will be available to others who are new to the fellowship.

Group Contributions and individual contributions are the life support of Alcoholic Anonymous.

There is no such thing as a small contribution.



"Sorry, Billy. I'm tired of waiting."

JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

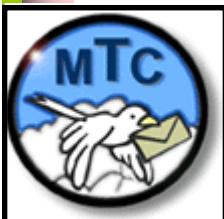
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