

Tradition X

IN my opinion, the minute we come down the stairs on meeting night we shed the cloak of the worries of the week to gather here for one purpose--to help one another. For a whole week, as individuals we have had to make decisions in our businesses, our homes and in other fields. Let us enjoy these few short hours of fellowship with those who understand and with the people who can laugh and have a darned good reason for doing so. Then when we don our coats to go back up the stairs, we are better prepared both mentally and spiritually to cope with an ever demanding life on the outside.

I see no reason why an individual, if he is so inclined, may not endorse his own opinions on any number of outside issues as "John Doe, member of Alcoholics Anonymous." That's his baby. He has one mind, and no doubt his own track on which to run it. But I'll bet if we hand-picked five people from our group here who had the same political leanings, religion, racial origin and the same outlook on world affairs and asked them to give a panel discussion on any one subject, they still wouldn't be in complete agreement. So, how could we as a cosmopolitan group even contemplate venturing an opinion or endorsing outside issues? Our only obligation as alcoholics is to ourselves collectively and individually.

I think that being anonymous and obscure as a group is all important to prospective new members. To most of us, the realization that we were failures as social drinkers and needed help with our problem was paralyzing enough at first. The knowledge that we could enter a group such as this without having our names tossed around amongst the local cynics was balm to our wounded pride. Now it doesn't matter, but at that time if there had been a mere inkling of an idea that we would be in the public eye as a member of AA, nine chances out of ten we would still be looking for a do-it-yourself plan.

So, if we are to continue with our "all for one and one for all" ideals, I believe that we should as a group stay on a self-improvement program of our own making, steer clear of endeavors other than those fundamental to our being here.

Remember, united we stand, divided we fall.

A. D.

Grande Prairie, Alberta

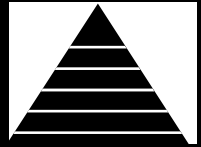
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TRIANGLE EXPRESS

Serving District 39 with Local,
Area, and GSO News and Events



June
2009

Tradition Seven By Bill W.

Self-supporting alcoholics? Who ever heard of such a thing?! Yet we find that's what we have to be. This principle is telling evidence of the profound change that AA has wrought in all of us. Everybody knows that active alcoholics scream that they have no troubles money can't cure. Always, we've had our hands out. Time out of mind we've been dependent upon somebody, usually money-wise. When a society composed entirely of alcoholics says it's going to pay its bills, that's really news.

Probably no AA tradition had the labor pains this one did. In early times we were all broke. When you add to this the habitual supposition that people ought to give money to alcoholics trying to stay sober, it can be understood why we thought we

deserved a pile of folding money. What great things AA would be able to do with it! But oddly enough, people who had money thought otherwise. They figured that----sober----it was high time we now paid our own way. So our fellowship stayed poor because it had to.

**24 Hour AA Hotline:
604-615-2911
www.abbotsfordaa.org**

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There was another reason for our collective poverty. It was soon apparent that while alcoholics would spend lavishly on Twelfth Step cases, they had a terrific aversion to dropping money into a meeting-place hat for group purposes. We were astounded to find that we were as tight as the bark on a tree. So AA, the movement, started and stayed broke,

while its individual members waxed prosperous.

Alcoholics are certainly all-or-nothing people. Our reactions to money prove this. As AA emerged from its infancy into adolescence, we swung from the idea we needed vast sums of money to the notion that AA shouldn't have any. On every lip were the words, "You can't mix AA and money. We shall have to separate the spiritual from the material." We took this violent new tack because here and there members had tried to make money out of their AA connections, and we feared we'd be exploited. Now and then, grateful benefactors had endowed clubhouses, and as a result there was sometimes outside interference in our affairs. We had been presented with a hospital, and almost immediately the donor's son became its principal patient and would-be manager. One AA group was given \$5,000 to do with what it would. The hassle over that chunk of money played havoc for years. Frightened by these complications, some groups refused to have a cent in their treasuries.

Despite these misgivings, we had to recognize the fact that AA had to function. Meeting places cost something. To save whole areas from turmoil, small offices had to be set up, telephones installed, and a few full-time secretaries hired. Over many protests, these things were accomplished. We saw that if they weren't, the man coming in the door couldn't get a break. These simple services would require small sums of money which we could and would pay ourselves. At last the pendulum stopped swinging and pointed straight at Tradition Seven as it reads today.

There is another story about money. One night in 1948, the trustees of the Foundation were having their quarterly meeting. The agenda discussion included a very important question. A certain lady had died. When her will was read, it was discovered she had left Alcoholics Anonymous in trust with the Alcoholic Foundation a sum of \$10,000. The question was, should AA take the gift?

What a debate we had on that one! The Foundation was really hard up just then; the groups weren't sending in enough for the support of the office, we had been tossing in all the book income and even that hadn't been enough. The reserve was melting like snow in springtime. We needed that \$10,000. "Maybe," some said, "the groups will never fully support the office. We can't let it shut down, it's far too vital. Yes, let's take the money. Let's take all such donations in the future. We're going to need them."

Then came the opposition. They pointed out that the Foundation board already knew of a total of half a million dollars set aside for AA in the wills of people still alive. Heaven only knew how much there was we hadn't heard about. If outside donations weren't declined, absolutely cut off, then the Foundation would one day become rich. Moreover, at the slightest intimation to the general public from our trustees that we needed money, we could become immensely rich. Compared to this prospect, the \$10,000 under consideration wasn't much, but like the alcoholic's first drink it would, if taken, inevitably

Ebby and Bill drank all night and then decided to hire a plane. They radioed ahead that they would be coming. A high school band and complete fanfare was there to greet them when they landed. After they landed, they both got out of the plane only to fall flat on their faces. They were so drunk that they couldn't even stand up.

Page 9 -- Bottom paragraph -- "The two men who appeared in court with Ebby"

Rowland Hazard and Cebra G., both were from the Oxford Group at the time. Rowland was never a member of AA. Cebra later joined AA while living in France.

Page 16 -- 1st paragraph -- "Poor chap who committed suicide in Bill's house"

Bill C., was a "guest" for nearly a year. He was a lawyer and gambler (professional bridge player). This happened in the summer of 1936 at their home at 182 Clinton St. Upon returning home from visiting Fitz M and others in Maryland, Bill opened the door to the strong smell of the natural gas that had ended the "poor chaps" life. Over the next few months, Bill and Lois discovered that he had been selling off all of their good dress clothes to finance his drinking and gambling.

Page 32 -- 2nd paragraph -- "The man of thirty"

"The man of thirty who was ambitious in business and remained bone dry for 25 years only to die after 4 years of drinking."

This story was probably adapted from the chapter "First Steps" in the book "The Common Sense of Drinking" by Richard Peabody. There is one story on page 37 that speaks of a man 36 years old that had been drinking for 16 years and another story on page 123 regarding a man who gave up drinking to make a million dollars.

Neither one of these actually match the story in the big book. The story on page 123 is the one that most closely matches the story in the book. The big discrepancy in the story is the amount of sobriety this man had (full text below). The big book speaks of 25 years of sobriety and the other states he had 5 years sober.

"Some years ago there lived a man who decided to give up drinking until he could make a million dollars, at which time he intended to drink in moderation. It took him 5 years of sobriety to make the million; then he begins his "moderate" drinking. In two or three years he lost all his money, and in another three he died of alcoholism."

AA Missing Trivia

Roman Numeral Section

Page xiii — Foreword to the First Edition

"We, of Alcoholics Anonymous, are more than one hundred men and women who have recovered from a seemingly hopeless state of mind and body." was a total experience of 74 members from 1935 through 1938 as the original manuscript went to press, 41 known to have achieved permanent sobriety, a slight "alcoholic exaggeration," unless the wives were counted also. Florence Rankin, the first woman to achieve a considerable period of sobriety, and the only woman sober at that time, went back to the bottle and died an apparent suicide in 1939. See *Pioneers of A.A.*

Page xvii -- 3rd paragraph -- "Very first case..."

The very first case that Bill and Bob worked on was Eddie R. They were not successful with Eddie. He was from a prominent Youngstown, Ohio, family, had lost his rented house and was about to lose his job. At Doctor Bob's funeral in 1950, Eddie R. was there with one year of sobriety.

The first "successful" case was Bill D., AA member number three. Bill D's sobriety date was June 26, 1935, 16 days after Dr Bob's.

Page XXVI -- 1st paragraph -- "We believe and so suggested a few years ago..."

This was stated in an article in the "Lancet Journal" published in 1937.

Page XXIX -- 2nd paragraph -- "man was brought in to be treated for chronic alcoholism gastric hemorrhage Pathological mental deterioration."

Hank P. -- His story in the first edition of the big book was titled "The Unbeliever". Hank was a high-pressure kind of guy. He was called a "promoter among promoters". Hank had worked for Standard Oil of New Jersey. He was the 2nd member in New York. Hank wrote chapter 10 "To Employers." He subsequently relapsed in September 1939, and never again gained any degree of sobriety.

Page XXIX -- 3rd paragraph -- "and deciding his situation was hopeless, had hidden in a deserted barn determined to die."

The First 164 Pages

Page 9 -- Top paragraph -- "Details of the airplane charter to complete a jag."

There was a new airfield by the Equinox House in Manchester, Vermont.

set up a disastrous chain reaction. Where would that land us? Whoever pays the piper is apt to call the tune, and if the AA Foundation obtained money from outside sources, its trustees might be tempted to run things without reference to the wishes of AA as a whole. Relieved of responsibility, every alcoholic would shrug and say, "Oh, the Foundation is wealthy----why should I bother?" The pressure of that fat treasury would surely tempt the board to invent all kinds of schemes to do good with such funds, and so divert AA from its primary purpose. The moment that happened our fellowship's confidence would be shaken. The board would be isolated, and would fall under heavy attack of criticism from both AA and the public. These were the possibilities, pro and con.

Then our trustees wrote a bright page of AA history. They declared for the principle that AA must always stay poor. Bare running expenses plus a prudent reserve would henceforth be the Foundation's financial policy. Difficult as it was, they officially declined that \$10,000, and adopted a formal, airtight resolution that all such future gifts would be similarly declined. At that moment, we believe, the principle of corporate poverty was firmly and finally embedded in AA tradition.

When these facts were printed, there was a profound reaction. To people familiar with endless drives for charitable funds, AA presented a strange and refreshing spectacle. Approving editorials here and abroad generated a wave of confidence in the integrity of Alcoholics Anonymous. They pointed out that the irresponsible had become responsible, and that by making financial independence part of its tradition, Alcoholics Anonymous had revived an ideal that its era had almost forgotten.

Bill W.

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District 39 News and Reports

Friday Night Big Book

GSR: Warren E.

I am happy to say attendance has been fifty members or more. We are currently on page forty-five of the Big Book. There are upcoming cakes at this time. Everyone welcome and we are definitely not a glum lot.

Monday Night Beginners

GSR: Pierre

We are doing well in attendance and new members are getting involved in the spirit of rotation. We have rotated most of our positions. I had the privilege to attend the Pre-Assembly in Burnaby.

We have 2 cakes in June:

Jack O. 25 years, and Mary A. 1 year, both on June 1.

Yours in Love and Service,
Pierre.

Friends In Need

Adam H. Will be taking 2 years June 30.

The Youngtimers

GSR: Mark H.

Hi everyone! Our attendance is excellent, and we are attracting out-of-townners. We try to get together after the meeting to do things —

District Committee Members

DCM: Bob T.— 604-751-0045

Alternate DCM: Mike B.— 604-807-6577

Secretary: Donna B. — 604-853-4845

Treasurer: Angie — 604-217-0341

Telephone Chair: Randy C.— 778-549-3508

Grapevine Chair: Debbie S.— 604-855-0001

Treatment Chair: Gene Y.— 604-864-4033

Newsletter Chair: Mark H.— 604-768-7133

Webmaster/Directory Chair: Peter R.— 604-897-3470

Cooperation with Professional Communities/Public Information

Chair (CPC/PI): Michelle L. — 778-908-0026

Corrections Chair: Vacant

Archives Chair: Vacant

such as mini-golf, go carts, and bowling — for fellowship and fun. We are looking for long-timers who sobered up young to come and support us — or anyone who just wants to check us out.

News, Events, and Important Dates

**49th Annual DISTRICT 6 AA Rally "LIVING FREE" June 12 to 14, 2009
Nanoose Bay, BC**

PACIFIC NORTHWEST CONFERENCE

**Our Commitment to Carry AA's Message
Enthusiasm and Gratitude in Action**

June 26 to 28, 2009

Rossland, BC

BCYPAA.03 - Superhero Dance

June 20th 2009

Tickets \$10 at the door, free for kids 12 and under

Dress up as your favorite Superhero or Supervillain !

Trinity United Church

33737 George Ferguson Way

Abbotsford, BC

Doors Open @ 7:00PM

Meeting @ 8:00PM

Dance @ 9:30PM

Late Night Meeting @ 10:30PM

2 DJs !! Playing Dance, Pop, Hip Hop, House
50/50

Best Costume

Fun and Fellowship

Contact Information :

Candace 604.897.4565

Andrea 604.854.9697

email: info@bcypaa3.org

"I know you told me no new relationships for a year, but he's got seven months and I've got five--does that count as a year?"
Sheila O., Massachusetts.

EACH YEAR, ON MY AA ANNIVERSARY, my sponsor doesn't give me a medallion. Instead, he hands me a get well card.
Richael K.Haverhill, Massachusetts