

# *Anonymous SJ*

April 2010

## *Keeping It Simple*

### On Simplicity, of Faith, of Living, of Outlook

The A.A. program itself is simple. Why do too many of us try to read complexities and mysteries into the 12 steps? In our drinking days our lives were complex and confused. We were unable to be honest with ourselves and we rationalized our wrong position with all the tricks of evasion and equivocation. We added jealousy, resentment and intolerance to the tangled pattern of our lives. Our greatest longing was for relief, for deliverance from a way of living that had become too complex to endure without the treacherous aid of alcohol.

Our introduction to A.A. at once offered that freedom, if we desired it without reservation and were willing to follow a few steps whose greatest appeal to our bewildered spirits was their simplicity. One of the main differences between A.A. and other programs of sound living is the ease with which a newcomer can grasp its principles, and with which the oldest member can live each day in harmony with himself and his neighbors by practicing the

*Kipling might have written this expressly for A.A.: Not as a ladder from Earth to Heaven, not as a witness to any creed, But simple service simply given to his own kind in their common need*

If each individual member wholeheartedly and unquestioningly accepts the program in the simple form it was given us, without straining for effects and methods of practice to elaborate it, we will have even-tempered groups with only enough organization to insure against over-organization.

Earl T. Chicago

Ed Note: This hit me, as we often hear AA is a simple program for complicated people. Today I am reminded of the beauty of simplicity.

## Committee Report Highlights

### H&I

This committee is planning a workshop on June 12, called “**Why We Carry the Message**”. It is from 9:00am to 1:00 pm, with registration at 8:30 am. It will be held at the George Ruch Bldg, 14th and Highland Ave in Williamstown NJ. There will be 5 speakers. Contact Priscilla S, 856-649-6844 for more info and/or to register.

There are still 2 host/chairperson commitments needed for the Maryville Women’s group for the first and fourth Wednesdays every night. If you are interested in participating, contact Priscilla.

Reminder: The H&I Meeting for May will be held on 5/24 so as not to coincide with Memorial Day.

### Answering Service

There is a **shift for Saturday mornings from 8-10am that still needs to be covered**. Also needed are volunteers to be placed on the waiting list. One year of sobriety is needed for this position.

### Bookers

Next meeting is May 6th at 8pm

### Newsletter

Help is needed!! If you are interested in design, content, writing an article, or helping in any way, please contact Judy at 856-983-0166 or [jcplatt1@aol.com](mailto:jcplatt1@aol.com).

## New AA Dictionary

Sponsorage—noun—collective group consisting of a sponsor and his/her sponsees (Lisa, POP)

Surrendity—(sp?)- the act of surrendering to achieve serenity—Red Lion

Long timer—someone with many years of sobriety who is not a senior citizen

## Gratitude List

Our communal gratitude list, picking the main ingredients, the top of your lists of gratitude items (keep sending to me). I am grateful for:

My health

The Fellowship

My Family

My Friends

e mail YOUR additions to [newsletter@aasj.org](mailto:newsletter@aasj.org)

## Fellowship Announcements and Things To Do

Open Mike night, April 24, 8:30 to 12:00 am. Four house bands, food, fun and fellowship

Spaghetti Dinner, 400 Club, April 25th. 4:00 to 7:00 pm. Contact Dan P 856-287-1705

Dance : May1 "Calvin Hall" Willingboro 8 - 12 \$8.00 per person

Founders Day Picnic June 5 "Subaru Pavilion" 12:30 - 5:00pm

Camping Trip June 25 - 27. Goshen Camp Ground \$5.00 for weekend

Fishing Trip "Duke of Fluke" Somers Point 1:00 - 5:00pm, July 17 \$25.00 per person. Contact Mike Lore 856-779-1830

**June 4 - 6 - Third Annual Jersey Shore Big Book Retreat. San Alfonso Retreat House, Long Branch, NJ. For info contact: Marybeth or Jim - 732-282-1974. Reservations Required.**

**June 4 - 6 - Circle of Hope Roundup. Reading-Berks Intergroup, Perkins Auditorium, Penn State University - Berks Campus, Tulpehocken Rd., Reading, PA. [www.circleofhoperoundup.com](http://www.circleofhoperoundup.com) **NEW****

**June 11 - 13 - South Jersey takes Akron - come join us in Akron, Ohio to celebrate AA's birthday - where it all started. \$ 375/ person covers round trip transportation with breakfast and lunch the first day - registration - accommodations at the Radisson Hotel in downtown Akron - gift - great convention. Send monies to SJFDTC 222 Hanover Rd. West Deptford, Nj 08086 for more info call Wayne @ 856-534-0104.**

**AA Softball Game, June 27th, 11:00am to 7:00pm. Contact Jim O 856-340-6227 or Priscilla S 856-649-6844**

\*\*\*\*\*

Spotlight on.....400 Club, Clementon

New meetings that need support:

Tuesdays, 8pm, Step One

Thursdays, 8-9:30, How It Works, Beginners

Events:

Social with four bands, Sat 4/24, 8:30—midnight.

Also on the agenda are open mike nights/bands/karaoke planned for the first and third Saturdays every month From 8:30—midnight

Spaghetti Dinner, Sun 4/25. Contact Dan P for more info and tickets

Comedy Night, Sat 5/22 starting at 9:00 pm. \$10.00 for tickets

Ed Note: Let us know what your group has planned!!

## ***YOUR TURN—CONTRIBUTIONS FROM OUR FELLOWSHIP***

Ed Note: There were no contributions for this month—please step up to tell us something that is important to you..an experience, a message, what keeps you sober. Looking forward to next month.

Substituting are the Bill W Carl Jung letters.

January 23, 1961

My dear Dr. Jung

This letter of great appreciation has been very long overdue. May I first introduce myself as Bill W., a co-founder of the Society of Alcoholics Anonymous. Though you surely have heard of us, I doubt if you are aware that a certain conversation you once had with one of your patients, a Mr. Rowland H., back in the early 1930's did play a critical role in the founding of our Fellowship.

Though Mr. Rowland H. has long since passed away, the recollection of his remarkable experience while under treatment by you has definitely become part of A.A. history. Our remembrance of Rowland H.'s statements about his experience with you is as follows:

Having exhausted other means of recovery from his alcoholism, it was about 1931 that he became your patient. I believe he remained under your care for perhaps a year. His admiration for you was boundless, and he left with a feeling of much confidence.

To his great consternation, he soon relapsed into intoxication. Certain that you were his 'court of last resort', he again returned to your care. Then followed the conversation between you that was to become the first link in the chain of events that led to the foundation of Alcoholics Anonymous.

My recollection of his account of that conversation is this: First of all, you frankly told him of his hopelessness, so far as any further medical or psychiatric treatment might be concerned. This candid and humble statement of yours was beyond doubt the first foundation stone upon which our Society has since been built.

Coming from you, one he so trusted and admired, the impact upon him was immense.

When he then asked you if there was any other hope, you told him that there might be, provided he could become the subject of a spiritual or religious experience—in short a genuine conversion. You pointed out how such an experience, if brought about, might remotivate him when nothing else could. You did caution, though, that while such experiences had sometimes brought recovery to alcoholics, they were, nevertheless, comparatively rare. You recommended that he place himself in a religious atmosphere and hope for the best. This, I believe, was the substance of your advice.

Shortly thereafter, Mr. H. joined the Oxford Group, an evangelical movement than at the height of its success in Europe, and one with which you are doubtless familiar. You will remember their emphasis upon the principles of self-survey, confession, restitution, and the giving of oneself in service to others. They strongly stressed meditation and prayer. In these surroundings, Rowland H. did find a conversion experience that released him for the time being from his compulsion to drink.

Returning to New York, he became very active with the "O.G." here, then led by an Episcopal clergyman, Dr. Samuel Shoemaker. Dr. Shoemaker had been one of the founders of that movement, and his was a very powerful personality that carried immense sincerity and conviction.

At this time (1932-1934) the Oxford Group had already sobered a number of alcoholics, and Rowland, feeling that he could especially identify with these sufferers, addressed himself to the help of others. One of these chanced to be an old schoolmate of mine, named Edwin T. (Ebby). He had been threatened with commitment to an institution, but Mr. H. and another ex-alcoholic "O.G." member procured his parole, and helped to bring about his sobriety.

Meanwhile, I had run the course of alcoholism and was threatened with commitment myself. Fortunately, I had fallen under the care of a physician—Dr. William D. Silkworth—who was wonderfully capable of understanding alcoholics. But just as you had given up on Rowland, so had he given me up. It was his theory that alcoholism had two components—an obsession that compelled the sufferer to rink against his will and interest and some sort of metabolism difficulty which he then called an allergy. The alcoholic's compulsion guaranteed that the alcoholic drinking would go on, and the allergy made sure that the sufferer would finally deteriorate, go insane or die. Though I had been one of the few he had thought it possible to help, he was finally obliged to tell me of my hopelessness; I too would have to be locked up. To me this was a shattering

[Redacted]

blow. Just as Rowland had been made ready, for his conversion experience by you, so had my wonderful friend, Dr Silkworth prepared me.

Hearing of my plight, my friend Edwin T. came to see me at my home, where I was drinking. By then, it was November 1934; I had long marked my friend Edwin for a hopeless case. Yet here he was in a very evident state of "release", which could by no means be accounted for by his mere association for a very short time with the Oxford Group. Yet this obvious state of release, as distinguished from his usual depression, was tremendously convincing. Because he was a kindred sufferer, he could unquestionably communicate with me at great depth. I knew at once I must find an experience like his, or die.

Again I returned to Dr. Dilworth's care, where I could be once more sobered and so gain a clearer view of my friend's experience of release, and of Rowland H.'s approach to him.

Clear once more of alcohol, I found myself terribly depressed. This seemed to be caused by my inability to gain the slightest faith. Edwin T. again visited me and repeated the simple Oxford Group formulas. Soon he left me, I became even more depressed. In utter despair, I cried out, "If there be a God, will he show himself." There immediately came to me an illumination of enormous impact and dimension, something which I have since tried to describe in the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* and also in *A.A. Comes of Age*, basic texts which I am sending to you.

My release from alcohol obsession was immediate, At once; I knew that I was a free man.

Shortly after my experience, my friend Edwin came to the hospital, bringing me a copy of William James's *The Varieties of Religious Experiences*. This book gave me the realization that most conversion experiences, whatever their variety, do have a common denominator of ego collapse at depth. The individual faces an impossible dilemma. In my case, the dilemma had been created by my compulsive drinking, and the deep feeling of hopelessness had been vastly deepened still more by my alcoholic friend when he acquainted me with your verdict of hopelessness regarding Rowland H.

In the wake of my spiritual experiences, there came a vision of a society of alcoholics, each identifying with and transmitting his experience to the next—chain-style. If each sufferer were to carry the news of the scientific hopelessness of alcoholism to each new prospect, he might be able to lay every newcomer wide open to a transforming spiritual; experience. This concept proved to be the foundation of such success as Alcoholics Anonymous has since achieved. This has made conversion experience—nearly every variety reported by James—available on almost wholesale basis. Our sustained recoveries over the last quarter century number about 300,000. In America and though the world, there are today (1961) 8,000 AA groups.

So, to you, to Dr. Shoemaker of the Oxford Group, to William James, and to my own physician, Dr. Silkworth, we of AA Owe this tremendous benefaction. As you will now clearly see this astonishing chain of events actually started long ago in your consulting room, and it was directly founded upon your own humility and deep perception.

Very many thoughtful AAs are students of your writings. Because of your conviction that man is something more than intellect, emotion, and two dollars worth of chemicals, you have especially endeared yourself to us.

How our society grew, developed its Traditions for unity and structured its functioning, will be seen in the texts and pamphlet material that I am sending you.

You will also be interested to learn that, in addition to the "spiritual experience" many AAs report a great variety of psychic phenomena, the cumulative weight of which is very considerable. Other members have—following their recovery in AA—been much helped by your parishioners. A few have been intrigued by *Ching* and your remarkable introduction to that work.

Please be certain that your place in the affection, and in the history, of our Fellowship is like no other.

Gratefully Yours  
William G. W \_\_\_\_\_

January 30, 1961

Dear Mr. W.:

Your letter has been very welcome indeed.

I had no news from Rowland H. any more and often wondered what had been his fate. Our conversation, which he has adequately reported to you, had an aspect of which he did not know. The reason that I that I could not tell him everything was that in those days I had to be extremely careful of what I said. I had found out that I was misunderstood in every possible way. Thus I was very careful when I talked to Rowland H. But what I really thought about was the result of many experiences with men of his kind.

His craving for alcohol was the equivalent, on a low level, of the spiritual thirst of our being for wholeness, expressed in medieval language: the union with God\*

How could one formulate such an insight in a language that he is not misunderstood in our days?

The only right and legitimate way to such an experience is that it happens to you in reality, and it can only happen to you when you walk on a path, which leads you to a higher understanding. You might be led to that goal by an act of Grace or through a personal and honest contact with friends, or through a higher education of the mind beyond the confines of mere rationalization. I see from your letter that Rowland H. has chosen the second way, which was, under the circumstances, obviously the best one.

I am strongly convinced that the evil principle in the world leads the unrecognized spiritual need into perdition if it is not counter-acted either by real religious insight or by the protective wall of human community. An ordinary man, not protected by an action from above and isolated in society, cannot resist the power of evil, which is called, very aptly, the Devil. But the use of such words arouses so many mistakes that one can only keep aloof from them as much as possible.

These are the reasons why I could not give a full and sufficient explanation to Rowland H., but I am risking it with you because I conclude from your very decent and honest letter that you have acquired a point of view above the misleading platitudes one usually hears about alcoholism.

You see "Alcohol" in Latin is *spiritus*, and you use the same word for the highest religious experience as well fro the most depraving poison. The helpful formula therefore is: *spiritus contra spiritum*.

Thanking you again for your kind letter, I remain

Yours Sincerely

C.G.Jung

\*\*\*\*\*

## Ham on Wry

RECIPE FOR MAKING A MOUNTAIN out of a molehill:

Start with a generous portion of negative thinking.

Add a small problem and self-centered fear.

Stir in a few worst-case scenarios.

Beat continuously so there's no time to think anything through.

Stew for hours.

Jim O.

Poughkeepsie, New York

Reprinted from AA Grapevine, Dec 2001