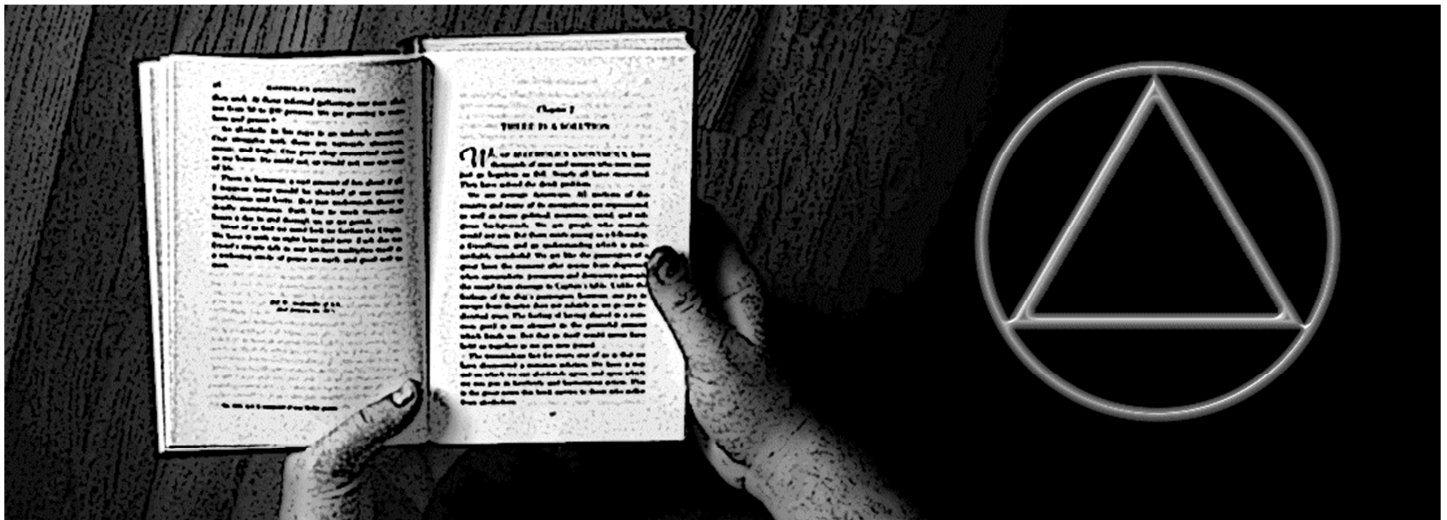




The Voice Within

THE SOLUTION



The 100% Solution

Often in early sobriety, I heard “AA is the solution.” “The Twelve Steps are the solution.” When someone was doing particularly well in their program, they might say, “I’m living in the solution.” What were they talking about?

As an analytic (read “obsessive”) alcoholic, I went to the dictionary for insight. My online dictionary gave the following information:

Solution:

1. An answer to a problem or question.
2. A particular process or method for determining the answer to a problem or question.
3. Chemistry: a uniform, molecular mixture of two or more substances that combine without chemical change. (ex. Dissolved salt in solution.)

Chapter 2 of the Big Book has the title “There Is a Solution.” Sounds like a commercial, doesn’t it? It could be an ad for a cleaning product, a debt consolidation company, a business that promises to organize your life- a quick fix to any of life’s problems. Even more enticing, many quick fixes don’t seem to require much work. As an alcoholic previously accustomed to solving life’s messes by avoiding them, I was intrigued. Broken, lonely, and despairing, I was looking for an answer that would heal me the way I saw people around me healing. I wanted that kind of solution- The Answer. Now. New in sobriety, that’s the only kind of solution I could grasp. (continued)

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(continued)

Hints of another story, like “We feel that elimination of our drinking is but a beginning. (p. 19)” went right by me at first, but in a later reading of page 25, the following stopped me short: ***There is a solution. Almost none of us like the self-searching, the leveling of our pride, the confession of shortcomings which the process requires for its successful consummation. But we saw that it really worked in others...***

Wait a minute. This was not going to be a kind of class with a workbook and a teacher’s answer key, after all. I could talk to my therapist. I could learn what standard answers people might like to hear. But this sounded...messy. I was going to have to go inside my brain and my heart and do some work in those very dark, dangerous neighborhoods. And so I began to learn about the second kind of solution as it applies to AA: the process or method by which a problem is solved. That process is the Twelve Steps.

The good news is that I don’t have to go into those dangerous neighborhoods alone. I work with a sponsor, who is currently guiding me through my most recent fourth step. ***If I am open, honest, and willing enough to peel back the layers of denial and delusion in order to face my fears, resentments, and sick behavior, I have a chance of recovery.*** Not recovery of my old life and the things I used to have, but the recovery of hope, confidence, and purpose.

Steps Four through Ten require real courage. And the fears don’t just go away and leave me, either. I have to work with my sponsor. I have to meditate and pray. But the relief! The relief of telling the truth about myself to someone who understands! The relief of turning my character defects over to my Higher Power! The relief of listing the people I have harmed and then making amends to someone I have hurt! A character defect listed and turned over to my Higher Power has been identified, made specific. An injury done to myself or another person has also been listed and, with my sponsor’s help, an appropriate amends planned and made.

No longer do I need to stoop under the weight of my character defects, as if I were born selfish, insecure, lazy, and greedy and doomed to remain that way. No longer do I need to suffer perpetual self-hatred and self-punishment. I can do something about it! *If I persevere through the steps*, I can get some of that serenity, courage, and wisdom mentioned in the Serenity Prayer. And I can see the Promises from pages 83 and 84 of the Big Book begin to come true. This is working the solution. And I need to do it every day.

The third meaning of “solution” involves my disease and my character defects. As I work the steps with my sponsor, go to regular meetings, and participate in service, the evidence of my defects starts to dissolve like salt or sugar in water. The evidence of my disease begins to fade. As I practice the AA principles in all aspects of my life, I can begin to forget my defects are there. I can forget that my disease is there. If I should then decide that I’m too busy, too healthy to do all this work, guess what happens? I know what happens- it has happened to me, and I’m grateful to have come back from relapse alive. Not everyone makes it back.

I’m an alcoholic. Nothing is ever going to change that. But yes, there is a solution to my thinking problem and my drinking problem. I have a daily reprieve, based on the maintenance of my spiritual condition. The twelve steps of recovery give me the solution, in all its meanings and all its promises. This solution requires total commitment, no holding back. ***Today I’m willing to do whatever it takes to get the solution of sobriety.*** Cathy H. Manchester

THE VOICE WITHIN NEEDS YOUR SUBMISSIONS

Stories of experience, strength and hope, anecdotes, articles on AA in general, group announcements, etc.

Lance C. Newsletter Chair (603) 235-5706 Voicewithinnews@gmail.com

PO Box 3814

Manchester, NH 03105-3814

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NHSCYPAA COMES TO DISTRICT TWELVE
Manchester will host the 12th annual State Conference.

The New Hampshire State Conference of Young People in Alcoholics Anonymous is a group of young men and women who work together within the state and the local community to assist others in recovering from alcoholism. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety through hosting an annual conference and other activities throughout the year to carry the message to alcoholics who still suffer. NHCYPAA operates in accordance with the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and the Twelve Concepts of Alcoholics Anonymous. How it happened: Young people from the city of Manchester created a bid committee in February of 2010. The committee submitted its bid in March 2010 to the NHCYPAA Advisory Committee. This committee selected The Manchester Bid Committee to host its 2011 conference. The Manchester Bid Committee was dissolved at that time and the Manchester Host Committee was formed. Elections were held by The Third Legacy process of voting and the positions of Chair, Co-Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, Hotel Chair, Events Chair, Arts and Crafts Chair, Hospitality Chair, Programs Chair, Outreach Chair and a Prayer Chair were elected. These Chairs have various duties as explained by their title. The Hotel Chair, for example, is in charge of finding a suitable hotel for the conference. The Host Committee is in the process of creating a conference that will be held in early 2011 as well as other events to help alcoholics stay sober, one of which was a Sober Prom that was held in June. Meetings are held twice a month on the first and third Sundays of each month from 4 to 6pm at 1850 Elm St in Manchester. All are welcome to attend. The Committee is currently looking for people to help with its Out-Reach as well as help on its other committees. Stay tuned for more info on the 2011 Conference and its preceding events. NHCYPAA Out-Reach Chair David M

The Native American General Service office of AA represents
“Daily Mediations for the AA lodge”

Hi I'm Cindy C. and I'm an alcoholic. I live in Manchester, NH and I serve on the advisory board of The Native American Indian General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous which functions to provide a vision of recovery, unity and service to the more than 500 sovereign Indian Nations in North America, which are recognized by the Federal Government. www.NAIGSO-AA.org

How NAIGSO-AA supports you: Provides contact point for information on AA activities happening in Indian Country. Establishes and maintains a Native American AA Directory of Groups and individuals (loners). Provides traditional/cultural means of representation from the AA group and individual level to the world services level and return.

“Daily Mediations from the AA Lodge” The book is finished but not yet published in book form, we offer it to you in PDF from our website or you can order a CD free of charge. Each daily meditation page includes wisdom of one of our Native Elders and then a paragraph or two from Big Book or other AA publications that coincides with the elder speak. Example: (continued)

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(continued)

"The god that people reject is not the true god, it is a god they have conjured up apart from proper education, and understanding. In such cases, the least Fools Crow will do is to call their assumptions into question, and force them to reevaluate their position." -Thomas Mails Lakota

If what we have learned and felt and seen means anything at all, it means that all of us, whatever our race, color, or creed are the children of a living Creator with whom we may form a relationship upon simple and understandable terms as soon as we are willing and honest enough to try.

Big Book pg. 28

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We used to amuse ourselves by cynically dissecting spiritual beliefs and practices when we might have observed that many spiritually-minded persons of all races, colors and creeds were demonstrating a degree of stability, happiness and usefulness which we should have sought ourselves.

Big Book pg. 49

Reprinted with permission A.A.W.S.

There is one God looking down on us all. We are all the children of one God. The sun, the darkness, the winds are all listening to what we have to say. -Geronimo

Great Spirit lead us on your path.



Halloween Costume Bash !! Potluck - Dance Party

Saturday October 30, 2010

6:00 P.M. - 10:00 P.M.

First United Methodist Church

961 Valley Street – Manchester, NH.

**DJ & Dancing, Raffles, Best Costumes Prizes,
Sober Fun & General Frivolity**

TICKETS: \$10.00 (At the Door)

**Bring A Favorite Snack Food, Special
Treat, Dinner Dish Or Dessert, If You
Can, to Share With Others In The
Festivities and Fellowship.**

The District Twelve Service Forum
which was held Saturday September 11, 2010 was
a great success! Plans are underway to hold the
event again in 2011. Stay tuned!

The theme of the *December 2010* issue of the
Voice Within will be:

‘Demonstrating Gratitude’.

Send us your thoughts, your article, or your
input! Deadline is November 30, 2010.

GET INVOLVED

IN AA'S LEGACY OF SERVICE

District 12 Website: www.aadistrict12.org

There are a number of different
committees that provide services to District
12; everything from working to put on
functions to bringing commitments into
jails and institutions to working with the
Professional Community. Contact the
chair of one of the committees that you are
interested in.

ATTEND A DISTRICT 12 MONTHLY MEETING

3rd Sunday of the month from 6:00 - 8:00 PM

St. Raphael's Church Hall

Ferry St Manchester NH

**Help to ensure AA is here for today's alcoholic
as well as future alcoholics!**

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