



The Voice Within

THE 12 STEPS TO A SLIP

Persons who attain sobriety through the A.A. principles, do so only after a thoughtful application of the 12 Suggested Steps to recovery. They happily find themselves on a level plateau of sanity after ascending these steps, one after another, and they maintain their sobriety by a continuing application of these same steps.

Those unfortunates who lose their sobriety are said to be having a "slip". I believe this is a misnomer, for it suggests only a momentary adversity that unexpectedly pounces on its unwary victim. A more apt term would be a "glissade," for a slip is the result of a gradual process, beginning long before its logical termination, and progressing through a series of wrong steps, to a drink, and for us, a drunk.

A slip cannot be said to occur only when it culminates in a drink, for many of us, in our failure to apply the 12 Steps to our living, frequently have slips, which are none the less slips merely because we do not slip as far as a drink.

As one must ascend the 12 Steps gradually, I feel the "slip" is the result of unconsciously descending these Steps. *And as descending steps is always accompanied with less effort than ascending them, the steps soon assume the behavior of an escalator.*

As the "bottom" is reached it invariably results in taking that "one drink," which leads, for us, only to all the remorse, terror and unhappiness that follows a binge. These, then, are in my opinion the "12 Steps to a slip," and are the direct result of failure to consciously apply to our lives the 12 Suggested Steps to recovery:

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| 1. We neglect 12th Step work. | 7. We fall into self pity. |
| 2. We omit contact with the Higher Power. | 8. We worry about unalterables. |
| 3. We forget personal inventory. | 9. Our thinkin' really starts stinkin'. |
| 4. We assume grudges against others. | 10. We become "cocky" and overconfident. |
| 5. We miss A.A. meetings, and avoid A.A. friends. | 11. We neglect to ask help from the Higher Power, and take "just one." |
| 6. We gradually lose humility. | 12. We become a "social drinker."
(Temporarily.) |

February 2011

DISTRICT 12 NH ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

CURIOUS ABOUT GETTING INVOLVED IN SERVICE?

WONDERING WHAT IT'S LIKE, OR IF IT TRULY IS ANOTHER WAY TO GIVE BACK, TO CARRY THE MESSAGE?

THE SEARCH COMMITTEE, A COMMITTEE WITHIN DISTRICT TWELVE HAS COMPILED SOME SURVEYS FROM AA MEMBERS TO SEE WHAT IT'S REALLY LIKE. (ALL SURVEY RESPONDERS TO REMAIN ANONYMOUS.) WE'LL OCCASSIONALLY PRINT SOME OF THESE SURVEYS HERE IN THE *VOICE WITHIN*, AND ALSO ON THE WEBSITE AT WWW.AADISTRICT12.ORG.

1. What is your number one reason for getting involved in service?

A. I wanted to give back what has been given to me.

A. God worked through my sponsor and many other people in AA to give me the gift of sobriety. I MUST be willing to take the action to fulfill God's plan for me which is to do the same for others that was done for me.

2. Do you consider service to be an integral part of your recovery?

A. YES

A. YES

a. If yes, please explain:

A. It's our primary purpose and without it the AA program would not be what it is today.

A. See #1

b. If no please explain:

3. Do you believe that the service legacy of AA is crucial for the survival of AA?

A. Yes without service and a higher power the program would not be the same.

A. YES

4. How has service played a role in your recovery?

A. It helps me remember what it was like in the beginning, helps me get out of myself and give back what was freely given to me. It keeps me focused and willing knowing that if I continue on my path the possibility to help someone get greater and greater.

A. The more I help others, the better I am as a member of AA, a husband, father, friend and employee.

5. Would you recommend that someone you sponsor or a friend of yours become active in service?

A. Yes, I feel it is one of the most important parts of the program

A. Yes I do constantly.

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This issue of The Voice Within was sponsored through the 7th Tradition

Submitting Articles

Length and format: The newsletter may publish work of different lengths, from snappy one-liners and one-paragraph anecdotes to full-page articles (word count 400 max) **Text** sent by e-mail should be submitted in the body of the message or as attached files, saved in "Word." Handwritten text should be written clearly on one side of the paper. Include your phone number please. **Comments? Email us your comments on any articles, topics, etc.**

Articles are reviewed, selected, and edited by the editorial team. The contents appropriateness is at the sole discretion of the Newsletter Committee.

Absolute Deadline to be considered for April 2011 issue is March 31, 2011

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Thank You God for AA.

Our program as it is outlined in the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous saved my life and this fellowship that surrounds the program makes this journey Joyous. Today, a power greater than myself grants me a daily reprieve from the horrors of active alcoholism.

When this power brought me to AA, the Old Timers welcomed me with open arms. They freely gave me what I today believe is a person's most valuable possession. ***Their time.***

They were present before and after meetings...Late at night and early in the morning...

Someone was always there to pat on the back or kick in the butt. These Men and Women were united against a common foe. One of these men looked me in the eye and touched my soul. He instantly knew me better than I knew myself. Every time he shared at meetings he proclaimed; "My name is Jim Y. And I am an alcoholic and today I have a Total Attitude of Gratitude for my sobriety".

That statement perplexed me to no end. **"Total Attitude of Gratitude"?**

When I asked Jim to explain, he suggested (?) what he always suggested; Get a dictionary Abby (He nicknamed me Abby normal after the defective brain in the movie Young Frankenstein) I whined and complained and then got a dictionary.

Total	= Complete
Attitude	= A state of feeling or mind about a person or situation
of	= caused by
Gratitude	= the state of being grateful

Ahhhhh Haaaaaa!!!! **A Complete feeling caused by the state of being grateful.**

Jim Y and the others God surrounded me with were focused on the miracle they had been allowed to participate in via Alcoholics Anonymous. **They nurtured all who wanted it, respected where AA had come from and fiercely defended this gift.**

When I asked how I could get that feeling he smiled and said "Keep Coming".

Jim passed on in 1992 and years after his passing my wife gave me a copy of the William James book; *The Varieties of the Religious Experience*. **I was stunned to find on page #35 total attitudes are different from usual or professional attitudes.**

I smiled and reflected that Jim was still Passing it on long after he passed on! I am still striving to reach that complete feeling and each day work towards attaining a Total attitude of gratitude for my sobriety.

ALK

Peace

With the holiday season passing us, much conversation has been on the subject of peace, though recovery in Alcoholics Anonymous presents this on a daily basis. The peace of not obsessing over a drink, gives a wave of warmth and joy that is a gift that one simply can't be given without using the suggestions within the step program. **There is a peace knowing the struggle is over, and that there is a chance to enjoy life as one has never known before.**

There is a peace you receive with a spiritual awakening, knowing that you are never alone, and that we have a purpose. We have been in battle with John Barleycorn for a long time, and once we surrender and accept that we are alcoholic, the walls begin to melt, and the peace of your higher power begins to shine through a darkness that we thought never could be revealed.

Step 12 begins with telling us to be happy, joyous, and free, words that are synonymous with Christmas, though we are given this every day, if we choose to work our program. **Let 2011 be your best year ever, one day at a time.** May the peace of your higher power be with you.

Richard S.

Life on Life's Terms

I left a meeting last night and heard announcements that the newsletter didn't have enough stories to publish. I thought I would send you something, though I didn't know what subject I would find.

What a difference a day makes.

Last night I got an emergency call from my daughter, my grandson was transported to hospital by ambulance. He's all of seven and they don't know if it is appendix or pancreas. At this time he has been in over night and they are still monitoring him and running ultra sounds.

I have his little brother here with me and he's watching "Max and Ruby" while I type. I need the distraction. Cartoons were never my things. For me, when I was a kid Saturday morning cartoons were banned because it was cleaning day in the house. If by any slim chance you would have all your chores done, you might be able to watch one show. I repeated the pattern with my children. I repeated too many patterns from my childhood.

Growing up in an alcoholic home I had no idea that there was a different way to raise kids. I look back now and see the biggest problem was that I like my elders became an alcoholic. Kids were to be seen and not heard. They were a burden and always got in the way of my drinking.

But what this day with my grandson does for me is send me into a place of gratitude. When I got sober I had to learn to live a totally different way. My kids were still small and they had grown used to me handing them treats or toys to get them out of my hair, and suddenly that ended. I began to pay attention to what they were doing. I began to be interested in school projects and after school activities.

Working the program the way that it is laid out in the Big Book gave me a way to restore and refresh my life and be more influential in the lives of my children. I wasn't perfect mind you; I could slip back into old behaviors anytime I wasn't in good spiritual space.

But I was better than I could ever have been if I continued to drink.

I have lots of sisters, they haven't found the halls yet, but I am praying for them. Their children are estranged from them. Now I can tell you that I raised two daughters. Grandsons are a totally different breed of kid! Everything has to have wheels or noise. Yikes! They are a load of fun! I am happy to have the opportunity. I would never had this, if I didn't put my hand on the latch and open the door of willingness so I just want to say thanks to all of you who helped me to stay sober. So now I am present in the lives of others. anonymous

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