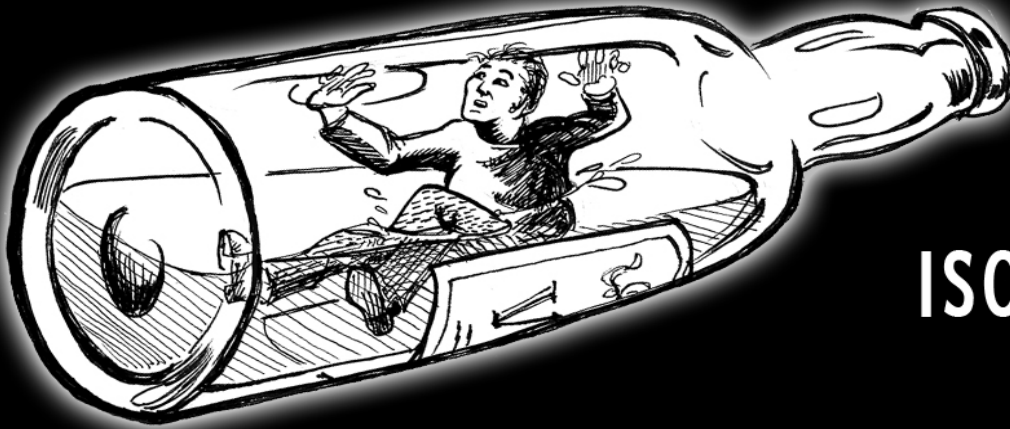


The Voice Within



ISOLATION

OR

FELLOWSHIP?

Terminal Uniqueness or Common Bond?

It's our choice. It's my choice. I can sit on the sidelines of Alcoholics Anonymous and proclaim myself different than the rest of you if I so choose. I can consider myself to have a unique disease and therefore decide that the treatment for my uniqueness differs from your treatment. I can point to the differences in our stories or highlight the commonalities. I can insist the Steps and Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous are not in keeping with my version of what they should be or I can recognize the recovery and unity they represent. I can decide that gratitude is a word only and not an action, and let "them" handle "things." I can keep it all to myself or I can "pass it on." I can use "my program" or "our program." I can balance precariously on the razor edge of relapse or I can become part of.

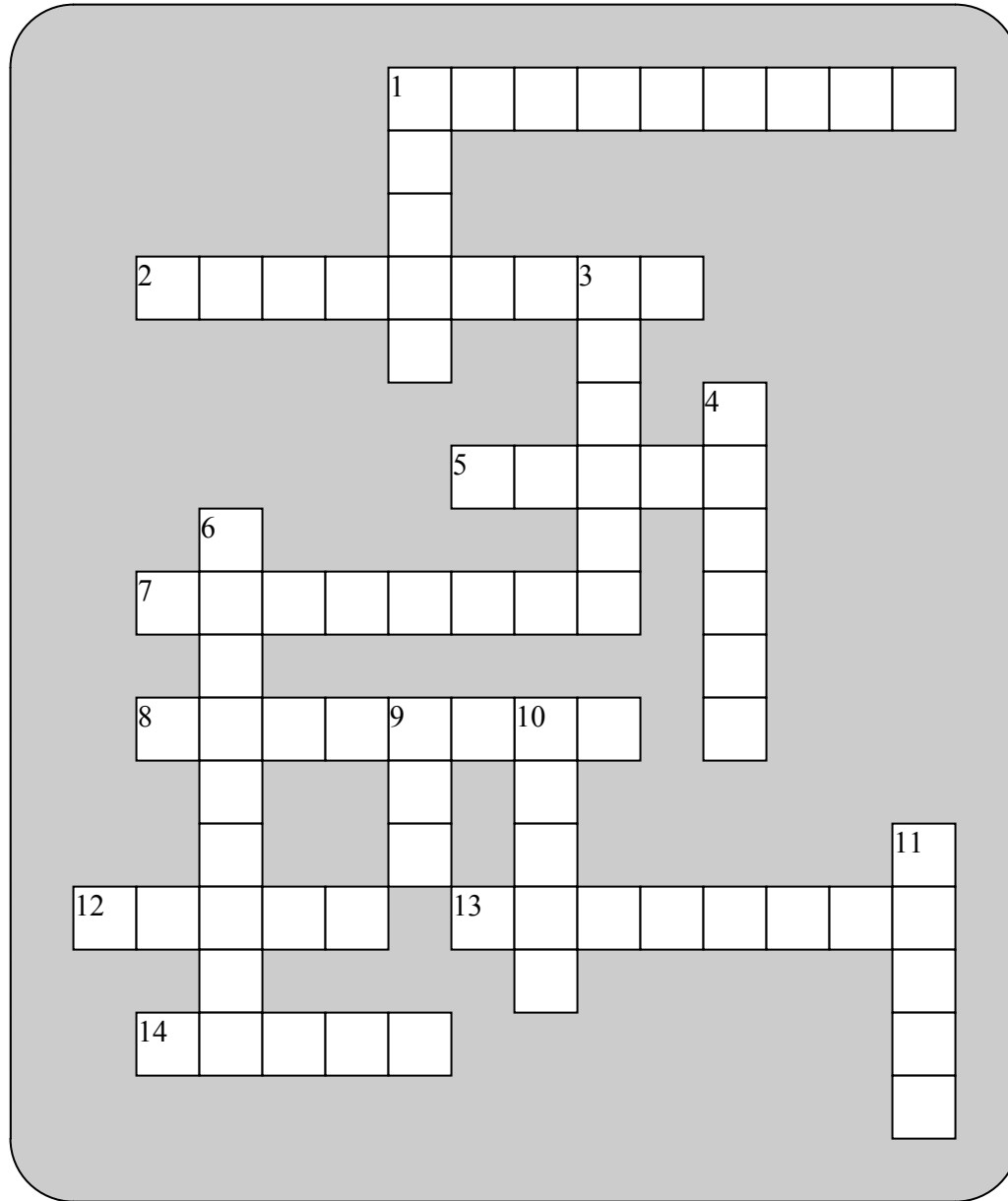
I can decide to stay sober or I can decide to drink. It's my choice.

April 2011

DISTRICT 12 NH ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

The Voice Within

Recovery Crossword



Across:

- 1 - "Better to do one thing _____ well than many badly."
 2 - "_____ experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics"
 5 - It isn't by accident it leads!
 7 - We made one of these in step three
 8 - State representative to GSO
 12 - A small hole, as in an "ego's walls"
 13 - "Our...troubles are caused by the _____ of other people." (for a time)
 14 - What personal recovery depends upon.

Down:

- 1 - Maybe it isn't by accident it brings up the rear.
 3 - An act or deed, a movement or series of movements
 4 - A committee in District Twelve that seeks out service candidates
 6 - "_____ dogs our every step at first"
 9 - Who your home group sends to the district as your voice (abv)
 10 - How many pertinent ideas?
 11 - "Self searching is the means by which we bring new vision, action, and _____ to bear upon the dark and negative side of our natures."

April 2011

DISTRICT 12 NH ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

The Heard It Through the Grapevine Group

**Invites you to attend our 7th Anniversary
Celebration**

Tuesday May 24, 2011

2 Longtimers/Oldtimers

Each over 30 years sobriety

Desserts 7-7:30pm

Meeting 7:30-8:30pm

**St. Andrew's Episcopal 120 N. Main St.
(adjacent to West High)**

Responsibility

**As a recovering alcoholic I need only
have two concerns.**

**The first is to maintain my sobriety on a
daily basis**

**and to practice the program of AA one
day at a time.**

**The second is to ensure that what was
here yesterday will be here tomorrow
for the next alcoholic who walks through
the doors of the Fellowship.**

And for that I am responsible.

When is my debt to the fellowship paid in full?

My debt to the fellowship is directly proportionate to my level of gratitude. I suppose some feel they have done their time in service or even owe the fellowship nothing.

I am alive only because someone freely gave of themselves to me. I hear from areas, districts and groups about how hard it is to fill positions of service at all these levels of service. I see districts not being represented at areas, groups not being represented at districts and members not attending business meetings.

In AA the group's voice is the *Ultimate Authority*. "For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority - a loving God as he may express himself in our group conscience." That tells me that if I don't participate at a Group, District, or Area level I am telling my Higher Power that his voice doesn't count. That is a pretty strong statement but carries some truth in it. If God (as I understand Him) gave me a second chance at life I owe Him a voice. There are 36 Principles in this program of recovery I cherish. Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts. A three legged stool. I have heard all the excuses from "Service is all politics" to "I have done my share." If Service has become all politics it is because of the lack of participation at the Group, District and Area levels. If I have done my share then I have paid my debt to AA for what AA has done for me.

I hope my gratitude never becomes irrelevant. I have heard that "I can't do that service position; I am just too busy". If this is true I would guess you are busy because you have received an *unmerited* gift called sobriety. This means I have not earned this gift. I realize that what I say may sound a little strong to some. However - When is my debt paid in full? When is our debt paid in full? yours in service Still Dan

HOW DO YOU SEE IT?

Madge is having breakfast with Harry. She looks out the window and sees her new neighbor hanging out her wash. "Harry, look how dingy that woman's sheets are. Doesn't she know how to do laundry?" A few days later Madge and Harry are enjoying breakfast and again; out comes the neighbor with a load of wash to hang. "I don't believe it!" says Madge, "Look at the clothes, it doesn't even look clean - I wonder what she's using for laundry detergent? Whatever it is, it's not getting the job done."

Several more days pass. Madge and Harry sit down for breakfast. It's wash day again for their new neighbor, and Madge notices that once again, the wash looks dingy and says "Maybe her washing machine isn't working right; someone should say something to her." Days pass. Madge and Harry sit down to breakfast. Much to Madge's surprise, her neighbor is hanging out clean clothes. "Wow" she says. "Look how clean her laundry is today ... I wonder what happened?"

Harry says "I washed the window." (contd)

Wow! What might be obscuring my view of the world? When I am feeling disturbed, is what I see real, or could my disease of perception be interfering with the truth, of with what really is? Could I be suffering from an emotional hangover? Have I been going to enough meetings? Have I been listening at meetings? What is the state of my spiritual condition? Am I helping others? Am I looking through the eyes of love? These are some of the questions I ask myself when I am off the AA beam. What's happening on my side of the glass when I am disturbed? What must I do to get undisturbed? My friend Mal says "It's an inside job." Just as Madge had to look through clear glass to see reality, I must clean the internal window through which I view the world to see what really is.

What action must I take to get back on the AA beam, to get undisturbed? A phone call to my sponsor, prayer and meditation, service, a daily inventory, the Acceptance prayer. These are just a few of the tools I have at my disposal to help set me straight. I take comfort in knowing that I have these resources and that I never have to be alone again! Denise C.

NHSCYPAA Conference Clueless Attendee Goes Berserk

I attended the NHSCYPAA Conference February 26th, where I went to a couple of the informative and well represented workshops. Yes, they let me in; it's a good thing that age, or lack thereof, is not a requirement of the disease!

The *Twelve Traditions* workshop was presented by two young people who did a great job of not just reading the Traditions, but giving specific examples of how those Traditions apply in their sobriety as well as in their home groups and in AA as a whole.

Unfortunately, some attendees who obviously never studied the Alcoholics Anonymous Twelve Traditions decided to cause an uproar and behave badly because they don't agree with how the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous are written.

Discussion and points of view are always well accepted at every level of Alcoholics Anonymous. But one attendee apparently felt as if his **childish** emotional outburst and **aggressive** tactics were appropriate in light of his level of righteous indignation. His demonstration of immature behavior was, well, mostly sad, but alarming at the same time. What used to happen when we behaved badly? We were arrested, that's what! I hope if this "gentleman" ever rears his ugly behavior at another function they do the right thing, and call the police!

Another attendee voiced his opinion about Traditions by beginning: "Well, I haven't studied them much, but....this is what they say". How ridiculous is that? (Does this guy drive on our highways?)

"Just read the black parts" is what I was told about Steps, and Traditions, and AA literature in general. *Too often we decide we know a better way, and interpret what the literature says to suit our own thinking. Don't read between the lines; just read the black parts.*

And, if you decide you want to change the Steps, or Traditions, why not get active and try to make the changes you think are necessary? It's easy; show up to a business meeting at your group and bring it up for discussion to be brought to the District. If you don't want to do that, maybe it's time you accept them as they are. And don't think you can circumvent the process and bully people in Alcoholics Anonymous into making it the way you think is best, because it won't happen. **We're way too passionate about keeping AA intact for future generations to let that happen.**

And "schoolboy" antics don't even come close to **altering the Power that the passion of trying to keep AA intact produces.** Last, let me just say that the young lady who had to put up with the bully did a fantastic job of maintaining her composure. In her calmness she made him look even more ridiculous! It's not appropriate for me to name her here, of course. But she and her associate did an astounding job presenting the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous, and she did a tremendous job in demonstrating her bravery in the face of ignorance. **Great job NHSCYPAA!** Lance

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