



Quinte West Messenger

July 2009 Newsletter

It's All In Your Head...

When I first heard AA members say, "The main problem of the alcoholic is in the mind, rather than the body," I remember being unsure what this actually meant. I was a tad offended and somewhat confused. Here is my journey - so far - in understanding what the Big Book means by this.

I read about the phenomenon of craving:

"All these, and many others, have one symptom in common: they cannot start drinking without developing the phenomenon of craving. This phenomenon, as we have suggested, may be the manifestation of an allergy which differentiates these people, and sets them apart as a distinct entity" (Alcoholics Anonymous, *The Doctor's Opinion*, xxi, 4th edition).

I never heard of the phenomenon of craving until I came into AA but I knew that once I took that first drink, I lost all control to stop. I was sceptical of the idea that alcoholics have an actual "allergy" to alcohol. I thought that I just couldn't handle my alcohol, that I was in some way defective, and that if I could just do it right somehow, I could drink like other people. But this never happened and my denial kept me on the merry go round for many years.

I came out of blackouts filled with shame and so sick in body, mind and spirit that I'd swear off alcohol only to find a drink in my hand, often the very same day, without even the slightest remembrance that I had decided I never wanted to drink alcohol again.

Even when I came into AA and understood that my body responded differently to alcohol than a so called "normy's" did, I still thought of it as a physical response to alcohol and when people talked about it being a disease of body, mind and spirit, my lips agreed but I didn't really get it. The Big Book sheds some light on this:

"We know that while the alcoholic keeps away from drink, as he may do for months and years, he reacts much like other men. We are equally positive that once he takes any alcohol whatever into his system, something happens, both in the bodily and mental sense, which makes it virtually impossible for him to stop ... These observations would be academic and pointless if our friend never took the first drink, thereby setting the terrible cycle in motion. Therefore, the main problem of the alcoholic centres in his mind, rather than in his body" (*There is a Solution*, p. 23, 4th edition).

When we take that first drink something happens to us mentally - not just physically - that causes us to lose all control. But that is only part of what the Big Book is saying here. Why would we take the first drink after everything that has happened and before the phenomenon of craving has kicked in?

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Seventh Step Prayer

from page 76 of the 3rd edition Big Book

My Creator, I am now willing that you should have all of me, good and bad.

I pray that you now remove from me every single defect of character which stands in the way of my usefulness to you and my fellows.

Grant me strength, as I go out from here, to do your bidding.

Amen

"Faith without works is dead."

Prayer

"All of us, without exception, pass through times when we can pray only with the greatest exertion of will.

Occasionally we go even further than this.

We are seized with a rebellion so sickening that we simply won't pray.

When these things happen we should not think too ill of ourselves.

We should simply resume prayer as soon as we can, doing what we know to be good for us."

1952AAWS, Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, p. 105



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Area 83 Area Committee Meeting
June 6, 2009



DCM Report District 30 Quinte West

Good morning friends, I'm an alcoholic, member of the Keep It Simple Group in Frankford Ontario. Best Group by a dam site in the Province of Ontario. My name is Tom. I am presently serving as the District Committee Member for district 30 Quinte West.

Alcoholics Anonymous is alive and well in Quinte West. The district is financially sound and all positions at the table are filled.

The district meetings are well attended with over 80% of the groups regularly sending representation to the table.

The district has now instituted a newsletter "Messenger". Copies of this have been placed in your folders. Read it at your leisure. It is also available on the district web site www.quintewestaa.org This newsletter has become quite a favourite among members in the district with birthdates and events presented in a manner for inclusion in the announcements section of most meetings.

The new "1-800 " telephone number is quite a success. Calls to the service have increased but costs have decreased. Thus our work at carrying the message has improved and the lower cost has allowed more resources to be expended in direct service. This freeing of resources has enabled the district to supply Big Books and other literature to the prison and detention centre within the district with minimal discussion at the table.

Our annual round up was held on May 9th 2009 in Codrington, Ontario. It was quite a success thank you Dot and Dareena for being part of "the best round up ever held in Quinte West". A personal side note to the round up was that one of the guest speakers on one of the panels happened to be a high school friend of yours truly. A friend I hadn't seen for 48 years. Thanks to AA a friendship has been reformed.



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Area 83 Area Committee Meeting - continued

Something has been happened within our district that we are unable to answer and seek advice from other districts who might have had a similar problem. A number of members within our district suffer from scent allergies. This has led to some questioning as to the intent of the fourth tradition and accessibility. If anyone here has faced a similar concern we would appreciate any possible solutions. See me during the breaks today with your experiences.

It is with sadness that we in district 30 say goodbye to two of our members. Alex R. who has been active at the table since moving here from Ottawa passed away two weeks ago. He will be missed. Also on Tuesday after speaking at an AA meeting Amy was killed in an automobile accident on the way home. She leaves three children under the age of six. Amy had recently celebrated two years of continuous sobriety. God be with you both.

Thank all of you for my sobriety.

Yours in Love and Service,
Tom JC
District Committee Member
Quinte West
District 30



July Word Search - 7 Words to find From The Serenity Prayer

SERENITY
COURAGE
GOD
ACCEPT

CHANGE
WISDOM
GRANT

Solution on Page 4

July Word Search The Serenity Prayer

AZWFEPGARUOCAM
PNTVCNNSXVJRALU
RMCGHGIBDOGXBXQ
WEGH SERENITYGDQ
XUMDEOCFMRBIRCV
IUTHACCEPTYGZB
OCHENMXIUQWPNUD
KVPUFDRSJITVTAU
KPPORCGJSYFEMOQ
MYGCULMDWLNUSKQ
DDRVBPOZPBKXKPM
WNZQWMZXDEGNAHC
LSWXCOLABRUEICS
QQPSKORANNVQRNZ



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I knew that my brain often drove me crazy - and still does upon occasion - like a runaway train on a circular track. So I thought, oh, that helps to explain why the main problem of the alcoholic is in the mind, rather than the body ... my mind drives me crazy. That's why I drank and it is true that what the alcoholic needs to recover is right thinking; sometimes referred to as "moral psychology" (*The Doctor's Opinion*, xxvii & xxxi, 4th edition).

But if I really think this through, many times I drank when my mind was not driving me around the bend. I lacked the ability to even remember that I had quit, to remember the many times I drank to blackout, to remember the shame and remorse and pain. So thinking of it this way, I understand why the main problem of the alcoholic is in the mind, not the body. As it says in *There Is A Solution* (and much more succinctly than I do, I might add :-):

"We are unable, at certain times to bring into our consciousness with sufficient force the memory of the suffering and humiliation of even a week or a month ago. We are without defense against the first drink" (Alcoholics Anonymous, p. 24, 4th edition).

This helps me to understand why I cannot do it alone and why I need to work the steps. My brain cannot think me out of this one. My brain is the problem!!!
Carol L.

TWO WOLVES

One evening an old man told his grandson about a battle that goes on inside all people. He said, "My son, the battle is between two "wolves" inside us all.

One is Evil. It is anger, envy, jealousy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority, and ego.

The other is Good. It is joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion and faith."

The grandson thought about it for a minute and then asked his grandfather: "Which wolf wins?" The old man simply replied, "The one you feed."

AA Wordlist Word Search - Solution

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E G A R U O C
      D O G
S E R E N I T Y G
              R
A C C E P T      A
              W  N
              I  T
      S
    D
  O
M      E G N A H C

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The *Messenger* is published monthly by District 30 to provide members with information about events and happenings in our area. Member submissions are encouraged and may be submitted to:

district30@quintewestaa.org

Current and past issues are available online at our website:

www.quintewestaa.org