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Java Journal



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From The Archives

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January 1993 (vol. 49 no. 8)

The Road to Open-mindedness

Our local group had a great meeting the other day about open-mindedness. It got me thinking about the last few years of my drinking. My life experience had led me to the closed-minded conclusion that God existed all right, but that God was a sick and twisted universal mind. In reality, drinking had sickened and twisted my perception of God.

Of course, my first reckoning with open-mindedness came when I opened my mind to the idea that I could be sick and that alcohol was the problem. That idea had to come first. But to continue with recovery, I had to become open to the idea that God was something other than what I had imagined God to be. Maybe God wasn't sick and twisted after all. Perhaps God was loving, all-knowing, and caring, and interested in guiding me toward a happy, joyous, and free life.

The idea was a stretch. But rooms full of sober people in AA helped open my mind to this possibility.

And I'm happy to say that the thin sliver of light that they brought into the darkness of my world has grown to wonderful proportions.

Of course, more open-mindedness is still needed for complete recovery from a "hopeless state of mind and body." And I think that completion of the Third Step marks a point where unfortunately many of us in AA close the door on open-mindedness. Many of us think that open-mindedness about the existence and nature of our Higher Power is sufficient, and that no more open-mindedness is needed. Yet acceptance of the idea of God is only the bare beginning. I had to become open-minded about all the remaining Steps, beginning with the Fourth.

Maybe, I thought, a moral and fearless inventory as described in the Big Book could boost the quality of my life. Maybe a frank and open revelation of my inventory to God and another person really could result in a remarkably deeper spiritual understanding: one that would make my life immeasurably more meaningful to live.

Maybe practicing willingness and humility in asking God to remove my de-

(Continued on page 2)

Decision

the act of or need for making up one's mind.

Random House Dictionary, ©
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Victory

Success in a struggle against difficulties or an obstacle.

The American Heritage®
Dictionary of the English
Language, Fourth Edition

From the Archives (continued)

(Continued from page 1)

facts could lead me onto a new path of freedom that would really make a profound difference in my life; maybe the willingness and making of thoughtful amends could result in my actually experiencing all the promises of AA rather than just a few; maybe time spent in prayer and meditation could be more than a vain exercise in convincing myself that I was near to God. Maybe it could actually bring me nearer.

And maybe service to others really could be the secret to a happy, joy-filled life: Through working with others, I might begin to discover who I really am; by giving to others, maybe I could find myself on the receiving end of some great and wonderful cornucopia of life.

So with all these "maybe's," I figure that my job today is to remain open-minded, and to actually try new ideas

(AA-related or not) that seem to make sense. Then I can truly and confidently decide for myself whether a particular idea works (in which case I can embrace it), or whether each idea is just so much bunk (in which case I can abandon it).

I have learned that if I isolate too much, my mind closes very quickly. But when I swim deeply in the stream of life, in the companionship of others, it becomes very much easier to be honest, open, and willing. And that is exactly the point where my life begins to get better.

- *Anonymous*
Beaumont, California

Monthly Prayer

3rd Step Prayer (Big Book page 63):

God, I offer myself to Thee--to build with me and to do with me as Thou wilt. Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Thy will. Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of Thy Power, Thy Love, and Thy Way of life.

May I do Thy will always!

Monthly Laughs

Ham on Wry

OVERHEARD AT A GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE DINNER,

"An alcoholic seeing a sign at a bar: Happy Hour-- all you can drink, \$1.00, goes up to the bartender and says, 'Give me two dollars worth.'"

A BEAR WALKED INTO A BAR and roared for a martini.

The surprised bartender just stared, so the bear bellowed his order again, adding, "How much?"

"Fifteen dollars," said the bartender, still staring.

"What's the matter," said the bear after downing his martini in one gulp, "haven't you ever seen a bear in a bar before?"

"No," replied the bartender.

"Well," said the bear, "at these prices, you're not going to see many more!"

We alcoholics are sensitive people.

It takes some of us a long time to outgrow that serious handicap.

-Big Book pg 125

Distilled Spirits

(by Mary Louise L.)

Missouri -- Each night I pray that when the alarm clock goes off in the morning, I'll have a spiritual awakening.

June 1999

AA's Newsletter for the

Central Office

102 E. Kennewick Ave. (upstairs at the Alano Club) POBox 6675 Kennewick, WA 99336
 Central Office Hours of Operation
 Mon - Thu, 11:30 am–1:30 pm and 6:00–8:00 pm;

Central Office Questions: Mary E. (509) 713-0148
 Java Journal Editor: Courtney
 javajournaldistrict4@gmail.com
 AA Hotline (509) 735-4086
 See us online at www.3citiesaa.org

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Please Contact The Java Journal Editor With the Following Info:

- Birthday announcements: send your name, sobriety date and years sober;
- Events, announcements, fellowship information, Journal corrections;
- Your email if you would like to receive the Journal in your inbox once a month.

Short Takes

"Such is the paradox of AA regeneration: strength arising out of weakness, the loss of one's old life as a condition for finding a new one."

AA Comes of Age p. 46

Calendar of Events

<p>Ladies Potluck and Speaker Meeting Benton REA Community Room, 6095 W. Van Giesen, West Richland. 11:00 a.m. potluck, 12:00 speaker: Carol E. with 24 years of sobriety. Contact Lisa B at 509-378-4646, rain-bow7964@hotmail.com; or Shawna S. at 509-366-5235.</p>	<p>March 20 11am</p>
<p>G.S.R. School. This school is for anyone who wants to learn more about the role of the G.S.R. in A.A. General Service Representatives (G.S.R.'s) Central Office Representatives, Committee chairs and members, And anyone interested in service, Are encouraged to attend. Westside Center 1007 Wright Ave, Richland, WA (see map on back). Lunch will be provided. Any questions call: Michael S. 942-4066</p>	<p>March 21th 9am-2pm</p>
<p>2nd Annual Spring Fling Dance. Kennewick First Lutheran 418 N Yelm St. Speakers Pat and Duke (40 YEARS!!!!) at 7pm, Dancing starts at 9pm, Cake Walk, 50/50 Raffle, Water and Soda available for sale for \$1 each \$5 per person. If you can...please bring a cake, cupcakes or cookies for the cake walk!</p>	<p>March 27 7pm</p>
<p>"Sunlight of the Spirit" 30th Inland Empire Roundup. Clarion Hotel Richland, WA. www.sunlightofthespiritroundup.com. This year's speakers: Madeline P (AA, Pocatello, Idaho), Karl M (AA, Covina, CA), Ellen C (AFG, Addison, TX), Otto M (AA, Plano, TX).</p>	<p>April 30–May 2</p>
<p>Silver Anniversary of the Touchet River Outdoor Roundup & World Famous Woody's Filipino Pig Roast. At the fairgrounds in Waitsburg. Register online at Snafubar.com/PigRoast link. For more information contact Larry (619) 723-6390 or headpig@snafubar.com or Todd (KTW031584@hotmail.com)</p>	<p>May 28-30</p>
<p>2010 International Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous "A Vision For You" Alamodome, San Antonio, TX. AA members and guests from around the world will celebrate AAs 75th year. Big meetings held Friday night, Saturday night, and Sunday morning in the Alamodome. Other meetings, scheduled or informal, will take place throughout the weekend in the San Antonio Convention Center and local hotels. Go to http://aa.org for more information.</p>	<p>Jul 1–Jul 4</p>