THE TRUDGE

November 2026



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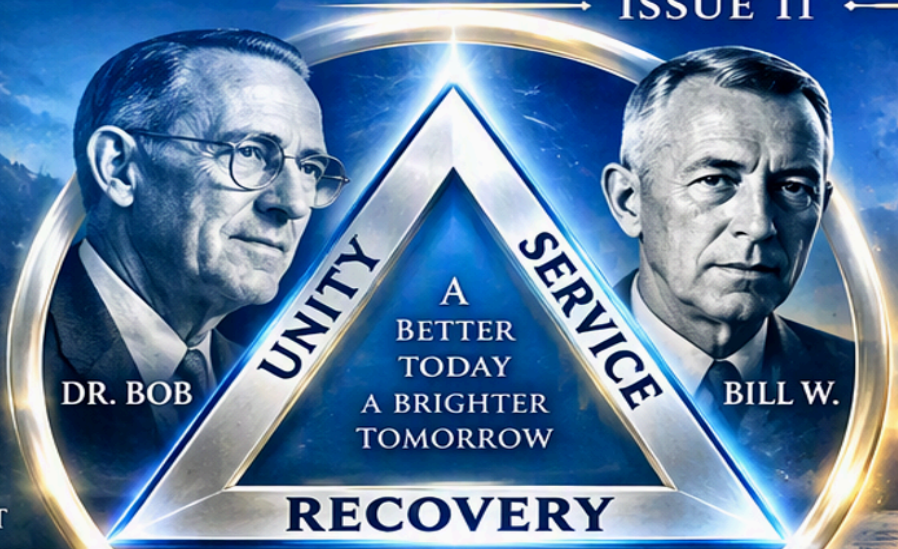
HOPE
HEALING
FAMILY
RECOVERY

The Trudge

NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 11

UNITY
SERVICE
STRENGTH
TOGETHER



No one recovers alone... Families recover together.

PAST
STRENGTH
PRESENT
HOPE
BRIGHTER
TOMORROWS

RECOVERY ISN'T JUST A SOLO JOURNEY; *It's a Family One.*



Together
We Heal
Together
We Grow
Together
We Recover

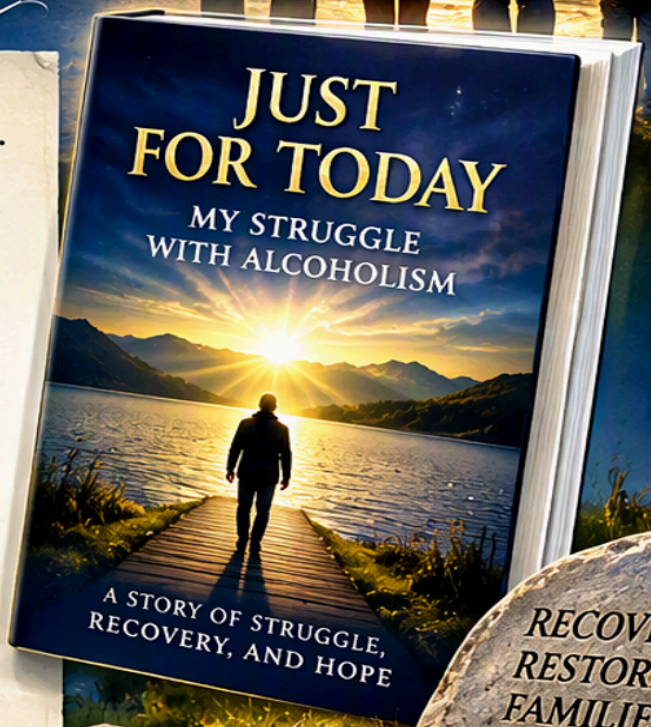
Watching my husband battle alcoholism was one of the hardest chapters of my life. But watching him find his way back to himself was the most rewarding.

Throughout his recovery, we realized how many people feel lost in the "middle ground" of the struggle. To help others navigate this path, he's shared his entire journey—the lows, the breakthroughs, and the tools that actually worked—in his new book, *Just For Today - My Struggle With Alcoholism*.

If you or someone you love is looking for a message of hope today, I'd love for you to check out.

Theresa Kitchen

8/11/2025



REAL
STORIES
REAL
PEOPLE
REAL
HOPE



Editor's Reflection

By Harold, Editor-in-Chief

Sometimes loneliness is not created by being different. Sometimes it comes from misunderstanding. People may stand at a distance because of assumptions, fears, or perceptions. Yet behind the image they see is a person who longs for connection, understanding, and companionship.

This poem speaks to the quiet sorrow of being admired from afar while remaining unseen up close. It reminds us that healing often begins when we move closer to one another and truly listen.

In a world where it is easy to judge from a distance, let us choose compassion over assumption, curiosity over fear, and kindness over indifference. When we take the time to understand instead of misunderstand, we open the door to genuine connection, and in doing so, we help ease the loneliness that so many carry.

May we all strive to see beyond the surface, to recognize the humanity in each other, and to be the kind of presence that brings people closer rather than keeping them apart.

"A kinder world begins with a closer look."
— Harold



PEOPLE • UNDERSTANDING • KINDNESS
A BRIGHTER TOMORROW

RECOVERY ACRONYMS

A Few Words To Live By

PUSH
Push Until Something Happens or Pray Until Something Happens

HOPE
Hang On Pain Ends; Holding On Positive Energy; Helping Other People Everyday; Harnessing Only Positive Energy; Hearing Other People's Experiences

LOVE
Living Our Vision Everyday

EGO
Edging God Out or Eventually Going Out

MAGIC
Me Accepting God's In Charge

GRACE
God Respects All Changed Experiences

DOUBT
Depending on Understanding Before Trusting

BIG BOOK
Belief in God Beats Our Own Knowledge

KISS
Keep It Simple Student

STAY
Stop Thinking About Yourself

STEPS
Solution To Every Problem Sober

NUTS
Not Understanding The Steps or Not Using The Steps

PAUSE
Postpone Action Until Serenity Enters

DEVIL
Destroying Everything Valuable In Life

GOD
Gift Of Desperation; Good Orderly Directions; Group Of Drunks; Guidance Of Development; Grow Or Die

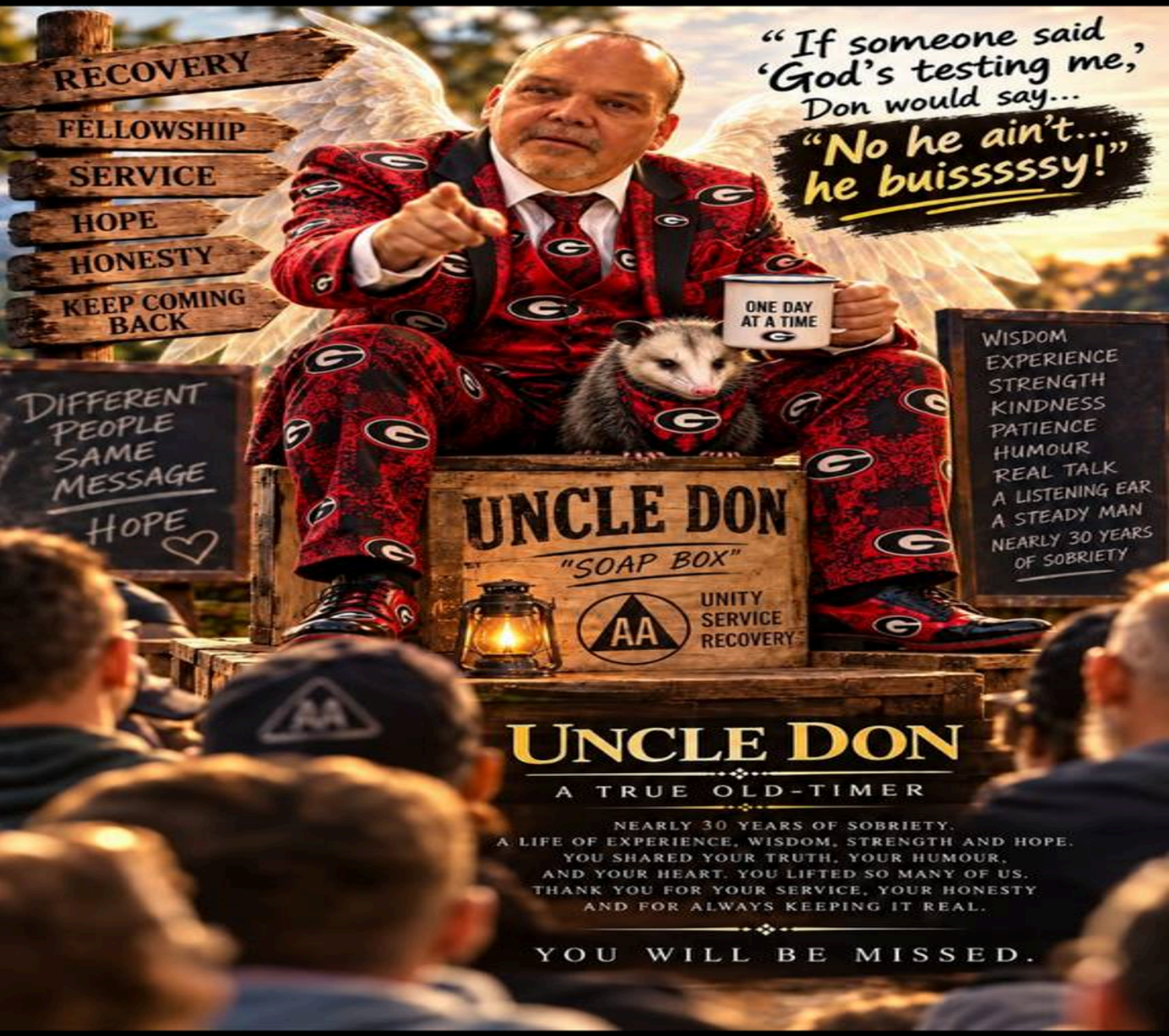
ACTION
Any Change Towards Improving One's Nature; Any Change Improves Our Nature

SPONSOR
Sober Person Offering Newcomers Suggestions On Recovery

S . U . R . V . I . V . A . L .

S – Stay grounded in your recovery — remember where you came from.
U – Understand that growth takes time; patience is part of the process.
R – Reach out when you struggle — connection keeps you alive.
V – Value yourself and your progress — even the small steps count.
I – Invest in your spiritual and emotional well-being daily.
V – Visualize the life you're building — and keep that vision clear.
A – Act with purpose — let your actions reflect your gratitude.
L – Live one day at a time — with hope, humility, and heart.

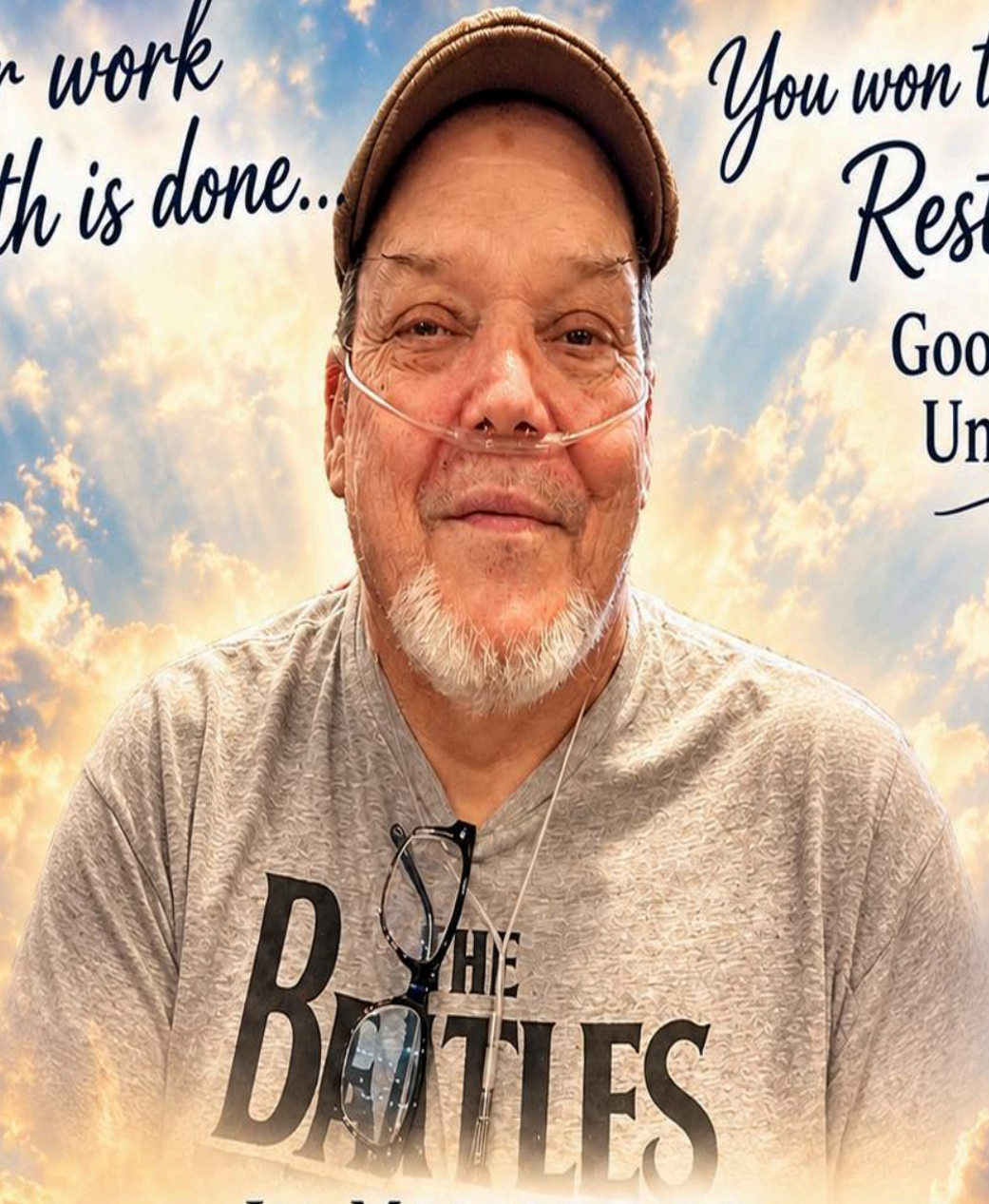
Submitted by Carla S., WA, on behalf of Brother Vernon


RECOVERY
FELLOWSHIP
SERVICE
HOPE
HONESTY
KEEP COMING BACK
"If someone said 'God's testing me,' Don would say... "No he ain't... he buisssssy!"
ONE DAY AT A TIME
DIFFERENT PEOPLE SAME MESSAGE
HOPE
WISDOM
EXPERIENCE
STRENGTH
KINDNESS
PATIENCE
HUMOUR
REAL TALK
A LISTENING EAR
A STEADY MAN
NEARLY 30 YEARS OF SOBRIETY
UNCLE DON
"SOAP BOX"
AA
UNITY
SERVICE
RECOVERY
UNCLE DON
A TRUE OLD-TIMER
NEARLY 30 YEARS OF SOBRIETY.
A LIFE OF EXPERIENCE, WISDOM, STRENGTH AND HOPE.
YOU SHARED YOUR TRUTH, YOUR HUMOUR,
AND YOUR HEART. YOU LIFTED SO MANY OF US.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE, YOUR HONESTY
AND FOR ALWAYS KEEPING IT REAL.
YOU WILL BE MISSED.

Your work on earth is done...

You won the race... Rest easy

Good Friend
Uncle Don



IN MEMORY OF

Uncle Don

JUNE 26TH 1957 ♥ OCTOBER 2ND 2026

The Phenomenon Of Craving

The Big Book on page xxiv (The Doctor's Opinion) says:

That an alcoholic has an "allergy to alcohol". An allergy is an abnormal reaction to any food, liquid or substance. If nine out of ten people have one reaction and one out of ten people have a different reaction, then the reaction of the one out of ten crew is abnormal.

It also says on page xxvi that "the action of alcohol on an alcoholic is a manifestation of an allergy;

that the phenomenon of craving is LIMITED to this class and NEVER occurs in the

average temperate drinker." (A phenomenon is something that you can see but can't explain). "These allergic types can NEVER safely use alcohol in ANY FORM AT ALL".

Then on page 22:

"We know that while the alcoholic keeps away from drink, as he may do for months or 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." This includes substances that contain alcohol like mouthwash, cold remedies, some chocolates, food prepared with alcohol, etc.). Your body doesn't know if you are having a drink or taking Nyquil for a cold, it only senses alcohol and begins to process it.

It also says on page xxviii:

That, "all the different classifications of alcoholics have ONE symptom in common; they CANNOT start drinking without developing the phenomenon of craving. This phenomenon may be the manifestation of an allergy which differentiates these people and sets them apart as a distinct entity." Dr. William D. Silkworth, M.D., who at that time had nine years' experience specializing in the treatment of alcoholics and

drug addicts, wrote this in the late 1930's. He called it a "phenomenon of craving" because at that time there was no way to study metabolism.

Since then, science has proven his theory as correct. The following is an explanation of what happens when alcoholics put alcohol into their bodies, and how it is a completely different experience compared to non-alcoholics. No wonder why non-alcoholics can't relate, and make statements like, "Can't you just stop after one or two drinks?" It shows why alcoholics can use their willpower against everything EXCEPT alcohol.

Alcoholics make up about 12% of the population. The body of an alcoholic is physically different from the body of someone who is not an alcoholic. The liver and pancreas of the alcoholic process alcohol at one-third to one-tenth the rate of a normal pancreas and liver.

As alcohol enters the body, it breaks down into its various components, one of which is acetate. We know now that acetate triggers a craving for more acetate. In a normal drinker, the acetate moves quickly through the system and exits. But that doesn't happen in an alcoholic. In alcoholics, the acetate of the first drink is barely processed out, so by staying in their body, it triggers a craving for more acetate. The alcoholic then has a second drink, now adding to most of the acetate of the first drink, and that makes them want a drink twice as much as the normal drinker. So, they have another. Then, having almost three times the craving as a normal drinker, they have another. You can see from that point how alcoholics have no control over how much they drink. The craving cycle has begun and they have no choice but to keep drinking. Once the acetate accumulates in their body, and that begins to happen with only ONE drink, they will crave another. How many times does an alcoholic think it would be nice to have JUST ONE drink to relax, but has many more? Now you see why. AND THIS CAN NEVER CHANGE!

On top of THAT (like it's not bad enough already), alcohol is a poison because it destroys human tissue. The two organs that alcohol damages the most are the liver and the pancreas. So, the more the alcoholic drinks as time passes (or doesn't drink, because the liver and pancreas also deteriorate naturally as we age), the less their body is able to process the acetate. THAT is why alcoholism is a progressive, fatal illness.

Bill W. says on page 30:

"We are convinced to a man that alcoholics of our type are in the grip of a progressive illness. Over any considerable period, we get worse, NEVER better." Pretty revealing, huh? It explains many things I never before understood. But if you think about it, we never have to deal with ANY of this if we DON'T put alcohol into our bodies in the first place. So, the MAIN problem of the alcoholic centers in their mind and in their spiritual condition. My mind tells me that it's okay to TAKE the first drink and doesn't see that what I'm about to do is harmful (otherwise known as the alcoholic's mental obsession or our powerlessness), and if I'm NOT spiritually fit I can't STAND being sober because my thinking and emotions are too uncomfortable (otherwise known as the spiritual malady or our unmanageability).

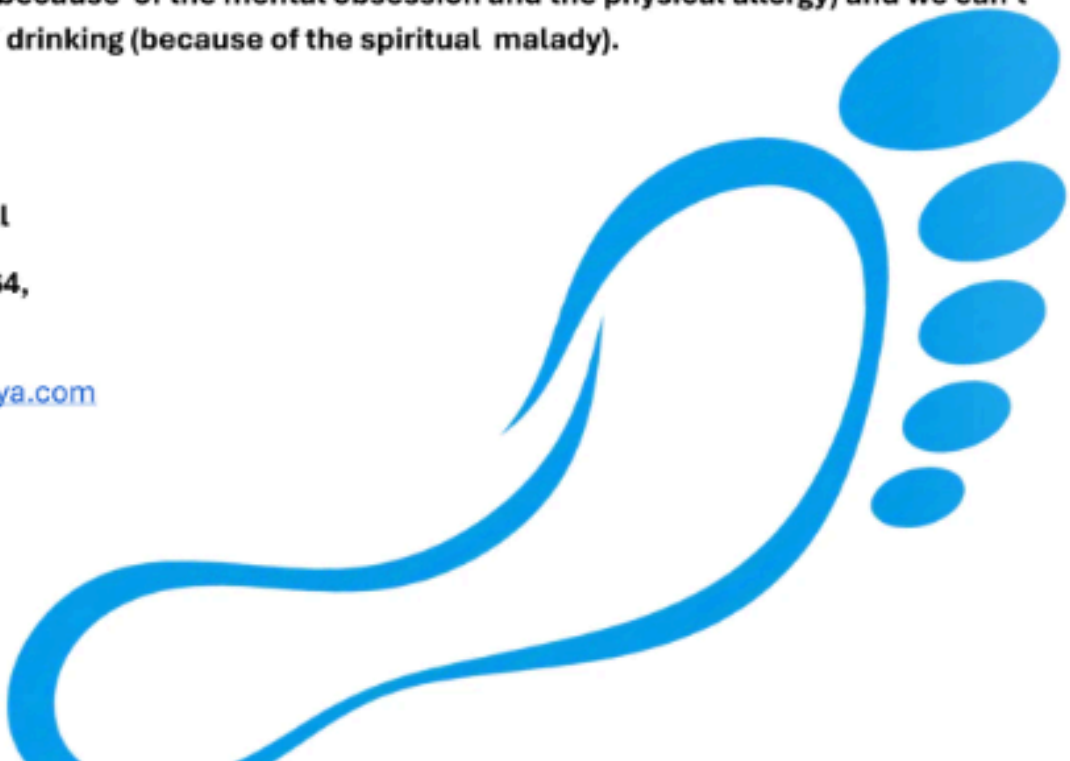
So, whether they're drinking or not an alcoholic is powerless over alcohol, because of the mind and the body; and their life is unmanageable, especially their INNER life, because of their spiritual condition. Coincidentally, the Steps deal DIRECTLY and EFFECTIVELY with both our spiritual condition and with the mental obsession. BUT the way the alcoholic's body handles alcohol will ONLY get worse as time passes, so there is NOTHING we can do about the physical features of alcoholism except staying away from the first drink.

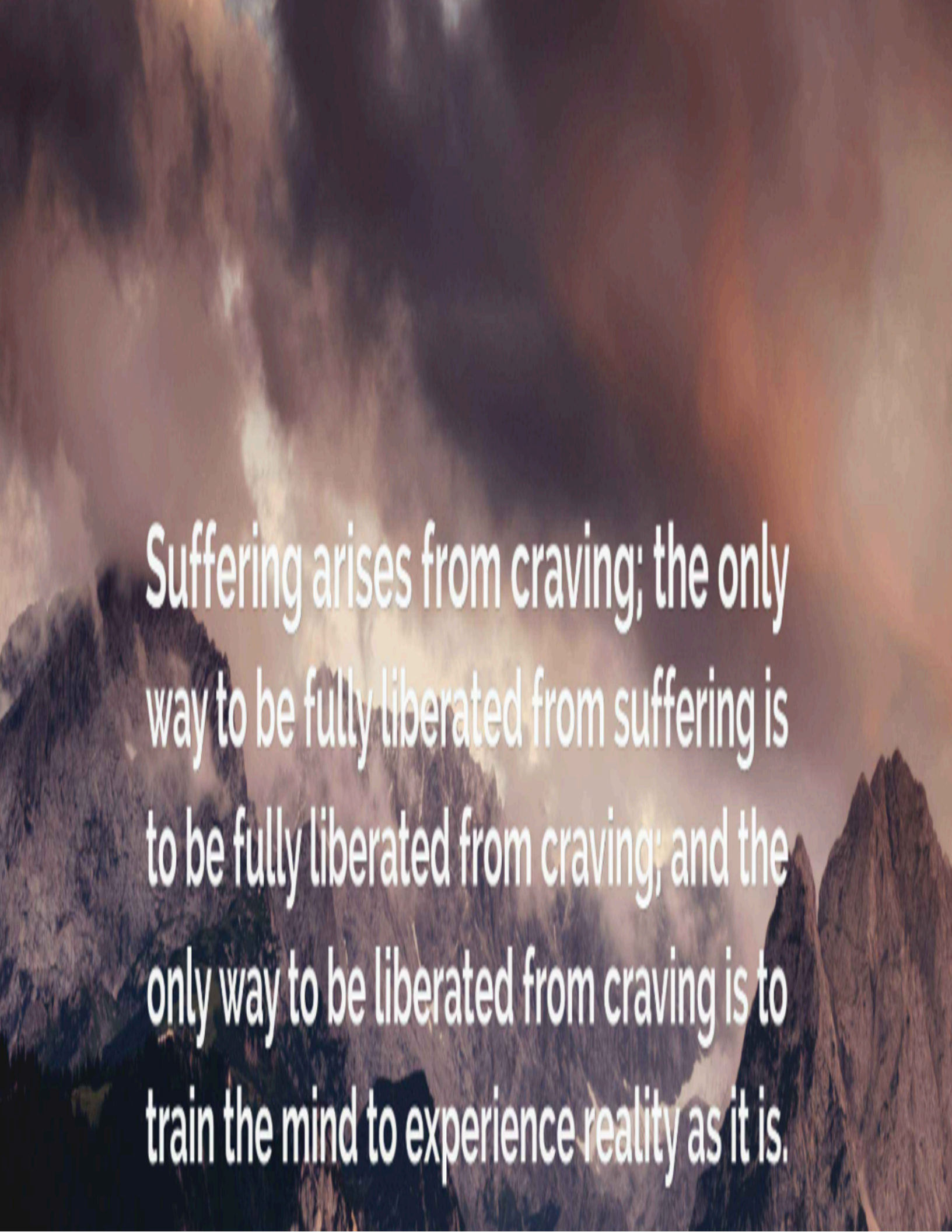
So that's the simple definition of what it means to be an alcoholic - we can't handle DRINKING (because of the mental obsession and the physical allergy) and we can't handle NOT drinking (because of the spiritual malady).

Barefoot Bill

732-968-1264,

wlash@avaya.com




Suffering arises from craving; the only way to be fully liberated from suffering is to be fully liberated from craving; and the only way to be liberated from craving is to train the mind to experience reality as it is.

OUR TRUDGE NEWS *One Day at a Time*

Finding My Feet in AA



I've been in Alcoholics Anonymous for two months now. When I first walked through the doors of my first meeting, I was scared and lost. My life was in pieces, and I didn't know where to turn. But in those rooms, I found a glimmer of hope.

It hasn't been easy. Some days are really tough. But I'm learning to take it one day at a time. I'm learning to be present, to stay in the moment, and to listen. The people in the meetings remind me to "keep coming back," and I'm starting to understand why.

Today, I feel grateful. Grateful for the support, the shared stories, and the honest fellowship. I'm beginning to feel a sense of belonging, a sense of peace I haven't felt in a long time.



As I look down at my feet, I realize I'm exactly where I'm supposed to be.
One step at a time, I'm finding my way.



Using the 24-Hour Plan.

For me, the 24-hour plan is one of the things that helps keep recovery simple. When I think about never drinking again for the rest of my life, that can sound like a very long time. But I don't have to stay sober for the rest of my life today.

I only have to stay sober today.

Every morning, I try to start my day with a decision. I got up, I joined an AA meeting, and I reminded myself that I have a choice today. I can make the decision not to take that first drink.

Then I go about my day. I make my coffee and breakfast, make my bed, take a shower, get dressed, and handle whatever the day brings me. At night, I attend another meeting and I look back at the day. If I made it through

without drinking, then I have another sober day.

And tomorrow, I will get to do it again.

The 24-hour plan doesn't mean that life is always going to be easy. We are still going to have problems. We are still going to get angry, frustrated, lonely, disappointed, and afraid. But when those feelings come, I don't have to drink over them.

I don't have to figure out how to solve every problem I will ever have. I just have to deal with what is happening today.

Sometimes, I may even have to shorten the 24-hour plan. I need to get through the next hour. The next ten minutes. The next five minutes.

But as long as I don't take that first drink, I give myself another chance.

Because I know where the first drink can lead me. I don't have to worry about the second drink, the third drink, or what happens after that if I don't take the first one.

One of the things I appreciate about AA is that I don't have to do this alone. If I am having a difficult day, I can call another alcoholic. I can go to a meeting. I can talk to my sponsor. I

can pray. I can reach out instead of isolating myself.

I have learned that yesterday is over. I can't change what I did yesterday, although I can learn from it. And tomorrow isn't here yet. I can plan for tomorrow, but I don't need to live tomorrow today.

All I really have is today.

So, when I wake up, I try to keep it simple:

Today, I will not drink.

I don't have to make a promise about it forever. I don't have to worry about next year. I don't have to let the rest of my life overwhelm me.

I just have to stay sober for the next 24 hours.

And when those 24 hours are over, I can make the same decision again.

For me, recovery is built one day at a time. One meeting at a time. One conversation at a time. One decision at a time.

And sometimes, the most important decision I make all day is simply this:

I will not take the first drink today.

THE TRUDGE

REAL PEOPLE. REAL STRUGGLES. REAL PROGRESS.

How Do I Deal With the Winter Blues Through Doing the Work?

I stand now in the sunlight of the Spirit.

Page 63 of the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous says:

> *"More and more we became interested in seeing what we could contribute to life."*

As I found a new Power flowing in me, enjoyed peace of mind, and discovered that I could face life successfully, I began to develop a God-consciousness.

Whether it be summer, winter, spring or fall, I need to get outside of myself and help someone else. I need to be of maximum service to God, to another human being.

Having the blues at any time of the year could cause me to spiral into a demoralization of my spirit.

So for me, what I do is, I am good to myself, being of maximum service to God and my fellows, and it keeps me on that spiritual beam that gives my life meaning.

I don't have to be feeling so blue. Instead, I can stand in the sunlight of the Spirit.

Vicky, S. Ky
ODAAT ♡




TAKE NOTHING BUT PICTURES
LEAVE NOTHING BUT FOOTPRINTS

Please Don't Take This From Me

A few days ago, someone I love told me about an article he read. Something about caffeine and alcohol cravings. He suggested that maybe if I quit caffeine for a year, I wouldn't need AA to control my cravings anymore.

I felt my whole body react.

No. Absolutely not.

It probably didn't make sense to him. I think he thought he was offering me hope. Like maybe there was another explanation. Maybe there was something I could change and then I wouldn't need this anymore. But I didn't feel hopeful. I felt threatened.

Please don't take this from me.

I have spent my whole life looking for another explanation. Trauma. Bad relationships. Stress. Money. My mother. My marriage. The wrong medication. The right medication. Being unhappy. Being overwhelmed. Being lonely. And God knows I have had plenty of "reasons" to drink.

But I am finally, finally conceding to my innermost self that I am really alcoholic. I don't mean saying the words, "I'm an alcoholic." I've done that. I mean knowing it. I mean looking back and seeing that every time I get away from AA and the fellowship, it is simply a matter of time before I drink again.

Maybe not immediately. That's the part that gets me. I can look pretty damn good for a while. I can build a business. I can be a mom. I can fall in love. I can make plans and set

goals and convince myself that I am doing so well that whatever happened before doesn't really apply anymore.

And then I drink.

This time I ended up in the hospital. I was very sick. Sicker than I had allowed myself to realize. I had a lot of time to lie there and look at the wreckage of yet another spree. Again. I cried a lot of silent tears in that hospital. I mourned what I had done, the people I had hurt, the things I had blown up, and how badly ill I had allowed myself to get while I was busy drinking and living like I had everything under control.

I didn't want to be alone, so I went to meetings. A lot of meetings. I wanted as many meetings as I could find because I did not want to be left alone with my own head. I was in one Zoom meeting when someone posted about another meeting in the chat. So I went to that one too.

That is where I met the woman who would become my sponsor.

Because I was desperate enough to click another link.

Then she drove to the hospital to see me. I remember thinking about the early days of AA. Alcoholics going into hospitals to sit with other alcoholics. One alcoholic talking to another. And there I was with an IV in my arm while this woman I had met on Zoom sat with me and read the Big Book.

It felt like history repeating itself in this tiny, very personal way.

We read together. Then I got down on my knees beside that hospital bed and prayed the Third Step Prayer out loud with her. It hurt like hell to get down there, and it hurt like hell to get back up. My body was so weak.

But I got on my knees.

I paced the halls of that hospital listening to Joe and Charlie's Big Book Comes Alive. I went to meetings from my bed. I listened. I cried. I started opening my mind to the possibility that maybe my problem wasn't that I hadn't found the right way to control my drinking yet. Maybe I am an alcoholic. Maybe AA is not something I use until I feel better.

Maybe this is my life.
And the crazy thing is, that thought does not scare me like it used to. The thought of not having AA scares me.

So, when someone tells me maybe caffeine is causing my cravings and maybe if I quit for a year I won't need AA anymore, I know my reaction is bigger than that conversation. Because I have left before. I have gotten better before. I have decided I was okay before.

I know where my little escape hatches lead.

My life is not fixed. My body is still sick. There is still wreckage. There are still people I owe amends to and truths about myself I am only beginning to look at. But I am here.

AA was here when I was pacing a hospital hallway with headphones in my ears. AA was there when a woman I met on Zoom drove to sit beside me. AA was there when I got my hurting body down on my knees.

AA let me come back again.

So no, please don't give me another theory. Please don't find me a loophole. Please don't tell me how I might not need AA someday. I have spent enough of my life trying to prove that I am different.

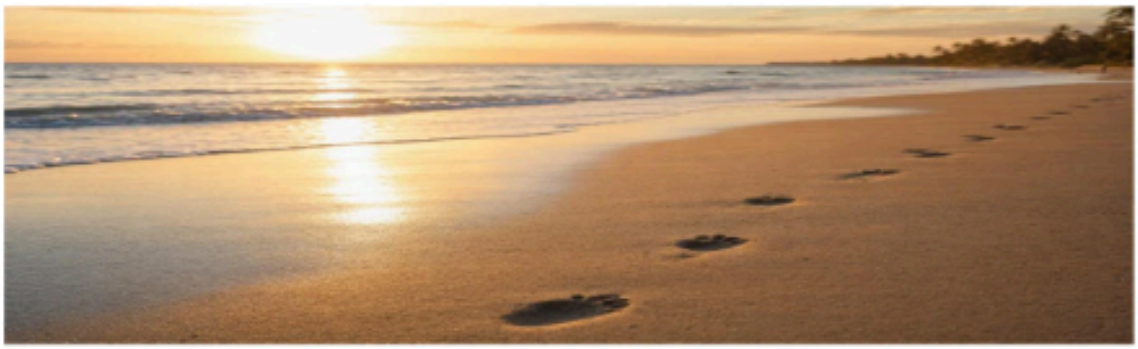

In my recovery, I learned that the
pain of my defects is the very
substance God uses to cleanse my
character and to set me free.



By Jersey Jeff

Enjoy!

Submitted with love,



A Psalm of Life

By Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

What The Heart Of The Young Man Said To The Psalmist.

Tell me not, in mournful numbers,

Life is but an empty dream!

For the soul is dead that slumbers,

And things are not what they seem.

Life is real! Life is earnest!

And the grave is not its goal;

Dust thou art, to dust returnest,

Was not spoken of the soul.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,

Is our destined end or way;

But to act, that each to-morrow

Find us farther than today.

Art is long, and Time is fleeting,



7/250

"Excerpts at the End of Time"

A Psalm of Life

By Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

What The Heart Of The Young Man Said To The Psalmist.

Tell me not, in mournful numbers, Life
is but an empty dream!
For the soul is dead that slumbers, And
things are not what they seem.

Life is real! Life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal;
Dust thou art, to dust returnest, Was
not spoken of the soul.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,
Is our destined end or way;
But to act, that each to-morrow

Find us farther than today.

Art is long, and Time is fleeting,
And our hearts, though stout and brave,
Still, like muffled drums, are beating Funeral
marches to the grave.

In the world's broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of Life,
Be not like dumb, driven cattle! Be
a hero in the strife!

Trust no Future, howe'er pleasant!
Let the dead Past bury its dead! Act,—
act in the living Present!
Heart within, and God o'erhead!

Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,



Reflection on steps 11

A conscious contact with God lays forth connection through mind, body and soul, or creator, as of us to direct our path geared towards understanding our own journey, and ways to unblock any obstacle, seizing the flow of being in silence and peace to true alignment.

A higher power is critical to stay sober and clean of intoxicants. It could be art, music works, positive distractions, and anything holding focus on being productive rather than destructive.

I find how God works through others' lives to keep me grounded when times get tough. This way I realize he's all around in the lives of many. Let's be realistic, is he in everyone's lives? I would say not especially when there's atheists, non-religious affiliates and hate in this World.

Dear God, accept these types of individuals into his kingdom. Yes, he is compassionate, forgiving, and God of mercy. Giving way to accepting God in Christ as their savior is casting our fears, worries and doubts on him. Free agency is where decisions affect the way we live. We choose and want to respond rather than react.

I noticed many in AA doing the best they could with what they have throughout the day then releasing The Care's over to a higher power. This is good practice.

Since being in a sobriety program with AA, and also through my own ways, remaining sober, I have gone to recovery in person meetings every Thursday evening. I attended what I consider temple worship with Mormon doctrine, and finally after six or seven months, I had the experience of being baptized in the name of Jesus Christ on a stage before countless others. Does that mean I'm done and could do as I please? No, not at all I walked and am "walking" through the guidance and way of life.
Discernment, discipline, and gratitude. Respect that after I do my own good work he will provide; notice ING any triggers that would place me in a predicament, and just saying no, even if that means talking myself out of it. Literally locating ways to be gracious, and appreciating what real life has to offer, not some delusion, how come there's pain? One thing for sure is God accepts us into his care by presenting challenges we could 80% overcome and the other 20% is through drawing near to a connection that we need this by him.

Some suffering is necessary to realize we're alive, and everything is not at our fingertips whenever we want. Assistance to prayers allows voids of disconnect. to become channels of responsiveness, then carrying these ways out is how proof is reached, by seeking these when the going gets tough, and we're under pressure. Evidence is real.

Reassurance and self-proclamation. Even proclaiming the man up above is the all-knowing/all powerful. Before the word God, there was energy and this was godly energy to blend ways into feeling alive. And then re-energizing to

be re-aligned. It was Godspell, then converted to gospel. There wasn't even religion because of such dystopia and disarray. They could find no meaning in a God because of so many of the country's problems. Individuals. would travel tens of miles, maybe hundreds of miles to make it to church.

Do we have easier access today? Yes, however if one loses touch of disconnection and relapses. Out of the driver seat or on the horse and Start walking.

Amen.

— Bill W. —

It must never be forgotten that the purpose of Alcoholics Anonymous is to sober up alcoholics. There is no religious or spiritual requirement for membership. No demands are made on anyone. An experience is offered which members may accept or reject. That is up to them.

REAL PEOPLE.
REAL STRUGGLES.
A BRIGHTER TOMORROW.

The Trudge

STORIES
PERSPECTIVE
HOPE
COMMUNITY

ISSUE 11

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 11
BELIEVE • ENDURE • RISE

GOOD MORNING

A Newspaper for Life's Journey



"What did Tolstoy say about
families?
(Everything in this poem is true.)
With comfort, Aunt Joan
reassured me:
'Love is
'The second most mispriced of
human goals.'
What's first?"

Perfection does not belong to
human bonds — weeding
broken glass back together
yet the cracks will always show.
Happy families are scripted
plays —
Unhappy families are street
fights the bark —

You are still young enough
to devour and be devoured.
The bad gushing out of you:
a freshly broken bottle
the fine white clime of powder,
a desperation for sex,
a plea for connection.

Crimes in the crevices
calling —
Once you've been to jail,
you're not scared of it anymore.

Half a gram on the porcelain:

Temptation of suicide.

This is a nightmare you
can't sleep off,
the kind you can't outrun.

Begging for the crumbs
that fall from the man's table.

Broke-ass — using your kids'
social security number, just
to pay the utility bills.

Pocket every penny, and
swear off the sauce that ate
way your head.

Pocket every penny, and
swear off that one genuine
hairy noon...

Every pocketed penny —
some hope.

Every refused drink —
some courage.

Some people survive the night.
Stronger people meet the morning.

THE TRUDGE

RECOVERY • UNITY • SERVICE

ISSUE 11 | A NEW WAY OF LIFE | ONE DAY AT A TIME

BEING OF SERVICE TO GOD AND OTHERS IN ALL SEASONS

"I stand now in the sunlight of the Spirit."

"Having blues any time of the year could cause me to spiral into a demoralization of my Spirit."

"So for me what I do is, I am good to myself, being of maximum service to God and my fellows and it keeps me on that spiritual beam that gives my life meaning I don't have to be feeling so blue."

WINTER
SPRING
SUMMER
FALL

"Whether it be Summer, Winter, Spring or Fall, I need to get outside of myself and help someone else, be of maximum service to God and another human being."

Vicky, S. Ky.

More and More we became interested in seeing what we could contribute to life, as we found a new power flow in us, and as we enjoyed peace of mind and discovered we could face life successfully, because we became to have a God consciousness.

SERVICE CHANGES LIVES



Recovery isn't just a solo journey; it's a family one.

Watching my husband battle alcoholism was one of the hardest chapters of my life. But watching him find his way back to himself was the most rewarding.

Throughout his recovery, we realized how many people feel lost in the "middle ground" of the struggle. To help others navigate this path, he's shared his entire journey — the lows, the breakthroughs, and the tools that actually worked — in his new book, Just For Today - My Struggle With Alcoholism.

If you or someone you love is looking for a message of hope today, I'd love for you to check out.

Theresa Kitchen
8/11/2025: JUST FOR TODAY!
MY STRUGGLE WITH ALCOHOLISM

Just For Today

RECOVERY
STORIES
EXPERIENCE
STRENGTH
HOPE

THE TRUDGE

A NEWSLETTER FOR A BRIGHTER TOMORROW

ONE DAY AT A TIME

ISSUE 11

Real People. Real Struggles. Real Hope.

TOGETHER WE TRUDGE



I GOT THIS

By Aaron B.

— Sometimes the hardest thing to admit is that we don't have to do it alone. —

There are times in life when we pretend everything is okay. We figure it out on our own or at least try to. Every part of us screams that everything is pushing, and we convince ourselves that everything is fine.

My initial date of sobriety was November 5, 2009, but that's not what this story is about — though it begins there. I lost my wife, my newborn son, and a career I put a lifetime into. I had hit rock bottom. I drank to numb the pain. Alcohol wanted to get better because I didn't like being so much because of alcohol. I'm not going to lie — I sang, I hurt, and my ego was real.

"I got this."

I was determined to get better. I was determined to do better. I was determined to make it work. I drank, and I made a choice. I went to AA for the first time.

I'm not going to lie — the years passed quickly. I rebuilt my life, and I got a better job. I watched my son grow up. There were arguments, sadness, and love. Every part of my being learned with efficiency because, in my mind,

"I got this."

As time passed, everything must change. Children grow, jobs change, and life starts to shift. You slowly stop going to meetings and everything gets looser. You leave working the Big Book, you stop the same fervor, so you keep holding on to the routine,

"I got this."

You start to travel more for work, alone, and there is no empty hotel room to take the answer to. You tell yourself you're okay, your promises — you aren't drinking at home. Isn't that what you want? You swear you would never drink at home again. Everyone else can do this when they travel.

"I got this."

You start with just one drink in the hotel room, and you tell yourself it's okay. Everything is okay. Everyone does it, right? You deserve multiple weaknesses, you're not the boss, you are in charge, you don't lose control. Then you really start to forget what AA was about at the first place. Ironically, you have a hard time remembering why you stopped drinking the first time. Old bad, now your routine is,

"I got this and always have."

Two years have passed. The stress grows unbearably, and eventually you drink an every trip from the minute you are off work until you pass out. Then one day, you wake up in a hotel, call for public intoxication. You must call your job, your boss, and suddenly everything feels fallen apart in a short time because your routine has been,

"I got this."

The truth is, I don't have this. My higher power and the support of others are what keep tell, I am just a humble passenger, and I can never again afford to be by the motto,

"I got this."

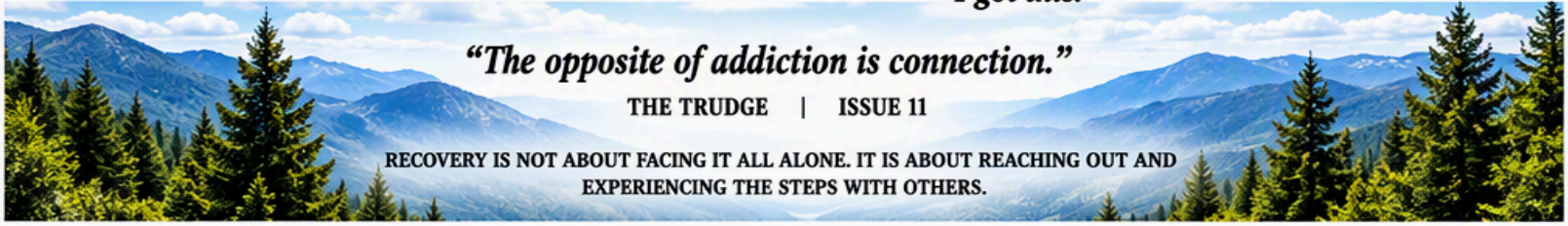


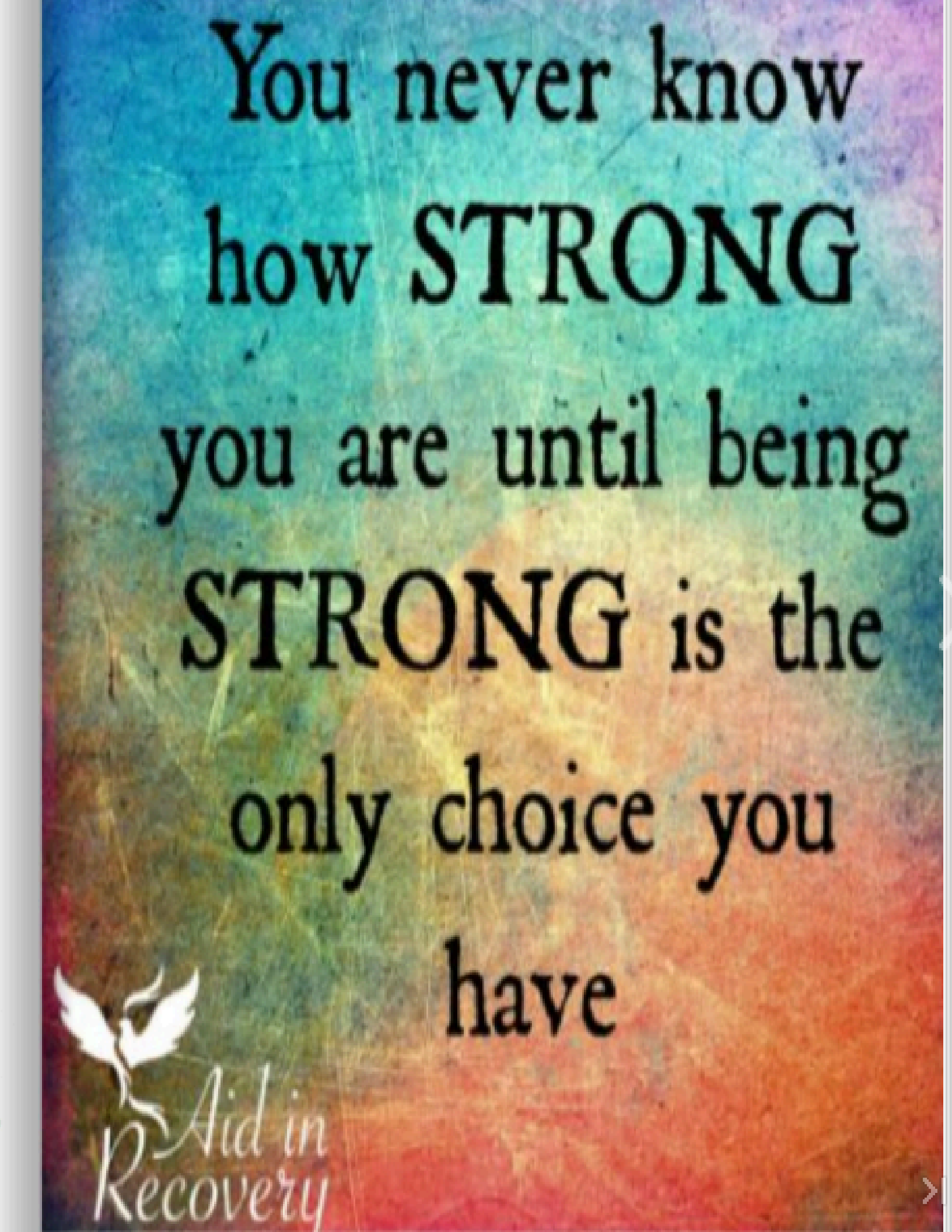
"When I say, 'I got this,' it is nothing more than the ism of alcoholism— the I, self, and me."

— AARON B.

RECOVERY LESSONS

- Recovery requires correction.
- Isolation creates opportunity for addiction.
- Complacency can be dangerous.
- Asking for help is strength.
- Higher power and community sustain sobriety.




You never know
how STRONG
you are until being
STRONG is the
only choice you
have
Aid in
Recovery



Asleep mid-afternoon, yet
again What was it this time
The Vodka or Gin

Why am I drinking my life away
And question why another day
Another day of what
That jaded feeling as
I open my eyes
and look up at the ceiling.
When did my zest for life
disappear
Why do I awake in constant
fear?
I will find my happy place again
Without the Vodka, without the
Gin



Recovery

Liquor promised comfort, but stole my way, turning bright tomorrow's into yesterday .

It clouded my mind and weakened my stride, leaving hurt and loss I could no longer hide .

Recovery helped me reclaim my name, one day at a time ,

I rose from the pain with clearer eyes and a heart renewed,

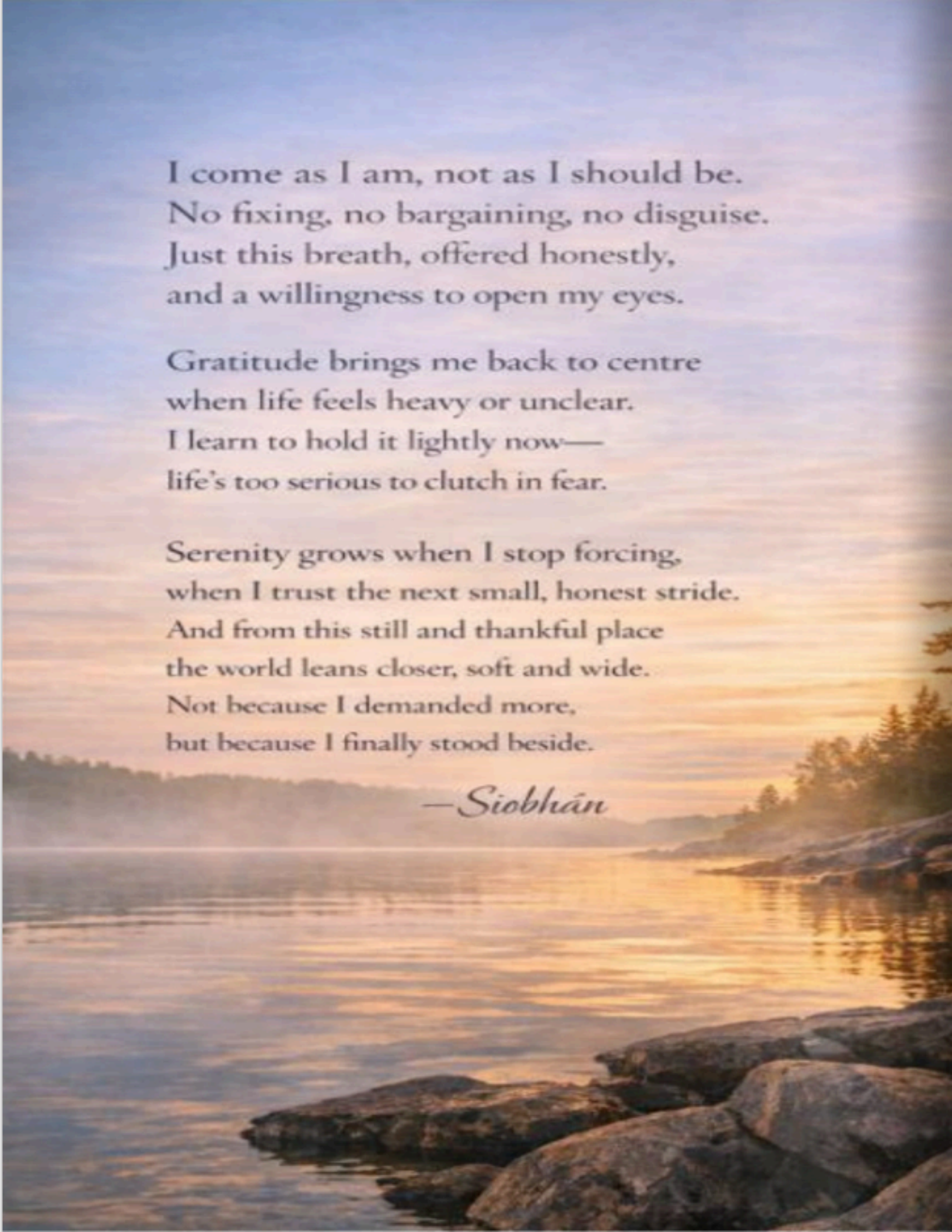
I found my strength and a better view.

Now each step forward is a victory won,

A reminder that recovery has only begun.

Though the road is long I choose it each day,grateful recovery helped me find my way

By Kat


I come as I am, not as I should be.
No fixing, no bargaining, no disguise.
Just this breath, offered honestly,
and a willingness to open my eyes.
Gratitude brings me back to centre
when life feels heavy or unclear.
I learn to hold it lightly now—
life's too serious to clutch in fear.
Serenity grows when I stop forcing,
when I trust the next small, honest stride.
And from this still and thankful place
the world leans closer, soft and wide.
Not because I demanded more,
but because I finally stood beside.
—Siobhán

To Stay Dry

What's that at my window? I'm a Butterfly
What are you doing there?

Heaven started to cry
I cannot get my wings wet or I won't be able to fly

So, I'm resting here a moment
trying my best To Stay Dry We have a bit in common,
little butterfly I'm inside from Heaven's tears
Trying my best To Stay Dry,
Dry from what, did I hear you say? It's too long a story
Maybe another day
Now the sun is shining
And your wings are dry
Time to fly off up into the sky
Thanks for your visit
That made me cry
I'll stay in for now,
Trying my best To Stay **Dry.**



©The Anonymous Poet

They all think I have

That I have something they want.

Because of that fear, none of them come near. No one is

near, to hear my silent tears.

If they want what I have, I'd be more than glad-- --I'd be

more than glad to share what I have.

But they would have to come close--they would have to

come near;

They would have to come close enough to hear my

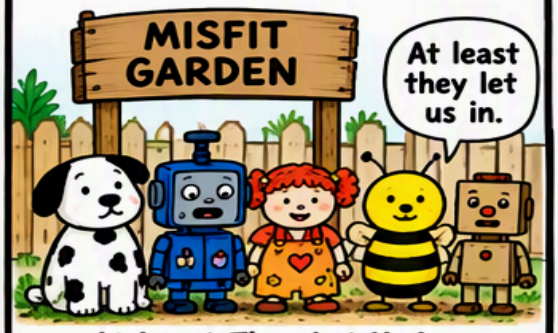
silent tears.

- anonymous



THE COMMUNITY GARDEN PLOT
explains AA
By Mackenzie – Texas

1. We are all a little broken when we arrive.

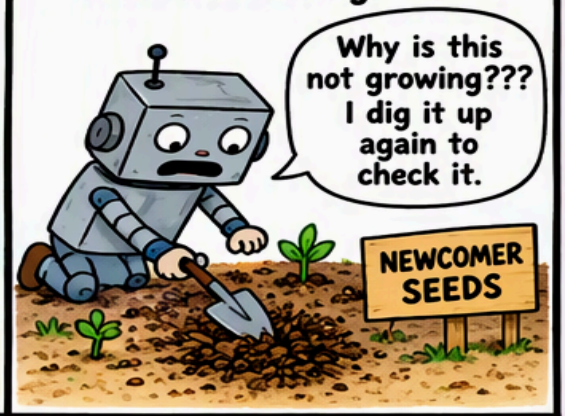


At Least They Let Us In..., explains AA 2.

2. We get a little plot. We're told the same simple things.



3. At first, we have no idea what we're doing.



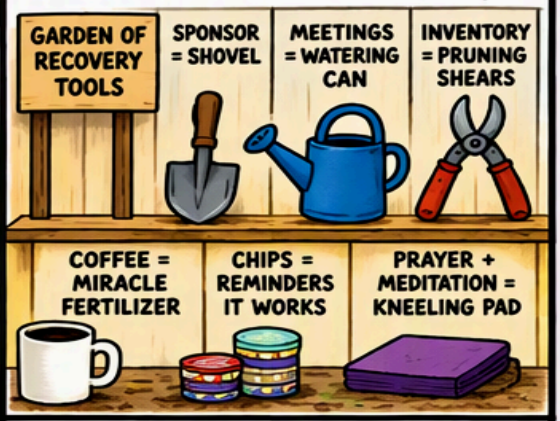
4. We try a lot of things. Some help. Some don't.



5. We pull weeds (character defects) and learn what to let go of.



6. We have tools that help.



7. Some days are good. Some days are survival.



8. We compost the stuff we don't need anymore.



9. Our gardens look different. That's okay.



10. Nobody in AA knows exactly what they're doing.



You don't have to be perfect to grow here.
You just have to be willing.

Mackenzie – Texas

“THE COMMUNITY GARDEN PLOT

By Mackenzie-Texas



We are all a little broken when we arrive.

MISFIT GARDEN

At Least They Let Us In., explains AA 2.

1. We Get

A little Plot.

We are told the Same Simple Things.

Sunlight. Water. Honesty. Keep coming back.

3. At first, we had no idea what we were doing.

Why is this not growing??? I dug it up again to check it.

ONE DAY AT A TIME

NEWCOMER SEEDS

4. We try a lot of things. Some help. Some don't.

I went to 9 meetings today and now I have a personality around sobriety.

5. We pull weeds (character defects) and learn what to let go of.

These are my character defects.

Those are Dandelions. Relax.

6. We have tools that help.

GARDEN OF RECOVERY TOOLS

SPONSOR =SHOVEL

MEETINGS = WATERING CAN

INVENTORY = PRUNING SHEARS

OVERWATERED MY RECOVERY

7. Some days are good. Some days are about survival.

Look!

I have Sprouts!

8. We compost the stuff we don't need anymore.

COFFEE = MIRACLE FERTILIZER

CHIPS = REMINDERS IT WORKS

PRAYER + MEDITATION

= KNEELING PAD 9. Our

Gardens Look Different.

That's okay. BOUNTIFUL

SLOW & STEADY

Today I just showed up. That's

THINGS WE

NO LONGER

NEED STILL

DIGGING

Enough.

SHAME BLACKOUT STORIES
TEXTING EXES AT 1:14 AM

PRETENDING WE'RE FINE

10. Nobody in AA knows exactly what they're doing.

We just keep

Showing up...

JUST HAPPY TO BE HERE

...to water each other.

KEEP COMING BACK

You don't have to be perfect. You just have to be willing.

Grow here.

Friendship Recipe

INGREDIENTS:

1 cup kindness
2/3 cup of listening
4 tbs. of forgiveness
2 cups of encouragement
Simmer with patience.
Stir in sensitivity.





ELMO'S CHILI RECIPE



*(for two people, double it for more)

1 lb. Ground Beef or Italian sausage whole diced medium onion (cook w/meat 5 or 10 mins. - optional) 1 can black, red, or chili beans - rinsed in hot water & drained! 1 can Chicken Broth or chicken stock 1 10 oz. can Rotel Tomatoes & Green Chiles

½ tsp. Garlic powder (or more... to taste)

2 ½ tsp. or 1 tbs. Chili powder

1 or 2 Bay leaves

½ tsp. Tabasco sauce (or Louisiana hot sauce, and use your judgment)

Brown the burger. Add ingredients. Bring to a slow boil *(never a full rolling boil with chili!)*, then turn heat down, cover and simmer.



Molasses Cookies

Ingredients:

Original recipe (1X) yields 24 servings

- 2 tablespoons white sugar
- 2 ¼ cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons ground ginger
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ¾ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon ground cloves
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¾ cup butter, softened
- 1 cup white sugar
- 1 large egg
- ¼ cup molasses
- 1 tablespoon water

Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Put 2 tablespoons of sugar in a small bowl; set aside.
2. Sift flour, ginger, baking soda, cinnamon, cloves, and salt together into a medium bowl.
3. Beat butter and 1 cup sugar together in a large bowl with an electric mixer until light and fluffy. Beat in egg; stir in molasses and water. Gradually stir flour-spice mixture into molasses mixture until well combined.

4. Shape dough into 24 walnut-sized balls with floured hands. Roll each ball in the reserved sugar to coat.
5. Place cookies 2 inches apart on ungreased cookie sheets; flatten slightly with the bottom of a glass.
6. Bake in the preheated oven until the tops crack and centers are soft, 8 to 10 minutes, switching racks halfway through.
7. Remove from the oven; let cool on the baking sheets for 5 minutes, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.





Steph's Easy Healthy Kodiak Cake Bowl

(Serves up to 2.)

Ingredients:

- ½ banana mashed
- 1 egg
- 1/2 cup milk or almond milk
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup Kodiak Power Cakes Mix
- 2 TBL sweetener of your choice
- cinnamon (optional)

Optional: mix-ins or toppings(Not including toppings): 1 tbsp maple syrup, chocolate chips, nuts, berries Instructions:

1. **Mix: Lightly coat a microwave-safe bowl with cooking spray. Add the banana and mash, add egg, and beat in, add milk, vanilla and mix again. Finally add Kodiak mix and any other dry ingredients, then stir until smooth. Fold in any mix-ins like chocolate chips or blueberries.**
2. **Microwave: Microwave on high for 1.5 to 3 minutes. Microwave one minute at a time.**

The cake should be set in the center but not overcooked. Microwaves will vary.

3. Check: If it's still wet, continue microwaving in 10 to 15-second intervals.

4. Serve: Let it cool for 1 minute, then top with any toppings you enjoy.

***Nutrition Facts as 1 serving w/ Skim Milk and Sugar Free Sweetener**

RECOVERY
UNITY
SERVICE

THE TRUDGE

ISSUE 11

ONE DAY AT A TIME

REAL PEOPLE ~ REAL STORIES ~ A BRIGHTER TOMORROW

ARTICLE 6

THE CASE OF THE MISSING COFFEE

An Ex-Cop's First Assignment in Recovery



Back when I wore a badge, I was trained to handle high-pressure situations — domestic, wrecks, people yelling, things going sidewys fast. I could walk into chaos and keep it under control.

So imagine my surprise when in my first few weeks of recovery, I was taken down by a coffee pot.

I showed up early to a meeting like I was reporting for the beginning of a shift briefing. Old habits die hard. The room was quiet, chairs stacked, lights half on — and the coffee pot was empty.

Now, in police work, if something's missing, you start asking questions… Who's responsible? When was it last seen Any witnesses? But in this case, the only suspect was me.

I opened cabinets like I was searching a vehicle — found filters, found coffee grounds, but no instructions. No training manual. No field training officer to ride along and show me the ropes. Apparently, in recovery, making coffee is a "learn-as-you-go" assignment.

So I did what I used to do on the night shift — guessed with confidence.

I poured in what looked right… which turned out to be enough grounds to caffeinate a small country. What came out of that coffee machine wasn't coffee — it was evidence of poor judgment.



The first guy takes a sip, pauses, and says, "whew, that'll put hair on your chest". Another one just nods like he's seen worse. Which, to be fair, he probably had.

And nobody complained.

No reports were filed. No one read me my rights. One old-timer just smiled and said, "Just keep coming back… and maybe write a lighter ticket next time."

That stuck with me.

Because out on the street, I was used to people leaving, arguing, blaming. But here? Nobody walked out over bad coffee. They stayed — for each other. For me.

> *"Apparently, in recovery, making coffee is a 'learn-as-you-go' assignment."*

These days, I still make the coffee now and then. It's improved — less like motor oil, more like something you'd actually drink. But the real difference is me.

I spent years trying to control everything on the outside. Turns out, recovery is about learning how to handle what's on the inside… one meeting, one cup, one day at a time.

> **"Nobody walked out over bad coffee. They stayed for each other."**

That's just a couple of examples of my amends and how I went about to make them carefully. As I had made my list, I prayed for each person on it and sought through my sponsor for the guidance and how to approach amends.

I've had friends that have bailed me out of jail and I owed the money for that and I gave my amends to them also.

I am doing the same work. I prayed for them as well, as I went to them, and told them, "When you bailed me out of jail and financially cost you, I want to make this right with you. I'm an alcoholic, in order for me to stay sober. I need to do this.

Some of my friends would tell me now you don't owe me anything, and some of them would tell me I did, and I would do the next right thing, I would pay them.

You know there's things like I didn't pay my bills on time and or I would pay my bills when I was drinking. You know, those people too.

I went to them and told them the same thing, and that I'm an alcoholic. In order for me to stay sober, I need to make right my wrongs with you and pay you what I owe.

CASE CLOSED

Blake Gurley
Ex cop
Recovering alcoholic

The ABC's of My Sobriety

~ Donna K ~

A journey of hope... A life worth living...

I am alive
I believe
I choose happiness
I dream
I educate myself
I fear
I gained grit
I have hope
I imagine
I just breathe
I know kindness
I let go and let God
I meditate
I need support
I own my past
I pray
I quietly question
I reside in the raw and the real
I shall shine
I tread toward trust
I unfold in my own uniqueness
I vouch for my own value
I willingly watch and wonder
I X-ray my soul
I yearn for more years
I zoom toward my Higher Power

One of the most important lessons I have learned since I wrote this on 6/1/18 is ~ that

"it's not I it's 'WE'!!!"

~ Donna K ~

ISSUE 11 A JOURNEY OF HOPE, RECOVERY AND A BRIGHTER TOMORROW

THE TRUDGE

REAL PEOPLE. REAL STRUGGLES. REAL PROGRESS.

Strength at Dawn

A Higher Power, A Brighter Day



STEP 3

"Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him."

This step was the beginning of freedom. It was a decision to stop fighting every battle alone and to trust that a Higher Power could guide my life. Surrender did not mean giving up, it meant giving over. In that moment, I found hope, relief, and a new way to live.

STEP 5

"Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs."

Honesty opened the door to healing. When I admitted the truth, I laid down the weight of secrets and shame. It was not easy, but it was necessary. Through courage and humility, I found freedom. What I could not change, I could finally release. This step gave me the strength to move forward.

STEP 11

"Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out."

This step is my daily practice. Each morning, I take time to pray and be still. My journal becomes a conversation with God. In the quiet, I receive guidance, clarity, and strength. It is here that I am reminded to stay grateful, keep growing, and trust the path ahead.



I Am A Warrior

My Creator has given me the ability to be strong,
As I watch the dew glisten on the grass.
Birds singing at the crack of dawn,
I look into myself and have the reassurance that this day,

I am a warrior who will take on life, embracing whatever is in front of me,
nurturing love, peace, joy, selfless kindness and happiness.

I'm proud to be a blessed woman warrior.

Vicky's sober date: 3/3/93 ODAAT

PAINTING BY MICHEAL R



A hand-colored coastal scene by Micheal R, displayed as submitted by the artist.

A TRANQUIL VIEW

his untitled piece by **Micheleal** R captures a serene boardwalk leading to e sea under a glowing sunset.

he artist's use of color and detail evokes a sense of peace and dreloxation.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Micheal R is known for creating evocative seascapes that invite viewers to experience the calm beauty of the shore.



Trudging Through — Mark M

The Trudge

Hope in AA

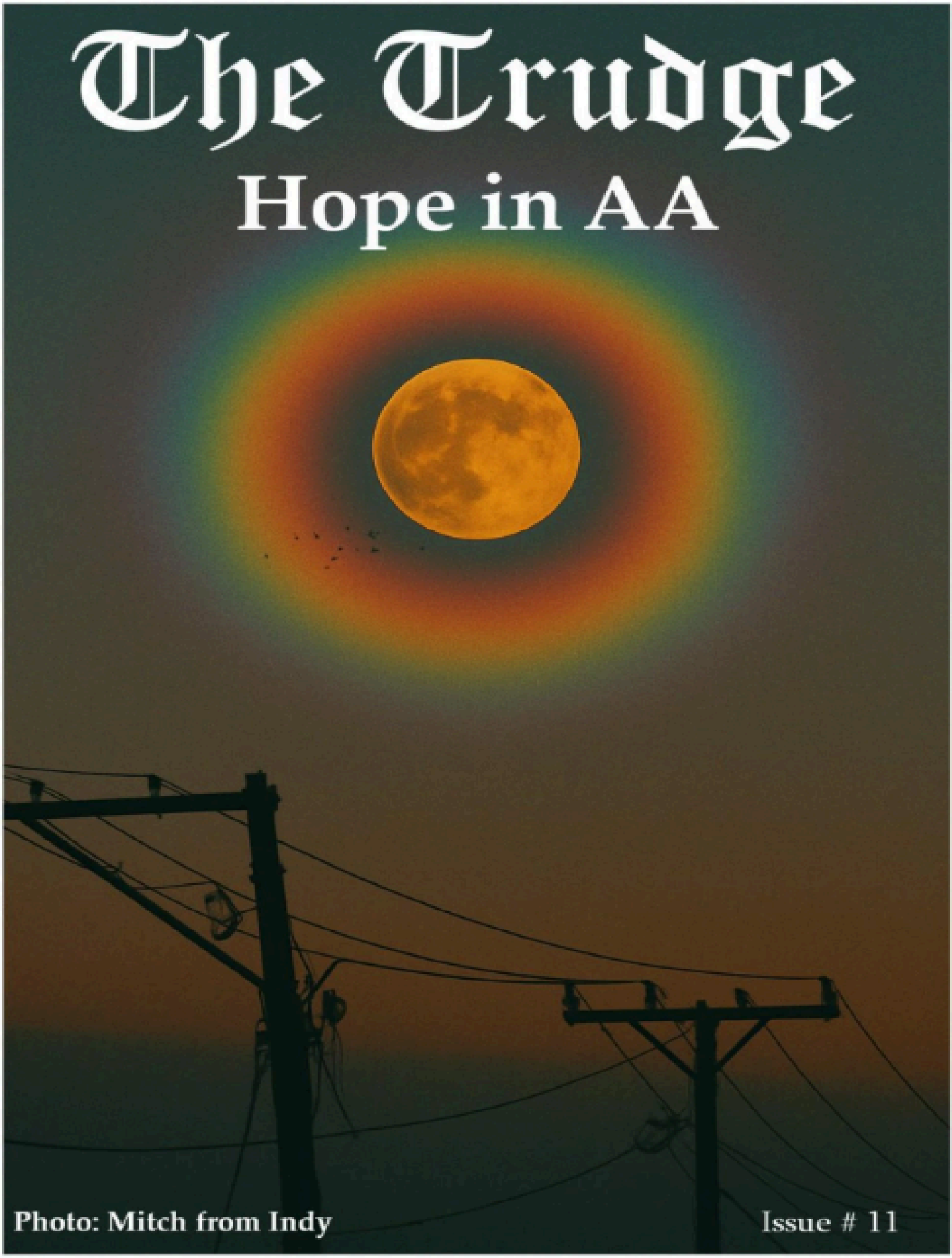


Photo: Mitch from Indy

Issue # 11

THE TRUDGE

Issue 11 – September 2026

Economic Uncertainty Grows

As markets slide into turmoli, fears of a global recession inhmrsf, with investors seeting safer assets amidst the instability. The central bank debates trate actions. Jobless rates climb, while busineses express oot caution inter investmontsto tough evemnes ahead.

Protests Exupt Across Cities

Mass demonsitations broek out in several cities last night as citizens de to the streets. to demend justice ts and feform. cilnce with led t: numerous arrests and inivies. Protesters call for change as as governments trpee tough public discottent.



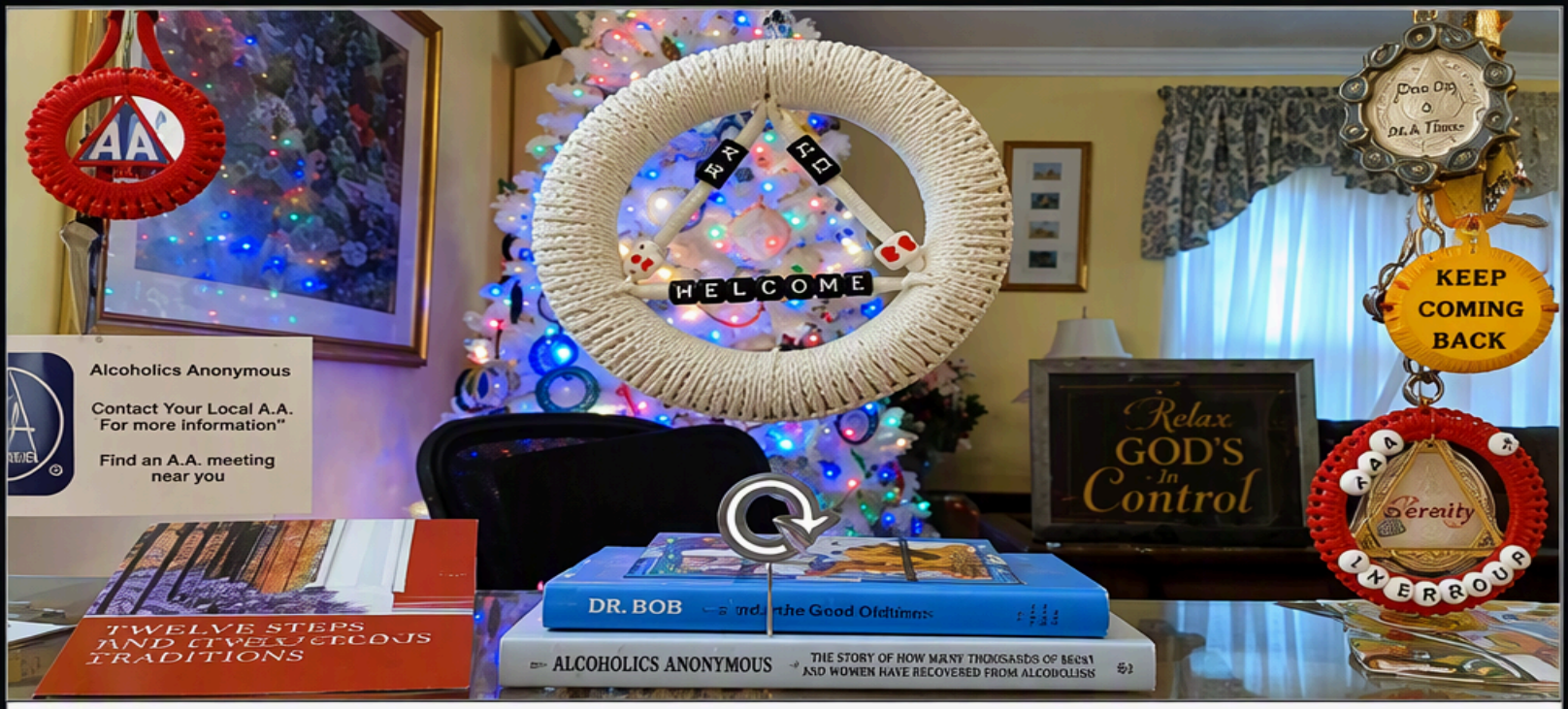
Art by @freyarichardsonartist

Concerns Over Housing Crisis

As rents skyrocket, affordable housing becomes harder to find. Familiess are being preced out hn emmerise m. Lawmakers faces pressure faces to address the addect shortage as debates of solutions intensiify.

Global Tensions Escalate

The international stage is fraught with conflict as dipolocatic effors falter. Military postiuring heightens is nations bragnnts brakes as potential confincations. Analysts ise on the bring of a significant pegulodical shift.





Relax GOD'S In Control

WEBSITE & LITERATURE: **'Alcoholics Anonymous**
Download "Meeting Guide" App to your global
Find an closest meeting
near you
ON: **THE HOME GROUP:**
www.aa.org/meetings

"YouTube A.A."
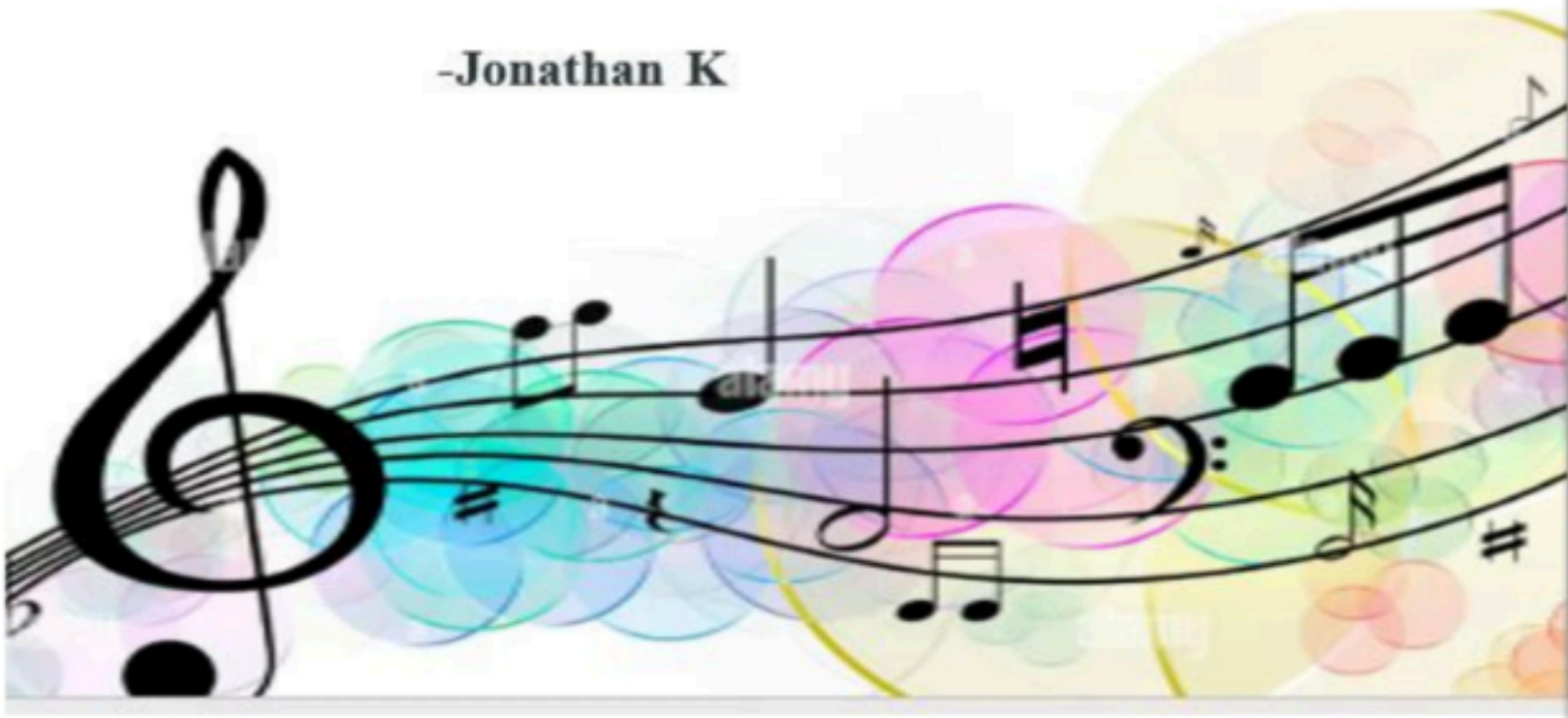
Related Taping from AA Grapevine
DR BOB and the Good Oldtimers
TWELVE STEPS AND TWELVE TRADITIONS
Grapevine
FRIEND OF DR. BOB

Mark A, Sober and free from all mind altering substances Since April 22: 1986

Music Playlist

1. Breaking the Habit- Lincoln Park
2. Sober- Demi Lovato
3. It's been a while- Stain'd
4. That's why I'm here- Kenny
5. Chesney Amazing- Aerosmith
6. Between the bars- Elliot Smith Starting over- Macklemore
7. When I quit drinking- JP Harris Not an addict- Ks Choice
8. Sober Now- Stephen Merrill

-Jonathan K



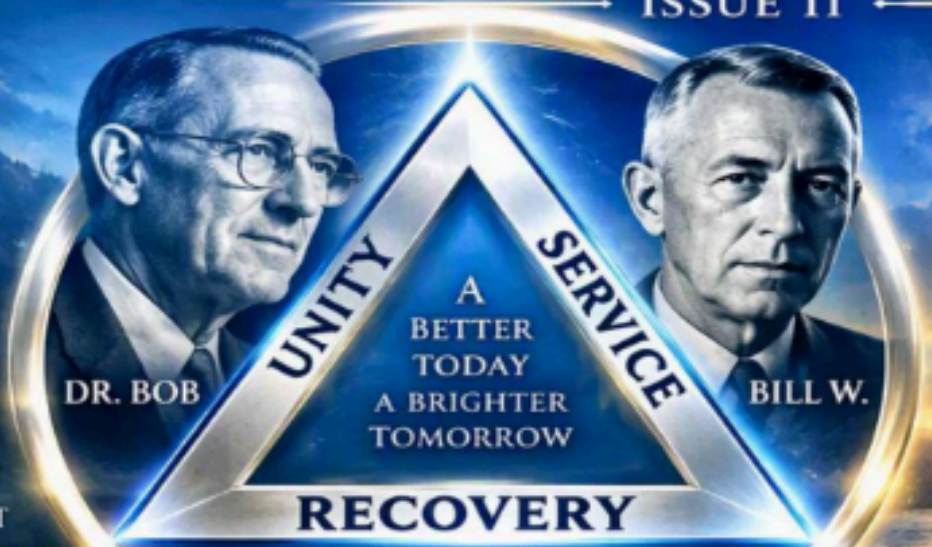
HOPE
HEALING
FAMILY
RECOVERY

The Trudge

NEWSLETTER

UNITY
SERVICE
STRENGTH
TOGETHER

ISSUE 11



No one recovers alone... Families recover together.

PAST
STRENGTH
PRESENT
HOPE
BRIGHTER
TOMORROWS

RECOVERY ISN'T JUST A SOLO JOURNEY; *It's a Family One.*



Together
We Heal
Together
We Grow
Together
We Recover

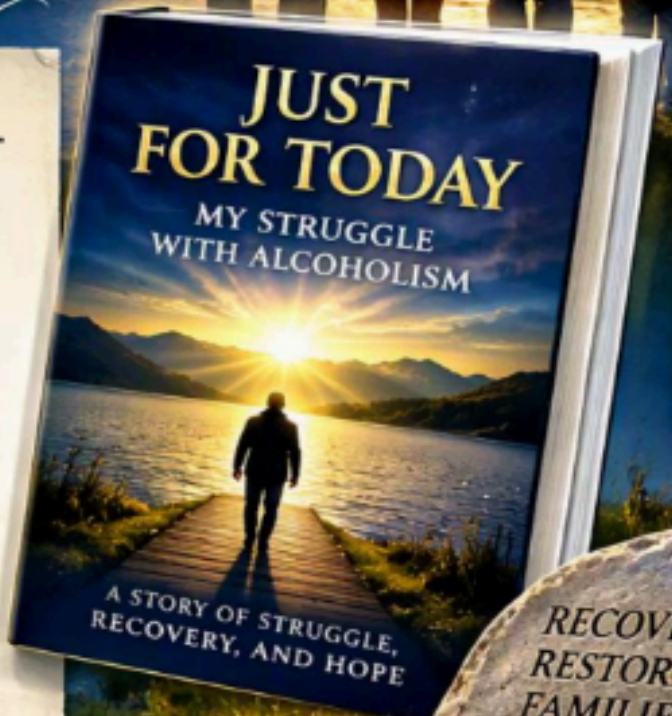
Watching my husband battle alcoholism was one of the hardest chapters of my life. But watching him find his way back to himself was the most rewarding.

Throughout his recovery, we realized how many people feel lost in the "middle ground" of the struggle. To help others navigate this path, he's shared his entire journey—the lows, the breakthroughs, and the tools that actually worked—in his new book, *Just For Today - My Struggle With Alcoholism.*

If you or someone you love is looking for a message of hope today, I'd love for you to check out.

Theresa Kitchen

8/11/2025



REAL
STORIES
REAL
PEOPLE
REAL
HOPE



THE BACK DOOR

NEWCOMER RESOURCES

- New to AA: Is A.A. for Me? | Alcoholics Anonymous
  https://www.aa.org/assets/en_US/p-36_isAAforrMe.pdf
- A Newcomer Asks: A Newcomer Asks | Alcoholics Anonymous
  https://www.aa.org/assets/en_US/p-24_anewcomerask.pdf
- Big Book: The Big Book | Alcoholics Anonymous
  https://aahomegroup.org/#bigbook
- Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions: Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions Book | Alcoholics Anonymous
  https://www.aa.org/twelve-steps-twelve-traditions
- Sponsorship: Questions and Answers on Sponsorship | Alcoholics Anonymous
  https://www.aa.org/assets/en_US/p-15_Q&AonSpon.pdf

Our Next Issue: "Experience, Strength, and Hope"

We are seeking articles for our next issue on experience, strength, and hope — what it means to you, how you've experienced it, and your thoughts on Steps 7 & 8. We also welcome content on any AA or recovery-related topics, including personal stories, original art, poems, recipes, AA book reviews, jokes, pet pictures, and advice.

This is YOUR newsletter, and we want to feature your experience, strength, and hope.

Submissions can be anonymous if you prefer.

Send your submissions to communications@aahomegroup.org —
We can't wait to share your voice in the next issue!