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SERVICE  
KEEPS US

# *Sober*

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THE DAILY REPRIEVE  
OCTOBER 2021

## Welcome to the latest edition of *The Daily Reprieve*

As sober alcoholics we know that connection to the God of our understanding is more often-than-not connected through working with others. This is the spirit of service and what our entire program is built on.

Us here at the newsletter team are thankful for every contribution, because it allowed us to dig a bit deeper into what it means to give *and receive* service. The fellows who contributed shared various stories on how they stayed sober, by being of help to others in the program and it's wonderful to know that we are sober today, because someone was of service to us when we came into the rooms.

There are some great poems, stories, some jokes and with great sadness - a tribute page to our dear fellow H\*, who passed away last month.

We trust that you will enjoy this edition and it will surely help another alcoholic, if they read it too. So please share it with those who might be struggling.

For our newcomers, please refer to our welcome pack: <http://4thdim.link/welcome> - as we have some good information on our program. The "A Newcomer Asks" section is a PDF document which may contain many many answers to questions you might have.

For the list of our meetings please visit <https://singaporeaa.org/meetings.html>

Until next time,

The Singapore AA newsletter team

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*\*we use initials only in electronic documents for those who have passed*

## *Service limericks*

There was an old drunk from Boat Quay  
What a lazy old fecker was he  
He was the first one to swerve  
Every offer to serve  
And he ne'er found sobriety.

There was an old drunk from the rooms  
On whose face many wide smiles would bloom  
And his soul he would nourish  
With his offers of service  
A long way from those seedy saloons.

## *Service - yeah right!*

If someone had told me that the way to sober up was to find a bunch of other drunks in the same shape as me, or worse, and then try and help them, I'd have said that person was madder than a cut snake - madder than me - and I was certifiable!

It didn't make sense at all. I was often drunk, tired, depressed, low key ill / hungover. My life was a mess of stuff I'm trying to fix or cover up. My every waking thought and all the ones after that revolved around what a shitty life I had, how others had a huge hand in my crappy situation, the bad hand that I'd been dealt etc. etc. And on top of all this I was a selfish fecker - always needing to know what was in it for me.

And you AAs told this person, me, that by helping other drunks I would get and stay sober. No chance!

And look at the type of help being proposed here: call a drunk, meet a drunk for coffee,

see a drunk who's in hospital, go to a meeting and share honesty with other drunks, get the water at meetings, help with the newsletter, put the books out at meetings. I mean seriously, what is all this rubbish?

So imagine my surprise when it worked! When I saw my life getting better (and not just because I was sober). When I saw the same in those around me too. Including those I'd reached out to. When I do something for another, I feel less tired and more happy - what weird magic is this !?

Later, with a bit of happy sobriety under my belt, I could do more of this service thing-chair meetings, be treasurer or literature guy and take up other service positions in my home group or inter-group. And these commitments were the same - they took my time, energy and resources and yet I felt more full of goodness for doing the work, the service.

And behind all this is the gradual understanding that I obviously didn't really know how I worked or what really made me tick, or how things worked, how the world worked - I mean I got this service thing all wrong. That was humbling but in a very good way. Only by shaking apart my theories of everything could the decks be cleared and a solid foundation laid. An AA foundation where service, doing things for others willingly and happily, became the magic ingredient that, over time, allowed peace and happiness to come into all aspects of my life.

~ Mark

## "Vitamin S"

I've enjoyed the gift of sobriety for a while now, but sometimes I get wrapped up in petty concerns with my worldview, my drama, me me me. When I'm in such an ego state, I can't will myself out of it, because I have lost self-awareness and connection. The button of the washing machine has been pushed, and I can only go round for a full cycle. Imagine my silly rotating face, coated in suds, visible to any sane spectator watching me through the porthole. Eventually, I am restored to myself. I have a moment of connection, of choice. And then what? Sometimes I just choose to push the button again, and go round for another wash.

Other times, I manage to say: "OK enough, let's do something different". Such a decision is fragile - I need to take action immediately. Sometimes even dropping to my knees by the bed or in the shower, I ask my Higher Power to restore me to sanity. And if I listen, I can hear a quiet voice in the back of my mind telling me what to do next: "go home" or "apologise now" or "don't worry" or "sleep". Another kind of action involves contacting another member of the Fellowship. AA has a collective reservoir of sanity, which we are all free to tap into. We are usually not all crazy in the same way at the same time.

Well, these are fine fixes. But what about prevention? Do I really need to go through so much random misery? My sponsors over the years have all advised me to acquire a variety of AA Service commitments as part of my regular weekly schedule. It's not foolproof (I'm quite the fool) but I think it's made my recovery much more robust, and given me a richer quality of life.

Regular doses of this "Vitamin S", whereby I must do something for other folk in recovery, reduces the amount of time I would spend in the dark recesses of my head. Although it takes some time and effort, service participation is essentially free because otherwise I would fritter these resources away in insane washing-machine behaviour. In the remainder of this article, I will briefly touch on some of these forms.

"Service" is a broad term. In my opinion, simply attending a meeting is Service. My life in recovery has taken me all over the world, to meetings big and small. Without the other AA members, these meetings couldn't exist. I am grateful for every attendee at every meeting I've ever been to. Even if I disagree with a detail of what someone says, or how they say it, we are all God's kids trudging the path together. As p87 of the Big Book says (in a narrower context)

"Be quick to see where others are right. Make use of what they have to offer." Take what you like, and leave the rest.

Beyond this (literally) entry-level Service, there are more active opportunities to support a meeting. Doors must be opened, chairs set out, coffee made, newcomers greeted, literature arranged harmoniously.

In my experience, thriving groups formalise these roles, so that most folks can have something to do. If you don't have an official post, please help set up the chairs, or clear away at the end. I've had some wonderful conversations while doing the washing-up.

Regular attendees give coherence to a group. They allow folk who might otherwise drift away to identify with the group and feel a sense of "Home". Sticking around at particular meetings meant that I got to know people better and they got to know me. They made it harder for me to disassemble, and allowed me to trust them enough to be honest.

A particularly cool meeting commitment is coffee or tea maker. Meetings I've attended in Britain and America generally last 90 minutes, and refreshments are usually made available in mid-meeting. We are thirsty folk. I can still be tongue-tied at times

and am grateful for the opportunity to connect with folk at a meeting through undertaking meeting commitments.

There are other admin roles. Over the years, I've been secretary, treasurer, GSR representative, and literature guy for different meetings at different times. These commitments require a slightly longer duration of sobriety, but I try to avoid creating any sense of "recovery hierarchy". We are all capable of being idiots. We are all sober just for today.

My favourite such commitment is an obscure one: "speaker-finder". Speaker meetings are one of the most popular in our AA roster. A new speaker must be asked beforehand each week. In my humble view, it's best if speakers come from outside the speaker meeting itself. This ensures an input of new ideas, and sometimes the speaker decides to become a regular. So a diligent speaker-finder must attend many other different meetings and listen to many shares. What a gig! What can a newcomer do to be of Service, right from the start?

Get a sponsor! It may not be obvious that a sponsee is doing a Service, but really they are. Countless times, I've heard a speaker express gratitude for being a sponsor and for what they've had a chance to learn through the experience.

The sponsor's own Service is to assess his own practice of sobriety, and find a way to express lessons he has learned in a way which is effective for the particular sponsee. I ruefully acknowledge that as a sponsor, I often discover holes in my own fabric of recovery. I have my own sponsor to turn to to sort out my confusions, but I never discuss with my sponsor details of my sponsee's situation.

Beyond the sponsor-sponsee relation, another level of Service is fellowship. This can mean the wonderful "meeting after the meeting", where members gather together for coffee or a meal, and talk in a more relaxed way about what's going on in their lives. Through these, I learned about social interactions without alcohol. Giving newcomers lifts to and from meetings is another wonderful opportunity to give and to learn. Whatsapp & Zoom mean I can have weekly conversations around the world with recovering alcoholics who are now friends.

There are many other kinds of Service: webmasters, outreach, general service at national or international levels, etc, etc, but perhaps the greatest responsibility in Service is Step 12: contact with newcomers and struggling members. As an introduction, I had no idea how challenging and interesting telephone hotline support would be. Beyond that, there is the need to go to hospitals, prisons or homes. I would not be here today

if a man called Francis, God bless his memory, had not carried the message to me without ego, one day long ago. The need to be present, to listen, and to carry a message to another human being at possibly the critical point of their lives underscores my responsibility to work on my own recovery:

*"The answers will come, if your own house is in order. But obviously you cannot transmit something you haven't got. See to it that your relationship with them is right, and great events will come to pass for you and countless others."*

# Peace of Mind and a Quiet Heart

## What More Could A Person Want

In my early days of sobriety, I was hearing a lot of words that were unfamiliar to me and I did not pay much attention to them at the time since I had bigger fish to fry. I had a drinking problem and everything else took a back seat to that. I was overwhelmed by marital, legal, and economic problems. Words like love, patience, spirituality, and forgiveness were foreign to me and I did not see how they mattered when all I wanted to do was quit drinking. I stayed close to that group and they started calling me *the fortunate one*. At the age of 28, I was the youngest one in that group and it stayed that way for quite a while as drug problems had not evolved enough at the time (1969) to affect the influx of younger members. I felt like the elders of that group took a special interest in me and that endeared me to them in a special way.

I was always listening for the magic word that would inspire me and give me a purpose in life and one day it happened. Tears come to my eyes when I recall the memory of the gentle voice of *an old farmer named Harlan*. As he talked about all the trials and tribulations in the past, that he had endured, he explained how he had stumbled into A.A. and that all the answers were there, but he did not understand it until he had a goal to reach for, and the next words that came out of his mouth changed my life forever.

He said, "All I want from life is **PEACE OF MIND AND A QUIET HEART**". The next

thought that came to me was, *what more could a person want?* To this day, I still quote Harlan and credit him with the inspiration. He passed away in 2007 being sober 51 years.

I have been through the big book and the 12&12 many times and have made a slow but very purposeful attempt to rid my mind of all the tormenting memories and regrets of the past, and as I processed each one of them, the more I realise that *peace of mind* is the natural result of living by these principals. Clearing the wreckage of the past, and changing those behaviours that caused it, and practicing unselfish behaviours, with the help of seasoned veterans like Harlan, I move closer and closer to the promise: *We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace.*

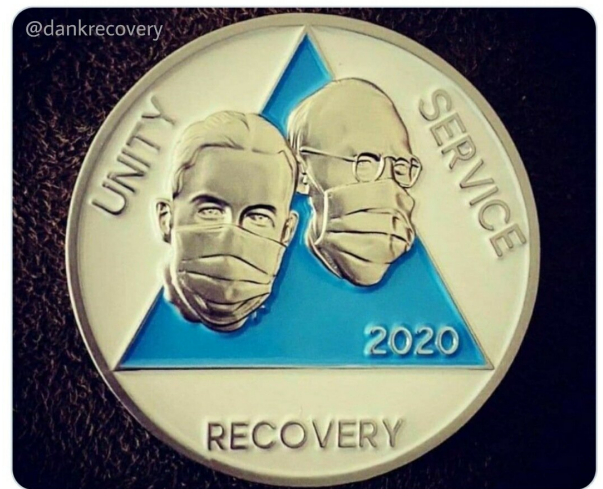
My books are marked and highlighted over the years as I evolved through the step study meetings or checked out the references to the big book in the Daily Reflections. Recently I have been focusing on the word *peace* and underlining it, and it is amazing how often it is linked to other words that seem to get more attention. *Peace of mind encompasses the spirit of recovery in Alcoholics Anonymous* and I will be forever grateful that God saw fit to lead me to this wonderful program. *Harlan, rest in peace and thank you for the inspiration.*

~Rick R.

"Sup I'm Chad, been sober for like 40 days. Not in a row or anything, just total"



Everyone that stayed sober through this pandemic deserves one of these coins



## *Four Reasons to be of Service*

**Four reasons to be of service that Dr. Bob mentioned while sharing his experience, strength and hope in the Big Book are:**

1. A Sense of Duty
2. It is a pleasure
3. In doing so I am paying my debt to the man who took time to pass it on to me.
4. Every time I do it I take out a little more insurance for myself against a possible slip.

In the years that I have been in AA I have had many opportunities to help other women and many times they have saved me from a possible relapse. Like those days when I didn't want to go to a meeting but I went because I told a newcomer to meet me there. Many times I have been exposed to developing my own recovery through reading the 12&12 and the Big Book because I was helping a woman to work the AA 12 steps.

During this past year there have been times where I felt stuck in my own recovery or even had emotional relapses. Sometimes I felt disconnected, hopeless and unmotivated in the programme but I have no doubt that being involved in different

types of service to the AA community kept me away from drinking when nothing else seemed to work.

I have one of many particular service experiences that is very close to my heart. I was traveling in India for a few months and in a city where there weren't any AA meetings. At that time I was the Intergroup Rep of my home group, so given I couldn't attend any meetings - what I did as part of my service position was to constantly check my home group's WhatsApp chat for

possible announcements to carry to the Intergroup or vice versa. I have to say that actions like this one in my daily life have helped me to stay focused and connected to my AA programme and to my AA fellows.

Service has helped me to overcome the feeling of uselessness, self-pity and low self-esteem I used to have when I first came to AA. Today, I don't take the AA responsibility pledge lightly because, yes, "I am responsible when anyone, anywhere reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there and for that I am responsible".

With Love, Mariana.



## Step Ten In Action

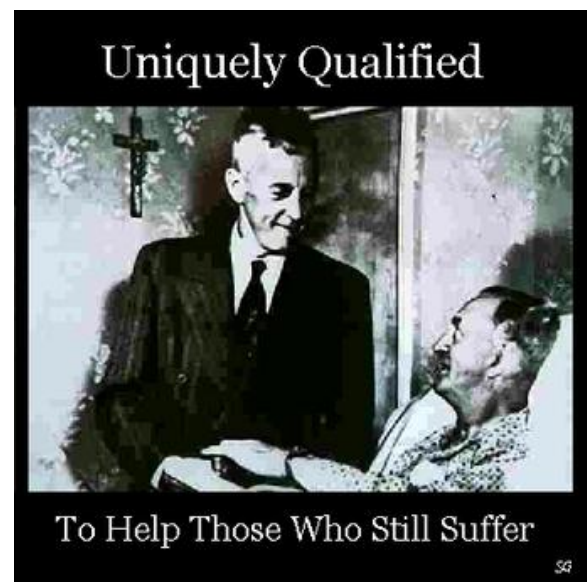
As a Los Angeles taxi driver during the 1980s, many “adventures” took place calling for immediate use of Step Ten, for instance: Drunks vomiting in the back seat, passengers who take off running to avoid paying. One mentally ill guy announced he had no money but just wanted to go for a ride which cost me about ten dollars on the meter. A rich family after a thirty-mile trip to Los Angeles which included my heavy luggage handling left no tip. After these “adventures” I was naturally experiencing anger. Maybe worse!

Luckily, AA had taught me that repeated thoughts of anger (resentment) could threaten my sobriety—but what to do? This is where page 84 from the Big Book came in handy. It said to ask God, at once, to remove my anger and then to discuss my defect or shortcoming with someone (LA has clubhouses galore so “at once” was no problem). Lastly it suggests: “We resolutely turned our thoughts to someone we can help.” I think this could be a prayer for someone, or even planning a birthday gift. Bill Wilson’s Oxford Group mentor, Reverend Sam Shoemaker, summed up AA as: “Out of self, into God, into others.”

AA has provided the ability to control my mind, to some degree—at least better than before. I like to think before I think! When I feel thoughts of selfishness, dishonesty, resentment or fear coming to consciousness, I go to God for help. A simple statement such as, “Be still and know that I am God,” seems to calm me down enough to stymie destructive thoughts. What freedom!

I have learned that when negative emotions begin to take over, Step Ten has taught me what to do. Step Ten is indeed an all-day-long step! Its rewards are beyond belief: “The problem (mental Obsession) has been removed. It does not exist for us.” (p. 85) That is so long a I remain in a fit spiritual condition—Step Ten allows this to happen.

Bob S, Richmond, IN



# *I Do not Understand Thermodynamics*

## Where is All This Warmth Coming From?

I came to Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.) bankrupt in every department. When I started to take the steps, my first big challenge was to find a power greater than myself that could solve my problems. What an order for a guy who they describe in step two in the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions (12&12) as the one who "had tried religion and found it wanting". I could see the examples of people around me that seemed to have it figured out and I became a nuisance trying to corner them to get them to explain to me how they do it and they had the same trouble explaining it as I did. One day I confronted my friend, Jim, and asked him to let me in on the secret. Frustrated, he asked, "Do you want to drink right now?" My answer was "NO." He then asked me, "Did you want to drink a year ago?" And my answer was "Yes! I could not go a day without it." Next, he asked me "what made the difference?" My answer was, "I was influenced by the A.A. program." His next question was, "do you have any problem calling that God?" WOW! What a concept.

I have never wanted a drink since I entered the programme and the only answer I could produce was the influence of A.A in my life. For a guy who could not conceive of a day without alcohol, to a guy that has never wanted a drink since, was all I needed to know about God. I wish I could tell you who or what God is, but I cannot. I can, however, tell you what God does for me, but I will get to that later.

The second appendage in the Big Book, (Alcoholics Anonymous), Spiritual Experience, implies that there are many examples of spiritual experiences, and they come in different forms. They can be of the Burning Bush variety or a

Psychic Change enough to bring about recovery from Alcoholism. Or, as I like to believe, my spiritual experience came in the form of "A Profound Change of Perception." When it occurred to me that all my thinking was flawed and that I was finally in an environment where I could, with the help of the group, start to follow simple unselfish guidelines that would restore my self-esteem and put me at peace with myself and others, I started this wonderful journey and I have never had it so good. These universal truths are common in the meaningful philosophies of life, and I must seek them out if I want to heal.

I pray to God every day, even though I do not know who or what God is. My mind is not evolved enough to understand God and I am not sure that God hears my prayers, but, I HEAR MY PRAYERS and that, I believe, puts me in the best possible attitude I can have about the issue I pray for. My prayers are always the same. I pray for knowledge of his will for me and strength to carry it out. i.e., God, please show me what to do and please give me the strength to do it, I do not do well on my own. I often knew what to do but was not always strong enough to do what was right. Today I am stronger.

Who or what is God? I am not sure anyone can define God. As a friend of mine (Will) explained, "You do not have to understand Thermodynamics to enjoy the warmth of the sun", I do, however, know what God does. When I ask for guidance, I become a better receiver and I hear the answers that used to pass right over my head when I Thought I had all the answers, and today, I thank God for an open mind.

~By Rick R.

## Resentment!

I woke up to an email that seriously pissed me off, and here are the main takeaways after discussing it with my sponsor.

There are four reactions when someone frustrates or confronts me:

A. I want to win the argument

B. I want to hurt or belittle them

THIS IS WHEN I NEED TO STOP! I will hurt myself & others if I continue reacting at this point! Restraint of tongue and pen will help me set a new direction to the situation.

C. After discussing with my sponsor and calming down, I realized that my ultimate desire is to no longer be frustrated. I lived in

that space of darkness for years, even in sobriety! It took me about 10 years without a drink to stop revelling in those resentments in daydreams or at night. Now that I have put a hard stop to that, I absolutely do not want to stay in that kind of mood which drains all my energy.

D. I reviewed my spiritual principles and tried to apply them to the best of my ability through the actions or level of acceptance needed to clear my side of the street.

I'm so grateful today to be reminded of this... even after 26 years, I still need the programme!

~ Nicolas

*Dear Newsletter,*

Now in my 3rd year of recovery I have finally understood that the fellowship is all about being of service. It took a while for me to fully understand the phrase,

*"You have to give it away to keep it".*

The wonderful gift of sobriety that has transformed all parts of my life to the better is something that I am forever grateful for and the most treasured thing in my life.

~ Nick

### THE RECOVERY PARADOXES

We SURRENDER to WIN.

We FORGIVE to be FORGIVEN.

We GIVE it AWAY to KEEP it.

From WEAKNESS (adversity) comes STRENGTH.

We SUFFER to get WELL.

From DARKNESS comes LIGHT.

From DEPENDENCE comes INDEPENDENCE.

We DIE to LIVE.

## *Do You Believe in Mother?*

In a mother's womb were two babies. One asked the other: "Do you believe in life after delivery?"

The second baby replied, "Why, of course. There has to be something after delivery. Maybe we are here to prepare ourselves for what we will be later."

"Nonsense" said the first. "There is no life after delivery. What kind of life would that be?"

The second said, "I don't know, but there might be more light than there is here. Maybe we will walk with our legs, and eat from our mouths. Maybe we will have other senses that we can't understand now."

The first replied, "That is absurd. Walking is impossible, and eating with our mouths? Ridiculous! The umbilical cord supplies nutrition and everything we need. Because the umbilical cord is so short, life after delivery is logically impossible."

The second baby insisted, "Well, I think there is something, and maybe it's different than it is here, so we won't need this physical cord anymore."

The first replied, "Nonsense. And moreover,

if there is life, then why has no one ever come back from there? Delivery is the end of life, and in the after-delivery there is nothing but darkness, silence and oblivion. It delivers us nowhere."

"Well, I don't know," said the second, "but certainly we will meet Mother and she will take care of us."

The first replied, "Mother? You actually believe in Mother? That's laughable. If Mother exists then where is she now?"

The second said, "She is all around us. We are surrounded by Her. We are of Her. It is in Her that we live. Without Her this world would not and could not exist."

Said the first: "Well, I don't see Her, so it is only logical that She doesn't exist."

To which the second replied, "Sometimes, when you're in silence – and you focus, and really listen – you can perceive Her presence, and you can hear Her loving voice, calling down from above."

*Written by Hungarian writer, Utmutato a Leleknek.*

~ Patrick

## Service Has Me Showing Up

**I love the idea of writing something for the newsletter, but when it comes to actually sitting down to write, I'm thinking: "the quality of my writing could be better", or, "I have nothing interesting to say", or just plain old, "I suck at writing!" That's my ego talking.**

Service is about letting go of my perfectionist tendencies, my need to be the best at something, and instead, just chip in, help out, and contribute. It's not about winning the Pulitzer Prize for crying out loud. It's being of service and participating in life and the AA community that I am so grateful for and indebted to.

When I came into the rooms, my sponsor talked a lot about service. She often reframed things for me that I didn't want to do as an opportunity to be of service. During my first year of sobriety I was the greeter at one of the evening meetings—I had to sit by the door and essentially block the meditators from coming in as they would often get the wrong entrance to their meditation groups we shared the building with. For that whole year I had to sit away from the rest of the group by the door, feeling like a bouncer, but it was a useful role and it kept me sober. That group is very strict about showing up for your service position and if you can't be there, you have to find a backup. That taught me about the spiritual principle of responsibility, accountability and unselfishness. It made me feel like a helpful part of the group.

I've chaired meetings as well which has also helped keep me sober. Without the chair people we wouldn't have meetings so I am so grateful for those who show up and chair even when it may not be convenient.

Joining committees such as HIPI in the past has also taught me about my own defects of character that can rear their ugly heads in business group settings. I've had to write inventories and amends. Fellows accepted and loved me through it because they understand. How humbling it is to be in a business group for AA. How difficult it is to keep my mouth shut. What a good opportunity to practice the principles. My fellows won't inflate my ego! Challenging stuff.

It's principles over personalities. When I do service, my job is to be useful and help carry the message and contribute to the unity of the group.

I had to start to get into the frame of mind where I wasn't thinking just about myself. Service is the mechanism that allows me to do that. And, since the root of my problem is selfishness and self-centeredness, service is the perfect antidote. Service is like taking my medicine; doing self-care. It is something I need to make time for during my schedule. I have to build it into my days and weeks. When I don't feel like doing a call, sharing in a meeting, or attending Intergroup, I have to remember that when I start to slip on my service, I seriously run the risk of picking up a drink and/or falling back into being a dry drunk. Service makes AA Singapore run—without it we wouldn't have a place to go to get sober. There are so many opportunities to be of service in AA and being of service is what keeps AA going to get that daily reprieve we need to stay sober just for today. Thank you for the reminder of how important it is and how I cannot rest on my laurels.

*~Margaret*

# Who Holds the Key to Willingness?

## *The Control Rooms in My Brainbox*

There are many proven, practical suggestions in Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.) literature that, if followed, would lead to a life of serenity and peace of mind, and we hear these suggestions every day in the AA meetings that we attend, and it seems that we all place different degrees of importance on these suggestions.

This might simply be based on how desperate we were when we entered the program. Desperation was the main motivation that brought many of us to Alcoholics Anonymous voluntarily in the first place. Unfortunately, some members get to a certain comfort level then we see them settling into a pattern of just attending meetings and falling into that "Half Measures" rut and this is a routine that can go on indefinitely, but that is their choice.

On page 35 in *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* (12&12) it states that willingness is the key but when I was in my early days of sobriety, I resisted looking deeper into those embarrassing behaviors of the past, and the present, and it slowed down the pace of my recovery, but thank God, it did not bring it to a complete stop.

I then learned that I was not the one making decisions about my willingness, for I had another power hijacking that function of my brain box. I had to come to terms with something that never occurred to me on my drinking days. Most of my errant behavior was the result of an EGO driven mindset. My EGO did not want me to be willing to do any of the altruistic principles that the AA program encourages, and it selfishly ran the show, for the most part.

I recognized this many years ago and decided that until I got my EGO under control, I was going to be one of those unfortunate souls that falls into that complacency mode. I seem to approach the EGO deflation problem by

imagining it as a separate control room in my brain, so to speak, right next to another control room labeled "Conscience". My Conscience says, "Make your bed" and my EGO says, "Don't be a Wimp." Next, I make my bed. The more I do what my Conscience suggests, the more I render my EGO irrelevant.

All my EGO driven actions were of a selfish nature, and all my Conscience driven actions are Unselfish in Spirit. If I had not given due diligence to all the twelve steps and had let my EGO talk me out of it, I would, most likely not have gotten to this level of understanding.

I had to start with simple suggestions like, Restraint of pen and tongue (12 & 12 pg.91) and, Drop the word blame from my speech and thoughts. (12 & 12 pg.47). I find it rewarding to be willing to brew and serve coffee, pass out the books at the step study meetings, take out the trash bags etc. I can also smile, open a door for someone, let someone in on the highway and help with an occasional hand out to the less fortunate.

Some may misunderstand my motives for why I do these simple little gestures, but I never let myself be deterred simply because, if I did, I would be letting my EGO get another foothold and I am just not going to let that happen here. I am simply dropping the dead weight from my Conscience.

Today, I do not have to think about doing these deeds as they have become second nature and part of who I am these days. When I do these things without fanfare, I get a warm feeling in my heart that replaces those old neglectful, Negative emotions of the past. No Half Measures here. My Conscience is my guide. Night-night EGO, it is time to take your nap now.

~ Rick R.



Dear H,  
Your presence will  
be greatly missed!  
Enjoy the  
'meeting in the sky'  
'Gone too soon.'  
A

08 Oct 2021 Fri  
2:27pm

My dear friend,

I saw you smile and lie about how you were doing and eventually admit the truth about your struggle.

I saw you transform from a closed off, cool fellow to a warm, caring and loving friend.

I saw you at my wedding reception and I'm deeply happy to have seen you laughing and hugging, 2 days before you passed away.

Every evening you sent me your gratitude list and it was the dearest, hand-written gritudes I've yet seen.

I used to wonder how you could take the time to write such lengthy gritudes.

When I heard the news of your passing, it was sudden. Yet it was profound.

You were a man of many ~~and~~ accomplishments; yet you were also flawed, human, just like me; and like me you strove each day to be just a little better.

Your passing reminded me that I have today - and only that. No yesterday; No tomorrow.

How much am I going to stay and be in the "now"?  
How much joy and service will I give to people around me today?  
If I'm gone tomorrow, will I be remembered fondly, or I remember you brother?

Now I see that the time you took to savour each day and write your gratitude lists was not wasted.

Thank you for the lesson to enjoy each day my friend.  
In the spirit that it may help others, I attach your last gratitude list here - written on your last night.

With Love,  
Alex. A.

DEAR H,  
WE DID NOT KNOW EACH OTHER  
PERSONALLY BUT MY MEMORY OF YOU IS:  
- A WONDERFUL FAMILY MAN,  
- SURE & INTELLIGENT,  
- HUMBLE,  
- ALWAYS PRESENT TO BE OF SERVICE  
WITH AN OPEN HEART.  
YOU WILL NEVER BE FORGOTTEN H.

DEAR H  
MAY YOU HAVE LOVE  
MAY YOU HAVE PEACE  
MAY YOU HAVE HAPPINESS  
VA

Dear H

It was always good to see you on the zoom morning meetings. You'd usually share, even if you didn't want to. Maybe especially if you didn't want to. I liked that, that's something I do too. You would share honestly about your struggles. It helped me and others do the same. It helped us stay sober. Will miss you my friend. Gone too soon.

Mark L



## How Service Keeps Us Sober

I came into AA in Roosevelt, at the WE CARE AA Group on Long Island, New York--my first Home Group. Those Old Timers would always say almost at every meeting, "There are no rules or regulations in AA. But you better get a Home Group. You better get a Sponsor and you better do service." This is our topic for our Singapore Newsletter this month. There are no coincidences.

This is how I do my AA service throughout the years - working with newcomers. I was told in my early Sobriety, "always shake the hand of a newcomer, because one day she or he might be your Sponsor. There are no guarantees. AA is a 24 hour program, one day at a time. Sometimes one minute or one second. But you don't drink and go to meetings even if your ass falls off. You put your ass into a plastic bag, drag it to a meeting, and learn to sit another way.

In New York AA Groups, the Secretary would say, "Are there any new comers here today? When they raised their hand, said their name and gave their day count, the Secretary would say "welcome, keep coming back", and assure them they were the most important people in the rooms today. Then the Secretary would say "Let us love you until you learn to love yourself. To keep it, we must give it away. I have a sponsor list with their phone numbers. If you want to contact someone from our sponsor or temporary sponsor list, come see me at the end of the meeting for a copy."

Another form of Service was H&I, (Hospital or Institutions), carrying the AA Meetings to Jails, which I loved. My weekly commitment was at San Bruno Prison Complex, San Bruno, California. This Pod looked exactly like OZ, the TV Series. It was all glass, 2 tiers with a half moon Command Control Center to the rear wall where the Police Officers monitor everything via closed circuit TV's. Opening and closing cell doors. CLANK. Total Lockdown in a matter of seconds via ceiling

public speakers.

The majority of brothers who attended the AA meetings were so young. They looked to me like kids in Grade School rather than inmates in a Correctional Facility. They were so eager to help us, The AA Crew set up the chairs for our AA meetings in the Pod's Library glass encased area. Even in Jail, the program is for those who want it, not those who need it. So our attendance was small, maybe 5 or 6 bodies, but still it only takes 2 to have a meeting.

One afternoon this young inmate said, "Mr. Tony, can I tell you something?" I replied, "Little Brother, you can tell me anything. What you got to tell me?" He said, "Do you know what Denial is?" I played dumb and said "No! You tell me what Denial is!" That kid said "DENIAL means, Don't Even No I am Lying".

That floored me. I told him I was going to talk about what he'd said at my next AA Meeting. That his slogan was wonderful and I thanked him for sharing it with me. He had a huge grin on his face going towards his chair as I started up the meeting.

This is the reward, to me, for doing service. There is always unconditional love and Fellowship in any AA Meeting wherever it is located be it Jail, a Church Basement, a Meeting Hall, Yale, a park bench or Park Avenue. It is not how much I drank or what I drank, it was the first drink that got me drunk.

Our primary purpose is to stay sober and to help another alcoholic achieve Sobriety. We carry this message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

Doing service has kept me sober for many many years. To keep it, I must give it away. And for that, I am grateful.

TonyT/SFO, CA - last drink, April 4th, 1979.

## *Service*

Service keeps us sober  
It helps our heart to shine  
Like chestnuts in October  
Peel off the selfish rind

If we do work for others  
We find that in no time  
Good purpose is uncovered  
A perfect paradigm

As we deflate our egos  
And put another first  
Self-seeking is torpedoed  
We quench that inner thirst

Yes service keeps us sober  
Humility it breeds  
The power to recover  
In serving others needs.

~Anon

“As our self-interest diminishes,  
our anxieties disappear,  
and then comes quiet and firm joy,  
which always diffuses us with a good spiritual disposition  
and a clear conscience.  
Every good deed helps to kindle this feeling of joy within us.  
The egoist feels lonely,  
surrounded by threatening and alien events;  
all his desires are sunk in his own concerns.  
A kind person lives in a world of beneficent events,  
whose goodness matches his own.”

*Arthur Schopenhauer*