

THE DAILY REPRIEVE

JUNE/JULY 2022



Welcome to the latest edition of The Daily Reprieve

Many alcoholics have experienced a deep sense of relief when we *knew* which of our defects have caused us and so many others, a lot of unnecessary pain. The trouble of course was to have them removed!

The theme for the newsletter was inspired by personal stories of which *removed defects* had the biggest impact on a sober alcoholic's life.

We have some heartfelt honesty, pretty poetry, happy humour and a selection of hilarious memes. So we trust that you will enjoy this edition as much as we had when we put it together.

In the spirit of service we would like for you to share this with other fellows, as it may help them in ways you never thought possible.

*Till next time and sober greetings,
The Singapore Newsletter Team*

**For the latest list of available online and face-to-face meetings please visit
<https://singaporeaa.org/meetings.html>**

The Social Committee Presents

A MID-SUMMER BBQ

**AN ALCOHOL-FREE EVENT.
AND AN ALCOHOL FREE-FREE
EVENT.***

***DUE TO THE DIFFERING OPINIONS ON THE
MATTER, PLEASE DON'T BRING "ZERO
ALCOHOL" DRINKS**

Sunday, 31 July 2022

East Coast Park

Area F, Pit 56

Grills booked from noon onward
Families welcome. Open to those
who support us in our recovery.

Bring a dish if you wish.

Share with your fellows.

Contact Marge at 82614138 to be
added to the WhatsApp group



The character defect that has had the biggest impact on my life.

"A personality flaw can be a trait or behavior that is conscious and the person usually has control over it, whereas a personality disorder is a long enduring pattern of defensive behavior that lies outside of the persons control, because they are not AWARE of it. "

It was not until I came into the rooms of AA that I grasped a better understanding of this term Character defects.

My background is that of a child given up at birth, and so as I got older and tried to understand what had happened to me, that word defect has tortured me for many many years. I was adopted at age two and only found that out when I was 9 or 10 and up until then could never understand why I never seemed to fit in with these "parents and 2 sisters" that I could not relate to. So, too young to understand, I latched onto the belief that I must be defective in some way, that my birth mother did not want me etc. At that young age I learnt that if I isolated the pain over this issue seemed to lessen. So this became my escape route to all circumstances.

As a result, I have spent most of my life living in my own dreamworld and far away from reality. Finding alcohol in my early teens turned this shy introverted person into a person quite the opposite – and of course as we alcoholics know – a person nobody wants to be around. So by the time I reached AA, I had gone full circle again to hide in isolation; this time round because of what I had done with alcohol or what it had done to me.

One would think that with all the years of being sober I would have this one licked but it remains with me to this day.

So while I may not have removed this character defect from my life, one of the biggest gifts from the program is my awareness and that's what really matters. As long as I am AWARE of my defects I stand a chance. The number of defects that no longer have power over me are many and only in these rooms and through people like you was I able to tick many of my lists and I hope the same for you on your lists.

~ Terrance

A Glorious Release

The minute I stopped arguing.

Firstly with God. That things should be my way. That I know better.

Then through sobriety, I began to feel joy, pain, hurt, balance, longing, regret and HOPE.

Seeing MY want from my need.

Understanding, that I don't understand.

That questions won't be answered and that's ok. Faith.

What a release..

Watching signs appear and appear and appear, but being sober now; I saw them.

Now, in the present moment, I wasn't thinking of yesterday or tomorrow. Now, I knew what I had to do.

I prayed. I got on my knees and humbled my ego, humbled my sense of self.

I prayed.

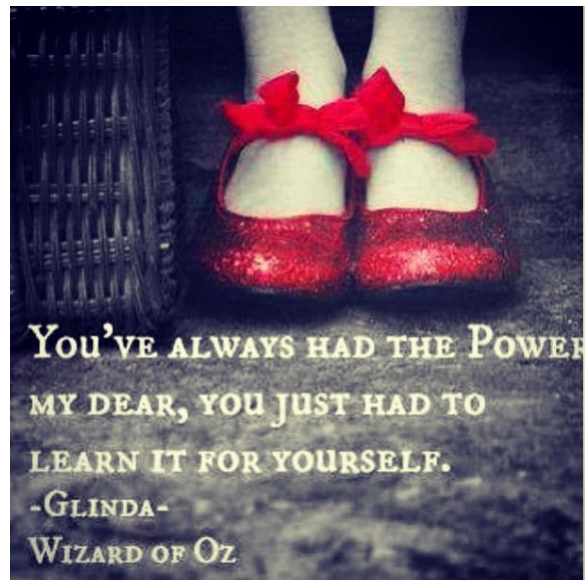
That God grant me the serenity to accept the things I can not change.

THE COURAGE TO CHANGE THE THINGS I CAN.

And the Wisdom to know the difference.

~ Eimaer

With the angels at her back.



Stop Doing What Marge Wants to Do

Entitlement has been one of the biggest character defects that has been lifted a lot from me.

In the past, I expected people to do things for me, rather than pitching in and helping out and being of service. I learned to think of others and to be of service from being in the rooms.

As my sponsor says, this program is all about growing up. Being a real adult has nothing to do with age, rather—to me—living by spiritual principles such as being responsible, accountable, tolerant, patient, humble and disciplined, to name a few. Overall, the defect of irresponsibility is being lifted as I learn more how to navigate through life using the program as my guide.

When I do steps 4 and 5 and see the patterns of my behavior I become aware of them moving forward, and with step 2 and 3, I made a decision that I don't want to live the way I used to—I want to live a new life guided by my Higher Power. When I do steps 6 and 7 I am able to start letting go of old behavior that keeps me spiritually sick, and begin to learn what new, healthy behavior is needed to serve me and my Higher Power. When I do the next right thing, I am not seeking validation nor am I avoiding people and responsibilities—I learn to face life's challenges and just get things done that I need to do.

For me to keep growing up, I have to keep working the steps, otherwise I will fall back into my old selfish, self-centered and entitled behavior, as that is my default! I am grateful for the 12 Step Program of Alcoholics Anonymous and all of my fellows who keep it fun, supportive, interesting and healing so I keep coming back!

~ Margaret

Letting Go and Letting God.

When I finally realized I had no control of people, places and things - my biggest and strongest defect of character, I was blessed with a new mindset. I was filled with a new joy and a new freedom.

Letting go and letting God guide me through the things I can't control opened doors to new and wonderful possibilities and gave me a new understanding and empathy for all things.

I trust in my God that all things out of my control will work out for the best and they normally always do.

Putting my trust in God to take away and have my control and fully embracing his power and control in my life has removed from me all the fear I had in losing control in the beginning.

~ Cat



Releasing people-pleasing, slowly, but surely.

When I first came to AA in 2013, I came because I wanted someone I knew in the program to like me. I stayed because I got a sponsor and did not want to let my sponsor down. In December of 2015 I had a slip - I took a drink but did not tell my sponsor because I did not want to "let her down" by telling her I had relapsed.

While I am grateful my people-pleasing has served me by getting me into AA, it harmed me when I was hiding my relapse in 2015. Pretending to be "sober" and lying is the greatest self harm, but I was too afraid of what people would say if I were truly honest that I had slipped.

On January 1st of 2016, I decided to get over what people would care or think - I knew I needed to be honest for MY recovery, sanity, health and well-being - and it is the best thing I could have ever done for myself.

In my honest sober journey since January 1st 2016, my HP has been slowly removing the people pleasing, little by little, bit by bit. It is definitely a work in progress that I know I will be working on through my entire life time.

Through staying sober. I've been given the courage to get into recovery for other addictions (food addiction, looking at my spending/money issues, etc) that I shied away from because of fear of what others would say/think/feel. And without sobriety I would be in no shape or form capable of working on these things!

But what AA has taught me is that I need to place myself first. And, the only way I can do that is through doing what is right and true for me, and what others think about me is none of my business.

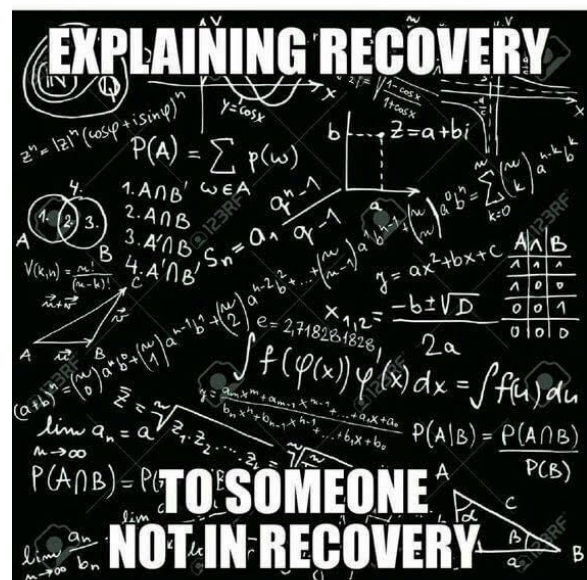
I need to put on my own oxygen mask, before I can be in the place to help others.

This means that just for today, I don't drink no matter what. Regardless if someone tells me it's "specially for me", or tells me it's "just one sip". Not even if the president pours me a drink.

And I only need to do that for today.

I love AA, I love my recovery - and my life is wonderful because I am sober. Thank you for this fellowship!

-HG



Learning To Smile Again

Before I found the rooms I was always impatient, unless I was drinking. It occurs to me that I spent all my energy planning my life around drinking, and when I did not have a drink in hand I was therefore very impatient and not a very nice person to be around. After a few drinks this would all change and I would be jolly, cheering and in an upbeat mode.

Then came the morning after when I again was anxious, nervous and shaking. I would again start planning for the next drink and be impatient and not be smiling. I can recall my wife telling me that her fear was that I may never smile again if I stopped drinking. Perfect, another excuse for me to keep drinking!

It took a while in the program for a sober smile to come to me but when it did it was a genuine one. It was probably around 2-3 months into the program and after a bike ride with the AA fellows we would meet up at Boomerang Boat Quay for a coffee followed by an AA meeting. It was the perfect start to a day and I had found a cure that not only saved my life but also put a smile back on my face.

Since those early days in sobriety I have come a long way and I continue to appreciate all the learnings that come with the program. The gifts that come with it are more than I can express in words and includes being more patient and more pleasant to be around and the ability to smile again.

~Nick J

Going around in Circles

I can't explain very well so I'm going to go around in circles. I don't know how it works but it does. Maybe it is some kind of connectedness at play when I keep being around people like you. Some kind of effect grows within me whereby I am somewhat more willing to focus on what I have done, haven't or can do rather than anyone else.

This process is really a process because there are many days where I am really triggered by others. But after some thinking, this trigger is often lifted and then I'm left with some humility and modesty to squeeze out something that I could have done or done better. Often it is that I could have asserted myself better in the situation but was gripped by fear.

When I don't focus on my side of the street and go after someone else, it is usually followed by instant self-loathing, and the fear that it is going to happen again and again.

When I do let go, I often end up doing what's right and just, and the results have been beautiful. BUT... even when this beauty is around me, the anxiety creeps in that I don't deserve it.

So these defects... they just keep coming back. So, God willing, I'll keep coming back too!

~Anon

A Program of Honesty

As we read *How It Works* at the beginning of each meeting, I heard the words "rigorous honesty" and thought "I got this!". After all, I wasn't drinking anymore, so I didn't have to lie about that. And really that was the only thing I told outright lies about.

I wasn't a thief or a cheat and I certainly didn't tell harmful deliberate lies. That bit of the Big Book was for others, not for me. And yet, here I was relapsing time and again, so maybe I was one of the ones they were talking about that failed despite having thoroughly followed the path.

Of course! AA works for others, but not for me. I am unique and different!

Working with a sponsor, step meetings and listening to others share, I gradually realised my narrow definition of dishonesty was serving me, but not in the way that brought me closer to God.

*Did I embellish to make myself seem better? Was I grandiose and prideful?
Did I slander others through gossip?*

Confronting those truths about myself was ugly. That surrender and letting go of the constant battle to appear better than others was the most freeing moment of my life so far.

The psychic change happened for me when I finally understood and accepted that rigorous honesty is a lifetime of work.

Changing myself day by day to be free from concealment. Being truly willing and

asking God to remove those false airs and let people see the real me.

The gift of this program was to finally be free from fear and let others see my true nature.

And it turns out that the real me is a far better friend, fellow, mother, and partner than I ever believed I could be when I was lying to myself.

~Claire



Replacing Fear With Faith

In spirit of the 6th and 7th month and thinking about which removed character defect had the biggest impact; it is definitely having less fear in my life!

I've always had it as a shadow companion for as long as I can remember. The fear that I wasn't good enough, or what others might think of me. The fear of being gay, or creative, or outspoken or anything else...it was just always there. Until I took a drink. The distinct feeling of the fear and anxiety draining from my body was the most amazing feeling and I chased it as much as I possibly could. It was also fun, my goodness, I had SO MUCH fun when I wasn't frightened. But, unfortunately that didn't last very long, as the more I drank, the fun came with some consequences and in the end - it was just consequences. Dire ones.

My goodness, as I am writing this my memories get flooded with images of waking up with heart-stopping anxiety and trying to remember what I have done the night before. Or looking at my phone and seeing that, again, I have wasted so much money on drinking (and other shenanigans). My problems seemed to have just compounded itself and somehow multiplied, when I was doing my disappearing-from-reality act.

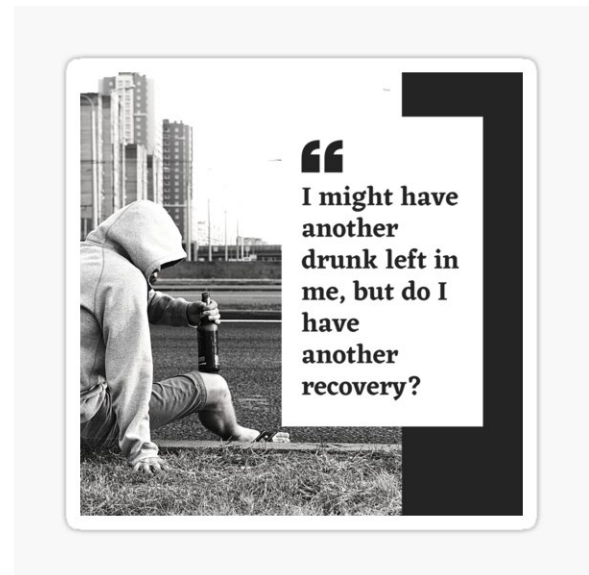
I sobered up in January 2015 and I started working the steps. The fear definitely wasn't removed immediately and it still plagues me to this day, but nothing as intensely as it was. I wake up in the mornings with gratitude instead of anxiety, I manage my finances in a way

that doesn't render me lame with fear, I am in a monogamous relationship and don't have to lie about anything anymore.

But faith only comes when I do the work. Knowing my defects and asking my higher power to remove them. Owning up to when I am in the wrong, connecting through prayer and meditation. Helping others.

I am thankful to be sober. I am thankful to have recovered in the program of Alcoholics Anonymous and I am so incredibly thankful to have less fear, more faith and a tremendous amount of love.

My name is Adrian and I am a grateful alcoholic!



Step Six: I Think Therefore I Do

My Actions Stem from My Thinking

In my early days in Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.) I heard someone stating that about ten percent of the population in this country become Alcoholics. I am not sure about that figure, but it got extended when the drug addicted population joined us in the middle seventies and brought a different dynamic to the sharing, and I sometimes chuckle when we poke fun at each other.

We strictly alcoholics suffered from guilt and shame for all the things we neglected when our families needed us. The drug addicts would say that they would rip-off your drugs then help you look for them, and again, we would chuckle. I believe that the goal in A.A. is to rid our minds of the burden we carried around between our ears that only the alcohol could subdue.

The sad fact for us is that it gets worse, never better and we thought that we could not live without it, and we could not live with it. If we are lucky, we walk through the doors of A.A. and start trudging the road of happy destiny, and this requires a profound change of perception.

On page 76 in the Big Book (Alcoholics Anonymous) it has only two paragraphs on Step Six containing a prayer, and at the end of the second Paragraph It states that "We have then completed step seven". That might give the impression that God is going to do all the work if we ask Him to. The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, (12&12) first printed in 1953 about 14 years after the Big Book and it has seven pages on how we should address our Defects of Character and it has another chapter of seven pages about how to address our Shortcomings in Step Seven.

When trying to make sense of the difference between a Defect of Character and a Shortcoming I use a situation that anyone can understand. Suppose you purchase a new car and drive it off the lot and come to

a stop sign and the car does not stop, but drifts into the middle of the intersection, you take it back to the dealer and have them check it out. They come back and tell you they had the wrong brake pads on it, they changed the pads. This time you drive off and when you came to the stop sign the car stops perfectly and it stopes at all the other stop signs and redlights as well. Once the Defect (brake pads) was corrected the Short Coming (Behavior) went away.

On page 68 in the 12&12 it states that, "If we would gain any real advantage in the use of this step on problems other than alcohol, we shall need to make a brand-new venture into open-mindedness".

Most everything we do in our lives begins with our instincts and our thinking. "Selfishness--self-Centeredness! That, we think, is the root of our troubles. Driven by a hundred forms of fear, self-delusion, self-seeking, and self-pity we step on the toes of our fellows, and they retaliate." (BB pg. 62) If Selfishness is the root of our troubles, what is the solution?

In the first year of my sobriety my wife came home from an Alanon meeting excited about the topic that they shared and I ask her what the topic was, and she said "Examine My Motives for What I Do" I have been examining my motives for all of my decision making and keeping them on the Unselfish side of the ledger and nothing in my agenda has had a more positive affect on promises that the A.A. Program offers.

~ Rick R

**I couldn't heal
because I kept
pretending I
wasn't hurt.**

Did Shakespeare Get It Right? The Dram of Eale

Since I arrived at the door of Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.) in 1969, I have led a highly active life physically, and mentally. I faced most of the challenges that I thought to be impossible before I got sober and found them to be much easier than I expected.

As I got older, I had to be a little more calculating when I took physical risks to avoid ending up disabled. Sometime around the age of 65, I suffered a leg injury playing racket ball and it put a stop to most of my physical endeavours and forced me to look elsewhere for my challenges.

I always envied people who could quote classic literature and especially those who could understand Shakespeare. While I was incapacitated with the leg injury, I went to the library and took out books on understanding The Bard. As the result of many hours of reading all 38 of his plays I became able to comprehend Middle English. I have read all his plays multiple times, and the more popular plays, as many as 10 times each. I also believe that I have been that diligent about understanding the A.A. program and as a result of that, I believe that I saw a particular scene in Hamlet that the average literary critic would overlook unless they were alcoholics themselves.

Shakespeare developed hundreds of characters between 1588 and 1613 and modern readers marvel at how deeply he understood the human condition. It seemed that he could put himself right inside of the character whether they were Kings, or Fools. After reading many modern versions of what he was trying to express, I think they would have to be an alcoholic and a literary critic for them to understand what Hamlet was trying to describe in Act 1. Scene 4. Briefly I will try explaining the context of his words he uses to describe the King.

King Claudius is Hamlet's stepfather after murdering the king, (Hamlet's father), and immediately marrying Hamlet's mother, and in almost every scene where he is sitting, he has a cup of wine in his hand and sometimes slurs his words. His dead father's ghost is appearing each night atop the castle platform stuck between this world and the next.

The guards tell Hamlet of this, and he goes there at night to witness it. While they are there waiting, they see the King and his courtiers carousing down below in the courtyard. He tries to explain the shames they bring on Denmark as they are seen as drunkards and low lives. (So to speak)

Then he tries to explain what he sees in the King (Act 1, Scene 4):

25 So oft it chances in particular men
That for some vicious mole of nature in
them—
As in their birth (wherein they are not guilty,
Since nature cannot choose his origin),
By the o'ergrowth of some complexion,
30 Oft breaking down the pales and
forts of reason,
Or by some habit that too much o'erleavens
The form of plausible manners— that these
men,
Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect,
Being nature's livery or fortune's star,
35 Their virtues else (be they as pure as
grace,
As infinite as man may undergo)
Shall in the general censure take corruption
From that particular fault. The dram of evil
Doth all the noble substance of a doubt
40 To his own scandal.

If this is not an attempt by Shakespeare's Hamlet to describe Alcoholism long before the term "Alcoholism" was ever coined, I stand corrected. I've seen this on film (I recorded Hamlet from the TCM channel where they show it about every 2 years), starring Lawrence Olivier, where it is plain to me what he is trying to say.

~ Rick R

When people say they look up to me
or see me as a role model.



**ME: IT IS NOT ABOUT HOW MANY
TIMES YOU FALL, IT IS ABOUT HOW
MANY TIMES YOU GET BACK UP AGAIN.**



**POLICE: THAT IS NOT HOW THE
FIELD SOBRIETY TEST WORKS SIR.**

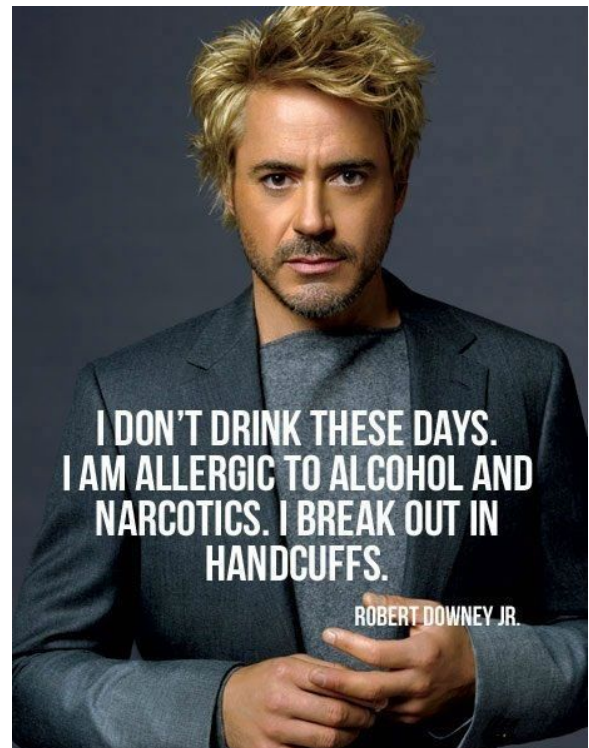
I love when I realize
I'm handling a situation
better than my old self
would have.



SOBRIETY

Making being in the moment a possibility

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**I DON'T DRINK THESE DAYS.
I AM ALLERGIC TO ALCOHOL AND
NARCOTICS. I BREAK OUT IN
HANDCUFFS.**

ROBERT DOWNEY JR.

We Know Memes