

The Paper III

Snowflakes & Gravestones

When I came into these rooms, I did not want to admit I was an alcoholic. I did not want to think that I was like the people I saw in meetings. Although I didn't know them, or anything about them, I was convinced that they were losers, and not a high-quality person like I imagined myself to be.

When they would talk about how working the program had saved their lives, and even made their lives better than they'd ever been, I thought "That's great for you people, but your way can't work for me. I'm not like you. Nobody is like me."

It's funny - as I kept coming back, and hearing more people's experiences, I learned that many people had gone through the same line of thinking - thinking they were different, everyone's totally unique - like no two snowflakes are exactly alike. I heard someone mocking that attitude once, saying "Oh, I was terminally unique."

He was driving home the point that holding on to an attitude that separated him from the fellowship of AA could have stopped him from what saved his life.

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So, just like snowflakes, I guess, no two gravestones are exactly alike! Welcome to our program of recovery, which starts with Step One!

Marvin R.

The Paper III is published monthly by Indianapolis Intergroup with help from area AA members. Please send submissions, comments and questions to The Paper III via e-mail at paper3indy@hotmail.com or via snail mail to Indianapolis Intergroup, 1915 West 18th Street, Suite 6, Indianapolis, IN 46202. Opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of Indianapolis Intergroup or AA as a whole, and publication does not imply endorsement by AA at any level. The names Alcoholics Anonymous and AA are registered trademarks of AA. Once printed, all original material becomes the property of Indianapolis Intergroup, Inc., but the author or any other publication may use any material with attribution.

Tradition One: Unity

(The fellowship of the spirit)

Tradition One: *“Our common welfare should come first; common welfare depends on AA unity.”*

The word ‘unity’ seems to leap out from the above sentence. Considering the tremendously vital importance of our group unanimity it would appear that the remaining Eleven Traditions were specifically designed to solidify and encourage this practical concept. Just as the Twelve Steps coagulate us as sober members of the AA fellowship, our Twelve Traditional values unify our groups as they maintain their role in helping us get started, then keeping us on the beam. Without said cohesion our fellowship would have become quite a diverse and erratic – and probably nonfunctional – mixture after these nearly seventy-seven years of existence.

In regards to AA fellowship, I personally take two views:

First there exists the ‘*Fellowship*.’ This includes any and all alcoholics who have a desire to stop drinking. Certain of these members may choose not to take the Big Book program of action seriously, may have little or no interest in AAs Twelve Step process or volunteering for service work, and may even attend meetings weeks or months apart. Yet, so long as they maintain sobriety, they are welcome and considered *full-fledged* members of the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous and are treated with all due respect.

Then there are those members who exist in the *Fellowship of the Spirit*. This majority, each in their own way, become involved in the many diverse activities that AA has to offer, which are too numerous to mention in this short article; yet, the knowledge of, and adherence to, the Twelve Step process from the Big Book looms large in my mind when it come to AA unity.

Bill W. writes about AA’s common solution on page 17: *“The tremendous fact for everyone of us is that we have discovered a common solution. We have a way out on which we can absolutely agree, and upon which we can join in brotherly and harmonious action. This is the great news this book carries to those who suffer from alcoholism.”* The fact that we join in *brotherly and harmonious action*, marks for me a high point of AA unity. I personally enjoy the *fellowship of the spirit* members who engage in what I call “AA Speak,” or “Big Book Speak.” When my AA friends speak in page numbers, AA clichés, or historical AA events, I feel right at home. You might say in the *fellowship of the spirit*! For yours truly, this style of AA unity is manna from Heaven.

Clarence S., founder of Cleveland’s first AA Group (1939), pronounced that unity is when one drunk gets mad at another drunk in his group and goes out and starts his own meeting. Clarence quipped: *“We had a lot of ‘unity’ in Cleveland during those early days.”*

Bob S., Richmond, In



2013 Special Events

Wanna Pick the Theme for

The 2014 Indiana State Convention?

We picked the time and place . . .

You pick the theme

January 6 & 27

Committee Members needed to help plan & facilitate the Indianapolis Founder's Day Event!!

Founders Day Needs You!

Upcoming Committee Meetings

January 6th & 27th

4 PM @ Club East

Saturday, January 12, 2013

6th Anniversary

Lighten Your Load Group

Fellowship @ 6 PM; Dinner @ 7PM; Fellowship @ 7 PM; Speaker @ 8 PM

3602 South Meridian

St. Roch's Catholic Church

January 29, 2013

18th Anniversary

#1 Team Big Book Study Group

* Fellowship @ 6:00 PM; Dinner @ 6:30 PM; Speaker @ 7:30 PM

2302 W. Morris St.

Free Methodist Church

For more information on these and other events, see the Intergroup Web site at
www.indyaa.org/events/january.htm

Become a Faithful Fiver

Remember wasting more than \$5 drinking? Why not contribute \$5 to carry the message?

Faithful Fivers are A. A. members who donate \$5 or more per month to help support Indianapolis Intergroup.

Become a Faithful Fiver. Your contribution will help carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Indianapolis Intergroup Faithful Fiver Form Date _____

YES, I want to help continue to carry our life-saving message of hope.

I will contribute: __ Annually (\$60) __ Quarterly (\$15) __ Monthly (\$5)

Please send email reminder to this email address:

Enclosed is my contribution of \$ _____ for _____ Months

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone number _____

Please make check payable to: Indianapolis Intergroup
 1915 West 18th Street, Suite 6
 Indianapolis, IN 46202

When we meet and defeat the temptation to take large gifts we are only being prudent. But when we are generous with the hat, we give a token that we are grateful for our blessing and evidence that we are eager to share what we have found with all those who still suffer.

Language of the Heart----Bill W.

- 2 year: Tom W., Aidence C., Bill B., Bill T.
- 3 year: Bill B.,* William T., * William DT*
- 4 year: Norma G., Bill K., Allison L., Dennis M.,
- 5 year: Lori W., Allen H., Sherry E., Jane C., Bill K.,* Dennis M.*
- 6 year: Sherry E.,* John L., Tom M.
- 7 year: John L.,* Tom M.
- 9 year: Jack P. Tim H. Tina H.
- 10 year: Tim H.*
- 11 year: Jerry H.
- 12 year: Theresa J.
- 13 year: Cathy L.
- 16 year: John O.
- 17 year: Ed B.
- 18 year: Sally H.

January Birthdays

- 17 year: Ed B.
- 18 year: Sally H.
- 19 year: Randy B., Sally H.
- 21 year: Chuck L.
- 23 year: Sonnet H.
- 25 year: James M.
- 26 year: James M.*
- 33 year: Mary W., Kathy H.
- 36 year: Bill B.
- 39 year: Laura CG.
- 40 year: Laura CG.*

* denotes Birthday Club Member

Light Bulb, Door Knob, or Book?

After I came to meetings for a while, my interest in AA grew. I began to think that I might want to follow the path of the happy people I saw, so I wondered what I had to do.

Much of what I learned involved seeking God's help. My view of God had been warped into a belief that I had to stop drinking on willpower alone, not with divine help. But I didn't really doubt God's existence.

However, I sat in rooms with some newcomers who did struggle with that. Sometimes it was suggested that they could choose some inanimate object as their higher power. Usually I'd hear them mention a light bulb, or a doorknob. Though I usually kept it to myself, I thought that was really silly and impractical.

However, over time, I've adjusted my view on looking up to an inanimate object as a higher power. I heard another AA relate his story of balking at the idea of turning his life over to a door knob, when his buddy laughed at him and told him that he'd be better off doing that than continuing to run

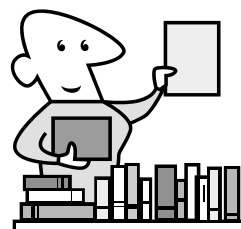
his own life - at least the door knob wasn't trying to kill him!

Then I heard a guy describe his life before AA as a paper cup on the highway that had been run over by an eighteen-wheeler. I suppose a shiny, functional doorknob would be practically omnipotent compared to the crumpled remains of that paper cup.

But my final surrender was when I realized that, in practical terms; I was turning my will and my life over to an inanimate object! It's not a doorknob, though, or a light bulb. It's the first 164 pages of the book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*. Those pages, and the people helping me use them, have performed miracles in my life!

I can wholeheartedly recommend this particular inanimate object to anyone who wants to recover from alcoholism, no matter what their current belief system!

Marvin R.



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