

THE PAPER III

What Is a Vital Spiritual Experience?

A publication of Indianapolis Intergroup

Seemingly hopeless alcoholic, Rowland Hazard, was pronounced incurable by famous psychiatrist, Dr. Carl Jung (p. 27). Desperately, he asked: —Is there no exception? He was told: —*Here and there, once in a while, alcoholics have had vital spiritual experiences.* || The doctor explained, —*They seem to be in the nature of huge emotional displacements and rearrangements. Ideas, emotions and attitudes . . . Were suddenly cast aside and a completely new set of conceptions and motives begin to dominate them.*"

A fine way to remember old ideas, emotions and attitudes is to remember the Wizard of OZ. As Dorothy trod the yellow Brick Road she met: The Scarecrow — No brains = no ideas. The Tin Man — No heart = no emotions. The Cowardly Lion — No nerve = cowardly attitude.

Three potential alxies, obviously! But they were —fixed, || (Dr. Bob called it —Jelled ||), by a hidden wizard (many of us call that God) and they doubtless never started drinking. The evil witch was the mental obsession and don't forget the drunken monkeys. Dorothy had the solution all the time, but didn't know it — The Great Reality deep within (p. 55). I think of the good witch as my sponsor, Carl.

The movie came out in 1939, the same year as our Big Book! Some may ask which came first the chicken or the egg. Who knows! Maybe Bill Wilson's Big Book ideas came from a trip he took down the yellow brick road — err, I mean the road to happy destiny.

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Carry This Message

Step Twelve: "Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, *we tried to carry this message* to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs."



Bill Wilson first got the idea of helping others find sobriety shortly after his spiritual experience at Towns Hospital about the 14th of December, 1934. He wrote of this idea occurring to him: ". . . *that there were perhaps thousands of other alcoholics he might help and that they, in turn, might work with others*" (p. 14).

He immediately joined the Oxford Group where he learned the Five Cs: Confidence, Confession, Conviction, Conversion and Continuance; the latter of which stated: ". . . *but part of the way I guarantee my own Continuance in the program is to **Pass It On** to the next person.*"

Bill tried to help countless NY sots (mostly from the Calvary mission) during his first five months sober but they all got drunk. When he admitted to his wife, Lois, that he was a flop for fixing drunks, Lois reminded him that, at least, he stayed sober – and that wasn't hay! So, when, in May of 1935, Bill found himself alone in the Akron Mayflower Hotel with a profound terror of drinking, he used this tool to keep from that first drink, and as we know, that consummated into the beginning of AA (pp 153–155).

Then Bill and Dr. Bob, realizing the vital importance of helping another drunk, searched out AA #3, Bill Dotson who, in turn, carried this message to many others (p59). Bill had been understandably profoundly influenced by the Oxford Group, who was much more interested in saving entire nations than a few inebriants. So, in December of 1938 Big Book Manuscript, he wrote Step Twelve thusly: "*Having had a spiritual experience as the result of this course of action, we tried to carry this message to others, especially alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.*"

What! ". . .to others, especially alcoholics?" Well, the editors a month later (January 1939), changed the wording as we have it today. Thank God! In the language of the editors, this wording was too much like the Oxford Group program. "Shoemaker, stick to thy last." AA was not meant to be a one shoe fits all religion." There were plenty of *new religions* floating around in those days, so what chance would AA have had in such competition?

But the Oxford Group tenets did set the course for our program of action; note how the tenets on page xvi jive with the "six step program" mentioned in the Big Book story: "He Sold Himself Short" (p. 163).

I hope this writing will provide a tad of researchable history about how the idea of carrying the AA message was developed.

Bob S., Richmond, IN



2012 Special Events

October 5 -7

Southern Indiana Area 3

General Service Weekend

Friday To Sunday

Clifty Inn, Clifty Falls State Park

Madison, Indiana

October 13

Ever Wonder How & Where AA Began?

What were the events that led to first AA meeting?

Come Learn About AA's Origin!!

226 Cherry Street , Greenfield, In

October 13, 3:30 PM til 9:00 PM....

Octoberfest 2012

Sponsored by Indianapolis Intergroup Special Events Committee

Pitch In, Bonfire, Hayrides and Speakers

Eagle Creek Park Shelter

October 20, 12- 3

Hosted by District 22

GSR School

Come find out what Serving your group as a GSR is all about

Suburban North Club

1811 N 10th St

Noblesville, In

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:

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Name_____

Address_____

City, State,

Zip_____

Phone

number_____

Please make check payable to: Indianapolis Intergroup

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Indianapolis, IN 46204

(317) 632-7864

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.

- | | | |
|---------------|-----------------|--------------|
| 3 - Edward W. | 8 - Bll C. | 9 - Rufus B. |
| 4 - Stephen D | 10 - Diane T. | 27 - Judy S. |
| 4- Mattew V. | 19 - Kathy W. | 28 - John S. |
| 5 - Aaron R. | 23 - Charles F. | 30 - John S |
| 6 - Bob L. | 24 - Fin Z. | 37 - Jim M |
| 6- Judy C. | 26 - Jerry D | |
| 7- Phil W. | 26 - Jerry O. | |



October Birthdays

It's In The Book!

Step Ten: "Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it."

(I accept the above sentence as a general summation of Step Ten – an outline, if you will – but not the complete clear-cut-directions of our basic text.)

In my early months of sobriety, a drunken monkey claimed domain of my confused head. In response I immediately began using Step Ten . . . and that is just what I did – I used it! I mean this in a negative sense. By simply following the Step Ten outline on the pull down chart on the clubhouse wall, I was home free! There seemed very little need for personal change. This *on-the-wall* version of Step Ten seemed quite permissive, because my 'old self' – still in charge – would tell me things like:

- Yes you did tell a bit of a lie. That was certainly wrong, but just admit it to yourself, and everything will be according to Hoyle.
- Yes, I was selfish to talk so long at last night's AA meeting and that was wrong. But so long as I admit that I had been selfish and wrong, everything will be okay. I will probably do the same again thing at my next meeting.

With my distorted-thinking 'old self' in charge, I could logically get by with about anything! Nothing needed to be changed about me because I was enveloped in a massive lie, which seemed completely justified (true) by distorting the actual meaning of Step Ten. I was living in the misery of a fool's paradise and a price was to be paid.

After six months of said dryness, I almost ordered a gin & tonic. Terrified, I asked a Big Book style sponsor for help. It was explained that the two-part Step Ten on the wall did not contain all five directions on page 84, e.g.:

1. Watch for selfishness, dishonesty, resentment and fear.
2. When these crop up ask God, at once, to remove them.
3. Discuss them with someone immediately.
4. Make amends quickly if I had harmed anyone.
5. Resolutely turned my thoughts to someone I might help.

Wow! There are no loopholes in those clear-cut-directions! I began to live the Twelve Steps directly from the Big Book and within a few months that drunken monkey mysteriously disappeared and has never returned. I have learned that my directions for sobriety are not on the wall; they are in the Big Book.

Bob S., Richmond, IN

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