

# Resentments are the Biggest Killer

The Number One Offender

By Rick R.

In my early months of sobriety, I was asked, a few days in advance, to lead one of my first meetings. At that time, My EGO was already taking control of this new phase of my life, and of course, I immediately wanted to let everyone know just how enlightened I had become in such a short period of time. In our little meeting room, we didn't have a lot of upper end furniture. Someone donated two rows of old theatre seats, and they were arranged one behind the other. I seated myself in the center of the front row. I went through all the preliminaries we go through and when it came time to select a topic, I decided to impress everyone and announced the topic to be SELF PITY, for we all know that it is, as stated in the Big Book, the biggest Killer in AA We had a lady named Helen B. who always announced herself as "A tough old broad", and she was. Unfortunately for me, she was seated in the row behind me. When I finished my sentence, she leaned over and shouted in my right ear, loud enough for everyone in the room to hear. "YOU'RE FULL OF S---, RESENTMENTS ARE THE BIGGEST KILLER IN AA" and she was right. She gave me resentment and I wanted to kill her. LOL. It was humiliating. I grew to love Helen for what she did to my ego, what I couldn't do to it myself at the time. (B.B. Pg. 64, Resentment is the "number one" offender. It destroys more alcoholics than anything else.) One of the things I took away from that little embarrassing experience was that I better know what I'm talking about before I open my mouth. Another thing that came with those little course corrections, was a drive to understand why I do the things I do. If I am still judging others, Gossiping, Rationalizing, Selfish, etc. My EGO is still in control. A friend in the program once stated that: All forms of criticism and Character Assassination stem from Low Self-esteem and my thoughts were: Who Me??? From that day on I have stopped those EGO driven behaviors, and I replaced them with Patience, Empathy and Compassion and Understanding. I now live by the dictates of my Conscience. Most of the progress that I've experienced in AA wasn't as difficult as it seemed, when I was going through it, but it took a lot longer to have the structure in place, such as, honesty, patience, understanding, unselfishness, and so on, to support each level of growth. Intellectually, resentment was one of the things that I could understand, but with all the complicated mental defenses I had bouncing around in my head, my best efforts only produced slow but steady progress. Most of the resentment issues I had while I was still drinking were usually more of the façade I created with my sick mind. When I got sober, my relation was *real* and even then, I, with the help of my ego, had a hard time accepting the day-to-day interfacing with other people. Does all this mean that I must take abuse from others in my circle of friends? I always thought there was a conflict of values, like "turn the other cheek" or something like that. Well, I found out through trial and error that we, in the A.A. program, are closely related to more people than the average person out there, and we come to know the personality traits and I am not threatened by them anymore. The People that know me, Know me Well.

And it all started with a loving kick in the Butt from a "tough old broad" named Helen B. God bless her. To this day, I thank Helen for setting me straight.