

# Alcoholism, Selfishness, Service, Unselfishness, Peace

## The Beginning of Our Spiritual Development.

I do not think I have ever seen an alcoholic come to A.A. that was unselfish, and I certainly do not remember ever seeing a person show up in the meetings that was at peace with him/herself. On the contrary, most of us arrive beaten down by the lash of alcoholism and don't have the faintest idea that selfishness, self-centeredness, and fear are the root of our problems. As our drinking became an issue it appeared, to the outside observer, to be the culprit, and if we would only stop drinking, we should be alright, but that is where normal drinking and alcoholism part company.

Alcoholism affects a cross section of society and it is a respecter of no one. It seems that something is missing in us, and if we could figure out what it was, we could prevent it in future generations, but all of the great minds of science can't pin it down. We who have come to A.A. and have been in recovery for any length of time have learned that we can only deal with the symptoms of the disease, and bring a level of comfort to our-selves and to the next person who arrives, if he/she is willing to surrender the bottle and join the millions of us that have found a solution.

In the beginning all we can do is attend meetings, and bask in the new found environment where people seem to understand us, and sincerely encourage us to keep coming back. (A strange new sensation) Then they gently begin to explain to us that selfishness/self-centeredness was our problem and if we wanted to recover we would have to be willing to try to change some of our habits.

It starts off with suggestions that we get into service work such as: coffee maker or greeter or setting up for the meeting. This seems to me to be a structured way to begin to wrench us away from the selfish habits of the past. These actions, uncomfortable at first, get easier as time goes by, and a person begins to feel part of the group and starts to feel better about him/her self. This giving of oneself is the gateway to unselfishness, which is the beginning of our spiritual development. If we continue to do these unselfish deeds, it becomes easier to sense the inner/spiritual wellbeing as the result of these behaviors and we will eventually experience the peace and serenity that is promised in the big book.

Alcoholism is the problem, fueled by self-centeredness and fear. Being of service is the beginning of our way back. Unselfishness becomes the solution to most of our problem, and peace of mind is our reward. If we can understand this simple overview of the process, and can recognize it as we take the steps, we can eventually bring this spirit into our everyday lives and our families and our loved ones will benefit from it, and our self-worth will grow in time, and if a person has peace of mind, why would he/she ever need to drink?