

Selfishness, Self-Centeredness, Low Self Esteem

Our Self-worth will Grow in Time.

By Rick R.

I can't recall that I've ever seen an alcoholic come to AA that did not harbor overly selfish, self-protective tendencies 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 do not 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. Drinking alcohol is but a symptom of the problem.

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 the great minds of science cannot pin it down. We who have come to AA 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 and has the capacity to surrender the bottle and join the millions of us that have found the solution.

In the beginning all we can do is attend meetings and bask in the newfound 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 the thoughts and habits and deeds of the past that we regret.

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 and the fear of simple responsibility. 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/herself. 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, fear and insecurity. 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 as we stop neglecting our responsibilities and replace them with unselfish habits and as the result, our self-worth will grow, in time, well beyond anything we could have imagined when we first started this process. A drink has no appeal to persons who are at peace with themselves and the world around them.

