

The Spiritual Life is not a Theory.

We Have to Live it

With the help of many people through the years, and a deep desire to put my life to good purpose, I have developed an insatiable appetite to go as deep as I can to understand what makes the alcoholic tick. Being a garden variety drunk has made the program easy for me to accept, at face value. I have never used drugs, except for those prescribed by doctors, and only when needed. When I asked questions concerning this disease, my mentors would give me ideas that clarified what the program suggested. As I assimilated these ideas into my daily life, I could go on to a deeper understanding of my condition and sometimes I could pass those ideas on to others.

When I ask for the definition of alcoholism, I was referred to Pg. 30 in the Big Book (Alcoholics Anonymous) and it says, "*We alcoholics are men and women that have lost the ability to control our drinking*". It was as simple as that. We are not controlling our car when it is parked in the garage. What happens after we get started, that is what tells the tale. All the supporting information seemed to explain that we were done having any success with drinking alcohol.

The next real important revelation that was pointed out to me was on Pg. 62 B.B. where it says "*Selfishness—self-centeredness! That, we think, is the root of our troubles*". If that is the root of my problems, I figure that I should try to understand the deeper causes and try to address it at that level and try to identify the fears that they suggest, drives this selfish-self-centered behavior. Once I get into the habit of uncovering these things that cause my problems, they are much easier to resolve. Step four became less daunting when I went after the root causes and made the changes at that level.

I had to take many other, more simplified suggestions from the big book and the 12&12, and *these* were in my *thinking*, such as "*restraint of pen and tongue*", and "*remove the word blame from your speech and thought*." These I tried to practice daily.

The first nine steps of the program are the slow and painstaking processing of dealing with the wreckage of the past. I believe they are most effective when taken in the order that they are in. I had a hard time feeling spiritual when I was taking them but, as the result of taking them at that level of understanding I think it made it easier to let go of, not only my faulty behaviors, but more importantly, my faulting thinking too. Spirituality is in the thinking, and it is not enough to do good things but still think badly, so to speak, but it is a beginning. In time, if you persist, your thinking will come along and be at one with your behavior.

"The spiritual life is not a theory. We have to live it". (Pg.83 BB.) It is worth every step of the journey.