

The Delusion Had to be Smashed.

Like Men Who Had Lost Their Legs

As a kid approaching adolescence, I had my first encounter with alcohol, and it did something for me that I had never experienced before. It brought about a degree of peace and serenity in those first few minutes that I could not dismiss as just another good time. It started me on that road to fantasy land and thank God it only lasted fourteen years. I was quick to burn through those years starting off as lampshade drunkenness, and then the tolerance started to develop to the point that I was surprisingly good at drinking and that only lasted for a short time, then I enter the black-out phase and that was not a pretty sight. My first wife left me and for the next two years I went through the self-pity phase when I hung out in bars and got into fights, got locked up, and cried in my beer a lot. I spent much of those last few years thinking that one day I would evolve into a responsible adult and put all of it behind me, but that never happened. Then one day I woke up from a black-out drunk and somehow realized that if I did not do something about my drinking, I was going to die a young and horrible death, I threw in the towel, called AA, and started this wonderful journey.

As I look back on it now, I can understand why alcohol had the effect on me that it did not have on, nine out of ten, of the others that I drank with in those early days. We were all partying, and the alcohol masked the differences between them and me. They enjoyed it all right, but they went home and went to work the next morning. I went right back to the bar again and in search of that euphoria I experienced that first time I drank and every time there after.

After years of sobriety, it occurred to me that the drink quelled all those fears and inhibitions that we alcoholics face each morning upon awakening that the normal drinker never has to face. That is what makes us different. Once our tolerance for alcohol is depleted, it never returns. That is the hardest fact for the alcoholic to face. In Ch. 3 of the Big Book, it states: (The delusion that we are like other people, or presently may be, has to be *smashed*. We know that no real alcoholic ever recovers control.) In my early days of sobriety at the meetings in Los Angeles, most of the meetings that I attended read a portion of chapter 3 as well as the portion of chapter five that we do here. That portion of the book drives home the true nature of this disease, but they stopped reading at the words: *ad infinitum*. I suggest that a person read one more paragraph after that. That always brought home the fact that I was responsible for my own recovery if I had a desire to stop drinking AA could help me accomplish that but by no means will it work for me until I except that devastating fact.

The abnormal fears and inhibitions that I faced in the beginning of my AA journey are no longer a problem now that I have embraced the program in the spirit that is suggested. All I would need to do to have them return would be to rest on my laurels and ignore the wisdom of those who came before me and that is not going to happen here. I may be sick, but I am not foolish. We get a daily reprieve based upon the maintenance of our spiritual condition and as long as I have days left, I am not finished.