AA is not a Punishment.

AA is The Solution

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Men and women of all walks of life, all economic and social levels, all ethnic groups, all genders, and all religious backgrounds, show up at the doors of AA they come to the meetings because something happens in their life, be it desperation on their part, encouragement of their loved ones, a doctor's recommendation. Each of these reasons have much to do with exactly how well people fare as they go through the initial stages of the AA program. Those of us that walked in of our own accord, searching for answers, are fortunate indeed for there was little resistance since we were no longer in denial and we were, absolutely, sure that alcoholism was our problem, and we were so thankful that, at last we found a solution to this frustrating nightmare. To those that came by way of the encouragement of loved ones, the judge, their employer, or the doctor, may still resist the idea that they are alcoholics, but it may turn out to be the steppingstone to addressing their problem, and that is a good start, but they may need to do some more research before they truly surrender. Those who do relapse can be assured that they will always be welcomed back, without judgment, when they run out of options. Nothing is fun for an alcoholic who is simply abstaining from alcohol, (being on the wagon), and when people come to AA and get involved, they are encouraged to do things that are outside of their comfort zone if they want to have any chance at a normal life. If we are not convinced to our innermost self that we can never drink again we will, soon return to the only thing that gave us comfort in the past, and we know where that option leads. Next, they are encouraged to come to terms with a concept of a higher power of their own understanding that can solve their problems. If they are desperate enough, the segue to this new concept will not be as difficult as it might seem if one applies the approach suggested in the Big Book (Alcoholics Anonymous) and in the12&12, (Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions) for even the *past Vice-president of the atheist society got through with room to spare*. Atheists, Agnostics, and Former Believers are on equal footings. (As per step two in the 12&12) The AA program *is not a sentence*. *It is the answer to all the troubles* that we carry around *between our ears*. If we can establish an understanding of a higher power, *whatever we conceive it to be,* we can start to *ask for guidance*, call it prayer if you see fit, and most of us do. When I pray to my concept of God, he does not answer me in the spoken word, and I do not think I have ever met anyone that has had a two-way conversation with God the way we talk to each other. When I pray to God, I simply ask for inspiration, and it seems to come from within or from what I hear other people saying. My prayers are simply: God, please show me what to do, and please give me the strength to do it. *Then it is my choice whether I want to do it or continue to suffer*. God does not exclude anyone. No exceptions, No expectations, and NO SENTENCE. When a doubter asks me if a person can ever become a normal drinker again, I jokingly reply: Yes, he can, on the day that Hell freezes over.