

Alcoholism in the Simplest Terms

To Them it's Just a Social Lubricant

By Rick R.

Many of us, in AA have lost our families, our jobs, our friends, and even our health before we were desperate enough to deal with our problem. WHY? Asks the normal person, would anybody put the bottle before their family, their health, their career and just about everything else in their lives. Well, the alcoholics who have recovered from this malady, and have been restored to a somewhat normal life, often understand how the practicing alcoholic could do such a thing in the face of everything they have to lose, mainly because they have all been through the same, or similar ordeals to one degree or another. They also know that, until this person has reached his/her bottom, it is unlikely that anything will get in the way of their drinking. The delusion (FAULTY PERCEPTION) is still there. To them the thought of living without alcohol is terrifying. Try to look at it this way: On a scale of 1 to 10 the normal person awakens each morning at an emotional level of **8**. The alcoholic, on the other hand, awakens at a level of **2**. Neither knows the emotional level of the other. The normal one does not understand why the alcoholic is so silent/depressed/disgruntled/unhappy, etc. mostly everything seems fine to them. What's the problem? The alcoholic, on the other hand (being at a **2**) cannot understand why the normal drinker is so up-beat, after all, the world is a cold and hostile place to them. There's politics, wars, the economy, sickness, responsibilities, financial problems, family problems... not much to look forward to. What's the use? They feel they are looking up from the bottom of a deep pit. (**2**) When the alcoholic is in that pit and takes a drink, they go from a **2** to an **8** and halfway through their second drink they feel normal and everything is right with the world, no problem here! On the other hand, when normal drinkers take a drink, they go from an **8** to an **8 1/2**, it is nice, but they wouldn't give up their life for it, and the next day, they are back to an **8**. This is normal, and to them, *alcohol is simply a social lubricant*. The emotional level of an alcoholic will always return to a **2** and they continue to get progressively worse until they lose, or they are about to lose more than they were willing to lose. That is when they begin to realize that they will probably never be able to drink successfully, and if they are desperate enough to ask for help, they have a chance to salvage their lives. The answers for me were in Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.) where I had a profound *change of perception*, or a (Spiritual awakening) if you like. The delusion that I could drink like a normal person was smashed. I knew that if I neglect the evidence that I've experienced before and after I came to AA. I risk doing irreparable damage to myself and others, and worse than that, I risk wasting the only life I get to live, to a chemical that is closer to gasoline or lighter fluid than to the romantic way I used to perceive it. What a tragic thing that would be when the solution was laid at my feet. All I had to do was surrender. As the result of following this path, I am at an **8** almost every day of my life. A bad day for me is a **7**. If I stop growing spiritually, I will start to drift back down the scale again and as I approach a **5** or a **4**, a drink might start looking good to me and it would be only a matter of time before I'd be back at the old game again. Knowing this, I am vigilante about my priorities, and I stay in the safe (spiritual) zone. That is so much better than the alternative.