

Half Measures Avail Us Nothing

Night, Night Mister EGO

There are many practical suggestions in our Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.) literature that, if followed, would lead to a life of serenity and peace of mind, and we hear these suggestions every day in the A.A. meetings that we attend, and it seems that we all place different degrees of importance on them. This might simply be based on how desperate we were when we entered the program. Desperation is probably the biggest motivator that brought many of us to A.A. in the first place. Some members get to a certain comfort level then we see them settling into a pattern of just attending meetings and falling into that “Half Measures” rut and, this is a routine that can go on indefinitely.

In step three it states that willingness is the key but when I was in my early days of sobriety, I resisted looking deeper into those embarrassing behaviors of the past and it slowed down the pace of my recovery, but thank God it didn't bring it to a complete stop. I then learned that I was not the one making decisions about my willingness, for I had another power hijacking that function of my mind. I had to come to terms with something that never occurred to me on my drinking days. Most of my errant behavior was the result of an EGO driven mindset. My EGO didn't want me to be willing to do any of the altruistic behaviors that the AA program encourages, and it selfishly ran the show, for the most part.

I recognized this many years ago and decided that until I got my EGO under control, I was going to be one of those unfortunate souls that falls into that complacency rut. I seem to approach the EGO deflation problem by imagining it as a separate control room in my brain, so to speak, right next to another control room labeled “Conscience”. My conscience says, “Make your bed” and my EGO says “Don't be a sap.” Next, I make my bed. The more I do what my Conscience suggests, the more I render my EGO irrelevant. All my EGO driven actions were of a selfish nature, and all my Conscience driven actions are Unselfish in spirit. If I had not given due diligence to all the twelve steps and had let my EGO talk me out of it, I would, most likely not have gotten to this level of understanding. I had to start with simple suggestions like, Restraint of pen and tongue (12&12 pg.91) and, Drop the word blame from my speech and thoughts. (12&12 pg. 47). I find it very rewarding to be willing to brew and serve coffee, pass out the books at the step study meetings, take out the trash bags etc. I can also smile, open a door for someone, let someone in on the highway and help with an occasional hand out. Some may misunderstand my motives for why I do these little gestures, but I never let myself be deterred simply because, if I did, I would be letting my EGO get another foothold and I'm just not going to let that happen here.

Today, I don't have to think about doing these deeds as they have become second nature and part of who I am these days. When I do these things without fanfare, I get a warm feeling in my heart that replaces those old neglectful emotions of the past. No Half Measures here. My conscience is my guide. Night Night Mr. EGO, it's time to take your nap now.