

Spiritual Simplicity Gets It Done.

Practice the Program with Enthusiasm

By Rick R.

Tackling the alcoholism problem, the wreckage of the past, and trying to be Spiritual at the same time is a large order in the beginning. Most of us are consumed with the trauma left in the wake of a life run by our Egos and flooded with alcohol. We hear a variety of ways to approach the Spiritual way of life, and we try to fit it into our AA agenda but, still reeling from the wreckage, our effort seemed scattered at best.

If we manage to get a handle on those troubling issues that consume our thinking, it often frees us up to explore the Spiritual aspects of the program at a deeper level. At first, it is not easy to define, or to articulate, the word spiritual but most of us will try to put a face on it based on something we learned in church or something we have heard at an AA meeting etc. This is an O.K. Start but it is wise to continue to look for that deeper meaning that is consistent with the spirit of the AA program and to practice it in our daily lives. As I researched the word spiritual, I find many phrases that could define it such as: In the spirit of, Of the inside, Intangible, not of a physical or material nature, Religious, Psychic, and many more.

I have read most of the publications that have come from the list of AA approved literature, and in "Doctor Bob and the Good Old Timers", it suggests that when the Co-founders had to address the issue of spirituality, they got their inspiration from the book: The Sermon on the Mount, by Emmet Fox. (1938) I have found that book to be exactly what I needed to segue into a way of thinking that covers all the principles that AA suggests. It explains that we can live by the Letter of the Law, and still not receive the desired results until we learn to live in the Spirit of the Law. This is my Go-to Guide and I frequently reread it to reinforce my Spiritual understanding. I do not go-it alone. There I come to understand that there's no such thing as a Selfish Spiritual Principle.

We hear talk of prayer, and most of us who have been around for a while have found an approach that works for us. If I pray to God, how does God communicate his message to me? I have never heard a voice that I could confirm to be the voice of God. I do, however, receive inspiration in the form that is more than enough for me, and I have a tremendous amount of faith. They speak of a kind and loving God is he may express himself in our group conscience. That works for me.

The way I have come to explain this concept is as follows: I have sat in on thousands of AA meetings and whether I know it or not, my mind is collecting information that I am not even aware of, and storing it away, as in a file cabinet, in those 86 billion brain cells that we are supposed to have in our heads. When I pray for guidance, the search begins in the file system and comes up with the answer intuitively. This file cabinet metaphor is my way of trying to express a sound and solid approach to being open to outside influences without really having to define who or what God is. He speaks in many ways.

Another thing that I believe it does without my personal effort is to Neutralize much of my negative way of thinking. Spirituality is an inside quality. It resides in my mind, my heart, and my conscience. To acquire it I had only to stop fighting and practice the rest of the AA program as enthusiastically as I could (12&12 page 27) and I might add, Keep it Simple.