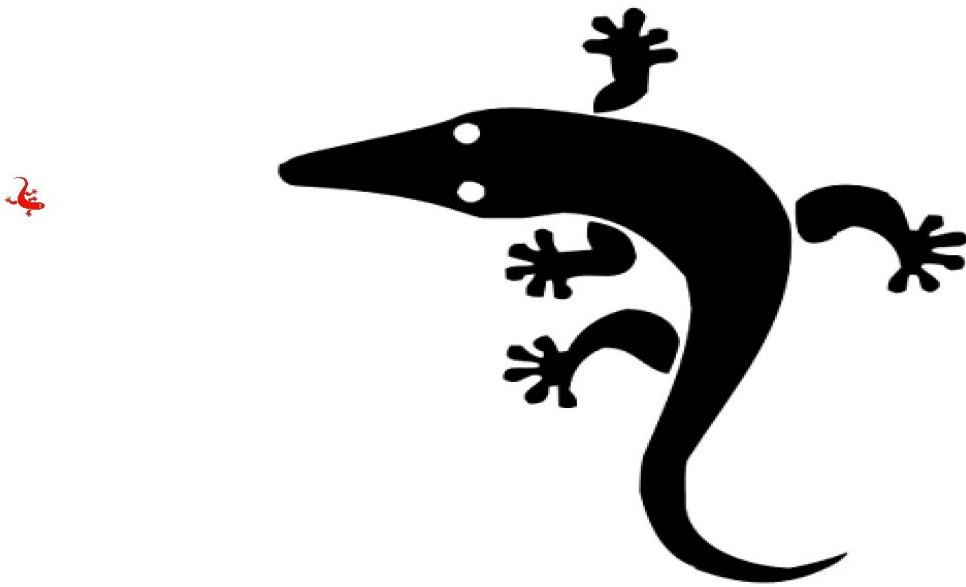


The Daily Reprieve



By
Singapore A.A. members
Autumn 2014

The Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

Reprinted from Alcoholics Anonymous 4th Edition, pg 59 -60 with permission of A.A. World Services, Inc."

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

BACK TO THE BASICS OF RECOVERY- STEP FIVE

I MUST REMEMBER

A NOTE OF GRATITUDE FROM A VISITING FELLOW

IN MY SHOES

AN ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE

BACK TO THE BASICS OF RECOVERY- STEP SIX AND SEVEN

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

SINGAPORE INTERGROUP NEWS-AUGUST 2014

WHILE IT SLEEPS

LIFE IN MY SKIN

HOSPITALS & INSTITUTIONS/PUBLIC INFORMATION COMMITTEE UPDATE

HUMILITY

JUST ME

STEP ONE-A REMINDER

INSIGHTFUL & INSPIRATIONAL RECOVERY CATCHPHRASES

SINGAPORE SOCIAL AND EVENTS COMMITTEE

UPCOMING REGIONAL EVENTS

MEETING SCHEDULE

**For further assistance, call (+65)6475 0890 or email us at: help@Singaporeaa.org
To contribute to the Daily Reprieve, please send your article or Announcement to:
newsletter@Singaporeaa.org. See details and meeting schedules at: www.Singaporeaa.org**

Dear Fellows in Sobriety,

In this issue, we continue with Wally P's "Back to Basics" articles on Steps 5, 6 and 7. Entitled "Back to the Basics of Recovery," this is the original action program used with newcomers by the first members of A.A..

Thank you to our Local members who have contributed to this edition of The Daily Reprieve. These include "I Must Remember", "In My Shoes", "An Attitude of Gratitude", "To Whom It May Concern", "While It Sleeps", "Just Me", and "Insightful & Inspirational Recovery Catchphrases". We are also grateful for the contributions from other Fellows from around the world, who have contributed to the Newsletter.

The Hospitals & Institutions/Public Information Committee has been active and is working on Community Outreach Programs and an upcoming Workshop with Healthcare Professionals.

The Social and Event Committee has also been busy, organising monthly social events and a small Roundup in October 2014. Keep It Simple Singapore (KISS), a Weekend of Fun, Fellowship and Laughter is being held on January 30 – February 1 2015, and promises to be just that. If you would like further information or would like to offer your assistance to help on the Committee, please contact events@singaporeaa.org.

Thank you to Claire who has stepped down as the Editor of the Daily Reprieve but continues to assist with her invaluable experience. This is your Newsletter, and is made possible by contributions from our members so if you are a budding writer, or just want to provide an act of service, all contributions are gratefully received. You can submit articles, inspirational quotes, or cartoons to newsletter@singaporeaa.org

Wishing you all health, happiness and serenity.

With kind regards,

Michelle K

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in articles submitted to the Daily Reprieve are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Who is Wally P?

Wally P. is an archivist, historian and author who, for more than twenty-three years, has been studying the origins and growth of the Twelve-step movement. He is the caretaker for the personal archives of Dr. Bob and Anne Smith.

Wally conducts history presentations and recovery workshops, including "Back to the Basics of Recovery" in which he takes attendees through all Twelve Steps in four, one-hour sessions. More than 500,000 have taken the Steps using this powerful, time-tested, and highly successful "original" program of action.

Back to the Basics of Recovery

Step Five

by Wally P.

Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

In a previous article, I described how, during A.A.'s early days, the sponsor and sponsee together filled out the liabilities side of an assets and liabilities checklist. Now it is time for us to choose the person or persons with whom we share this inventory. In order to recover, it is essential that we confide in someone.

In the second paragraph on page 72, the "Big Book" authors tell us why we admit our faults to another person:

". . . The best reason first: If we skip this vital step, we may not overcome drinking. Time after time newcomers have tried to keep to themselves certain facts about their lives. Trying to avoid this humbling experience, they have turned to easier methods. Almost invariably they got drunk."

Sponsees tell their "life story" about the events and situations on the one-page inventory sheet. Sometimes it takes only a few items to get down to "causes and conditions." Once they "come to believe" in the process and experience the relief and release that result from talking about the things that had been blocking them from a spiritual solution to their problems, they become much more willing to conduct additional inventories in the future.

Today, this is referred to as "peeling the onion." We deal with the first few "items in stock" during the initial inventory. This prepares us to dig deeper and deeper during subsequent inventories.

The “Big Book” authors tell us that taking inventory is an ongoing process. They write at the top of page 71, “If you have made an inventory of your grosser handicaps, you have made a good beginning.” So this is just the first of many inventories to come. As some A.A. pioneers used to say, “We take the Steps quickly and often.”

How thorough is this simple and straightforward inventory? It was thorough enough to produce a 50-75% recovery rate during the 1940's and thorough enough to produce similar results today.

Sponsees can share their inventory with any number of people. It may be the person who helped put the list together, but it doesn't have to be. The “Big Book” authors provide other options. Starting with the fourth paragraph on page 73, they describe some of the people with whom sponsees can discuss their checklist:

“We must be entirely honest with somebody if we expect to live long or happily in this world. Rightly and naturally, we think well before we choose the person or persons with whom to take this intimate and confidential step. . . . Though we have no religious connection, we may still do well to talk with someone ordained by an established religion.

“If we cannot or would rather not do this, we search our acquaintance for a close-mouthed, understanding friend. Perhaps our doctor or psychologist will be the person.”

Of critical importance is confidentiality. The “Big Book” authors list some of professionals who are legally bound to keep a secret. This “privilege” protects communications between certain individuals and keeps these communications private. The people listed in the “Big Book” who have this legal protection are members of religious, medical, and mental health communities. Attorneys also have this “privilege.”

This legal protection, the “clergy-parishioner privilege,” the “physician-patient privilege,” and the “attorney-client privilege,” is not absolute—there are exceptions. But, this “privilege” does NOT include A.A. sponsors. This is why both sponsor and sponsee must be cautious about what is shared during a Fifth Step. Events that may be construed as criminal or abusive are best discussed with someone legally bound to keep a secret.

Notwithstanding the necessity of being careful, sponsees need to share their inventory as soon as possible. The “Big Book” authors confirm this in the first paragraph on page 75:

“When we decide who is to hear our story, we waste no time. We have a written inventory and we are prepared for a long talk.”

A key concept from the 1940's was, "The healing is in the sharing not in the writing." Nothing was put on paper that could be potentially incriminating. Today, this concept can be summarized as, "Do not put anything in writing that can be used against you in a court of law." This is why, in the early days, an inventory consisted of a few generic names on a checklist.

When Dr. Bob took sponsees through the Fifth Step, which he did more than 5,000 times, he discussed their assets as well as their liabilities. He knew that most of them were overwhelmed and horrified by the shame, guilt, apprehension and fear associated with their alcoholic behavior. They had a poor self-image and low self-confidence. These people tended to treat themselves badly.

Dr. Bob would counter this lack of self-esteem, by encouraging and uplifting them. He would talk about the assets they already had and those that would be strengthened as the result of making restitution to those they had harmed and forgiving those who had harmed them.

In the next article, I will describe Steps Six and Seven. Some A.A. old-timers called these steps the "second surrender."

Wally P. is an archivist, historian and author who, for more than twenty-three years, has been studying the origins and growth of the Twelve-step movement. He is the caretaker for the personal archives of Dr. Bob and Anne Smith.

Wally conducts history presentations and recovery workshops, including "Back to the Basics of Recovery" in which he takes attendees through all Twelve Steps in four, one-hour sessions. More than 500,000 have taken the Steps using this powerful, time-tested, and highly successful "original" program of action.

Politeness and consideration for others is like investing pennies and getting dollars back.
~Thomas Sowell

It is one of the most beautiful compensations of this life, that no man can sincerely try to help another without helping himself. ~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

We make a living by what we get, we make a life by what we give. ~ Winston Churchill

I Must Remember

I was born the only child in a Roman Catholic family. We were not extreme or radical Christians, however God was always present in our home and worship, in moderation, was a part of our daily routine. My mother and my father gave me a lot of love, protection and attention. They also kept me away from alcohol, even though a consistent social life and conviviality were always present in our home. I have since wondered why there was such a tight protection from alcohol, did we have a history of alcoholics in our family? And although I have never found the answer, I have seen my father drunk on many occasions. I was 18 before I first tasted alcohol.

When I turned 18, I moved away from my parents to study and start a mature, independent life. Initially, I had a feeling of relief, like bonds were being untightened. However, problems soon emerged in my social life and I had difficulties finding understanding friends. I had problems adapting to campus life, and my expectations for attention and special consideration were barely met or rather, not at all. There was an overwhelming feeling of mismatch with the world, and I felt like I did not belong. I watched other people and how easily they could talk, joke and party together. My discomfort and inability to communicate frustrated me every day and was unbearable. Finally, in an act of desperation I found the way "...maybe I would buy a bottle of vodka and join my colleagues for a weekend binge? Maybe they would accept me then?" Indeed, that was the solution, and the result was far better than I could have ever dreamt. The morning hangover and stomach pain was not a big deal in comparison to the gift of belonging and unity with my colleagues. I found the *perfect* way, which fixed my feelings of detachment from the world.

Later, I realized that I drank more than my peers, most likely due to body size: I am a tall and heavy man. Moreover, the morning symptoms of long hours of drinking diminished and my tolerance for large quantities of booze increased. Simultaneously I built better relations with many people, I was funnier, braver and more relaxed, which appeared to be well received by my campus society. I felt like I was "a Man". In addition my grades at a University were very good, even though some exams were directly preceded by a night binge and in many cases I was doing better than others, and spending less time studying.

There was no power which could have stopped me from drinking. Even though I had heard about alcoholism I was definitely not vulnerable, at least that was what I thought. After leaving University, my professional life was progressing well, as was my drinking. Due to the type of work I was involved in I had to relocate and travel, which resulted in many instances of being on my own for months at a time. That was the perfect occasion to drink more, without any control. I never acknowledged or recognized the moment I crossed that intangible, tiny line when I lost the ability to control my drinking. What a paradox! The control of my drinking was never a goal; I drank because I wanted to. At parties I drank moderately, even though I could have drunk more, but when I went back to the hotel or to home, I drank heavily and the

purpose was always the same. Alcohol had become my fix, my pleasure which I consumed in loneliness and deepening alienation. More and more I felt social events were an obstacle for “proper” drinking. I only felt comfortable with some friends who drank the same way I did, heavily and until oblivion. I returned to the point I had started from, separation and isolation.

Eventually, the alcohol also became an obstruction in my work, but it was easier to compromise work and keep on drinking, changing my goals and behaviours to suit my drinking habits. Ultimately, I lost my first job. My employer proposed a demotion and offered me a role with fewer responsibilities and subsequently less stress. However, my proud Ego was heavily offended. How could they do something like that to me? How dare they? Having been able to maintain a good reputation within my industry, it was pretty easy to find another job and to reject the proposal of demotion.

It was a smooth transition to new employer and another geographical location, which gave me hope. I thought that moving from one place to other I could start a new life, but I did not realise that the disease travelled with me. After 12 months I lost my job again. That time was more spectacular, as it had ended with a 5-day detox, hospitalization and repatriation, under the escort of a doctor.

For the first time in my life I had the thought that there might be something wrong with me. I had no knowledge of A.A., the Big Book or the 12&12. I had heard about alcoholics, but believed in the stereotype of homeless, stinky, ragged people and this didn’t match me, so it must be something else.

There was “specialist” in the next town who “cured” addictions with hypnosis and that was my first ever therapy. Somehow, that worked for me for almost one year during which time I got also new job, which was to be the best ever. At the end of my 12 months of self-achieved sobriety, I relapsed during a business trip. From then my relapses were more and more often. I worked hard and played hard. I probably should have lost my job, but my wife supported me by taking care of me after numerous binges, sobering me up and getting me into shape. This could not be sustained and soon after I was stopped by the police while driving with a blood alcohol level of 2.25% , it’s a miracle that I did not hurt others or myself.

My employer showed much compassion and suggested a 3 month leave and a stay in an alcohol addiction treatment centre as a condition to keeping my job. I spent three months in rehab before returning to work. It was at the centre that I found out some more about A.A. and watched a number of movies including, “My Name is Bill W” “When a Man Loves a Woman” and “Barfly”. I found myself empathizing with the characters but still wasn’t sure that I was an alcoholic. A relapse seemed inevitable.

Due to financial issues within my company, they transferred me to Asia. I assumed that a new environment would mean a new start, but it was not long before my efforts at “controlled” drinking brought me to A.A. in Singapore. The long journey and countless attempts to prove I could control my drinking on my own changed when I came to A.A., and I finally accomplished what I could not do on my own in the rooms of A.A..

I have been sober more than 2 years, and I now have a new set of tools and new friends with the same problems as mine. I realized that I was not the only one who couldn’t control his drinking and there was nothing wrong with that. It is a disease which requires treatment and a change in lifestyle. I have found other ways to connect with the existing world, but the most important are surrender, acceptance and to quit playing God. And I must remember: Once an alcoholic always an alcoholic.

JK

A Note of Gratitude from a Visiting Fellow

Hello my name is Phil and I'm an alcoholic from Newcastle in England. I have recently been on holiday in Singapore with my family visiting my wife's sister. I found the fellowship in Singapore a lifeline as I attended the early morning meeting at Boat Quay most mornings. It made such a difference to my holiday being around like-minded people, I just wanted to write a few lines to thank-you all for your support. On my last day I was chatting to a member and he said why not stay in touch with us all via What'sApp. This is where members of the fellowship can share their experience, strength and hope with one another by an app on the phone. I've enjoyed reading messages on this service usually the morning messages which I receive at 11pm due to the time difference. I was sitting at home tonight and the morning messages were talking about the newsletter and the deadline being today, I thought I'd just write a few lines of gratitude to you all, and I hope to see you all when I return to Singapore in August 2015.

Phil C

In my shoes

I'm Tony and I'm and I'm an alcoholic. I've been sober for 336 days.

About 3 months ago I was on the balcony reflecting on my day and I realized I did not have an obsession to drink. I actually hadn't had the obsession for a while. I felt a clean breeze. I had taken off my shoes for the day. I could feel cool wood planking on the balcony through my bare feet. I felt free. The funny thing is that it had been a bad day. I recall my boss complaining that my work wasn't sharp, wasn't different than our competitors. Hard to understand. Yet I was acutely aware that I wasn't even thinking about drinking. No obsession.

No desire to run and hide. Grateful, in fact. Grateful to experience my life sober. Grateful, to even re-experience my life as it really is.

As I was thinking about my boss, I was able to actually recall the exact conversation. Turns out he wasn't complaining. He made simple, precise statements. There was not criticism in his voice. There was statement of fact. He wasn't complaining. He was calling it as he saw it. I remember spending an hour after that discussion feeling hurt, inadequate. Feeling like he was out to get me. Then I got over it. His points were valid. "Go make it clearer." And then I moved on. Several hours later, it turns out I had been holding on to resentment over criticism. Whether or not he intended to criticize wasn't something I could control. But I did take his suggestions and felt that my work was more clear now. It was, in fact a miracle.

Probably a year ago to that day on my balcony, I remember being on a call with 5 people. I was drunk. I was drinking vodka from a water bottle at work by that time, in the office, on client sites, in bathrooms, while driving. I remember trying not to drink before this meeting. It was important. There were serious issues. People weren't pulling their weight. The client wasn't happy. Of course, before I dialed in, I took one sip. To take the edge off. And when the call started, I think I was having a sip after every point someone made. By the end of the call I wasn't rationale. I was accusing my colleagues of not supporting me. I was hysterical about the performance of junior team members. I told them the project was in serious trouble. I remember one kind team member asking what he could do and I wasn't able to come up with one action for him to take, before going back to complaining and accusing. By then, the bottle was empty and I was feeling drunker and drunker. I was expected home. In no position to drive. I sat in a bathroom for over an hour trying to sober up. I drove home drunk that day. I woke up the next morning without talking to my wife and started the same thing again.

I feel I am in a special place in my sobriety. Stable most days, yet able to feel the complete despair of my recent past. I remember a newcomer last month ask me when the obsession left me. I'm not sure if he liked my response of 5-6 months after I quit drinking. Then I remembered, like him, I still want instant gratification, a quick fix. Something for nothing. In fact, I can't remember an exact date, or an exact situation when the obsession left me. It's like the point when a new pair of shoes gets broken in and you don't get blisters anymore.

It helps if you wear it every day. It helps if you walk an extra few steps and deal with a bit of discomfort. It helps if you polish them so you look sharp. It helps if you pace yourself and don't start running on them. So I guess my sobriety has been about doing the work, a day at a time. Step by step. As they say in the book, "it works, it really does."

My recovery hasn't been perfect. It's been clumsy. I've had lots of ups and downs. Large mood swings. I have struggled with life on life's terms. I have not always followed instructions.

I don't reach out to my sponsor enough. (Thanks for everything, you know who you are). I don't always call people when I'm feeling low.

To be precise, the obsession has left but sometimes comes back. There are days when I experience a twinge of regret I don't drink anymore. There are days when it really sounds like a good idea to pick up again. But those days are few and far between. Most days the obsession just doesn't want to be around me. I've filled my life with a meeting every morning. Friends—real friends surround me in the program. A connection to a higher power. A feeling I can be useful to others like me. A sense that I am worth something and have a purpose. I practice better solutions to really small problems. Those same solutions also apply to really big problems. My life seems simpler today and I really can't see another way of living.

Thanks for letting me share.

An Attitude of Gratitude

We often hear in the rooms references to gratitude, be it gratitude lists or a fellow introducing themselves as a "grateful alcoholic". In Singapore, we even have a gratitude meeting on Saturday mornings where the focus is on some aspect of being grateful for being sober. I remember some years ago, before I got sober, I read "The Secret" and there was a reference to gratitude lists in the book. At the time, this looked like a good idea, but did I ever write a gratitude list or recite one in the shower as one of the authors regularly did. Nope!! Nor did I see any need. I was delusional to my life's unmanageability and the misery I was in and the cause of that misery – my alcoholism!

Fast forward a few years...I was in early sobriety and my sponsor suggested that I write a gratitude list. But this time, I was in so much pain that I took note. Now, it is easy to rattle off a list of things I'm grateful for... My home, my family, my friends, my sponsor, my sponsees, my meetings, even my sobriety...Yadda yadda yadda...but am I BEING grateful?

Am I really feeling the gratitude?

I believe that when I am BEING grateful and really feeling the gratitude, I get a shift in perspective. This change in perspective is the ultimate goal. For example, I may lamely put "my job" on my gratitude list when I am going through the motions and writing or reciting my list. But, am I feeling it? Well, I am currently in a phase where I actually don't like my job. I really don't. So, how can I feel gratitude for the job I hate? What I can do is take a moment (or a few if necessary) and remember what it is like to not have a job. I have experienced this in sobriety as well as before. I can remember what it is like to try and support my family without a job and remember the times I wished I had a job...any job. Pretty soon, I can find a way to feel the gratitude, to BE grateful for my job. And the list goes on...

If I will be still for a moment, there is always the fact that today I am sober. And if I am sober, I have a chance. A chance at what? Anything. And that is the possibility of sobriety... Anything. Anything is possible, if I stay sober.

I am genuinely grateful to the sponsor that first suggested that I write a gratitude list. And today, the more I practice the attitude of gratitude, the more I can see things to be grateful for, some big some small.

Simon A.

Back to the Basics of Recovery

Step Six and Seven

By Wally P.

Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

Some A.A. pioneers refer to Steps Six and Seven as the “second surrender.” In Step Three we ask God to “take away (our) difficulties,” even though we may only have a general idea as to what they are. In Steps Six and Seven we surrender the specific items that are preventing us from tapping into the “Power greater than (ourselves) that will solve our problem.”

In the first paragraph on page 76, the “Big Book” authors provide details about this second surrender:

“. . . (W)e then look at Step Six. We have emphasized willingness as being indispensable. Are we now ready to let God remove from us all the things which we have admitted are objectionable? Can He now take them all—every one? If we still cling to something we will not let go, we ask God to help us be willing.”

Throughout the “Big Book,” the authors make clear we must be willing to take certain actions if we are to overcome our addictions and compulsive behaviors. On page 568, the authors state that, “Willingness, honesty, and open mindedness are the essentials of recovery,” and on page 124 the authors explain the importance of willingness when they write, “We grow by our willingness to face and rectify errors (our liabilities) and convert them into assets.”

Willingness implies acceptance without reluctance. We must have no reservations about giving up the liabilities we talked about in Steps Four and Five; specifically, the resentments (page 64), the fears (page 68), and the harm we have done to others because of our selfishness, dishonesty, inconsideration, jealousy, suspicion and bitterness (page 69).

As we learned in a previous article, “Healing is in the sharing, not in the writing.” During the Fourth Step, the sponsor writes down some generic names and puts some marks on a checklist. The objective is to compile an amends list, not chronicle every dastardly deed or questionable behavior the sponsee has ever engaged in.

In Step Six, we ask the God of our understanding to remove the liabilities that are blocking us. If we are unwilling to let go of some of these shortcomings, the sponsor and sponsee together pray for the willingness to have these shortcomings removed.

This prayer can be life-changing. I have personally witnessed many “psychic changes,” as the direct result of making this “petition” in the presence of the sponsee. I have seen abuse issues resolved and fear issues overcome with this simple request for willingness.

The Sixth Step question is a rewording of the third sentence in the first paragraph on page 76. It reads:

“Are you now ready to let God remove from you all the things which you have admitted are objectionable?”

If you can answer in the affirmative, then you have taken Step Six and are ready to move on to Step Seven.

In the Seventh Step we turn our assets as well as our liabilities over to the “Power greater than ourselves.” Then, we ask the Power to give back to us only what we need “to be of maximum service to God and the people about us” (page 77, lines 3-4). According to the “Big Book” authors, being of service is our “real purpose.”

We ask the God of our understanding to remove the blocks that have been standing in the way of our recovery. We ask that these blocks be taken away, not for our own well-being, but so we can help others. We get out of ourselves by working with those who are still suffering or who have lost their way. Once we remove those things that have separated us from the Power greater than human power, we become much more efficient and effective in our ability to carry a beneficial message.

This is a selfless program and the Seventh Step prayer exemplifies this concept of selflessness. The prayer is found in the second paragraph on page 76:

“. . . My Creator, I am now willing that you should have all of me, good and bad. I pray that you now remove from me every single defect of character which stands in the way of my usefulness to you and my fellows. Grant me strength, as I go out from here, to do your bidding. Amen.”

Even though we have identified the blocks and asked “the One who has all power” to remove them, the blocks are not cleared away until we make restitution to those we’ve harmed. We do this in Steps Eight and Nine which we will cover in the next article.

To Whom It May Concern

It’s still early days for me and I still don’t have a name for you or quite understand who you are or why you have been there all my life or even why I have only just noticed you now. All I can do is thank you, as my eyes begin to embrace a new life of hope.

Who would have imagined this new life? A life of hope and joy as I connect more and more with other alcoholics. A new moral compass, a new sense of well-being, a new sense of belonging and understanding of a better future.

Who would have thought?

A life of many sad moments that only became the blindfold to my disease known as alcoholism. What a gift it has been to see the light. There is a solution!

Who would have thought?

A life I proclaimed worthless.

A self I proclaimed unlovable.

A future I proclaimed non-existent.

Today it is different. By the love I have found in you, you have helped me hold my little heart in light and shown me how I can blossom into the person I ought to be in your eyes. I trust you will in time, help heal my wounds and help me get strong enough to help others. I know today that that is what I want.

Who would have thought I would even have known what I wanted?

Nothing ever made sense.

The world did not make sense.

I did not make sense.

How could it be, that following the simple steps that are suggested, that connecting with other fellows, could fill a person with a bottomless pit and regain a reason to live?

I thank you dear friend for doing the things I could not do for myself. I see that now.

I have spent a long time being angry with you.

Why did you make me suffer so much?

What did I do wrong?

That is all in the past now, all forgotten, all forgiven, as for the biggest pain in my heart you caused me, lead me to this path that has more sunny days than rainy.

Today I sometimes even like the rainy days. I understand the teachings and growth that come with it.

I don't understand why I thought I could do it all on my own or even why I wanted to do it all on my own.

Thank you for reaching out to me, when I could no longer walk by myself.

The sense of peace you have given me by connecting me to others with this disease has removed my need to live a lonely existence.

I am excited about our future together and watching our relationship develop.

I am scared though. This is all so new. I still need help with trust and fear. Please just continue to hold my hand for I am still not ready to live this life without you and hope I never am, for you always seem to know which way to turn.

I leave you with this until I write again or see you in my prayers.

Thank you for my new life. I am eternally grateful.

Much Love

Anonymous

Singapore Intergroup News - August 2014 Update

The Singapore Intergroup is the Service office that has been established to carry out certain functions common to all A.A. Groups in the Singapore community. Operating under the guidelines of A.A.'s Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts, the Singapore Intergroup is maintained, supervised and supported by the local Singapore A.A. groups. The primary purpose of Singapore Intergroup is to aid the individual A.A. groups in their common purpose to carry the A.A. message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

Intergrip Minutes for August, 2014

Deputy Chairperson opened meeting with serenity prayer.

Meeting Updates

- Damien – Rep updated all is good except Thursday 20:00 meeting is now cancelled
- Boat Quay – Rep updated that meetings are all good, though the group is exploring other venue options
- Serenity Sisters – Rep updated all good but will check with others regarding other venue options
- Men’s Sunday – Rep updated that all is good. The meeting is now at 313 Starbucks on the second floor. Very busy.
- We Care – Rep updated that attendance has been low at the new location
- East Coast (Holy Family Church) – No representation.
- Rainbow – Rep updated that there are some location issues (Editor’s note meeting has now moved to Oogachaga at 57B Pagoda Street)
- Thursday Speaker – Rep updated that the meeting is going well with strong attendance and will be able to pay back Intergroup soon.
- TGIFriday – Rep updated that attendance is low and group has discussed checking new locations.
- Novena – Rep updated so far all good at new location.
- Marina Bay – No representation.
- Red Hill – Rep updated all good the BB study going well.
- Mana Mana – Reps updated that it’s a darn fine meeting. All good!!! Bagels were good.

Key Bullets for Representatives to take to their Respective Groups

- The Events and Social Committee will take volunteers of any sobriety to assist in the round up being prepared for next January. Can use more sub-committee chairs ASAP and also any ideas on location
- Newsletter chair is still looking for content contributions for the next quarterly newsletter. Send all contributions to newsletter@Singaporeaa.org. Any extra material received can be used for future editions

Communications –sent via email

- Updated A.A. Telephone Service Rota issued for 16/17 Aug 2014 to 06/07 Dec 2014
- Emails to A.A. Help (help@Singaporeaa.org) - sporadic emails received from general public. Some emails are from A.A. fellows travelling to Singapore, some from people seeking help for themselves or loved ones and some from students or institutions. We have received one email from a journalist, which was passed to HI/PI.
- Outstanding action from last InterGroup: "*Will investigate the best phone setup. We currently have the fixed line and the pre-paid line. Need to check the voice*

mail set-up and determine if we still need both." ACTION: Communications chair will check this.

- Outstanding Action: "*12 Step list is being prepared -- need to inform groups that A.A. member participants must have at least 1 year sobriety and the guidance for performing 12 step calls will be on the web...*" ACTION: 12 Step document (first version) is ready to be issued. Communications chair to work with web team to get this document on the web site.

Literature

- One large order for HIPI placed for the Dec workshop
- More resources requested for HIPI. Approved by Intergroup
- The remaining groups are suggested to place orders to keep a balance of literature and advise everyone to note there is a two month lead time

Website

- Will do a separate page for the round up.
- Will update the Thursday meeting that has been stopped.

Newsletter

- Will go out in September
- Contributions can be sent to the address on the Singapore A.A. web page
- Get all folks and sponsees to send content. Extra material can be used in future

Hospitals & Institutions/Public Information

- Family services Boon Lay event in August 4 people.
- Posters for public places agreed but add Alcoholics Anonymous, check the Tamil translation and an English subtext regarding anonymity. Intergroup approved.
- SACIC will display stuff and forward contacts to A.A..
- Special workshop at We CARE for health care workers proposed. Intergroup approved. Event 26th of Sept.
- Will check prisons next
- Will look for members to sign up as volunteer contacts/temporary sponsors etc.
- No responses from Polyclinics, Universities etc. will visit them with posters.
- Will add HIPI update for newsletter.

Mongolia

- Member reimbursed who could not go. Still checking two preapproved volunteers for September trip

Events and Social Committees

- Out of town speakers confirmed
- Still need location for Fri. Jan. 30 18:00 until 23:00, Sat. 31 9:00 until 18:00 and Sun. Feb. 1 9:00 until 15:00. Some places can't book yet. Many checked but any suggestions welcome
- Need auditorium for 200 to 250 with PA and a breakout for 50
- Next meeting Aug. 23 11:30. Follow up with Event Chair if interested
- Round up at we care 25th October one day event 9:30-17:00 Intergroup approved
- Member updated good turn out last social event last Sat in September will be East Coast BBQ.

Serenity Prayer and Meeting Adjourned

Next Meeting: Saturday October 11th, at Damien Hall 12:30PM

While it sleeps

Mad, shrill voices in my head
Telling me I'm better of dead
Feelings of discomfort and despair
Hopes and dreams beyond repair

While it sleeps I'm up all night
Can't seem to find a way to make it right...

The sun, I know, will rise again
To start this life, anew, and then
New hope from friend, from God, my soul
To pray for peace and kindness. Make me whole

While I sleep, it's up all night
Licks it's wounds, it lost this fight
Today

I found my way, this life is mine
I experience it only, a day at a time
Sometimes quickly, sometime slow
I'll wake the same, get up and go

Tony L.

In My Skin

This is my choice – recovery
and no one can take it
away from me.
Yeah this is my epiphany
and I finally see
with eyes open wide in the light of enlightenment
that I'm no longer willing to be
a victim of my own misery
cause somewhere inside my insides
I know
there's a better way to go
so I let it go
and surrender myself
to this fight for my life
for the rest of my life
and it starts with today
me looking for a way
to look at myself and say
I'm OK, I'm enough
in this moment I don't have to be
more or less or anything else
other than myself
which is more
than I ever imagined or hoped for.

This is my choice – recovery
and no one can take it
away from me.
Yeah, this is my epiphany
and I finally see
with eyes open wide in the light of enlightenment
that I can stand to be me
be with me and actually enjoy

my own company
'cause I love who I am
and who I am becoming
and all that I'm achieving right now
and I am reaching out for help
letting love in, letting life in making
myself available to be vulnerable
and for the first time experiencing
the beauty of honesty in the company
of another.

This is my choice – recovery
and no one can take it away from me.
Yeah, this is my epiphany
and I finally see
with eyes open wide in the light of enlightenment
that I am stronger
when I am tender
with my heart, my dreams, my psyche
setting myself free
to embrace my humanity
in all of its glorious imperfection
and my mistakes are my connection
to this world that I live in
lessons in humility reminding me
it's better to give than receive
and to seek the opportunity
to love, to understand, to forgive
and to accept without condition
life in my skin.

This is my epiphany I finally see.

CRV

Hospitals & Institutions/Public Information Committee

Greetings from the Hospitals & Institutions/Public Information Committee! Here is a short update to let you know what we've been up to over the last couple of months.

Community Outreach

The Boon Lay Family Services Centre reached out to us, as they were concerned about some problem drinkers in their community. We will be looking to arrange a panel with them to create awareness about A.A. to local social workers and counselors.

The Singapore National Library has agreed to a donation of the A.A. Big Book to be made available to the public.

Promises Healthcare invited us to send an A.A. member to speak about their experience in recovery with Dr. Winslow on 938 Live radio on the 11th of September- the discussion was a success.

The National Addictions Management team invited us to participate in the National Addictions Awareness Day for the second time this year- we have declined to take part, however we are arranging to donate literature and pamphlets for the event.

Cooperation with the Professional Community

We are hosting a workshop for 40 healthcare professionals on the 26th of September. The new WECARE Centre has kindly agreed to accommodate us. This will include information about A.A., a demonstration meeting, a Q&A panel and a chance to make contacts in the medical/psychology professions.

SACAC (The Singapore American Community Action Council) Counseling organisation has agreed to display literature and pamphlets on their premises. They will also be helping us to make first contact with counseling departments of international schools.

We have designed posters that will provide contact information for A.A., and we will be contacting doctors offices, hospitals, counseling practices and the like to try and obtain their permission to display the posters on their premises. **Please see one of the HIPI Committee if you would like to take a poster and some information leaflets for your doctor!**

Stay posted for your meeting announcements for exciting upcoming projects!

Humility

I was escorted to my first A.A. meeting following a three day non-stop binge. I must have presented a pitiful picture: bloodshot eyes, still mostly drunk and trembling — strange ‘music’ was echoing through my head. But then, after a few weeks, I felt returned to my proper position as center of the universe. When someone told me I was the most important person in the meeting I could see they were absolutely right; I would never let on, but I somehow ‘knew’ that it was *all* about me!

After a few marbles started spinning the same direction, I realized that it was time everyone in the rooms realized just how smart I really was; I began discussing my opinion concerning atoms, molecules, the speed of light and all things metaphysical (whatever that means). Just imagine my shock when Jack, a person I greatly respected, followed my share by stating: *“When I talk, I try to make sense.”* That hurt my feelings!

A few weeks thereafter, at a Hollywood meeting, someone shared a physical problem. So, I just popped up and told of a certain drug I had read about that would probably work wonders. I was proud of myself! That is, till the next person shared that he had indeed tried that same drug in San Francisco, then decided to jump off the Golden Gate Bridge. Oops!

Someone wrote that we spend the first half of our lives building up our protective false self (ego) — and the second half getting rid of it. Well, after a few years of living the A.A. program of action (Twelve-Steps) I began to see myself for what I really was — just another drunk, lucky to be sober by the grace of God! Bill W. wrote: *“Humility is the ability to see who and what we really are, coupled by the willingness to become what God will have us be.”*

I once wondered how high up I could go in A.A.: A GSR,? — A DCM? — An Area Delegate to NY? — A Trustee? Then came the down-to-earth answer: **Sober!** Sober is the highest level any of us can obtain in A.A.. This realization should infuse continual humility into my deepest self — but it probably won’t.

Bob S., Richmond, IN

Your life does not get better by chance, it gets better by change. ~ Jim Rohn

You’re braver than you believe, and stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think. ~ A.A. Milne

I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel ~ Maya Angelou

Just Me

Just me I wake up in the morning and I wear a suit and tie
Think about the day and I just want to cry
Nothing seems to matter. No one seems to care. Things aren't going as they should.
It's just too hard to bear

And It's just me. Me you don't want to see Just me.
No friends no peace no way out Absent from life.
My job my life my joy
If I could run a thousand miles away
I still can't get far enough from me
Pathetic sad and lonely. Too drunk to face life.

Maybe I should stop. Find a way to stay dry
Can't make it through the day. I don't know why
I can't stop picking up. I've tried. Denied
Myself of hopes and dreams. Can't be relied (upon)
(and) it's just me. Me against the world
What an awful combination. I cannot stand
The roar. The voices telling me I'm lost
No more strength. It's gone. It's done. That's it.
If I could have a thousand. It would never be enough
Time to end this disaster. Times up.

I prayed.

And now it's just me. And a whole lot of friends .
In these rooms. No one else can experience
My life the way it is. But I got strength and hope
From you. And from a higher power.
It flows over me. Like water in a stream
Like leaves in autumn. Like wind through the hills

Tony L

Close the door, change the record, clean the house. Stop being who you were, become who you are. ~ *Paul Coelho*

Ego says: "Once everything falls into place, I will find peace." Spirit says: "find peace, and everything will fall into place." ~ *Marianne Williamson.*

Step One – A reminder

I was a few days sober and floating on a pink cloud. I sat in a counseling circle in the treatment center along with five or six other outpatients. When it was my turn to speak, I said, "I feel so good, I know I'll never drink again." The woman that ran the center, an ex-heroin junkie from New York with a pronounced lack of tolerance for newcomer bullshit, said, "That's just ego Jeff, we don't say crap like that in here. You have no idea what you will or won't do in the future. Better you stay out of the future and concentrate on what you need to do to stay sober today." Step One reminds me that the very first thing I need to do to stay sober today is to remember **I have a disease that will kill me if I give it half a chance.**

I've seen what happens to alcoholics who forget. At almost every meeting here in the US, I hear of people going out, some with significant time on the program. Most report they stopped going to meetings first, but not all of them. One guy shared that he just woke up with a drink in his hand. Step One helps me remember I am not bullet proof. I am not immune from picking up a drink even though I haven't had one in a while.

My brain will never forget the relief I felt from alcohol. My cares and concerns melted away after a few drinks. I am rubbed raw from my wife's illness. Step One helps me remember I am in a vulnerable place and without spiritual help I do not have the strength to resist the relief that alcohol promises. Gratefully I have tools that will get me through anything that life throws at me without a drink, but I won't pick up the tools and use them if I forget Step One.

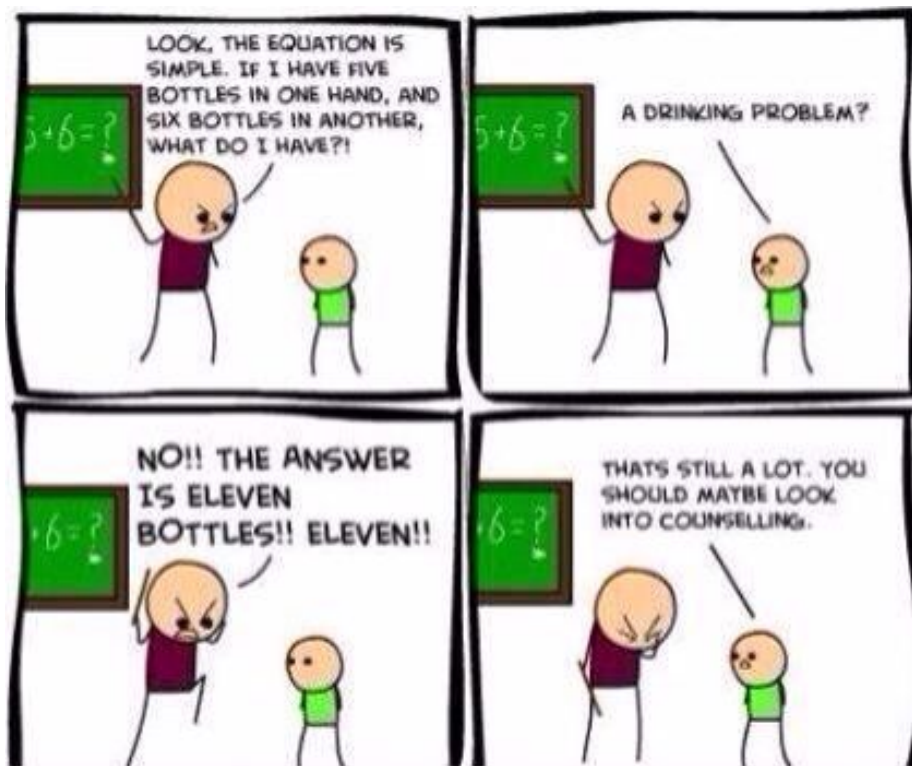
Anonymous

Inspiring & Insightful Recovery Catchphrases

Thanks to Fellow Sita S. who has shared some A.A. and related sayings which have helped her during recovery. Please forward any sayings, phrases or slogans that you think may also help others to newsletter@singaporeaa.org and we will make this a regular feature.

- QTIP... Quit Taking It Personally!
- PPP...Pause, Pray and then Proceed
- ASAP...Always Say A Prayer
- The joy is in the journey...and the ride is something else!
- Uncover...discover....and discard!

- I came for my drinking and I stayed for my thinking...
- A.A. is not for people who need it...it's for people who want it...
- GOD... Good Orderly Direction
- HOW...Honesty, Openness and Willingness
- My attitude is gratitude...and deciding which bridge to burn and which to build
- Recovery is a process not a destination
- Let my higher power direct my day!
- God gives us what we need not what we want.
- Be a reflection of what you'd like to see in others!



Singapore Social and Events Committee

Social Committee

Alcoholics Anonymous Singapore holds monthly events. The next scheduled event is on 27 September 2014 – East Coast BBQ and Cycling. Details in relation to this social gathering, which includes contact information can be found at www.Singaporeaa.org. Please check back regularly for details of further upcoming events.

Event Committee

Mini Roundup

Singapore A.A. is putting on this special Mini Roundup on 25 October 2014 including speakers. The aim of this event is to help alcoholics stay sober, improve on their quality of recovery and learn more about the program of action outlined in the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous. Further details are available at www.Singaporeaa.org.

A.A. Roundup 2015 - Keep It Simple Singapore

AA Round Up 2015

January 30-February 1, 2015

A weekend of fun, fellowship and laughter.

Open to all those with a desire to stop drinking, and to those who would like to hear more about how we recovered.

Tickets for registration are FREE! There will be a charge for Gala Banquet, prices will be determined once location is confirmed.

Registration is required and will close at 250 people.

There will be a gala banquet, AA workshops and speakers from AA and AI-anon.

Gala Banquet: Friday, January 30th, 7pm-10pm

Round Up: Saturday, January 31st, 10am-5pm

Round Up: Sunday, February 1st, 10am-2pm

Guest AA Speakers Include

Kevin H. from New York, USA & Lorraine L. from Aberdeen, UK

For more information please contact us at events@singaporeaa.org

Some Upcoming A.A. Events in the Region

6th Annual International A.A. Convention in Hong Kong 2014 – Into Action

7th to 9th November 2014

<http://www.hkconvention.org>

52nd New Zealand Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous We are not a glum lot”

16th to 18th January 2015.

<http://www.A.A.convention.org.nz>

3rd Annual Asia Convention of Young People in Alcoholics Anonymous

10th- 12th October 2014

<http://azypA.A..org/wordpress/>

19th International Fall Roundup – Angeles City, Philippines

10th – 12th October 2014

<http://roundupangelescity.wordpress.com>

18th Annual Western Area Conference of Young People in Alcoholics Anonymous – Hawaii

18th – 21st December 2014

<http://www.wacypA.A.18.org>

2015 Annual Thailand Roundup – Pattaya

6th – 8th February 2015

<http://thailandroundup.weebly.com/the-roundup.html>

I sought my soul, but my soul I could not see. I sought my God, but my God eluded me. I sought my brother and I found all three ...Martin Luther King Jr.

The secret of change is to focus all of your energy, not on the fighting the old, but on building the new. ~ Socrates

Whenever you find yourself doubting how far you can go, just remember how far you have come. Remember everything you have faced, all the battles you have won, and all the fears you have overcome. ~ unknown

Live without pretending, love without depending, listen without defending, speak without offending. ~ Drake

Singapore A.A. Weekly Meeting Schedule

(please see website for directions)

Monday	07.15 - 08.00 AM	Men's Meeting	Closed	Marina Bay City Gallery
	07.30 - 08.30 AM	Big Book Study	Closed	Boat Quay
	12:30 - 01:30 PM	Daily Reflections	Open	Damien Hall
	12:30 - 01:30 PM	Big Book Study	Open	East Coast
	07:00 - 08:00 PM	Daily Reflections	Closed	Damien Hall
	07:15 - 08:15 PM	Big Book Study	Closed	Waterfalls Student Centre
	08:05 - 09:05 PM	Beginners Meeting	Open	Damien Hall
Tuesday	07:30 - 08:30 AM	Speaker Meeting	Closed	Boat Quay
	12:30 - 01:30 PM	Big Book	Closed	Damien Hall
	07:00 - 08:00 PM	Daily Reflections	Closed	Damien Hall
	07:00 - 08:30 PM	11th Step Meeting	Closed	Novena Medical Centre
	07:00 - 08:00 PM	Open Topics	Open	NAMS Clinic, IMH
Wednesday	07.30 - 08.30 AM	Just for Today	Closed	Boat Quay
	12:30 - 01:30 PM	Daily Reflections	Open	Damien Hall
	12:30 - 01:30 PM	Living Sober	Open	East Coast
	07:00 - 08:00 PM	Speaker Meeting	Closed	Damien Hall
	08:15 - 09:15 PM	Women's Step Study	Closed	Damien Hall
Thursday	07:30 - 08:30 AM	12 & 12	Closed	Boat Quay
	12:30 - 01:30 PM	Daily Reflections	Closed	Damien Hall
	12:30 - 01:30 PM	Step Study	Closed	East Coast
	07:00 - 08:00 PM	12 & 12	Closed	Damien Hall
	07:30 - 08:30 PM	Speakers Meeting	Closed	World Peace Cafe
	08:10 - 09:00 PM	Big Book	Closed	Damien Hall
Friday	07.15 - 08.00 AM	Mens Meeting	Closed	Marina Bay City Gallery
	07:30 - 08:30 AM	Beginners Meeting	Open	Boat Quay
	12:30 - 01:30 PM	12 & 12	Closed	Damien Hall
	12:30 - 01:30 PM	Step 11 Meeting	Open	East Coast
	07:00 - 08:00 PM	Living Sober	Open	Damien Hall
	07:00 - 08:00 PM	Topics Meeting	Closed	8 Shenton Way
Saturday	08:00 - 09:00 AM	Big Book Meeting	Closed	Mana Mana Beach Club
	08:30 - 09:30 AM	Gratitude Meeting	Closed	Boat Quay
	10:00 - 11:00 AM	Women's Meeting	Closed	Boat Quay
	04:30 - 05:30 PM	Daily Reflections	Closed	Damien Hall
	04:30 - 05:30 PM	Daily Reflections	Closed	We Care - Eunos
	07:00 - 08:30 PM	Saturday Night Live	Open	Damien Hall
Sunday	08:00 - 09:00 AM	Men's Meeting	Open	Starbucks 313 Orchard
	08:00 - 09:00 AM	Beginners Meeting	Open	Mana Mana Beach Club
	09:00 - 10:00 AM	LGBT Meeting	Closed	Oogachaga
	11:00 - 12:00 PM	Step Meeting	Closed	We Care - Eunos
	06:30 - 07:45 PM	Big Book	Closed	Damien Hall

Do you have a problem with alcohol?

1 - Have you ever decided to stop drinking for a week or so, but only lasted for a couple of days?

Most of us in A.A. made all kinds of promises to ourselves and to our families. We could not keep them. Then we came to A.A. A.A. said: "Just try not to drink today." (If you do not drink today, you cannot get drunk today.)

Yes No

2 - Do you wish people would mind their own business about your drinking-- stop telling you what to do?

In A.A. we do not tell anyone to do anything. We just talk about our own drinking, the trouble we got into, and how we stopped. We will be glad to help you, if you want us to.

Yes No

3 - Have you ever switched from one kind of drink to another in the hope that this would keep you from getting drunk?

We tried all kinds of ways. We made our drinks weak. Or just drank beer. Or we did not drink cocktails. Or only drank on weekends. You name it, we tried it. But if we drank anything with alcohol in it, we usually got drunk eventually.

Yes No

4 - Have you had to have an eye-opener upon awakening during the past year?

Do you need a drink to get started, or to stop shaking? This is a pretty sure sign that you are not drinking "socially."

Yes No

5 - Do you envy people who can drink without getting into trouble?

At one time or another, most of us have wondered why we were not like most people, who really can take it or leave it.

Yes No

6 - Have you had problems connected with drinking during the past year?

Be honest! Doctors say that if you have a problem with alcohol and keep on drinking, it will get worse -- never better. Eventually, you will die, or end up in an institution for the rest of your life. The only hope is to stop drinking.

Yes No

7 - Has your drinking caused trouble at home?

Before we came into A.A., most of us said that it was the people or problems at home that made us drink. We could not see that our drinking just made everything worse. It never solved problems anywhere or anytime.

Yes No

8 - Do you ever try to get "extra" drinks at a party because you do not get enough?

Most of us used to have a "few" before we started out if we thought it was going to be that kind of party. And if drinks were not served fast enough, we would go some place else to get more.

Yes No

9 - Do you tell yourself you can stop drinking any time you want to, even though you keep getting drunk when you don't mean to?

Many of us kidded ourselves into thinking that we drank because we wanted to. After we came into A.A., we found out that once we started to drink, we couldn't stop.

Yes No

10 - Have you missed days of work or school because of drinking?

Many of us admit now that we "called in sick" lots of times when the truth was that we were hung-over or on a drunk.

Yes No

11 - Do you have "blackouts"?

A "blackout" is when we have been drinking hours or days which we cannot remember. When we came to A.A., we found out that this is a pretty sure sign of alcoholic drinking.

Yes No

12 - Have you ever felt that your life would be better if you did not drink?

Many of us started to drink because drinking made life seem better, at least for a while. By the time we got into A.A., we felt trapped. We were drinking to live and living to drink. We were sick and tired of being sick and tired.

Yes No

Reprinted from "Is A.A. for You?", with permission of A.A. World Services, Inc."

+65 6475 0890 for further assistance
Or email us at help@Singaporeaa.org