

## Resentment

### *I Love Therefore, I Resent*

Ruben G.

Six years ago I came to the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous with many a character defect, some of which I was not even aware existed. However, one of my defects did not get any real playing time until after I got sober. That defect would be resentment.

Prior to getting sober, like some drunks, I suppose, I didn't care about anyone one enough to ever really get upset with them. I still managed to ruin a good number of relationships, some without even saying a word. My sister and I did not speak for almost 18 months because I didn't want discuss our differences. Upon getting sober I started to realize that I had "feelings," and that dealing with these "feelings" wasn't always easy for me. I seemed to be pretty volatile through the first three to four years of my sobriety, and it didn't take much to set me off. Little by little I began to discover why I had become so resentful (thanks to step work) and a good deal of it slipped away. There was no more plotting against co-workers, no yelling at pedestrians crossing the street, no walking out of AA business meetings in disgust—and I can honestly say that it's been almost two years since I have threatened anyone with violence. For all of this I am truly grateful.

It would almost seem that the general public is now safe from my insanity, unless one of you within the general public should be someone I know and hold dear to me. So why is it easier for me to deal with someone cutting me off on the Dan Ryan? How is it I can deal with my high-stress job without going postal? All this progress with getting over the "hate," but so little tolerance for those that mean the

most to me. Not to share my 5th step and to protect the names of the innocent I will speak in a general way about what's going on in my head and how I deal with the resentments.

I suffer from placing unrealistic expectations on those who are close to me; I place them on members of my family and on close friends (and yes, a couple of sponsees). It's not like I'm trying to be that director guy in the Big Book; that would require me to take action, and as I said, it's an unrealistic expectation—which means that none of these folks are even aware of what's going on in my head or the expectation that I placed on them. So, of course, when they don't do what I want them to do, I freak out. Although not always out loud, because that would again require action, and if you haven't figured it out yet I have communication deficiencies. It's when I don't communicate that these resentments begin to fester. To be fair, not all of these resentments consume me, and most of them are so trivial that they go away fairly quickly. However, they are resentments, and if not treated immediately they can be fatal. Our literature tells us so. *Resentments are the number one offender.*

Well, our literature also states that self-knowledge avails us nothing. So what I do with this bit of self-knowledge? I know you're probably thinking, "Work some more steps, psycho," and you would be correct. Some of the other things that seem to have worked are constant work with others, calling my sponsor, and going to a ton of meetings. Yes, it's that easy (not)! I've been told countless times that if I'm not thinking about myself I can't be upset with you. I have also been blessed with very forgiving friends, family members, and wife who allow me to make my mistakes and thankfully learn from them as well.

### *Letting Go*

Sara U.

One would think that the pain and the suffering you carry with you when you walk through the doors of Alcoholics Anonymous would be an easy thing to give up. Isn't that why we're here, after all? But for me, I was like a child being asked to give up my security blanket; or my dirty but well-loved teddy bear with its stuffing insides spilling out—too many memories and comforts to be easily tossed aside. The idea of letting go of that pain and that misery held a lot of fear for me. And, as in most cases, my fear blossomed into a full-on resentment. I became bitter and angry, and lashed out towards the people in AA; after all, they couldn't possibly understand the extent of what they were asking me to give up. That pain had been my source of inspiration and my creative channel for years. I had been writing and publishing work that thrived off my tears and my angst—and now I was supposed to break free from these things? Shed that old skin and step into a new dawn? How could I? So I held onto my anger and my depression in early sobriety because it was the only thing I had left. Who would I be if I just "let go"? So I kept people, AA, and happiness at arm's length for as long as I could, but somehow I had managed to land myself in the midst of a strong homegroup. The women were full of patience and love, and even better still, tons of experience and much needed hope. Even though I wasn't entirely comfortable with the idea of being happy yet, I started to open my mind to the prospect. So it seemed, in the midst of this environment, there was not much I could do to stop the progression of my own recovery. I started to relax. I became "softer." I slowly released my grip on what I thought was my "dark, brooding soul, beauty in the macabre" image (keep in mind I was 19 when I got sober, and teenage angst was very en vogue). Sadly, I

also stopped writing. I just lost it. I couldn't find any material to work with, and my attempts at healthy, well-adjusted prose were flopping like a fish out of water, which is what I felt like—scared, desperate not to lose what I thought was my only claim to talent and self-identity. But I had so many other things to think about, being newly sober, rejoining society, learning to shower, brush my teeth, and hold a conversation. I tried to accept that I might never write again, but I was angry at AA for the sacrifice that I had had to make. I had no concept yet of the phrase "When God closes a door she opens a window." I thought that my creativity had died with sobriety. I was afraid I was to be left talentless and bland, but talent didn't leave—it just shifted. Sobriety has opened the door to other interests today. At four months of sobriety I started attending college, taking a few design classes, and I fell in love with it. I was re-inspired and I found there a fulfillment unsurpassed by anything I had experienced before. I am so grateful to have found a new path. My emotional and sobriety growth is reflected in my work today just as my pain was expressed through my writing prior to sobriety. I can see the world in color today, and I can create work that is healthy and happy—and I'm okay with that! That existence that I was so loathe to give up has been replaced with a life that is infinitely more satisfying than anything I could have planned on my own. I never know what to expect in this journey of sobriety, but when I finally let go and let God, I am never let down!

Tell us about "what it was like, what happened and what it is like now." In upcoming issues, Here's How will publish your stories about:

#### **Growth**

June – July Issue

Last day for submission: April 30th

#### **Hope**

August – September Issue

Last day for submission: June 30th

#### **Serenity**

October – November Issue

Last day for submission: August 31st

#### **We are Not a Glum Lot**

December – January Issue

Last day for submission: October 31st

## We Are Responsible!

*"Our spiritual way of life is safe for future generations if, as a society we resist the temptation to receive money from the outside world. But this leaves us with the responsibility – one that every member ought to understand – our groups, our areas, and AA as a whole will not function unless our services are sufficient and their bills are paid."*

Bill W., 1957

Dear Chicago Area Fellowship, I was sitting in a meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous a few weekends ago and the speaker introduced himself. He started to tell his story and emphasized one of the many reasons why your Chicago Area Service Office is here. He talked about how he called the Chicago Area Service Office over a year ago for help. He went on to mention that he talked to one of our telephone volunteers and she set him up with a 12-step call. He was met by a man in his area at what would be his first meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous. The man that 12-stepped him is now his sponsor. This man went on to express his gratitude that someone was at the office to take his call, talk with him, understand him. What was most apparent to me was the gleam in his eyes as he went on to tell how his life is now. He is not the man he used to be and likes the man that he is becoming. This is just one of many stories about your Central Service Office. The Chicago Area Service Office is the nerve center of the Chicagoland Area Alcoholics Anonymous. I cannot begin to tell you all that we do here. I know that our primary purpose is to carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous; this includes helping

you carry the message to those that are still suffering. After all, we are responsible... when anyone, anywhere reaches out for help, we want the hand of A. A. always to be there. And for that we are responsible. I have finally found a place where I know that I belong; I have never felt that way before. One of the greatest joys in my life is to know that we are doing our utmost to ensure that others get the help that they need. We have a fully functional bookstore (which I encourage you to visit) and a website that can help preserve the anonymity of our Fellowship. Most importantly we have the Fellowship, without whom we would not have a purpose. We are all indebted to our sobriety just as the Chicago Area Service Office is indebted to the Fellowship. Without you, we would not be here.

This spring please dig a little bit deeper, even if it is only your spare change. You can take up a special collection at your next meeting. Even telling another person about our office lets those around you know that we are here. Most of all, please remember all the wonderful gifts sobriety has given you. Help spread those gifts so we can continue to realize our responsibility, to be here for those that reach out for help. My hand will be extended. Will yours?

Chicago Area Service Office Manager

Here are some of the things we do with your support in our 12-Step Work.\*

\* We manage some 26,000 help line phone calls a year, 24/7/365. That's 70+ calls per day from people in need. AA's who need help—get it fast from us.

\* We have a database of 1,700 12-Step volunteers who directly help

alcoholics when they're most in need.

\* Our Bookstore offers hundreds of AA (and some related non-AA literature titles) in virtually every major language. Bookstore prices are practically at cost so that no AA is ever locked out of AA literature because of cost.

\* Our Website (actually, it's your Website) generates over 1 million hits/visitors per year! It's the most complete AA outreach you can imagine.

\* We publish, in house, some 4,195 pages of AA literature a year.

\* We host and manage a large community of dedicated AA volunteers. Your volunteers add value and are absolutely indispensable to the cause of AA in Chicagoland.

\* Your Chicago Central Office hosts 7 AA meetings a week. That's 336 per year, or approximately 16,000 attendees go through these friendly rooms!

\* We also host nearly 150 Chicago area AA Committee meetings per year.

\* An average of over 8,000 attend the All-Chicago open, facilitated by your Chicago office and the All Chicago Open Committee.

Data Provided March, 2005-March, 2006

You can tell from the above that we're totally enthusiastic about delivering service to AA's in Chicago and around the world. We need to keep this momentum going. We need your help to keep up with our many missions.

## CASO Corner

Spring is here, and we in the Central Office send you many warm spring greetings. I hope we are all over the ravages of winter by this time and ready to get out and enjoy the gifts we have been given.

Spring brings the Spring Special Contribution Campaign. This year's campaign is focusing on responsibility. "We Are Responsible" to the alcoholic who still suffers and to the public at large. We are asking every Group to make a special donation this spring to support the Central Office above and beyond what they normally contribute. We also want to encourage everyone to have all their groups make a contribution. Only about 1 group in every 4 makes donations to the Chicago Area. We would like every Group to participate and be part of the great whole that is the Alcoholics Anonymous Fellowship. Special contribution envelopes are being sent to each Group, but you can mail in your contribution any way you want. Please indicate that this is for the Spring Special Contribution Campaign.

Your Chicago Area Service Office has undergone some changes; yes, the thing that this alcoholic dreads the most, change. As many of you may already know our, Office Manager Bruce P. resigned as of December 01, 2005. I, Laura G. was your acting Office Manager. After an extensive search by the Finance Committee, I am proud to announce to you our new Office Manager, ME! I was hired by Bruce Parry as the bookkeeper over two years ago. I have since then been promoted to Bookstore Manager along with the added title of Assistant Office Manager. I have been given the wonderful opportunity to serve this fellowship that I love so much and I will continue to do so. Along with this promotion there has also been another promotion. Geoff C., your Group Fellowship and Services Coordinator, has added Assistant Office Manager to his title. The Bookstore is being operated by two part-time employees, Peter H. and Thomas G., who has recently joined our team just over two months ago. Our Operations Manager continues to be Michael M., and Nellie P. con-

tinues to be our receptionist.

Currently in the Bookstore we hold monthly specials, so please contact us to find out what they are. We are in the latter stages of on-line Bookstore orders. We currently accept orders over the phone (312) 346-8451, fax (312) 346-5477 by e-mail at [bookstore@chicagoaa.org](mailto:bookstore@chicagoaa.org) or you can always mail in your order. We have catalogs available to guide your literature purchases.

It is that time of year. We are currently planning The Spring Thing event for all AA members who volunteer at the Central Office. All the Office Volunteers are invited. It will be during the week of Monday, May 22nd to Friday, May 26th. Last year we had a Pizza Party. Let us know what you want and when. I hope we'll see ALL the volunteers here at CASO!

## CHICAGO AREA SERVICE OFFICE

200 N. Michigan Avenue, Suite 501  
Chicago, IL 60601  
telephone: 312-346-1475  
also  
800-371-1475  
facsimile: 312-346-5477  
e-mail: [caso@chicagoAA.org](mailto:caso@chicagoAA.org)  
website: <http://www.chicagoAA.org>

## Here's How Newsletter

Here's How is published six times a year by the Chicago Area Service Assembly (CASA) of AA in the interest of greater unity of the 75,000+ members and 3,200+ groups in the Chicago/ Suburban Area.

Address all communications to:  
Here's How  
200 N. Michigan Avenue, Suite 501  
Chicago, IL 60601  
or  
e-mail: [hereshow@chicagoAA.org](mailto:hereshow@chicagoAA.org)

- Opinions expressed herein are individual and do not necessarily reflect the thinking of AA or CASA as a whole.
- The mailing list of Here's How subscribers is not made available for sale to any outside entity.
- The suggested contribution to Here's How is only \$5.00 annually. A contribution form can be found on the back of this issue.

Alcoholics Anonymous and AA are registered trademarks of AA World Services, Inc

## *A Blessing From Our Higher Power*

Ed L.

I was in Arizona on a business trip. After a full day of business meetings I was a bit down because I did not have any Friday evening plans nor anyone to have dinner with. Late that afternoon in phone calls with my AA sponsor, Steve, and with my wife, Judy, I was strongly encouraged by each of them to attend an AA meeting. I responded to their suggestions by complaining that I might have a hard time finding the meeting place because the town did not have well-marked streets nor good lighting at night. However, I did, reluctantly, make a call and found out that there was a meeting at a church fairly close to the hotel. As I drove to find the church I must have passed the turnoff because I had driven much too far down the road. Feeling very frustrated and annoyed, I turned my car into a store parking lot and went in thinking I would buy some soda and snacks, and then go back to the hotel and watch TV in my hotel room all night.

As I stood in the store looking at a display case filled with snacks I felt strangely "prompted from within" to ask a woman standing near me if she happened to know where the church was. She turned and looked at me for a moment and then discreetly inquired, "Are you a friend of Dr. Bob and Bill W?" I felt amazed by her response; finally I said, "Yes they are my good friends!" The woman went on to tell me that the Friday church meeting was her "home meeting" but she was not able to attend that evening. She gave me clear directions. I thanked her and left the store. Then I quickly found the church. When I walked into the room there were about 100 people at the meeting and I could see only one chair that was unoccupied in the entire room. The meeting had begun and someone was speaking. I quietly walked to the empty chair and as I sat down I said to the man next to me, "Hi, I'm Ed". The man said "Hi, I'm Jerry" and we shook hands. I felt stunned to realize that I actually knew this man! I quietly leaned to him and said, "You used to go to AA meetings in the Chicago area, right?" The man turned, carefully looked at me,

suddenly smiled and said, "Oh my God! You are Eddy!" We happily hugged! Steve, my sponsor, this man, Jerry, and I had attended AA meetings together for about ten years, approximately nine years earlier! Jerry had moved out of town and we had lost contact. This was only the second time Jerry had gone to this meeting. He had "felt strangely prompted to go" and had suddenly made a last-minute decision to attend! I found out that I was at a once-a-month Potluck Dinner meeting. After the formal meeting ended many friendly AA members came over, greeted me, and welcomed me to stay for the dinner.

Later Jerry and I talked outside. I shared about Steve's difficult battle with cancer and the fact that he was in the very same hospital where our meetings had been for all those years. I suggested that I call Steve and let Jerry talk to him. I told Jerry that often in the evening it might be hard to get Steve on the phone because he might be undergoing various medical procedures, but I made the call anyway. To my delight Steve immediately answered the phone and was able to talk! Steve and Jerry had a wonderful via the phone reunion! When I got back on the phone Steve's comment was, "Well, we all sure got a Surprise Gift from our Higher Power!" The Potluck dinner at the meeting was delicious and the camaraderie was fantastic! To think, I had not wanted to go to an AA meeting because I was concerned that perhaps I'd have a hard time finding the place and I had been feeling down because I had no one to go to dinner with! My Higher Power certainly surprised me with amazingly loving gifts: clear directions from a kind AA member, sincere AA sharing at the meeting followed by great food, a fantastic reunion with an AA friend, and a miraculously supportive/meaningful phone conversation for Steve and Jerry. Before going back to my hotel room Jerry and I made plans to meet the next day for lunch. When we met we talked more about Steve and prayed for him and his family. We reminisced about our fantastic years of meetings together, shared about where each of us was in our lives, we also had some laughs, and then we did some amazingly beautiful sightseeing. Our time together was just great! Upon returning back home when I visited Steve in the hospital

he told me what a wonderful gift it was to him to have the opportunity to reconnect via the phone call with his AA buddy Jerry. Steve died soon after this reunion experience. One of our last conversations was about how grateful he was because AA had given him twenty-four fantastic years of sobriety and friendships. I have no doubt that Steve went on and met his Higher Power in person. Thanks, my good buddy Steve, for all the sponsor support and friendship you gave me for 21 years! I believe in the future in eternity we will have a grand AA reunion. Our Higher Power, as the Big Book indicates, works miracles in our lives when we are "willing to go to any lengths to work the program." And to think I didn't want to go to a meeting that evening. Look what I would have missed! Thank you, Higher Power!

---

## *Sick*

Lex S.

I'm sick. No, not that kind of sick. I know. I know I'm alcoholic, so I'm mentally sick for the rest of my life. But as I'm writing this in my 12X12 bedroom on Huron Street I'm drinking the Howard Stern endorsed Air-borne vitamin supplement that, theoretically, will clear up this stubborn, ambiguous, aching, sluggish, headache, half-flu sickness that I probably picked up from the train, or that one disease packing dollar bill, or it could be my body telling my alcoholic mind that I must chill-out because it simply can't go on with all this stress. I tell you, it's mad in here sometimes, just mad.

I'm sick. When I'm sick, the ol' sloth-man comes out and says, "Hello. I love to sit and watch movies and do absolutely nothing and that's what you're going to do for the rest of your evening, so get ready for it." My roommate is out of apartment with her mother picking up groceries and getting a bite to eat, so I should be fine for a nice flick from the On Demand service that I never get to use because my roommate watches TV every night. Oh, you thought I'd forgotten this was about resentments. No buddy. And there's noth-

ing like resentments against a roommate, now is there? I choose *Trainspotting*—not sure why. I like the next drug infested picture as much as the next alcoholic, but I'm not a habitual watcher. Maybe because I knew I'd seen the movie well before I got sober and all I could remember was the protagonist's swim in the most disgusting toilet bowl in Scotland. Who knows? The point is I'm digging it. The guys in *Trainspotting* are on heroin. I did a lot of coke but no heroin, so the skinny Scottish twenty-somethings shooting up dope isn't pushing any buttons or triggering the sweats like *Scarface* or *Blow*. Can't hardly watch those two. The Scottish scenery is bringing back my travels abroad last summer. I remember the country; the barren hills, with green grass and no trees. I remember the stark towns with their grey, granite block buildings. I remember the repeat breakfasts (I was served breakfast three times in Scotland: two sausage links, two eggs over well, beans, black pudding, and toast—same plate, same configuration, three times).

Boom, boom, boom, boom. What's this? Boom Boom Boom Boom. Did I mention that my roommate stomps? What's this? She can't be home this early. Boom. Boom. Boom. No. No. I never get to watch TV. Jingle, jingle, jingle. Hello roommate. Hello alcoholic resentments.

How can she get done with dinner that fast and why is her mother staying here for the night? Couldn't she get a hotel like my parents do when they come to town. I'm not turning this off. I'm watching it. Just try to make me turn it off.

Mom is in the room now. I know she won't like the language but I'm not turning it off.

Mom: "That must be one of those cop films. They must pay them by how many times they can use that word."

Well you better get used to it because I'm not turning it off.

Mom is now bringing her bags into the room. I'm not turning it off. The light comes on. Roommate is in the room. I'm not turning it off.

The Scottish guys have gotten clean and are living in London now! I was in London too! I'm not turning it off. I never get to watch movies. I shouldn't have moved in here. I don't need her money. I could pay utilities by myself. I'm definitely getting out of this lease next year. But where will she go. Will she be okay without me? She might get lonely. What will I do?????

I turn the movie off.

I turn the movie off and pick my dirty plate off the floor and walk into the kitchen. I say hi to mother and roommate. Slothman is saying, "What? No more movie? What are you doing?" Resentmentman is saying, "You know you want to kill, kill, kill. Or, at least let out a sigh loud enough for the neighbors to hear."

I put the dirty dish in the sink and run the water. Slothman is saying, "Dishes? You can't do dishes. As sick as you are, you're lucky you can walk."

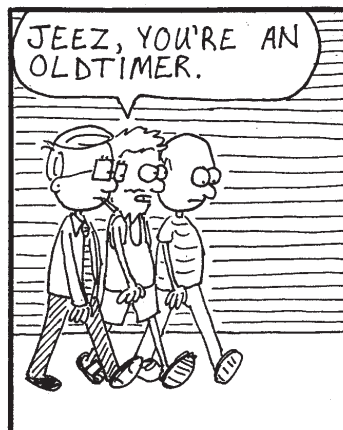
I wash the dishes. I'm not happy but I wash the dishes. Then I decide to write this column for Here's How. Slothman is saying, "Boy you're a lost cause."

As I'm writing I hear her say, "He sits for hours at the coffee shop on the corner," and I know she is talking about me. I don't know exactly why, but this makes everything okay, okay just for this evening.

To all readers:

We are currently in the process of cleaning up the Here's How subscriber list. Please refer to your subscription expiration date on the front of this issue to find your end date. Each \$5 donation to Here's How ensures you will continue to receive our area newsletter for one year. If you are near the end of your subscription's term, please consider sending another \$5 donation.

LIFE UNMANAGEABLE



www.lifeunmanageable.com

BY BEN

©BEN

*The Pain Would Not Go Away*

Jim R.

My name is Jim and I am an alcoholic. I'm 62 and retired. My sobriety date is January 5, 2003. I have suffered from episodes of depression since I was 12 years old. In my 30's, they would last sometimes up to six months. When they came, I thought they would stay forever; and when they left, I thought they would never return. I married a second time when I was 39. I fell in love with my best friend. I told her everything, even that I was an alcoholic. She knew I suffered from depression. She did not believe I was an alcoholic. She gave me financial security for the first time in my life. She treated each episode of my depression as if it were a common bout of the flu. Gradually, over four years, the depression became "normal". After that, I would have the "blues" every now and then. The episodes would last only a few days and then go away. For years before, I drank for relief from the pain and suffering. When I married again, and "got over" the depression, I drank to dilute the anger that broke out. Later, like all alcoholics, I drank because I had to. For three years, before I surrendered, not one day went by when I was not able not to drink. When I tried to quit and couldn't, I was devastated. For 26 years, I had said, "These AA's have no willpower. I can quit anytime. I just don't want to." For close to two years, I prayed each morning. For over two years, I read the Twenty-Four Hours A Day book. From time to time, I read Corinthians 1, Chapter 13, that begins, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity..." My first sponsor told me to read the Third Step Prayer and the Seventh Step Prayer even before I found God in the rooms. I attended about eight meetings a week; during my first year because I had to, during my second year and up until my last episode because I wanted to. An old-timer once growled at me, "I still go to meetings because I have to." My wife died in September two years ago. My last episode of depression hit me in February of last year and built up in intensity over a few days. I was all alone then, except for my AA friends, my pro-

gram, my Higher Power, my daughter who lives five miles away and a good friend who lives in the next state. When the depression struck and stayed, I was helpless.

I quit going to meetings. It was the worst episode in 18 years. The pain was unrelenting. It would not go away. I prayed with it. I went to meetings with it. I spoke about it, as it was with me. I went to bed with it. I woke up with it.

After about three weeks, one morning, I prayed, "Thank you, God, for this terrible depression." I said to myself, "That's nuts!" I quit praying. I quit my morning reading. Except for my home group, I asked my sponsor if he ever suffered from depression. He said, "Once, but I didn't like it, so I never did it again." I didn't think that was funny.

After about four weeks, I began to get used to it. I had been in bed then for two days, hiding. That morning, I said to myself, "I'll be in pain if I stay in bed and I'll be in pain if I get dressed. I might as well get dressed." That became my turning point. I got dressed. I called my family doctor and, to my surprise, I got an appointment the very next day for my annual check-up.

I called my therapist whom I had not seen since my wife died. She also could see me the every next day deliver meals to the home bound, one day a week; but, not this week. I called and said I was coming down with the flu. The director said, "It's more important, this week, that you take care of yourself than deliver meals." I felt relief for the first time in over a month. I had decided to face the pain and do something, anyway.

I had no hope that I would come out of it. I just needed to do something for myself. I cancelled the luncheon date I had made with my daughter and spent three days, out of town, with my good friend. We went to one open speaker's meeting. The speaker had been addicted to Listerine for over seven years. We both thought the story was kind of disgusting. I left in a rush early Sunday morning because I was not going to listen to the pastor at my friend's church. I had heard him three times before and for me, right now, that was

enough.

The depression lasted for three more days. I could almost "feel" it going away. For the first time in my adult life, I endured a depression without taking a drink. After two years in the program, alcohol was no longer on my list of options. Neither was the fantasy of suicide. That's why the pain was so unrelenting. I could no longer "take a break." I could no longer get drunk because I was depressed. I came to realize that my sobriety is more important to me than a painful, long-lasting episode of depression. I endured the pain even when I could see no end to it.

I went back to my meetings. I don't understand now why this happened to me after I had turned my will and my life over to the care of God. Many years ago, I told a therapist, "I am an emotional cripple. I will always be an emotional cripple. You have been telling me, one day, I will walk straight. What you should have been teaching me, all these years, was how to walk with a limp." I celebrated three years of sobriety in January. I pray, now, each morning. It's a prayer I wrote for myself. It begins, "I pray that after a while, it will not matter so much what happens to me. there will be a next time. But, for now, I do not have to wonder about it. I pray for the courage to face the day." I know, for now, that all we have is today and tonight. And tonight, I want to be grateful for what happened today. I know now it's not so bad to walk with a limp. As long as I can do it sober, one day at a time.

*Resentment and AA*

Rick S.

I was at a meeting not long ago at which the speaker talked about her early experiences with AA. After her first meeting a person of passing acquaintance approached to welcome her.

"We've been waiting and praying for you," was one thing he said to her. She recalled the indignation she felt-that these people would have the nerve to pray for her without her knowledge or consent, that strangers had sat in judgment and decided this was what she needed!

Her words struck a familiar chord in me. I remembered the first AA meeting I went to. It was in a smoke-filled room in the basement of a halfway house in Indiana. My plan was to sidle in, sit in the back and quietly take in the proceedings. But, as I walked down the stairs, one fellow asked if I was new to that meeting. I made the mistake of saying I was new ... period! Any hopes of anonymity within anonymity went up in, well, smoke. One after another, people told their "drinking" stories, how they had come to AA and what things were like for them now. I was amazed by their openness and honesty. I remember leaving the meeting with great hope and resolve that my drinking days were over.

Sadly, that was not to be the case. I went to meetings for a while but then drank again. I went back to meetings but would soon pick up again. Things went on like this for a couple of years. My "dry" times got shorter and my drinking periods got longer until there were no longer any "dry" times. Eventually, I just drank-just like before, only more.

I had many feelings about AA at that time, not the least of which was a great deal of resentment. I envied their sobriety. I resented my not having it. I told myself that when I wanted it enough I could get it-on my own. I did not want to be told what to do. I did not want to hear about my life being unmanageable. I could not fully and freely admit my powerlessness over alcohol. My denial was still very strong.

I now know what really threatened me, what I really resented. It wasn't just their sobriety. It was their honesty. I could see others had this. I didn't and this I resented.

I don't really know what happened or where that resentment went but after a lot of pain I made it back to AA. I don't know when or how I got "it"-whatever "it" is. But at that first meeting a seed had been planted. In the back of my mind I knew there were people who had found a way to get and stay sober. When I came back to AA and managed to stick around for a while, I found the openness and honesty of that first meeting was still there. I was still welcome. The people and stories hadn't changed. I guess I did-a little. Enough, at least, to start.

### Here's How Would Like to Thank this Month's Volunteers

Alan R	Pete B	John C
Diane V	Bob H	Sommer F
Mari M	Jack C	Chuck T
Andrew H	Peter L	John K
Dillan S	Bob K	Steve J
Maureen	Jeannine I	Corey J
Angie D	Rachel P	John N
Dylan H	Bob N	Susan S
Melanie W	Jerry B	Dan D
Anna L	Ron C	Kathi N
Ernestine W	Bruce A	Tim A
Michael B	Jim H	Darius G
Barbara U	Ruben G	Keith S
Ethan O	Caroline R	Tobias J
Michelle C	Jimmie W	Dave L
Beverly D	S C King	Kevin H
Eva M	Cathy G	Tom G
Mike R	Joe A	David M
Bill B	Sandra M	Leo S
Greg K	Cathy R	Tom Z
Morgan J	Joe H	David S
Bill P	Sarah M	Lorie G
Gregory M	Christine C	Tracy T
Pat B	John B	Virginia F
Billy Mc	Sarah U	Warren C
Holly B	Christopher S	

### Upcoming Events:

Friday, July 14 – July 16

Joe & Charlie at the Sheraton in Arlington Heights

Put out the fire and call in the dogs.....

**Joe and Charlie are coming back to Chicago.....**

July 14,15,16 2006.....We will have more details up on the site soon..... We are very excited to release this information and welcome everyone back....

In 2003 this event was sold out in about six months, we turned people away for over two months....as it is in life....everything has limits, we want everyone that wants to attend to be able to attend.....and we will make efforts to give everyone an even opportunity to attend....but dont be late.....

For more information, call Don B at 815-469-4038 or George K at 773-218-5512.

For all the details, see the flier.

Friday, September 1 – 3

### Second City Round-Up

*Come join the Chicago Area Fellowship for the annual conference.*

Marriott Hotel

540 N Michigan Ave

Chicago, IL 60611

Registration: \$20

Registration & Banquet: \$59

For full information, see the flier.

September 16 6:00 9:00 pm is the

### All-Chicago Open at the UIC Pavilion

Chicago Area Service Office, NFPC  
200 N. Michigan Avenue, #501  
Chicago, IL 60601

Dated Material, Do Not Delay

Non Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Chicago, IL  
Permit 9817



Begin/Renew my subscription.  
I am enclosing a Self-Support Contribution.

Name .....  
Address .....  
City .....  
State ..... Zip ..... Country .....

If address changes please indicate your old address:

Name .....  
Address .....  
City .....  
State ..... Zip ..... Country .....

- I am a new reader.
- \$5.00 suggested annual contribution enclosed.
- Here's an extra contribution of \$\_\_ to help keep Here's How self-supporting.
- Please remove my name from your mailing list.
- I can't contribute now, but please keep me on the mailing list.

Please mail to:  
Here's How  
200 N. Michigan Avenue, Suite 501  
Chicago, IL 60601