



The Sunset Group

January, 2007

A publication of the Sunset Group of Alcoholics Anonymous

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Want to know how our secretary is elected? About commitments? You can become part of our steering committee and help make those choices. It's our group conscience and it's held quarterly at another venue. Anyone can participate, although voting requires that you attend at least two steering committee meetings. The next one will be held Tuesday, March 20th, at 7:00 p.m. See Belinda for details.

WELCOME NEWCOMERS: THE FIRST STEP

The first of the 12 steps in the creed or philosophy of Alcoholics Anonymous is, "We admitted that we were powerless over alcohol--that our lives had become unmanageable." By such an admission any alcoholic, provided he is sincere, has achieved his first success on the road to well-being.

Such an admission is usually very difficult for the alcoholic to make. The very nature of his disease makes him shun the knowledge of his inability to cope with the problems of everyday life. Hence his desire for something that will rapidly create whatever he thinks he lacks as an individual. With a few drinks under his belt he can fashion the most wonderful dreams about himself. These dreams can become his real characteristics--but only when he recognizes that he must dominate alcohol rather than have alcohol dominate him.

The sincerity with which the newcomer takes the first step is the gauge by which his recovery through A.A. can be measured.

Over the years the alcoholic develops a three-dimensional ability at picture building, which is a kind way of saying that alcoholics are adept liars. So that by really taking the first step--admitting freely and without reservation that he is an alcoholic--a person starts to build a new pattern of thought. The whole, at last, is fabricated from truth rather than wishful thinking or fantasy.

"Ye shall know the truth--and the truth shall make you free" applies certainly to the first step in this program--for truth, to the alcoholic, is simply admitting to himself that he can't handle alcohol, and because of this his life is unmanageable. To those who accept this first step the other eleven follow in the natural course of events--as the scope of the teachings of A.A. become realized and some small rewards have been received.

-- John B. © *The Grapevine*, November 1944

The Sunrise Group features discussion of Step 1 this Saturday. Details on other side.

HOW DO I AVOID THE FIRST DRINK?

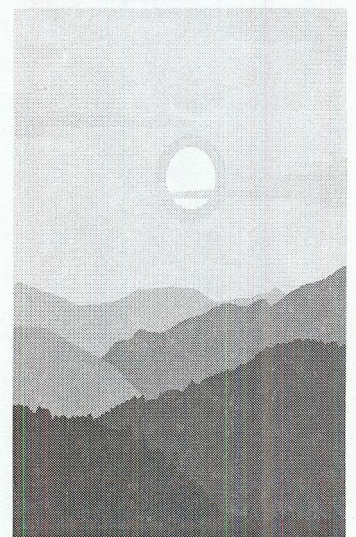
The alcoholic at certain times has no effective mental defense against the first drink. Except in a few cases, neither he nor any other human being can provide such a defense. His defense must come from a Higher Power.

-- *The Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous*, p. 43

THE THIRD STEP PRAYER:

God, I offer myself to Thee -- to build with me and to do with me as Thou wilt. Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Thy will. Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of Thy Power, Thy Love, and Thy Way of life. May I do Thy will always!"

-- *The Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous*, p. 63



The Sunset Group
Thursdays at 7:00 pm
Jewish Community Center
13164 Burbank Boulevard
Sherman Oaks, California

January 11

Doug R. of Tujunga

January 18

Donzo H. of Studio City

January 25

Keith D. of San Diego

February 1

Rhonda D. of Studio City

February 8

Joel W. of Long Beach

February 15

Jim M. of West Hollywood

February 22

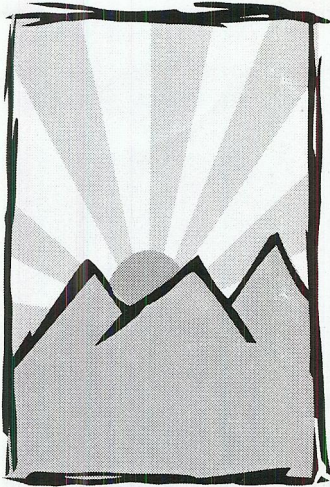
Lee Y. of Tampa, Florida

Coffee and refreshments are served only before the meeting and at the break.



The Sunrise Group

January 2007



SUNRISE GROUP

Saturday Morning
Step Study 8:15 am
above PINZ Bowling Alley
12655 Ventura Blvd
Studio City, CA

January 6

Bill W. of Valley Village
Step 1

January 13

Candace M. of Long Beach
Step 1

January 20

Carrie W.
Step 2

January 27

Kathy R. of Chatsworth
Step 2

February 3

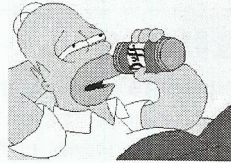
Johnny O. of Studio City
Step 3

February 10

Cia F.
Step 3

February 17

Clancy O.
Step 4
Resentments



A SALUTE TO ALCOHOL!

*To Alcohol – the cause of – and solution to all
of life's problems!"*

-- Homer J. Simpson

SOME TRUTHS ABOUT ALCOHOLISM

Most of us have been unwilling to admit we were real alcoholics. No person likes to think he is bodily and mentally different from his fellows. Therefore, it is not surprising that our drinking careers have been characterized by countless vain attempts to prove we could drink like other people. The idea that somehow, someday he will control and enjoy his drinking is the great obsession of every abnormal drinker. The persistence of this illusion is astonishing. Many pursue it into the gates of insanity or death.

We learned that we had to fully concede to our innermost selves that we were alcoholics. This is the first step in recovery. The delusion that we are like other people, or presently may be, has to be smashed.

We alcoholics are men and women who have lost the ability to control our drinking. We know that no real alcoholic ever recovers control. All of us felt at times that we were regaining control, but such intervals usually brief were inevitably followed by still less control, which led in time to pitiful and incomprehensible demoralization. We are convinced to a man that alcoholics of our type are in the grip of a progressive illness. Over any considerable period we get worse, never better.

-- The Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous, p. 30

“OKAY, SO WHEN DO I GET HAPPY?”

I sat in a treatment center at one of my first Alcoholics Anonymous meetings and asked the chairperson if she could guarantee that I would find happiness in sobriety. Being a newcomer herself, I think my demanding tone threw her off guard. I knew that if I drank, I would get high. I wanted that same relief from AA.

I sat in that meeting, wrapped in all my weapons of isolation: arrogance, pride, judgment, criticism, and anger. I'd had little experience with happiness, unless it came in the short-relief form of alcohol or drugs. I couldn't begin to define "happiness," because I'd never truly experienced it. I didn't even know what I was asking for.

While in rehab, I asked someone to be my sponsor, and we began working the Steps. At the time, I had no idea that it was possible to attend meetings and not do the Steps. I had no virtue; I simply didn't want to die. That was my motivation for asking for help and doing what I was told. It was that simple and that painful....

Years after sitting in that rehab, wanting a guarantee of happiness from AA, I want that same guarantee today: that whatever actions I take will bring happiness. The difference is that I am now aware and mature enough to know what real happiness is. My eyes are open, so that when it comes, in whatever form God chooses that day, I see it and embrace it. No matter what's going on in my life, there are moments of happiness. Not days, not hours, but simply the most profoundly beautiful moments, and they sustain me for that moment. That's all I have. And that's enough for this sober alcoholic.

_ Rosemary R. , New York © The Grapevine, November 2005

CD's of all speakers from Sunrise and Sunset Groups available for a nominal cost.
See Jonathan S.