

# The Update

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The view points expressed here do not represent AA as a whole.

## D I S T R I C T 1 4

Step 3  
Made a decision to turn our will and lives over to the care of God as we understood him

- SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:**
- Step 3
  - Tradition 3
  - Birthdays

Like all the remaining Steps, Step Three calls for affirmative action, for it is only by action that we can cut away the self-will which has always blocked the entry of God - or, if you like a Higher Power - into our lives. Faith, to be sure, is necessary, but faith alone can avail nothing. We can have faith, yet keep God out of our lives. Therefore our problem now becomes just how and by what specific means shall we be able to let Him in? Step Three represents our first attempt to do this. In fact, the effectiveness of the whole A.A. program will rest upon how well and how earnestly we have tried to come to "a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him*".

- *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, p. 40*

### Third Step Prayer

to build with me, and do with me as Thou wilt. "God, I offer myself to Thee

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 Live.

May I do Thy Will always."

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- Alcoholics Anonymous

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### Opportunities In Life

I used to be plagued by feelings that I was the victim of bad breaks --- and I was continually angry or frustrated because others always seemed to have all the luck. If only I could catch the same opportunity as "those lucky ones" --- *life simply was not fair!!!*

Experience is an incredible teacher and the only teacher I seem to be able to learn from. By becoming teachable and in the process, by taking direction, I have learned through experience that everyone has opportunities presented to them.

Taking an honest look back at my

life, I can see that I was presented many opportunities --- and most of them I simply passed up. There was a multitude of reasons why --- fear, not the right time, not the right place, not good enough for me, I was not good enough, it may not work, it might work out and then what???, I really do not have time, it would interfere with something I really wanted to do ..... and the list goes on and on and on .....

Today I try to follow direction and listen to suggestion. It is simply amazing at how much opportunity I have found through AA --- and it has been as simple as following direction or suggestion.

Each one of us is presented with a

gift to grow. We can help set up at a meeting, can clean a table if there is spilled coffee, can help clean up after. We can volunteer to help with the various committees throughout the year. We can attend our groups business meetings. We can write something for the newsletter.

We all have opportunities --- it is what we choose to do with these that makes a difference.

I remember hearing a chairperson one night say to the room "*Participate in your own recovery*". I can still hear his words loud and clear today.

## EMOTIONAL SOBRIETY

"I think that many oldsters who have put our AA "booze cure" to severe but successful tests still find they often lack emotional sobriety. Perhaps they will be the spearhead for the next major development in AA, the development of much more real maturity and balance (which is to say, humility) in our relations with ourselves, with our fellows, and with God.

Those adolescent urges that so many of us have for top approval, perfect security, and perfect romance, urges quite appropriate to age seventeen, prove to be an impossible way of life when we are at age forty-seven and fifty-seven.

Since AA began, I've taken immense wallops in all these areas because of my failure to grow up emotionally and spiritually. My God, how painful it is to keep demanding the impossible, and how very painful to discover, finally, that all along we have had the cart before the horse. Then comes the final agony of seeing how awfully wrong we have been, but still finding ourselves unable to get off the emotional merry-go-round.

How to translate a right mental conviction into a right emotional result, and so into easy, happy and good

living. Well, that's not only the neurotic's problem, it's the problem of life itself for all of us who have got to the point of real willingness to hew to right principles in all of our affairs.

Even then, as we hew away, peace and joy may still elude us. That's the place so many of us AA oldsters have come to. And it's a hell of a spot, literally. How shall our unconscious, from which so many of our fears, compulsions and phony aspirations still stream, be brought into line with what we actually believe, know and want! How to convince our dumb, raging and hidden 'Mr. Hyde' becomes our main task.

I've recently come to believe that this can be achieved. I believe so because I begin to see many benighted ones, folks like you and me, commencing to get results. Last autumn, depression, having no really rational cause at all, almost took me to the cleaners. I began to be scared that I was in for another long chronic spell. Considering the grief I've had with depressions, it wasn't a bright prospect.

I kept asking myself "Why can't the twelve steps work to release depression?" By

the hour, I stared at the St. Francis Prayer ... "it's better to comfort than to be comforted". Here was the formula, all right, but why didn't it work?

Suddenly, I realized what the matter was. My basic flaw had always been dependence, almost absolute dependence, on people or circumstances to supply me with prestige, security, and the like. Failing to get these things according to my perfectionist dreams and specifications, I had fought for them. And when defeat came, so did my depression.

There wasn't a chance of making the outgoing love of St. Francis a workable and joyous way of life until these fatal and almost absolute dependencies were cut away.

Because I had over the years undergone a little spiritual development, the absolute quality of these frightful dependencies had never before been so starkly revealed. Reinforced by what grace I could secure in prayer, I found I had to exert every ounce of will and action to cut off these faulty emotional dependencies upon people, upon AA, indeed upon any

act of circumstance whatsoever.

Then only could I be free to love as Francis did. Emotional and instinctual satisfactions, I saw, were really the extra dividends of having love, offering love, and expressing love appropriate to each relation of life.

Plainly, I could not avail myself to God's love until I was able to offer it back to Him by loving others as He would have me. And I couldn't possibly do that so long as I was victimized by false dependencies.

For my dependence meant demand, a demand for the possession and control of the people and the conditions surrounding me.

While those words "absolute dependence" may look like a gimmick, they were the ones that helped to trigger my release into my present degree of stability and quietness of mind, qualities which I am now trying to consolidate by offering love to others regardless of the return to me.

This seems to be the primary healing circuit: an outgoing love of God's creation and His people, by means of which we avail ourselves of His love for us. It is most clear that the real current can't flow until our paralyzing dependencies are broken, and broken at depth.

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Only then can we possibly have a glimmer of what adult love really is.

If we examine every disturbance we have, great or small, we will find at the root of it some unhealthy dependence and its consequent demand. Let us, with God's help, continually surrender these hobbling demands. Then we can be set free to live and love: we may then be

able to gain emotional sobriety.

Of course, I haven't offered you a really new idea --- only a gimmick that has started to unhook several of my own hexes' at depth. Nowadays, my brain no longer races compulsively in either elation, grandiosity or depression. I have been given a quiet place in bright sunshine"

Bill Wilson

Tradition 3

The Only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking.

- In my mind, do I prejudge some new AA members as losers?
- Is there some kind of alcoholic whom I privately do not want in my AA group?
- Do I set myself up as a judge of whether a newcomer is sincere or phony?
- Do I let language, religion (or

lack of it), race, education, age, or other such things interfere with my carrying the message?

- Am I over impressed by a celebrity? By a doctor, a clergyman, an ex-convict? Or can I just treat this new member simply and naturally as one more sick human, like the rest of us?

Tradition 3  
From the 12 & 12

**Just for Today...  
You have to be willing to get rid of the life you have planned, so to have the life that is waiting for you.**

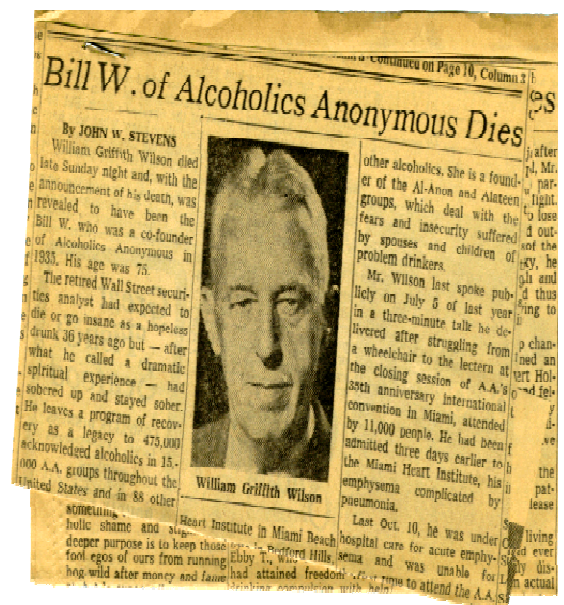
ODAAAT



**"... AA is really saying to every serious drinker, 'You are an AA member if you say so. You can declare yourself in; nobody can keep you out. No matter who you are, no matter how low you've gone, no matter how grave your emotional complications - even your crimes - we still can't deny you AA. We don't want to keep you out. We aren't a bit afraid you'll harm us, never mind how**

**twisted and violent you may be. We just want to be sure that you get the same great chance for sobriety that we've had. So you're an AA member the minute you declare yourself...**

**12 Steps 12 Traditions**



# BIRTHDAYS

Highlighted birthdays are 1, 5, 10....

June

<u>Name</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Group</u>
Harlee M	6	2008	Freedom Group
Gord W	6	1996	Murphy Road Group
John C	8	1979	St Georges Group
Anita	8	2009	Theford Workshop Group
Jane W	8	1996	Murphy Road Group
Paul H	10	2009	High noon group
Pat S	10	2006	St Peters Group
Paul H	16	1980	Forest Lakeside Group
John McD	17	1969	Theford Workshop Group
Jim C	21	1990	New Beginnings Group
Monica W.	23	2007	Beginners/Reflections Group

*Congratulation to all who  
have achieved another  
year in Sobriety.  
ODAAAT*

July

<u>Name</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Group</u>
Joe G	1	2006	Happy Friday Group
Leigh -Ann M	7	1997	St Peters Group
Butch B	15	1964	St Georges Group
Graham R	19	2007	St Georges Group
Patti H	20	2006	Happy Friday Group
Eric h	25	1988	Happy Friday Group
Kyle A	28	2007	Beginners/Reflection Group
Pam W	29	1983	Hill St Blues Group