



Of Seeds and Flowers



Volume 34 Issue 9 - Founded in 1982

October 2017

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WE ALL NEED A TWELVE STEP PROGRAM FOR SOMETHING

Alcoholics, at Alcoholics Anonymous meetings, begin their witness (tell their life stories or a part of their recent life story) by beginning with the words. "Hi, my name is ____ (no last names), I am an alcoholic and my life has become unmanageable.

AA has helped millions of people throughout the world. I have often thought how many more of US could be helped in a similar group by beginning with the same admission: "Hi, my name is ____, I am a fear-aholic, I am a shopping-aholic, a food aholic, a work aholic, an anger aholic, a money-aholic, a religion-aholic, a worry-aholic, a control-freak aholic, an academic and intellectual aholic, a porno aholic, I need constant praise-aholic, an exercise and physical conditioning -aholic, I am a racist-issues aholic, a news-junkie aholic, a politically correct aholic, a people pleasing aholic, a sports-aholic, a clothes aholic, a judgmental /condemning aholic, a saving myself aholic, **and my life has become unmanageable. You have the idea.** Fill in the blanks for yourself. This is the first of the twelve steps in A.A..

The second A.A. step to freedom, equally important, is: "Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could **restore us to sanity.**" And the third step "Made a decision to turn our will and lives over to the care of God as we understood him."

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.*

Bill Wilson, the founder of Alcoholics Anonymous, describes his conversion experience this way: "My depression deepened unbearably and finally it seemed to me as though I were at the very bottom of the pit. I still gagged badly at the notion of a Power greater than myself, but finally, just for the moment, the last vestige of my proud obstinacy was crushed. All at once I found myself crying out, "If there is a God, let Him show Himself! I am ready to do anything, anything!"

Suddenly, the room lit up with a great white light. I was caught up into an ecstasy which there are no words to describe. It seemed to me, in the mind's eye, that I was on a mountain and that a wind not of air but of spirit was blowing. And then it burst upon me that I was a free man. Slowly the ecstasy subsided. I lay on the bed, but now for a time I was in another world of consciousness. All about me and through me there was wonderful feeling of Presence, and I thought to myself, "So this is the God of the preachers!" A great peace stole over me and I thought, "No matter how wrong things seem to be, they are still all right. Things are all right with God and His world."
Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age: A Brief History of A.A. , Pg. 63

The following from Evelyn Underhill seems to follow nicely from the above Bill Wilson experience. Evelyn Underhill, 1875 - 1931, wrote in the late 1930s that her "object was to present some of the great truths concerning man's spiritual life in simple language". She did this in a series of talks on the BBC. Here is a little piece of her incredible wisdom.

We have to want the Reality that invites us!!

Now and then some great emotion, some devastating visitation of beauty, love, or pain lifts us to another level of consciousness; and we are aware for a moment of the difference between what seems reality to us and the height, the depth, and the breadth of that which is truly Real.

Our focus is sharpened, our landscape widens to one that is more brilliant, more significant, more detailed, more Real. The material for a more intense life, a wider, sharper, consciousness, a more profound understanding of our own existence lies at our gates.

A more intense life awaits us. We are invited to vitalize our latent faculties, to arouse our languid consciousness, to emancipate our spirit from the fetters of appearances, to turn our attention to new levels of the world. Reality exists for us all; and we may all participate in it, and unite with it according to the measure, the strength, and the purity of our desire.

But we have to want the Reality that invites us, that awaits us, that except for these heightened moments we hardly know is here. Prayer helps us to become aware of the Reality in which we are swimming.

"God is the ULTIMATE REALITY that upholds ALL REALITY." - Pope Benedict XVI

Jesus, the Hitch Hiker

If Jesus was by the side of the road looking for a ride and you picked him up where would you put Him in your car? In the trunk where you know He would be safe, under full control and not bother you? In the back seat, passenger side so He wouldn't have an easy chance to be a back seat driver? In the back seat, behind you where He can offer you some advice on how to drive and where to go?-easy back seat driver access. In the front seat, next to you so you can converse back and forth about your driving and where you are going and the best route to get there?

Or would you have the courage to put Him in the driver's seat, and let Him take over fully in charge of your trip? Who is driving your "car"?

"In His will is our peace". Dante

Don't worry about tomorrow. You did that yesterday.

PRIORITIES: First, God. Second, wife/husband. Third, children/family. Fourth, work. Fifth, all other stuff. Our lives have to be in RIGHT ORDER. **Never let your career become more important than your vocation** as a human being, husband/wife, mother/father, brother, sister, friend.

***"The only cure for angst among modern man is contemplation."* Thomas Merton.**

VISION AND REALITY

On October 13th, we celebrated the 100th anniversary of the Blessed Mother's visits to the three children at Fatima. On the 13th of Oct. 1917, she said she would perform a miracle to confirm the fact of her apparitions. It was the MIRACLE OF THE SUN. 70,000 rain soaked, muddy people witnessed the miracle, at the end of which, everyone was dry and mud clear. Below is an account of the event of the 19th century.

The Miracle of the Sun: An Eyewitness Account by Dr. Iose Maria de Almeida Garrett, professor at the Faculty of Sciences of Coimbra, Portugal

"It must have been 1:30 p.m when there arose, at the exact spot where the children were, a column of smoke, thin, fine and bluish, which extended up to perhaps two meters above their heads, and evaporated at that height. This phenomenon, perfectly visible to the naked eye, lasted for a few seconds. Not having noted how long it had lasted, I cannot say whether it was more or less than a minute. The smoke dissipated abruptly, and after some time, it came back to occur a second time, then a third time.

"The sky, which had been overcast all day, suddenly cleared; the rain stopped and it looked as if the sun were about to fill with light the countryside that the wintery morning had made so gloomy. I was looking at the spot of the apparitions in a serene, if cold, expectation of something happening and with diminishing curiosity because a long time had passed without anything to excite my attention. The sun, a few moments before, had broken through the thick layer of clouds which hid it and now shone clearly and intensely.

"Suddenly I heard the uproar of thousands of voices, and I saw the whole multitude spread out in that vast space at my feet.. turn their backs to that spot where, until then, all their expectations had been focused, and look at the sun on the other side. I turned around, too, toward the point commanding their gaze and I could see the sun, like a very clear disc, with its sharp edge, which gleamed without hurting the sight. It could not be confused with the sun seen through a fog (there was no fog at that moment), for it was neither veiled nor dim. At Fatima, it kept its light and heat, and stood out clearly in the sky, with a sharp edge, like a large gaming table. The most astonishing thing was to be able to stare at the solar disc for a long time, brilliant with light and heat, without hurting the eyes or damaging the retina. [During this time], the sun's disc did not remain immobile, it had a giddy motion, [but] not like the twinkling of a star in all its brilliance for it spun round upon itself in a mad whirl.

"During the solar phenomenon, which I have just described, there were also changes of color in the atmosphere. Looking at the sun, I noticed that everything was becoming darkened. I looked first at the nearest objects and then extended my glance further afield as far as the horizon. I saw everything had assumed an amethyst color. Objects around me, the sky and the atmosphere, were of the same color. Everything both near and far had changed, taking on the color of old yellow damask. People looked as if they were suffering from jaundice and I recall a sensation of amusement at seeing them look so ugly and unattractive. My own hand was the same color.

"Then, suddenly, one heard a clamor, a cry of anguish breaking from all the people. The sun, whirling wildly, seemed all at once to loosen itself from the firmament and, blood red, advance threateningly upon the earth as if to crush us with its huge and fiery weight. The sensation during those moments was truly terrible. "All the phenomena which I have described were observed by me in a calm and serene state of mind without any emotional disturbance. It is for others to interpret and explain them. Finally, I must declare that never, before or after October 13, 1917 have I observed similar atmospheric or solar phenomena." Professor Almeida Garrett's full account may be found in *Novos Documentos de Fatima* (Loyola editions, San Paulo, 1984)

If this is true, it is true for everybody, everywhere!! More importantly, *her message!* Check it out!

CINDY'S VIDEOS: My wife, Cindy, has produced 4 wonderful videos. The address for all four videos, 'An Easter Song', "A Retreat with Mary", "Abba Father" and "Our Children" **on YouTube** is *simply: Cindy Jo Pfeiffer*. Truly worth your time and sharing!

Amazon Smile Foundation: If you order items on Amazon, simply, instead of going to Amazon.com, please go to **Smile.amazon.com**. Log in, using your existing Amazon account. All of the products and pricing are the same as Amazon.com. We would appreciate it if you chose Mary's Field as your charity. Four times a year Amazon will send us a check for .5% of the money you spent. Once you choose a charity for the first time, it automatically does it each time you log on. Thank you so much!!!



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Speaking Softly

Every morning, right after breakfast, Cindy and I pray a rosary. -even when I was teaching school. Each, in turn, we pray a rosary for one of the 13 members of our immediate family, then one for Mary and one for the poor souls in purgatory. The rosary is powerful prayer; and it is a beautiful prayer especially when your body, your head or your emotions are hurting. While I was a hospital chaplain, MANY patients could be found, rosary in hand. With profit, they were able to pray a rosary.

The October 2nd gentle, loving, wise words from Mary to Mirjana, one of the Medjugorje visionaries, follow:

"Dear children, I am speaking to you as a mother – with simple words, but words filled with much love and concern for my children who, through my Son, are entrusted to me. And my Son, who is of the eternal now, He is speaking to you with words of life and is sowing love in open hearts. Therefore, I am imploring you, apostles of my love, have open hearts always ready for mercy and forgiveness. According to my Son, always forgive your neighbors, because in that way peace will be in you. My children, care for your soul, because it alone is what truly belongs to you. You are forgetting the importance of family. A family does not need to be a place of suffering and pain, but a place of understanding and tenderness. Families who strive to live according to my Son live in mutual love. While He was still little, my Son would say to me that all people are His brothers. Therefore, remember, apostles of my love, that all people whom you meet are family to you – brothers according to my Son. My children, do not waste time thinking about the future, worrying. May your only concern be how to live well every moment according to my Son. And there it is – peace for you! My children, do not ever forget to pray for your shepherds. Pray that they can accept all people as their children; that, according to my Son, they may be spiritual fathers to them. Thank you!"

"God called me to be faithful, not successful." Mother Teresa

Last Halloween, one child showed up at our door dressed as an IRS agent. It was very authentic. He took 40% of our candy.

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