

If you go to enough meetings, you will most likely hear a great many things and think, *"Hey – where'd they get THAT from – 'cause THAT AIN'T IN THE BOOK!"* We hear many things said in meetings that just cannot be reconciled with the PROGRAM as outlined in the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous. And the problem is, if you hear them repeated often enough, they enter our vernacular – they become absorbed into our **spoken** culture. And for the newcomer, that can be a fatal error. Especially if you believe Bill when he wrote "...unless they follow to the best of (their) ability our suggested Twelve Steps...he almost certainly signs his own death warrant."

Since the suggestion made by "The Grapevine" in the late 60's that the new *"Open Discussion Meetings"* ("OD") might be a good idea there's been a profound change in the content of the message presented in the rooms. This radical shift in our culture away from a historical / traditional focus on the **Program** of Alcoholics Anonymous (*the Steps*) to a sort of "group therapy" where anyone and everyone *"shares"* whatever might be on their mind has resulted in a significant decline in the success rate of alcoholics finding lasting recovery. Some say this was made worse by the boom in rehabs in the late 70's and early 80's where the focus was on the "sharing" of one's feelings.

So, here's a list of some of the things we often hear, followed by **"Let's Hear What Bill W. Had to Say About That"**.

**Don't drink and go to meetings"** Or **"Meeting makers make it."**

**Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions:**

Page 39-40: "...sobriety brought about by the admission of alcoholism and by attendance at a few meetings is very good indeed, but it is bound to be a far cry from permanent sobriety and a contented, useful life. That is just where the remaining Steps of the A.A. program come in. Nothing short of continuous action upon these as a way of life can bring the much-desired result....

Page 174: "Unless each A.A. member follows to the best of his ability our suggested Twelve Steps to recovery, he almost certainly signs his own death warrant. His drunkenness and dissolution...result from his personal disobedience to spiritual principles."

Page 15: "A.A.'s Twelve Steps are a group of principles, spiritual in their nature, which, if practiced as a way of life, can expel the obsession to drink and enable the sufferer to become happily and usefully whole."

**"The Big Book":**

Page 14: Bottom of page: "For if an alcoholic failed to perfect and enlarge his spiritual life **through work and self-sacrifice for others**, he could not survive the **certain** trials and low spots ahead."

Page 17: 2: "Unlike the feelings of the ship's passengers, however, our joy in escape from disaster does not subside as we go our individual ways. The feeling of having shared in a **common peril** is one element in the powerful cement which binds us. But that in itself would never have held us together as we are now joined. The tremendous fact...is that we have discovered a **common solution**...THIS is the great news this book carries to those who suffer from alcoholism."

Page 34: 2: "For those who are unable to drink moderately the question is how to stop altogether...Whether such a person can quit upon **a nonspiritual basis** depends upon the extent to which he has already lost the power to choose whether he will drink or not...There was **a tremendous urge to cease forever**. Yet we found it impossible. This is the baffling feature of alcoholism as we know it--this utter inability to leave it alone, no matter how great the necessity or the wish."

Page 59: "...**the steps we took...are suggested as (the) program** of recovery."

Page 569 (Appendix 2): bottom of page: "What often takes place in a few months could hardly be accomplished by years of self-discipline."

***"This is a "Just For Today" Program – there's no such thing as  
"Permanent Sobriety"***

Page xvi / Forward to Second Edition / Fourth Edition: "He sobered, never to drink again....." (third line from bottom of page)

Page xvii / Forward to Second Edition / Fourth Edition: "...strenuous work, one alcoholic with another, was vital to permanent recovery."

Page xvii / Forward to Second Edition / Fourth Edition: "...and became A.A. number three. He never had another drink."

Page 13:1: "I was separated from alcohol for the last time."

Page 13:2: "I have not had a drink since". (Dec. 11, 1934)

Page 90:3: "Then let his family or a friend to ask him if he wants to quit for good and if he would go to any extreme to do so."

Page 116:1: "It may convince your husband he wants to stop drinking forever."

Page 156:2: "He has not had a drink since."

Page 158:4: That was June 1935. He never drank again."

Page 169: *Part 1 : Pioneers of A.A.* / Fourth Edition: "They bear witness that release from alcoholism can really be permanent."

***"We'll love you until you love yourself"***

Page 84: 2: "Love and tolerance of others is our code."

Page 94: 1: "...you hope that he will try to help other alcoholics when he escapes his own difficulties. Suggest how important it is that he place the welfare of other people ahead of his own."

Page 97: 1: "Helping others is the foundation stone of your recovery."

**"You've got to have Faith, You've Got to have Faith,  
You've got to have Faith"**

Page 47: 3: "I cannot accept as surely true the many articles of faith which are so plain to him. So it was comforting to learn that we could commence at a simpler level."

**"Stay out of relationships for the first year!"**

Or

**"No Sex for the first year"**

Page. 69: 1: "We do not want to be the arbiter of anyone's sex conduct."

Page 69: 3: "In meditation, we ask God what we should do about each specific matter. The right answer will come if we want it."

Page 69: 4: "God alone can judge our sex situation."

Page 69 -70: "Counsel with other persons is often desirable, but we let God be the final judge."

Page 70, third line from top of page: "We avoid (hysterical thinking or) advice."

Page 70: 2: "We earnestly pray for the right ideal, for guidance in each questionable situation, for sanity, and for the strength to do the right thing."

**"Don't be so hard on yourself"**

Or

**"Take it easy on yourself"**

Page 74: 1: "The rule is we must be hard on ourself (ourselves), but always considerate of others."

**"This is a selfish program"**

Page 13:4: *"Never was I to pray for myself, except when my requests bore on my usefulness to others."*

Page 14-15: *"For if an alcoholic failed to perfect and enlarge his spiritual life through work and self-sacrifice for others, he could not survive the certain trials and low spots ahead."*

Page 20:1: *"Our very lives, as ex-problem drinkers depend upon our constant thought of others and how we may help meet their needs."*

Page 62:2: *"Selfishness, self-centeredness! That, we think, is the root of our troubles"*

Page 62:3: *"So our troubles, we think, are basically of our own making. They arise out of ourselves, and the alcoholic is an extreme example of self-will run riot, though he usually doesn't think so. Above everything, we alcoholics must be rid of this selfishness. We must, or it kills us."*

Page 77, top of page: *At the moment we are trying to put our lives in order. But this is not an end in itself. **Our real purpose is to fit ourselves to be of maximum service to God and the people about us.**-----→page 84:2: **Our next function is to grow in understanding and effectiveness**--→page 85:1: **Every day is a day when we must carry the vision of God's will into all of our activities***

Page 97:1: *"Helping others is the foundation stone of your recovery. A kindly act once in a while isn't enough. You have to act the Good Samaritan every day, if need be."*

Page 84, Paragraph 2: *"Love and tolerance of others is our code."*

Page 118:2: *"Patience, tolerance, understanding and love are the watchwords."*

Page 120:2: *"...you will awaken to a new sense of responsibility for others."*

Page 97:2: *"a/k/a **"THE TWELVE INCONVENIENCES"**: 1. It may mean the loss of many nights' sleep, 2. great interference with your pleasures, 3. interruptions to your business. 4. It may mean sharing your money and your home, 5. counseling frantic wives and relatives, 6. innumerable trips to police courts, sanitariums, hospitals, jails and asylums. 7. Your telephone may jangle at any time of the day or night. 8. Your wife may sometimes say she is neglected. 9. A drunk may smash the furniture in your home or burn a mattress. 10. You may have to fight with him if he is violent. 11. Sometimes you will have to call a doctor and administer sedatives under his direction. 12. Another time you may have to send for the police of an ambulance."*

### **"Just do the next right thing"**

Page 61:1 "Is he not, even in his best moments, a producer of **confusion rather than harmony?**"

Page 70:2 "We earnestly pray for the **right ideal**, for **guidance** in each questionable situation, for **sanity**, and for the **strength** to do the right thing."

Page 86:3: "...we may face indecision. We may not be able to determine which course to take. Here we ask God for inspiration, an intuitive thought or a decision. **We relax and take it easy. We don't struggle.** We are often surprised how the right answers come **after we have tried this for a while.**

Page 87:0: "We might pay for this presumption in all sorts of absurd actions and ideas. Nevertheless, we find that our thinking will, **as time passes**, be more and more on the plane of inspiration. We come to rely upon it."

### **"You only work one step a year"**

Or

### **"Take your time to work the steps"**

*"Sometimes a new man is anxious to proceed at once. And you may be tempted to let him do so. This is sometimes a mistake. If he has trouble later, he is likely to say you rushed him." (pg.95:1)*

Page 569: 3: "What often takes place **in a few months** could seldom have been accomplished by years of self-discipline."

Page 28: 2: "We...sought the same escape with all the **desperation** of drowning men"

Page 63: 3: "Next we **launched** on a course of vigorous action."

Page 74: 2: "If that is so, this step may be postponed, only, however, if we hold ourselves in complete readiness to go through with it at **the first opportunity**"

Page 75: 3: "Returning home we find a place where we can be quiet **for AN HOUR**, carefully reviewing what we have done."

*"Don't drink, even if your ass falls off."*

Or *"Don't pick-up no matter what"*

Or *"Remember your last drunk"*

Or *"Play the tape all the way through"*

Or *"If you don't take the first drink, you can't get drunk"*

or

*"Just say no"*

Page 24: 1: *The fact is that most alcoholics...have lost the power of choice in drink. Our so-called will power becomes practically nonexistent. We are unable, at certain times, to bring into our consciousness with sufficient force the memory of the suffering and humiliation of even a week or a month ago. We are without defense against the first drink."*

Page 24: 2: *"The almost certain consequences that follow taking even a glass of beer do not crowd into the mind to deter us. If these thoughts do occur, they are hazy and readily supplanted with the old threadbare idea that this time we shall handle ourselves like other people. There is a complete failure of the kind of defense that keeps one from putting his hand on a hot stove."*

Page 34:2: *"There was a tremendous urge to cease forever. Yet we found it impossible. This is the baffling feature of alcoholism as we know it—this utter inability to leave it alone, no matter how great the necessity or the wish."*

Page 43:3: *"The alcoholic at certain times has no effective mental defense against the first drink...neither he nor any other human being can provide such a defense. His defense must come from a Higher Power."*

***"I choose not to drink today"***

Page 24: 1: *"The fact is that most alcoholics, for reasons yet obscure, have **lost the power of choice** in drink."*

Page 30: 3: *"We alcoholics are men and women who have **lost the ability to control** our drinking."*

***"We go to meetings to dump...to get things off our chest"***

Or

***"I'm OK – I don't need to go to a meeting today"***

(= *Why do we go to meetings?*)

Page 15: 2 (last two lines): *"We meet frequently so that **newcomers** may find the fellowship they seek."*

Page 89: 2: *"Frequent contact with **newcomers** and with each other is the bright spot of our lives."*

Page 159: 3: *"Scarce an evening past that someone's home did not shelter **a little gathering of men and women, happy in their release**...constantly thinking how they might present their discovery to some **newcomer**."*

Page 160: 0: *"Aside from fellowship and sociability, the prime object was to provide a time and place where **new people** might bring their problems."*

{ In **Problems Other Than Alcohol** (IP #35), Bill states that *"Sobriety — freedom from alcohol — through the **teaching and practice** of the Twelve Steps is the sole purpose of an A.A. group."*

And in **As Bill Sees It**: Page 105 : *"Our chief responsibility to the newcomer is an adequate presentation of the program."*}



***"That's just the way I am. I cannot and never will be able to change that."***

Page 76: 1 & 2: "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.

"When ready, we say something like this: "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."

### **Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions:**

Pages 68-69: "Looking again at those defects we are still unwilling to give up, we ought to **erase the hard-and-fast lines that we have drawn. Perhaps we shall be obliged in some cases still to say, "This I cannot give up yet . . . ,"** but we should not say to ourselves, "This I will never give up! '...At the very least, we shall have to come to grips with some of our worst character defects and take action toward their removal as quickly as we can."

"The moment we say, "No, never!" our minds close against the grace of God. **Delay is dangerous, and rebellion may be fatal.** This is the exact point at which we abandon limited objectives, and move toward God's will for us"

**"I haven't had a drink today, so I'm a complete success today."**

OR:

**"If all I do is stay sober today, then it's been a good day."**

Page 19: 1: "The elimination of drinking is but a beginning. A much more important **demonstration of our principles** lies before us in our respective homes, occupations and affairs."

Page 51: 0: "Leaving aside the drink question, they tell why living was so unsatisfactory....

Page 52: 2: "We were having trouble with personal relationships, we couldn't control our emotional natures, we were a prey to misery and depression, we couldn't make a living, we had a feeling of uselessness, we were full of fear, we were unhappy, we couldn't seem to be of real help to other people"

Page 82: 3: "Sometimes we hear an alcoholic say that **the only thing he needs to do is to keep sober**. Certainly he must keep sober, for there will be no home if he doesn't. But he is yet a long way from making good to the wife or parents whom for years he has so shockingly treated."

Page 82: 4: "We feel **a man is unthinking** when he says sobriety is enough."

**"Keep coming back....it will rub off on you...you'll get it by osmosis."**

Page 64: 1: *"Though our decision was a vital and crucial step, it could have little permanent effect unless at once followed by a strenuous effort to face, and to be rid of, the things in ourselves which had been blocking us"*

**Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions:**

Page 65; middle of page: *...in no case does He render us white as snow and keep us that way without our cooperation.*

**"Don't talk to the prospect when they're drunk"**

Page 90: 3: *"Don't deal with him when he is very drunk."*

**"AA is the ONLY way to stay sober"**

Page 95: 4: *"We have no monopoly on God; we merely have an approach that worked with us."*

Page 144: 2: *"When the man is presented with this volume it is best that no one tell him he must abide by its suggestions. The man must decide for himself."*

**"I'm powerless over people, places and things"**

Page 89: 2: *"You can help when no one else can. You can secure their confidence when others fail."*

Page 89: 3: *"...because of your own drinking experience you can be uniquely useful to other alcoholics."*

Page 132: 3: *"We have recovered, and have been given the power to help others."*

### ***"I was only harming myself"***

Page 18:1: *"But not so with the alcoholic illness, for with it there goes annihilation of all the things worthwhile in life. It engulfs all whose lives touch the sufferer's. It brings misunderstanding, fierce resentment, financial insecurity, disgusted friends and employers, warped lives of blameless children, sad wives and parents—anyone can increase the list."*

Page 82:4: *"The alcoholic is like a tornado roaring his way through the lives of others. Hearts are broken. Sweet relationships are dead. Affections have been uprooted. Selfish and inconsiderate habits have kept the home in turmoil."*

Page 114:2 : *"The wives and children of such men suffer horribly..."*

Page 122:3: *"Years of living with an alcoholic is almost sure to make any wife or child neurotic."*

Page 155:1 : *"It was the usual situation; home in jeopardy, wife ill, children distracted, bills in arrears and standing damaged."*

### ***"The group (or the rooms) are my Higher Power"***

Page 24:4: *"When this sort of thinking is fully established in an individual with alcoholic tendencies, he has probably placed himself beyond human aid..."*

Page 34:2: *"Whether such a person can quit upon a nonspiritual basis depends upon the extent to which he has already lost the power to choose whether he will drink or not."*

**(Note: see "Writing the Big Book: the Creation of A A" by Bill Schaberg pgs. 280-281 and APPENDIX 1: "Clarence Snyder : My Higher Power – The Light Bulb")**

**"Take what you want and leave the rest"**

Or

**"This is a program of suggestions"**

Page 17:3: *"The tremendous fact for every one of us is that we have discovered **a common solution**. We have a way out on which we can absolutely agree, and upon which we can join in **brotherly and harmonious action**. This is the great news this book carries to those who suffer from alcoholism."*

Page 19:3: *"We shall bring to the task our combined experience and knowledge. This should **suggest a useful program** for anyone concerned with a drinking problem."*

Page 59:3: *"Here are the steps we took, which are **suggested as a program** of recovery"*

**"Shut up and listen"**

Or

**"Take the cotton out of your ears and put it in your mouth"**

Page 84, Paragraph 2: *"Love and tolerance of others is our code."*

Page 90:1: *"When you discover a prospect for Alcoholics Anonymous, find out all you can about him."*

Page 91:3: *"...encourage him to speak of himself. If he wishes to talk, let him do so."*

Page 95:1 *"If you do stay, let him steer the conversation in any direction he likes."*

**"You must change people, places and things"**

Page 100: 4 – 101: 0: "Assuming we are **spiritually fit**, we can do all sorts of things alcoholics are not supposed to do. People have said we must not go where liquor is served; we must not have it in our homes; we must shun friends who drink; we must avoid moving pictures which show drinking scenes; we must not go into bars; our friends must hide their bottles if we go to their houses; we mustn't think or be reminded about alcohol at all. Our experience shows that this is not necessarily so.

Page 101: 1: "We meet these conditions every day. An alcoholic who cannot meet them, still has an alcoholic mind; there is something the matter with his spiritual status.

Page 101: 2: "In our belief any scheme of combating alcoholism which proposes to shield the sick man from temptation is doomed to failure.

Page 101: 3: "So our rule is not to avoid a place where there is drinking, **IF WE HAVE A LEGITIMATE REASON FOR BEING THERE**. That includes bars, nightclubs, dances, receptions, weddings, even plain ordinary whoopee parties. To a person who has had experience with an alcoholic, this may seem like tempting Providence, but it isn't.

Page 101: 4 – 102: 0: "*You will note that we made an important qualification. Therefore, ask yourself on each occasion, "Have I any good social, business, or personal reason for going to this place? Or am I expecting to steal a little vicarious pleasure from the atmosphere of such places?" If you answer these questions satisfactorily, you need have no apprehension. Go or stay away, whichever seems best. But be sure you are **on solid spiritual ground** before you start and that your motive in going is thoroughly good....*

Page 102: 2: "*Your job now is to be at the place where you may be of maximum helpfulness to others, so never hesitate to go anywhere if you can be helpful. You should not hesitate to visit the most sordid spot on earth on such an errand. Keep on the firing line of life with these motives and God will keep you unharmed.*"

**If you take meds, you're not sober**

1. **BILL'S STORY: PAGE 6:2-7:0;** A doctor came with a *heavy sedative*. Next day found me drinking both gin and *sedative*. *This combination soon landed me on the rocks.*
2. **The Family Afterward: page 133:2:** *But this does not mean that we disregard human health measures. God has abundantly supplied this world with fine doctors, psychologists, and practitioners of various kinds. Do not hesitate to take your health problems to such persons. Most of them give freely of themselves, that their fellows may enjoy sound minds and bodies. Try to remember that though God has wrought miracles among us, we should never belittle a good doctor or psychiatrist. Their services are often indispensable in treating a newcomer and in following his case afterward.*
3. **Doctor Bob's Nightmare: page 176:** *Most of the time, therefore, I did not take the morning drink which I craved so badly. But instead would fill up on large doses of sedatives to quiet the jitters.....page 177: taking large doses of sedatives to make it possible for me to earn more money.*
4. **DR BOB & the GOOD OLDTIMERS: page 32-33:**
  - "He soon "developed two distinct phobias," in his own words: "One was the fear of not sleeping; the other was the fear of running out of liquor. Not being a man of means, I knew that if I did not stay sober enough to earn money, I would run out of liquor."*
  - "This irrefutable logic led him into a squirrel-cage existence - a 17-year "nightmare." Staying sober to earn money to get drunk . . . getting drunk to go to sleep. Then over again-and again!*
  - "Instead of taking the morning drink, which he craved, Dr. Bob turned to what he described as "large doses of sedatives" to quiet the jitters, which distressed him terribly. He contracted what in later years would be called a pill problem, or dual addiction.*
  - "Whenever Bob did yield to the craving for the morning drink instead, there was a major disaster. First, he was unfit for work within a few hours. Second, he lost his usual skill in smuggling home enough liquor to put him to sleep. This led to a night of "futile tossing around in bed followed by a morning of unbearable jitters."*
  - "His usual pattern was to stay dry but well sedated every day until four o'clock."*

*"I will always be recovering, never recovered....."*

Or *"We never say recovered"*

1. *The Story of How Many Thousands of Men and Women have Recovered from Alcoholism* (Title Page)
2. *WE, OF Alcoholics Anonymous, are more than one hundred men and woman who have recovered from a seemingly hopeless state of mind and body.* (Pg. XIII)
3. *To show other alcoholics PRECISELY HOW WE HAVE RECOVERED is the main purpose of this book.* (Pg. XIII)
4. *Alcoholics Anonymous has mushroomed into nearly 6,000 groups whose membership is far above 150,000 recovered alcoholics.* (Pg. XV)
5. *Their very first case, a desperate one, recovered immediately and became A.A. number three.* (Pg. XVIII)
6. *This man and over one hundred others appear to have recovered.* (Pg. XXV)
7. *Nearly all have recovered. They have solved the drink problem.* (Pg. 17:1)
8. *Many could recover if they had the opportunity we have enjoyed.* (Pg. 19:2)
9. *...we have recovered from a hopeless condition of mind and body.* (Pg. 20:1)
10. *When therefore, we were approached by those in whom the problem has been solved...* (pg 25:1)
11. *Further on, clear-cut directions are given showing how we recovered.* (Pg. 29)
12. *many of us would have recovered long ago.* (Pg 44-45)
13. *Those who do not recover are people who cannot or will not completely give themselves to this simple program, usually men and women who are constitutionally incapable of being honest with themselves.* (Pg. 58:0)
14. *There are those, too, who suffer from grave emotional and mental disorders, but many of them do recover if they have the capacity to be honest.* (Pg. 58:0)



15. *To watch people **recover**, to see them help others, to watch loneliness vanish, to see a fellowship grow up about you, to have a host of friends - this is an experience you must not miss. (Pg. 89:1)*
16. *Perhaps you are not acquainted with any drinkers **who want to recover**. You can easily find some by asking a few doctors, ministers, priests or hospitals. (Pg. 89:2)*
17. *If he says yes, then his attention should be drawn to you as a person who has **recovered**. (Pg. 90)*
18. *But insist that if he is severely afflicted, there may be little chance he can **recover** by himself. (Pg. 92:1)*
19. *We find it a waste of time to keep chasing a man who cannot or will not work with you. If you leave such a person alone, he may soon become convinced that he cannot **recover** by himself. (Pg. 96:1)*
20. *he might have deprived many others, who have since **recovered** (Pg. 96:1)*
21. *Should they accept and practice spiritual principles, there is a much better chance that the head of the family will **recover**. (Pg. 97:3)*
22. *Let no alcoholic say he cannot **recover** unless he has his family back. (Pg. 99:3)*
23. *He knows that thousands of men, much like himself, have **recovered**. (Pg. 113:1)*
24. *Our women folk have suggested certain attitudes a wife may take with the husband who is **recovering**. (Pg. 122:0)*
25. *We have **recovered**, and have been given the power to help others. (Pg. 132:2)*
26. *We, who have **recovered** from serious drinking, are miracles of mental health. (Pg. 133:1)*
27. *Whether the family goes on a spiritual basis or not, the alcoholic member has to if he would **recover**. (Pg. 135:1)*

28. *After satisfying yourself that your man wants to **recover** and that he will go to any extreme to do so, you may suggest a definite course of action. (Pg. 142:4)*
29. *An alcoholic who **has recovered**... (Pg. 143:3)*
30. *If he is, and is still trying **to recover**, he will tell you about it even if it means the loss of his job. (Pg. 146:3)*
31. *The right kind of man, the kind who **recovers**, will not want this sort of thing. (Pg. 149:3)*
32. *He has helped other men **recover**, and is a power in the church from which he was long absent. (Pg. 158:4)*
33. *Understanding our work, he can do this with an eye to selecting those who are willing and able to **recover** on a spiritual basis. (Pg. 162:1)*
34. *When a few men in this city have found themselves, and have discovered the joy of helping others to face life again, there will be no stopping until everyone in that town has had his opportunity to **recover** - if he can and will. (Pg. 163:4>164:0)*
35. *Most emphatically we wish to say that any alcoholic capable of honestly facing his problems in the light of our experience **can recover**, provided he does not close his mind to all spiritual concepts. (Appendix II Spiritual Experience)*

## ***"There are no musts in A.A."***

(Remember: There are many ways to say "must")

### **THE DOCTOR'S OPINION**

1. Page xxv: Convincing testimony *must* surely come from medical men who have had experience with the sufferings of our members and have witnessed our return to health.
2. page xxv: As part of his rehabilitation he commenced to present his conceptions to other alcoholics, impressing on them that they *must* do likewise with still others.
3. page xxvi: In this statement he confirms what we who have suffered alcoholic torture *must* believe -- that the body of the alcoholic is quite as abnormal as his mind.
4. Page xxvi: More often than not, it is *imperative* that a man's brain be cleared before he is approached
5. page xxviii: The message which can interest and hold these alcoholic people *must* have depth and weight.
6. page xxviii: In nearly all cases, their ideals *must* be grounded in a power greater than themselves, if they are to re-create their lives.
7. Page xxix: ...the only effort *necessary* being ...
8. Page xxix: ...that *required* to follow a few simple rules.
9. page xxix: I *must* stop, but I cannot!
10. page xxix: You *must* help me!
11. page xxix: Faced with this problem, if a doctor is honest with himself, he *must* sometimes feel his own inadequacy.
12. Page xxix: One feels that something more than human power *is needed* to...
13. Page xxix: ....produce the *essential* psychic change.

14. page xxix: *Though the aggregate of recoveries resulting from psychiatric effort is considerable, we physicians **must** admit we have made little impression upon the problem as a whole.*

## **CHAPTER 1 BILL'S STORY**

15. page 5:1: *Liquor ceased to be a luxury; it became a **necessity**.*

16. page 5:1: *A tumbler full of gin followed by half a dozen bottles of beer would be **required** if I were to eat any breakfast.*

17. page 10:0: *Certainly I was interested. I **had to** be for I was hopeless.*

18. page 10:3: *I simply **had to** believe in a Spirit of the Universe...*

19. page 14: *Simple, but not easy; a price **had to** be paid*

20. page 14: *I **must** turn in all things to the Father of Light who presides over us all.*

21. page 14: *My friend emphasized the **absolute necessity** of demonstrating these principles in all my affairs.*

22. page 14: *Particularly was it **imperative** to work with others...*

23. page 16: *Faith **has to** work twenty-four hours a day...*

## **CHAPTER 2 THERE IS A SOLUTION**

24. page 19: ***Of necessity** there will have to be discussion of matters medical, psychiatric, social and religious.*

25. page 20:0: *Our very lives, as ex-problem drinkers **depend upon** our constant thought of others and how we may help meet their needs.*

26. page 20: *His will power **must** be weak.*

27. page 25:1: *Almost none of us liked the self-searching, the leveling of our pride, the confession of shortcomings which the process **requires** for its successful consummation.*

28. page 29: Our hope is that many alcoholic men and women, desperately in need will see these pages, and we believe that it is only by fully disclosing ourselves and our problems that they will be persuaded to say, "Yes I am one of them too; I **must** have this thing."

### **CHAPTER 3 MORE ABOUT ALCOHOLISM**

29. page 30:2: We learned that **we had to** fully concede to our innermost selves that we were alcoholics.

30. ....The delusion that we are like other people, or presently may be **has to be** smashed.

31. page 33: If we are planning to stop drinking, there **must** be no reservation of any kind, nor any lurking notion that someday we will be immune to alcohol.

32. page 42:1: I **had to** concede both propositions.

33. page 43: His defense **must** come from a Higher Power.

### **CHAPTER 4 WE AGNOSTICS**

34. page 44:3: But after a while we **had to** face the fact that.....

35. page 44:3: ... we **must** find a spiritual basis of life -- or else.

36. page 45:1: We **had to** find a power by which we could live...

37. page 45:1: ...and it **had to** be a Power greater than ourselves.

38. Page 47:1: **Do not let** any prejudice you may have against spiritual terms deter you from honestly asking yourself what they mean to you.

39. page 47:1: ...but if we wished to grow, **we had to** begin somewhere.

40. Page 47:2 We **needed to** ask ourselves but one short question.

41. page 48:0: This sort of thinking **had to be** abandoned.

42. page 50:4: This happened soon after they wholeheartedly met a few simple *requirements*.
43. Page 52:2: We *had to* ask ourselves why we shouldn't apply to our human problems the same readiness to change our point of view.
44. page 52:3: We *had to* stop doubting the power of God.
45. page 53:2: *We had to* fearlessly face the proposition that either God is everything or else He is nothing.
46. Page 55:3: Sometimes we *had to* search fearlessly...

## **CHAPTER 5    HOW IT WORKS**

47. Page 60:4: The first *requirement* is that we be convinced...
48. page 62:2: Above everything, we alcoholics *must* be rid of this selfishness.
49. page 62:2: We *must*, or it kills us!
50. page 62:2: We *had to* have God's help.
51. page 62:3: First of all, we *had to* quit playing God
52. page 64:0: So *we had to* get down to causes and conditions.
53. page 66:2: If we were to live, *we had to* be free of anger.
54. page 66:3: We saw that these resentments *must* be mastered, but how?
55. page 69:3: Whatever our ideal turns out to be, we *must* be willing to grow toward it.
56. page 69:3: We *must* be willing to make amends where we have done harm, provided that we do not bring about still more harm in so doing.

## **CHAPTER 6    INTO ACTION**

57. page 72:1: This *requires* action on our part...

58. page 73:0: ...in the sense we find it *necessary* until someone else all their life story.
59. page 73:4: We *must* be entirely honest with somebody if we expect to live long or happily in this world.
60. page 74:0: Those of us who belong to a religious denomination which requires confession *must*, and of course, will want to go to the properly appointed authority whose duty is to receive it.
61. page 74:1: The rule is we *must* be hard on ourself, but always considerate of others.
62. page 74:2: Notwithstanding the *great necessity* for discussing ourselves with someone.....
63. Page 74:2: It is important that he be able to keep a confidence...
64. page 75:0: But we *must* not use this as a mere excuse to postpone.
65. Page 75:1; We explain to our partner what we are about to do and why *we have to* do it.
66. page 76:1: We have emphasized willingness as being *indispensable*.
67. page 77:2: *Under no condition* do we criticize such a person or argue.
68. page 78:2: We *must* lose our fear of creditors no matter how far we have to go, for we are liable to drink if we are afraid to face them.
69. Page 79:2: ...but we are willing. We *have to* be.
70. page 79:1: We *must* not shrink..
71. page 80:1: If we obtained permission, have consulted with others, asked God to help and the drastic step is indicated we *must* not shrink.
72. page 81:0: In fairness we *must* say that she may understand, but what are we going to do about a thing like that?
73. page 81:1: Whatever the situation, we usually *have to* do something about it.

74. page 82:2: Certainly he **must** keep sober, for there will be no home if he doesn't.
75. page 83:1: We **must** take the lead.
76. Page 83:2: The spiritual life is not a theory. **We have to** live it.
77. page 83:2: We **must** remember that ten or twenty years of drunkenness would make a skeptic out of anyone.
78. page 85:1: Every day is a day when we **must** carry the vision of God's will into all of our activities.
79. page 85:1: : These are the thoughts which **must** go with us constantly.
80. page 85:2: But we **must** go further and that means more action.
81. page 86:1: But we **must** be careful not to drift into worry, remorse or morbid reflection, for that would diminish our usefulness to others.

## **CHAPTER 7      WORKING WITH OTHERS**

82. page 89:2: To watch people recover, to see them help others, to watch loneliness vanish, to see a fellowship grow up about you, to have a host of friends -- this is an experience you **must** not miss.
83. page 90:4: The family **must** decide these things.
84. page 93:2: To be vital, faith **must** be accompanied by self sacrifice and unselfish, constructive action.
85. page 95:1: **Never** talk down to an alcoholic....
86. page 95:3: After doing that, he **must** decide for himself whether he wants to go on.
87. page 95:3: If he is to find God, the desire **must** come from within him.
88. page 97:1: **Never** avoid these responsibilities.
89. page 97:2: **You have to** act the Good Samaritan every day...



90. page 97:1: Occasionally you will *have to* meet such conditions.
91. page 99:0: In many homes this is a difficult thing to do, but it *must* be done if any results are to be expected.
92. Page 99:1: But we *must* try to repair the damage immediately lest we pay the penalty by a spree.
93. page 99:2: If their old relationship is to be resumed it *must* be on a better basis, since the former did not work.
94. page 100:1: Both you and the new man *must* walk day by day in the path of spiritual progress.
95. page 102:0: But if you are shaky, *you had better* work with another alcoholic instead.
96. page 102:3: *We never argue* this question.
97. page 103:1: We are careful *never* to show intolerance or hatred of drinking as an institution.
98. page 103:3: Besides, we have stopped fighting anybody or anything. *We have to!*

## **CHAPTER 8 TO WIVES**

99. Page 111:1: Patience and good temper are *most necessary*.
100. page 111:2 Our next thought is that you should never tell him what he *must* do about his drinking.
101. page 113:1: Wait until repeated stumbling convinces him he *must* act, for the more you hurry him the longer his recovery will be delayed.
102. page 114:3: But sometimes you *must* start life anew.
103. page 115:1: But you *must* be on guard not to embarrass or harm your husband.

104. page 115:2: You will no longer be self-conscious or feel that you *must* apologize as though your husband were a weak character.
105. page 117:3: Often you *must* carry the burden of avoiding them or keeping them under control.
106. page 117:3: *Never forget* that resentment is a deadly hazard to an alcoholic.
107. page 118:2: Yet you *must* not expect too much.
108. page 118:2: Live and let live is *the rule*.
109. page 120: 1: Your husband will see at once that he *must* redouble his spiritual activities if he expects to survive.
110. page 120:3: *Never, never* try to arrange a man's life....

## **CHAPTER 9 THE FAMILY AFTERWARD**

111. page 127:0: The family *must* realize that dad, though marvelously improved, is still convalescing.
112. page 127:1 But he *must* see the danger of over-concentration on financial success.
113. page 127:2: We know there are difficult wives and families, but the man who is getting over alcoholism *must* remember he did much to make them so.
114. Page 129: 1:...a spiritual life which does not include his family *obligations* may not be so perfect after all.
115. page 130: 1: That is where our fellow travelers are, and that is where our work *must* be done.
116. page 131:2: Father will *necessarily* spend much time with other alcoholics....
117. Page 131:2...but this activity *should* be balanced.
118. page132: 1: We *absolutely insist* on enjoying life.

119. Page 133:2: Their services are often *indispensable*...

120. page 135:1: Whether the family goes on a spiritual basis or not, the alcoholic member *has to* if he would recover.

121. Page 135:1: The others *must* be convinced of his new status beyond the shadow of a doubt.

## **CHAPTER 10 TO EMPLOYERS**

122. page 141:4: State that you know about his drinking, and that it *must* stop.

123. page 143:0: ...a certain amount of physical treatment is desirable, even *imperative*.

124. page 143:1: Though you are providing him with the best possible medical attention, he should understand that he *must* undergo a change of heart.

125. Page 144:2: When the man is presented with this volume it is best that no one tell him he *must* abide by its suggestions.

126. Page 146:2: Being on a radically different basis of life, he *will never* take advantage of the situation.

127. Page 146:2: For he knows he *must* be honest if he would live at all.

## **CHAPTER 11 A VISION FOR YOU**

128. page 152:1: "...I know I *must* get along without liquor, but how can I?..."

129. page 153:2: They will approach still other sick ones and fellowships of Alcoholics Anonymous may spring up in each city and hamlet, havens for those who *must* find a way out.

130. page 154:4: There *must* be many such in this town.

131. page 155:3: He saw that he would *have to* face.....
132. page 156:3: Both saw that they *must* keep spiritually active.
133. Page 158:5: ...who now felt they *had to* give to others...
134. page 159:2: Though they knew they *must* help other alcoholics if they would remain sober, that motive became secondary.
135. page 164:1: God will determine that, so you *must* remember that your real reliance is always upon Him.

## **APPENDIX II....SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE**

136. page 569:2: Yet it is true that our first printing gave many readers the impression that these personality changes, or religious experiences, *must* be in the nature of sudden and spectacular upheavals.
137. page 569:3: Though it was not our intention to create such an impression, many alcoholics have nevertheless concluded that in order to recover they *must* acquire an immediate and overwhelming "God-consciousness" followed at once by a vast change in feeling and outlook.
138. Page 570:3: Willingness, honesty and open mindedness are the *essentials* of recovery.
139. Page 570:3: But these are *indispensable*.

***"If they want it bad enough, they'll ask ME for help....or my phone number"***

Among the many points Bill Wilson makes over and over in the Big Book is that it is the *responsibility*, the *obligation* of those who are living in the solution as the result of the steps to **approach** the newcomer or someone who is struggling or suffering. The attitude found in today's recovery culture of "if they want it bad enough, they'll come and ask me for help" is nowhere to be found in the Big Book.

Or, how about giving phone numbers to newcomers without taking theirs and making the first contact yourself? Clearly we expect too much from the newcomer. How many of us when new were able to pick up the phone and talk to a total stranger about our problems, fears or God?

So, what follows is a partial list of references to "**making the approach**."

1. *"More often than not, it is imperative that a man's brain be cleared before he is **approached**, as he has then a better chance of understanding and accepting what we have to offer."* (Doctor's Opinion, pg. xxiv)
2. *"**He had come** to pass his experience along to me" (Bill's Story, pg. 9:7)*
3. *"My schoolmate **visited me**..." (Bill's Story 13:3)*
4. *"That the man who is making the **approach** has had the same difficulty, that he obviously knows what he is talking about" (There Is A Solution, Pg. 18:5)*
5. *"After such an **approach** many take up their beds and walk again." (There Is A Solution, Pg. 19:0)*
6. *"When, therefore, we were **approached** by those in whom the problem had been solved, there was nothing left for us but to pick up the simple kit of spiritual tools laid at our feet." (There Is A Solution, Pg. 25:1)*
7. *"Two of the members of Alcoholics Anonymous **came to see me**." (More About Alcoholism, pg. 42:1)*
8. *"Step 12.....we tried to **carry this message**..." (How It Works, 60:0)*
9. *"This is our twelfth suggestion: **Carry this message** to other alcoholics!" (Working With Others pg. 89:1)*

10. "You can easily find some by asking a few doctors, ministers, priests or hospitals." (Working With Others pg. 89: 1)
11. "When you discover a prospect for Alcoholics Anonymous...(Working With Others, pg 90: 1)
12. "You need this information to put yourself in his place, to see how you would like him to approach you if the tables were turned." (Working With Others pg. 90:2)
13. 'Approach through a doctor or an institution is a better bet.' (Working With Others pg. 91: 1)
14. When your man is better, the doctor might suggest a visit from you. (Working With Others pg. 91:2)
15. Call on him while he is still jittery. (Working With Others pg. 91:2)
16. "...we merely have an approach that worked for us" (Working With Others, pg 95:4)
17. "Search out another alcoholic and try again." (Working With Others pg 96: 1)
18. "...find someone desperate enough to accept with eagerness what you offer." (Working With Others, pg 96: 1)
19. Your job now is to be at the place where you may be of maximum helpfulness to others...(Working With Others pg. 102:2)
20. ...so never hesitate to go anywhere if you can be helpful. (Working With Others pg. 102:2)
21. You should not hesitate to visit the most sordid spot on earth on such an errand. (Working With Others pg. 102:2)
22. When we see a man sinking into the mire that is alcoholism, we give him first aid...(The Family Afterwards Pg. 132: 1)
23. ...and place what we have at his disposal. (The Family Afterwards Pg. 132: 1)
24. Following his discharge, we contacted him. (To Employers 139: 1)

25. We think this method of **approach** will accomplish several things. (To Employers 148:3)
26. The other day an **approach** was made to the vice president of a large industrial concern. He remarked: "I'm glad you fellows got over your drinking." (To Employers 148:4)
27. They will **approach** still other sick ones and fellowships of Alcoholics Anonymous may spring up in each city and hamlet (A Vision For You pg. 153:2)
28. In the chapter "Working With Others" you gathered an idea of how we **approach** and aid others to health. (A Vision For You pg. 153:3)
29. Every few days this doctor suggests our **approach** to one of his patients. (A Vision For You pg. 162:1)

## **Food for thought:**

Throughout this text book, Bill has been pounding home the unparalleled importance of working with others:

***"You can only keep what you have by giving it away."***

Pg. 14:6 to 15:0: *"For if an alcoholic failed to perfect and enlarge his spiritual life through work and self-sacrifice for others, he could not survive the certain trials and low spots ahead."*

Pg. 70:2: *"If (something) is very troublesome, we throw ourselves the harder into helping others. We think of their needs and work for them."*

Pg. 89:1: *"Practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics."*

Pg. 102:0: *"...if you're shaky, you had better work with another alcoholic instead."*

***But then, about five pages from the end of Bill's summarization of the book, he seems to reverse himself – or does he???***

Page 159:2: *Though they knew they must help other alcoholics if they would remain sober, that motive **became secondary**. It was **transcended by the happiness they found in giving themselves for others**.*

***A lofty aspiration or a realistic objective???***