



HOPE, FAITH & COURAGE

WRITE LINES



A NEWSLETTER WRITTEN BY C.A. MEMBERS FOR C.A. MEMBERS IN HOSPITALS AND INSTITUTIONS

Issue 8

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**If you have any comments or questions related to this publication please email: hi@cauk.org.uk
If you would like to contribute an article please post to: CAUK H&I, PO Box 6258, Bournemouth, BH1 9DR**

How Did That Happen

We learned that we had to fully concede to our innermost selves that we were addicts. This is the first Step in recovery.

This is a very important statement concerning the first Step. I had to learn what being an addict actually meant. To understand the true nature and gravity of addiction is vital if I am going to work the Steps daily to the best of my ability. I learnt that I suffer from the disease of addiction by getting to C.A. meetings and listening to other members share their experience, strength and hope. I would suggest tuning into the guys who have some time under their belts because most of them seem to know what they're talking about. I would also suggest reading the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous with another addict who is properly armed with the facts about himself and pay particular attention to the first 164 pages. I have come to believe that I suffer from an illness from which there is no known cure and abstinence from all mind altering chemicals is suggested.

This is where my problem lies, I can't live life on life's terms without using drugs - drugs were my solution to life and they became a necessity. I had no Power to choose whether I used/drank, I simply used/drank. Drugs were my way of getting connected to something, which would make everything seem "ok." The problem was once I put that first drug inside me this phenomena of craving developed and I was off and running. I had no ability to control how much I was going to use. I would go to the dealer and think to myself, I'll just have a couple of stones and that would be it, no more and I would sincerely mean it. I would be back and forth to the cash machine all night and all morning until the

money ran out. After all the money was gone I would be walking home thinking "How the bloody hell did that happen?!" I would repeat this behaviour over and over and over again. Day in day out, week in week out, month in month out, year in year out.

I had a mind that would forget and all I would focus on would be the hit, the buzz, the feeling. The last debauch would be put to the back of my mind, my will was insufficient to prevent me from repeating the same behaviour and all I could think of was that first one, which would give me a feeling of ease and comfort. I could let out a huge sigh of relief immediately after taking that first hit, which would make it all better or so I thought. I was deluded, insane, in full flight from reality! This "thought" or "obsession" took me to near death experiences and places I never knew existed or had only read about. It damn near killed me! So I have learnt that I suffer from a two-fold illness - A mental obsession and a physical allergy. The main problem centres in my mind rather than my body.

Lack of Power, that was our dilemma - We had to find a Power by which we could live, and it had to be a Power greater than ourselves. Obviously. But where and how were we to find this Power? Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous Page 45
I found this Power by finding a man who was properly armed with the facts about himself, and by following a few simple rules outlined in the book of Alcoholics Anonymous.

As a result of learning about the illness I suffer from and by working through the Twelve Steps of Cocaine Anonymous, I have seen that I have lived with God and without God in my life and today I know what I prefer.

A Child of God

Years of using had left me convinced to my very core I was no good to anyone. The people close to me had all gone, friends, family and loved ones decided it was safer to stay away.

I had always known God existed and now I believed he had left me too, after all, how could anyone including God still love such a low-down evil addict? How wrong I was.

Working through the steps with my sponsor gave me a connection with God filled with so much love that today I have no doubt I am loved and wanted by the power in my life I am proud to call God

COCAINE ANONYMOUS HELPLINE

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A Goodbye Letter

My everything is the way I love to sum you up. You have been with me through thick and thin, you've understood me when most abandoned me. You took away the fears and help me fight back the tears. Your loyalty isn't seen in many, you've kept me going in times of trouble, and we've travelled far and wide together. Staying close, inseparable I'd describe, my friend, my lover – Amelda to name.

When I was cold you hugged me, when I was lonely you kept me company and when I was sad you were there to cheer me up. My love for you has been unconditional, a love at times I thought impossible to find, you're in my head and in my heart, welded together I did pray forever. A friendship so strong you filled me with love I felt special at

last no one could part us, a powerful friendship with mutual respect, I nearly died for you – but you crossed me which broke my heart...

One by one you took my family, my only hope, you turned me into something contrived, I lost hope of the 'real me' even being alive. Unrecognisable they say, but you still told me everything was okay. Why did I listen? I was blinded by love.

You're evil, you're nasty. What else can I say? My morals you took and threw them away and my beautiful children without a mum - until today.

The people I loved you just took them away, I sometimes get confused and ask myself why? What did I do to you to deserve this pain?

Our friendship was a lie. I've now thrown off my blinkers, what more can I say – I really don't need you in my life today.

I am getting to know me and everything is making sense. My blocks and my assets. The only way is up and with that I guess it is time to say goodbye, farewell and I guess thank you to some extent. You've made me the person I am today; strong, brave and determined. I'm learning to love me again and in turn be loved. Our journey has been rocky, happy and sad, so leave my mind and drift out of my heart. My new life is waiting and with new friends I begin.

Goodbye Amelda – let my journey begin...

JUST A THOUGHT

It's not what I know in recovery that keeps me sober.
It's what I **DO** that keeps me sober.

Things That Are Difficult To Say When You're Drunk:

- 1. Innovative
- 2. Preliminary
- 3. Proliferation
- 4. Cinnamon

Things That Are Very Difficult To Say When You're Drunk:

- 1. Specificity
- 2. Anti-constitutionalistically
- 3. Passive-aggressive disorder
- 4. Transubstantiate

Things That Are Downright Impossible To Say When You're Drunk:

- 1. Thanks, but I don't want to have sex.
- 2. Nope, no more booze for me!
- 3. Sorry, but you're not really my type.
- 4. Good evening, officer. Isn't it lovely out tonight?
- 5. Oh, I couldn't! No one wants to hear me sing karaoke.
- 6. I'm not interested in fighting you.
- 7. Thank you, but I won't make any attempt to dance, I have no coordination. I'd hate to look like a fool!
- 8. Where is the nearest bathroom? I refuse to pee in this parking lot or on the side of the road.
- 9. I must be going home now as I have to work in the morning.

A Promise

N	T	L	U	A	U	S	Y	O	W	I	S	T	A	I	S	C	T	O	
L	O	S	N	D	Y	D	C	O	N	O	R	E	E	M	G	O	D	L	L
T	O																		

Unscramble the tiles to reveal a message.

*God, grant me the Serenity to accept the things I cannot change...
 Courage to change the things I can and Wisdom to know the difference*

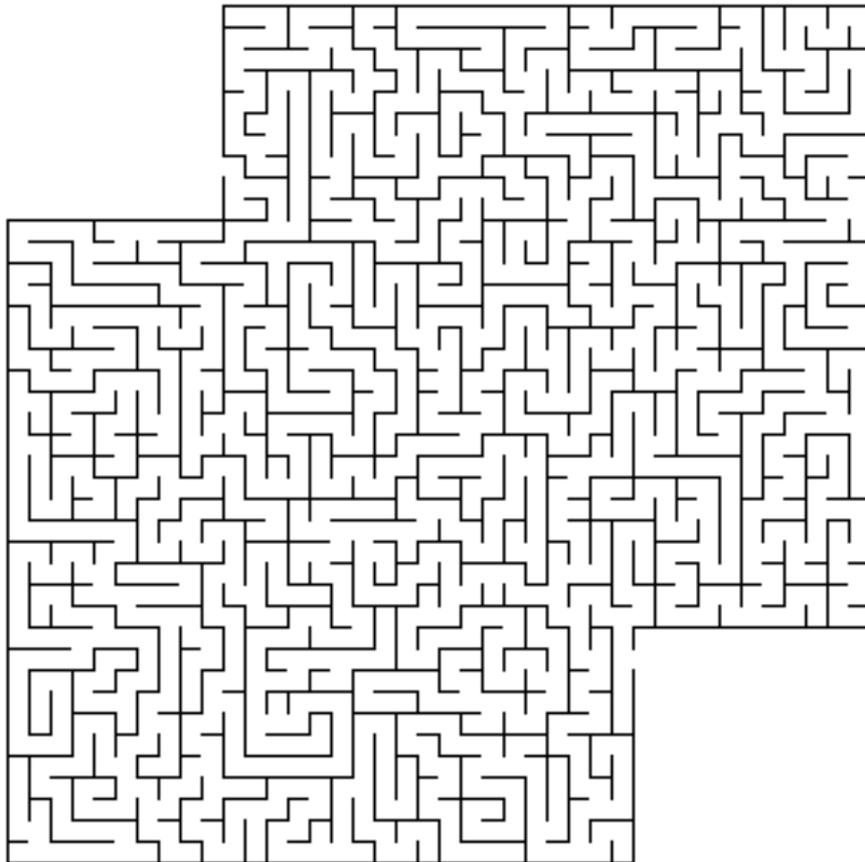
Who Is A C.A. Member?

According to C.A.'s Third Tradition, the only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using cocaine and all other mind-altering substances. *Whatever you may have been using, if it led you to this meeting, you're probably in the right place.* Over time, virtually every single one of us has realized that our real problem is not cocaine or any specific drug; it is the disease of addiction.

It can be tempting to focus on our differences rather than our similarities, but this can blind us to potential sources of support in our recovery. As we hear other members' stories, the most important question to ask ourselves is not, "Would I have partied with these people?" but rather, "Do these people have a solution that can help me stay sober?" We encourage you to stick around and listen with an open mind.

Taken from the reading 'Who Is A C.A. Member?' Cocaine Anonymous approved literature. Copyright 2009

You'll be aMAZEd before you are half way through!



Answers to issue 7 puzzles:
STEP ELEVEN PRAYER – Page 4
The power to carry that out (*Step 11*)

JUST A THOUGHT

The two most dangerous words in a recovering addict's vocabulary are: "I'm different"

“Our personal recovery depends on C.A. unity”

I dragged two prison holdalls into my first Cocaine Anonymous Meeting, feeling scared; I was lost, believing I was a social loner. Afraid ‘they’ would not like me and ‘they’ would judge me because I didn’t like me and I judged me, so I initially judged all ‘them’. A C.A. sponsor had been through the 12 Steps, 12 Traditions and 12 Concepts of C.A. and visibly lived principles in her life; she helped ‘me’ become ‘we’.

I was taught that if I am alone I am powerless (Step One) then we need a Power greater than ourselves (Step

Two). Our whole recovery as individuals depends on the 1st Tradition’s principle of unity, being united as one by the C.A. group working in harmony via unison. Helping newcomers is simply to get out of the bondage of self, 12 Stepping promotes recovery of mind and being of service treats our maladjusted spirit. Attending meetings is not enough; Unity is the collective entity of C.A. sharing one common goal.

Thought for the Day

I practice unity by thinking of the greater good of C.A. as a whole, considering the fellowships wellbeing before my own, aware that my own actions may cause harm, disrepute and disunity: I am judged on my actions and not my words. *I pray to seek God in all areas, through a newcomer, sponsor, meetings and all around me, so we grow in usefulness, effectiveness and understanding.*

A grateful addict

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The Jokes On You!

A long time C.A. member named Joe B has lived to a very old age and one morning God appears to him, as Joe lies in bed.

Joe: What have you come for God?

God: Well Joe, I've come with some good news and some bad news, what do you want first?

Joe (being an optimist): I like to start the morning with good news

God: I have come to tell you that we have C.A. meetings in heaven

Joe: Alright - that's great! So what's the bad news?

God: You're chairing tonight's meeting....

The Home Group

Becoming Part Of

It is the common experience for many of us to feel like we didn't fit in anywhere. Drugs gave us that instantaneous feeling of belonging. When we get sober, that drug-induced feeling of belonging disappears. Finding a group of sober people we can relate to is a new start for us. We go to meetings as often as possible, preferably every day.

Before long, we find we are most comfortable at one particular meeting. Because we feel "at home" there, we join the home group and commit to attending regularly. Other home group members get to know who we are, and we get to know them. We never have to be alone again. On a bad day, we find there is usually someone there who understands and who can help us get through it sober.

The Home Group

As newcomers, we hear the suggestion to get a "Home Group," but we aren't sure why. Many of us have been in isolation for the last months or years of our using. We feel apart from society and need to connect with people who understand. We find those people at meetings of Cocaine Anonymous.

A Power Greater Than Ourselves

Sometimes it is difficult to develop a concept of a Power greater than ourselves. Our drugs had been such a power, but what could be greater than that? As we begin to work a program of recovery, we learn that we are defenceless against our addiction. We need a Power greater than ourselves, greater than our addiction. There may be no better place to start than with a group of sober addicts. Our own concept of a Higher Power will come in time as we work the Twelve Steps. Until then, it is good to have the power of the group with us.

Twelve Step Work/ Service

We often wonder how we can carry the message to the addict who still suffers before we get through working all of the steps. The answer is service. Wasn't it important to us to have someone at the door to welcome us? Was there coffee made? Did someone take the time to greet us? Were there chairs set up? Who read the readings at the beginning of the meeting? Was there someone to empty the ashtrays? We can find a way to help no matter how long we have been sober. We are told that getting out of ourselves is one of the best things for us for us to do, and serving our home group is a wonderful way to start.

Responsibility

In our active addiction, we were often irresponsible and unaccountable. We often placed blame on others and none on ourselves. Taking on responsibility at our home group is a good step forward. Although you probably won't become treasurer at your first business meeting, you might become the coffee person, showing up early to make sure the coffee is ready for the early birds and staying late to clean up the pots and cups. There are a variety of positions that need to be filled at most groups: Chairperson, Secretary, Group Service Representative (GSR), Greeter, Coffee Maker, Chips and Literature Representative, Floor Sweeper and others. All are very important. There is always something you can do, no matter how long you have been sober. Being of service at your home group is a great way to practice being a responsible member of society.

The benefits of becoming involved in a home group are more than you can probably imagine. It can be an important part of the process that ultimately keeps us clean and sober. One of our original members writes, "It occurred to me that when many of us walk through the doors of Cocaine Anonymous for the first time, we do so without hope, without faith, but with an ounce of courage. We listen to the stories and experiences of others and develop hope. As a result of coming back, and coming back, and coming back and working the Twelve Steps, we acquire an abundance of faith." (Hope, Faith, & Courage xxviii-xxix).

We encourage you to keep going to meetings until you find yourself a home group – and no matter what, keep coming back.

Taken and adapted from the pamphlet 'The Home Group' Cocaine Anonymous approved literature. Copyright 2004

Happy, Joyous & Free