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www.aa-costablanca.org

MY GOD, YOU MUST BE CRAZY

IT WAS 1934 and Bill was a few months off the booze. He had listened to Dr Silkworth's advice at Town's Hospital. He even returned to Wall Street and pulled off a few small deals. He was steering clear of liquor. Things were looking better, a lot better.

He was finding it easier to resist alcohol and when offered drinks, he told people about his former condition. Confidence was growing.

But Bill was to have one last great battle with booze. It would be a running, bruising battle. It started on Armistice Day.

Here is what happened in Bill's own words: "Armistice Day, 1934, rolled around. Lois had to go to the Brooklyn department store where she worked. Wall Street was closed down, and I began to wonder what I would do. I thought of golf. I hadn't played in a long time. The family purse was slender, so I suggested to Lois that I might go over to Staten Island, where there was a public course. She couldn't quite conceal her apprehension, but managed to say cheerfully, 'Oh, please do. That would be wonderful.' I soon crossed on the ferry and found myself seated on the bus beside a man with a flying target rifle. That brought back memories of that Remington single-shot piece my grandfather had given me

when I was 11 years old. We started talking about shooting.

"Suddenly, a bus behind us collided with the one we were in. There wasn't any great shock, neither too much damage. My friend and I alighted on the pavement to



wait for the next one to come along. Still talking about shooting irons, we noticed something that looked like a speakeasy. He said to me, 'What about a little nip?'

"I said to him, 'Fine, let's go.' We walked into the place. He ordered a Scotch. With ease, I ordered ginger ale.

"Don't you drink?' he said.

"No,' I said 'I'm one of those people who can't manage it.' And then, I dwelt on the allergy and the obsession, among other things. I told him all about the terrible time

I'd had with liquor and how I was through with it forever. Very carefully, I explained the whole illness to him.

"Soon, seated in another bus, we were presently deposited in front of a country inn quite well down the island. I was to go to the golf course nearby; he was to take another bus to the rifle range. But it was noontime, so he said, 'Let's go in and have a sandwich. Besides, I'd like to have a drink.' We sat at the bar this time. As I have said, it was Armistice Day. The place was filling up, and so were the customers. That familiar buzz which rises from drinking crowds filled the room. My friend and I continued our talk, still on the subject of shooting. Sandwiches and ginger ale for me, sandwiches and another drink for him.

"We were almost ready to leave when my mind turned back again to Armistice Day in France — all the ecstasy of those hours. I remembered how we'd all gone to town. I no longer heard what my friend was saying. Suddenly, the bartender, a big, florid Irishman, came abreast of us beaming. In each hand he held a drink. 'Have one on the house, boys,' he cried. 'It's Armistice Day.' Without an instant's hesitation, I picked up the liquor and drank it.

"My friend looked at me aghast. 'My God, is it possible that you could take a drink after what you just told me?

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You must be crazy.'

"And my only reply could be this: 'Yes, I am.'

"The next morning about five o'clock, Lois found me unconscious in the areaway of 182 Clinton Street. I'd fallen against the door, was bleeding heavily from a bad scalp wound. My hand still clutched the strap of the golf bag. As I regained consciousness, nothing much was said. Indeed, there wasn't anything to say. We both hit an all-time low."

...taken from Pass It On — Bill Wilson and the A.A. Message, pp. 109-111

CHALLENGES & BENEFITS OF SERVICE

WHEN I joined AA, I just wanted to stop drinking – that was very hard and it took me two attempts to get it right.

When I crawled back into AA for the second time, I got my head down and started working the programme with my sponsor. My life began to change. I was doing what I didn't do the first time – what was suggested.

My dear sponsor suggested strongly and early in my recovery that I get involved in service and obligingly 'helped' me to volunteer for treasurer at a meeting the following week.

I have rarely stopped serving during the last 14 years and have covered just

about all the service positions in several groups, as we moved from the UK to Spain

where we helped to set up new meetings.

To me, part of my ongoing recovery is linked to service, but these days I am on my guard as the positions come up.

I think: 'Am I robbing someone who perhaps needs it? Am I denying anyone the opportunity to do valuable service for themselves as well as the group?'

Of course, the number one priority is to get new members to stick at it and keep coming

back to meetings, so care must be exercised in 'encouraging' early recoverers into doing service.

But as ever you have to use your own

experience to a great deal in AA, and in my case, service did me no harm, quite the opposite.

That was when I then 'joined' AA, became 'a part of' and not 'apart from' – as I had been the first time round.

I firmly believe all AAs should at some point, sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly, do service in their local groups, whether it is the vital business of teas and coffees or the mundane business of GSR (joke).

This almost forces the volunteer into involvement in their local group and AA as a whole, and if the appetite is whetted enough can lead to further levels of service such as Intergroup (CBIC) and beyond.

There is nothing like doing service for the first time. In any role it can be daunting, exciting and worrying but as you persevere, like almost anything in life, you gain experience and confidence which can spur you on to greater challenges.

AA member, Costa Blanca



THE TORREVIEJA CONVENTION SEPTEMBER 2010



Mediterranean views from all hotel rooms

THE SOBRIETY CANDLE is about to be lit again by the English-speaking community in Torrevieja as visitors gather for the Recovery In The Sun convention weekend from 3-5 September 2010.

Plenty of meetings are planned including the non-stop Marathon meeting. There will be AI-Anon participation, a celebratory dance and a fun raffle on Saturday night.

A wonderful and warm weekend is in store – not to be missed!

'RECOVERY IN THE SUN' AA English Speaking Convention TORREVIEJA, COSTA BLANCA - SPAIN 3rd - 5th September 2010

Hotel Cabo Cervera

Ctra. Torrevieja a La Mata,

03188 TORREVIEJA,

Alicante, Spain

Tel: (+34) 966 921 717

Fax: (+34) 966 921 896

E-mail: info@hotelcabocervera.com

Web: www.hotelcabocervera.com

Bookings & enquiries must be made direct with hotel by phone or email, quoting 'AA Convention'

Double Room with Full Board €47.80 per person, per night.

(Half Board €41.11 pp, pp or Bed & Breakfast €32.48 pp, pp)

Single Occupancy in Twin Rooms with Full Board €45.01 pp, pp

Family Rooms also available. All Prices Inc. VAT

Convention registration fee of €10 payable on arrival from noon on Friday 3rd September 2010.

• All-day Saturday AA Marathon meeting.

• Saturday evening Raffle & Disco.

• AA and AI-Anon Open & Closed Meetings.

For further Convention information, contact

Helpline (0034) 625 912 076

E-mail: aaevent@gmail.com

or contact, John & Christine ...

From UK call 0844 3129304 (cheap rate)

RULE N°62

AN OLDTIMER arrives home from his AA meeting, gets ready for bed, and is on his knees saying his evening prayers.

He is in the middle of his "God blesses" saying "God bless the guy who says the same thing no matter what the topic, God bless George, God bless the tea-maker, God



bless . . .", when suddenly he pauses and looks up, saying: "You know God, I wonder if there is AA in heaven. "If there isn't, I don't know that I want to go there.

"These folk are so important to me, I don't want to spend eternity without them." There's a bolt of lightning and a loud clap of thunder and the oldtimer hears a voice say: "I have good news and bad news. The good news is, there is AA in heaven. The bad news is, you are speaking tomorrow night."

• **I AM** in trouble when I put a Cheque Book before the Big Book.

• **TAKE** what you can use and leave the rest.

• **LEARN** to listen and listen to learn.

TODAY'S MEDITATION: LOVE & TOLERANCE IS OUR CODE

SPREADING GOSSIP feeds a dark hunger in us. Sometimes we think the only way we can feel good about ourselves is to make someone else look bad by comparison. But the kind of self-esteem that can be purchased at another's expense is hollow and not worth the price.

How, then, do we deal with our negative sense of self? Simple. We replace it with a positive concern for others. Rather than dwell on our low self-esteem, we turn to those around us and seek to be of service to them.

This may seem to be a way of avoiding the issue, but it's not. There's nothing we can do by dwelling on our low sense of self except work ourselves into a stew of self-pity. But by replacing our self-pity with active, loving concern for others, we become the kind of people we can respect.

The way to build our self-esteem is not to tear others down, but to build them up through love and positive concern. To help us with this, we can ask ourselves if we are contributing to the problem or to the solution. Today, we can choose to build instead of destroy.

Just for Today: Though I may be feeling low, I don't need to tear someone down to build myself up. Today, I will replace my negative sense of self with a positive concern for others. I will build, not destroy.'

The Big Book repeatedly, in fact about 90 times, uses words such as kind, helpful, patience, usefulness, love and tolerance, as attitudes and behaviours for recovering alcoholics to adopt towards others, whether inside or outside AA meetings. Love and tolerance towards others is our code. These practices develop, as the meditation suggests, our self-respect and our self-esteem.

By practicing this spiritual programme of AA in all our affairs, we can lead happy, free and peaceful lives.

Occurrences in The Big Book (where in context) it is suggested to practice an attitude of kindness, helpfulness, tolerance and love towards others:	
Being helpful.....	19 times
Useful / Usefulness.....	14 times
Tolerant / Tolerance.....	13 times
Kind / Kindness.....	8 times
Love.....	7 times
Friendly / Friendliness.....	7 times
Understanding.....	6 times
Patient / Patience.....	6 times
Considerate.....	5 times
Fellowship.....	5 times

SERVICE THROUGH ARCHIVES

Dolores R. talks about her service as AA archivist for CER and the importance and responsibility of conserving and preserving AA's 75-year old history.

LIKE ANY other AA service, the primary purpose of those involved in archival work is to carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Archives Service work is more than mere custodial activity. It is the means by which we collect, preserve, and share the rich and meaningful heritage of our Fellowship.

It is by collecting and sharing of these important historical elements that our collective gratitude for Alcoholics Anonymous is deepened.

AA members have a responsibility to gather and care for the Fellowship's historical documents and memorabilia.

Correspondence, records, minutes, reports (from Group, Intergroup, Region, etc.), photographs, newspapers, and magazine articles from the past and the present should be collected, and



preserved.

If the area's Intergroup chooses not to have an archivist, then this can be done by the secretary of a meeting, or maybe even the GSR of the group.

At the moment, the archive focus is on the history of the groups within Continental European Region's (CER) Intergroups.

*Dolores R. CER Archivist
dolli@dr-rinecker.de*

CBIC MATTERS

CBIC felt it was time to take a good look in the mirror and therefore an inventory was held on 9 May 2010.

There was a disappointingly low turnout which after months of comments, complaints and criticism from members seemed unusual that they would not want to be present to make their worries and doubts heard.

But, nevertheless, the meeting went ahead and out of it came several interesting points. The main one being the idea to write a brief overview so that anyone interested can get a quick and basic understanding of what CBIC is, what it does, why we need it, who runs it, who can attend and a controversial issue that invariably comes up – where does the money go?

The points in this leaflet will be discussed further at the next CBIC meeting in June 2010.

CBIC VACANCIES

PUBLIC INFORMATION LIAISON OFFICER stood down in September 2009 and this service is yet to be filled. This position involves carrying the AA message of recovery to professionals and the general public.

Maintaining announcements in public media and placing articles about AA in the local press and other media.

Liaising with the groups' PI Contacts throughout the Costa Blanca, via regular PI Team Meetings to create opportunities to pass the message, whether through public talks, PI & Open meetings, radio, film or exhibitions.

Organizing and giving talks to clubs, societies, schools, doctors, nurses, social workers, etc.

Suggested sobriety: 2 years

SERVICE KEEPS US SOBER

THE CHAIRPERSON and **SECRETARY** have completed their service of two years and are rotating out as of this quarter.

As with above PI Liaison Officer position, it is very much hoped that volunteers will come forward for these posts.

All outgoing committee members are more than willing to sponsor AA members into these services if necessary.

Suggested sobriety: 2 years

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

Thank you to those who have contributed to Recovery In The Sun. Please send meeting news and changes, comments, views, articles, suggestions, personal stories, or anything else you would like published in your AA Costa Blanca newsletter to:

ourprimarypurpose@gmail.com

Mobile: (+34) 679 18 26 22. Landline: (+34) 96 648 1150.

Disclaimer: Articles in this publication represent the views of the authors which are not necessarily shared by other AA members or by the AA Fellowship as a whole.

REMINDER: the next CBIC (Costa Blanca International Committee) intergroup meeting is at 12 noon on Sunday, 13 June 2010 in Alicante at Area 21 offices – C/Virgen del Puig, 3 bajo, Alicante. Everybody is welcome. Meet us for coffee & Danish at 11.15am in nearby Cafeteria Alacant.



The Big Book of AA



THE FACT IS that most alcoholics for reasons yet obscure, 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.

The almost certain consequences that follow taking even a glass of beer do not crowd into the mind to deter us. If these thoughts 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.

taken from There is a Solution, Alcoholics Anonymous, p.24

9TH AA NATIONAL SPANISH CONVENTION AT THE BALI

9^a Convención Nacional
75 Aniversario de Alcohólicos Anónimos
Lema: "Nuestra esperanza en acción"

9, 10, 11 y 12 de Octubre 2010
Benidorm (Alicante)

Alojamientos:
Hotel Bali ****
Hotel Torre Dorada ***

ASISTENCIA
PRECIO INSCRIPCIÓN SÓLO ASISTENCIA: 40€/PERSONA

ALOJAMIENTO Y ASISTENCIA

	HAB. DOBLE	HAB. INDIVIDUAL	NINO Menor 12 años
GRAN HOTEL BALI 4* C/ Lolo Princes, 67	183,00	242,00	111,00
HOTEL TORRE DORADA 3* C/ Avda. 2 La Cala	153,00	182,00	86,00

THE 9th AA SPANISH NATIONAL CONVENTION will be held in Benidorm from 9-12 October 2010, celebrating the 75th anniversary of AA and themed: Our Hope in Action.

Alicante's Area 21 hosts this event, though it is organized and planned by Spanish General Service's Convention Committee. There will be English-speaking meetings throughout the convention – so all are welcome and everybody will be looked after and catered for.

The Convention Committee has reserved rooms for AA members and their families in the 4-star Hotel Bali and the nearby 3-star Hotel Torre Dorada, both excellent hotels in the south of Benidorm. For more information and reservations call: (00 34) 98 596 3253 or email: ovidogesta@viajeseci.es

An agenda of events and meetings will be published in the next Recovery In The Sun. Watch this space!



The Bali Hotel—the highest hotel in Spain offering stunning views

