

# RECOVERY IN THE SUN



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[www.aa-costablanca.org](http://www.aa-costablanca.org)

## LAND OF HOPE & MEETINGS

*'The natural flights of the human mind are not from pleasure to pleasure, but from hope to hope.'* - a quote from the daily reading.

**WHEN** I came into AA, the word *hope* took on a new meaning for me as I began to use the programme to improve my life.

But I *used* to hope that life would get better for me if I had more money, if certain people were not in my life, if I could do the things I wanted to do, if I could be in another place, and if no one ever found out what I was really like.

Today I *hope* I can be an example by being a better person, having found a recovery that gives me a life worth living.

Hope, for me, also means — honesty; open-mindedness; positive thinking and eternal gratitude. I am eternally grateful for all the people who are in my life and share my journey of recovery.

Some of those people are on the Costa Blanca.

I have fond memories of that area because a fellow member allowed me to use his apartment during my stay in Spain and from there I attended as many meetings as possible.

When I travel it is important for me to get to whichever meeting is available because I know I may not be able to get to

another meeting while I am away at sea.

I was given the gift of being able to walk into a new meeting without fear. Sometimes I hear people say they are uncomfortable with that. I would like to think that by sharing my experience I can give hope to others, and



that when they are away from their home group, they too can continue in their sobriety by attending meetings.

We are all welcome as soon as we walk through the door of an AA meeting. We are all there for the same reason, regardless of where we have come from.

The eclectic mix in some

meetings in tourist areas is so strong you want to carry it with you to your home group which might at times seem a little boring. But I always try to remember, a meeting is only dull or boring if I make it that way in my mind.

I hope whenever I arrive at a new place I can get to a meeting and listen to other members sharing.

Only that way can I be reminded of how my life used to be and how it is today. Sharing is a powerful tool that I use in my recovery and often it is the only time I take to reflect on how life used to be.

I also share through writing and believe that by doing so I can encourage others and give them hope.

I believe that if I want to stay clean and sober just for today and I put in the effort, there is a very good chance I will — no matter where I am in the world. Whether at sea or on dry land. I only have this day.

When I start running ahead of myself I know I will end up tripping and then I have to wait until I catch up with myself and get back in the day.

When I am just moseying along in my own world I do not have to remind myself of the problems I used to encounter. So it is always good for me to go to a meeting and be reminded.

*AA member and regular CB visitor*

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CB North: **648 16 90 45**  
 CB South: **625 912 078**  
 Costa Calida East:  
**679 385 195**  
 Costa Calida South West:  
**646 290 420**  
 Valencia City:  
**686 685 860**

*Next CBIC meeting on 6 Dec 2009 at noon in Alicante*

### Recovery In The Sun The Costa Blanca's AA Newsletter



Delivered straight to your inbox

# EITHER OUT THE WINDOW OR INTO AA

**I** HAVE always felt negative towards life. I cursed my parents for bringing me into the world. Every night, going to bed, I prayed I would die in my sleep and I cried every morning when I woke up, still alive and miserable.

I started drinking at a very early age, to numb the pain. This went on for 48 years. I was trapped in a cycle of getting drunk — morning, noon and evening.

During all those years, I was never happy. Everything in my life seemed to be going wrong. Of course, being drunk all the time didn't help.

I neglected my husband, who left me. Soon afterwards, my 9 year-old son followed him. Then I felt even more sad and alone and could not cope with the cruel, outside world.

For many years, I cared only about staying drunk avoiding pain and blaming others. I had trouble sleeping. I had mad, racing thoughts. Suicide beckoned.

The moment I woke up, I put another bottle to my mouth and went into oblivion again. When I was awake, I felt shaky and fragile. I felt tired all the time, physically and mentally.



Recently, upon learning about the existence of Alcoholics Anonymous on the Costa Blanca, I gathered up what strength I had and gave it a try. I heard AA members say alcoholism is a disease, an illness — not a lack of willpower, as my entire family and I believed.

At my first meeting, I told them that I wasn't sure I was an alcoholic. They just listened quietly and patiently. Then after a few meetings, I began to realize that I was scared and in a lot of pain.

Gently and with understanding, AA members helped me open my eyes to my drinking problem. I began feeling better about myself and they set me off on my road to recovery.

I was ignorant and impatient, but the Twelve Step programme taught me that to recover I only need to take one small step, one day at a time. I have learned how to work on my emotional problems and I have never felt so light-hearted before.

After 6 months sobriety, I am doing and feeling so much better. Instead of just reacting to my fluctuating moods by picking up a drink, I am learning to stabilize and maintain them.

The quality of my life has definitely

improved, slowly but steadily. I have become grateful, humble, happy and strong.

And I am delighted to say my relationship with my son has been restored, and he's very proud of me. He has forgiven me for all the harm I did to him. God bless.

I feel such happiness lately that I want to share this feeling. I want to help others feel better too. I would recommend AA to anyone. It's a life-saver.

*Costa Blanca AA member*

## ...SO TO VALENCIA



**THE AA** English-speaking group in Valencia has changed its meeting time to every Wednesday from 12:30-1:30pm. The idea is to offer a meeting during the day, allowing time afterwards for fellowship and a cup of tea or coffee with AA members.

The popular Sunday evening meeting at 7pm remains at the same time and venue (see below) and all are welcome at both meetings.

Some members meet before the Sunday meeting at 7pm. If you would like to spend some time supporting and visiting the Valencia group, a carload of AA members from other areas of the Costa Blanca can make the journey more economical. What better than a drive to Valencia for a Sunday evening or Wednesday lunchtime AA meeting with friends in recovery.

All that is required is a desire to stop drinking.

**Valencia Meetings: Sundays 7-8pm & Wednesdays 12.30-1.30pm at C/Pouet de San Vicente 1, Parroquia (church). Alley is next to C/del Mar 51, the last alley on that main street, first door on the left. Just 15 minutes walk from Valencia main train station. Valencia Contacts: 96 146 1123, 686 685 860, 96 144 5085, 654 874 916. [www.aa-costablanca.org](http://www.aa-costablanca.org)**

## THE 12 SYMPTOMS OF A SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

1. An increased tendency to let things happen rather than make them happen.
2. Frequent attacks of smiling.
3. Feelings of being connected with others and nature.
4. Frequent overwhelming episodes of appreciation.
5. A tendency to think and act spontaneously rather than from fears based on past experience.
6. An unmistakable ability to enjoy each moment.
7. A loss of ability to worry.
8. A loss of interest in conflict.
9. A loss of interest in interpreting the actions of others.
10. A loss of interest in judging others.
11. A loss of interest in judging self.
12. Gaining the ability to love without expecting anything in return.

# DR SILKWORTH DISCUSSES THE RELAPSE

**T**HE MYSTERY of slips is not so deep as may appear. While it seems odd that an alcoholic who has restored himself to a dignified place among his fellows, and been dry for years, should suddenly throw all his happiness overboard and find himself again in mortal peril of drowning in liquor - often the reason is very simple.

People are inclined to say: "There is something peculiar about alcoholics. They may seem to be well, yet at any moment they may turn back to their old ways. You can never be sure!"

This is largely twaddle. The alcoholic is a sick person. Under the techniques of Alcoholics Anonymous he gets well; that is to say, his disease is arrested. There is nothing unpredictable about him any more than there is anything weird about a person who has arrested diabetes.

Let's get it clear, once and for all, that alcoholics are human beings just like other human beings. Then we can safeguard ourselves intelligently against most of the slips.

Both in professional and lay circles, there is a tendency to label everything that an alcoholic may do as "alcoholic behaviour." The truth is, it is simply human nature!

It is very wrong to consider many of the personality traits observed in liquor addicts as peculiar to the alcoholic. Emotional and mental quirks are classified as symptoms of alcoholism merely because alcoholics have them - yet those same quirks can be found among non-alcoholics, too. *Actually they are symptoms of mankind!*

Of course, the alcoholic himself tends to think of himself as different, someone special, with unique tendencies and reactions. Many psychiatrists, doctors and therapists carry the same idea to extremes in their analyses and treatment of alcoholics. Sometimes they make a complicated mystery of a condition which is found in all human beings, whether they drink whiskey or buttermilk.

To be sure, alcoholism like every other disease does manifest itself in some unique ways. It does have a number of baffling peculiarities which differ from all other diseases. At the same time, many of the symptoms and much of the behaviour of alcoholism are closely paralleled and even duplicated in other diseases.

The alcoholic "slip" as it is known in AA, furnishes a perfect example of how human nature can be mistaken for alcoholic behaviour.

The "slip" is a relapse! It is a relapse that occurs after the alcoholic has stopped drinking and started on the AA programme of recovery. Slips usually occur in the early stages of the alcoholic's AA indoctrination, before having time to learn enough of the AA technique and AA philosophy to obtain solid footing. But slips may also occur after an alcoholic has been a member of AA for many months, or even years, and it is in this kind, above all, that one finds a marked similarity between the alcoholic's behaviour and "normal" victims of other diseases.

No one is startled by the fact that relapses are not uncommon among arrested tubercular patients. But here is a startling fact - the cause is often the same as the cause which leads to "slips" for the alcoholic. It happens in this way:

When a tubercular patient recovers sufficiently to be released from the hospital, the doctor hands out careful directions for the way the patient is to live upon returning home. Bed every night by, say, eight o'clock; drink plenty of milk, refrain from smoking, and obey other stringent rules.

For the first several months, perhaps for years, the patient follows directions. But as his strength increases and he feels fully recovered, he becomes slack.

There may come the night when he decides he can stay up until ten o'clock. When he does this, nothing untoward happens. The next day he still feels good. He does it again. Soon he is disregarding the directions given him when he left the hospital. *Eventually, he has a relapse!*

The same tragedy can be found in cardiac cases. After the heart attack, the patient is put on a strict rest schedule. Frightened, he naturally follows directions obediently for a long time. Goes to bed early, avoids exercise such as walking up stairs, quits smoking and leads a Spartan life. Eventually, though, there comes a day after he has been feeling good for months, or years, when he feels he has regained his strength and has also recovered from his fright. If the elevator is out of order one day, he walks up the three flights of stairs. Or, he decides to go to a party - or do just a little smoking - or take a cocktail or two. If

no serious after effects follow the first departure from the rigorous schedule prescribed he may try it again, until he suffers a relapse.

In both cardiac and tubercular cases, the acts which led to the relapses were preceded by wrong thinking. The patient in each case rationalized himself out of a sense of his own perilous reality. He deliberately turned away from this knowledge of the fact that he had been the victim of a serious disease. He grew over-confident and decided he didn't have to follow directions.

Now that is precisely what happens with the alcoholic - the arrested alcoholic, or the alcoholic in AA - who relapses.

Obviously, he decides to take a drink some time before he actually takes it. He starts thinking wrong before he embarks on the course that leads to the relapse.

There is no more reason to charge the "slip" to alcoholic behaviour than there is to lay a tubercular relapse to tubercular behaviour or a second heart attack to cardiac behaviour.

The alcoholic "slip" is not a symptom of a psychotic condition. There's nothing "screwy" about it at all. *The patient simply didn't follow directions.*

For the alcoholic, AA offers the directions. A vital factor, or ingredient, of the preventative, especially for the alcoholic, is sustained emotion. The alcoholic who learns some of the techniques or mechanics of AA but misses the philosophy or the spirit may get tired of following directions - not because he is alcoholic but because he is human. Rules and regulations irk almost anyone, because they are restraining, prohibitive, negative. The philosophy of AA, however, is positive and provides ample sustained emotion - a sustained desire to follow directions voluntarily.

In any event, the psychology of the alcoholic is not as different as some people try to make it. The disease has certain physical differences, yes, and the alcoholic has problems peculiar to him, perhaps, in that he has been put on the defensive and consequently has developed nervous frustrations. But, in many instances, there is no more reason to be talking about "the alcoholic mind" than there is to try to describe something called "the cardiac mind" or "the t.b. mind."

I think we'll help the alcoholic more if we can first recognize that they are primarily human beings - afflicted with human nature!

*William D. Silkworth, M.D. January 1954*



Dr Silkworth — Friend of AA



## 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 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, 6 December 2009 in Alicante at Area 21 offices — C/Virgen del Puig, 3 bajo. Everybody is welcome. Meet us for coffee & Danish at 11.15am in nearby Cafeteria Alacant.

*'Recovery cannot take place without abstinence; but abstinence is not recovery.'*



## REMEMBER, REMEMBER—RULE 62!

We should go to meetings to hear voices other than our own.

If we were dragged into court and accused of being an A.A. member, would there be enough evidence to convict us?



"I never have more than one glass!

Fooling people is a serious business but fooling ourselves can be fatal.

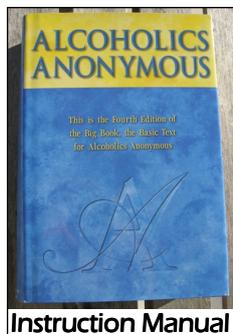
Question: How long should we keep going to AA meetings?  
Answer: Until we die of something else.

If we fail to change the person we were when we came into AA, the same person will take us out.

Types of alcoholics: 1) those drinking; 2) those not drinking; 3) those in recovery.

AA is a programme for alcoholics from Yale or from jail.

A pessimist sees the glass as half empty, an optimist sees the glass as half full, an economist sees the glass as too large, an alcoholic sees the glass as pointless.



## AA CONVENTION IN LANZAROTE

INTERNATIONAL AA English-speaking Convention is to be held in Lanzarote, Canary Islands, Spain from 29-31st January 2010. There will be Al-Anon participation. For further details check the AA Lanzarote website at:

[www.aalanzarote.com](http://www.aalanzarote.com)

## The Big Book - page 66

*It is plain that a life which includes deep resentment leads only to futility and unhappiness. To the precise extent that we permit these, do we squander the hours that might have been worth while. But with the alcoholic, whose hope is the maintenance and growth of a spiritual experience, this business of resentment is infinitely grave. We found that it is fatal. For when harboring such feelings we shut ourselves off from the sunlight of the Spirit. The insanity of alcohol returns and we drink again. And with us, to drink is to die.*

*If we were to live, we had to be free of anger. The grouch and the brainstorm were not for us. They may be the dubious luxury of normal men, but for alcoholics these things are poison.*

*Alcoholics Anonymous, p.66*



## C.B.I.C.

**SERVICE POSITIONS VACANT**

*It is suggested that CBIC officers have previous GSR experience at intergroup. Anyone interested in these services will be supported for as long as they wish by the rotating-out officers.*

**PI Liaison Officer:** Carry the message of recovery to the still suffering alcoholic by informing professionals and the general public about AA.

**Literature Officer:** Organise the literature stocks for the meetings on the Costa Blanca. Order new literature from the UK and the US. The above positions have a suggested sobriety guideline of two years.

## SPANISH AA & AREA 21

THE NEXT Asamblea Area 21 intergroup meeting will be held on 29 November 2009 at 9.30am in the Alicante offices.

Everybody is welcome and this is an opportunity to meet more members of the AA Costa Blanca fellowship.

If you are GSR for your group you are entitled to vote at Area 21 intergroup.

The Alicante area has been elected to hold the next AA National Spanish Convention in 2010. The Convention will take place in one of the large, luxury hotels in Benidorm.

Further details of this convention will be published in Recovery In The Sun and at: [www.aa-costablanca.org](http://www.aa-costablanca.org)