

**SURRENDER SCHOOL  
PRESENTS  
JOE & CHARLIE**

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**BIG BOOK STUDY  
WEEK 5**

Step Studies ▾ Meditation

Work the Steps using a “Study”

2024 Joe and Charlie

2023 Quick Step Study – Nov

### Joe and Charlie 2024 Step Study

**Prior to September 1** – AA Big Book

- Read AA Big Book *Foreword to First Edition* – (pp. xiii-xiv) AND
- *Foreword to Second Edition* – (pp. xiii-xiv)
- Print out *the handouts* or save them for easy reference.

**Homework for Week1, September 1** – AA History

- *Watch video*
  - Here is the *powerpoint* and *pdf*
- Read AA Big Book – *The Doctor’s Opinion* – (pp. xiii-xiv).

**Homework for September 8** – A Doctor’s Opinion

- *Watch this Video*
  - Here is the *powerpoint* and *pdf*
- Read *Bill’s Story* – (pp. 1-16).

SURRENDER SCHOOL

WE RECOVER

Different Paths Share

Home About Us Work the Steps ▾ Workshops ▾ Book Studies ▾ Step Studies ▾ Medit

**MISSION STATEMENT**

At Surrender School, we recover!  
 mission is to share 12-Step and other supportive recovery solutions with those who want a healthy relationship with food.

▼.....▼.....▼

All of our Workshops are Free, Register Below

## HOW TO ACCESS SURRENDER SCHOOL

### JOE AND CHARLIE PREVIOUS SESSIONS, HOMEWORK AND DOCUMENTS.

# MESSAGES FROM THE SURRENDER SCHOOL BOARD

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This session will be recorded

Each session is approximately 1 hour 15 min

Updates/Announcements from Surrender School

## SET ASIDE PRAYER

God, please set aside everything I think I know about myself, my emotional sobriety, the 12 Steps and You; for an open mind and a new experience of myself, my emotional sobriety, the 12 Steps and especially You!

# Joe and Charlie - Big Book Study

## September 1 – November 3

- [AA History](#)
- [The Doctor's Opinion](#)
- [Bill's Story](#)
- [There is a Solution](#)
- [More About Alcoholism and We Agnostics](#)
- [Step 1, Step 2, and Step 3](#)
- [Step 4 – Part 1](#)
- [Step 4 – Part 2](#)
- [Step 5, Step 6, and Step 7](#)
- [Step 8, Step 9, Step 10, Step 11, Step 12](#)

## Source Credits:

YOUTUBE: [12 Step Retro Speakers](#)

AA Big Book Online PDF - [AA Netherlands](#)

Link to Handout Source - [Take The 12](#)

Links to Joe and Charlie biography – [The Big Book Seminar](#)

A photograph of a microphone on a stand in front of a keyboard, with a warm orange overlay. The text "MODERATOR, PLEASE START THE RECORDING" is centered in white, bold, uppercase letters. A thin white horizontal line is positioned below the text.

**MODERATOR, PLEASE  
START THE RECORDING**

# There Is A Solution



**Joe McQ,**

**Joe McQuany - (AA)  
(1928-2007, 78 years old)  
Sober: 1962 - 2007**

**We are not the gurus of  
Alcoholic Anonymous!**



**Charlie P.**

**Charlie Parmley - (AA)  
(1929-2011, 82 years old)  
Sober: 1970 - 2011**

**We do not speak for AA as  
a whole!**

# AA BIG BOOK STUDY WEEK 5

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Chapter 3 - More About Alcoholism

And

Chapter 4 - We Agnostics



# AA Big Book Layout

## GOALS OF THE BIG BOOK

### GOALS OF THE BIG BOOK:

- **1st GOAL - THE PROBLEM**
  - *The Dr.'s Opinion*
  - *Chapter 1 - Bill's Story*
- **2nd GOAL - THE SOLUTION**
  - *Chapter 2: There Is A Solution*
  - ***Chapter 3: More About Alcoholism***
  - ***Chapter 4: We Agnostics***
- **3rd GOAL – ACTION**
  - *Chapter 5: How It Works*
  - *Chapter 6: Into Action*
  - *Chapter 7: Working with Others*

GOAL 1 Describe The PROBLEM	GOAL 2 Describe The SOLUTION	GOAL 3 Define The ACTION Necessary for Recovery.
Doctors's Opinion  Chapter 1 – Bill's Story	Chapter 2 -There Is A Solution  Chapter 3 –More About Alcoholism  Chapter 4 – We Agnostics	Chapter 5 –How It Works  Chapter 6 –Into Action  Chapter 7 –Working With Others
STEP  1	STEP  2	STEPS  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10  11  12

# Chapter 3 – More About Alcoholism The Insanity of Alcoholism



**Step 2:**

**“We came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.”**

**Sanity:**

**Wholeness of mind or completeness of mind.**

**“Insanity does not mean you’re all gone. It just means you’re not quite all here.”**

# Chapter 3 – More About Alcoholism Examples of Sanity to Insanity

**Example 1:  
The man of  
30**

**Example 2:  
Jim**

**Example 3:  
The  
Jaywalker**

**Example 4:  
Fred**

## Chapter 3 – More About Alcoholism

“... fully concede to our innermost selves that we were alcoholics.”



### AA Big Book – Page 30

*“Most of us have been unwilling to admit we were real alcoholics. No person likes to think he is bodily and mentally different from his fellows. Therefore, it is not surprising that our drinking careers have been characterized by countless vain attempts to prove we could drink like other people. The idea that somehow, **someday he will control and enjoy his drinking** is the great obsession of every abnormal drinker. The persistence of this illusion is astonishing. Many pursue it into the gates of insanity or death.*

***We learned that we had to fully concede to our innermost selves that we were alcoholics.*** This is the first step in recovery. The delusion that we are like other people, or presently may be, has to be ***smashed.***”

# Chapter 3 – More About Alcoholism Obsession, Illusion, Insanity and Delusion

“Most of us have been unwilling to admit we were real alcoholics. No person likes to think he is bodily and mentally different from his fellows. Therefore, it is not surprising that our drinking careers have been characterized by countless vain attempts to prove we could drink like other people. The idea that somehow, someday he will control and enjoy his drinking is the **great obsession** of every abnormal drinker. The persistence of this **illusion** is astonishing. Many pursue it into the gates of **insanity** or death.

We learned that we had to fully concede to our innermost selves that we were alcoholics. This is the first step in recovery. The **delusion** that we are like other people, or presently may be, has to be smashed.”

- **Obsession**
- **Illusion**
- **Delusion**
- **Insanity**

**Moderator: Please post the questions:** Have you fully conceded to our innermost selves that you are POWERLESS? Are you able to “Control and Enjoy” your substance?

“All four mean exactly the same thing. To believe something that is not true, or to believe a lie.”

GATES OF INSANITY

# Chapter 3 – More About Alcoholism

## Example 1: The Man of 30



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Number: 0467



### AA Big Book – Pages 32 & 33

*"A man of thirty was doing a great deal of spree drinking. He was very nervous in the morning after these bouts and quieted himself with more liquor. He was ambitious to succeed in business, but saw that he would get nowhere if he drank at all. **Once he started, he had no control whatever.** He made up his mind that until he had been successful in business and had retired, he would not touch another drop.*

# Chapter 3 – More About Alcoholism

## Example 1: The Man of 30

### AA Big Book – Pages 32 & 33

*An exceptional man, he remained bone dry for twenty-five years and retired at the age of fifty-five, after a successful and happy business career. Then he fell victim to a belief which practically every alcoholic has that his long period of sobriety and self-discipline had qualified him to drink as other men. Out came his carpet slippers and a bottle. In two months he was in a hospital, puzzled and humiliated. **He tried to regulate his drinking for a little while, making several trips to the hospital meantime. Then, gathering all his forces, he attempted to stop altogether and found he could not.** Every means of solving his problem which money could buy was at his disposal. Every attempt failed. Though a robust man at retirement, he went to pieces quickly and was dead within four years.*



# Chapter 3 – More About Alcoholism

## Example 1: The Man of 30



### AA Big Book – Pages 32 & 33

*"This case contains a powerful lesson. Most of us have believed that if we remained sober for a long stretch, we could thereafter drink normally. But here is a man who at fifty-five years found he was just where he had left off at thirty. We have seen the truth demonstrated again and again: **"Once an alcoholic, always an alcoholic."***

*Commencing to drink after a period of sobriety, we are in a short time as bad as ever. 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."*

**The real problem centers in our mind telling us we can drink rather than in our body that ensures that we can't drink.**



# Chapter 3 – More About Alcoholism

## Example 1: The Man of 30 (Link)



**Richard Rogers**

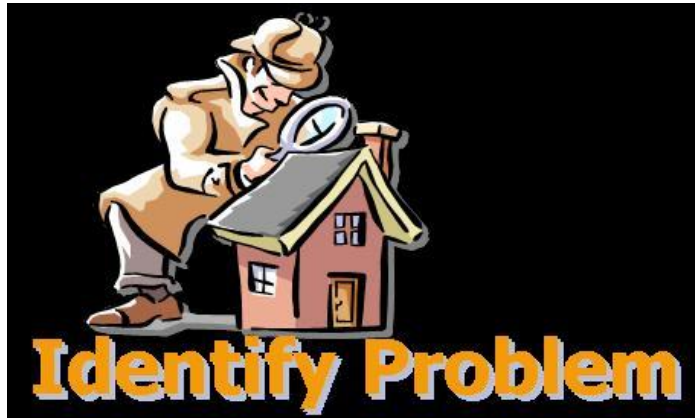
**Peabody** (23 January 1892 – 26 April 1936) was an American psychotherapist who specialized in alcoholism. [Link to Wikipedia](#)

### "A MAN OF THIRTY"

Peabody also briefly mentioned ([The Common Sense of Drinking](#) - p.123) an unknown man who gave up drinking until he had made his fortune five years later. Resuming "moderate" drinking, he was soon back in his alcoholic difficulties, losing his money in two or three years and dying of alcoholism a few years after that. This anecdotal account may have been the germ idea for the Big Book story (PP.32-33) about the "man of thirty" who gave up drinking until successful retirement at fifty-five, and then picked up the bottle again, with disastrous results.

# Chapter 3 – More About Alcoholism

## “... the crux of the problem.”



AA Big Book – Pages 34 (Par. 2) & Page 35

*“For those who are unable to drink moderately the question is how to stop altogether. We are assuming, of course, that the reader desires to stop.”*

*“How then shall we help our readers determine, to their own satisfaction, whether they are one of us? The experiment of quitting for a period of time will be helpful, but we think we can render an even greater service to alcoholic sufferers and perhaps to the medical fraternity. So we shall describe some of the mental states that precede a relapse into drinking, for obviously this is the crux of the problem.”*

The crux of the problem refers to the most important or serious part of a matter, problem, or argument.

*What sort of thinking dominates an alcoholic who repeats time after time the desperate experiment of the first drink?*

**Moderator:** Please post the comment: If you have ever relapsed; describe the mental states that precede a relapse.

# Chapter 3 – More About Alcoholism

## Jim: The Car Salesman



### AA Big Book –Page 35



**STEP 1**

*“Our first example is a friend we shall call Jim. This man has a charming wife and family. He inherited a lucrative automobile agency. He had a commendable World War record. He is a good salesman. Everybody likes him. He is an intelligent man, normal so far as we can see, except for a nervous disposition. He did no drinking until he was thirty-five. In a few years he became so violent when intoxicated that he had to be committed. On leaving the asylum he came into contact with us.*



**STEP 2**

*We told him what we knew of alcoholism (Step 1) and the answer we had found (Step 2). He made a beginning (Step 3). His family was re-assembled, and he began to work as a salesman for the business he had lost through drinking. All went well for a time, **but he failed to enlarge his spiritual life.**”*



**STEP 3**

# Chapter 3 – More About Alcoholism

## Jim: The Car Salesman



### AA Big Book – Page 35

*"To his consternation, he found himself drunk half a dozen times in rapid succession. On each of these occasions we worked with him, reviewing carefully what had happened. **He agreed he was a real alcoholic and in a serious condition. He knew he faced another trip to the asylum if he kept on.** Moreover, he would lose his family for whom he had a deep affection."*

### AA Big Book – Page 36

***Yet he got drunk again.** We asked him to tell us exactly how it happened. This is his story: **"I came to work on Tuesday morning.** I remember I felt irritated that I had to be a salesman for a concern I once owned. I had a few words with the boss, but nothing serious. **Then I decided to drive to the country and see one of my prospects for a car.**"*



# Chapter 3 – More About Alcoholism

## Jim: The Car Salesman

### AA Big Book – Page 36

“On the way I felt hungry so I stopped at a roadside place where they have a bar. I had no intention of drinking. I just thought I would get a sandwich. I also had the notion that I might find a customer for a car at this place, which was familiar for I had been going to it for years. I had eaten there many times during the months I was sober. I sat down at a table and ordered a sandwich and a glass of milk. Still no thought of drinking. I ordered another sandwich and decided to have another glass of milk.”



# Chapter 3 – More About Alcoholism

## Jim: The Car Salesman

AA Big Book – Page 36

"Suddenly the thought crossed my mind that if I were to put an ounce of whiskey in my milk it couldn't hurt me on a full stomach. I ordered a whiskey and poured it into the milk. I vaguely sensed I was not being any too smart, but felt reassured as I was taking the whiskey on a full stomach. The experiment went so well that I ordered another whiskey and poured it into more milk. That didn't seem to bother me so I tried another."



# Chapter 3 – More About Alcoholism

## Jim: The Car Salesman

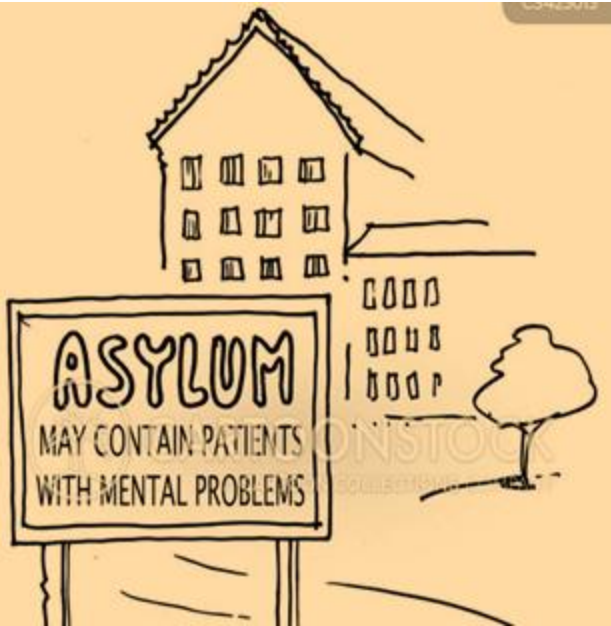


### AA Big Book – Pages 36 & 37

“Thus started one more journey to the asylum for Jim. Here was the threat of commitment, the loss of family and position, to say nothing of that intense mental and physical suffering which drinking always caused him. ***He had much knowledge about himself as an alcoholic. Yet all reasons for not drinking were easily pushed aside in favor of the foolish idea that he could take whiskey if only he mixed it with milk!***”

Whatever the precise definition of the word may be, we call this plain insanity. How can such a lack of proportion, of the ability to think straight, be called anything else?”

**The real problem centers in our mind telling us we can drink rather than in our body that ensures that we can't drink.**



# Chapter 3 – More About Alcoholism The Jaywalker



## AA Big Book – Pages 37 & 38

*"Our behavior is as absurd and incomprehensible with respect to the first drink as that of an individual with a passion, say, for jay-walking. He gets a thrill out of skipping in front of fast-moving vehicles. He enjoys himself for a few years in spite of friendly warnings. Up to this point you would label him as a foolish chap having queer ideas of fun. Luck then deserts him and he is slightly injured several times in succession. You would expect him, if he were normal, to cut it out. Presently he is hit again and this time has a fractured skull. Within a week after leaving the hospital a fast-moving trolley car breaks his arm. He tells you he has decided to stop jay-walking for good, but in a few weeks he breaks both legs.*

*On through the years this conduct continues, accompanied by his continual promises to be careful or to keep off the streets altogether. Finally, he can no longer work, his wife gets a divorce and he is held up to ridicule. **He tries every known means to get the jay-walking idea out of his head.** He shuts himself up in an asylum, hoping to mend his ways. But the day he comes out he races in front of a fire engine, which breaks his back. Such a man would be crazy, wouldn't he?"*





# Chapter 3 – More About Alcoholism The Jaywalker

## AA Big Book – Pages 37 & 38



*"You may think our illustration is too ridiculous. But is it? We, who have been through the wringer, have to admit if we substituted alcoholism for jay-walking, the illustration would fit exactly. However intelligent we may have been in other respects, where alcohol has been involved, we have been strangely insane. It's strong language—but isn't it true?"*

# Chapter 3 – More About Alcoholism

## Fred: The Accountant (Successful Businessman)

### AA Big Book – Page 39

“Fred is a partner in a well-known accounting firm. His income is good, he has a fine home, is happily married and the father of promising children of college age. He has so attractive a personality that he makes friends with everyone. If ever there was a successful business man, it is Fred. **To all appearance he is a stable, well balanced individual. Yet, he is alcoholic.** We first saw Fred about a year ago in a hospital where he had gone to recover from a bad case of jitters. It was his first experience of this kind, and he was much ashamed of it. Far from admitting he was an alcoholic, **he told himself he came to the hospital to rest his nerves.**”



gettyimages  
Credit: Art Glazer

# Chapter 3 – More About Alcoholism

## Fred: The Accountant (Successful Businessman)

### AA Big Book – Pages 39 & 40



“The doctor intimated strongly that he might be worse than he realized. **For a few days he was depressed about his condition. He made up his mind to quit drinking altogether. It never occurred to him that perhaps he could not do so, in spite of his character and standing.** Fred would not believe himself an alcoholic, (**Step 1**) much less accept a spiritual remedy for his problem (**Step 2**). We told him what we knew about alcoholism.”

# Chapter 3 – More About Alcoholism Fred: The Accountant (Successful Businessman)

## AA Big Book – Page 40

*"He was interested and conceded that he had some of the symptoms, but he was a long way from admitting that he could do nothing about it himself. He was positive that this humiliating experience, plus the knowledge he had acquired, would keep him sober the rest of his life. **Self-knowledge would fix it.**"*



***I reasoned I was not so far advanced as most of you fellows, that I had been usually successful in licking my other personal problems, and that I would therefore be successful where you men failed. I felt I had every right to be self-confident, that it would be only a matter of exercising my will power and keeping on guard.***

*"In this frame of mind, I went about my business and for a time all was well. I had no trouble refusing drinks, and began to wonder if I had not been making too hard work of a simple matter."*



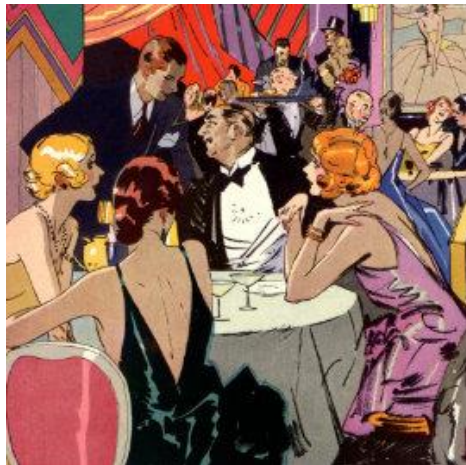
# Chapter 3 – More About Alcoholism

## Fred: The Accountant (Successful Businessman)



### AA Big Book – Pages 40 & 41

One day I went to Washington to present some accounting evidence to a government bureau. I had been out of town before during this particular dry spell, so there was nothing new about that. Physically, I felt fine. Neither did I have any pressing problems or worries. My business came off well, I was pleased and knew my partners would be too. It was the end of a perfect day, not a cloud on the horizon. "I went to my hotel and leisurely dressed for dinner. ***As I crossed the threshold of the dining room, the thought came to mind that it would be nice to have a couple of cocktails with dinner. That was all. Nothing more.***"



**Moderator:** Please post the question: Has "Self Knowledge" helped to fix the problem?



# Chapter 3 – More About Alcoholism

## Fred: The Accountant (Successful Businessman)

### AA Big Book – Page 41

I ordered a cocktail and my meal. Then I ordered another cocktail. After dinner I decided to take a walk. When I returned to the hotel it struck me a highball would be fine before going to bed, so I stepped into the bar and had one. I remember having several more that night and plenty next morning. I have a shadowy recollection of being in an airplane bound for New York, and of finding a friendly taxicab driver at the landing field instead of my wife. The driver escorted me for several days. I know little of where I went or what I said and did. Then came the hospital with the unbearable mental and physical suffering.

“As soon as I regained my ability to think, I went carefully over that evening in Washington. *Not only had I been off guard, I had made no fight whatever against the first drink. This time I had not thought of the consequences at all.* I had commenced to drink as carelessly as though the cocktails were ginger ale.



**The real problem centers in our mind telling us we can drink rather than in our body that ensures that we can't drink.**

# Chapter 3 – More About Alcoholism

## Fred: The Accountant (Successful Businessman)



### AA Big Book – Page 43



*"Once more: The alcoholic at certain times has no effective mental defense against the first drink. Except in a few cases, neither he nor any other human being can provide such a defense. His defense must come from a Higher Power."*

**Chapter 3 – More About Alcoholism**  
**Fred: The Accountant (Successful Businessman)**  
Harry B. – New York, “A Different Slant” – 1st edition Big Book. Original Manuscript, p. 252 in 1st edition – Welcome to Silkworth.net

His date of sobriety was probably June 1938. It is said that he sued to get the money he had loaned A.A. to get the Big Book published refunded.

Harry was probably an accountant. **He is believed to be “Fred, a partner in a well known accounting firm” whose story is told on pages 39 through 43 of the Big Book.**

He was happily married with fine children, sufficient income to indulge his whims and future financial security. To all appearances he was a stable, well-balanced individual, with an attractive personality who made friends easily.

However, he missed going to his office several times because of drinking, and when he failed in efforts to stop on his own, had to be hospitalized—a blow to his ego. At the hospital a doctor told him about a group of men staying sober, and he reluctantly consented to have one of them call on him, only to be polite to the doctor. He refused help from the man who called on him, but within sixty days, after leaving the hospital the second time, he was pounding at his door, willing to do anything to conquer the vicious thing that had conquered him.

He soon learned that not only had his drinking problem been relieved, but quite as important was the discovery that spiritual principles would solve all his problems.

His story is the shortest in the 1st edition. He had only one point he wanted to make. Even a man with everything money can buy, a man with tremendous pride and will power to function in all ordinary circumstances, could become an alcoholic and find himself as hope less and helpless as the man who has a multitude of worries and troubles.

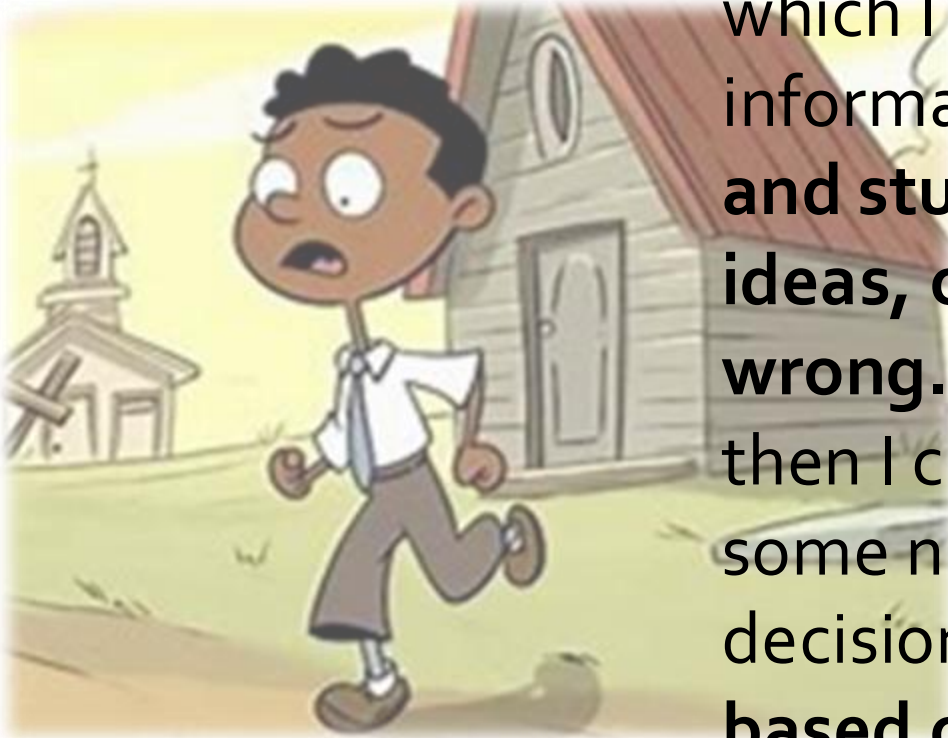
Harry served on the first board of trustees of the Alcoholic Foundation, replacing Bill R., who got drunk. Soon Harry was drunk, too.



# Chapter 4 – We Agnostics Charlie's Introduction



And he wrote another Chapter called, **We Agnostics**, which I think is one of the greatest pieces of spiritual information I've ever read in my life. **As I read that and studied that I could see where some of my old ideas, old prejudices, about God and religion, were wrong.** And when I could see where they were wrong then I could discard them, and then I could accept some new ideas about God and then I could make a decision. **Now based on hellfire and brimstone, based on a God of justice, no way could I have ever made the decision about God.**



# Chapter 4 – We Agnostics Agnostic and Alcoholism Defined



## Definition of Agnostic:

- **NOSTIC** means **KNOWLEDGE**
- **AG** means **WITHOUT**.

**THOSE OF US WHO ARE WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE.**

- Have you been able to quit drinking entirely left on your own resources?
- Do you have any control over the amount you take after you've once started drinking?

## AA Big Book – Page 44

*"IN THE PRECEDING chapters you have learned something of alcoholism. We hope we have made clear the distinction between the alcoholic and the non-alcoholic. alcoholic. **If, when you honestly want to, you find you cannot quit entirely, or if when drinking, you have little control over the amount you take, you are probably alcoholic. If that be the case, you may be suffering from an illness which only a spiritual experience will conquer.**"*

# Chapter 4 – We Agnostics

## Agnostic Means Without Knowledge



### AA Big Book – Page 44

*"To one who feels he is an atheist or agnostic such an experience seems impossible, but to continue as he is means disaster, especially if he is an alcoholic of the hopeless variety. **To be doomed to an alcoholic death (Step 1) or to live on a spiritual basis (Step 2)** are not always easy alternatives to face.*

*But it isn't so difficult. About half our original fellowships were of exactly that type. **At first some of us tried to avoid the issue, hoping against hope we were not true alcoholics. But after a while we had to face the fact that we must find a spiritual basis of life—or else.** Perhaps it is going to be that way with you. But cheer up, something like half of us thought we were atheists or agnostics. Our experience shows that you need not be disconcerted."*



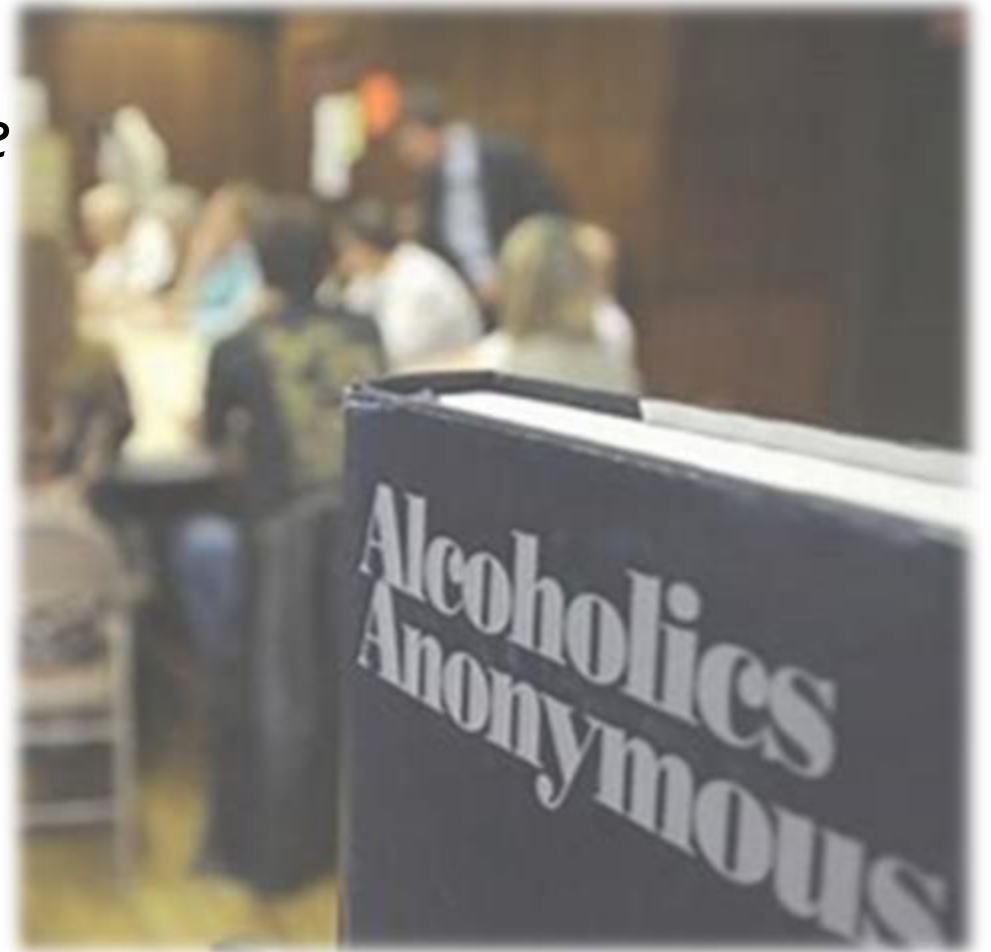
"Dave Sober, I'm Mike Teetotal, and this is Kenneth Abstinent."

# Chapter 4 – We Agnostics Lack of Power, that was our Dilemma.

## AA Big Book – Page 45

*"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?"*

*Well, that's exactly what this book is about. Its main object is to enable you to find a Power greater than yourself which will solve your problem."*



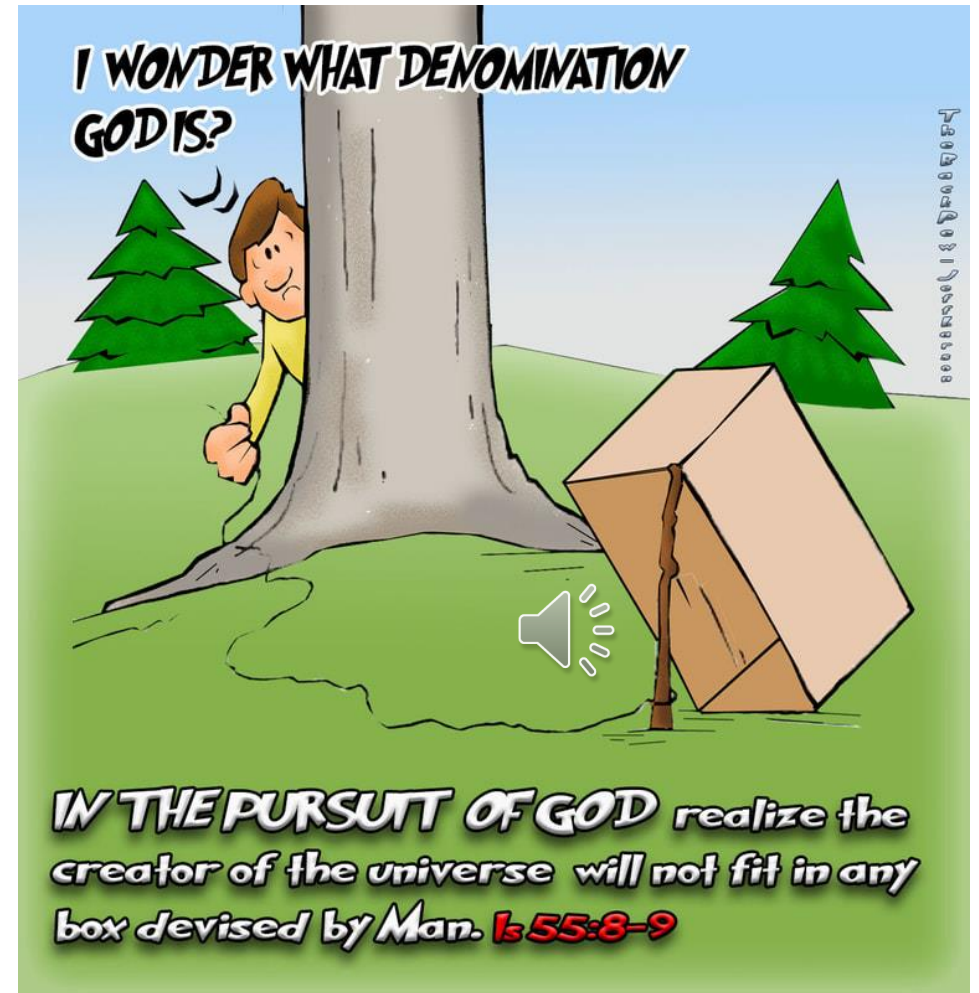
# Chapter 4 – We Agnostics

## How do you become a TRUE Believer of God?

### AA Big Book – Page 46

"Yes, we of agnostic temperament have had these thoughts and experiences. Let us make haste to reassure you. **We found that as soon as we were able to lay aside prejudice and express even a willingness to believe in a Power greater than ourselves, we commenced to get results, even though it was impossible for any of us to fully define or comprehend that Power, which is God.**

Much to our relief, we discovered we did not need to consider another's conception of God. **Our own conception, however inadequate, was sufficient to make the approach and to affect a contact with Him."**



# Chapter 4 – We Agnostics It's in the seeking it's not in the finding.

## AA Big Book – Page 46

"As soon as we admitted the possible existence of a Creative Intelligence, a Spirit of the Universe underlying the totality of things, we began to be possessed of a new sense of power and direction, **provided we took other simple steps.** We found that God does not make too hard terms with those who seek Him. To us, the Realm of Spirit is broad, roomy, all inclusive; never exclusive or forbidding to those who earnestly seek. It is open, we believe, to all men."



spending whole days in motion-picture houses to stave off the temptation to drink; of smoking out of the office for quickies during the day. They talk of losing jobs and stealing money from their wives' purses; of putting pepper into whiskey to give it a tang; of tipping on litters and sedative tablets, or on mouthwash or hair tonic; of getting into the habit of camping outside the neighborhood tavern ten minutes before opening time. They describe a hand so shaky that it could not lift a penny to the lips without spilling the contents of drinking liquor from a beer stein because it can be steadied with two hands, although at the risk of slipping a front tooth; of tying an end of a towel about a glass, looping the towel around the back of the neck and drawing the free end with the other hand, pulley fashion, to advance the glass to the mouth; of hands so shaky they feel as if they were about to snap off and fly into space; of sitting on hands for hours to keep them from doing this.

Those and other bits of drinking lore usually manage to convince the alcoholic that he is talking to blood hounders. A ledge of confidence is thereby erected, spanning a gap which has baffled the physician, the minister, the priest or the hapless relative. Over this connection, the trouble shooter never, but for a moment, details a program for living which has worked for them and which, they feel, can work for any other alcoholic. They consider as out of their orbit only those who are psychotic or who are already suffering from the physical impairment known as wet brain. At the same time they see to it that the prospect gets whatever medical attention is needed.

Many doctors and staffs of institutions throughout the country now suggest Alcoholics Anonymous to

their drinking patients. In some towns the courts and probation officers co-operate with the local group. In a few city protopathic divisions the workers of Alcoholics Anonymous are accorded the same visiting privileges as staff members. Philadelphia General is one of these. Dr. John F. Stouffer, the chief psychiatrist, says: "The alcoholics we get here are mostly those who cannot afford private treatment; and this is by far the greatest thing we have ever been able to offer them. Even among those who occasionally land back in here again we observe a profound change in personality. You would hardly recognize them."

The Illinois Medical Journal, in an editorial last December, went farther than Doctor Stouffer, in stating: "It is indeed a miracle when a person who for years has been more or less constantly under the influence of alcohol and in whom his friends have

lost all confidence, will sit up all night with a 'drunk' and at stated intervals administer a small amount of liquor in accordance with a doctor's order without taking a drop himself."

This is a reference to a common aspect of the Arabian Nights' adventures to which Alcoholics Anonymous workers dedicate themselves. Often it involves sitting upon, as well as up with, the intemperate person, as the impulse to jump out a window seems to be an attractive one to many alcoholics when in their cups. Only an alcoholic can assist another alcoholic's chest for hours with the proper combination of discipline and sympathy.

During a recent trip around the East and Middle West I met and talked with scores of A. A.'s, as they call themselves, and found them to be unusually calm, tolerant people. Somehow they seemed better integrated than the average group of non-alcoholic individuals. Their transformation from soap fighters, condemned drinkers and, in some instances, wife beaters, was startling. On one of the national industrial newspapers in the country I found that the city editor, the assistant city editor and a nationally known reporter were A. A.'s, and strong in the evidence of their publisher.

In another city I heard a judge handle a drunken driver to an A. A. member. The latter, during his drinking days, had smashed several men and had had his own operator's license suspended. The judge, who knew him and was glad to trust him, A. A. member, an advertising firm disclosed that two years ago he had been pushing and sleeping in a doorway under an elevated structure. He had a favorite doorway, which he shared with other vagrants, and every few weeks he got back and pays them a visit just to assure himself he isn't drinking.

Beginning  
A FOUR-PART  
NOVEL ON PAGE 28  
By Clifford Stouffer

## Chapter 4 – We Agnostics

*"Do not let any prejudice you may have against spiritual terms deter you from honestly asking yourself what they mean to you."*

### AA Big Book – Page 47

*"When, therefore, we speak to you of God, we mean your own conception of God. This applies, too, to other spiritual expressions which you find in this book. **Do not let any prejudice you may have against spiritual terms deter you from honestly asking yourself what they mean to you.** At the start, this was all we needed to commence spiritual growth, to effect our first conscious relation with God as we understood Him. Afterward, we found ourselves accepting many things which then seemed entirely out of reach. That was growth, but if we wished to grow we had to begin somewhere. **So we used our own conception, however limited it was.**"*



**Moderator:** Please post the question: Has spiritual prejudices deterred you for honestly seeing a Higher Power?

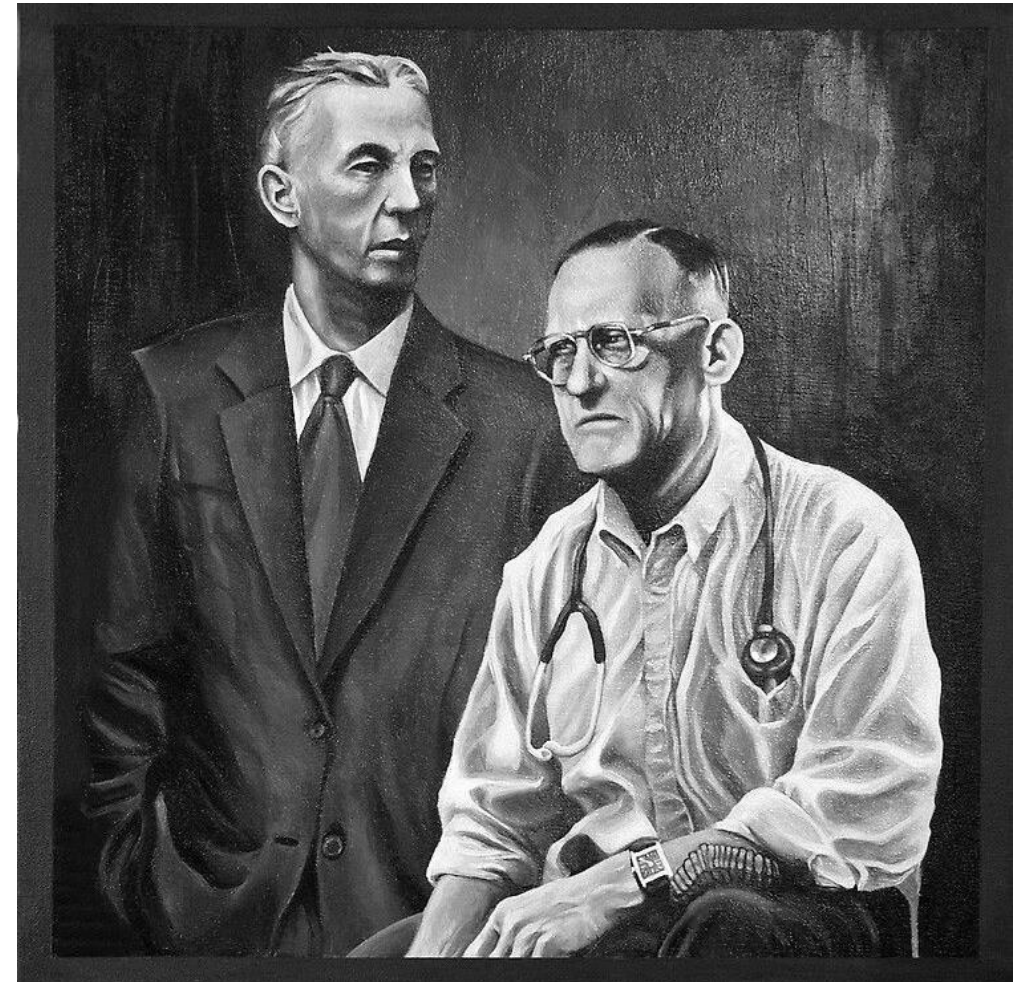
## Chapter 4 – We Agnostics

*“Do I now believe, or am I even willing to believe, that there is a Power greater than myself?”*

### AA Big Book – Page 47

*We needed to ask ourselves but one short question. “Do I now believe, or am I even willing to believe, that there is a Power greater than myself?” As soon as a man can say that he does believe, or is willing to believe, we emphatically assure him that he is on his way. It has been repeatedly proven among us that upon this simple cornerstone a wonderfully effective spiritual structure can be built\*.*

[Link to AA Big Book – Page 567 “Spiritual Experience”](#)







**MODERATOR, PLEASE  
STOP THE RECORDING**

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**Surrender School Closing  
Announcements?**

# SERENITY PRAYER

God grant me the serenity to accept the things I can not change, the courage to change the things I can and the wisdom to know the difference.

# QUESTIONS

- Have you fully conceded to our innermost selves that you are POWERLESS?
- Are you able to “Control and Enjoy” your substance?
- **If you have ever relapsed; describe the mental states that precede a relapse.**
- Has “Self Knowledge” helped to fix the problem?
- Has spiritual prejudices deterred you for honestly seeing a Higher Power?