

Spring 2014

The GABRIEL

The Magazine for Christians In Recovery®

Issue focus:

WHY?

In the final analysis, the questions of why bad things happen to good people transmutes itself into some very different questions, no longer asking why something happened, but asking how we will respond, what we intend to do now that it happened.

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

The Gabriel

The Gabriel is a publication of Christians-in-Recovery® dedicated to the uplifting and inspiration of its members and friends. It is published 4 times a year, once each quarter.

The Gabriel Staff

Clara T. — Editor
James A. — Associate Editor
Cindy B. — Associate Layout Editor
Obie — CIR Director
CIR Membership—Contributors

Christians in Recovery®, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. We are a group of recovering Christians dedicated to personal one-on-one sharing of faith, strength and hope as we live each day in recovery. We work to regain and maintain balance and order in our lives through active discussion of the 12 Steps, the Bible, and experiences in our own recovery from abuse, family dysfunction, depression, anxiety, grief, relationships and/or addictions of alcohol, drugs, food, pornography, sexual addiction, etc. CIR is comprised of people like you who become Members and/or Donate.

Our Vision

It is the vision of the Board and Supporting Members of CIR to continue to use the latest technology, in addition to conventional means, to reach those who would normally not seek help-- to catch those who fall through the cracks-- and to further spread Christian hope, healing and fellowship to those in need of recovery. Our vision to go well beyond recovery so people can fully discover, explore and magnify all possibilities God intends for them as individuals.

Christians in Recovery® is NOT:

- A crises center or hotline
- A substitute for attending church
- A professional therapy group
- A substitute for professional help or assistance
- Geared to any one denomination
- Intended to replace secular recovery groups or meetings
- Intended to replace or undermine any other Christian organization or group.

Find out more on the website: <http://www.christians-in-recovery.org>

Winter 2014 Issue Contents

ARTICLES



I Am a Soldier in Recovery

An original article by one of our enlisted CIR Members.



The Book That Started it All

The original working manuscript of the AA Big Book is available.



Daphne Writes

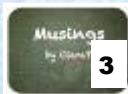
Relapse Ain't Got Nothin' on my Recovery Group by Daphne Tarango



Focus on Recovery

A Study on the Twelve Promises from the AA Big Book

DEPARTMENTS



Musings by ClaraT

Why am I an addict? Why did I make that mistake? Why doesn't my family understand?



NEWSFLASH!

TechMission--the newest member of our Christians-in-Recovery® family.



Focus Article

Nurtured by the Right Question by Pastor Ron on our issue focus.



Poets Among Us

More wonderful meditative creativity from our CIR Members



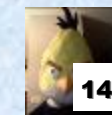
CIR News

The latest issue of the CIR Hope and Help News



Humor In Recovery

A bevy of Paraprosdokians... yes you read that correctly.



GLEANINGS

Pictures and Quotes from the CIR Members Gallery



The Back Page

Share The Gabriel with friends, families and coworkers!



Wondering if there are any more issues of the Gabriel? Well yes! View the most recent issues online as well as Archives of past Gabriel issues.

The Gabriel Archives are available on CD here: <http://self-helpsoftware.com/Gabriel>

It would make a great gift to a fellow recovering Christian.
The Gabriel Archives

Do you have stories, poetry or original articles you would like to submit for publication in the Gabriel? Links to websites and original images are welcome. Email your submissions to: clara@christians-in-recovery.org

WHY DO WE ASK WHY?

The focus of this issue came to me one day, not when I was asking why, but rather when I was realizing that something “bad” that had happened in my life was actually turning out to be for the best. There are a lot of lessons for us in that one word, Why? One of them I’ve posted to the right – the Recovery Paradoxes.

I think when we ask “Why” aren’t we really saying, “I want to be in control” or “I want to be able to change something that was...or is...or will be?” No, we don’t sit on our duffs waiting – recovery is a program of action. But action with my Lord’s will in mind. I find more peace when I realize that. The Third Step which says “I made a

decision to turn my will and my life over to the care of God as I understood Him” becomes a blessing rather than a “do-I-have-to”.

There are many less “why’s” in my life today and more acceptance that God’s Will is being done – whether I see it right then or not. Faith – Trust – God’s Love. These are stepping stones to a happier life today for me. And even those things in my past – from the genes that may make up my physical addiction to the mistakes I have made become far less important. Today the alternative to Why is to ask “What is the next best thing to do”? And then trust the Lord for the rest. ClaraT



We have some exciting news! Over the past 20 years, the ministry of Christians in Recovery (CIR) has grown tremendously. Just two years ago CIR took under its umbrella Alcoholics Victorious (founded in 1948). As of December 1, 2013 we are pleased to announce we will be working together with TechMission, a leader in technology, addiction recovery and ministry.

Both CIR and AV will be programs of TechMission. TechMission also runs City Vision College (administered by Michael Liimatta), which provides bachelor’s degrees in Addiction Studies.

This union will strengthen Christians in Recovery, Alcoholics Victorious and TechMission enabling all three organizations to more effectively minister to those in need. Everyone who works for and volunteers for CIR will maintain their current positions and duties.

CIR will continue to be responsible for its own financial well being. Dues and donations to CIR and AV remain critical to both organizations. Donations should be made as usual either online:

<http://christians-in-recovery.org/Give>

or by check or money order made out to Christians in Recovery (or Alcoholics Victorious):

48 Pleasant Street
Dorchester, MA 02125 USA
Fax: 816-256-8A471

Our website remains the same: <http://christians-in-recovery.org>

You may learn more about us:

TechMission:
<http://www.techmission.org>

Christians in Recovery:
<http://christians-in-recovery.org>

Alcoholics Victorious:
<http://alcoholicsvictorious.org>



Taken straight from the pages of our CIR website, one of our members shares the story of....

I AM A SOLDIER IN RECOVERY

My story about alcohol, drugs, gambling, porn addiction, arrest and recovery.

I was raised in a very loving Christian home. I went to church 6 out of 7 days a week. There was never any history of abuse or addiction in my family. I have no one to blame but myself. I have backslidden severely over these past 3 decades.

You have the wonderful opportunity to become a member in Christians in Recovery (CIR) and therefore invest in the health and spiritual welfare not only of yourself but also of our United States Service men and women. Do not pass up this opportunity.

Chapels can be a great support and alternative for soldiers, sailors, Marines and airmen for an hour or two a week while attending Catholic Mass or Protestant worship services. However, soldiers, sailors, Marines and airmen work in a culture that talks all week about how they are going to party on the weekends. When they go back to the barracks they

are bombarded with the message that in order to fit in they need to drink.

CIR is anonymous; they are available around the world, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. No chapel program has that type of availability. No Super Chaplain has that kind of presence or stamina to minister to soldiers, sailors, Marines and airmen on a 24 basis. I had never before heard of Christians In Recovery through advertising from the military. During my struggles with alcohol and another addiction, my parents were diligently searching the internet for recovery resources. They are the ones who found CIR for me. Search the website for the wealth of free resources made available to help those who are caught in slavery to one powerful addiction or another. Check out the testimonials too.

A Catholic chaplain in Florida shared a web page link with me on the Archdiocese for the Military Services (Catholic website). It had similar resources to Christians In

Recovery. But CIR has one major advantage over the Archdiocese for the Military Services website. You can post and read messages from recovering Christians all over the world and you can attend online meetings on a variety of topics. You can chat formally or informally. I'm talking about the opportunity to join a vibrant community of supporters who can't help but encourage you and point you to God for forgiveness and the strength to carry on one day at a time. Christians In Recovery will help anyone, and I do mean anyone, from any faith or no faith at all, to get the help and find the resources to start recovery. CIR has many links to secular recovery groups, organizations and resources too.

Alcohol

It is my understanding that when I joined the military in 1984 that alcohol abuse wasn't really that bad. The worst years for the military were WWII. However, I can attest that through the early 90's and even on up to today that

alcohol is glamorized by the military.

While I was stationed in Germany in the late 80's we had the opportunity to have alcohol delivered to our barracks rooms. It is legal of course for an 18-20 year old American GI to consume alcohol while stationed overseas. A German man, George a.k.a. "The Beer Man" delivered soda POP, German bee and wine to our barracks rooms every Tuesday or Wednesday night. You could order whatever you wanted. You got credit for your empty cases. You didn't even have to pay George for your beer. If it was between paydays and you were a little short on cash, George would extend you credit. George accepted checks, US dollars and Deutsche Marks. George knew every barracks manager, First Sergeant and Commander on the base. He also knew the Finance commander. If he ever needed to collect from us he always knew where he could go. I remember many a week when my friends and I were penniless but we had stacks of empty cases of beer lined up against the walls in our barracks rooms. George would give us a refund for the empty cases and we had enough money to buy many more cases of beer. We got enough free cases of beer to get us drunk through another weekend.

I went to the Non-Commissioned Officer Academy in 2001 and our instructor taught an hour-long course on substance abuse. He told us that the Department of Defense's (DoD) official stance was that the military does not glamorize alcohol. The roar of laughter that went up from our

classroom echoed through the halls of the academy. Even our instructor couldn't keep a straight face while he taught the course. Finally, at the end of the hour, we did come to the consensus that the military does not glamorize alcohol as much as it used to in the early 90's. However, the Department of Defense does still

"I had forgotten about Christians In Recovery then. If I had remembered, I would have paid for a membership for him and myself."

glamorize alcohol.

The Army and Air Force Exchange Service brought the Jack Daniels Master Distiller to Europe in 2006 or 2007 on a tour of military bases. While in the stores, soldiers, sailors, Marines and airmen had the opportunity to purchase bottles of Gentleman Jack and have the Jack Daniels Master Distiller autograph the bottles. Jack Daniels had created a pewter medallion on a chain with the crest of the military base that I was stationed at that hung around the neck of the Gentleman Jack bottles. Ironically enough, the motto on the medallion was, "Return with Honor". Is this sending the wrong message? Please, the DoD does still glamorize alcohol. There are always kegs of beer at every annual picnic and after every inspection.

Drugs

Drugs are also a problem. I supervised an airman in Italy who was raised Catholic but

succumbed to peer pressure to just take a hit off of a joint. He was told that there was no way that he could get caught by taking just one hit. Just one hit off of a joint they told him. Well, he did get caught. He was incarcerated for one month and was discharged from the military. If he would have had a 24-hour, 365 days a year support group like CIR I think he would have been fine. He just needed the support of fellow Christians who have struggled with drugs in the past. He was a good young man who worked so hard for me until his discharge. He is now in seminary to become a Catholic priest. I had forgotten about Christians In Recovery then. If I had remembered, I would have paid for a membership for him and myself.

Gambling

Another huge problem for the military overseas is the temptation to gamble. Slot machines are so common in clubs overseas. Why am I bringing this up? You guessed it; Christians In Recovery has resources for people who want to recover from a gambling addiction. CIR has many members that are in recovery from gambling.

The civilian workforce and civilian families have the luxury of putting down roots for at least 5 years or more in the community in which they live. They usually thrive because they have support networks. The military lifestyle is full of change, constant change. There is the constant pressure of exercises, deployments, inspections and war. It's hard to find someone you can trust in that lifestyle. It's even harder to find a

constant support network that can encourage you anywhere in the world, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. That support network is Christians In Recovery. I've talked to you about alcohol and drugs. I did struggle for about a year with alcohol.

Sex & Porn

Okay, here goes, my true addiction has been to pornography. It is possibly the most shameful addiction of all. Another shocker, I worked in a chapel as a Chaplain Assistant. It is rare but unfortunately at my first assignment I witnessed a chaplain breach the confidentiality of one of his clients. Addictions are scary, painful and they isolate you from the world. I just couldn't bring myself to admit to myself, to chaplains and to God my struggle that most Christians see as sinful, deviant and a sin that only enslaves the worst of sinners. I was looked down upon by Christians years ago when I used to smoke. Certainly chapel-going Christians do not struggle with such a deviant behavior as pornography.

I've talked with numerous people over the years that have said that they've studied and that they understood pornography addiction. They studied it in their "Psych 202" class or whatever. I've always been skeptical of those people. However, I've met people on Christians In Recovery who would talk about their alcoholism, drug addiction, either illegal or prescription and their gambling addictions and I could totally "get" the powerlessness, unmanageability and lack of self-control over their addictions even though my addiction is different. I only had the courage to cry out

for help 3 times in 25 years. The first time I called a Sexaholics Anonymous group in Colorado Springs. It was after hours and there was no answering machine. I never got the courage to call back. About 7 years later I sought counseling from an Air Force mental health officer.

Unfortunately I didn't spend enough money on my addiction to convince him that I met the required criteria for a control disorder. However, I did tell him things about my fantasies and obsessions, about tens of thousands of hours wasted and relationships sacrificed due to my addiction that should have curled his toes. The things I told him surely would have curled your toes.

I was told that I did not suffer from an addiction to pornography so I stopped going for counseling. About 1 year later I tried to join Christians In Recovery. The bank transaction didn't go through from Europe. I know that this happens occasionally and that I should have kept on trying. However, I didn't have the courage to try to join CIR a second time.

My Arrest

It was finally 4 years later that I was arrested on a charge of Enticement. I have 25+ years in the military. I am a Master Sergeant and I was a Chaplain Assistant until I was fired on 8 January 2008. My family is facing a future with no retirement and no security. I have a wife and a 13-year-old son. We have no savings and no assets. We only have a used car. I have a mountain of debt. I have been under investigation for over 2 years now. I'm facing both a General Courts-Martial and a Federal trial. I'm looking at 16 years to life in prison.

I did decide to cooperate during my interrogation. People ask me, "Why did you talk to the FBI and not to an attorney?" For me, it felt so good to finally start talking honestly and quit living this Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde existence. I was tired of leading a double life. I was still in somewhat of a denial for an additional 5 months. I even slipped once and started sexually charged chats with women online again.

Recovery

Finally, on 16 June 2008 I joined Christians In Recovery. I had felt so isolated in Italy -- felt so broken. My marriage and family were broken but getting better. Yet here were these recovering Christians who assured me that I could be healed, fixed and put back together. Here I was, late at night talking to recovering alcoholics and recovering drug addicts from halfway around the world. They welcomed me with love, not judgment. They welcomed me with reconciliation and NOT humiliation. If that's what Christians In Recovery is about, encouraging soldiers, sailors, Marines and airmen to be reconciled to God, then I'm in with all my heart, spirit, soul, mind, resources and strength.

I thank God that Christians In Recovery was established and I am so thankful that my parents turned me on to their website. God used CIR to save my life. One must lose one's life and one's freedom in order to gain one's life and ones freedom. Praise the Lord Jesus Christ! God Bless you.

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HOPE & HELP

- For the Suffering
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- For Husbands and Fathers
- For the Homosexual
- For Gambling
- For Self-Injurers and Cutters
- Through Biblical Counseling

Not a CIR member yet?

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Thank you to our many volunteers!!
CIR would not be possible without you.

Alcoholics Victorious



a program of

Christians in Recovery

<http://christians-in-recovery.org>

Christians in Recovery® has long been an online ministry serving the needs of people through the Internet. We have good news! Alcoholics Victorious (AV), founded in 1948, has come under the umbrella of CIR. With the union of the ministry of CIR and the program of AV we are a driving force serving the needs of the Christian recovery community.

AV - <http://alcoholicsvictorious.org> - is a network of local face to face meetings all over the US, Canada and world-wide. With the union of the ministry of CIR and the program of AV we are well equipped to serve your needs.

If you are looking for a local face-to-face meeting, search our online database: <http://christians-in-recovery.org/db>

If you cannot find a local meeting in your area, consider starting a local AV or CIR group! We will provide you with the literature and resources you need to get started. Learn more about starting a local Alcoholics Victorious or Christians in Recovery meeting:

http://christians-in-recovery.org/AboutCIR_StartGroup

Do not overlook the CIR web site with it's thousands of pages of information and resources available to you online.

We are here to serve YOU!

Obie

Executive Director

[Christians in Recovery®](http://christians-in-recovery.org)

<http://christians-in-recovery.org>


and

Alcoholics Victorious

<http://alcoholicsvictorious.org/>

Help us meet our goal for 2014

\$0 3% \$ 20,000.00



Raised \$ 600.00 of \$ 20,000.00

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Nurtured by the Right Question



Wrong questions are the breeding ground of doubt, despair and unbelief. I know; I've asked the wrong questions for almost sixty years. But, in the midst of those questions mercy, grace, atonement and **the answer** burst its way into my darkened questions. **Tell Me Why** is the most foreboding of all wrong questions.

Don't miss-hear me; questions are natural and a part of our God given DNA. **But:** to end up at **Why? That wrong question is not a part of the likeness and image of God that we are all endowed with.** It is the epitome of our fallen, darkened condition! So, how do we approach these unanswerable questions?

Before there are answers, there is a relationship you must have your heart opened to. There is a knowing that paves the way for sufficient answers. Here it comes! **You must know that God's plan is God; revealed in a "baby wrapped in old dirty clothes", a Son of Man, a life lived exemplary for all generations, on a Cross-disfigured and murdered by His own and in an empty tomb. He is not a program, or an impersonal idea.**

"You must know it's Me pouring My life into you, into all of your children. I punish only those who insist on their own way and their own answers, who reject Me! Those who invest their all in knowing Me, pressing into Me will have **the answer in the face of every imaginable hurt, suffering, and injustice. This fallen world is**

not nice, never! Stop insisting on your own understanding. Heaven is the enjoyment of My way forever! Hell is the enjoyment of your own way forever, eternally apart from Me!"

"I allow suffering for those I love, because it draws them to concentrate on Me as their only source for life. In order to rest in hope, you must first writhe in pain. You must repent of demanding fair and your own understanding. Look; no, study all of those in the scriptures who rested only in Me! They didn't get answers to the wrong questions. And they often had to wait for a future time for the fulfillment of My promises."

"Only I can awaken your intimacy taste buds, to enjoy the feast of Me. To know Me well you must also first be confused by Me. What! That's not fair! Only in the mystery of suffering well, of not wasting your sorrows will you cease to try to fit Me into your understanding! As you continue to stand before Me in mystery you will; in time, rest in Me in the strong, sufficient arms of trust. Suffering without demanding an explanation will create the fertile ground of faith in Me; the faith that simply looks for My heart, not My answers." One put it this way; 'As long as there are many springs from which to draw water, anxiety about possible water failure does not arise.'

Blessed are those who thirst and hunger for Me! Trust and faith are opened when there is only one source of water-Me! **Knowing My**

love is the answer. Because it is My love that seeks and supplies the well-being of another. If that requires suffering, then love permits and, sometimes, brings about suffering. But my love never allows you to suffer more than is necessary to achieve the well-being of the beloved!

Trust God from the bottom of your heart; don't try to figure out everything on your own. Listen for God's voice in everything you do, everywhere you go; He's the one who will keep you on track. Don't assume that you know it all. Run to God! Run from evil! [Proverbs 3:5-7](#), The Message.

In the grip of the answer-Jesus!



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Rev. Ron Ross is a pastor, author, teacher, and counselor. As founder of [NET Casting Ministries](#), he equips the church around the world to care for the wounded and addicted. Ron is a cofounder of the [NET Training Institute](#).

[Find more articles daily on CIR.](#)

This article is just one of the **free** daily articles posted just today! Others include:

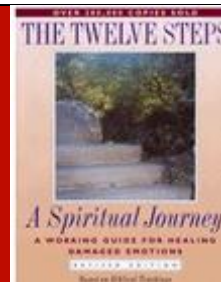
- [Back to the Basics: An Introduction to Recovery](#)
- [Are You Experiencing True Guilt or False Guilt?](#)
- [Who Needs Recovery?](#)
- [Asking for Support: Getting the Help You Need - Part 2](#)

Also available on the CIR website are member Forums & Bulletin Boards which include:

- [Newbie Introductions & Member Testimonies](#)
- [Abuse, Emotions, Suffering, Survivors, Adult Children, Grief, Incest](#)
- [Alcoholism, Substance Abuse, Smoking](#)
- [General Recovery](#)
- [Tips for Studying Scripture & Working the 12 Steps](#)
- [Digging Deeper, Beyond Recovery & Biblical Worldview](#)
- [Member's Photo Gallery](#)
- [Book Studies & Reviews to Aid in Recovery](#)
- [FREE STUFF - Book & Music Exchange](#)

....and more!

Prayers for the Twelve Steps: A Spiritual Journey



The Twelve Steps: a Spiritual Journey

Suggested Reading

Letting God (Devotional)



Are you on Facebook?

Access the CIR FREE daily articles on our CIR Page there as well as daily meditations and an easy link to the CIR homepage on your computer.

The Gabriel's own regular contributor, Daphne Tarango has just published a new book:

Dragonflies, Ketchup, and Late-Night Phone Calls: 31 Days of Journaling God's Blessings.



This inspirational new book will help the reader go beyond the general "thank you" to God to see minor, insignificant, and even annoying things as God's blessings. On good days, bad days, and difficult seasons, *Dragonflies, Ketchup, and Late-Night Phone Calls* will help you find at least one thing for which to thank God, and that one thing can make your day brighter, your night more peaceful, and your life more enjoyable.

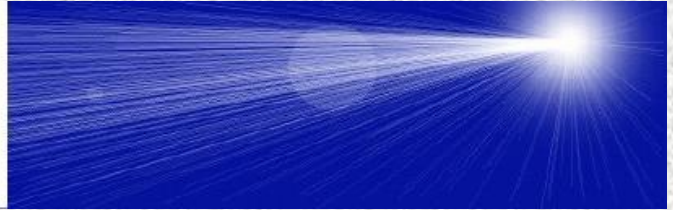
Dragonflies, Ketchup, and Late-Night Phone Calls is great for young and old, men and women, group reading and single meditation when going through difficult seasons. Individuals with chronic illnesses can use it to jot down small blessings that remind them of God's strength when they have little to none. Also, recovering Christians can use it to document small victories on their recovery journeys. And don't forget this new volume would make a great gift to anyone who is suffering or just in need of a spiritual uplift!

Dragonflies, Ketchup, and Late-Night Phone Calls is available on Daphne's Web site (<http://DaphneWrites.com>), on CreateSpace, Amazon, Smashwords, and other major online book retailers. It will soon be available in both Spanish and audio versions.



Christians in Recovery®

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Christians in Recovery® News Spring 2014

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ANSWERS

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- [God Fights for His People](#)

TIP FOR SUPPORTING MEMBERS

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HELP FOR RECOVERY

[FREE Recovery Magazine "The Gabriel"](#)

You are encouraged to download this, print it out or put on a diskette and share it with your loved ones, church, pastor or recovery group. It is jam packed with inspiration, tips, resources and information for all Christians as well as those in recovery.

FOUND ON THE NET

- [Binge Drinking and Your Health](#)
- [Binge Drinking Self-assessment](#)

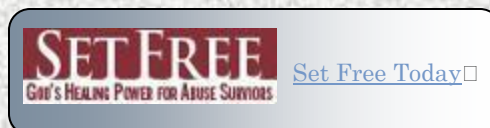
WISDOM FROM A CIR MEMBER

"I like seeds because they are probably scared when they get planted in the dark. And when the soil gets trampled they are buried a little deeper and their roots grow stronger. Faith makes them grow up cause they know there is light and room to grow on the other side. The cool thing is, once matured, the plant makes new seeds, spreading the faith that begins, quite often, in darkness." ~tacit

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- No need to move entries when you switch computers
- No worry about losing entries if your computer crashes
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FROM ALCOHOLICS VICTORIOUS

[Alcoholics Victorious](#) is a program of Christians in Recovery. Founded in 1948, Alcoholics Victorious support groups offer a safe environment for people recovering from the effects of alcoholism or drug addiction. We recognize Jesus Christ as our "Higher Power" and gather together to share our experience, faith, strength and hope. AV meetings use the 12 Steps, the Bible and the Alcoholics Victorious Creed.



[Restoration Though Making Amends \(Part 1\)](#)

[Restoration Though Making Amends \(Part 2\)](#)

[The Emotional Dimension of Recovery](#)

FOR RECOVERY PROFESSIONALS

- [Work Therapy in Recovery Programs](#)
- [Aftercare for Recovery Programs](#)

QUESTIONS ANSWERED

- [Asking for Wisdom - How Are You Praying?](#)
- [Are You Taking Advantage of Kingdom Synergy?](#)



HUMOR IN RECOVERY

Sayings to make you think

A PARAPROSDOKIAN is a figure of speech in which the latter part of a sentence or phrase is surprising or unexpected in a way that causes the reader or listener to reframe or reinterpret the first part. It is frequently used for humorous or dramatic effect.

1. Do not argue with an idiot. He will drag you down to his level and beat you with experience.
2. Going to church doesn't make you a Christian any more than standing in a garage makes you a car.
3. The last thing I want to do is hurt you. But it's still on the list.
4. If I agreed with you we'd both be wrong.
5. We never really grow up; we only learn how to act in public.
6. War does not determine who is right - only who is left.
7. Knowledge is knowing that a tomato is a fruit; Wisdom is not putting it in a fruit salad.
8. Evening news is where they begin with 'Good evening', and then proceed to tell you why it isn't.
9. A bus station is where a bus stops. A train station is where a train stops. On my desk, I have a workstation.
10. How is it one careless match can start a forest fire, but it takes a whole box to start a campfire?
11. Dolphins are so smart that within a few weeks of captivity, they can train people to stand on the very edge of the pool and throw them fish.
12. I thought I wanted a career, turns out I just wanted paychecks.
13. Whenever I fill out an application, in the part that says "In an emergency, notify:" I put "Doctor".
14. I didn't say it was your fault, I said I was blaming you.
15. Behind every successful man is his woman. Behind the fall of a successful man is usually another woman.
16. You do not need a parachute to skydive. You only need a parachute to skydive twice.
17. The voices in my head may not be real, but they have some good ideas!
18. Hospitality: Making your guests feel like they're at home, even if you wish they were.
19. I discovered I scream the same way whether I'm about to be devoured by a great white shark or if a piece of seaweed touches my foot.
20. There's a fine line between cuddling and holding someone down so they can't get away.
21. When tempted to fight fire with fire, remember that the Fire Department usually uses water.
22. You're never too old to learn something stupid.
23. To be sure of hitting the target, shoot first and then call whatever you hit, the target.

*Submitted by Sail
to the [Humor Forum](#)*

CAN YOU PICTURE THIS:



The Christians in Recovery® (CIR) site is visited by thousands of Christians and people in recovery. Users have praised the CIR site for helping them and their families.

The front page alone of CIR receives over 200,000 page views / 90,000 unique visitors per month. The entire site receives over 10 million hits per year. Your group will get the exposure you need and benefit by becoming a sponsor. Your ad will reach a very targeted audience: Christians and People in Recovery. Sponsorships are available to any Recovery group or organization, Christian ministry, Christian-based web site, or business that upholds Christian values. Each sponsor is subject to approval.

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THE BOOK THAT STARTED IT ALL

AA Original Manuscript Shows Debate Over Religion

The Book That Started It All: The Original Working Manuscript of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) Big Book is being published for the first time, along with edits that changed its references to religion, the Washington Post reported Sept. 22.

The first AA manual, called: "Alcoholics Anonymous: The Story of How More Than One Hundred Men Have Recovered from Alcoholism," was published in 1939, the Associated Press (AP) reported Sept. 28.

First drafted by co-founder Bill Wilson, the 12-step manual has become known as the "Big Book" or "Bible." Wilson's working manuscript is now being published by Hazelden under the title, "The Book That Started It All."

The annotated manuscript shows that Wilson picked a group of people -- whose identities are still unknown -- to review and edit the Big Book. Their changes and comments indicate there was disagreement over how explicitly to talk about God and religion. For example, a sentence in the first chapter that read "God has to work twenty-four hours a day in and through us, or we perish," was changed to read "Faith has to work twenty-four hours a day in and through us, or we perish." The anonymous editor explained, "Who are we to say what God has to do?" The editors also made changes to the 12 Steps as well. In Wilson's original version, Step 7 read, "Humbly, on our knees, asked Him to remove our shortcomings -- holding nothing

back." The editors suggested it be changed to read, "Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings," because "on our knees" suggested church worship, the Post said.

The Big Book has exerted worldwide influence. Millions have used it to help them with addiction -- not only to alcohol, but also to many other substances and activities, including sex, food, and email. It has been adopted for use by Jews, evangelical Christians, the former Soviet Union, and the Islamic government of Iran.

"If it had been a Christian-based book, a religious book, it wouldn't have succeeded as it has," said Nick Motu, of Hazelden Publishing.

The book was published at a time when the public tended to see alcoholism not as a disease, but as an indication of weak morals. The doctor's opinion at the book's opening, by contrast, called it "a kind of allergy." That represented a radical shift in thinking.

"We didn't have any knowledge then about the brain. Today we know there is a neurological component, we know there are spiritual, psychological and environmental components," said Joseph Califano, founder of the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University.

It is still unclear how Wilson's manuscript was edited, or who its editors were. Before its publication, Wilson sent the manuscript to about 300 doctors, religious leaders, and people in



recovery from alcoholism. The actual number of editors was probably smaller, according to the Post. Since its publication, the book has gone through four editions almost unchanged, although the stories of those in recovery have been replaced with newer ones several times. Wilson and his wife Lois kept his manuscript until the late 1970s, when she gave it to a friend. In 2004, it was auctioned by Sotheby's for about \$1.5 million; it was sold again a few years later to a man who gave it to Hazelden for publication.

The Post reported that the publication of the edited manuscript may stimulate debate over how big a role faith should play in treatment.

"We're downplaying the faith issue to get more people," said Jack Cowley, who oversees faith-based prison programs. Cowley said that Wilson's decision not to emphasize God and Christ was a "cop-out."

"Wilson was divided, too," said Sid Farrar, Hazelden's editorial director.

The fourth edition of the Big Book Alcoholics Anonymous can be read or purchased online.

*by Benjamin Chambers
submitted to Forums by AlanH*

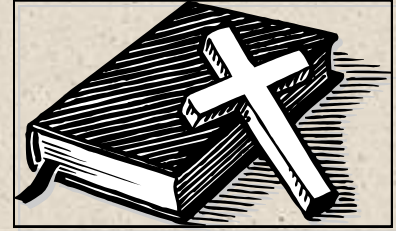
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- Several scheduled recovery meetings every day
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GLEANNINGS

Today's Life Question:

Jeremiah bought a field as a sign of his faith in the future of Israel. By what "investments" can you demonstrate practical faith in God's kingdom?

Pursue the presence of God
Repent of self-reliance
Accept God's love
Yield to God's choices for you.

Each day CIR has a new article or Bible study designed to strengthen your faith, boost your recovery and/or give you something to contemplate. You can check for new articles here Monday-Friday: http://christians-in-recovery.org/Tools_DailyArticle



There is so much that we do not see or understand. We see in a mirror dimly now. We can't even begin to imagine the blessings he yet has in store for us.

Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

1 Corinthians 2:9

The holy spirit spoke the truth to your ancestors thru Isaiah the prophet saying...

Go to this people and say:
You will listen and listen, but you will not understand.

You will look and look but you will NOT learn.

Because these people have become stubborn,

They don't hear with their ears and they have closed their eyes.

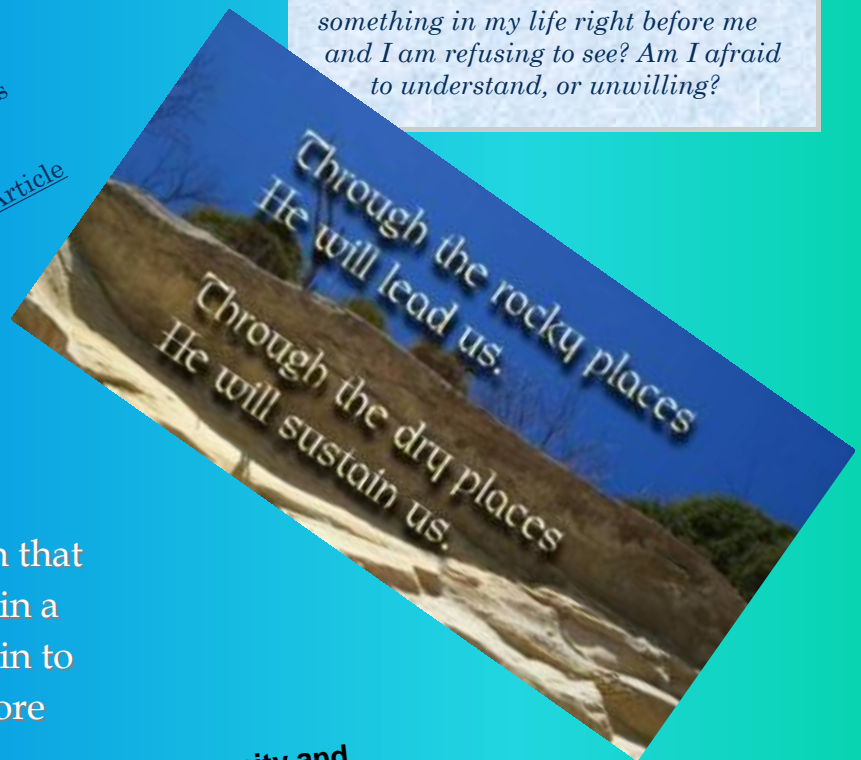
OTHERWISE they might really understand

what they see with their eyes, what they hear with their ears.

They might Really understand in their minds

AND COME BACK TO ME AND BE HEALED.

WOW. THIS SPEAKS to me... is there something in my life right before me and I am refusing to see? Am I afraid to understand, or unwilling?

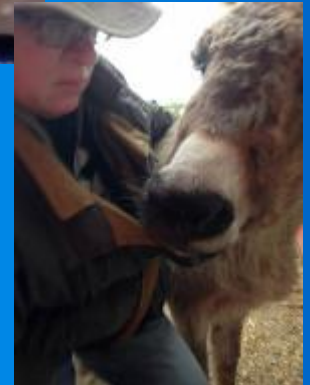
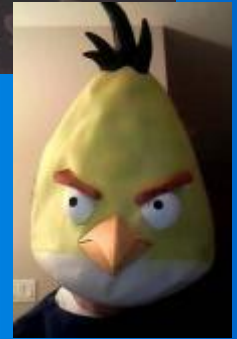


All is vanity and vexation of spirit.

Life, for me, just goes on and on without change. The issues that vexed me several years ago vex me now. Nothing has changed. Things are not right in so many ways and it burdens me daily. One eventually assumes this is how it will be. Just accept it. You have done all you can: prayed and prayed and prayed and with no definitive answer. Years of this.

I know many here struggle because they feel God does not hear their prayers or He just seems silent and remote. Here is a quote that may help:

"When God gives you a vision and darkness follows, wait. God will bring the vision He has given you to reality in your life if you will wait on His timing. Never try to help God fulfill His word. Abram went through thirteen years of silence, but in those years all of his self-sufficiency was destroyed. ... Those years of silence were a time of discipline, not a period of God's displeasure. There is never any need to pretend that your life is filled with joy and confidence; just wait upon God and be grounded in Him." Oswald Chambers



Mandy, the smallest member of the phone mtg

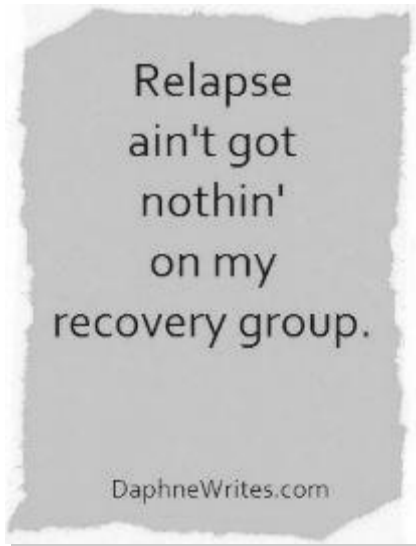
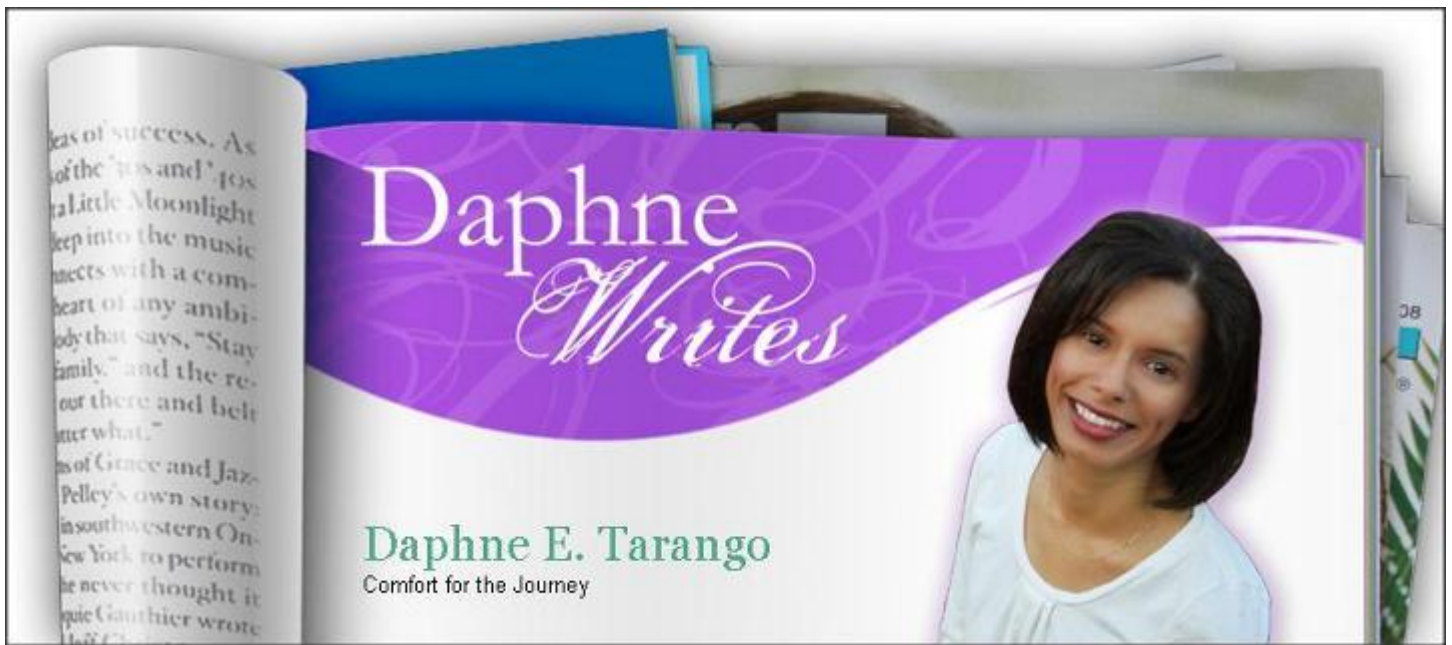
CIR Members come in all shapes and sizes!



After fifty years as the church organist, Gladys made a genuine effort to adjust to the new worship format.



**A Psalm for the Struggle
Psalm 42**



Let's talk recovery. More specifically, relapse.

We see it over and over again on the news, mainly with celebrities whose relapse into addictions and unhealthy behaviors results in death. Singer [Whitney Houston](#) comes to mind. Just this week, actor [Philip Seymour Hoffman](#) died after being clean more than two decades. He relapsed last year.

This isn't just about celebrities. We see relapse more and more in the lives of those around us – family,

friends, acquaintances, even people at church. We might be the ones in relapse.

This past year has been incredibly difficult for me: Emotional stress, financial issues, and tense relationships. Like others in recovery, I've had a hard time not falling back into old habits when I face triggers. I've had some missteps—even skidding back to square one in several areas. I'll be honest: I wasn't practicing what I wrote two years ago about preventing and reversing relapse:

Reflect

Expose your triggers and plan your escape strategies

Look up and re-learn scripture passages

Activate your accountability partners

Pray, pray, pray

Share your story

Evaluate regularly

(You can find more detailed explanations about each of these tips in [part one](#) and [part two](#) from

2012.)

One thing has been important for me to step back onto—and stay on—my recovery path:

I started attending weekly recovery group meetings again.

Recovery groups aren't just for people who struggle with drugs or alcohol. Recovery groups are for people who struggle with anger, codependency, food addictions, workaholism, pornography addictions, fear and worry, trust, and so much more. People like me and possibly you

I made a lot of progress when I was attending group, so I didn't see the need to keep going once I was "better." Now I remember why it's important to attend my recovery group regularly. I have people who hold me accountable. They don't judge me, criticize me, or look at me any differently when I make a bad choice. They listen, understand, and love me no matter what. My recovery group keeps me from relapsing. They are my family.

Attending weekly also helps me to

live consistently, my word for this year.

I don't know why I ever stopped attending.

Today, I encourage you: If you're struggling to stay on your recovery path—or if you're already on an unhealthy and destructive path, find a recovery group in your area. Celebrate Recovery is a great place to get connected. You'll meet with others who will walk with you, encourage you, and love you.

Don't go it alone. Relapse ain't got nothin' on recovery groups!*

Blessings,
Daphne

**Note: I don't mean to minimize addiction by saying it's easy to recover by solely attending recovery groups. Other resources and treatments might be necessary to address recovery. Recovery groups are just one component to address recovery, relapse, and addictive behaviors.*

Two people are better than one. They can help each other in everything they do. Suppose someone falls down. Then his friend can help him up. But suppose the man who falls down doesn't have anyone to help him up. Then feel sorry for him! Or suppose two people lie down together. Then they'll keep warm. But how can one person keep warm alone? One person could be overpowered. But two people can stand up for themselves. And a rope made out of three cords isn't easily broken.
(Ecclesiastes 4:9-12)

Published February 5, 2014

By Daphne

Daphne Tarango is a regular contributor to the Gabriel. More of her writings may be found on her online blog, Daphne Writes

SPECIAL REQUEST TO OUR READERS FROM DAPHNE

I'm conducting a short informal survey on how our family and friends were loving / could have been more loving during our recovery journey.

The feedback will be used in my next inspirational book on ways to show understanding and love to a family or friend in recovery. I would love to hear from our Gabriel readers.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Z6MCC89>

The survey takes 5-10 minutes, at most, and your answers are completely anonymous and confidential.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES @ CIR

Service Work is essential to recovery and Christianity. All volunteer opportunities can be done from your own home



according to YOUR schedule. So it is with faith: if it is alone and includes no actions, then it is dead. But someone will say, "One person has faith, another has actions." My answer is, "Show me how anyone can have faith without actions. I will show you my faith by my actions." James 2:1 7-18

- **Become a Meeting Host**
- **12th Step Committee**
- **Sponsor Someone**
- **Provide a Scholarship**
- **Moderate a Message Board**
- **Be a Chat Room Greeter**
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- **Write Website Content**
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- **Grant Writing**
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- **Represent CIR at a Recovery Seminar in your Area**
- **Offer you Ideas and Talents if you have other ways to help!**

Contact us now.

We want to hear from you!

Focus on Recovery:

The Twelve Promises

The following article on the Promises may be used as a study guide or meditation tool to strengthen your Recovery.

THE TWELVE PROMISES OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

(These 12 promises go with and can be adapted to all 12 Step Recovery programs no matter what the Addictions or Life-Controlling Problems.)

Readers of the Big Book (third edition) may be surprised when they come upon pages 83 through 84 where twelve promises of joyous living are listed.

A rewarding revelation lies in these promises. Sobriety and Abstinence alone is never enough to guarantee the spiritual progress that leads to serenity.

No mention of alcohol, other drugs or problems is made in the promises. The promises stress freedom from addictions and life-controlling problems that keep us in bondage. They teach that abstinence can be comfortable if "*Easy Does It*" is always followed by "*But Do It*".

Exploring the promises is an adventurous education that never leads to graduation. Recovery and Spiritual Growth are for the rest of our life. The primary reason is that sobriety/abstinence and God do make promises and keeps them.

1. WE FIND NEW FREEDOM

The first promise says, "We will know a new freedom and a new happiness." This is a vast change for the alcoholic who always insisted, "I'll handle it myself when I'm good and ready." But the alcoholic agonized over lack of

freedom of choice about drinking.

The first promise assures us complete freedom as our reward for staying with the winners. It encourages us to make wise use of our free choices.

Happiness comes with the peace of mind we experience after we surrender and accept the reality of our addiction. Now we understand the difference between the happiness of sobriety and the false joy the bottle brought. We find a happiness replete with laughter, contrasted with the despair we wallowed in while we were drunk.

The new freedom brings love, honesty, gratitude, humility, positive-ness, faith, hope and trust. Our choices become steps in spiritual growth.

2. OUR REGRETS SUBSIDE

The second promise tells us, "We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it." This assures us freedom from guilt over what we did, what we lost, whom we hurt and what might have been. We can remember the past to benefit from mistakes without dwelling on it.

By benefiting from past misdeeds, we reduce the chance of repeating them. Absence of regrets makes life possible in the now. When we confront the past horrors, we emphasize the lesson that "pain is the price of maturity." In sobriety, we would surely be distraught if the deep hurt we suffered while drinking had all been in vain.

Using the past as a tool for growth, we protect ourselves against slips by avoiding complacency and carelessness. We need not be ashamed of our past, because we know we can bring our character defects into the open, admit them and get help to rid ourselves of them.

When we compare the real joys of sobriety with the fancied pleasures of intoxication we can feel grateful.

3. WE WILL FIND SERENITY

In the third promise we are told, "We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace." We once drank to kill pain but it only increased our agony. In sobriety, we find we can use our past suffering for emotional growth, healing and peace of mind. While Alcoholism is a disease of denial, recovery in A.A. is based on the truth of the Serenity Prayer, which teaches us acceptance of the things we cannot change, courage to change the things we can, and wisdom to know the difference.

Serenity is not a passive attitude but requires constructive action that creates an ideal climate for spiritual growth. With peace of mind, we readily take inventories of both defects and assets in our characters. Selfishness does not grow in an atmosphere of serenity. We cannot be hateful and grateful at the same time. Serenity has been called a passport to the presence of a Higher Power. Serenity makes

our forgiveness of others and ourselves possible. It frees us from excessive living and thinking.

4. OUR EXPERIENCES HAVE VALUES

The fourth promise states, "No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others." This promise pointedly reminds alcoholics to look for similarities not differences in fellow A.A. members.

This promise assures us that we belong. We rightfully share a sense of value within society with millions of other recovering addicts. As victims of alcohol, we felt we were less than others. We were full of shame and guilt for what we had become. In our first days in A.A. we believed none of those nice sober people would have anything to do with us if they found out what failures we were.

Surprisingly, we learn our sordid pasts and horrid behaviour can help others to relate to us. We think, "If they can make it, why not me?" Beginners are told, "Keep coming to meetings and you'll hear your story coming out of the mouths of others." Our drunkologues are never so unique that they won't be topped again and again by fellow alcoholics. The practice of holding nothing back helps us identify with others, not compare. The caste system and generation gap go out the window in A.A. We quickly agree our common welfare comes first; personal recovery depends on our unity.

It becomes almost impossible for a recovering alcoholic to deceive fellow members who have already heard all the lies, cop-outs and alibis. Denial, the number one

symptom of addiction, gets us nowhere with a group of recovering alcoholics.

One important idea behind this promise is that the realities of drinking will reach not only the "helpless, hopeless boozer" but also the "high-bottom alcoholic" who may be struggling to admit he or she belongs in A.A.

Relating and identifying will always be key words in reaching a drinking, still-suffering alcoholic, because recovering drinkers who tell their past experiences abound with sincerity. Words that come from the heart always reach the hearts of those who need to hear them.

5. SELF-PITY DISAPPEARS

The fifth promise seems improbable to those who are still drinking. It tells us, "That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear." We actually do find our lives becoming manageable. Before we surrendered to reality, we alcoholics considered ourselves failures. We felt inadequate, undeserving, rejected, unlucky, betrayed and unimportant. "What's the use? Who cares?" summed up our views on life and death. Self-pity was our only solace.

Self-respect during sobriety will come slowly but steadily. We learn to be patient. The miracle of rediscovering purpose in life comes to us, if we give it time. We find the joy of living, a second lifetime, one filled with caring and sharing and love and service. As we progress from useless to purposeful living, our thinking becomes positive. We act with gratitude and humility.

Constructive thinking reveals we are always basically what we think

The Twelve Promises

- If we are painstaking about this phase of our development, we will be amazed before we are half way through.
- We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness.
- We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it.
- We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace.
- No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others.
- That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear.
- We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows.
- Self-seeking will slip away.
- Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change.
- Fear of people and of economic insecurity will leave us.
- We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us.
- We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.

Are these extravagant promises? We think not. They are being fulfilled among us, sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly. They will always materialize if we work for them. ©

From pages 83-84 of the Big Book

Continued on next page

we are. When we believe ourselves failures, we are failures. When we live free of self-pity and with a positive outlook, we build our open-mindedness and our willingness for spiritual growth. The antidote for self-pity is action. Self-pity is revealed as selfishness, unwarranted pride and an unhealthy ego. Self-pity is an extension of self-absorption and leads losers to depend on "cop-outs" to explain why the program failed to work for them. Self-pitiers never grasp the truth that a recovery program has few failures but many quitters.

We start feeling sorry for ourselves when our demands are rejected for everything on our terms. We ultimately understand that we can't work this program our way. We stop trying easier, softer ways and stop holding onto old ideas. Growth becomes easier after we develop a willingness to go to any length to arrive at solid sobriety.

6. INTEREST IN OTHERS GROWS

Any person, whether suffering from an addiction or not, would feel rewarded with "the key to happy, fruitful living" if he or she were the recipient of sobriety's sixth promise. It states, "We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows." When we give up the bottle, we also relinquish our envy and self-centeredness. We were extremely colourful liars about our successes. How our hungry egos thrived!

Alcoholics are expert people-pleasers, always hoping to influence others to respond with material or emotional rewards. Kindness merely for the sake of feeling good was an unthinkable waste of opportunity. Most of our drinking was done to benefit only ourselves. We reveled in the false

feelings of pleasure, power and importance that alcohol brought us. Alcohol made us believe we were somebody. Even when misery followed a binge, we usually felt the lift we'd experienced was worth the price. Sadly, the agony got progressively worse.

**Exploring the promises
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leads to graduation.
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Spiritual Growth
are for the
rest of our life.**

It is a drinker's self-centeredness that disregards the symptoms of our disease and the warnings of loved ones. Our egos, a potent factor during drinking, can continue to retard our spiritual progress. Few things in life are more rewarding than the realization that we enjoy helping others and sharing solutions instead of working overtime to attract attention to ourselves. We find that generosity without thought of return is a cure for problems. It becomes evident that people who share freely seldom sink into depression. We become aware that faulty thinking can be the root of our depression.

Since reaction to people, places and things is a source of depression, positive thinking depends on close contact with other people. That requires action. We need to focus

outside ourselves on the mainstream of life.

Sharing is the key to enjoying the sixth promise. We begin to practice the slogan, "We can do what I can't." By exchanging ideas and experiences with one another, we rid ourselves of emotions that enable selfishness to flourish, pride, vanity, self-righteousness, jealousy, self-pity, resentment and condemnation. Interest in others that prompts giving and sharing takes us far from that drunken existence where complained that the world owed us a lot and never paid off. When sober, we do more than make friends; we understand how to be friends.

7. GRANDIOSITY DISAPPEARS

The seventh promise of sobriety is, "Self-seeking will slip away." This promise becomes one of the benefits of sobriety, when we are aware that we have made spiritual progress.

Before recovery, we always insisted our drinking was nobody's business. Our attitude constantly put us on the defensive. We were sure we had to protect our rights. Self-seeking and self-indulgence seemed wholly justified.

In recovery, we realize self-centeredness created that stubborn denial that kept us from surrendering. We realize how much help we need. Our grandiosity has to go.

It was natural while we were drinking to exalt our egos. If we are self-made successes in a professional field, we can easily begin to worship our creators, ourselves. Egotists devote little time to character growth. Any potential change for the better is restrained by a lack of humility, even when a drinker grows tired of

misery. An active alcoholic lacks open-mindedness. Though often wrong, drinkers never doubt they are right. Only when an admission and acceptance show them they are just human, no more or less, are they ready to welcome helping hands.

Acceptance in recovery is without reservation, but never with the feeling we are simply resigned to our disease. We see self-seeking as only an inferiority complex turned inside out. As our self-centeredness slips away, humility will make a quiet entrance. The recovering alcoholic becomes teachable and will never stop learning new truths.

As our self-seeking diminishes, humility allows us to listen. Arrogant persons are not ready to hear. Unless we hear, we cannot grow. One early lesson for us is that sobriety does not make A.A. members "fellows in virtue" but sharers of character defects who are helping one another lose those faults.

We find that change is a must for us. Without it, we cannot take the vital inventories that identify our shortcomings. Without change, old ideas will dominate our lives. All change must come from within us. Nobody else can alter us. Not even A.A. plays that role; it simply gives us the tools to change ourselves.

Results depend on how much we want to change, how hard we are willing to work and how open to advice from experienced friends our minds are. If we take the suggested Steps of Recovery, it will be impossible not to change. In making changes, it is well to remember the adage; "You must first empty the old, dirty water from the pitcher before you can fill

it with new, clean water."

8. OUR OUTLOOK BRIGHTENS

The eighth promise is far-reaching. It states, "Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change." As drinkers, the only important changes for us were external, different watering holes, different drinks, different mixes, different friends. We blamed everything but alcohol for the pain we suffered and the mishaps we encountered. We didn't even admit the one obvious change: Our lives grew progressively worse, no matter what we tried.

In recovery, we begin to accept life as it happens, not as we would like it to be or as we believed the bottle would make it. With our new attitudes, we no longer seek others to validate our behaviour and our opinions. We no longer seek compliments, knowing that such praise is really fragile and short-lived. We learn that the less we seek approval, the more we receive. We see the importance of satisfying ourselves instead of inviting applause from others. We strive to live up to our potential while making sure we work wisely within our limitations.

We discover in a fellowship like A.A. that our true worth remains after all material things are gone. The things in life with lasting value can never be taken from us. We become aware that truth is unchangeable. Our approach to truth, however, can change for the worse if we permit old ideas to dominate our outlook on life. We must remember no one can hurt us unless we permit him or her to. We cannot prevent what happens to us but we are always responsible for how we react to our experiences. A positive attitude will determine

our responses.

In recovery, we change our approach from hostile and negative to positive and friendly. It becomes obvious that a wrong attitude will build as much guilt within us as a wrong deed. A changed attitude will not lead us to believe everything will be perfect but we will confront life on realistic not fanciful terms. Furthermore, the self-loathing of our guilty drunken selves will give way to higher self-esteem. Our new attitude will include looking at life one day at a time. Thus, we escape the persistent guilt from the past and the fear of the future. This outlook includes examining each day as it ends. This always produces an active gratitude within us. We find it is not enough to feel grateful; we must express gratitude through love and service to others.

9. OUR FEARS DECREASE

The ninth promise strikes down unwarranted fear. It states "Fear of people and of economic insecurity will leave us." Since courage has been described as fear that has said its prayers, we become accustomed to praying for God's will for us. The insight this brings convinces us our fears come from within ourselves, not from others. We will no longer have to be defensive or blame people, places and circumstances for what we do or say. We will discover we may have become our own worst enemy, but we don't have to be this way. It is rewarding to make and keep friends instead of antagonizing everyone around us because we fear confrontations. We used to be quarrelsome drinkers, unaware that anger often covered fear.

In sobriety, decreased fear reduces

Continued on next page

envy, low self-esteem, resentments and feelings of rejection and frustration. In A.A., we lose our loneliness, our starting point for fear of others. We can find love and trust in new friends who remind us, "Everything is going to be all right; This, too, shall pass. Things will get better and better."

Involvement with others is the magic that dissolves fear. Where there is unity, there is no room for conflict. There are no strangers in caring and sharing programs, only new friends not yet met. In a fellowship of recovering addicts, we are all people who need people.

Love in sobriety is demonstrated by wishing someone else well; being available; having interest in others and sharing sympathy, understanding, kindness, honesty and humility.

The ninth promise also assures us freedom from the fear of financial insecurity. This does not mean we will be showered with possessions or become affluent. We will not always get what we want, but we will receive what we need to enjoy sobriety.

10. COPING BECOMES EASIER

Although our recovery program is simple, it is not easy. The tenth promise addresses this: "We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us." Experience teaches us to stop complicating everything. We are told, "If it works, don't fix it."

As drinkers, life was never easy or unhurried. In recovery, we grow emotionally through countless lessons that are a joy to experience and live the philosophy of Easy Does It or One Day At a Time. Time is a great teacher and each approach to life that we master stays with us forever. Like riding a

bicycle, recovery may be puzzling at first but, once we learn, we will never forget.

The tenth promise guarantees that, as our sobriety continues and strengthens, we will grow spiritually. An intuitive know-how indicates change and change means progress. Even though change is constant, we will never reach perfection because humans never attain perfection.

Yet, once we permit
God to do what we
cannot, we find
happiness we never
before knew existed.
We learn what it is to
share with love.

In early recovery, a major change we experience is our growing concern for other people. It is said all humans are born selfish and addiction accentuates this trait. In sobriety, we begin to care about others. Changes come, sometimes slowly, sometimes quickly, but always surely

Working the Steps of Recovery will be the foundation for our intuition in solving problems. We can benefit from the advice others give us and we can replace old useless ideas with workable ones. A large part of intuition involves faith. We experience an awareness of reality and our thought process becomes more mature. We instinctively begin to do the right thing at the right time.

11. OUR SPIRITUALITY GROWS

The eleventh promise assures us spiritual growth will be a part of our sobriety. This promise states, "We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves." When drinking, we had little faith in prayer. Our impatience never allowed us to understand good things must come in God's time, not ours. Grandiosity kept us from turning anything over to God. Even when we felt a need for help, we were usually resigned to our drinking problem. Our ego told us if we got out of the driver's seat, we'd lose control.

Yet, once we permit God to do what we cannot, we find happiness we never before knew existed. We learn what it is to share with love. We discover that once we recognize God's will for us, we still have the responsibility of changing ourselves and carrying out His will.

The eleventh promise informs us we must completely turn over problems that are beyond our control. As this promise materializes for us, we will have better understanding of God and His power. Finding God may seem to great a task, but a sincere search for Him will sustain our spiritual progress. God will always be too great an entity for humans to understand entirely, but all our efforts at awareness will build a strong faith that unlocks to doors to acceptance. When we have faith, we have made the first move toward letting go and letting God do for us hat we cannot do.

In this relationship with a Higher Power, faith leads to trust. The less we press at being spiritual, the more spiritual we become. Once we find a satisfying relationship

with a Higher Power, we will know we can never again play God with the lives of others.

Obviously, contact with God must be through prayer and meditation, our communication system with our Higher Power. So long as we have faith that the eleventh promise will be part of our sobriety, we will develop confidence and we will make the spiritual progress necessary for continued sobriety. Trust in this promise will make us aware that we will never walk alone, no matter where we travel in sobriety.

12. THE PROMISES EVOLVE THROUGH EFFORT

The twelfth promise sums up all the others and is probably the most rewarding of all. It asserts, "All the promises of Sobriety will always materialize if we work for them."

Whether the promises materialize quickly or slowly depends on the amount of work we do. It is like taking a picture; we get back what we focus on. Unless we follow instructions in every effort, we are going to lose more than we win. Patience is a necessity to complete each step of spiritual growth. Patient people see the difference between true solutions and circumstances that are nothing but problems in disguise.

In our growth process, we discover winners are tenacious listeners in any learning group while those who continue to struggle are usually impatient to express their opinions. (*God gave us two ears and one mouth so that we could listen twice as much as we talk.*) Growth comes through love. (*Giving it and receiving it.*) Recovering people, whether alcoholics/addicts or those struggling with Life-Controlling Problems, find it is

more important to give love than to be loved. By helping others we help ourselves. In order to keep what we have, we have to share it and give it away. Haphazard action will never bring these promises to fruition. We must direct our efforts carefully by knowing what is happening and being among those who are constantly making things happen.

Posted by Teddybear
5/23/13 in the Steps Forum

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Twelve Steps and Twelve Promises

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol – that our lives had become unmanageable.
Promise: *We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness.*
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
Promise: *We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it.*
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
Promise: *We will comprehend the word "Serenity" and we will know peace.*
4. Made a searching and fearless inventory of ourselves.
Promise: *No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others.*
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being, the exact nature of our wrongs.
Promise: *That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear.*
6. We're entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
Promise: *We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows.*
7. Humbly ask Him to remove our shortcomings.
Promise: *Self-seeking will slip away.*
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
Promise: *Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change.*
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
Promise: *Fear of people and economic insecurity will leave us.*
10. Continued to take personal inventory, and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
Promise: *We will intuitively know how to handle situations which use to baffle us.*
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
Promise: *We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.*
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

Are these extravagant promises? We think not. They are being fulfilled among us – sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly. They will always materialize if we work for them.

Poets Among Us

As smooth as glass
 As clear as a mirror
 I shiver in awe
 All my life has brought me to this point
 Food, oxygen, activity, rest
 Have all sustained tender tissues
 So reflection, refraction
 Electrochemical reactions
 Could feed my soul.
 All I can do
 Is humbly bow
 And say "Thanks!"



Do we keep God in a box?
 Is He a wily fox we keep caged
 Unengaged
 Trapped in the prison of our understanding?

Are our prayers really snares
 Limiting God
 Through the walls of our imagination?

If we cease to assimilate,
 Rather, subordinate
 To the unassimilable...

We may slip the subliminal
 Escape the ephemeral
 Engage the seminal Source of Life

Be separated
 Reassembled
 Rekindled
 By His knife.

PERSEVERANCE

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| 1. When you think
Big thoughts,
But relish
Small pleasures;
God blesses you
In triple measures. | 7. Since nothing
succeeds
Quite like success,
Just carry on
And do your best\ | 13. The very worst
Is not to try.
So don't
Let your life
Just pass you by. |
| 2. This time,
Like all times
Is a very good one,
If you know,
What to do with it. | 8. A smile
Is like a window
On your face,
To show your
heart's
In the right place | 14. Be you in charge;
Broken or cut; The
challenges,
Are precisely
what,
Make life so
interesting. |
| 3. There's nothing
that's,
New under the sun.
So share some
laughter
With another and
Express your wit. | 9. All grace
Is bestowed
On Abraham's race;
No more in
The desert to roam. | 15. Just like
A game of cards
Or pool,
Overcoming the
barriers |
| 4. Exude larger than
life confidence.
Throw your heart
Over the fence.
The rest will follow
You must never
In pity wallow. | 10. Even a mosquito
Doesn't get a slap
On the back,
Gathering in
volumes
Like a
thunderclap, | 16. And getting
Over the blocks
Can be engaging,
And cool.
If you remember
Always that love
Is the rule. |
| 5. To be upset,
Over what you
Do not have,
Is to waste
With great haste
All you do. | 11. Until it starts
To work,
So as not
To result in
A surprising
quirk. | -----

Wisdom Poetry by
Rev. Bola A.
(copyright: 12.7.12
-ARR) |
| 6. To be wronged,
Is nothing unless,
You continue to
Remember it. | 12. Had truth
Not been reversed,
Failure is really
Not the worst,
In the world. | ----- |

'Blessed is the man who --remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him.' James 1:12

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Submitted by Aartisans (aka: Angelsanon)
 CHRISTIANS VICTORIOUS FELLOWSHIP- UK

This is not poetry but it is poetic in nature. From Grace Gems. Submitted by Sail:

I love to trace there the footsteps of my Father!

"The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of His hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge!" Psalm 19:1-2

GOD IN NATURE! I love to trace there the footsteps of my Father!

His watchful stars look down kindly and lovingly from their heights.

There is a touch of beauty even in Alpine solitudes--the piles of driven snow like white mantles woven by angels; the translucent light of fairy grottoes, their roofs pendent with icicle, and distant or overhanging peaks gleaming with the gold of the morning, or with evening ruby.

That great and wide sea, with its dancing waves and troughs of chameleon hue.

The whisper of the forest and the sympathetic music of its million leaves.

The pastures clothed with flocks, the valleys also covered over with grain.

The sparkling rivulet winding its thread of silver, singing with gentle ripple, and taking its part in the blessing of Creation.

The Almighty has thus put His loving and creative thoughts into His world. We can devoutly say, "How precious also are Your thoughts unto me, O God; how great is the sum of them!"

Yes, with all this apparent to his vision--who can see and recognize the Great Ruler of all--only in mists and storms, the boom of the thunder, the flash of the lightning, the tremors of the earthquake, and the havoc of the avalanche? These are the abnormal occurrences in His mighty sway--a few exceptional notes in the great hymn and harmonies of eternal love.
(John MacDuff, "Ripples in the Twilight" 1885)

From CIR Admin: Let us know what you find on the Internet that would be interesting resources of Christian and/or recovery music and/or poetry. Here are some for starters:

The Timeless Truths Web site:

[Music](#) (including Sheet Music, audios, and more)

They also have in this section

<http://library.timelesstruths.org/texts/>

Foundation Truth

This is a magazine for youths and adults, addressing basic issues of walking with the Lord. It is issued two or three times a year, up to 36 pages.

Treasures of the Kingdom

A 16-page quarterly magazine written especially for six- to twelve-year-olds. Since issue Number 40 the focus has been on "Casting Up a Highway for the Children of This Generation."

Dear Princess

"Encouraging Young Women Who Are Daughters of the Heavenly King." This magazine was published from 1996 to 1999, and has since been incorporated into Foundation Truth.

Books

Growing collection includes devotionals, biographies, and true-to-life stories, mostly written during the latter 19th and early 20th centuries.

Sermons

Articles

Tracts



Send your poetry, art or song lyrics to Email: CIRAdmin@christians-in-recovery.org or mail to "The Gabriel" C/O Christians-In-Recovery P.O. Box 48 Pleasant Street, Dorchester, MA 02125 USA

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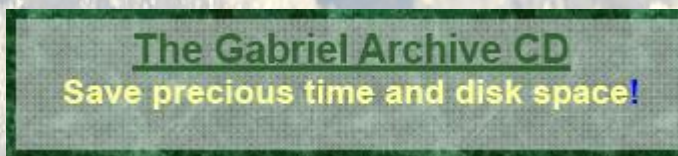
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