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~~Should be studied from the mold angle~~

Chapter Five

HOW IT WORKS

OK

manner path

Rarely have we seen a person fail who has thoroughly followed our directions. Those who do not recover are people who cannot or will not completely give themselves to this simple program, usually men and women who are constitutionally incapable of being honest with themselves. There are such unfortunates. They are not at fault; they seem to have been born that way. They are naturally incapable of grasping and developing a way of life which demands rigorous honesty. Their chances are less than average. There are those, too, who suffer from grave emotional and mental disorders, but many of them do recover if they have the capacity to be honest.

Our stories disclose in a general way what we used to be like, what happened, and what we are like now. If you have decided you want what we have and are willing to go to any length to get it -- ~~then you are ready to follow directions.~~ take certain steps

At some of these ~~you may~~ balk. we You may think you can find an easier, softer way. we doubt if you can. With all the earnestness at our command, we beg of you to be fearless and thorough from the very start. Some of us have tried to hold on to our old ideas and the result was nil until we let go absolutely.

Remember that ~~you are~~ dealing with alcohol -- cunning, baffling, powerful! Without help it is too much for ~~you~~. But there is One who has all power -- That One is God. we You must find Him now! (?)

Half measures will avail you nothing. we You stand at the turning point. we asked yourself under His protection and care with complete abandon. when we were receiving the response.

Now ~~we~~ think you can take it! Here are the steps we took, which are suggested as our Program of Recovery:

1. Admitted we were powerless over alcohol -- that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care and direction of God as we understood him.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs. our understanding of
6. Were entirely willing ready to have that God remove all these defects of character wouldn't "anxious" express greater humility?
7. Humbly, ~~our knees~~, asked Him to remove our shortcomings holding nothing back.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make complete amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

His Divine Consideration

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that others were wrong as far as most of us ever get. The usual outcome is that people continue to wrong you and you stay sore. Sometimes it was remorse and then you were sore at yourself. But the more you fight and try to have your way, the worse matters get. ~~were~~ that so? As in war, Victor only seem to win. Your moments of triumph were short-lived.

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

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

Turn back to ~~the~~ list, for it holds the key to your future. You must be prepared to look at it from an entirely different angle. You will begin to see that the world and its people really dominate you. In your present state, the wrongdoing of others, fancied or real, had power to actually kill you. How shall you escape? You see that these resentments must be mastered, but how? You cannot wish them away any more than alcohol.

This is our course: we realized at once that the people who wrong you are spiritually sick. Though you don't like their symptoms and the way these disturb you, they, like yourself, are sick, too. Ask God to help you show them the same tolerance, pity, and patience that you would cheerfully grant a sick friend. When a person next offends, say to yourself "This is a sick man. How can I be helpful to him? God save me from being angry. Thy will be done."

Never argue. Never retaliate. You wouldn't treat sick people that way. If you do, you destroy your chance of being helpful. You cannot be helpful to all people, but at least God will show you how to take a kindly and tolerant view of each and every one.

Put up with ~~our~~ list again. Putting out of your mind the wrongs others have done, resolutely look for your own mistakes. Where have you been selfish, dishonest, self-seeking and frightened? Though a situation may not be entirely your fault, disregard the other person involved entirely. See where you have been to blame? This is your inventory, not the other man's. When you see your fault, sit down on the list. See it before you in black and white. Admit your wrongs honestly and be willing to set these matters straight.

You will notice that the word fear is bracketed alongside the difficulties with Mr. Brown, Mrs. Jones, the employer, and the wife. This short word somehow touches about every aspect of our lives. It is an evil and corroding thread; the fabric of our existence is shot through with it. It sets in motion trains of circumstances which bring us misfortune we feel we don't deserve. But did not we, ourselves, set the ball rolling? Sometimes we think fear ought to be classed with stealing. It seems to cause more trouble.

Review your fears thoroughly. Put them on paper, even though you have no resentment in connection with them. Ask yourself why you have them. Isn't it because self-reliance has failed you? Self-reliance was good as far as it went, but it didn't go far enough. Some of us once had great self-confidence, but it didn't fully solve the fear problem, or any other. When it made us cocky, it was worse.

interform ONLY A bad word.

Doesn't mean this? SPIRITUAL sickness IS A SIN. To claim in another person is sick places in a position of criticism. They say spiritual sickness and cancer are the same.

HSP

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Perhaps there is a better way -- we think so. For you are now to go on a different basis; the basis of trusting and relying upon God. You are to trust infinite God rather than your finite self. You are in the world to play the role He assigns. Just to the extent that you do as you think He would have you, and humbly rely on Him, does He enable you to match calamity with serenity.

You must never apologize to anyone for depending upon your Creator. You can laugh at those who think spirituality the way of weakness. Paradoxically, it is the way of strength. The verdict of the ages is that faith means courage. All men of faith have courage. They trust their God. Never apologize for God. Instead let Him demonstrate, through you, what He can do. Ask Him to remove your fear and direct your attention to what He would have you be. At once, you will commence to outgrow fear.

Now about sex. You can probably stand an overhauling there. We needed it. But above all, let's be sensible on this question. It's so easy to get way off the track. Here we find human opinions running to extremes -- absurd extremes, perhaps. One set of voices cry that sex is a lust of our lower nature, a base necessity of procreation. Then we have the voices who cry for sex and more sex; who bewail the institution of marriage; who think that most of the troubles of the race are traceable to sex causes. They think we do not have enough of it, or that it isn't the right kind. They see its significance everywhere. One school would allow man no flavor for his fare and the other would have us all on a straight pepper diet. We want to stay out of this controversy. We do not want to be the arbiter of anyone's sex conduct. We all have sex problems. We'd hardly be human if we didn't. What can we do about them?

Review your own conduct over the years past. Where have you been selfish, dishonest, or inconsiderate? Whom did you hurt? Did you unjustifiably arouse jealousy, suspicion or bitterness? Where you were at fault, what should you have done instead? Get this all down on paper and look at it.

In this way you can shape a sane and sound ideal for your future sex life. Subject each relation to this test -- is it selfish or not? Ask God to mould your ideals and help you to live up to them. Remember always that your sex powers are God-given, and therefore good, neither to be used lightly or selfishly nor to be despised and loathed.

Whatever your ideal may be, you must be willing to grow toward it. You must be willing to make amends where you have done harm, provided that you will not bring about still more harm in so doing. In other words, treat sex as you would any other problem. In meditation, ask God what you should do about each specific matter. The right answer will come, if you want it.

God alone can judge your sex situation. Counsel with persons is often desirable, but let God be the final judge. Remember that some people are as fanatical about sex as others are loose. Avoid hysterical thinking or advice.

Suppose you fall short of the chosen ideal and stumble? Does this mean you are going to get drunk? Some people tell you so, if they do, it will be only a half-truth. It depends on you and your motive. If you are sorry for what you have done, and have the honest desire to let God take you to better things, you will be forgiven and will have learned your lesson. If you are not sorry, and your conduct continues to harm others, you are quite sure to drink. We are not theorizing. These are facts out of our experience.

To sum up about sex: earnestly pray for the right ideal, for guidance in each questionable situation, for sanity, and for the strength to do the right thing. If

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sex is very troublesome, ~~throw~~ ^{we} yourself the harder into helping others. ~~think~~ ^{we} of their needs and work for them. This will take ~~you~~ ^{us} out of ~~yourself~~ ^{us}. It ~~will~~ ^{will} quiet the imperious urge, when to yield would mean heartache.

~~If~~ ^{if} you have been thorough about your personal inventory, ~~you~~ ^{we} have written down a lot ~~by~~ ^{we} this time. ~~You~~ ^{we} have listed and analyzed your resentments. ~~You~~ ^{we} have begun to comprehend their futility and their fatality. ~~You~~ ^{we} have commenced to see their terrible destructiveness. ~~You~~ ^{we} have begun to learn tolerance, patience and good will toward all men, even your enemies, for you know them to ~~be~~ ^{be} sick people. ~~You~~ ^{we} have listed the people you have hurt by your conduct, and you are willing to straighten out the past if you can. ~~we~~ ^{we} could.

~~our understanding of faith~~

In this book you read again and again that ~~God~~ ^{God} did for us what we could not do for ourselves. We hope you are convinced now that ~~He~~ ^{He} can remove the self-will that has blocked you off from Him. ~~You~~ ^{you} have made your decision. ~~You~~ ^{you} have made an inventory of the grosser handicaps you have. ~~You~~ ^{you} have made a ~~good~~ ^{good} beginning for you have swallowed and digested some big chunks of truth about yourself. ~~you~~ ^{you} willing to go on.

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