

FOREWORD TO FIRST EDITION

This is the Foreword as it appeared in the first printing of the first edition in 1939.

WE, OF Alcoholics Anonymous, are more than one hundred men and women who have recovered from a seemingly hopeless state of mind and body. To show other alcoholics precisely how we have recovered is the main purpose of this book. For them, we hope these pages will prove so convincing that no further authentication will be necessary. We think this account of our experiences will help everyone to better understand the alcoholic. Many do not comprehend that the alcoholic is a very sick person. And besides, we are sure that our way of living has its advantages for all.

It is important that we remain anonymous because we are too few, at present to handle the overwhelming number of personal appeals which may result from this publication. Being mostly business or professional folk, we could not well carry on our occupations in such an event. We would like it understood that our alcoholic work is an avocation.

When writing or speaking publicly about alcoholism, we urge each of our Fellowship to omit his personal name, designating himself instead as "a member of Alcoholics Anonymous."

"Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films."

T&T 180 Tradition Eleven

"Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities."

T&T 184 Tradition Twelve

Very earnestly we ask the press also, to observe this request, for otherwise we shall be greatly handicapped.

We are not an organization in the conventional sense of the word.

"A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve."

T&T 172 Tradition Nine

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There are no fees or dues whatsoever. The only requirement for membership is an honest desire to stop drinking.

"The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking."

T&T 139 Tradition Three

We are not allied with any particular faith, sect or denomination, nor do we oppose anyone.

“Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.”

T&T 176 Tradition Ten

We simply wish to be helpful to those who are afflicted.

“Each group has but one primary purpose - to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers.”

T&T 150 Tradition Five

We shall be interested to hear from those who are getting results from this book, particularly from those who have commenced work with other alcoholics. We should like to be helpful to such cases. Inquiry by scientific, medical, and religious societies will be welcomed.

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS