

The Lies of the Cult

“All you have to do is don’t drink and go to meetings.” That, folks, happens to be the most popular lie that the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous perpetrates. Yes, I do mean lie. The fact remains that in order to get sober and stay sober one must do a lot more than don’t drink and go to meetings. In actuality, there is no place in the book Alcoholics Anonymous, known as the Big Book, that don’t drink and go to meetings is written. You won’t even find the words don’t drink next to each other. So where, pray tell, did the greatest lie of AA originate? It seems to me that this is a seemingly “easier, softer way.” I say seemingly because I believe there are a lot of imposters in the Fellowship.

Before diving into that “seething cauldron of debate,” I would first like to list some more of the AA lies: “Keep coming back. It gets better!” “Fake it till you make it!” “It’s a selfish program” “90 meetings in 90 days” “Change people, places, and things.” “No major changes in the first year.” “Stay out of relationships for the first year” “You people keep me sober” “Men with the mean; women with the women” “AA is the only way to get sober.” Now, this is by no means an exhaustive list, but it certainly contains most of the major felonies. Most of these lies go hand in hand with the original lie Don’t drink and go to meetings. Perpetrated by the impostors.

I know impostors is a strong word to describe people who are only trying to be helpful, but that is also the argument of the drug dealer, or bartender, who says they didn’t start the addict or drunk on their road to addiction. As an ex-alcoholic, who is a real alcoholic of the hopeless variety, it is my responsibility to expose the truth. Being blessed with full knowledge of my condition, I would be hurting people by withholding the facts.

The Lies of the Cult

The reality is that we have become lazy members of AA. We don't spend any time talking and qualifying newcomers. We throw a book at them and tell them to keep coming back. Rubbish. What happened to finding out all you can about the new prospect? What happened to being convinced that prospect is a real alcoholic? Not everyone who shows up at AA meetings are alcoholics. There are people sent by authorities to AA as a punishment. Frankly, most of those people I've met were a "certain type are hard drinker." I do not subscribe to the belief that everyone who shows up at AA is an alcoholic. Neither does AA. According to the book Dr. Bob and The Good Old-Timers, one of AA's "history" books, there was a woman who came to AA in the early years who did not sober up the AA way. However, she did achieve sobriety, and lived a healthy, happy productive life. So much for AA being the only way to get sober.

It is important to clarify my stand. I don't believe AA is the only way to get sober, but I do believe there is only one AA way. Once there is a change to that it is no longer AA. That is the point of this article. The lies that members of AA are handing out to people are NOT AA's opinion.

Let's delve into some of the lies previously listed starting with, "Keep coming back. It gets better." On page 14 and 15. Of the Big Book, it states, "For if an alcoholic failed to perfect and enlarge his spiritual life through work and self-sacrifice for others, he could not survive the certain trials and low spots ahead." The first word that jumps out to me is certain. That means it is unavoidable; it WILL happen. There is no getting around the hard times, which is what a trial is, and low spots, which means it's going to get worse. That's right, it is going to get worse, and it won't necessarily get better. As a

The Lies of the Cult

matter of fact, Bill and Lois Wilson were homeless from 1939 through 1941. They did not have a place of their own. They relied on the generosity and care of other people. Imagine something like that today. Someone as brilliant as Bill Wilson being homeless with his wife, who was no dolt, with 5 years of sobriety, and a published book, and remaining that way through his 7th year of sobriety. I wonder how they would be helped today.

That addressed the “it gets better” part, but what about the “Keep coming back?” On page 96, it states, “We find it a waste of time to keep chasing a man who cannot or will not work with you.” Also, page 31, states, “Step over to the nearest barroom and try some controlled drinking.” Page 32, continues, “It may be worth a bad case of the jitters if you get a full knowledge of your condition.” These are just a few examples; there are many others. Basically AA’s opinion is go away and try to stop on your own, and when you are ready to listen and do what you’re told come back and we’ll help you.

Next up: “Fake it till you make it.” First, we need to define the word fake. The book definition is to pretend or to trick or deceive. On page 58, in “How It Works,” it says, “They are naturally incapable of grasping and developing a manner of living which demands rigorous honesty.” Demands, in this context, means requires, and rigorous is restating demands, and means rigid or unbending. And just for the sake of argument, honesty is the lack of deception or deceit. So what exactly are we supposed to do? Are we supposed to lie until we become honest? Well, according to AA, we cannot succeed unless we become honest, and that would be the opposite of lying. Maybe a more appropriate expression would be, “Fake it till you’re drunk or dead.”

The Lies of the Cult

Let's combine two lies that usually accompany each other and cause massive confusion. "Change people, places, and things," and, "No major changes in the first year." What? Am I the only one who sees the stupidity in both these statements? Let's start with the latter. On page 42, it is written, "But the program of action, though entirely sensible, was pretty drastic. It meant I would have to throw several lifelong conceptions out of the window." Getting sober IS a major change. It is the most major change an alcoholic can make. However; if we follow the advice of no major changes we would stay drunk for the first year, and then once we get sober we'd be in our first year again, and since we can't make a major change, which is what getting sober is, we have to stay drunk. For those who might be confused about this when someone states it: GOOD! If you hear someone say that to you or anyone else for that matter, please walk away and tell someone with some recovery do they can deal with the killer.

Now for the "Change people, places, and things." I don't even know where to start here. The only person we need to change is our self, and the only thing we need to change is our belief in God. There are many places that serve alcohol. There are other reasons to go to these places. Sometimes it's a restaurant, sometimes there is a band we like to hear, sometimes there are friends gathered there, sometimes there is dancing, sometimes there is a private party, sometimes alcohol is served at a wedding, or a christening, or a funeral reception, or a Shiva, or a bar mitzvah, or there is wine served at holiday dinners, or served at ordinary every day dinners, baseball games, football and basketball games, it is even served in church. The alcohol is not the problem. It is our lack of power to leave it alone. So, as it states on page 101, "we need to ask ourselves one important question: Have I any GOOD social, business, or personal reason for going

The Lies of the Cult

to this place?” Now, if we have changed our belief and allowed ourselves to be changed we can go anywhere with anyone and do anything without FEAR!

“It’s a selfish program.” That statement can be the subject of its own paper, which I’m sure someday I will write. For brevity, I have two quotes. They are both from page 62. “Selfishness—self-centeredness! That, we think, is the root of our troubles.” “Above everything, we alcoholics must be rid of this selfishness. We must, or it kills us!” AA’s opinion is that being selfish is where ALL our troubles originate, and they believe that the most important thing we alcoholics need to do is eliminate it or it will kill us. Why then are we allowing accessories to murder to profess, “It is a selfish program?”

Seems we’re getting more controversial. Let’s keep it going shall we? “Men with the men; women with the women.” “Stay out of relationships for the first year.” Two statements riddled with fear and control. I still haven’t found the origin of the gender barrier. There are many theories and tales of its origin, but none come from AA itself. The reality is that if this were a true statement not one woman would be sober as the result of AA. In the AA Pioneers section of the Personal Stories in the Big Book, there are two stories of the two earliest women to recover in AA. The first is Women Suffer Too, which was written by Marty Mann, and the second is Keys To The Kingdom, written by Silvia K. Marty Mann was personally sponsored by Bill Wilson. She went on to be the Founder of the National Council On Alcoholism and Drug Dependency (NCADD), and she was instrumental getting the Hughes Act of 1970 passed by Congress. Incidentally, Geraldine O. Delaney, Founder of Little Hill-Alina Lodge, founded in 1957, in Blairstown, NJ, was also personally sponsored by Bill Wilson in 1947, and at the time of her passing had over 60 years of continuous sobriety. Silvia K

The Lies of the Cult

was first sponsored by Dr. Bob then when she returned to Chicago, she was sponsored by Earl T. She was the first woman in AA to achieve long-term sobriety. Perhaps these men and women were more mature than out present day members.

The very controlling, and anti-AA advice of staying out of a relationship for the first year is one of the most common lies perpetrated to the newcomer walking through the door of their first meetings. It is anti-AA because they clearly state on page 69, “We want to stay out of this controversy. We do not wish to be the arbiter of anyone’s sex conduct.” That means they don’t think it is any of their business. The book continues, “God alone can judge our sex situation. Counsel with others is often desirable, but we let God be the final judge.” Wait a minute. That would that the people who are trying to control other people’s sex lives are trying to play God; especially the ones who refuse to work with another alcoholic if they start dating someone new. Hmm. What about people who are already in a relationship when they get sober? Does that mean they need to separate from their partner? Does that mean they need to separate from their spouse? Such ignorance and provinciality. Shame on those god-like people. The worst part of it is that they are saying that AA says this, and now they are speaking for AA. Not while I’m still breathing.

Moving on. “90 meetings in 90 days.” “You people keep me sober.” Neither statement is AA’s opinion. Most people claim their rehabilitation center told them upon exiting to go to 90 meetings in 90 days. It does not state this in any AA literature. It is another attempt by impostors to make AA a cult. In 1946, Bill Wilson wrote 12 articles about the 12 Traditions of AA, for the Grapevine, the magazine known as “our meeting in print.” Later, they were published in 1953, along with 12 essays he wrote about his

The Lies of the Cult

opinion of the 12 Steps of AA, and it is titled Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, A co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous tells how members recovery and how the society functions. The first part, the steps, was Bill's opinion. The second part, the traditions, was AA's opinion. They were agreed upon and adopted in 1950, at the first world convention as AA's accepted traditions. This meant that ALL of AA agreed with the writing, just like the Big Book. Here is the point. In Tradition Two, on page 137, of the book known as the 12 and 12, it states, "It was meeting night." So in 1946, eleven years after AA had begun, there was only ONE meeting a week that Bill attended. Even in 1946, they were still relying on God to keep them sober, not meetings. Which brings us to the next lie.

"You people keep me sober." On page 60, under the three pertinent ideas, it says "b) that probably no human power could have relieved out alcoholism." Anyone claiming that another human being, or many human beings, is keeping them sober is NOT recovered. They are simply not drinking and at some point will probably return to it. Or, they are not real alcoholics of the hopeless variety. Either way, these people are killing the people who really need what AA has to offer. You know who these people are. They are the people who steer away from the subject of God. They become uncomfortable when you ask them questions about it. They can't really tell you much about their own spiritual life. They usually tell about getting involved in a Home Group, or getting a coffee commitment. They tell you to get active when they really mean get some activity. They are the ones that said they stopped going to meetings and got drunk.

AA tells people to active, but what they mean is doing the work that is required for successful consummation of the process. Yes, that means you can be recovered, and

The Lies of the Cult

never drink again. It can have a permanent effect. The drinking problem will be removed; it will no longer exist for you. You will be sane again. Your fears will fall from you. You will be able to do things without thought that used to confuse you. You are going to know peace of mind. You will be able to help other people. You will become a productive member of society again. You will be able to think clearly and correctly. You will be interested in other people's lives. You will have an entire psychic change. You will experience many spiritual experiences and awakenings. Life as you once knew it will cease to exist. These ARE extravagant promises!

However, a real alcoholic of the hopeless variety cannot achieve them by just not drinking and going to meetings. The reason for that is simple. Their hope is the maintenance and growth of a spiritual experience. Page 62, states, "Many of us had moral and philosophical convictions galore, but we could not live up to them even though we would have liked to. Neither could we reduce our self-centeredness much by wishing or trying on our own power. We had to have God's help." Well, that is exactly what "Don't drink and go to meetings" is about. It is about a moral conviction, going to meetings, coupled with a philosophical conviction, don't drink, that does not work for reducing our self-centeredness because it is wishing at our alcoholism, and trying to have power over alcohol, and trying to restore ourselves to sanity on our own power. It doesn't work for the real alcoholic.

"Don't drink and go to meetings." It is AA's belief that there are many impostors claiming this statement as truth. Page 20 and 21, states, "Then we have a certain type of hard drinker. He may have the habit badly enough to gradually impair him physically and mentally. It may cause him to die a few years before his time. If a sufficiently

The Lies of the Cult

strong reason – ill health, falling in love, change of environment, or the warning of a doctor—becomes operative, this man can also stop or moderate, although he may find it difficult and troublesome and may even need medical attention.” This description fits many of the people that I’ve experienced claiming long-term sobriety that have never done the steps, don’t believe in God, and perpetuates the AA lies. They are killers. If you are new, stay away from them. If you have had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, confront them and stop their crimes. It could be you or a family member that believes the lies and takes the poison. Have Courage to change the things you can! Stop the lies!

Keep the Faith!

BB Tim