

C.A. CHANGED MY LIFE

NEWS GRAM

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MY VARIETIES OF SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE

By Richard N.
London, UK

This is by no means a comprehensive account of all the things God has done in my life, seen or unseen. There are simply too many to count. These are what I have come to know as 'vital spiritual experiences'. I want this written account to serve as a reminder to me of many important points in my journey, should I ever need proof of the existence of God. I have been known to forget from time to time.

Also, should I ever share this with anyone, may it serve as hope that they too can have experiences like these. My encounters do not need to make you believe, but I hope they encourage you to follow the path of recovery and make your own acquaintance along the way. They are not necessarily in chronological order.

The first spiritual experience I had was shortly after I came into recovery. I had been going to meetings for a couple of weeks, but did not get involved - I sat and listened. Then the fateful day came when the obsession was on me. It was a Tuesday. I did not go to the meeting that night and I called everyone I could think of to get some coke. I managed to eventually and used at home, as I normally did. It was not a fun experience. I took Mum to a funeral the next day and struggled through the comedown. I returned to work on Thursday and Friday. I felt the physical comedown pass but I was left with constant and relentless thoughts of suicide. I didn't want to die, but it did start to seem like a genuine solution to my problems. The struggle would be over. The visions of running toward the edge of the roof, jumping over the scaffold and landing in the street below were becoming unbearable.

The journey home was filled with the idea of jumping in front of trains. Even at home everything was an opportunity to end it all. Whilst making dinner, I could use the knife to end it. There was a heavy and dark weight on me that I was unable to shift. Deep down there was the desire to keep living, but I did not know how much longer I could resist this darkness. I confided in my sister about these thoughts. She was understandably concerned and wanted to call an ambulance. I managed to persuade her not to, as the fear of going to hospital made me more resilient for a while. We went to the cinema that day and the struggle was real. Whilst waiting for coffee, the thought came that people had been speaking of God in the meetings, that He

had done for them what they could not do for themselves. I excused myself and went to the toilet. I was alone. I felt darkness all around me. I looked at myself in the mirror and I was broken. At that moment I sincerely asked for help. I pleaded to a God that I didn't think existed, and even if He did, certainly wouldn't be concerned with the likes of me. I said "God, if you are there please help me. I don't want to die and I don't think I can resist this anymore. If You help me I will go to a meeting and do whatever I have to." At that moment I felt the weight lift from my shoulders. I could stand up straight again. The room was brighter. It was like the lights had been turned up. The darkness was gone. God had made His presence clear to me in a profound way. I left the toilet and walked back to my sister and her boyfriend. I could not comprehend what had just happened. There were feelings of gratitude, confusion and awe. I got through that day and kept my word. I attended the meeting the next day and, for the first time, raised my hand and stated that I am looking for a sponsor. This is where my journey began...

This experience occurred on the day of my uncle's funeral. Unfortunately, this was the second uncle I had buried since coming into recovery. It felt like this would be harder than the last. I woke up that morning and, the truth is, I was scared. I was afraid that I couldn't make it through the day clean. The level of emotion felt almost too much to bear and I had only just woken up. I got down on my knees and shut my eyes, settled in and focused.

The exact wording of my prayers that morning is unclear, but I know that I humbly asked for God's help to get me through the day. I knew it was impossible for me to do it alone. I asked God to please hold my hand and help me. When I opened my eyes, I felt a peace and serenity that I had never felt in my life. Feelings of fear and anxiety were gone and peace emanated from deep within. I felt comforted and held. God made his presence felt in the most beautiful way. Calmness washed over me and I got dressed and made my way to the funeral. I was present. Emotions were felt without the need to suppress them. I let them pass through me. I was able to be there for my family. We cried, we laughed, we loved. I left the wake emotionally exhausted and absolutely staggered at what God had done for me that day.

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MY VARIETIES OF SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE

By Richard N.
London, UK

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I had an overwhelming need to share this experience with fellows. This could help someone. With what little energy I had left, I went to the book study meeting in Palmers Green. I gave an emotional account of the day's events and God's unwavering presence throughout. Everyone in the room felt it. I had been of maximum service that day and then went home to relax. I made it to bed clean and sober, with a clear conscience. The footwork was mine, but the grace was God's. I was not alone and I never had been.

The next experience is difficult to write because it involves reliving events of one of the most difficult days of my life. My uncle called me and expressed his concern that he was unable to get hold of Dad. He felt something was off so I suggested we drive up there to see what's going on. We set off on our journey, about a two-and-a-half-hour drive, with no real sense of trepidation, but definitely slightly concerned. We were approximately a minute or so away when the phone rang. It was Dad's friend calling to say that he had passed away. Upon arrival, we rushed into the house to find Dad laying on the floor lifeless and paramedics in the room. He was gone.

This is a sight I may never forget. Emotions overwhelmed me and I ran outside in floods of tears - I couldn't process what was happening. Things calmed after a while and I was able to go back inside to talk to the paramedics. I was then left with the unenviable task of calling my sister to let her know what had happened. A truly heart-breaking experience. Shortly after this call I took a moment to close my eyes and just breathe. I reached out to God to ask for help and strength. The feeling that came over me was of divine presence and also the presence of my Dad. It's a feeling that is extremely difficult to put into words. I knew that Dad was alright. In fact, he was better than alright. He was with God and no longer had to experience any suffering. He was truly in a better place. After this moment of connection, I was able to handle what needed to be done. It turned out to be more than I thought. Talking with the paramedics and the police, waiting for the coroner and collecting dad's paperwork.

They say that God comes to those who seek him and that is certainly true for me. Time and time again God has had my back. I'm extremely grateful that God continues to show up in my life because I cannot do this alone. The good news is that I don't have to.

On this path of recovery, I've had mental health struggles; diagnoses of depression and psychosis, several years of professional health, a 2 week stay in an institution and a lot of medication. During my struggles with psychosis, I have experienced a wide variety of hallucinations, both visual and auditory. One particular visual hallucination that I experienced many times was a blue light, usually in the shape of an orb and only seen for a brief moment. I first began to see this light during a candlelit C.A. meeting. There has been quite an adjustment period to deal with the hallucinations. At times they are terrifying and extremely unsettling. I have learned to accept these things for the most part and I'm not as jarred by them

as I used to be. Initially, I began to see this light regularly over a period of a few months and was curious as to whether it had some significance.

One afternoon, during breathwork meditation, I felt extremely connected, close to God. Upon opening my eyes, I looked up at the ceiling and the same blue light was right there in front of me. It took on a different form this time. It was spread out across the ceiling and had a wave-like structure to it. At that moment I knew deep inside that this was God. The light I had been seeing, in particular at meetings, was God making his presence known. What I thought was a hallucination with a negative connotation, was quite the opposite. This was nothing to be scared of - it was something to be comforted by. My experience after breathwork was not an intellectual connection to God, it was a knowing in my soul that needed no further question or explanation. I have since seen flashes of the same light on different occasions and it brings me great comfort. I will finish with a quote from Jane Wagner - "Why is it that when we talk to God it's called praying, but if God talks back it's called Schizophrenia?"

Shortly after my Father died, we had to clear his flat so the council could retake possession of the property. A few of us went to do the difficult job of packing up his belongings.

It was an extremely difficult and emotional day for obvious reasons. The image of finding dad dead on the front room floor was burned into my memory and came flooding back by being in his flat again. In an attempt to distract myself from my feelings and emotions, I began boxing up Dad's things. Emotions were running high and I was being asked many questions about different items. If I wanted them, if they could have them, give them to charity etc. I was reaching my limit and was becoming short and harder to deal with. I was organising things on a sideboard in the corner of the room. I had cleared items from the top of it. Someone asked me a question, but I forgot what it was and it isn't relevant. When I turned back around to the area I was clearing, there was an amethyst sitting there. This was not there before, it had just appeared when I had my back turned. I was stunned, but also extremely comforted. There was confirmation from God and possibly Dad that I was not in this alone and I was protected. I know I wasn't physically alone in that room, but each of us were on an individual journey and grieving in our own way. The amethyst has amazing healing properties, in particular regarding addiction. The Greek word for amethyst translates to 'not drunk'. This was no coincidence. In a time of extreme emotional upheaval, I had been given a protective item to ensure I stayed sober that day, which was by no means a given. I said nothing to my family and placed the crystal in my pocket. I kept it with me all day. During the long drive home, I held it tightly the whole way. In this time of reflection and introspection, having this amethyst in my hand made me feel safe and comforted. I consider this to be an extremely powerful item and I still have it to this day.

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MY VARIETIES OF SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE

By Richard N.
London, UK

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I get the same level of comfort from it. This profound moment, during one of the most challenging days of my life, is one that I will cherish forever.

Where to begin in describing the next experience. I am limited by language. There are no words available to accurately portray what happened that day, but I will try my best. It had been a long day of addictive consumption of mind-altering substances of many varieties. At the end of the evening I was alone on the sofa attempting to get some sleep, which is far from easy after the day I had. My heart was pounding through my chest and its rhythm was irregular. With my eyes closed my attention was inward and I contemplated the possibility of heart failure. Whilst laying there my body began to go numb from my feet upwards. I did not fight it. At one point I had lost all feeling in my body; I was somehow removed from it. I was aware of my body, but I was not in it. It was somehow out in front of me. I didn't know what was happening, yet I felt no fear. After my thoughts of heart failure, I felt I had a choice of whether to die on the sofa or not. I contemplated the ramifications of my death and the impact on my cousin when he would find me the following morning. There was awareness of how selfish it would be for me to die in that moment, given the choice. I made a decision that I did not want to die and so I carried on in this place. I began to contemplate where I was. There was confusion and wonder. I remember saying to myself "this is not sleep. Where is sleep? I can't find it". I could see and feel but I had no physical form. I was myself, the most authentic and true sense of self I had ever felt - pure consciousness. I was everywhere and nowhere, everything and nothing, all at once. I had a feeling of joy I'd never felt before. The emotion is rising in me as I am writing this. I was with God. This is where I had come from and this is where I would be returning to after the experience of life is over. There was an overwhelming sense of gratitude for the physical body I had been given and there was an understanding of what life is about. I now know I am

here to have an experience, to learn and to grow and then return to where I came from and become one with God once more. Never in my life had I felt more awake, more joyous and more grateful.

I am unsure of how long this experience lasted but it felt fairly brief. Upon returning to my body several hours had passed. I slept and woke up the following day with a completely new perspective on life. I no longer feared death, as I had been given a glimpse of what I would be returning to. The feeling of peace, knowing where my loved ones are that have passed away. My existence no longer feels futile and I am so grateful to be having this experience called life. Much time has been spent contemplating this. There has been some debate internally as to whether it was a near death experience. At this point it seems irrelevant as the main thing to take from it is the understanding I have been given. This was a sneak peek as to the true nature of reality and something I feel that language is insufficient to describe. I hope that you are able to understand my experience and that I went some way to describe the indescribable. I continue to seek and deepen my understanding and relationship with God. I will be forever grateful for this peek behind the curtain.

I am truly blessed to be on this journey and for the chance to reflect and chronicle some of my experiences. I continue to seek and expand on my relationship with God as I understand him. I know there will be more experiences along the way, so long as I remain open and connected. These events have changed my life dramatically and allowed me to have a greater depth of experience, even in the seemingly mundane. I pray that I can keep adding to this document and possibly share it with others, in the hope that it may help in some way. I will close with a quote from Ram Dass - "The spiritual journey is individual, highly personal. It can't be organised or regulated. It isn't true that everyone should follow one path. Listen to your own truth.



THE YOGURLAND EXPERIENCE, BELONGING IS AN INSIDE JOB

By Chris W.

Orange County, California, USA

I've spent a lifetime not belonging. Not fitting in. Being apart from, and not a part of wishing that somehow, someway, I could belong and be a part of. What prevented this from happening, in a large part, was the spiritual malady driven by fears and misconceptions. Internal dialogue and agreements with self not based in truth. So, it was 'me' preventing myself to belong. It was separation, not connection.

This began changing by working the Steps and having commitments at meetings. Participating in my recovery, acclimating into the Fellowship, connecting, following suggestions and guidance from my sponsor, and others, was the beginning of my journey into a new life. And this was a great step forward. But, to a less degree, that fear of not fitting in, or not belonging, was still there.

Especially outside of the meetings. Perhaps I was willing to face the fear. From this one experience, I learned what I think and becomes my reality. If I change my thinking, I can change my reality and it changes the experience to that of being rewarding and enriching. It's very much a perspective. Get out of self and connect. I had a coffee commitment at my first Friday night meeting. It was my first commitment and it helped me to belong, be a part of, and participate. Seems like after the meeting was done that fear of not belonging crept back in, grabbing hold of old thoughts &. I was reminded many times that if it's something I'm still doing today, it's not old behavior. It may have its origin from long ago. The Steps would reveal some cause and conditions. Lifelong thoughts and ideas would be replaced. Not an overnight matter, but a process. And sometimes that process could have big leaps forward, form new experience, and awakenings.

There was the 'meeting after the meeting' with this group. It was never announced, it was just talked about in small circles. So, it was unclear where it was exactly they would meet. Although I knew I wish I could go and participate, I also knew that I couldn't because of fear. Because of the old ideas that no longer served me or God. How can I be free of these?

I shared this with my sponsor, Howard, the fear I had, and he asked me what's the worst that could happen. I had a pretty good list prepared and ready for what could happen.

I wouldn't be allowed to sit with the people. I wouldn't know where to sit. They would not know who I was. I wouldn't know what to order. I wouldn't know what to say. I would be told to leave. Not allowed to join the private group. A lot of "I" statements stuck in a self-centered trans driven by fear, but they were very real fears to me. My sponsor laughed, and he was able to laugh with love. He asked if he could make a suggestion. I said sure. He said "Go ahead and go and see what happens, and report back to me".

It was several weeks later that I had made up my mind to join the 'meeting after the meeting'. I quickly cleaned up my coffee commitment and got it all put away. I found out

the location of the 'meeting after the meeting'. It was Yogurtland. I was absolutely determined to go, show up, and report back to my sponsor how much it sucked.

So, there I am entering the Yogurtland, and I start making conversation. I start talking to people. I'm not worried about anything. Just enjoying the moment. Engaging with everyone. They're laughing and enjoying their yogurt. I kind of made the rounds, talking to everyone there.

I was on my second yogurt when I realized I might be at the wrong Yogurtland. I was not really seeing people from the meeting. One girl, that I was certain was from the meeting, had two babies in a stroller. I asked her "Where were your kids during the meeting?" She asked "What meeting?"

I gave the time and location, and she says I was not at that meeting. I've just been here. She said she didn't know what kind of meeting I was talking about, but it must've been a good one. That I seem like a very nice guy and very interesting.

Oh my gosh disaster, right? How embarrassing, right? No, not at all. I just simply realized I was at the wrong Yogurtland. But the amazing awakening, and enlightenment, was that I had a fantastic time. As I drove home, I took the slow route. A good 20 minutes of thinking "Why did I have such a good time?" I thought in my mind I was probably a little bit over the top friendly for your average yogurt customer, but I smiled and laughed. And it didn't really matter, because I belong, and I fit. And, because I just simply did. There was connection with others, and not separation because of old ideas. A new experience of belonging.

Belonging is an inside job. It does takes courage & encouragement, and it does take love. It, also, takes God. But, most of all, it takes us to believe.

Now there are still times I can get embarrassed, feel nervous, or maybe lost. But I forgive myself immediately, so it is short-lived. I don't feed it. I don't give it credence. I just allow me to be me making mistakes, having fun, laughing at myself. Perhaps learn from mistakes and learn not to take myself too seriously. But I surely do take seriously this process of re-integrating into a life worth living. A life with purpose and direction. I have been to that Yogurtland since then, but just to get yogurt and be on my way. Not to strike up a conversation with everyone that was there. It causes me to laugh now.

Please let me share with you that, if you feel you don't belong, you do have the courage to change and you already belong. I love you, and we love you, just as you are...a wonderful person growing in sobriety. It looks good on you! Now join the party and help the next person that might like to belong too.

THE MOMENT I SURRENDERED, GOD STARTED WORKING IN MY LIFE

By Anela F.

Surrey, British Columbia, Canada

I knew, academically, that when faced with the choice between food or drugs, the addict would choose drugs every time. Yet still somehow, I thought I was different, that it wouldn't happen to me. I was living with a man who was a habitual cocaine user and crack addict and I saw the ugly side of addiction. I thought that I could help him but eventually I just gave up and joined him.

It went from fun to none fast. Within three months of using, I went from feeling euphoric to doing it just to feel normal. I went on chasing that old high, never again getting the same feeling as in the beginning. Before long I started trying to quit, only to find that I could not. My boyfriend and I tried together to quit. We tried hiding our paraphernalia. We tried giving away all the drugs we had. We tried telling our dealers not to answer when we called.

We tried giving our friends our drugs to hold onto for the night, so we could have it the next day. Once, we made it to ten days, when we were trying to stay sober for one month. It was miserable. I was regularly fantasizing and planning my suicide. I always hoped that the last hit would kill me.

I started reaching out for help, but in the meantime, I was still using. By that point it was the only way I felt that I could live. Somehow, I contacted a society that ended up providing me with free drug and alcohol counselling. The day of my first appointment was three months to the day of when my best friend had suddenly died. I went to work after the appointment. It was slow giving me lots of time to think and my head was not a good place to be in that night.

I stepped outside to smoke a joint and got caught and subsequently fired. I was livid, I was distraught, I was confused. After all the times I had bought, sold, and used cocaine at work, I get fired for a joint I never even got to light?! I also felt worthless, hopeless, alone, useless. I don't know how many ways I tried to kill myself that night but for some reason none of them worked. That night I begged to something, anything, to just make me "not so useless". That was my surrender.

Two days later I received an unexpected call. Against all odds, I had been one of the first picked in a new program to educate and train Care Aides which covered tuition and paid a stipend. That was the first of God's gifts of recovery that I received. Upon hearing the news my first impulse was to celebrate the way I always had; with cocaine. I believe that my refraining in that moment was God working through me before I even knew it.

The next week I had another meeting with my Drug and Alcohol Counsellor, where she suggested that I attend meetings as a means of supporting my sobriety. She asked me if I wanted to do A.A., N.A., or C.A.

"What's C.A.?" I asked

"Cocaine Anonymous" she told me.

Discovering Cocaine Anonymous was like Goldilocks finding that bowl of porridge which was just right. I was slow to stop at first. I would attend a weekly meeting and still use on the weekends. At my first C.A. meeting I thought all those people were crazy and that I was never going back. But I turned out to be wrong. I kept coming back week after week, getting to know the responsible members of that group, taking their numbers, calling them. Even though there were still days when I used, I came to believe that there was a solution. I saw a way out.

Knowing this plus the support of that group and the help from my higher power that I had just started to let into my life made it possible for me to quit drinking and using cocaine.

As my resolve to get sober strengthened my boyfriend became more abusive. I knew I was going to need to get out of there because he was starting to get violent when I tried to refuse to give him our rent money for crack. The first time I tried to leave him I was unsuccessful and ended up coming back and using again. The woman who would become my sponsor helped me find the courage to really make a plan. She coached me on looking for a room to rent and gave me the emotional support I needed while I looked for housing in secret. When the time came, she organized some C.A. members to meet me at my ex's home while he was out and pack up my things to move. Without them I would have left with nothing more than the contents of my backpack.

By the time I started my program of education I had 6 days clean from alcohol and cocaine. For some months after I still used marijuana. I had to come to terms on my own with how smoking pot was impacting my life and how it blocked me from a higher power. C.A. gave me the space to quit when I was ready and still hold me accountable until I was. I was about halfway through Care Aide school when I finally quit smoking pot. My clean date is April 12, 2021.

I am now a practicing Care Aide and continuing my education with the goal of becoming a nurse. I had a friend in my addiction who often talked about quitting drugs and alcohol. I introduced him to the room of Cocaine Anonymous and against all odds he stayed and got clean too. We are now engaged to be married.

I have been blessed to the extreme. Opening up to a Higher Power gave me a life beyond my wildest imagination. Once blessed with the opportunity it was up to me to do the work. I am forever grateful to my sponsor, my support group, to those who came before me, to the program of Cocaine Anonymous, and to God for supporting me, guiding me, and teaching me a better way of life. Most of all I am grateful to them for showing me that there IS a solution, that recovery IS possible.

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NEW COMMEMORATIVE CHIPS NOW AVAILABLE THROUGH THE WORLD SERVICE OFFICE

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COMMEMORATIVE C.A. RECOVERY MEDALLIONS

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C.A. WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE COMMITTEES

TRUSTEE CORNER

WANTED NON-ADDICT TRUSTEE

Hello to everyone that reads this, my name is Chris M. I am the Atlantic South Regional Trustee. I have been tasked with the important duty of spreading the word that our Fellowship is in need of a Non-Addict Trustee. This is a very important position in our service structure.

Some may not even know what a Trustee is or does, let alone a Non-Addict Trustee. Some might ask or say why do we even need or want a “normie” making decisions for our Fellowship. I will do my best to explain. The Board of Trustees are the guardians of our Fellowship, they provide financial oversight for our Fellowship. They protect our Traditions and give pertinent insight from all corners of C.A., as we rapidly grow to become a truly worldwide Fellowship. We also do much much more, if you would like to find out please put your name in for the Trustee Slate in your Area.

Now for the Non-Addict Trustee, they get elected through the same process as an Addict Trustee. The candidate’s name is put forward by an Area to the Region. The Region votes to have the candidate put on the Trustee Slate. The candidate then goes through the Trustee Election Committee process. We have had only one Non-Addict Trustee since the start of Cocaine Anonymous. In comparison with A.A., which currently has seven Non-Addict Trustees and 14 regular Trustees. Part of the reason we have the Non-Addict Trustee position first and foremost is to allow all people a chance to experience the spirituality that we received with the service for the Fellowship. “And besides, we are sure that our way of living has its advantages for all”. (Big Book Alcoholics Anonymous Foreword to First edition page VII). The Non-Addict Trustee would be of use in the public eye where we cannot, due to the Eleventh Tradition. We believe another important part this position can play is in providing an outside perspective on matters affecting C.A. as a whole, without being jaded by the spiritual malady that we addicts suffer from. As well as what the Non-Addict Trustee could add to the WSBT, such as the possibility of a specific professional background in things like non-profit corporations, licensing, copywriting, trademarks, international law, etc.

Please look in your communities for someone that could bring that outside perspective to our Fellowship. For instance, A.A. has had a warden, leaders of faith, doctors, judges, and wives of the members. For more information, please read pages 57-66 in the C.A. World Service Manual 2022 Edition.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

**PUT YOUR
SERVICE
SHOES
ON!**

The WSCIT COMMITTEE NEEDS YOU!!!

Exciting news C.A. is continuing work on an app for our Fellowship! We are looking for your ideas and input to find out what the Fellowship would like to see. We have a list of ideas from referrals and committee work for possible content:

- *Sobriety Calculator (referral)*
- *Find a meeting (referral)*
- *Pre-amble*
- *Who is a Cocaine Addict?*
- *We Can Recover*
- *Serenity Prayer*
- *Link to CA.org*
- *12 Steps*
- *12 Traditions*
- *Vision for you*
- *Reaching Out*
- *Meeting Formats*
- *Find events: district, area, or international*

Let us know what you would like to see, send an email to itcommittee@ca.org

Join us!!!

Do you have a passion for emerging technologies, would you like to get involved send us an email to join the committee.

C.A. WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE COMMITTEES

WORLD SERVICE OFFICE BOARD

“Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other group or C.A. as whole”

When I was new in the program, I had no idea what "autonomous" meant. Webster's Dictionary defines it as "self-governing."

So, when we talk about groups here, they could be two or three people or as many as hundreds that comprise a group. They are free to setup their group as they wish if it doesn't negatively affect their groups or violate C.A. Traditions. So, the watch words here are "injury and affiliation". We must not injure another group or C.A. as a whole nor affiliate with anything or anybody else like a hospital, a religion or Dry Duck Hunters or Irish Only Crackheads

In "*As Bill Sees It*" Bill W. wrote, "We admit that we have character defects as a society and that these defects threaten us continually." (p. 119)

The Fourth Tradition when exercised is like the Fourth Step. It suggests the group should take an honest inventory of itself when it plans to take any action that might break any Traditions or would harm another group or person. The group ought to be making any important decision via a group conscience which is the ultimate authority.

The beauty of Tradition Four is it allows a meeting or groups to create their own customs and formats. This provides a great deal of diversity and variety of topics and environments.

In "*Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*" Bill W. reminds us that we are "Children of Chaos" and that we have the "right to be wrong" (pp 146-147). We are also given rule 62: "Don't take yourself too damn seriously", and that being able to laugh at yourself is an act of humility" (p. 149)

Through my experience as a Director on the World Service Office Board (2002 to 2004) and as a trustee on the World Service Board of Trustees (2004 to 2008) I believe at the service level Tradition Four is autonomy with responsibility and patience. Some would say of Tradition Four that it leaves groups to do whatever they will learn let them go. Some say what they do may have a very wide impact and we should delay and consult with the wider Fellowship. Our experience showed us that most of us will fall somewhere in between.

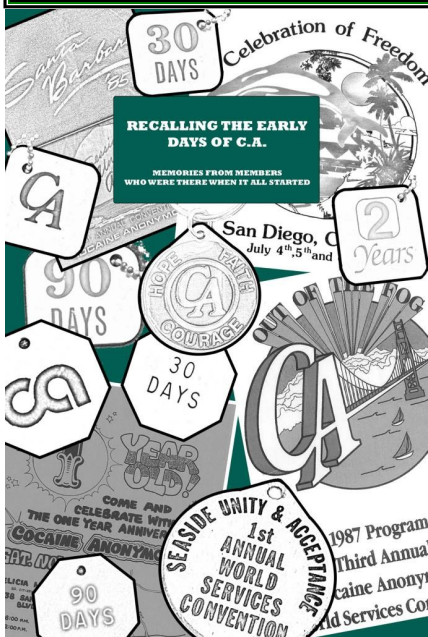
At the group level we always ask, "What might this affect?". The guiding concern should always be "Does this action greatly affects C.A. as a whole?" We would start a pro and cons list and get it on paper. When doing Public Information service work, we needed to consult with other groups and areas in the region before proceeding.

Being a group composed of children of chaos an ego driven individualists it is in our nature to defiantly test the boundaries. Our Fourth Tradition, through the group conscience, provides a guide to groups survival, and C.A. as a whole. The Steps were created to help me prevent my suicide; the Traditions were created to prevent homicide.

Remember Rule 62!

Earl H. WSOB Chair

LITERATURE, CHIPS & FORMATS



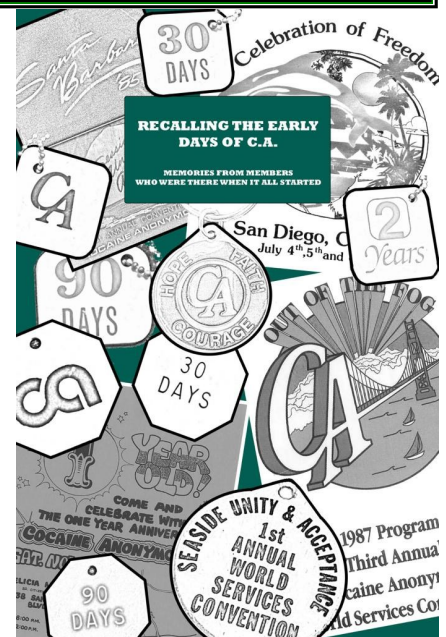
COMING SOON!

COMING SOON!

COMING SOON!

COMING SOON!

COMING SOON!



C.A. WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE COMMITTEES

ARCHIVES

Anonymity, Traditions & T-Shirts

I recently attended a single meeting of a decades old C.A. group that studies the literature, rotating through the Big Book, 12x12, and HFC. The subject of reading that night was the 12th Tradition. I got excited because I had just written an article bragging about how important the 12th Tradition's message of humility was to me. There was some interesting sharing, but the words that really hit me came from people who talked about C.A. t-shirts. At least three different people mentioned them, saying things like 'I don't wear Fellowship t-shirts', or 'I make sure to only wear them to C.A. events'. I used to think it was ridiculous to even make them, but thanks to my wife I have half a closet full today. I still feel wrong to wear them out in open in public, but I wear them to Area meetings, or conventions, sometimes. And, brutal irony, I was wearing one to the meeting that night. I avoided that topic and shared about the spiritual meaning I find in anonymity. But It got me thinking again about C.A. t-shirts, and all the history they record.

The shirt I was wearing had it's C.A. logo on the side, over the hip, where it was hard to spot and could be hidden by tucking the shirt in. It was from an event I never took part in, but that was put on by my original home group: Carpet Critters. It had their name on the front pocket and across the back. That group moved several times over the years. But in the end too many of the original members moved away and weren't replaced by enough new people. It finally went totally dark a couple years ago and I'm kind of glad to have a t-shirt with the name on it. It was a strong enough meeting at one time, and famous for a couple of its annual events. It is still remembered by many members around the large metropolitan area I live in.



In the Archives repository at the C.A. World Service Office, the history of t-shirts begins with the first C.A. World convention in 1985. There were black t-shirts, and sweatshirts, and satin finish jackets, all with a sunset, and palm trees, and the words "Seaside Unity and Acceptance '85 - 1st annual convention - COCAINE ANONYMOUS". Of course, that first run was quite widely viewed as an unacceptable 11th and 12th Tradition violation, and the shirts that actually went on sale read "1st Annual C.A. Convention". No familiar, trademarked, C.A. in the circle yet. Any one of these textile objects can stir memories for people who were there, and they feel like relics symbolizing a profound starting point to me. I have to admit that I really enjoy viewing the hundreds and thousands of t-shirt that are the most visible tokens of so many events that have followed.

The Archives repository at the CAWS Office has all the convention t-shirts, of course. The theme and the primary artwork of each event is presented on each one.

Folks have made quilts out of their collections. The second convention, in San Diego, was "A Celebration of Freedom". A dolphin leaping in front of a seaside scene was the image. Above the left breast a dolphin was leaping over the now familiar C.A. letters, but without the circle, the trademark, or the 'H', 'F', and 'C'. 1987 brought "Out of the Fog", the third CAWS convention, in San Francisco. The image looked like the C.A. letters we know today, but they were stylized, with the 'A' forming one tower of the Golden Gate bridge and it's crossbar the roadway span of the bridge itself. It might not be approved today, but Northern California had only recently agreed to surrender their own C.A. letter logotype for the one we all now recognize.

C.A. WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE COMMITTEES

ARCHIVES

(Continued from page 13)

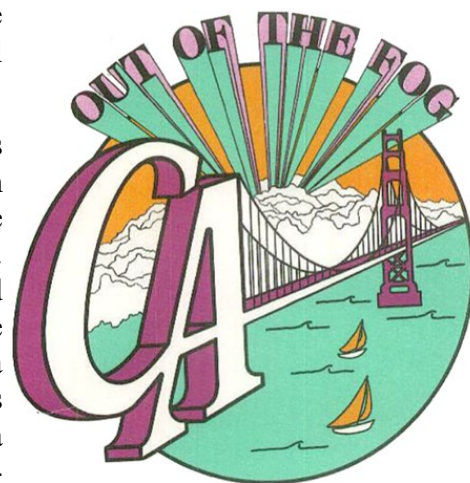


San Diego, California
July 4th, 5th and 6th, 1986

shirt in the Archives whose provenance suggests it might have been made by one of us. It's a high quality dark blue shirt with a remarkable reproduction of the 2nd edition Big Book, full proper name in those old cursive letters. Big Book t-shirts are certainly found in C.A. history. CAWS 2008, in Salt Lake, had an orange t-shirt with the C.A. logo on the front; and on the back, the image of a Big Book open to pages 132 and 133 with highlighting. Printed around the book, in big black letters: "We Absolutely Insist on Enjoying Life". A group in my own area

Chicago, 1988: the Chicago skyline as the cut edges of a key blade, "Under New Management". By 1989 the fifth Convention, held in New York City and called "Steps to Liberty", had the C.A. Hope, Faith, Courage logo on the left breast. But still no registered trademark symbol, that little "R" in the circle we now have to be so careful about.

I hate to admit it, but it is often the t-shirts that push the boundaries that are the most entertaining to me. While many C.A. events and conventions pick a quote from the Big Book as a theme, sometimes the t-shirts go a little farther. There's a completely unacceptable t-



1987 Program

Third Annual

Cocaine Anonymous

World Services Convention

shirt that had a Big Book page on the back. It was page 64, the inventory column example. It also had some yellow highlighting to explain the large letters printed above. They read "Mr. Brown Needs His Ass Kicked".

My wife loves t-shirts. She favors the more recent t-shirts with the Skeletal Formula of the organic compound known as cocaine above the word "Anonymous". There's one in Archives that I know she covets. It's a white shirt with three black letters and a red heart. "I (Love) C A", C.A. being the postal code for California, but it has our trademark logo with Hope-Faith-Courage in a circle on the sleeve. I'm not always sure what's proper. I don't really know how I feel about t-shirts naming a fellowship of the anonymous. I take the Traditions seriously. But I can't help having a whole lot of fun looking at these printed textile markers of moments in our Fellowship history.

Henry A. SGPVCA



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

November 4-6, 2022

28th Annual C.A. Midwest Regional Convention

LOCATION:

The Doubletree by Hilton

Worthington, Ohio, USA

November 12, 2022

Cocaine Anonymous 40th anniversary Celebration (6 pm - 9 pm)

LOCATION:

Carson Community center

810 E. Carson St. Carson, CA 90045

November 26, 2022

West Inland Empire turns 15 marathon and The Grateful Gobble (1 pm to 6 pm)

LOCATION:

9090 19th Street

Rancho Cucamonga CA 91701

March 24-26, 2023

Thus We Grow - C.A. European Regional Convention

LOCATION:

The Celtic Manor Resort

Newport, South Wales, UK

March 31-April 2, 2023

PNR Convention 2023

LOCATION:

Doubletree Hilton by SeaTac airport

Seattle, Washington, USA

April 21-23, 2023

The Southwest Regional Convention

LOCATION:

Wyndham Garden OKC Airport Hotel

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, USA

May 25-29, 2023

37th Annual Cocaine Anonymous World Service Convention

LOCATION:

Atlanta Marriott Marquis

Atlanta, Georgia, USA

COMING IN 2023

May 25-May 29, 2023

**C.A. WORLD SERVICE CONVENTION
RECOVERY ON MY MIND**



CAWS 2023 in Atlanta, GEORGIA

Atlanta Marriott Marquis

265 Peachtree Center Ave. NE

Atlanta, GEORGIA 30303, USA

INFORMATION, REGISTRATION, RESERVATION

<https://caws2023.org/>

Get the word out about your local

Event - Use the form at:

www.ca.org/event_form.html

to get your event listed on both the
website and the NewsGram

or notify us by mail to:

NewsGram C/O CAWSO, Inc.

21720 S. Wilmington Ave., Ste. 304

Long Beach, CA, 90810

USA

7th Tradition July-September 2022 Category or Group		
LOCATION	NAME/CITY	TOTAL
CANADA		
Quebec	CA Quebec	\$3,884.00
Europe		
England	3 Counties District of CA	\$1,485.65
	CA-Central UK Area Donation	\$6,274.04
	CA-Kent District	\$1,877.83
	CA-North London District Area	\$230.00
Thailand	PaKlok Group of Thailand	\$75.00
Mainland Europe		
Netherlands	CA-Haarlem, NL Men's Meeting	\$336.22
	CA-Group Weert Holland Area	\$9.96
USA		
Arizona	CA-EV MG 2012	\$361.48
California	CA- Richmond California Meeting	\$100.00
	CA-Borchard Park Group (San Fernando Valley Area)	\$1,000.00
	CA-Inland Empire Area Service Committee	\$1,367.46
	CA-Northern California	\$500.00
	CA-One Puff Too Tough	\$1,500.00
	CA-Southbay	\$105.00
	CA-XYZ-32 AKA Painfully Aware	\$162.37
	CA-Young Guns Meeting (South Central District)	\$568.42
Colorado	CA-Nirvana Group	\$130.07
	Colorado District One - White Out	\$87.00
Florida	CA - Central Service Board of South Florida, Inc.	\$116.66
	CA-Florida Area Inc (SWFL District)	\$240.00

7th Tradition July-September 2022 Category or Group		
LOCATION	NAME/CITY	TOTAL
Georgia	CA-Log Cabin Group	\$40.00
Idaho	CA-Idaho Area Starter Kit	\$40.00
Illinois	Forever Free Meeting of CA	\$15.00
	I.A.C.A. S & W Districts (Illinois Area District)	\$561.50
Kansas	CA-Kansas Area CA, Inc	\$200.00
Massachusetts	CA-MA	\$91.00
Missouri	CA-Greater St Louis District	\$100.00
Nebraska	CA-Monday Miracles Group	\$367.00
New York	CA-New York Inc	\$7,000.00
North Carolina	Hope Haven Sunday Meeting NC	\$50.00
Oklahoma	CA-Oklahoma District	\$75.00
	CA-Oklahoma Area	\$658.20
Oregon	CA of Oregon	\$100.00
Pennsylvania	CA-PA/NJ/DE	\$1,700.00
South Carolina	CA-There Is A Solution	\$38.86
Texas	CA-Beyond Human Aid	\$285.60
Utah	CA of Utah	\$7,500.00
Wisconsin	CA-Wisconsin Area	\$2,000.00
7th Tradition		\$3,583.59
Freedom Fund		\$6,909.54
Gratitude		\$0.00
S.M.A.R.T.		\$295.00
Total 7th Tradition		\$52,021.45

