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“A Publication for, of and by the Chemically Dependent”

the ragpicker



New Alumni Board

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"WE HAVE RECOVERED"

Danny S.

Go ahead. Believe in the Disease Model. Believe in recoverING and never completing the solution. Even extoll your beliefs aloud. But please don't call it AA. Even our American right to freedom of speech does not extend to shouting, Fire'n a crowded theater when it could spell death to the innocent. People die when we misspeak. Especially in this life or death business of recovery from alcoholism. Use of the word recovered in the Big Book is probably just and incidental, linguistic gaffe. Pay no attention to it. It cannot be true. No one ever recovers from alcoholism. Right?...Yeah...right.

Did the co-authors actually mean it when they wrote that they had "recovered"? Or is what they wrote a mere literary flummock; an editing blunder and accidental byproduct of the poor writing abilities of a group of uneducated, hapless fools in a depressed Midwestern city, still reeling from their recent rehabilitation from the binds of self-will?

A lot of people desperately want to believe so. They will fight tooth and nail for the privilege of verbally revising the principles in the Big Book, "Alcoholics Anonymous" in order to hold on to the idea, a doctrine manufactured and imbued into the "professional" recovery field and "the rooms" of recovery by some invested folks whose livelihoods depend on YOU believing that alcoholics NEVER recover from alcoholism; that the use of the word Recovered in AA is some sort of semantic aberration - to be sloughed off and ignored.

Well let's see. How many times did the supposedly illiterate Akronite newcomers commit this editorial oversight? 27 times.

Check it out in your Big Book. WOW. That is some huge load of mistakenness. You'd think someone would had caught it - if not one of the "One Hundred" co-authors then at least one of the scores of clergy, priests, doctors, professionals, family and friends and committees who were asked to review the manuscript prior to its publication.

So did the co-authors of "Alcoholics Anonymous" ever convey the "recovering" concept? Yes,... once in The Family Afterward. That's it. That's all for recoverING. This is what you would call a 'preponderance of evidence'.

Wouldn't you say? Do you kind of get the feeling that they might have thought they had recovered and that others could recover too?

Imagine pining one's life on a single oddball usage of a single word like recovering, when the overwhelming preponderance points at something different?

Back in the 30's "Recover" meant to get back

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Celebrate Recovery Month!
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A.A.'s Most Annoying Clichés

Justin K.

Some adages repeated in meetings are really helpful. Others, not so much. Sure, you got “sick and tired of being sick and tired” in your addiction, but don’t you also get sick and tired of all those clichés that are an inescapable inconvenience of recovery? Many aphorisms become aphorisms because they’re true, but others pop up and then stick around inexplicably—like these seven deadly slogans:

“**My worst day sober is better than my best day drinking.**” Really? Well then let’s get the most ridiculous cliché out of the way first. An appropriate response to this roundly scorned slogan is “Then you definitely weren’t partying with me!” If you’re in A.A., your drinking days clearly didn’t culminate in grace and health and dignity, but come on. You had at least one (or 100) amazing experiences on drugs and alcohol or you wouldn’t have kept chasing after another over and over until you ended up in a plastic chair at a dingy detox nursing a

Styrofoam cup of coffee. And, let’s just admit it, some sober days really, really suck. Life, you know? See how this adage doesn’t add up?

“**Let go and let God.**” Let go of what? Let God do what exactly? Existential questions like these echo in the minds of many addicts when some jerky girl in the front row of a meeting invariably pipes up with this inescapable exhortation. If this slogan belongs anywhere, it should be needlepointed and framed over your grandmother’s mantle, rather than actually uttered out loud by a sentient being. It’s frequently offered as advice by 12-steppers who are simply feeling good and aren’t quite sure why. A more practical suggestion might be, “Don’t drink, don’t obsess over your problems and stop feeling sorry for yourself. Just drag your tired ass to a meeting.”

“**Have an attitude of gratitude.**” A maxim commonly proffered by toothless old-timers to jittery newcomers, this saying is quite similar to a favorite Jesse Jackson tactic—serving up cutely rhyming, meaningless exhortations to answer some of life’s most intractable problems. One of the dangers of this ploy is that if someone is going through a majorly painful ordeal, simple-minded Dr. Seuss banalities might cause them to react not so serenely. The sister saying, “You can’t be grateful and angry at the same time,” has also been known to trigger a rage reaction.

“**Keep it simple, stupid.**” From the makers of “Make it Modest, Moron” comes this mother of all backhanded helpful hints. It’s a favorite of people who want to ignore the complexity of

their own chronically diseased life by adding insult to your already injured self-esteem. But why wait until the end of a sentence to demean a recovering, shaking schlep? Instead, just switch the slogan around to “Hey, stupid—keep it simple!” and get the painful part over with.

“**Pain is the touchstone of spiritual growth.**” Often opined at meetings by sad sacks, secret masochists and those who simply hate seeing others smile, this bromide provides only the coldest comfort, if any at all. The message here is that suffering is essential to maintaining your sobriety and, ultimately, your soul. But is that supposed to make the fact that you’re contemplating throwing yourself in front of the nearest bus feel somehow okay? Like after all the humiliation, regret, broken relationships, S.T.D.s and liver damage, now the pain starts?

“**If you hang around a barber shop long enough, sooner or later you’re gonna get a haircut.**” This one needs updating. Sure, some of us may go to barber shops. But does anyone really “hang around” them anymore? Maybe it’s time for us to branch out and include, say, women and younger folks who may feel alienated by all this barbershop talk. We could try a female-friendly version like, “If you hang around L.A. long enough, you’re gonna get a boob job” or, for pop culture fans, “If you hang around Justin Bieber’s stylist long enough, you’re gonna end up in skinny jeans with an adorable mop cut.” Or we could just start saying, “Don’t set up camp at bars and hang around with too many luses once you sober up.”

“**You’re only as sick as your secrets.**” Alliteration is snappy—and

by all means if you’re carrying around horrible, disgusting skeletons, you should certainly tell someone (just maybe not us). But, honestly, sometimes not admitting your most private experiences is simply a service to your fellow sober pals: we’ve all been in meetings where barely recovering comrades let loose with overwrought, embarrassing confessions that contain a tad T.M.I.



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the possession of; get or find again; to regain as in one's health or property. - (The Winston Simplified Dictionary - 1938) We are convinced that a spiritual mode of living is a most powerful health restorative. (Big Book 133:2) A restorative is something having the power to restore or to bring back to a former condition, especially something used to bring back health or to restore to consciousness. This too, according to the same usage of the era.

FINAL SCORE: Recovered 27 vs. Recovering 1

It's a landslide. Go with the real winners. Go with the co-founders. Go with the Recovered. And to those who do not respect the Big Book coauthors experience; nor the experience of many of us today who know that we have recovered ...those who claim they will never recover from alcoholism - that their health with never be restored ...believe them.

Return their lack of respect for our experience with unwavering respect for their experience, because with in-as-far-as their own recovery they are probably correct. They probably never will recover from alcoholism.

And maybe they don't need to either.



Congratulations Greg!

Last month, EAI Alumni and all around good guy Greg Bryan was awarded with the John Pena Memorial Scholarship for his dedication to working with addicts and alcoholics which will go toward the cost of continued education in the addiction field. Awarded by State Representative Aaron Pena, the John Pena Memorial Scholarship is named in honor of his late son who was lost to the addict lifestyle. exemplifies what treatment can do for people. He came to EAI just like you or me and today he is giving back in a big way by working with The Right Step, Momentum House, and The Texas Youth Advocates.



A New Foe in the Fight Against Addiction

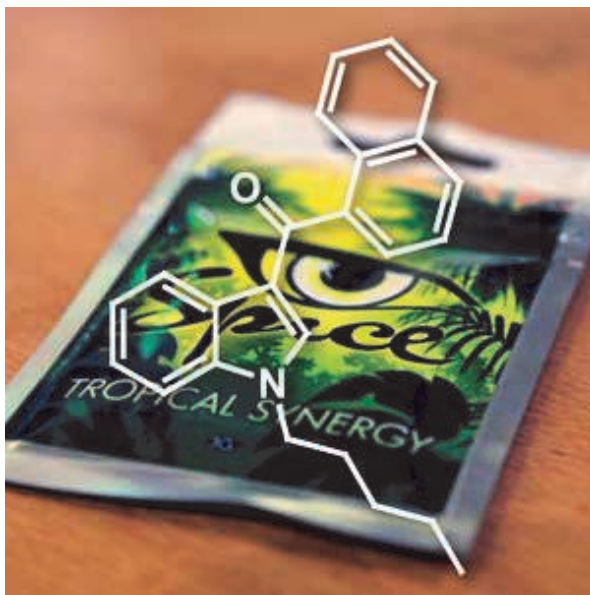
Anthony K. Davis

Spice is one of the most popular brands of synthetic cannabis, and is also known as Genie, K2, fake weed, or Zohai. Spice can be found in head shops everywhere, and can even be purchased online. It is sold as incense, but users smoke it and find that the effects are similar to those of marijuana.

Since the effects of Spice are similar to those of marijuana, many people smoke it for the same reasons – to get away from life's problems and enjoy the high feeling. Many users, in fact, mix the drug with marijuana for a more intense high. Also like marijuana, there are side effects: researchers have found Spice can cause dry mouth, red eyes, anxiety attacks, nausea, increased pulse rate, and hallucinations. When smoked over a long period of time, users develop a tolerance to the drug and find that they must smoke more and more to get the same high. Some users develop a chemical dependency. Sounds a lot like addiction to anything else, doesn't it?

Spice has been found to contain JWH-018, JWH-073, and HU-210, all of which are artificial chemical compounds. None of these chemicals are guaranteed safe for human consumption. JWH-018 is a chemical fertilizer that can cause the negative effects of marijuana at much lower dosages, JWH-073 has been listed by the Drug Enforcement Administration as a chemical concern, and HU-210 has been found to be between 100 to 800 times more potent than THC, the main active chemical in marijuana.

Because it is a designer drug – a drug that has been modified to take advantage of loopholes in the legal system – and is relatively new, Spice is currently not illegal in most U.S. states despite being so many of the same properties as marijuana. Spice difficult



to detect and regulate, since the drug does not show up on the same tests that work for marijuana. Many Spice proponents claim that they use it because it is not illegal and therefore they can't get into [legal] trouble. Alcohol isn't illegal either, as long as you are 21, but it is still dangerous to the public and can be a death sentence for an addict/ alcoholic. And at least you know what is in Alcohol!

The Texas Department of State Health Services is outlawed marijuana-like substances that are commonly found in K2, Spice and other synthetic marijuana products effective April 22, 2011. But as we addicts know, just because a drug is outlawed doesn't mean people aren't going to keep making it, selling it and using it. We can only hope that this new ban will deter large companies from producing the drug and selling it across our state borders.

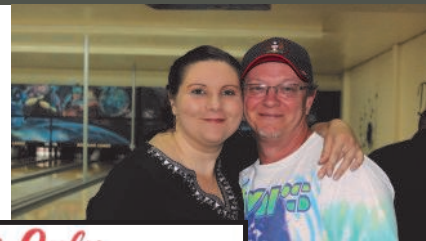
Always remember: just because it is not illegal does not mean it won't kill you.



Senility Prayer

Cindy C.

God, grant me the senility to forget the people I never liked, the good fortune to run into the ones that I do, and the eyesight to tell the difference.



The Only

TRUE FREEDOM A HUMAN BEING WILL EVER KNOW IS WHEN HE DOES WHAT HE OUGHT TO DO BECAUSE HE

WANTS TO DO IT!

10th Step

Anonymous

I know today what is important in my recovery. At the end of the day, I write a 10th Step on a sheet of paper. It is a way to look inside, to uncover the truth., to discover new ways of living and discard the old.

I could go on in my sobriety not doing this important step. What I have found when I do that– nothing. There have been times when I looked at others as the cause of my discontent. Peace comes from within. When I am faced with a resentment, I know how to process it, look at my part and make any amends if I reacted to the situation badly.

Being able to transform calamity into serenity, the 10th Step helps me grow spiritually. When I am spiritually fit I can do all kinds of things an addict isn't "supposed" to do. I am writing this today because I finally understand the concept and I apply the 10th Step to my life.

Anyone interested in improving the quality of their sobriety—do a 10th Step followed by prayer and meditation. It work, it really does.

Change

Leon B.

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.

The leader opened the meeting by first identifying the idea of change in the serenity prayer. He then opened the meeting to the group with the topic of "the prospect of change."

I feel that I am often confronted with change at an unidentifiable rate. I change for myself, other people, situations, jobs, drugs, status, goals, and habits. What do I change about what is really wrong with me? What do I change about my beliefs for my own good? How do I change so it is noticeable to me? I asked God to remove all of my character defects. What is the problem? Do I not trust God? I can do nothing, God does it. Can I change that? So what is with the serenity, acceptance and courage? What must I change?



final thoughts...

Anthony K. Davis

As the torch passes from this Board to the next I would feel remiss if I didn't say thank you. For all of you who have helped me over the last few years, thank you. For all of you who pitch in, volunteer, stick around and become a true member of the Alumni Family, thank you. And finally, for all of you out there who haven't made it to EAI yet, thank you for giving me a reason to stay involved.

12-Step Meeting Schedule

MONDAY	8 pm	AA	Step Study
TUESDAY	8 pm	AA	Big Book Study
WEDNESDAY	8 pm	AA	Open Discussion
THURSDAY	8 pm	CA	Open Discussion
FRIDAY	7:30 pm	AA	Speaker
SATURDAY	8 pm	AA	Open Discussion
SUNDAY	6 pm	NA	Open Discussion
	7 pm	CA	Open Discussion



Contact us at
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Bon Voyage!

Our brother Chester B, better known as Nigel Quartermaine, will soon be taking a major leap into the seas of change. Chester has been an integral part of the EAI Alumni Association, Extended Aftercare Inc. and our EAI Community for nearly four years. His dedication to helping the Newcomer, his open-mindedness in all things spiritual, and his big heart will be missed around our campus.

But let us not lament! This is an event worthy of celebration. As much as it is a loss for us around EAI, it is a joy to see a man I respect and have learned so much from move forward into the world to recapture life! I will always have a piece of Chester in my heart as I am sure he will always carry EAI, recovery and the Fellowship in his heart as he travels across the oceans of the world and down the river of recovery we call life. Be safe my friend and always remember you have a home here.

coming soon >>>

Alumni Meetings

Every Monday 6:30pm

2011 Houston Run For Recovery

September 11, 2011 7:30am

2011 EAI Alumni Bolivar Campout

October 2011 details coming soon



All design and printing provided gratis.



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