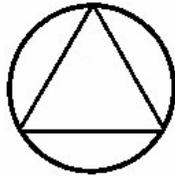


October
2012



Serenity Press

Monthly Newsletter from the Central Office of Southwest Missouri

Practice These Principles

(page 3 of the newsletter)

5 recovered in 1935
15 recovered in 1936
40 recovered in 1937
100 recovered by the end of 1938

With an original working title of **100 Men**, the "Big Book," later changed to the now familiar title of **Alcoholics Anonymous** (AA), has become an important reference for those wishing to begin a new life, apart from the unmanageable lifestyle of alcoholism.

400 recovered by the end of 1939
2,000 recovered by the end of 1940
8,000 recovered by the end of 1941

With so many attracted to the freedom of a life apart from alcohol, AA groups had to come up with ways to introduce newcomers to the principles of the 12 Step program, so they created "Beginners' Meetings." These initial meetings were designed to quickly take individuals through the basics of the program by explaining and doing the steps in about a month. By starting with this basic method of illustrating how to practically apply the Steps in daily life, we began recovering from alcoholism.

Southwest Missouri – Present Day

Now, groups are using a book titled **Back to Basics** written by Wally P. (an AA Archivist) to guide present day newcomers through the 12 Steps of AA in the span of one month. These open "Back to Basics" meetings are providing a chance for those new to the AA program to be taken through the Steps by others who have been through the process.

The results of these meetings can be seen on the faces of the newcomers. There is excitement in their voices as they ask questions about the Steps. There are lots of smiles, indicating understanding, as the time flies by each

week. There is community and love as one person helps another through the Steps for the first time. There is compassion and tears as a group hears the pain being expressed by someone. There is involvement, as someone three months sober helps another who has only one week.

The meetings are designed to take anyone through the 12 Steps as defined in the "Big Book" of AA. The meetings are open to all, whether alcoholic, addict, Al-Anon, relative, or simply a friend wanting to learn more about the 12 Steps. Lives are changing because those being introduced to the Steps through the "Back to Basics" meetings are quickly experiencing the benefits (promises) from doing the Steps.

One member of AA for over thirty years commented, "Every AA member should go through this program at least once."

Another person writes about "Back to Basics" from the perspective of a non-alcoholic. "I have been attending 'Back to Basics' and it has been very rewarding in many ways. You don't have to be an alcoholic to benefit from doing the Steps. Ultimately, the Steps are a way to a better and more fulfilling life. I believe everyone can benefit from doing the Steps."

"By doing the Steps in my own life, I've been able to let go of guilt from past actions. I am learning to rely on my Higher Power for guidance and the understanding that I am exactly where I am supposed to be at this point in time. My life is not perfect by any means, but it is better and still improving. For example, I recently caught myself being judgmental of someone else and was able to stop and realize that I don't know what's going on in that person's life which may be causing this action. For me, that is a big step, since I tend to be quite opinionated. I feel better because I was able to let that person have their experience without any input from me."

"I have attended 'Back to Basics' open AA meetings, conferences, and Al-Anon meetings, and I get the most benefit from working the Steps with people in 'Back to Basics.' 'Back to Basics' is not just a recovery program; it's a way-of-life program."

Hundreds have gone through the sessions learning how feeling bad can be turned into living happy, joyous and free. By applying the 12 Steps in their lives, people begin living in the solution and seeing their relationships improve. Miracles are happening in their lives as they find this life-changing program.

For those who would like more information on how to do the 12 Steps, they can show up at: 6:00 PM Wednesdays, where the Hillcrest Group meets at 818 Norton Road, Springfield, Missouri or contact Terry H. 417-818-5247 or Larry L. 417-839-0874.