2 Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

There is help

Came to Believe, Covid Year 3
Step 2 - Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

My A.A. journey can be summed up in an old saying my first sponsor used to quote when he talked to me about going to meetings. (And boy, was it irritating every time he did. Obnoxious little man. Always trying to help me. Always willing to listen. Always with the sound, sane, balanced advice. Is it any wonder he drove me up the wall? Who needs all that? Criminal!)

Came. Came to. Came to believe. That was the slogan.
I mean, you can see why it would piss me off, right?

Sure, sure, there was something wrong with my drinking. Fine, I could admit that. But come on, I knew that back in high school, when in a black out I wrestled my mother to the ground and bit her. (And for the record, I can take any sixty-plus year-old arthritic woman you want to throw at me.)

At first, when talking to my sponsor, I was only paying lip service to Step One.

But Step 2? What, are you talking about God with that "Power greater than myself" crap? And what's with the whole "restore me to sanity"?! That sounds A) painful and B) boring and, while we're at it, C) insulting and D) like it might not apply.

Oh, and don't think you're being clever. I can see "God" in the next step down the list, Step 3, so if you think you're sneaking up on me with the 'god thing' by using a cute little euphemism in Step 2, well, I'm on to you.

That was my internal dialog when I was new to A.A., but the face I presented was one of going along with it, keeping my doubts to myself for the most part. It wasn't like I had any better ideas. Or anywhere else to go, actually.

And also, truthfully, the Steps confused me. I mean, sure, each word in the Step made sense, and I could use them in a sentence and stuff -- but the larger meaning, and how I might apply them to my drinking problem? No clue. But my first sponsor was just keeping it simple for me, and thank God, since that was about the speed I could handle then. (Ok, fine, and now, too.)

Came.

Just come to the meetings. See how much you identify with. Have some coffee. Listen to people talk about solving their problems, drinking and otherwise, through the principles of A.A.

Came to.

For me, after a while, my head stopped spinning and screaming at me and some of what people were saying actually penetrated. I could begin to connect the dots as to how my drinking -- and more frighteningly, my thinking -- was really a mess.

Came to believe.

I could see how doing the whole A.A. deal really seemed to help the people around me. And finally, I got that if I did the same A.A. deal that they were doing, then I could get the same kind of help.

So if you're new, and you struggle with understanding the first three steps, just remember that every time you come to an A.A. meeting you are in essence, on some level, already practicing them.

Because, for me, when I come to A.A. I am admitting, by virtue of the fact that I walk through the door, that there is something not right. Something wrong with my drinking, and maybe some other stuff too (That's Step 1).

It hinges on that if you're new, and you're trying to find your way -- and it hinges on that if you're not so new, since alcoholics seem to have built-in forgetters when it comes to some stuff. Not to mention that, just as my sponsor was there for me, now I have a responsibility to be there for the next guy.

For me to even think that way is a testament to how A.A. can change someone.

Damn A.A.

From: https://mrsponsorpants.typepad.com/
Bill Wilson on the Second Tradition

Sooner or later, every A.A. comes to depend upon a Power greater than himself. He finds that the God of his understanding is not only a source of strength, but also a source of positive direction. Realizing that some fraction of that infinite resource is not available, his life takes on an entirely different complexion. He experiences a new inner security together with such a sense of destiny and purpose as he has never known before. As each day passes, our A.A. reviews his mistakes and vicissitudes. He learns from daily experience what his remaining character defects are and becomes ever more willing that they be removed. In this fashion he improves his conscious contact with God.

Every A.A. group follows this same cycle of development. We are coming to realize that each group, as well as each individual, is a special entity, not quite like any other. Though A.A. groups are basically the same, each group does have its own special atmosphere, its own peculiar state of development. We believe that every A.A. group has a conscience. It is the collective conscience of its own membership. Daily experience informs and instructs this conscience. The group begins to recognize its own defects of character and, one by one, these are removed or lessened. As this process continues, the group becomes better able to receive right direction for its own affairs. Trial and error produces group experience, and out of corrected experience comes custom. When a customary way of doing things is proven to be the best, then that custom forms into A.A. Tradition. The Greater Power is then working through a clear group conscience.

We humbly hope and believe that our growing A.A. Tradition will prove to be the will of God for us.

Many people are coming to think Alcoholics Anonymous is, to some extent, a new form of human society. In our discussion of the First Tradition, it was emphasized that we have, in A.A. no coercive human authority. Because each A.A., of necessity, has a sensitive and responsive conscience, and because alcohol will discipline him severely if he backslides, we are finding we have little need for manmade rules or regulations. Despite the fact that we do veer off at times on tangents, we are becoming more able to depend absolutely on the long-term stability of the A.A. group itself. With respect to its own affairs, the collective conscience of the group will, given time, almost surely demonstrate its perfect dependability. The group conscience will, in the end, prove a far more infallible guide to group affairs than the decision of any individual member, however good or wise he may be. This is a striking and almost unbelievable fact about Alcoholics Anonymous. Hence we can safely dispense with those exhortations and punishments seemingly so necessary to other societies. And we need not depend overmuch on inspired leaders. Because our active leadership of service of serve can truly be rotating, we enjoy a kind of democracy rarely possible elsewhere. In this respect we may be, to a large degree, unique.

Therefore, we of Alcoholics Anonymous are certain that that there is but one ultimate authority, “a loving God as he may express himself in our group conscience.”

(Bill Wilson in the January 1948 *Grapevine*)
WHAT IS SANITY?

I would hear in my A.A. meetings that insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results. I was still doing this about a problem with overeating nearly 30 years after I stopped drinking. But I can’t recall anybody saying what sanity is. I knew it could also be called mental health. When I lived in Japan, I found that the Japanese word for what we call mental hospital could also be translated as “spirit hospital,” so I suppose sanity could also be called spiritual health, as it is more a matter of spirit than intellect.

In recent years, I have come across three definitions of sanity that make sense to me and seem to be three ways of thinking about the same thing. Sanity is: 1) The ability to adjust to reality; 2) Seeing things as they really are; and 3) Living in harmony with reality.

Living in reality seemed like a horrible idea when I was drinking, as well as in early recovery. I can’t say that sanity always comes hand in hand with happiness and contentment, but it offers a much better change of getting them than the alternative.

As I have become more adjusted to living in reality, the world and the people around me seem to have gotten a lot better. Living in reality means accepting things as they are, but I feel like I am living in paradise, and this has been going on for so long that I’m pretty sure I am not just deluding myself. Life happens, and most of it is something to be grateful for.

I heard an amusing saying once, that if you can’t think of anything to be grateful for, start with not being on fire and work up from there.

Jim F., Tasmania
Originally appeared in the Grapevine
New York Post Reports: Officials are more concerned in promoting legal pot use than in helping addicts

Carl Campanile writes that “A frustrated drug-treatment provider says New York state’s officials care more about promoting marijuana than combating substance abuse.

“The fact is that most alcoholics, for reasons yet obscure, have lost the power of choice in drink. Our so-called will power becomes practically non-existent. We are unable at certain times, to bring into our consciousness with sufficient force the memory of the suffering and humiliation of even a week or a month ago. We are without defense against the first drink.

The almost certain consequences that follow taking even a glass of beer do not crowd into the mind to deter us. If these thoughts do occur, they are hazy, and readily supplanted with the old threadbare idea that this time we shall handle ourselves like other people. There is a complete failure of the kind of defense that keeps one from putting his hand on a hot stove.

Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous, Page 34
Florida man claims he only drank at stoplights and not while driving

YOU HATE YOUR RECOVERY HOUSE?

Tell me how much you miss your old abandoninium.

Do you ever get drunk?

☐ Yes
☐ No

THANK YOU, LORD!

As the world gets crazier, the nuts get easier to find!
Presented by Lyn S.

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- AA Big Book Pg 152

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**REGISTRATION OPENS MARCH 1, 2022**

Visit https://foundersday.org
February 14, 2022 - 7:00 pm  2nd Monday of the month except July

Go to area13aa.org for Zoom Meeting information.

February 8, 2022—8:00 PM  2nd Tuesday of the month except August

Join Zoom Meeting:
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83460598434?pwd=VVBEK2FNSzcS3VXZDFVOXhMa1oxZz09

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Check the Events Page on WAIA’s website for Holiday Event updates:
https://aa-dc.org/events

Check out our Events Calendar

Events are updated regularly!

If you would like to submit an event, send an email to events@aa-dc.org. A pdf flyer may be attached
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285  Westmoreland Women
107  Westside Women
305  What's Happening Now
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FEBRUARY 2022