

Appendix I

Written April 24, 1943 by Ken S., founder of the Sterling Group, the following is excerpted without editing from a six-page typed piece of his observations on membership in Alcoholics Anonymous, and is located in the NIA Archives.

What have we learned as we passed through the various stages of AA absorption? What are the things that make today so worthwhile? What has been given us for future guidance?

FIRST, that through God's guidance and Grace, it is possible to live in perfect sobriety, enjoying a greater than normal share of happiness and understanding.

SECOND, that in God we find we have an ever available haven when troubled or goaded by fear or despair---an ever ready guidance, if we but seek with a willingness to follow.

THIRD, that the spirit of God is an ever-present force, understanding, forgiving, loving, and guiding those who seek direction and try to live in accordance with His teachings---teachings upon which is founded our AA program of Faith, Tolerance, Humility, and Service.

FOURTH, we have learned, too, that the program so simply stated provides a straight and undeviating pathway to our goal. We need no further guides, guards, bosses, or directors. The way is open; it's up to us.

FIFTH, that the program goes beyond meetings---beyond our own little alcoholic world and our homes, when practiced in all our affairs.

SIXTH, we are awakened to a realization that we have and must assume obligations and responsibilities---that we owe so much and can repay so little.

SEVENTH, we find that work is the motivating power of our lives. It vitalizes Faith, produces accomplishment. Dryness without work is hunger partially satisfied - Faith without work spells failure.

EIGHTH, we acknowledge that the rights of others must be considered first. There is little danger that we shall forget to look to our own.

NINTH, we also find that the "I and We" judge and jury attitude has no place in a program of humility.

TENTH, that resentments include more than well nursed grudges of long standing. The word has many synonyms including: anger, animosity, irascibility, and wrathful indignation.

ELEVENTH, we have found that one of the hardest tasks is to be unselfishly truthful to ourselves, and we have seen truth reborn in the statements and actions of fellow members.

TWELFTH, and most important, we have discovered a capacity for true thankfulness, for the innumerable things large and small that is our daily lot.

So, with meditation on past and present, we move on through life, secure in the admonition to look up to where there is an intelligence from which comes all intellect--recognize the source which sustains us and gives us courage and self-reliance.

Source: Provided by District 73 Archives for the NIA History Project and placed in the NIA Archives, March 1995.