

Classic Opening of Thoughts

1990 | Reading edition

FORMAT	DURATION	RECORDING ID
Transcript PDF	00:57:12	DP-1990-BILLINGS_01

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Welcome to Sober Sunrise, a podcast bringing you AA speaker meetings with stories of experience, strength, and hope from around the world. We bring you several new speakers weekly, so be sure to subscribe. We hope to always remain an ad-free podcast, so if you'd like to help us remain self-supporting, please visit our website at sober-sunrise.com. Whether you join us in the morning or at night, there's nothing better than a sober sunrise. We hope that you enjoy today's speaker group is the Denver Thursday Night Group, which mates in Denver every Thursday night, at eight o'clock. And we hope you'll join us if you're ever in Denver. It's just a basic old-fashioned AA call-up meeting, and we only have one topic, but we were like what happened and what we're like now. You get about eight minutes to get that done. It's brisk AA, and people are staying sober.

I was thinking on the way up about tonight. See tonight I get to play. It's Sunday morning I get to play, and I've never had an arena where I got to play before, and I can remember back when I had given my eye teeth for an hour to tell you how much I know. And I'm having to let this one go, because what I know is I don't know an hour's worth of nothing, but I'm delighted to be in buildings. You warm and you're friendly, and I have felt good since I got here.

And I do ask some things I want to share with you all, because I came from death literally. Christmas night of 1967, I took enough amphetamine to kill six of us and drank every hang of us in my house and they don't die, because I simply couldn't stand being me anymore, not one more second. I had reached that place that everyone eventually reaches if you're going to get on a spiritual path. There was no more hope. All the little things that might have worked if I could only just figure them out.

I'd come to realize, where's it ever going to happen? There wasn't any hope left. I didn't even know what was wrong with me. And one of the things I think we and Alcoholics Anonymous are responsible for, when our new people come to us, help them find out what's wrong with them. We have a recognizable, describable disease with symptoms all over the place, and if you've got those symptoms, you are one. And if you don't have those symptoms, you aren't one.

And my responsibility to you, if you come to me, is to help you make that discovery. That's what they did for me. I couldn't even get locked up in the right place. I understand denial. I honestly had no clue, after years of drinking alcohol, that alcohol was my problem. I'd covered over with a number of things. I was certified by one government agency as Associate Path Type 2. Another government agency had me listed as a psychopath.

I had a long and infamous drug history. I'm not a drug addict, by the way. I just am an alcoholic to use a lot of drugs. And I'm only going to talk about that later when anybody wants to talk about it. We had it covered over. Nobody knew what was wrong with that. And I was literally taken to Alcoholics Anonymous. Because I was supposed to go to a federal hospital in Fort Worth, Texas. That was the plan. But I had reached that place where there was no hope.

And so I ended up in an amenity in the Colorado State Penitentiary, for which I'll be forever grateful. And all

I did, right, was that I had surrendered. Totally, absolutely, without question, I had reached the point where I can't do it anymore. I can't even live anymore. I quit. And became one to go anywhere anyone said, and do anything anyone said. But man, I didn't have to be me anymore. Because you got to understand, I was in a really precarious position when I woke up this 26th December.

I was in a body that wouldn't die, in a mind that wouldn't work. And somehow I'm stuck on this planet and this body, and I had to have an answer. You gave me that. You told me where to find it. And all the time, Renee, I'll probably, because we're going to explore my mind, I'll probably end up quoting more than I will talking from all the experience tonight. Because I've learned to be a listener. If you want to stay sober, if you're new here tonight, listen.

Become a listener. This old man said we don't have any answers here. If you want answers to your problems, you can pick any stranger on the street. And you lay out your problem and they'll have an answer for you. What we have here is a solution. And if you get in the heart of that solution, you'll find your own answer. And that was my experience. So I remember what he said as he described that. And I see that happening in Alcoholics Anonymous today, and it breaks my heart.

My turn forward is this. I don't put my business on the street. There are people I talk to, because I can trust them. They won't try to fix me. Nobody knows what's wrong with me anyway. I'll come to you and miss. My sponsors have never tried to fix me. They've shown me what to do, so that I can get in fit spiritual conditions, and then I don't need fixed. I'm not broken anymore. And the solution is taking care of the problems gone.

Anyway, I was hand carried through the 12 steps. I'm so grateful for the group I came into, because they never said to me, Don, just as soon as you're comfortable, we'll start working steps. What they did say was, if you ever hope to be comfortable, we better start this right away. The difference between, I believe for me, the difference between the non-spiritual state and the spiritual state is really very simple, and I learned this from an Al-Anon friend.

The non-spiritual state is that time of no hope. There is no hope. There's no answer. There's no reason for living. There's no reason to be here. And there's no chance of ever learning why I should be here. It's over. The spiritual awakening is the moment when there's hope again. Alcoholics Anonymous gave me hope in the guys of some people with numbers on their success, who were walking around free. I was five months sober when I got into late around the county jail and healed.

Which is a very dangerous thing for alcoholic to do. And these men took this business seriously. They put up with the jibes from the other convicts. The guards would holler out, drunks downstairs, and all that stuff would go on. These men just walked through that. And they made it a point to come look us up when we were in the fish tank, learning how to live down there. They came to us. I don't believe in pouring them off of bar stools, but I troll for drunks.

Yeah. My only reason for being alive today, when I'm dead certain of this, is each day for whatever time I have left, I'm to find one alcoholic who does not know this simple thing. If you're an alcoholic, you don't ever have to drink alcohol again. That's our message. At the beginning. And you know where I find most of them? In A meetings. I don't have to go lucky. I'm amazed at the number of people in A meetings that don't know that I

have to drink again.

Because nobody's told them that. These guys told me that with a certainty that I could see and hear and feel, they had a real answer. They were free. But most important, they'd been changed. And that's what I needed. I'm going to fry the penitentiary. I've been there before. I used to have to learn how to live there. But having me frightened is that I knew I couldn't die, and he was going to put me back on the streets eventually, and I couldn't live out there either.

And I couldn't stand going back out there. Not in the shape I was in. So, when I was promised was real interesting. I was promised recovery from alcoholism. I hear a lot about the promises, and I love the promises. But to me, it isn't just that little bunch on page section such. The real promise of Alcoholics Anonymous for me is in the first and second sentence of the first forward to the first edition of the Big Book.

We are more than 100 men and women who have recovered from the seemingly hopeless state of mind and body. Promise number one. To show others precisely how we have recovered is the purpose of this book. Precisely how we've recovered. I promise we have for you when you come day. No theories, no games, no encounter therapy. Oh God. Three weeks in AA, I was also at the request of the prison psychiatrist sent to an encounter therapy group.

That was fun. I was so glad I had three weeks in AA by then. I sat in this room and we started the games, and I knew if I come here in six weeks I'll be leading this group. Because that's what my life has been made up of, learning how to play the games. I'm a survivor, and so are everyone of you, and it wasn't good enough anymore. I don't play games anymore. I really don't. If I want to play games I'll get my computer out.

I'll get to sit down with my 16 year old and play. What the hell is the new one? She got a new one the other day. I love my 16 year old. She's a game player in her head. I'm a master and we have some fun. She didn't know it's all gave yet. Three people took great care to do what it says were to do here. To carry this message to another alcoholic to help me recover from alcoholism. They took their time, and they took their life stuff, and they took their experience, and they gave it to me.

Friendly, openly. They never kitted me. They were mean. They kept throwing the mirror of truth up in front of me. I said to one of them one day I'm terrified of my own mind. He said you have good reason to be here. I was in California a couple of weeks ago, and in mid-summer Bob Olson and I went out and did a retreat for some fellows we sponsored out there at 12 step retreat. And so one of the boys is only experiencing lessons that we were really cool that weekend, right?

We were patient and kind and loving and did all that stuff. And they were having a group inventory. He said well Don never offends anybody, and the guys at home and just cracked up. Because I tend to offend people sometimes. I tell the truth. And that's what they did to me. They said things that would normally be offensive, but they were telling me the truth in a way because they had an answer to it. They could say things to me that would be hurtful if you didn't have an answer.

I have a good reason to be afraid of my own mind. What do you promise me? A new mind. And Dr. Silkworth little description. He says without an entire psychic change, there's a little hope of recovery. Entire

psychic change for me means new mind. We had to fix the old one. I can't tell you how relieved I was to hear that. I had spent 34 years trying to fix it. And it was a mess. I'd become everybody I'd ever met. And they were all talking at once.

I was told very plainly. You must have a spiritual experience of your own and learn to live by spiritual principles. And that's all a risk to that. Well that's what they said, and that's how they lived. These men took great care to be visible. Anonymously visible. They talked about the changes in their lives and say, but I didn't do it. God did this. I really didn't care who had done it. They were changed. And they had some things I wanted.

Bruce got in and out of his cell when he told me he wanted to. And the reason I knew that is when I was locked up at night and couldn't get out, he'd come by and visit with me. And I wanted that. He said he could think one thought at a time. Imagineers. I wanted that. He was doing a natural life sentence. He was never to be released. And he was free. And I wanted that. And he walked that day after day after day. And he wasn't perfect.

I'll never forget the shock of the afternoon somebody upset him. And he'd been teaching me how devastating my resentments were. And he said, I resent that. It's all over. We had a group of about 90 men. Maybe 10, 12, 15th to most men of business. We had a 12-step study school you went through for five weeks. We weren't even allowed to talk. They said we didn't know anything. So we should listen. I'd listen to these guys that were obviously foaming talking.

I can spot one. The mirror of truth again. I know what you sound like. I wrote the script. He would say to me when I'd get fried with that phony son of a bitch. See, it doesn't matter whether he's doing this right or not. Whether he believes this or not. What are you doing? What are you thinking? Do you believe it? It doesn't matter what anybody else believes. This is your experience. And he walked it that way. They shared a lot with us.

They showed us how to come to believe. They showed us how to do the third step. They showed us how to take an inventory and what the purpose of it was. They took time and guided us. If I really surrender, I'm a little child all over again. I was told the God would restore me to a state where I wasn't start craving men. We would assume that I went crazy about three seconds after birth, so that meant all the way. Just give it all a start over.

I came to believe that everything I ever thought was warped. And today I love that word. That's true. I've been warped. And there's times when there's nothing good on television, I just sit and watch the warp. But that I could learn to live a way of life that would make sense to me. That struck me. I never tried to live like it to make sense to me. I tried to get everything I wanted. My problem, they told me, is that I'm so centered and selfish to the extreme.

I'm it. I was lonely. Of course I was lonely. I was the only human being on the planet. The rest of you were who I needed you to be. I thought life was get yours where you can. I wanted mine, and I wanted it now, and I wanted lots of it. And there wasn't enough of it, so I took some years, too. And that wasn't enough either. I was a creator of chaos, whatever I went. And I really wanted to be a voice guy. What they taught me is that it doesn't matter what I want to be.

My life is none of my business. That's what it says. God, I offer myself to thee to build with me as you want. I have no idea what he wants me to be. But I know it's better than anything I can think of. So they showed me.

And at the end of our initial journey through the steps I had had a series of spiritual awakenings and several spiritual experiences. And experience this fact. I'm not a human being trying to have a spiritual experience.

I'm a spiritual being having a human experience. And it changed my life forever. I'm a child of God that makes me a spiritual being. And it makes you one, too. The thing flattened me out. I was given a little rhyme by an old convict. And some of it sounds negative, but there's great joy in some of these things on earth. As good as you are and as bad as I am. I'm as good as you are as bad as I am. It flattens down. When old boy, I was goofing it up over something somebody had done.

He says, what are you worried about what they sing? There's not one I'm going to put a scrap of bread on your table. Now that's negative, but the truth of that, there's a kernel of truth in there. You can't do anything. You can't be me. But by what we do together, you do everything there is for me. When I depended on people, my life was an absolute mess. I started depending on God and looked what he sent me. He threw me into the heart of people.

I was told very plainly that at the end of this deal, I would have to give it all away or keep none of it. My sobriety is not for me. It's for you. That's what it says. That's what the man who came before us lived. My life is not my business and my sobriety is not for me. But I get to live it just as if it were. My basement is my place. The spiritual life requires a great deal of solitude. Visiting quietly was the Father.

And the world won't give you that, I promise you. So I created a place for me. There is, however, particularly for you new folks, that are trying to practice prayer and meditation, because we'll tell you a hundred times a day you've got to stop and pause. Every time you get agitated and doubtful, which is every time I move from here to there. America's hang-ups have created for us a meditation place everywhere. You can leave the board room.

You can leave a fight. You can leave anything that's going on and go to the bathroom. And nobody will bother you. Nobody. You can pause and ask for the right thought or action. And so these are things that they showed me I could do in the midst of problem. I remember the first time that happened for me. See, I don't work the AA program. I don't know how to do that. If I'm working at it, I screw it up whatever I'm doing.

I put myself in the middle of it and I take certain actions, but I think that's just to keep me busy so God can get the work done. I eventually had to learn how to work. I didn't know how to work. I'm a thief and a dope smuggler. And working takes different things. Although my drug smuggling got me a fine job for the time. My sponsors told me, I'm going to just float around. Okay. This was such fun, because I finally got to work after I was released in a place that didn't hire ex-convex.

Well, I'm not an ex-convex. Anyway, I'm a man who's been to prison. There is a difference. And so they hired me. And I was working on the docks and a little truck driving job came up. And so I bid for it. And the dispatcher called me in and I was taught by my sponsors on any resume I have. Anything from 1967 back goes on there too. Whatever I did goes on there and I'll explain it to him later. Well, here's this drug deal.

I was a smuggler. He says, tell me about that. So I did. And he said, you know, the organizational qualities and the talent that it took to do that is exactly what I need to do. I know how to get from here or there under difficult circumstances. In God's hands, all things can happen. He uses what's there. And it happens for us. Well,

anyway, I had to give it away. Now, my experiences were real to me and they were limited and I was like a new child.

So they gave me a big book. And the next group of guys coming out of the fish tank, it was my job to read the book to them. And to share my experiences we went. Over the next five weeks, I hand carried them. So I got into what the real business of Alcoholics Anonymous is in my sixth week. The real business of Alcoholics Anonymous is to carry the message and help the new person achieve sobriety. That's our real business.

I have to stay sober to engage in that business. In the eight step, there's a real interesting piece of information. It says I'm trying to claim a life of, but that in itself is not the real purpose of this. The purpose of all this is to fit me to be a maximum service to God and the people about me. And I think about things like that. I don't shut this mind off anymore. If I were going to play football for the Broncos, I would need to be fit to be in that game.

And that means there would be certain exercises I would do on a regular basis designed to keep me fit for that particular arena. Well, I'm in this arena. And there are certain exercises I must do on a daily basis to keep me fit for that. And it's just that simple. So I don't work the program. I am the program. I took the numbers off a long time ago, except when I'm working with new people. New people got to have the structure.

In fact, I'm a step and obviously I'm afraid. I swear I was accused of yesterday in a treatment center. All I know is that there may be a thousand ways for people to get sober. I only know one. So, as it was then, as it is now, I do the same thing yesterday with three of my guys that I did in my sixth week of Alcoholics Anonymous. We get the big book out and I read it out loud. And then we come to something where it says, do this, we do it.

If it comes to a place where it talks about a new attitude, do we have that attitude? And that's how we do this thing. And whatever it does for them, of course, it keeps me in the program. And I love watching them. I've got two now that are a joy to my heart. About six months ago, a little chuck came to me. He's been around 11 years. And he was two weeks sober at this time. And I loved him. He's little and mean and ugly.

And he just dared me to say something meaningful. Just dared me. But he was willing. And we talked about some things. We got around and talked about God. He said, oh, yeah. I hate that son a bit. I can't wait to die so I can get right up in his face and tell him what I think of him. My mind said, isn't that nice? Please. That's one hurdle we're not going to have to mess with. When he inventory got it was interesting.

He discovered he had created God in his own image just like I did. Angry man, terribly angry man. And as we finished his inventory, two things happened. He came up on a court date. He'd been caught driving under revocation without insurance. And in Colorado, those two charges were mandatory five-day jail sentences. There was no question he was going to jail. And then there was a third little thing that would be a little fine.

And I don't go to jail. And I don't go to court with the guys very often. But something said go. Because I'm watching a spiritual event take place with this guy. And I want to be part of that. Wherever he's going to go, he's teaching me things. And he asked me if I'd go with him so I could bring his stuff back and find out where he was and all the song went. And I said, let's go out just an hour early. And see what's going on.

I don't know what to tell you. Let's just go early. Maybe we can talk to the DA or something and get any little extra time. Whatever. We went an hour early. And he met a district attorney with compassion. And she wouldn't

let me go in with him. And they talked and he came out kind of shaking his head. He said she's dropped those two charges. And reduced the other one. And said, well, let's go to court then. That's what's next.

We got into court and he met a judge with compassion. This judge looked at the thing. He said, young man, I want you to know something. This district attorney didn't give you a break. She gave me a break. I don't have to send you to jail. And that morning, this was during a tough time. I'm in Denver and we're not making much money to happen here. \$46 had floated into my pocket that morning. And his file was \$41. And I just happened to have it.

And I don't want any people in those circumstances. Anyway, the essence of the deal is he's got a little year suspension to live with. And a \$41 court cost thing. And he hates God's stories. And we're going back and I can hear his teeth gnashing. And I said, I know what's wrong with you. You got a God's story, don't you? No, no, no. At the end of the inventory, Chuck had two people he will never make amounts to. His brother and his mother, never.

Within a week, his brother called. He's drinking badly. And his brother made a mess. Oh, rotten crap. He didn't actually need his teeth. And he's changing. And that's the joy of hanging around here. If my sobriety were for me, I'd be focused on me. And I'd miss the opening of this new life. And he's a pistol. Here's this man who's angry. People were afraid to be around him. He had a group of consciency at the night. He called something.

And he did it lovingly and with great care that nobody's got hurt while he made his statement. The man's getting soft. He's a wonder. Anyway, and then I got another one. Oh, I love him. He's the chief psychiatrist of one of the finest and foremost treatment centers in the United States. And he can't stay sober. He knows too much. And he's teaching me. Sponsoring people means I learn. See, I don't know what you need. What you do for me when you come to me and ask me to work with you is take me to my own heart and prayer.

I have to say, what am I supposed to do with this one? Give me something that will help here. And we're going over the description in the big book, Dr. Silkwood has about alcoholism. And he knows too much. He can't get powerlessness. That's why he can't stay sober. And I'm praying my brain's out. What can I say? Get it simpler. Get it simpler. Recognize for all he knows a man's idiot, just like I am. Get it simple. I said, Don, what happens to you after the first drink?

And he says, well, around the fifth or sixth drink, I go crazy and I lose control and blah, blah, blah. I said, no, what happens after the first drink? Well, before the fifth drink, I do these terrible things. See, what happens to me after the first drink is the second drink. And that's alcoholism. If I can understand that, I can get sober. He understood it. He's getting sober. He came into the house and said, my wife has a restraining order on me and it's thrown me out and she's right.

What a thrill. He's going to be all right. She's finally right. She got into Ellen and I learned what to do. I got caught by a bug. Part of my awakening, it wasn't just that they told me I had to give this away. If you've had this happen to you, you don't have any choice. I entered into my evangelistic stage in about six weeks. And I've never left it. We're talking about the power of God. You can't sit on that. I can't sit on that.

I got to tell you about that. The frustration of talking is that I've got each day for 22 years I've lived in the

presence of God. I want to tell you about every one of those days. You give me an hour. So I had to do something. And the 12 step study school helped. And this thing was on me. This need to do something. To give it away. To share it. And the politics down there worked in such a way that one of the politicians wanted one of his boys in the school.

The election came out one year anymore. And I needed something to do. So I learned to transcribe Braille. And then the next thing I know, this guy doesn't know what the hell's going on. He asked me if I'll teach the quest. So I'm back 12 step. And by then another thing had happened. I was able to get in and out of my cell anytime I wanted to. I don't know how I did that. The institution knew that most of the people in there are there because of alcohol problems.

So the guys who graduated from the 12 step study school and were active were allowed to go on 12 step. And that's all it was that Bruce had. He was 12 step. And that's all I've done ever since. I became an active member of that group. And I learned about commitment. I truly believe, and it's been said somewhere else, Alcoholics Anonymous Success is a direct result of restored families. Now while it was old broken ones that got restored or knew them, the restoration of the families would give us credibility.

And today gives us credibility. We're a family. This is where I learned how to function in a family. Families care actively about each other. Another old timer defined love that way. Active concern for the welfare and development of the person you want. That's what that's about. So I began to make a commitment. Families have committed to each other. I think as Thomas Wolfe said, the family home is that place where when you go there, they got to take you in.

That's us. Our most wretched, if one of them crawls in that door right now tonight. They'll be made welcome here by most of us. Probably by everybody in this group. So I learned how to behave a little bit in a family. How to take my responsibility. That's my turn to it. And when is it my turn? Whenever I'm asked. That's all. If I'm there, it's my turn. That's easy. And I have learned to ask you to come with me if you want to, but I know it's my turn.

And I don't know what to do. I walk around in this business knowing that lives are on the line. When some alcoholic comes to me, there's a life on the line. His handmine. And I don't have any answers. But I have a solution that works. And I pray a lot. I get confused sometimes. Four or three minutes ago? I've had to develop some of my own prayers. And I've already do that. Memorize the ones you've got because we've got some beautiful prayers here.

But each of us has a need for our own. And I've got a couple that work for me. I know that periodically I'm going to get screwed up. So I ask God, please don't let me get screwed up. About being screwed up. Because another old timer helped me understand this whole business is about being comfortable and not feeling good. I'm comfortable with the fact that there's periodically pain in my life. My 16-year-old nephew died.

That's a very painful experience. I'd be a cold, dead fish if I didn't hurt. But I was okay with it, hurting. I'm that's bent. The strength that comes to us. In fact, the early prayers in the big book that I learned, the elses in the very beginning. One of our basic prayers. Grab me the strengths to do the right thing. I've always known the right thing. One of the problems Alcoholics has isn't that we don't have a conscience.

Our conscience is overactive. I've known from the beginning this is wrong. But I don't know how to do right. And if you give me a choice, I will always pick the wrong thing to do. It's more fun. It's just the nature of the beast. So grab me the strength to do the right thing. Let's carry into general service real early. And there's a lot of ways to serve the fellowship. And when the evangelistic fury hits you, you just go do whatever it is you're going to do.

You hit me and I happen to be around general service people, so I ended up there. And I've wondered why along the way. Okay. One of the things that I've said to people, when I was asked to be a trustee on your general service board, was that I am not trustee material. From everything I know about what a trustee is and does, I'm not. And after four years of serving as a trustee on your general service board, I've discovered I was right.

But I did the job. Oh, yeah. I'm still in trouble back here with someone. I've been given an opportunity to participate in some major events, to participate in history. Because I just happened to be in the chair, one of the guy who gets to go make history or participated since. And we'll talk some more about that tomorrow afternoon. Because tomorrow afternoon what I really like to do, because I've got some time, is run you through this service experience and carry you with me.

So you can sit in the chair and see what a wonder this is. A general service is not politics. There are politics there. But politics isn't a dirty word either. That's how you get things done sometimes. It depends on the mode even how you go about it. But I haven't run into much politics here in any service. When I have run into it, it gets squashed real quick. I have to serve. I have to do more than just 12 steps and just sponsor.

I believe, and our founders made it very clear, I have a responsibility to God enter this fellowship to make sure that it's intact 50 years from now when I'm dead and gone. It goes beyond this meeting. And what that means unfortunately is that it isn't what I do that's important, it's what I don't do. I have some incredibly good ideas that would make AA better. You'll never hear them. I have the kind of sponsors, and I believe strongly in sponsorship, for me sponsorships a simple thing.

This is someone who has gone down the path I'm walking. Out of love comes back and walks away with me. It says over here it sounds like a rattlesnake, but it isn't. Over here there's a real rattlesnake. And I'm going to go around, but if you want to get bit, go ahead. They walk with me. So I've got a lot of different kinds of sponsors. My basic step sponsor is still the same guy. He lives in Indiana now, and we were unlikely characters.

We were people who would normally not mix. He's about six foot four, just pretty as hell. If you wanted to sell men's clothes, you'd put them on my sponsor and let him walk around people buy them. And I'm this little pop billy dumpy little old fellow who can barely speak English, and we hang out together a lot. One of the greatest times in my life was the four or five years when Gary and I were in a situation where each day we were practicing the tenth step actively.

As things would come up, we would just write it down. It doesn't always have to be this negative stuff. Just write it down, examine it, I'd call him, or he'd call me and would exchange all this. What a wonderful growing time that was, this direct exchange. I got off into a deal one time, and this is what I look for in sponsors. I got convinced by somebody that AA, it was a spiritual high school, almost time I graduated.

So I went and took the advanced course. We won't win the details tonight, but things got kind of hairy for a while. And I came back to him and totally what was going on. He looked me right in the eye and he said, that's insane. Go rescue your children. And I did. I've always done what my sponsor tells me. And I came out of that experience with this certain-insure knowledge. Whatever anybody believes on this planet is absolute gospel truth in whatever universe they happen to be living in.

I have another dear friend and sponsor, and he's not likely. He's a very bright intellectual, and he establishes insurance companies and gets them going and they call him in for trouble. I'm this guy's bright, and I'm kind of soft and mushy. We're good balance. We love each other. I rotate it from interest to you. I'm not a good person. I'm not a good person. I'm not a good person. I'm not a good person.

We love each other. I rotate it from interest to you to give you another idea. This is integrity, by the way. This man has absolute integrity. One of the things I'm trying to learn in the spiritual life is integrity. We're close friends. And he has a condo on Molly. And as a result of all this travel, I got to take my family to Molly. And as a friend, you would think he'd let us have that. And he would have. Without saying a word to him, he always charged me 700 bucks for that week.

And I understood why. I was a trustee, and he was a candidate for General Service Manager. And he wanted in no way any possibility that anyone could think that there was anything going on there. Now, that's integrity. When I rotate it from that job, I've had a dream for years. I'll share it with you. Years ago in my sickness, I had my two little boys and some suitcases and sea bags. And we were standing in a driveway.

We had just been put on the street again. And we had to go somewhere. And I was too tired to move. I've never forgotten how tired it was that day. I just couldn't do it anymore. But we had to go. And it slapped me with a dream. I'd like to find a place where I can live out my leisure years with patches on the elbows and my coat. And around that place will be other little houses, little cabins, whatever. Far enough away from the house that if you don't want to mess with me, you don't have to.

Where people who are tired just bone-weary tired can just come and rest for a while. And that's a simple dream. I want to have a few horses and some grandkids and do that. Well, when I rotated, a fellow from California that knows us about this dream called me, he said, we'll pay you \$100,000 a year if you'll come out and set that up for us. And I looked at that from every angle. Four years as being a trustee, it's a good thing my wife was working because I didn't work much.

And the money sounded nice. And the dream sounded nice. And it all sounded nice. But I listened to my instincts now that we small voice. And something didn't fit. So I took everything that I had put together, and I called George, and I ran it by him. And he said this to me, and this is how my sponsors work. He said, are they hiring you to be the guru? Do you want to angle ahead and look dead? He didn't fix me. He made me ask the question.

And yeah, that's what it was. I had acquired along the ways and prestige, I guess, because I got exposed a lot. And that's what they were trying to buy. And that isn't for sale. And so I had to say no thanks. I can't do that. And then he and I talked over the conditions under which that offer could be accepted. He's pretty sharp. I know what to look for now. I know what you sound like when you got it right. And then he said this to me.

In the meantime, keep roughing. I'm a roofer. And that's working out fine. So we sponsor each other. But I have guides. There's a thing going on now that's a wonder to me. Every now and then, instead of just going through the steps of the people I work with, I pick a guide and I go through as a newcomer. All the way through the deal. This last one was a joy. I only had one major resentment. He was against God. I crossed that funny little line.

See, I fully expect if I'll stay close to him and do his work well, he'll provide everything I need. And I crossed the line. I needed more than he was providing. And we examined that. I got straight with that. You see, it's very important to me today simply because of the joyous expressions of life that I've been able to participate in that I hear that we small voice. That's what I'm listening for. And this program's whole business is to clear my mind as the things that are keeping me from hearing that little voice.

As a result of that, without my doing anything. After 21 years, my brother invited me to his birthday party. You see, some of this takes time. I can't fix it. One of the things Chuck helped me was years ago was that I lost everything. I ever held dear to me and I deserved to lose it and never ever have it back. And I know that. So I don't meddle with it. Not only did he invite me to his birthday party, not too long ago, he had me over for dinner.

The wife and I. We had a grand time. And we were laughing and he said, I don't even know if we're going to like each other, but tonight was fun. I was thinking about my son. I'll tell you this when I sit down. One of the nice things about this weekend is that I'm not even close to through. But we got lots of time to go do it later, see? My son wasn't on this inventory. There was no direct work done in the steps concerning my older boy.

But a great healing has taken place as a result of my listening for the voice because of the work that I did. See, when my son was eight years old, I got arrested again. My two little boys got put in a foster home again. And this was not a good one. My eight-year-old had to become a man on the spot and protect his little brother and it was tough. And he and I talked about that and we're pretty clear with it, but there's always been, it's never healed for Terry.

There's been something wrong there. And after this business, what working the steps has always done and did to get this time is that I was able to sit in solitude and be quiet. I'm not asking for anything in particular, just be quiet and listen. And it occurred to me that I had never thanked him for that. That's all. So I called him. And I said, that was a very brave thing you did. I know it was tough, forgotten to thank you.

So I'm thanking you now for taking care of your brother when I couldn't. There's something new going on with my kid. That's what this is about. Being still enough to be a participant in this so it can be a maximum service. Now the biggest change came through this maniac that I sponsor, we have Bronco tickets all of a sudden. Because he has Bronco tickets and his kids won't go with him. I don't know if you have a damn about the Broncos, I really don't.

I'm not even sure what they do. So I called Terry before this incident, called him and asked him if he wants some Bronco tickets. And he said, sure, I'll be glad to. Yeah, took him. After my mind was clear and I had thanked him. I called him a couple weeks ago. We had tickets from the Giants game. And I said, would you like to see the Giants game? And his first response was, are you going with us? It takes time. And I trust in time.

If I'm walking hand in hand with God, I can trust in time. He couldn't heal till he could heal. I couldn't heal till I could heal. But if I'm willing to walk through it, I become a healer. Think about that for a minute and then we'll go on. I think about that a lot because I'm a healer. We all are. That's our business. We're going to scrape the sick ones off the street and help them heal. So what do healers do? Well, I have to look around the world.

My wife's a healer. She's a nurse and an infant research unit. Mothers are healers. What do the healers do? Well, this is just my observation, not because I watched them. When you come in all scratched up and munged up, they don't pick you up right away. They don't put a mandate on them all. First thing the healers do is sit you up on their lap. We patch you and rock you for a minute and say, it's going to be all right.

It's just going to be all right. And then after you believe that, then they pick you up. And isn't that what we do? They come in here. The last thing in the world I want to do is show the whole program on soon new drunk. I'm the kind that if you've got a cut hand, I'll put a cast on the damn thing and give him half a chance. Well, that's what you did for me and that's what I hope I can do this weekend while I'm here.

You say convincingly enough for anyone who may have any doubt, it's going to be all right. I know. I had that same boo boo once. And it's all healed up. So, I'll tell you about this tomorrow. She's going to be rich for him. Thank you. Thank you for listening to Sober Sunrise. If you enjoyed today's episode, please give it a thumbs up as it will help share the message. Until next time, have a great day.