

DON P ARCHIVE

Big Book Workshop

1999 | Part 2 | Reading edition

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Transcript

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Some of you can so you can learn how to enter the silence. You just did it. Entering the silence is simple. Shut up. It's one of life's lessons. When you're focused on one activity and then you move to another, and then you move to another, it's sometimes hard to get back to the first one. And that says it should be. That's just a natural order of things. We are given a little exercise here in the 11th step that says when agitator is doubtful we pause.

You do not have to be agitated just because you're doubtful. Doubtful simply means I have two choices to make so it becomes just a habit. Just pause. My alcoholic nature says put me in the game coach. My spiritual nature says let the game go on. I'll join you later or something. We've had some fun with this re-gathering over the years. For 11 years I did a little retreat in a monastery in Santa Barbara, California. With a group out of Los Angeles, young alcoholics mostly, and out of Los Angeles, interesting people. Great, great monastery. One of the sisters was telling us about the order. So we'd understand, you know, we're visitors in our home. We needed to understand what's going on here. She said we have taken vows of poverty, chastity, and hard work. For you guys that means no money, no honey, and you don't get your own way.

They had a house rule of silence from 10 o'clock at night until after breakfast in the morning. And of course we complied with that. Had a powerful experience because we had gotten to the third step just before 10 o'clock, took the third step as a group just as the bells rang. We couldn't stand up and say, wow, that felt good or anything. We went into silence with it. Really interesting experience. The gathering back together was difficult.

And it gets more difficult as the weekends go on because you get to liking each other, trusting each other more. So you talk more, it's a little harder to gather up. And this particular time there was a couple professional singers were part of the group. And the group was just a little unruly. And one of them just hung. And his partner caught it and did the harmony to that. And we ended up with a gorgeous sound that went out into this room and quieted everybody down.

At the end of the next break, they just automatically did that. And some of the group joined in. And I had this horrible thought. These young A's are going to go back into L.A. into the groups and say, look what Don taught us. We're a little faster track than I'm used to. Talk to me for a minute, if you will, about the doctor's opinion, about the allergy, about your understanding. Because then we're going to move on. If anybody needs to talk about that for a minute.

Do you have it? What happens to you after the first drink? You don't know. Tell me about it. Did it ever happen where you couldn't? Did you hear it? I hear that all the time. There were times when it didn't happen. Yeah. The next week. And that's important that we make sure folks understand it may not be immediate. But it will happen. The vendor will take place. No question. Do any of the people that they have that recover, they have to go back to drinking?

Yes, ma'am. My first sponsor did. One of the most spiritual men I've ever known. He was probably at that time he must have been 11 or 12 years sober. He's one taught me most everything I know. In the early times and

demonstrated it, he truly had it. The community's sentence. He was doing a naturalized sentence. Then the community didn't put him out. And within two weeks he was drunk. And I talked with him. He felt that he went in 117. And so he had adjusted the fact he was going to be there forever.

And so he was spiritually fit to stay in the penitentiary. But he only addressed those issues that were necessary. He came out and his mind got thinking, I've missed something. He hadn't been with a woman for years. And he needed sex. And he had not addressed the sex. The fact most male alcoholics to tell you the truth can't have sex unless you're drinking. I don't know why that is. But that's what happened to him. He needed to have a drink before he could have sex.

And his mind was saying, I missed this. There's a lack here. And it wiped the whole thing out. He said, where's mine syndrome? It can happen to anybody. Just because you're spiritually fit today, it does not mean that tomorrow you're going to be okay. Unless you continue to do the things that got you fit to start with. This is an area of city's disease. And whatever, whether it's sex or job or money, whatever it is, my mind will use it if it's an alcoholic mind to get me to take a drink.

Those who stay active and work with other people, I don't see many of them doing that though. There's some common signs that over the years I'm talking to slippers because we do, that you watch for. I stopped going to meetings, they say. Or I cut back. They began divorcing themselves from the fellowship. Stopped reading the big book, stopped sponsoring people. They stopped doing the things that they were doing. None of those things will keep me sober, but without them I'm going to get, particularly the working with others.

That's the most important one of all. Jim the car salesman got drunk because he failed to enlarge his spiritual life. And in the book it tells me very plainly we enlarge our spiritual life through working a self-sacrifice for others. Not through working the steps, through working the self-sacrifice for others. There's a mystique among step workers that this is the work. Now then, this gets you fit for the work. I'm going to be fit to carry God's message.

I promise you, you better be fit. Where you are. Fit physically and spiritually and mentally. This is a tough game. The Broncos got it easy. If you're going to play in this game, you've got to be ready spiritually to let God do all the work. Anyway, I'm getting out. Did you get your answer? Yes they do. What I did today will not keep me sober tomorrow. The minute that I'm still thinking, somewhere in the front, that I do think something is easier.

I don't have to go out and slip to prove that. I have a great network. It isn't about the stuff you lose. It's what I lose in here. Bottom is when my plans for my life aren't going to happen. I still have all my stuff. We have common ground. What happens to you after the first drink? Are you able to control your drinking? Are you able to not do that? Don't give up your seat. When we get it that simple we have common ground.

You don't have to have gone to a penitentiary. That's not what defines alcohol. I get where I hate to even talk about it, except that's where I've been. My problem is not the penitentiary. My problem is that I didn't know how to live on the street. I was completely comfortable in a penitentiary. That's an easy place to live. In three days you learn everything you need to know. It's a very simple environment because it is a life and death environment.

You're wrong, you're dead. Do the right, you're okay. So the lines are simple. You don't have to tell you what to wear and when to get up and when to go to bed and what to eat. There's no major decisions to make except who to hang out with. It's on the street that I'm in trouble. Bruce gave me some wonderful spiritual advice. Since you want money, get a job. Once you got it, show up for it. A long time. While you're there, consider doing some work.

And at the end of the prescribed period of time, they're going to give you money. It won't be enough, ever. But they'll give you something. And then all Sparky got into the money thing. Sparky was a wonder. He had, he was a big time bank robber at one point. This is a guy who made big money in his profession. He'd also done 25 years in various penitentiaries. And well, had nothing to do one day. He said he was just kind of running the numbers.

He put down approximately how much he accumulated through the profession. One of the years. And how much they had gotten back when they arrested him and how much his lawyers took. And how many years he'd done. And he figured he averaged about three grand a year as a big time gangster. Which was a thing that turned him to thinking maybe how to try something different. Get a job, show up. The simple stuff. Don't drink. There's the problem.

The only thing we have to offer is entire abstinence. It's the only way this is going to stop. How do I not do that? That's the problem. Jim McCarthy doesn't do that six times. The information didn't show up. That's the problem. The information doesn't show up when I really need it. So using the big book to gather information is fine, except it's been proven over and over again. It's been a critical time with the information that it showed up.

The memories don't show up with sufficient force. It'll be different this time. Or it just won't show up at all. We have story after story in the big book where it just didn't show up at all. Fred on that trip had a cocktail with his dinner. They'll thought it all. And that's the one that I have to pay attention to. It isn't that I need to remember what happened last time because that won't stop me anyway. It's those metal blank spots that it can do and have happened where I need protection.

That you won't be there. I love you all dearly. I trust you with my very life. But at the time when I'm going to be in the most danger, you won't be there. And I know that from experience. I had an experience, I don't know, six, seven years ago. I was flying back from somewhere, a convention I'd given a talk. Nobody hurt me. I'm on my way home to my wife and my love dearly. I've done God's work. I'm a spiritually fit. Everything's fine. United Airlines had bumped me up into first class because they had an empty seat and needed mine in the back. And I fly a lot, so they do that once in a while.

I wouldn't pay for first class, but it's better. Evening flights that we had the reading lights on. I'm reading a book I've been waiting to read. They used real plates up there. Did you know that? There's no plastic. I mean, it was laid out pretty nice. I'm comfortable. Everything's fine. I'm reading the book and out of the corner of my eye. I saw the flight attendant pour this burgundy red stuff into my seatmate's glass.

And the light was hitting it right. It got my attention and I looked over at it. And my mind said, that really looks good. And it did. I'm not thinking alcohol. I don't have an alcoholic mind. I don't relate to alcohol anymore. Just that looks good. Then my mind said, I bet that's going to taste good too. Of course it would. Why else would

she give it to him? I'm not thinking alcohol. Then my mind said, I bet that's going to make that whole dinner taste better.

Damn right. Then a prayer began in me. I did not begin to pray. I did not need it to. I trust that I will be protected and safe in these kind of circumstances. And a prayer began. And I withdrew because I've learned to do that and got inside and listened. And realized my very next thought would have been. I probably ought to have one of those without ever a thought of it being alcohol. Twenty-seven years sober, spiritually fed. I'm in that kind of danger.

There better be a God here now. Because that's the kind of thing that will go on for me. You weren't there. You won't be there when it happens. And I'm sure that's not the only time that has occurred in my life. The good news is, since I've surrounded entirely to God, those blank spots haven't caught me. Okay. The spirit does begin to pray. Something will occur. It'll take me out of that. Kind of an interesting phenomenon.

So I think those of us who've been here for a while are in far more danger of drinking because of the truth than we are from lies. You would be truly hard pressed to present me with enough lies and justifications to get me to drink. It'll come out of nowhere for no reason at all. It's scary, huh? And you can't stop it for me and I can't stop it for you. The good news is, it makes it apparent for me to find and have access to a power of greater than myself that can solve that problem.

And that's what this is all about. It's to find that bar. Jeez, I got everybody depressed in a minute there, didn't I? I didn't drink! So you're all pretty comfortable with the allergy idea that Doc Silkwood puts out. To the best of my knowledge, it continues to get worse, not better. Yeah. But I still have the, whatever causes that craving, if I take a drink, is still with me. I can recover from a number of things that still have them. I'm not cured of anything.

The reason I say I still have it is I've watched the alcoholics after a long period of abstinence. And when they drink, it's likely never stopped. Yes, far as I know, I still got it. I'm not going to test it. Yeah, and it continues to get worse, never better. As far as I know, from what I can see around me, yeah. We're not cured of anything. What we have is a daily reprieve contingent on the maintenance of our spiritual condition.

And I love that word. Reprieve means the postponement of a death sentence. That's what it means. Okay. It's temporarily postponed and it's contingent on something. I've been given the gift, but it's still contingent on me maintaining my own spiritual condition. My conduct now in this world and in the spiritual realm, I'm responsible for that. Is that why you wake up in the middle of the night? When you're nervous, you're already, I'm always hungry.

Like a four o'clock in the morning, my stomach starts brown. I get real hungry and I eat, it doesn't help. I drink all I can drink, but I still wake up about an hour later and I'm still hungry or thirsty or something. It's been going on for about 30 days. So about two weeks after I stopped and it's still going on. It's just like I crave something, but I thought I was hungry. I thought I was thirsty. I didn't think it was the alcohol in school right now.

Dr. Bob had that craving for two years after he got sober. It took that long for the craving to go away. It

doesn't mean you have to, but he stayed sober. It's been happening every night about three or four in the morning for about a month. Okay. How long have you been sober? 45 days. I can't sleep at night. I know it's coming. It bothers me a whole lot. You are withdrawing from one of the world's most severe drug addictions.

Right. Alcohol is a separate addiction from heroin addiction. Don't mistake that. But your body needs some sugars and some starches and you ought to give it to me. It was 39, 29 alcohol and 10 drugs. So it's the combination I guess. Well, you're not going to die yet. It's going to take a while for the craving to stop. I don't know. Look at all of a sudden. You have somebody you talk to about there? Well, I call it her. You have the night I call it Valerie.

But it seems like it really bothers me. I can't sleep. I'm scared of it. I have soda. I mean, she's trying to let soda, but soda only lasts for an hour. You might want to try some Cheerios before you go to sleep. See if that helps. Oatmeal is really good. We'll keep you away. Do you eat these brown sugar? I won't hurt a thing. Stay away from white sugar. Orange juice and honey is what we used to detox it with. It tastes like hell but it sure sells the body there.

When you got to throw up anyway, what's the difference? This is serious stuff. This is real. There's a long detox period sometimes. Long detox period. I get amazingly involved in the step work. So when you wake up at three in the morning, you've got something to think about. Big book. I read talks falsely. She's alright. I mean, I have a good gene. I did all kinds of different symptoms. To me, I'm like, man. So if you're not going to do one thing again, the first one I want to do is talk about all those things that have happened.

This term, I know it all. I understand that. And then I'm going to say we're still on the top. Body aches, everything. We've found that if you address the spirituality, when a spiritual knowledge is overcome, we straighten out mentally physically. I had about six years of periodic cramps. Things come and loosen the muscles up. Just off and on, they got further and further away. My last drunk dream, I was about six years old.

When I had it, it was the last one I had. Just don't give them any power. Continue to work on the spiritual knowledge and the rest of it. And there's a price to pay. I'm an alcoholic. I think, okay, now I've changed. Everything's going to be fine. I don't know. When the day comes when suddenly your mind doesn't work, I'm scared to hell out me. About 15 years sober, he just shut down. Wouldn't remember anybody's name.

My wife's, my kids, it just shut down. Well, I did some damage up here. And apparently the path that the member was trying to use that day is washed out. I discovered a new path, but it doesn't always function right now. And it doesn't even matter. All right. Did you get your, I would rather be wrong about that than test it. The observation over the years has told me I'm absolutely on the money with that. It's still there.

Bob Olson and I were having lunch one day. I was about 13 or 14 years sober and he was 9 or 10. Nice lunch, nice place. We had some ice cream afterwards, which was kind of a treat. We don't eat much ice cream. We had all sauce on it and it was just really kind of nice. We both ate it and then both said it the same moment. That was good. Let's have another one. Which set the alarm bells off because we don't do that very often.

And so we checked with the kitchen and sure enough in that sauce was a loom liqueur. And our bodies immediately responded, let's have another. We didn't change our sobriety dates. That'd be stupid. We just prayed

right there at the table. But the experience was, for both of us, immediately, let's have another. It was based on a minute amount of liqueur in that sauce. So I don't take any chances. I know what will happen.

If you get that, you'll probably let your last defense. When the mind is saying it's okay, that whole thing will say, I'm going to give you a little pause. It also gives us common ground, right? Rich poor, male, female, up or down, it doesn't make any difference. We've got common ground, isn't that nice? We're different. It's okay to be weird. So what's the real problem? I'm going to come back to this piece out of Bill's story that I want to read because we're on a different track.

After the next break, we'll pick that up. Bill Talks on page 17 is it's a great fact for us that we've discovered a common solution. We have a way out on which we can absolutely agree. And join in reveling in harmonious action. On page 18, he talks about how that happens. Because we won't talk to doctors. I didn't want to talk to the psychiatrist. I got him smoking dope instead. It was much easier. Oh, yeah. I certainly couldn't tell the family anything.

I learned when I was little. They did not understand me. That's why I got thinking, even though I looked like him, I must have come from another planet. Because I had nothing in common with it. Nothing. But the ex-problem drinker who has found this solution and has properly armed with facts about himself can generally win the conference, the entire conference, we know that alcoholic in a few hours, still such an understanding has reached.

Well, nothing can be accomplished. If I'm going to be an effective 12-stepper, all I need to do is to have found this solution, go proper and armed with facts about myself, then you don't have to be alone. The minute any alcoholic believes there is hope, they will try it. Have you noticed that? And I have an obligation as a member of Alcoholics, not only when new people come here, to have a message that has depths and weight, because they are coming, putting their lives in our hands.

And if we let them down and shame on us, we give them bullshit and shame on us. They need a message that I needed a whole message. I was totally sick. Don't give me some pep. I got to have a real message. And that wasn't you can change entirely, that was a message to God. You don't ever have to be what you were ever again. We don't know what you're going to be. You may still be a jerk, but you'll be a new jerk. I work with inmates a lot.

I tell them the truth. I don't care if you want to continue to be a brewer. I don't care. Be a sober brewer, for God's sake. If I won't get caught that way. Because I know if they get onto this path, eventually they're going to stop stealing anyway. And this isn't about dealing with people's behavior. It's about dealing with their spirit. If you try to identify with me as a male, former convict, we're going nowhere. If you can deal with me as an alcoholic who's found a solution, we can go somewhere.

I live in a nice home, married to the same woman for 22 years and raised kids. That may not be your lot in life. But somewhere in there, something very similar is going to be what your heart's all or not for. You're going to belong somewhere, will you? You're going to be able to do something useful. In the sense of family, I think it's part of the human psyche. You're in it. This is family. Gathered together for common purpose.

With the welfare of the others, at least it's important it's my own welfare. Sounds like family to me. Active concern for the welfare and the growth of the people who are... that you love. That's the definition of love. One of them. Active concern for the growth and welfare of that which you love. That's family. So I talk a lot about family because that's where I come from. But it's true. Home group. It's family. I think we're in trouble when we say the home group is the best group in the country.

I don't know, I admit all of you. I know it's the best one for me at this time. Anyway. The man who's making approaches have the same difficulty. Linda, have you been able to identify with anything I said? Yeah. And this is a female who didn't lose anything. I'm a male who lost everything. Even his name. We're identified. Isn't that hopeful? You can do 12 step work if you can do that. You don't identify with everything.

She's a hope not. I'd hate to think you're as crazy as I am. Then he obviously knows what he's talking about, that his whole department shouts at the new prospect that he's a man with a real answer. A real answer. Show me how you live. Don't talk to me. You can talk to me if you can live it. I watched Bruce. Because he was saying things I really wanted to hear. So was Roy and so was Phil. But I've been phony too long and I've been hanging out with phony so long.

I want to see this in action. So I'd watch him after the school during the week. How they conducted themselves on the yard and on their jobs and with the other inmates. Bruce had something I really wanted. I'd be locked up for the night in my cell and he'd come by and visit with me. And it struck me one night. He's getting out of his cell whenever he wants to. And I wondered what he had. Eventually I got it. I want to finish this and became active in the program that started letting me out too.

All I was doing, he had convinced the administration that that continuing work with the alcoholics from the school was vitally important. And he didn't promise them rehabilitation. He said they will be easier for you to manage. That's what the prison authorities wanted to hear. That's what I sell. It would be easier for you to manage if you let us in. And they are. The administration got messing with us one day as a group.

Bruce scared me. He talked about resentment and how dangerous it was and all of a sudden he got furious. And I'm watching this. He got the furious he left the school, went across the yard and right into the associate warden of treatment's office. That's what we lost track of here. And I figured in the attitude he carried into that office he'll probably be in the hole within ten minutes. He was there for half hour or so.

They come back out jaunty and back up and they had quick messing with us. That impressed me. And an inmate could go directly to the authorities and stop them from messing with this deal. He did it not for himself, he did it for us. So he lived what he said. He put himself on the line for the rest of us. That impressed the hell out of me. I wish I could have been like that. At that time I was still a coward. And he demonstrated power.

Spiritual power. I'm sure he had gotten calm before he talked to that associate warden or he had gone to the hole. But the anger got him across the yard. And I learned another lesson. In God's hands whatever shows up he'll use it if I'll let him have it. Sometimes that's what it takes to get me out there on the firing line. When I served as trustee God used that a lot. I would come back from those board meetings just quick to death.

See I'm not trustee material. I'm just an alcoholic. When I'd go in there and talk about principles. Oh my

goodness. Some of them would be with me and some of them thought you're a weird kid. Get out of here. When I'd get all beat up as I tried to learn how to do this thing with some grace instead of fighting everybody. When I'd go back to the next I'd come home saying I don't need this in my life I'm resigning. In my life I'd say if you do they win.

And they'd take anger to get me back on the plane to go back again. I'm going to be okay once I got there. There's nothing like zero pulling a sword on. Oh yeah. Don't mess with zero. He has no holier than an altitude. Nothing whatever except a sincere desire to be helpful. There are no fees to pay. No access to grind. No people to please. No lectures to be a nerd. These are the conditions we found most effective. There's a quick check inventory for you.

I use when I present myself is this me? Or do I come off a little holier than that? Do I have an axe to grind? Are you another notch on my belt? Either is a sponsor or is a sponsor. Or is this me? A good place to check myself. Do I have a real answer? Oh yeah. That's one of the reasons I tell you that it's over 31 years. It's not to self-aggrandize me so that you'll know I have a real answer. It's been going on for a long period of time through good and bad.

The human condition means that things are not always the way I'd like them. At a 16 year old nephew, die. That'll kick your ass. But you stay sober through that too. What I've found that I think is so funny. In fact the older I get the funnier I think I am. Because I've been serious about a whole lot of things. Hardly anything would have been serious about it. Anybody ever feel abandoned? I've got a solution for it. I can give it to you in one sentence.

Then you get to go dig for it. This is the truth. Folks come and folks go. And some folks stay longer than others. That's the truth. On my age there's a new addendum to it. Some folks stay longer than they should. That's the truth that I found. The finding of it was a long process. You just opened the door. So we'll walk through it. I hear today in AA a lot. God isn't working for me. What the hell should he? What is it?

Oh, God, boy. Why should he work for me? I'm here to work for him. That whole attitude makes a difference in how you approach things. Maybe he isn't working for you. I ask people that. I don't feel good. So apparently if I'm feeling good, God's handy. If I'm not, God's not. I don't understand that. God's here good or bad. It doesn't make any difference how I feel. There are things that happen on this planet and if they don't fish you off, you're sick.

I just can't hang on to that anger. I have to find some way, because I'm incapable and I'm giving a prayer here. Please show me how to take a kind of internal view. Because I can't. And I'm showing. We just had that horrible. That horrible event at the compound. We're never going to get over it, ever. That's my backyard. With the presence of God, I can understand I'm never going to get over that. A lot of us won't. Okay.

I get to live with that. Can't fix it. Can't do anything about it. Can't change the thing. Except don't know why it happened. I'm baffled. I just know it hurts. And one of the things I learned early on is that sometimes you don't have to deal with your emotions. You just have to have them. And some things are completely incomprehensible. They're beyond my ability to even grasp the kind of evil that goes on sometimes.

My job is to make sure I don't do that. I don't participate. I quit war. I won't go. I've guaranteed that I won't go. They can't even draft me anymore. I'm a convicted felon. I'm a sex offender. I'm a dope addict. I'm on their papers. I'm a psychopath. And I'm just too damned old. And they kicked me out one time anyway. I quit war. I'm not going. That's the hard way to do it, by the way. But nobody has ever done anything to me.

Even the people who did things to me. Nobody did anything to me. But I didn't stand out there and say, have at it. In one way or another. I've looked back on my whole life. And it doesn't mean I always consciously did that. But I have discovered the truth. It doesn't talk about here. All of my troubles are of my own making. I must walk down that path a little bit, because I got young Deb helped me with that. That a workshop years ago.

She said, look, you got to understand at the time Deb was buttoned down. She was wearing combat gear, a hat button up to here, button here, combat boots, everything buttoned down. If you got this close to Deb, let me ask you this. When I was five years old, my grandfather started molesting me. What the hell could I have done to bring that above? Nothing. But that's not the problem. That was 14 years ago. What troubles me today is not what really happened.

It's what I have made of it. The very first time I remember the event, that's not what happened. It's already covered by my reaction to it. And by the allies I've tried to gain. And what they've said to me. So the 14 years down the line, what's troubling me, never happened. I created it. And if I'm going to get free and I want to be free, I've got to clear all that illusion out so I can get to the real event. What really happened, the old bastard ought to be horse whipped.

What really happened was wrong, and the strange thing is the only way I can get free of it is to forgive them for it. That's what this is all about. I've got to make it as if it never happened. And I can't do that. It takes the power of God to do that. And a recognition that anybody who could do that to a child is terribly, terribly sick. Just like me. Inventory has proven to me that given the right circumstances, I am capable of anything.

I'll kill, I'll rape, I'll steal, I'll lie, I'll cheat, given the right circumstances. What I need to do, because I don't live that way, is have something else running my life in such a way that those circumstances never come out. If you ever do something that you're so ashamed of, you can't even tell your sponsor? Yeah. God, I remember one of those. It was my last take it to the grave thing, and I'm sitting at a meeting at York Street and some guys talking about it openly.

Not about me, about him. He'd done the same thing. It's a matter of viewpoint. My dad and grandpa were the head of the Colorado Ku Klux Klan at one time. We had some really funky ideas in our house. And I've always known they were. But there was some effect there. Dad had a spiritual awakening and changed all that. Became a bishop in this church. Very spiritual man. He took his robes off and put them away. I left the robes on him for years.

How stupid of me. How stupid of me. And that's kind of what this is about. That's what forgiveness means. I've taken the robes off. So I can honestly say that I don't feel that anybody's ever done anything to me. Even those who did it to me. It's because they were either sick or I put myself in a position where that could happen. We got badly beaten for having sex when I was 11. It was a precocious child. And it was a young teenage kid who thought it would be fun to turn the whole neighborhood on to this thing he just discovered.

Hey, he was right. Good stuff. At any age. We got caught. Got beaten with rubber holes and told my penis was going to be cut off and I defended God and my mother. I mean, it was something else. It deformed me for a while because I bought into it. My justification was always in 11. What could I possibly have known was wrong? And then the truth came out through inventory. We were hiding. I may not have known what was wrong, but I knew it was wrong.

My troubles are a model making. Once I got that piece, I can say the punishment was a little severe in terms of the event. But what the hell? The party punishing me was just passing on. It would have been passed on to them. And if I don't break the chain, I'll pass it on too. The buck stops here were done. I took the robes off of it. That's the only way I know how to deal with this kind of thing. Abandonment, mistreatment, all that.

Thank God for Deb. For helping me understand. Clear away the wreckage of the past that I've created, then I can get to the event and ask God to show me how to take you kindly and tell them to you. Because I want to send them free. If I don't, they owe me. If I resent you, you owe me. You don't have to be alive. You owe me. You're in my mind. You're running everything. And I just don't want to do that anymore. I also don't want to be so mean-spirited.

And I will keep you in bondage in my heart. Long after you've gotten free. That's mean-spirited to me. It's a little bit more than just being sober in there. This is about living sober. I know because God got such a weird sense of doing things. I watched it happen to a kid I sponsor. If I continue to hate drunk drivers, guess who I'm going to get to sponsor. True. Once I ask for freedom from bonding yourself, if I don't let it go, I'll get to circumstances.

Well, that was a little pathway we took. Thank you, Dustin. You opened that door and we went to that help any. Just chided some light in there. Don't be afraid to shine light into the darkness. There's a worm in my head that comes out once in a while. If I don't shine a light on it, it may get me someday. And that one is, what if I'm not an alcoholic? I'm still there. So bring it out once in a while and challenge it.

Every time you work with somebody new, you start at the beginning, let's find out. It doesn't take me ten seconds for me to say yes I am. I've got all the symptoms. But if I don't let that out now and I don't question that, it'll grow. It'll hide in the dark and it'll catch me someday. There's another way to ask the question if you want to ask it. What makes you think you're an alcoholic? Why do you think you are? And then you answer that question.

I have this and this and this and this and this. Oh, that's what's described as an alcoholic. And working with new people is the best way to do that, because you have to go over that ground with them time and time again. Yeah, but... Well, sorry about that. You all agree with what we've been going over? Are you fully aware that when you need it, it won't be there? If it's just here, if it's just information. You mentioned that information is wonderful.

It isn't enough. I do things with information up here. If my ego catches any kind of information that has any power at all, it will misuse it. I'll shift from having the answer to having the answer. Yes, at that point we're not working on me anymore. We're working on you. I'm in danger. As long as I have an answer, we can work together. See? Our very lives as ex-problem drinkers depend on our constant thought of others.

Now we may help meet their needs. We're still laying the groundwork as to how to work this program. There's an idea. Our lives as ex-problem drinkers depend on our constant thought of others and how we may help meet their needs. Not mine. My needs are always met. Once I understand that whatever's going on must be what I needed. Since taking this stand, I've never had to look for a job, except the first day. That first day out of the penitentiary was an incredible day.

I wasn't supposed to get out. I still have the federal government five years, so I've rolled to the federal detainer. And I had prepared myself to go on back to the federal penitentiary. I could do AA there too. In fact, I still had a little of that attitude to take it probably to use me. That goes with the territory. I came out later on the jail for a week waiting for my federal hearing. We all knew the judge was going to send me back down to between Texas.

That's cool. It was over, I think it's the Memorial Day weekend, the one that happens in May. And at that time, they gave us \$25 in a size 80 suit to turn you loose. And the federal pro-offs and I both agreed with a long weekend. I only had 17 bucks left. It would be a really risky thing for me to be out for a long weekend right off of that. So I just laid in jail for three days and waited till Monday. And my sponsor had said, just four left, Canyon City.

He said, I wish they weren't even thinking about letting you go. You're not quite ready yet. So I spent those three days getting ready. I went back to this whole deal so that I would be ready. Meaning that when I walked out, I had no idea what was going to go on. I would trust and guide entirely and just go where I was told and do what I was told to do. And that's how I hit the street on Monday. I went back into court and the federal judge just surprised the hell out of everybody.

He turned me loose. It seems this parole officer had told him, we'll know whether this one's going to make it in six days or not. He's been going to AA. Let's put him out and watch him. We can always pick him up. So they put me back out. And what a day. I have never felt so close to God ever. I just, it was there. So I've got the federal parole thing taken care of. I went over to the state parole officer because I had to meet with him every night.

He said, he just very simply said, have a job by tomorrow or back you go and get out of here. That's clear. Went over to start job hunting and saw a sign on the bus that said, have exact fare. Drivers carrying no change. I could not get on the bus. Couldn't do it. Too fragile. Well, if I don't have the right fare, they're going to ask me to get off. I could not face that. So I walked. Got a job. I went down to a daily labor pool on the way out of the jail.

One of the guys just gave me a note. He said, go see Jack at this address. I went down and walked in and did what you had told me to do. I said, Jack, I just get out of prison. I'm on federal parole. I'm on state parole. I'm an alcoholic. I need a job. What do you got? He says you're just exactly what I've been looking for. Oh, yeah. Got me a little hotel room and some jeans. He took me down to Dixon's paper company.

Dixon doesn't hire ex-cons. But I'm not an ex-con. I'm a man when I've been to prison. And there is a difference. And Dixon said, well, starting tomorrow, he can unload boxcars as long as he stays at your payroll. We can't put him on our payroll. Fine with Jack and I still had half a day to go. And he was nervous. He said, I got a job I can send you out to, but I'm really nervous about it. He sent me out to Dixon paper, not Dixon, but to

send those laboratories places.

They make the kind of speed I like the best. And I spent the day unloading trucks of all kinds of goodies. Now, I don't believe God ever tests me. I test God all the time. But God uses whatever circumstances are at hand in order to make me aware of where I'm at. And as I was unloading the truck that day and I'm working with a kid who's got a patch on his arm because he just had a bad shot tonight before. I became fully aware that he has indeed lifted from me all desire.

It's gone. I didn't want anything. I just moved boxes. I worked so hard that day they offered me a full-time job. And I was given the wisdom to say no thanks. This is really not where I need to work. Yeah. Went on down and started with Dixon. Now, funny thing happened there. I had been taught by my sponsors, absolute honesty. So on my resume or on my application, I had to put down my job duties and one of those was drug smugglers.

I did. That's the job I had to put down there. I couldn't work in there for three or four months on the dock and the dispatcher called me and he had a funny look on his face. He said, did you really do that? I said, yeah, I did it. He said, did you get it there? I said, yes, I did. He said, well, I've been thinking, we got this little truck delivered paper to the print shops in downtown Denver. It's a tough rod. It seems to me that you have the skills to get stuff in here and there.

Do you want the job? So I got me my first real job because in God's hands the past becomes useful for a day or the time. I just did that because I was killing time. It's lunch time. And we're about to head off into some pretty serious stuff here. And the time you're going to get back together. It's five minutes to twelve. One minute.