

DON P ARCHIVE

Big Book Workshop

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Transcript

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You want to do that? I can show you how to do that. This book can show you how to do that. How It Works, it says. Process. We're not about to enter process. Okay. So far, we've been dealing with getting rid of old ideas. What, you want to get into the process? Yeah. Why don't you say so? We could have done this in ten or five? Now, we've been told that the people who did this have recovered. And I'm telling you, I'm a rebel.

We've never recovered alcoholic. Now, I'm going to find out who won't recover. It tells me right here, those who do not recover are people who cannot or will not completely give themselves to this simple program. Usually men and women who are constitutionally incapable of being honest with themselves. I don't believe there's anybody like that in the room or you wouldn't be in this room. Not this time of day. You'd have already heard this shit in the left. Who cannot or will not completely give themselves to this program? When they lay out the program, there's a series of steps that we will take. These are the things we did. You're the steps we took. And these are suggested as a program of recovery. The steps are not suggested. That's a misnomer. These are not suggested steps. These are steps that are suggested. If you want to recover, we suggest you take them all. If you're going to jump out of an airplane with a parachute, we suggest you pull the rip cord. It's that kind of a suggestion. And there are 12 things we did. There's actually only six things we did. But worse than done, we had to break them into pieces so everybody'd understand them. First, we admitted we were powerless over alcohol that our lives have become unmanageable. Have we done that yet? Okay. Then we came to believe that a power greater than our stills could restore us to sanity. Do we believe that?

Yeah. And they go on and on. The precise things that we did. My friend Charlie says that we and A have done a good thing and a bad thing because we took these steps out of the book. And we put them up on the walls so everybody could see what it is we're going to ask of you. The problem is, when we do that, the directions were left in the book. So if you want off the wall, A, yeah. Because this can be interpreted. The rest of it can't be. It's really specific. Okay. But this is, and what a wonderfully honest thing for us to do for new people, we're going to tell you right in front, this is what you're going to need to do if you want what we have.

Which is access to a power graven ourselves to solve our problem. That's what we had. What an order I can't go through with it. I mean, a casual look at this from where I'm standing is completely lost, hopeless, lying, cheating, thieving. But I'm not even sure I like God, much less wanting to do with him. I'm going to confess my shortcomings to other people. I'm going to tell somebody what I've done. Hey, I'm doing time for what you caught before. You ought to see what I didn't get caught for.

Okay. I'm going to clean that up. I'm going to have to look at the heartbreak I had because of what I do to my children. And my family and my people and all the folks that trusted me. No. What an order I can't go through there. And that's true. I can't. On my own, I can't do that. Don't be discouraged. No one among us has been able to maintain perfect inheritance to these principles. We're not saints. The point is we are willing to grow along spiritual lines. I'm willing to grow along spiritual lines.

The principles we've set down are gods to progress. And we claim spiritual progress, not spiritual perfection.

There are three things that are clear. We hope we've made clear by this point. In the chapters of the agnostic, our description of the alcoholic, and our personal adventures before and after, we've tried to make three things clear. That we were alcoholic and could not manage our own lives. Period. The problem we know human power could have relieved our alcoholism. God could.

But God could and would if he were sought. Not if he were found if he were sought. The willingness produces the result all by itself. That mean? Bob White used to tell us that all we really do here are comply with the conditions, which alcoholics hate to do, by the way. Comply is not a word that fits well into my makeup. I'm not a guy that's headed out the door. And you tell me I've got to go no I don't. I go out this door. No, you can't. You watch me. It's contrary.

If being convinced of these three propositions, we're now at step three, which is that we have decided to turn our one of our lives over the care of God as we understand it. What do we mean by that? Just what do we do? We're about to get really specific. Isn't that nice? What do we do? Well, the first requirement is that we'd be convinced that any life run on self will can hardly be a success. That wasn't hard for me to do.

I'm living in cell B49 right in the Colorado State Penitentiary, wearing air clothes, eating their food. It's not hard for me to understand that my life run on self will can hardly be a success, unless it was my intention to be a convict. And in searching my memory, I don't recall any morning that I ever woke up and said, I think I'm going to be a convict. This will be fun. Okay, so it's clear. What makes it clear to you? There's an event like that in your life. That's the memory we bank off of here.

Isn't that wonderful? Any life run on self will can hardly be a success. On that basis, we're almost always in collision with something or somebody. No, shit. What? Don't wonder I'm having so much trouble. This is a terrible couple of pages here. This strips me bare. Even though our motives are good, that hurt. I mean, yes, I was a convict, but my motives were always good. I was noble. Most people try to live by self propulsion. Each person is like an actor who wants to run the whole show.

It's forever trying to arrange the lights in the ballet and the scenery and the rest of the players in his own way. If only his arrangements would stay put. If only people would do as he wished, the show would be great. See, we delude ourselves these days into thinking that's an alumni trait. No, no, no. No, no, that's me. The best way in the world to control somebody is to allow them to control you. You got them. That's for three in the morning. Yes, I'm in control if I allow you to control me.

I'm in complete control. The minute I stop allowing you to control me, we're both free. Yes, you are. I'm sorry. It was a shooting star. That's true. Is that not true? Yeah. It's got to check into the Avalon source. Oh, yeah. Everyone including himself would be pleased. Life would be wonderful. In trying to make these arrangements, our actor may sometimes be quite virtuous. I played that one. I wish they weren't being so cruel. He may be kind, considered, patient, generous.

Even modest in self-sacrificing. I did that one really good. Modest in self-sacrificing. On the other hand, he may be mean, egotistical, selfish and dishonest. But as with most humans, he's more likely to have varied traits. And boy, that helped me. My view, my skewed view of being spiritually meant perfect. When a guy's helped me understand, it's a long way from that. Long way. If someone asked me the other day, do you believe that God is

love?

And I must tell you, I certainly hope that's not all. Because then it'll be based on what my perception of love is and that's written and limited. My observation tells me that's probably close to truth. That it better be more than that. Because I don't know that much about love, so I won't comment on it. I have varied traits. There is in me, as my sponsor reminded me from time to time, a mean streak. That means knowing full well I'm about to create damage. I just go ahead and deliberately do it anyway.

Just to see a scorn. And I hate that. And it doesn't happen very often, but every now and then. And I use my tongue for it. They took my sword away. But I've got a tongue that can put the markers over on you. And belittle you so quickly you don't even know what's happened for about ten minutes. And I hate that, but it's there. God please don't let me do that. I think sometimes carrying some of those things with me make it easier for me to remain a little less than totally arrogant.

Very crazy. I also have within me the capacity for magnificence of so do you. It is within me to make the ultimate sacrifice for you. And I used to think that meant to die for you. That's not what that means. Jesus said one time the greater love hath no man than to give his life for his brother. I believe that means to live it for him, not to die. And I have that within me. So do you. We do that all the time. Great sacrifices of our time and effort and energy and love.

For somebody else who is hopeless and helpless and may not even appreciate it. We do it anyway. So we have that balance going on. So what usually happens? Well the children come off very well. Of course not. You got six people all doing the same thing. I know a lot of actors and this is simplistic and not entirely true. But we talk a lot. And I'm told that one of the things that makes a good actor is their ability to become character centered. Self centered.

Which makes it very difficult for most actors to be good directors. There are some who are fine directors also. But most of them aren't. Because once I get character centered, it's clear to me that the whole play will be better if I'm center stage. And you're playing off of me. Not me playing off of you. When I get into that business I need more lines. My character is much more important than these lines are giving me.

We just get into that so they don't make very good directors. It takes somebody to stand back and look at the whole show. And it came to my mind one day that one of the most famous, and I say famous because most people remember it, are the lines of a little old English drawing room comedy. Right in the middle of a rather tense scene. This idiot comes in from the outside through the French doors with a tennis rack in his hands.

Is tennis anyone? And it turns the entire play. People of my generation all remember that. It was a key role. And that's all we ever did in a whole damn play. But it turned the play from this dramatic sequence to the next thing. I don't know why I told you that. It's where my mind goes. I remember Shakespeare's soliloquies when I remember tennis. He begins to think a lot of it doesn't treat him right and decides to exert himself still more.

He becomes on an X occasion still more demanding or gracious as the case may be. Still the play does not suit him. Admitting he may be somewhat faulty, sure other people are more determined. He becomes angry and ignorant and self-kidding. They are really getting rough here. What is his basic trouble? Is he not really a

self-seeker even when trying to be kind? Oh, yes. Is he not a victim of the delusion that he can rest satisfaction and happiness out of his life if he only manages well?

A pivotal thought for the new mind. To think that I can rest satisfaction and happiness out of life if I just manage well is a delusion. Once I get that, I can stop trying. Is it not evident to all the rest of the players that these are things he wants? And do not his actions make each other much to retaliate? Snatching all they can get out of the show. Is he not even these best moments of producer of confusion rather than harmony?

Amen. There it is. Self-interest, that's what it does. Even with good motives, I will cause this kind of havoc in my life. Let me tell you some of the places that's taken me. Children are a mainstay in my life. I have been with children since I was one. Been nine children that I've had direct responsibility for. I have seven grandchildren. There's all kinds of other children that keep showing up at my house. I have no idea where they come from.

We feed them, change their pants, and wait for somebody to claim them. Oh, we do. I have come to believe that raising children is a crime. I go about it. Raising children means me imposing my desires and thoughts and dreams on them and insisting that they fulfill those. When they used to do that, that's a crime. So I quit doing that. Encouraging children is a different deal. And there are certain disciplines you must give if you're going to help a child to become strong.

But they don't have to do with much. Gianna lived with us for a year. She was a little Italian granddaughter. She was a compromise between Gina and Annabelle. They decided Gianna is close enough. I like it. It's a good name. But Gianna is encouraged. Now, she follows people. She watches. My role with Gianna has been, what is that? Look at that. And she does that now. We took her to the zoo one day. And she'd be in one person's arms and she'd see an animal and she'd say, why is that?

And then she'd want into somebody else's arms. So she could say to them, why is that? She made rounds that way. All through that zoo trip, she just went from person to person. She watched my wife and her mother do the lady thing and put him makeup on. And it struck her at the dinner table one night. And she did her first makeup with brown gravy. Now, if I'm raising children, I can't let them do that. I got to make some sort of asset on myself.

They wouldn't represent me well. I don't raise children. We can wash their hair. We will eventually get new carpet. This is not the time for it. We had a shampoo the other day and before the stuff was even dry. It was macaroni and cheese. Gianna periodically has a temper tantrum. Somebody tells her no and makes it stick and she pisses her off just like it did me. And she'll stand and scream. I let her. I don't care. If it gets too loud, I just walk out of the room and understand her and scream.

It didn't take long since she stopped that. She'll find some other way to get to me. But that didn't hit. If I'm raising children, I can't allow that to happen. I can't allow her to express what isn't going to work so she can get to something that does. I'll either paddle it a little behind or I'll scream back at her. I'll do something stupid. With the presence of God, what do I need to worry about her screaming at me for?

I know why she's mad. I got mad the same way for the same reason that somebody said no to me and made it stick. Made me awful mad. She and I get along just fine. We really do. I don't bullshit her. She didn't bullshit me.

She's beginning to talk now. And it's really funny because it's almost intelligible. She's running whole strings of words together and you know she's really saying something to you. Okay. It's getting closer.

I'm beginning to hear what she's saying. It doesn't really matter whether I understand what she's saying or not. She's communicating with me and I communicate back. Is that right? Is that true? Why are they here? You guys do about the same thing when you come to my house and go through the big bubble. I don't want to be the stage director for the child's life. I don't want to be the stage director for the people I sponsor for their life.

We have no idea what God has in mind for you. All I can do is show you how to find that out and you and he will discover that along the way. And I hope we can have some fun doing it. So I'm a terrible sponsor when it comes because of this. To have you come to me with relationship problems. I'm really bad at that. I have never figured out how to have a successful sick relationship. I have no advice for you. Well, yes I do.

I have one thing. Quit it. Move. Or with the guys I sponsor, generally, why don't you get out of there and quit hurt her. Just leave. Pack your shit to go. There's no business being here in the first place. I'd put you in jail if you did that to me. Where's that effect? So I'm no good at that. Don't call me and say, which of these jobs should I take? I don't care. Take one. But I don't care. Take one. If you discover six months from now you don't like it.

Go back and take the other one. I don't care. I'm no good at that. Would you like to find out how to make that kind of decision on your own? Come on over. We'll walk through how you, the decision making process. Because it's in here. I can show you that one. Joe was such fun. Just as we get to inventory. We get to fair inventory and he gets arrested for illegal gambling. And he's scared to death. And my comment was, what?

Great timing. Now is the time to inventory that. The timing couldn't be any better. We got to the sexy inventory and two ladies show up pregnant. My comment is what a wonderful sense of timing. Now you get to run all that through the inventory and find out where you're responsible. Because I'm not going to direct you. I don't know. Maybe his job is to impregnate the whole world. Maybe he's supposed to be a leader. I don't know.

I really don't. I doubt it. But if this is me and my sickness, then being well means I'm not going to do any of this. I have come to conclude, God doesn't care what kind of job I have. He really doesn't. Not the least I've been interested. I'm to serve him wherever I am. It doesn't make any difference what the job is. I can be me on any job. There are some things that come by and I don't know if you've noticed, but when you get kind of saying, there's always at least five or six decisions.

Opportunities are constantly flowing by. I've tried to quit three times in the last year. I can't even quit. I won't let me go. They keep offering me a deal I cannot refuse. Pretty soon they're going to be paying me for doing nothing if I keep working or right. Except I like what I'm doing. I liked what I was doing when I was a roofer. My son, I never tried to sell the roof in 11 years. I didn't sell the roof. I'd get a lead and I'd take the man out there and go on his roof.

I would do my best to see, first of all, did he need any service? If he did, would my way of doing it be a maximum benefit to him? If not, I would give him to somebody else. One job my son was going half nuts because the guy and I stood on the roof for half and I were talking about God. Not Russ. He's want me to get the contract signed. When we finished the guy, I said, oh, by the way, give me a bid. When we went down, got the

job.

It didn't matter what I did. I could be a service wherever I am. Selfishness and self-centered is what we think is the root of our problem. How easy that has made my life. If I'm having a problem, I know it is either because of selfishness or self-centered. Some aspect of self is kicking up. There are no other problems. Whatever's going on is only a problem when I feel hurt or threatened. It's affecting me and my desires and my ambitions and my pride or my prestige or whatever.

Driven by a hundred forms of fear, self-delusion, self-pity, self-seeking, we step on the toes of our fellows and they retaliate. Sometimes they hurt us seemingly without provocation. But we invariably find that at some time in the past we've made decisions based on self which later places in a position to be hurt. That's true for me. I've not been able to track anything that I didn't put myself in a position to get hurt.

Sometimes it had nothing to do with this event directly. But I got involved in the kind of thinking or kind of activity that later on caused me to be hurt. Yes, he did that to you. But who picked him? Just that kind of loose. Who picked him? I love that part of it too. I get to rob me by people responsible for that nowadays. She threw me out. She should have. I would have too. Or if it really is somebody bothering her, who picked him?

If I can keep that in my mind, who picked him? I can get some freedom. So our troubles we think are basically of our own making. Do we think that? Yeah. Sails sometimes. Unless it's really bad. They arise out of ourselves. And the alcoholic is an extreme example of self-woven riot. Boy, you didn't think so. Extreme example. I like that. I like extremes. Oh yeah. If I can't be Mr. Plain, I want to be Mr. Super dirty. It's got to be extreme somewhere.

I tried to be Superman. At one point I had a lovely wife and my first child. And I'm really on fire to set the world on fire. Took a job with a little insurance company on a debit. You don't know what a debit is? That's the five and six dollar premiums that you go around and collect because otherwise you're not going to get them. Low end. In a little over seven months I had sold \$800,000 in new premium on the debit. Unheard of.

I was about to be in the millionaire's club my first year. I didn't know you couldn't do that. I'm just on fire. The problem was I hadn't learned yet that the money I collected wasn't mine until it went through their books. So things weren't quite going to balance right. And I had to take my last month's check and put it into the kitty to make sure that was square and of course then I quit. Went back to Kansas City and became what would be what to work for an IBM training school.

And in three months I was sales manager. And in six months my family was gone because I started drinking because I wanted to set the world on fire and impress her and the parents. And it can do that. We're alcoholic. We are quick studies. You put me on the line on a new anything and I'm off and running and I'm incredible because I'm a quick study. I want everybody to notice me and like me and approve what I'm doing and I learn how to do that and off we go.

But don't get distracted because I will and I'll veer off the path here somewhere just about the time you think the boy's going to make it this time. I'm gone. I take a drink to celebrate or whatever. I was always truly afraid of success. Not failure. Failure's neat. People are very kind when you fail. I'll help you. And if you work it right,

don't only help you. They'll take care of you. They'll have her. I just knew that if I did anything right, that it was dumb luck.

And I knew that tomorrow morning you're going to want me to do it again. And I don't know how I did it the first time. So I became really afraid of success. Well, I've learned if I do anything right, it's dumb luck. No. Now I should get confused by that. I'm not going there. Above everything we alcoholics must be rid of the selfishness. We're entering into a new area. We do not need to get rid of the alcohol at this point.

It's already gone. If you've gotten here, you're already sober. You've been alcohol-free for a little while. You wouldn't get this far. Day and week, month, year, 22 years. Above everything else, including alcohol, we must be rid of the selfishness. Selfishness and self-centeredness. That's the reason my problem. Not drinking. Drinking is a symptom of my problem. That's what it says. We must read kills this. That's pretty strong statement.

Selfishness will kill me. I've been thinking that I have to operate on self, or I'm going to die. Because you don't care. Selfishness will kill me. God makes that possible. There often seems no way of entirely getting rid of self and saying, I love the way Chuck put it. You can't solve the problem with the problem. You've got to solve the problem with the answer. Selfishness and self-centeredness and my mind are the problem.

I can't use them to solve the problem. I've got to have God's help just to find God. Good. What a relief. Because I've been looking for a long time and couldn't get it found alone. Many of us had moral and philosophical convictions in the Lord, but we could not live up to them even though we would have liked to. Just the one I was loving will discover is about myself last year in this area. I still cannot live up to my principles, but I live by them.

There's nothing to reach for. That whole piece is gone. I don't have to live up to anything. I don't have expectations. And if you have expectations of me, shame on you. You're in for a great disappointment. I am who I am. But I live by principles. That's really very uncomfortable sometimes, you know. To live a principle in life in a world that doesn't always sometimes make you an outcast. Okay. I'd rather be an outcast than what I used to be.

Sometimes makes you fool. Hell, I spend a good party every day being the fool. When you're around grandkids, that's what they like best. I mean, they're mother and her dad are all the time being parents. And the one thing, if you've been raising kids, you know the worst crime of all is one we all do, is I'm bigger than you. That's why. No matter what you're doing, the bottom line is I can pick you up and put you somewhere and keep you there.

Isn't that lovely? But that's parenthood when most of us understand it. Grandparents are fools sometimes. And I love their old. I don't baby talk her. That's why she's beginning to learn to talk. But I make noises at her. She thinks noises are fun. I picture this. I got a two-year-old to do this and then send her home to her mother. And I told her what that was. That somebody's ass coming out of their head coming out of their ass.

I don't know if she'll remember that, but I hope. She loves to give me stuff because I respond. I react. That's what we're supposed to do. She gave me a little candy the other day. I bet into it. It was tangy. I kind of do that. She laughed. And gave me another one. And I bet into it. And she went. And we both laughed. That's the role of

the fool. Good role. Not bad. It's good for people you sponsor to. Real good for them.

Paul came to me one time and asked me if I'd teach him to play. Three or four-year-old man. Didn't know how to play. So I took him go-karting. We're out there with all the little six and seven-year-olds pretending we're race car drivers. I went a great time. Oh, I lost Paul on the ski slopes and tied on the ski. And he got serious about it. No, he became a millionaire, as a matter of fact. It seems. Neither could we reduce our self-centered as much by wasting your trying on our own power.

We had to have God's help. Now, if that's true and it's within me, that's where I gotta go. And all I have to do is clear away the stuff that's blocking me. You gotta come out. This is the how and why of it. First of all, we had to quit playing God. Any time I decide what your life is supposed to be, I'm God playing. Any time I decide what my life is supposed to be, I'm playing God. I'm told in here what God's will for me is over and over and over again.

I'm to be happy, joyous and free. I'm to be kind. I'm to have a genuine tolerance for other people's opinions and attitudes. There's all kinds of things in here that I'm supposed to be. What's mine or my other? That's a arm. Oh, okay. Well, first of all, we quit playing God because it didn't work. Best reason to fall. It just doesn't work. Next, we decided that here after this drama of life, God is going to be our director.

Whatever role I'm assigned, tomorrow, today I'm having to do the soliloquies of Shakespeare. I've got a long run, an all-day play here. That's my role today. Tomorrow, I get to tennis anyone. Yeah. Tomorrow Sunday, my newest grandson's christening is tomorrow. I have no part in that whatsoever except to go to the party and pretend that Catholics really are okay. They're not all bad. Yeah, tomorrow, I have no role to play except Doning Grandfather.

I'm going to pick my mom up, bring her to the party and take her home. She's 89 now and they won't let her drive anymore. But she wants to come to the kids, christening. I will miss the christening, by the way. This comes first. It must. And my family understands that the timing could have been better when they planned the christening, but I'll be there for the party. And that's the most important part, anyway. It's the party where I'll play the fool.

She thinks that that made my mom fucker, you should see what I've got for her. She's going to get one impact. The new, all-toid, one of Green's are wonderful. He's the principal and we're his agents. They're trying to give me some images I can deal with, because I still have to deal with the images. You're a salesman, aren't you? Are you a salesman? No, what do you do? You're dangerous. Boy, would you explain the principal and the agent as you understand it?

Salesmen understand principal agents. The principal is a guy that owns the business. He decides what the product's going to be, decides what the price is going to be, even decides what the sales strategy is going to be. As his agent, I simply carry out that directive about right. Alex? Yeah. He's the principal. Yeah. Yeah. He's the father and we're his children. Had a little bit of difficulty with that idea, because at the time I first was introduced to it, I wasn't that keen on my dad.

I was pissed. Had some resentments. Some anger. And then through peripheral contemplation, which I

commended to you, discovered the real reason I was mad at my dad was that I have deep within me a full and complete understanding of what father is. And he didn't match up. Nobody could. It's the fundamental idea of God. And I knew what that was and he didn't match up and I was pissed about it. It kind of helped clear the deck a little bit.

It doesn't mean that what he did was always right, but it helped me to come to some understandings. Because my freedom depends on my forgiving all of that somewhere, letting it go, making it as if it didn't happen. Somewhere on the way, I've got to get to that. So, I can accept the idea that he's the father and we're his children. I have a clear picture of what that's supposed to be. I'm not going to work with that. It also gives me a picture of how I can relate with you.

If for all his children you truly are my brothers and sisters in a very real way. We're kin. I can relate to that. I can operate from that. I think A.A. is a big family. I also believe that like any family there's immediate family and there's kissing cousins. They're still all family. But most of the time I need to be around my immediate family. I can tolerate kissing cousins and even have fun. And that's why there's so many groups.

We all have our own little kinship things going on. I think we all tend to be part of the same family because we're big book people. Folks from the other family aren't here today. They're not interested in the big book. And there's nothing wrong with that. It's just a different family line where their approach is different or they've got something else to do. I don't very often go to my blood family's reunions. We just don't have that much in common.

One of the reasons I don't fit there is I don't fit there. I love them all dearly. We do some things together. My mother and sister and all the rest of that matriarchal end of the family. Because my sister produced women mostly. They all like to go play bingo and some other thing. I don't even know what it is. Yeah, you just said. Bunkle. Bunkle. For me Bunkle is a scam. I don't know what there is. I don't do that. I don't have any fun doing that.

So we don't do that together. My brother and sister and I have a cabin up in the high country of Colorado. Meaning that we all pool our money to get it. We don't go out there. Hardly ever. That's their deal. And I'm contributing to it as part of my way of making a man you might see. I'm part of the family. I have access if I ever want it. But Jackie and I hit the road. We don't have somewhere else. We don't lock ourselves in the cabin.

But my brother just loves it. And I'm able to contribute something to his happiness with it. And he takes me up now and then to show me the new edition he's put on. It's great. But I don't spend a lot of time with him because we have different interests. My brother and I both got clear with that, you know, discussion one time. And discover we're both looking for the same thing. We're both spiritual men trying to serve God and have a spiritual relationship.

And he does his through his music. And I make my music this way when we're doing the same deal. So I can go along with the children thing. We can play and have fun and we should. Most good ideas are simple and this concept was the keystone of the new and triumphant arts through which we passed the freedom. I was reading that in a reformatory one time and one of the kids says, I don't understand a word that this guy just said because Bill wrote in New England English.

And this young kid only spoke street American. So sometimes I have to change that. That's a great picture. This is simply the beginning. This is where you enter into. That's what the artist of freedom is. You enter into the new path, the new way of living, the new way of thinking, the new relationship with God. I'm going to walk through and into the light. I'll examine the darkness from the light, not the darkness. The first time I examine the darkness within me I did it from the darkness.

Now I'm going to step into the light and then examine the darkness and it works better. Okay. That's a brand new image. I've never said that before. I really like that one. Write that down. Let me find out something for you guys. It's quarter after five. How long do you want to keep this up? I'm here until one o'clock tomorrow and I'm going home. We can stop at your whenever you want. We can continue to pursue this for as long as you want, but I need to have you tell me.

Because it's getting close to supper time. You want to come back after supper? You want to call it here? What do you all want to do? What's your pleasure? Okay. When do you want to go to supper? Kind of thought so. Is it storming? Good. It would be cool tonight. Yeah. Yeah. You know, we've had two and three inches in an hour out there for the last couple of weeks. You know, it's simply how I look at this next process.

Because you can read most of it, but there's some views of this that I know work. And then I'll tell you some more stories. I'm on a good one telling stories. I'm glad we're out of this last piece because it's so technical. It'll be so beautiful. It's Joseph. I need to know. Anything that's down here? I don't. There it is. No. I'm glad. We just have an agreement, John. Whenever there's going to be a tape of one of my talks, I mention his name.

And whenever he's talking, it's going to be taped, he mentions mine. Oh, okay. Let's take it back. Take it back. No, we'll go back. How far back did we go, Joe? We served together along the way. Ten years? It was 89, yeah. Ten years. He was there the night that Charlottesville thing happened to me. We're going to talk about that. Here, what about that show? What about that show? Yeah, I'm going to tell you about it. Yeah, I'm going to tell you about it right now.

Right. I'm going to get started. With the little time we have left, of course, I'm going to spend most of the time just kind of telling stories and trying to move us on because we're just at the third step and we want to do some things there. But one of the things that happened in my sickness is I put my mother in a position to say to me on Christmas day, you and your children can't come to my house anymore because they can't stand watching you die.

And there's no way to this day that I can figure how you straighten something like that up. You just did it anyway. In addition to that, one of the things that did along the way in my need was that I stole her \$2 bill collection. And 16 notes, I'm cursed with the memory, and that never got cleared because when I came out and began making amends, it was during that period of time in the early 70s when \$2 bills went out of circulation.

And so I could tell her about it, but I couldn't replace it. Well, at the assembly in Charlottesville, I was on the board at the time, and as a result, I had to show up everywhere. Anyway, they had me down. And part of the trip was a tour up to... Monticello. Munchilla. And of course, he's on the \$2 bill, and they had boxes of them. That's what they gave us change in souvenirs. So I bought 16 of those bills to take home.

And I love drama. Remember, I told the story that night because I'd become aware that God can take my very worst thing and turn it well. But here I'm going to get a chance to make amends to my mom. Several people cried, and it was a fun night. So I took them on home and gave them to her. She was a bit stunned. She didn't know quite what to do with it. She pretended it didn't matter, and it really did matter. Then I'd gotten them back to her.

Two weeks later, I got a letter from Charlottesville from somebody anonymously that had \$2 bills in it. And it burst on me that God could use me as an instrument and took one of the worst things I think I've ever done and turned it into a possible tool of healing for other people. Someone else had done the same thing and for whatever the reason could not make direct amends. So they sent them to me to give them to my mom.

And for the last 10 years, \$2 bills have been showing up. I quit telling the story and they still show up. She got \$2 bills now from Canada, all over the United States. One of the Polynesian islands has a \$2 bill. I sent it in and she's very careful with them. She takes them just as she gets them. It doesn't smooth them out or anything, however they come. She puts a little paper clips, a little tags to where that one came from.

She thinks we're a little weird. But she asked me, why is this happening? And I told her each one of these represents someone getting free of some past guilt. Some alcoholic straightening up the past. And my sister tells me that over the years she's got two collections, one that I replaced. And by the way, I bought an extra bill for that one. One past what you owe never hurts. But she takes this other great big box of \$2 bills my sister says.

And when her friends come by, she drags it out and tells them each of these represents someone healing. From a deadly disease. And my son's part of that. That's the show that's built here. I had fun getting over there. Remember, they had to send a newspaper reporter to fly me over to a private plane. Because for some reason, we had hell of a weekend, I'm telling you. Bill Bailey was still with us and running the show.

That was a good assembly. And a lot of good came from it. That's the story. If all a lot, God can take whatever it is and turn it to the good. So, had one lady catch me afterwards and somebody was giving me a \$2 bill and said, you got a really good thing going there. I think I'm a steal at story, but I want to use \$100 bill. The other day, the other day, several months ago, someone sent us each. A 1953, so I guess it was a silver certificate, a gold certificate, an original, uncirculated in a frame.

One for her and one for me. So the dimensions keep changing. So we have come to a place in this little gathering where we made a decision. God is. And I'm inclined to think we've decided that we may want to surrender to that. Now, the experience precedes the event, the event being the third step prayer. And let's see what the experience is. See if you have had the experience in any dimension at all. It doesn't have to be a total thing.

Bill prepares us for this surrender by saying, if you have come with me this far on this journey, this is probably what you're feeling and it's kind of what it looks like so you don't have to be scared. We had a new employer being all powerful. He provided what we needed if we kept close to him and performed his work well. Have you kind of experienced that? Is there a sense that I'm now not working for me anymore? Okay.

Established on such a footing, we became less and less interested in ourselves and our little plans and

designs. More and more, we became interested in seeing what we could contribute to life. Has that occurred in some measure? We're no longer 100% self-centered. We're about 85, 90. Every now and then I'll think about you without wanting something back. As we felt new power flow in, have you felt new power? Mm-hmm. Okay.

As we enjoyed peace of mind, and that's very clear in my mind, that doesn't say as I get peace of mind, it says as we enjoyed peace of mind. I have finally learned to enjoy peace of mind. I never did before. When I got quiet up here, I had to start something. This has spooked me. Have you had the time when you enjoyed some peace of mind? I'd sit quietly and say, oh, this is nice. I'm sitting quietly, which immediately takes you out of that.

As we became conscious of his presence, I have become conscious of where I am God is. We began to lose our fear of today, tomorrow and a hereafter. We were reborn. Has that occurred anywhere along the way? See what it has. That says, here's where we are. I'm so grateful for these kinds of things and for the people that shared them with me because I didn't know what was going on. There's several other books that I love, by the way, spiritual books.

They did not get me sober. They don't keep me sober, but I love them. Because what it did was describe what was happening to me... put words on it for me. His Lord's Prayer straightened us from things that I believe and now it confirmed. There's a little book called, The Practice of the Presence of God, which is the story of the old monk, the Lord's. For me, he can confirm some things that I'm experiencing, to you. Thomas Merton's new seeds of contemplation. Very hard to read. What a book. Really straighten some stuff out. New seeds of contemplation. She's hovering again. Can you hear me anyway? I'll try to talk up a little bit. So we're now at step three. Now I'm not gonna try to go through this whole thing but let me please give you a picture of what this means to me. In spiritual terms, amen is a closure of a prayer. It means so be it. This piece is done. So be it. It is so. The word God is always used as an invocation. It's the recognition. This is who's here.

So I look at the big book and I see the word God at the beginning of this third step prayer. That tells me I'm starting something. A long prayer. Because I don't find an amen until I get to the end of the seventh step prayer. It has led me to conclude and act as if everything between the word God and the third step. Amen at the end of the seventh are all part of the same prayer. And prayer takes on a whole new meaning for me. It's not just words and it's not just thought, oh that's really real pain. She did that on purpose.

No this is fine. Just sit down. She's done good. You got to give her credit. So prayer then becomes ideas, conversation, and activity. Prayer is my commitment to this surrender. And what does a surrender say? Let's just take a look at it first. Because it's a pretty powerful little prayer in itself what we call a third step prayer. God I offer myself to thee to build with me and to do with me as thou will. My life is no longer my business if I say that. Do with me and to me and of me as you will. Relieve me of the bondage of self that I may better do thy will. My problem is I'm in bondage to self and it doesn't say to me the bondage of self so I get to feel better since you remove it so that I can do your way better.

May or may not feel good. It's no consequence. Take away my difficulties. The victory over them. May bear witness to those I would help. I love and that way of life. Take away my difficulties. That's not these out here. The difficulties I'm having being honest. Being able to trust you. Being able to pursue this thing with some purpose. Take away those difficulties so I can tell you that he did that for me. You're having trouble writing

inventory. God removed my difficulties and presented me with the truth and made it possible. You're having trouble being kind. It can remove that difficulty. Caught up in self. It can remove that difficulty. Not so I get to feel better but so I can tell you about it. This whole thing keeps going back to that for me. This is not for me and so I can tell you about it because it's for you not me. My sobriety is not for me. It's for you.

We thought well before taking this step. Making sure we can blast venom or pills other way to him. At this point of my sponsoring somebody they get to go home.