

Steps and Service Workshop

2002 | Part 3 | Reading edition

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Transcript

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Call It. We just had a group conscious, consistent of two incredible alcoholic minds. We're going to have a three-hour meditation. Yeah. No day of water come out of that. We want to take just a minute before we get rolling and pose a little question to you. Everybody is here for a reason. Everybody came here either to get in out of the sun or whatever. But folks have got a reason for it. We've gone through some stuff this morning that I really enjoyed visiting. But part of our purpose is to try to help everybody here get what they're looking for, the best we can. And so we're at a point. You've sort of seen that we make it up as we go. And absolutely no way to get this train off track. It just stays there. And it winds up getting on track.

Real quick, give us some feedback, if you would, in terms of what you'd like to see visited before we get out of here at quitting time today. And we'll see how well we can respond to that. Anybody? Yes, a little more depth on the effect. I can tell you in one brief sentence. When we broke here, you were all standing out in the parking lot talking to each other. We have been incredibly affected. That's the marker. We also made you hungry.

At meetings, a good meeting people hang out. They stay late and they go do other things. That's what we're dreaming about. If everybody breaks and goes home, there's something missing out of that in the spirit. Alan mentioned a couple of things that I'll just throw out. If you may, is in the general area of sponsorship. I've kind of alluded to that before. A couple of real issues that are weighty for us to have to do with effective relationships is when do you discontinue a relationship and sponsorship if you just believe it's run its course.

How do you deal with that? Some people use a crude word like firing, but it's not necessarily that. It's just recognizing it. The other thing is how you deal with people who are under medication and it poses some real challenges in terms of discerning when you can do effective work, how to responsibly deal with it. Is that covered, Alan? Okay. Those are good points too. I just would like to hear your experience with the work staff.

When all else fails, go to the steps. Okay, good job. Hard casey. But persistent cases. How do you deal with resistant people? My mind just takes off with that. Anybody else? Yeah. Yeah, well. Yeah. Okay. Yeah. Gotcha. All dressed up with nowhere to go. Okay. Yeah. Good deal. You could have been a contender. Anybody else? Of course you know either one of those could go for a week. Yeah. Yeah. That's an excellent thing.

How you get it from the concept stage in the rooms into real stuff before we live. Yeah. Good stuff. Yeah. One more. Like we didn't have enough to do. You remember all that though. I'm sorry. Yeah, I'm going on. Help me just one day. You said be self supported through your own contributions. And then I couldn't quite follow that second part. I couldn't hear it. No, I heard it then. I'm just not incredibly brilliant. I have trouble following something.

I'm having trouble connecting and self supporting in that spiritual connection. Yeah. You've got a connection in there. Okay. You all obviously know that if we try to address those, we're going to be here until sometime in the middle of next week. However, it will allow us to tell some stories we can illustrate each one of them, sometimes a couple of them, from our own experience. If that's suitable, I left my lecture notes at home.

I left my addressing this notes at home. Yeah, I hear what you're saying. I've got personal experiences. You're talking about the application of spiritual principles in the real world. The essence of what I heard about here. How do you do that? Well, let me address remorse first because I know about that. Guilt is one I have been caught violating one of your rules or laws or principles when I feel guilty. Very easy to deal with. I wait for you to tell me what kind of time I have to do.

It's the payback. When I do that, and as soon as asked down or shortly before it's done, I just go my merry way. It's easy. Remorse and shame is when I have caught myself violating one of my principles, one of my true beliefs, violating who I am, and there is no payback. I'm going to tell you a little story. This one hurts, and I like to keep it fresh because you've all got one of these. We all have an ace in the hole, father, mother, uncle.

We've got a place where when all else fails, I go back and rest with you. My dad was that. During the last part of my sickness, I was part of a subculture. I'm one of the freaks that came out screaming out where there's dope. There's hope burned down the city hall. We lived underground. There's a real culture out there. Anyway, we were resting in Albert called me to Albuquerque. Albert said, we've got 30 kilos of good marijuana on this farm.

And our driver got it, and we need somebody to go get it. Now, get the whole picture. At the time, I'm a single parent to two little boys. One, six. I'm trying to be a parent, but we're on the road. Don't want to get too dramatic. Albert says, we need somebody to get it. Would you do it? And I said, of course, Albert. I should give you some dimension of where I'm at. I'm trying to keep these kids safe, and I just accept the job of smuggling.

And I didn't do it for the money. I did it for prestige. It was the only one in the United States they could think of to call. To go in the old Mexico. It's a job now. If truth was, Albert had been told to call me. They said, call Prince because he's crazy. We took the job. I stopped drinking, but I'm a little bit away. Did the math. Got my head clear. Math was necessary. How much volume is there in 30 kilos of marijuana that was packed in?

I needed to know. What kind of box can I put? I'm saying now. I'm functioning. Clean the boys up, clean me up. Young American to reach the father. Had them run a VW van. Somebody else's name. And had them get us a place to stay. At this point, I have nothing to do with the deal. It falls apart before I get there. I'm not in it. I'm not stupid. We got into Juarez. I got the van and got us into Juarez. I didn't pick the stuff up. It was lying in a motel.

They picked it up and then tripped. The hotel they'd picked for us, of course, was just a whorehouse motel in Juarez. We immediately moved into the Holiday Inn style place. That volume fits perfectly in a single air to open the end up and stuff at the map and reseal it, put air in it. That cuts the smell down. And on top of that, I put dirty diapers. On top of that, I put my two little one-way hip and border crossing.

I turned to the children and right out of nowhere screamed at them, scared them. So no payback for that except the one I found here. In the four-step, there is a promise. It is so profound. Face and be rid of. I didn't come here to just get fixed. I came here to be changed into the kind of person who's not capable of committing that act ever again. It's the only thing I know to do, as well, to change so profound. But I'm no longer that person.

Now I still have to deal with the fact that I've got to clean that up for the kids. They're scarred. And we'll always be scarred. We're eating the rain and we're looking better from it. So the answer is change so profoundly.

You could never do that again. Total surrender. As long as I'm capable of committing that kind of an act, I cannot live with myself. I can't deal with it. How can you deal with that kind of thing? You just have to be differently.

And that's what I did find here. That's precisely what occurred. Then the next job is to tell you that, so you can get off your own bed. Because like it or not, that's the best I could do. That's pretty sad. I'd rather die than be that ever. If you don't have to die, you need to be something even better. Let me mention two different levels of remorse that I think about Wilbur. One is that remorse comes when I fail to follow my hunchies.

What I'm talking about is a different level of the day-to-day things that are building up remorse. Because what I found is that when I listen to my hunchies and I do what I feel the urge to do, if I don't do it, I always regret it. It's a real message. Now, if I've got a friend sick in the hospital and I have a hunch that ought to go see him, if I don't, deeply remorse. And I think that's the signals about being in tune with the calling voices, if you will, but the things that I feel spiritually driven to do in those hunchies.

And if I take over and impose my judgment, I nearly always have remorse about that. What I've learned is that my first hunch, whether it's a spiritual signal or not, but my first impression about something is usually the most correct one I'll ever have. And if I follow that up with a whole bunch of thinking, all I do is screw it up. And after a certain amount of a whole bunch of turmoil and diffusion, I don't mind it right back where I started, but it went off from too late.

So that's one level. The other that I think I'm talking about, our program is designed to provide the surgery for the soul, that you're from deep remorse like that. And I have some. I think we sort of visit steps a little bit, this thing. I believe that what starts to emerge in the fourth step and then gets crystallized in the eighth and ninth are the surgery in the soul, where I start getting rooting out those causes and conditions.

And the enormous damage that has come from my defects of character. And my belief is, whether it's true or not, is certainly my belief, is that every time, whether it's gravity like he's talking about, or gravity like in my case, where I took human life, all of these things have an enormous weight. And so do those far lesser things that make up in the business. And my belief is that I will never have the freedom that this program promises until I take that surgical procedure and give it my best to make right those wrongs.

And so it's one thing to recognize and deal with it, but if I don't have to figure it out and deal with it, what I have to do is take the steps and let it happen. And if we don't, I think we pay an awful price because those things become the anchors that we drag through life. And I won't be free till I'm able to turn them loose and just kidding myself that it wasn't all that bad, it's not enough. Just having somebody try to placate me and say, oh, you weren't that bad, it's not enough.

What I have to do is root out those things that beat me up. And so I think the steps to directly put us through it, whatever level, so that we can find peace. This kind of thing is about being shabby. I describe the high intensity, high drama piece. Children were no real danger, no mistake that. Had we been caught, they had been better off because they had gone to a least a decent foster home. What I did to my children is that for no reason whatsoever, I broke the spiritual bond between us.

I harmed them to accomplish my own ends. Totally self-serving. And that's what inventory brings me to

every case. It's shabby. It's about me wanting a little prestige. It's about me wanting this or that little money or whatever. And that's the one that's hard to face. And on my own, I am nothing. It's very clear. To my own devices, at my very best, there's ten people in the room. At my very, very best, I can help nine of them.

Somebody's going to get screwed. In God's hands, I have found that even the onlookers benefit. Nobody gets masterly. Even people just crossing the street. Two little pieces for the prayer that goes along with us. This whole thing is about me getting conscious of the relationship. We asked for guidance and direction. It was an old assembly of God preacher who used to come into the penitentiary. And I discovered that I like spiritual people.

I don't care what they call themselves. And I love singing hymns. We shall gather at the river still brings tears to our lives. You sing in the garden? Oh, I'm dead meat. And this guy, I had this illusion that spiritual people were perfect. And he was one. And yet he said he had difficulty sometimes. Intemptation sometimes. We asked him, what do you do? He said, well, when I'm tempted with something and I'm not sure.

See, I know the difference between or not in an arm. It's the gray area that I get in trouble. If I'm not sure, he said I'd take the master by hand and say, if I go do this, will you go with me? And I got my guide. Today's guide is a little different. It's a little more personal. If what I'm about to do would it be alright if my mother, my wife, my daughter, my granddaughter saw me do it. The answer isn't absolutely yes.

I'm not doing it. It just gets real simple and basic that way. And the temptation is even harder as you get rid of your defenses against your temptations. It gets really tough. Well, right here. In relating to that, clearing away self puts me in, see the spiritual life is a very practical life. Anything that separates me from the children of God separates me from God. And since the whole idea of God's bigger than I can even begin to comprehend, the mercy of that A is that it deals with it on this level.

One of the old masters says, treat people like they want to be treated. Because what goes around does come around. Those are some of the guys. I must engage in this thing. I've been a lovely guy, sober several years now. Never talks to me. Never does nothing. He's just miserable. He's in deep depression. Of course he is. You get up and sing for him. Anything to be old? But he doesn't know how to sing. Or doesn't want to sing or whatever.

Does that help a little bit? There are no bad answers for that. I must behave as if God were at hand because where I am God is. He wants me to run my head into the wall. If I want to run my head into the wall, he stands by and lets me. He keeps the bandages handy. If I don't want to run my head into the wall, all you do is ask for the strength to do the right thing. And when I ask will you go with me, if I get a strong yes, I go.

And that's the toughest one of all. That's the hardest. Because I know it's a good one. I'm going to be doing something that's extraordinary if I say yes to that and go. If I get a no, I don't go. If I don't get either one, I don't go. That's the greater. That's where the doubts are. If you're not sure you ought to do it, don't. Boy, you're done. I might have missed it. But your temptations get harder as you lose your defense against your temptations.

I am more vulnerable to drinking today than I ever was before because I don't see alcohol. It's not part of my mind. The mental obsession with alcohol is gone. I don't even see it. Fifteen or so years ago, I was flying home. I think those of us who were sober a while aren't far more dangerous or drinking because of the truth than we are alive. You've got to all work real hard to come up with enough lies to convince me it's okay for me to drink.

But I'm flying home. And this was a perfect evening. I'd give them a talk that didn't hurt anybody. They even drove me back to the airport. They didn't make me walk. I fly united a lot. And on this particular evening, because of that, they move me into first class. I used to think that's because I had some special thing going on. It's because they can't sell that seat but they can sell mine. Back here, they just moved me up.

That's an eager player. But it's nice up in first class. Real food, real plates. It's an evening flight. I'm in fifth spiritual condition. I'm going home to the family I adore. I've got a book I've been waiting to read for several weeks. The lights in the first class cabin were just wonderful. I'm okay. And I noticed that outside of my corner of my eye, the flight attendant pouring this burgundy red stuff into my seat mate's glass.

That's all it was. And I looked over at it because the light was hitting it. And my mind said, that really looks good. Well, that's the truth. It really did. It's not wine. It's bad. Then my mind said, I bet that's going to taste good. Of course it would. That's why she's giving it to me. I'm still not thinking alcohol. Then my mind said, I bet that's going to make his whole dinner taste better. That's the main function of wine.

It cuts the grease from the glass course. Then our prayer began in me. I don't know how to describe this to you. I just know that I absolutely trust this inner resource, the spiritual resource, to protect me when I don't even know I need to protect me. When I'm in the grave, there's a sense that comes over me. And I immediately turned and went in and just got quiet. And realized my very next thought would have been, I probably ought to have one of those.

Without ever thinking, that's all vulnerable. The temptations are much more. I've got to really stay fit. We're out on the road a lot. There's a lot of danger out here. I don't know if you know that or not. There's grave ego danger. There's grave physical danger. There's grave emotional danger. It's really easy to cave into that. After 50 people tell you, you're just wonderful. You begin to think, maybe they're right.

That means that I have special privilege. And that's where my evil goes. Does that help a little bit? Yeah. Pardon me. I'm a storyteller. You've got to get it all because I don't know anything. I tell you that part of the temptation, and I don't want to kind of lead this around and talk about that emotional recovery thing a little bit too, but with me, the more critical kinds of temptation stuff are matters of principle things.

Like now, I'm not cured, but it's been many years since I've had a real crisis in terms of drinking. That doesn't mean I'm cured because I know what causes that to be so. What I run into to difficulties now is that as my life has changed and I've become a participant in life and a responsible person, I have to make a lot of ethical, principle-based decisions that are sometimes tough to make. And with most older members, that's where I see the real crisis coming.

It's about values and what you stand for. And so I find a lot more threatening stuff that I have to be diligent about in terms of cutting corners of not being scrupulous about the way I do business. So the ones where it becomes the glaring thing of the burgundy, I can deal with that. The more subtle ones that kind of take away my integrity are the ones that I really have to watch out for. The trouble that moves to me is always at least six months ahead of the crisis, at least.

And it has to do with starting to lose that sort of sharp focus and clear kind of plug into the program. It's a

strange thing that you can watch somebody headed for trouble. Probably everybody here has seen somebody, or may know somebody right now, that's headed for trouble and you know it. Everybody recognizes it, but everybody is equally baffled about how to deal with it. Now how do you do it? How you charge in? Sometimes you can charge in and do far more harm than good.

But you see it. You start seeing it in behavior, you start seeing it in that squishy thing called additive. You start seeing it in performance and meetings and stuff like that. But how to step in and intervene is a real deal. My group spent four hours recently in a workshop. We'll work with people and that was one of the things we talked about. What we wound up seeing, the consensus of that group was something I saw about this morning.

It depends on the level of trust. The person who is most apt to be able to step in is the one who's greatest level of trust. If you have that trust, there's absolutely no limit to what you can do within our column. There's no limit to what you can say. If you don't have it, it's a pretty narrow limit to what you can do. To me, those are where we tended. It is about emotional recovery. It's about being sound and solid.

Somebody asked me a good while back to do a workshop on emotional recovery. I'm accountable down to the earth type of fellow. My first reaction, even though I know that it's a legitimate term, my first reaction was hell's built. I don't want to do a workshop on some touchy-feely stuff like that. There's no real sad agenda. I can do what I want to do. That's what they said, kind of like we're doing here today. I didn't know until lunch what the program was.

I'm looking at this thing of emotional recovery and how we're going to tackle it. I sat down and in 20 minutes I did what anybody in this room could do. I thought about what is it that destroys emotional? What is it that tears up emotional recovery? It's one thing to talk about, the wonderful nirvana of sound emotional recovery. What is it that needs it up? You could do the same thing. I sat down and in 20 minutes I listed 28 things just in a brainstorming style.

First one I put on the list was expectations. My God, and no wonder I put it first because I don't know of anything in the world that will pull me off good sound emotional recovery than putting on expectations on other people. All I've got to do to destroy my peace of mind is put expectations because what I do is let them have free space in my head. I am absolutely done for it because I've turned it over somebody else.

There's little things you'd think about getting over committed feeling like you're carrying a world on your shoulders. Worry. The thing he mentioned this morning that sounds really innocuous, a little thing called change your mind, change your mind. If you think about what we have, we have a real, we have a spiritual hold on a new way of life. And all I have to do to lose it is change my mind and that sucker can be gone in a heartbeat.

And so that thing of keeping spiritually sound and keeping emotionally sound is tremendously important. And we had a good time doing that thing on emotional recovery. And so to me that's the imminent danger is when I start eroding that sound spiritual ground in a stand-on. And no matter what I sell it out to, you can make your own list of things that take that down. And so what deals with it? I'll let you know in a little secret and go a little bit to steps that I'm not somebody who works on problems.

I literally don't. And the reason I don't is because when I work on them, they honest to God get worse. They

really do. If I'm trying to fix remorse like we were talking about, if I'm trying to fix guilt or trying to work on relationships or whatever, I guarantee you I'll make it worse. And what I found is that the way that I work on the problems of my life is by trying to do what the program lays out. That little thing in the 12 and 12 that I have come to really appreciate or describe what the steps are.

It says almost exactly this. I know I screwed up a little bit, but you recognize it says our steps are a set of principle spiritual in their nature. You tell me what my tools are. Which you've practiced as a way of life. That thing about you working the steps, doing the steps, writing the steps, seminarizing the steps. To me, they're off the subject. Those are nice activities. But what the real key to the steps is, is then practice them as a way of life.

And what I've found, and has absolutely been my experience, that in 45 years I have never consciously solved one single problem in Alcoholics and Optics. Not a single one. I have never sat in a meeting or sat with a sponsor and said, I finally got it. It has never happened. What I find is that as I practice this set of principles as a way of life, amazing stuff happens, emotional sobriety happens, remorse gets dealt with.

All of the things that constitute my alcoholism get addressed. And so to me that whole business about, if there isn't a motion recovery, there's nothing to recover. That whole business is how to be free of those devils that broke me. And so that's the way I like to go at this kind of stuff. I don't like to just set little goals and do stuff and do mechanical actions. What I like to do is give myself to this program. When I've got trouble, I never pursue the trouble.

What I do, we've talked about it a little bit last night, that what I do is I get focused like a laser on what I'm doing. I get focused like a laser. I go to meetings and I listen at that meeting like a sermon on the mountain. I don't get there. Guys teaching you how to throw up. I listen like I've never heard. Because I want to get locked in. I want to get really geared in. And so that's how I go about dealing with problems.

I don't try to fix them out younger somewhere. I try to fix them by getting solidly tuned in to who I am, to what my spiritual life is, so that I get solidly connected. And then when I get like that, I'm about as strong as they come. And when I try to fix it out younger somewhere, I'm about as weak as can be. And so that's not just probably philosophical stuff. That is truly what I believe happens. It's certainly been my experience that if I practice this as a way of life, stuff just happens.

And those problems that eat me alive, one day I take a look and they ain't there. I don't go looking for them. Because I know how to find them. All I have to do is just quit doing what keeps them out there. And they'll be back. Yeah, that's a practical area. Practical story about what he just said. How do I apply this on the street? That's what I have to keep looking for. I was working in community corrections in Denver.

You have to understand the corrections system itself is designed to fail. You need to know that so that you don't. So I've got a probation officer here. I was treatment services supervisor, so I'm here. And I've got my boss here and a couple other department heads here. She sends me a piece of paper. I do something with it. I send it to them so they can get it to here so they can get back to them through me back to her.

That's designed to fail. Somewhere I just bogged down. She's under pressure and she's yelling at me. And for a couple of weeks, okay. Then she starts yelling at my boss and he starts yelling at me. Now I've got two of me

on that. It wasn't okay. Now I know something. One of the basic principles of this thing is if I'm disturbed, it's me. I've got a deal with me. So I sat down and did him and toy the way I've been taught to do it.

Because I cut myself. I listened to myself. I heard myself tell one of my staff about the bitch. Right now I know I'm completely out of work. Renee and Stephanie, not the bitch. And so that immediately triggers me to lock my office door. Don't talk to anybody else because I'm starting to mess with my own staff. Stupid thing to do. Anyway, I've got to fold in and discover what was going on. First of all, I want my boss to quit yelling at me.

I don't care if she yells at me. But I do care if he doesn't have me because he pays my check. And he and I haven't agreed but he yells too much. He gets this. It's a guy I work with. And I wasn't ready to do that. So I looked at what was going on. It's all about her yelling at me because this paperwork that she had a timeline on wasn't back here. The monster in the case was the... I get the paperwork. I mean the hearse is busy.

Mine's busy. That whole thing is jammed up. You have taught me the basic principle here is one more one. I've all I've all. Not telephone. It's not fax machines. We're going to talk together. Her office was about ten minutes away. She was shocked to send me. They ever heard faithfully. And I asked her do you have any for me? She was shocked at that. Did I give that? In twenty-five minutes instead of an hour. Waiting with the fax.

Problem solved. She's no longer a threat to me. My boss is no longer a threat to me. I didn't try. I'm lucky. I don't try to solve that problem. What's wrong with me? What can I bring to the situation? It will make it better. The recognition that she's under the same pressure I am. She got somebody yelling at her. No wonder she's up tight. It worked by the way. Last time I saw her, she came clear across the room. Which was not what I had in mind, but it worked.

I don't mind. This goes to the street. Prayer is an activity. As well as an in the head thing. It's an activity. How can I bring about unity in my whole life? Well, that's how. Emotional sobriety means I recognize when I ain't. I recognize I'm out of work here. Let me tell you one little more story. Sometimes when I first heard people talking about the spiritual life and how you had to live it. It was my image when I hear people talking about the spiritual life and how it worked.

You're talking about how you found that parking place you're describing and you're in the right place. When I heard people telling stuff like that, I thought, witchcraft is this. It sounded like they just prayed and somebody's car blew up or something. They just made the world turn around for them. Gee, that is just a spiritual joke. Now I talk that way, but they make sense for them. I talk that way. But it's the same message.

If you're not too dead to that, it really sounds goofy. What I found is that the spiritual life, just like that, it's not just some sort of squishy, do-good, grinning Dalai Lama stuff. It really is about how to function effectively in life. It works. I tell you one of a thousand stories. I was heading a pretty large organization. I had something done that was really malicious and underhanded and injurious to people that work for me.

You remind me of that story. I think as a supervisor, you're not only responsible for getting work out. You're also responsible for looking after the welfare of folk. I had 41 people whose careers were going to be destroyed over a decision that was made. I'm the boss and hadn't even considered that. Well, I mean, I was mad. I was mad on behalf of the 41 people and I was about equally mad over the total disregard and insult to walking past me to

screw my people.

And so I was fit to be tied. I said, well, I demanded an audience of the head of the system. I guess I had enough rank that they respected the demand. He gave me an audience. A few pictures of this and this is absolutely true exactly the way it happens and why the spiritual life is not a wimpy thing. I'm mad and I've got in my mind that I'm going to handle this sucker street level. I'm going to go in there and stick it in the ear.

And so I'm going to meet with seven people. And most of the seven had directly benefited from the action that had been taken. So I got to go meet with my enemies in my mind that had done me in and profited in the process. And I'm going to go in there so all I can think about is I'm going to flat put them down. And I'm driving to the meeting, spoiling for the fight. And on the way up there, thank God it was a long drive.

And on the way, I got to thinking about who I am where I'm going. And I thought, my God, is this the way I take care of business that the only thing I can think of is to resort to the old street behavior and go up there and try to bang up on somebody or whatever. And then I thought about what our program says is to pray for those folk. And so what I did, driving up US one, was I put the face of each person visually in my mind.

I knew them all well. And so I put each one of them right there, and then I prayed directly with that face in my mind. Virtual reality was there. And I gave them to benefit the doctor. I said, well, maybe these folk are wrong, but they're probably doing what they believe is right. And I did that seven times because a picture of those people. When I got through, I was no longer angry. I was still resolute, but I was not angry.

And we went into the meeting, and I sat down with those folks. I took a long time because I had to go through 41 decisions and present my case for why that was a bad decision. At the end of the first day, I hadn't lost a round. I had won everything that came up. But I couldn't lose. I mean, when I went in there, there was no way I could lose. If it had all gone the wrong way, I was at peace. But I was determined that I was right and I was trying to do the right thing.

And I was not trying to be right. I was trying to do what was right. And at the end of that day, I was really on the road, man. I'd won everything. And the boss said, Tom, we're going to have to call a break. And I didn't want a break. I'm on a break. And I said, no, no, no. Let's go do that, man. I got 75 miles. And he said, you've got us beaten on, Marty. I said, all right. I did. I was short. Came back the next day.

They hadn't even changed. I picked up again. Out of 41 major issues, I lost one. I think I could have won that one. But I didn't want to rub their nose at it. But see what I'm talking about. If I had gone in there using the old Ivester strategies, it'd eat me alive. I would have walked out of there with no gains and more losses if I'd have done it my way. And that's why I say, I don't have to do this. If I let the power of the program take care of giving me what I need, I'm a pretty dog gone worthy adversary.

But if you let me try to do it on out slipping or out toughing or outsmarting people, I'm going to lose a lot more to win. And so to me, that's what this thing is. It's about not some doormat approach to life. It's about being able to take a good responsible position in trying to do something according to principles so that it don't get lost and weak in the process. And just truly amazing things happen. And that's literally one of hundreds of cases that I could tell you where that genuinely works for me.

I'll tell you one more. It's a shorter one. But it's just as effective to me. I've got to call one day to go make a presentation on behalf of an agency. And I thought we were just going to go sit around a coffee table somewhere. So I mean, I was off duty and so I just went up casually dressed in an old golf shirt, you know, and I said, well, I didn't know it, but we had a Madison Avenue presentation schedule. And I walk into a real Ritz conference room with, and I've got people sitting there who were my competitors who had productions that were produced in Hollywood.

I think men, they had videos and computers, and I had a legal path. I was looking like a real doofus here with my legal path. This was for all those. What am I going to do there? I am absolutely outclassed. I mean, I was a hiccup in Las Vegas and totally blindsided. Well, what do you do? When all else fails, try praying. And so I stepped out, went down to the bathroom where I do my best praying. And I asked God to help me do what I was there to do and try to get done what was right.

And so I walked in with my little legal path, made my presentation and guess who walked out with it. See what I'm talking about? And it wasn't a matter, I think I had the best deal. But I surely had the ugliest presentation. But when I'm trying to do the right thing, and I am genuinely trying to carry out God's will to do what's right for folk, it's hard to lose, awfully hard to lose. And so it's amazing how this thing works out.

It's spiritual life. And why I don't get into the fix it business. You know, I just sort of practice things, let it year me up, engage in life, and manage it. It works strongly. Emotional sobriety does not mean that I'm going to feel good all the time. That's insane. Absolutely insane. I live on a planet with temperature ranges of 4 or 5,000 degrees. I can handle 10 of them. I need to put something on or take something off or why.

I'm a person who by nature needs to be loved and adored by everybody. That's dumb. There are people who don't like me just because I'm here. They don't even know me. In fact, I think real sanity is that the day I recognize that there are people who like me no matter what I do, there are people who don't like me no matter what. But the more important is there are millions of people who don't even know I exist and wouldn't care if they did it.

So I'm not going to feel good all. A 16 year old nephew died. We knew he was going to die from the day he was born. It's very fair for him. It's still devastating. I didn't feel good that day or for several days after. I had to do his funeral service. So what do you do? I cried all the way through my talk. That's honest. I just have to feel. I have chronic physical pain. What do you do? You say hi, Flanagan? You know Flanagan?

Very dangerous, man. Close last time, I'm sorry. So that doesn't feel good. If I get concerned with not feeling good, about not feeling good. So the prayer is God don't let me get depressed about being depressed. So don't let me feel bad about feeling bad. Get up off your ass and go do something. Well I don't want to. Well, who cares? You know. During the time of the worst time and I won't go into the whole thing, I was struck almost to death in this appetite of sea and some complications.

In fact, he saved my life by putting me to work and making me useful in the worst of it. But some idiot came by to visit me. He said if I had been spiritually fit, I bought into that for about 10 minutes. But during that period of time, I started looking at my heroes. You see, I want to be better than I am. So I don't want to look down here. I want to look out here. And almost without exception to the people that I consider heroic, had severe physical

problems and they just got above them.

And then I bumped into the whole thing a sister Theresa talked about as to how she came to her ministry. You know how that is? It's on a train going across Germany during Hitler's time. I was reading about that and the horrors of that and realized that deep within her was the same capacity for evil that was being demonstrated by him. And it touched her so deeply. She decided she needed to give her entire life to just the opposite of that.

By recognizing the evil within me, now I can do something. If I'm busy over here, this isn't coming. I have to always know that deep within me, I'm a lazy whiner. I was interested in a whiner's mom. We ought to take a little break, which thing. Are we heading in the direction you want to go? Fifteen minutes.