



The Front Door

Sobriety

Birthdays: *Winter*

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Prescott House Addressing Eating Disorders for the Past 5 Years

Eating Disorders: At Prescott House?

Did you know the first diagnosis of an eating disorder was in 1689? This initial diagnosis was of Anorexia Nervosa by an English physician named Richard Morton, a diagnosis that is well known today as a deadly disorder effecting millions of women. So who was this first known diagnosis applied to? The 16 year old son of a minister, that's right; the first known eating disorder diagnosis was given to a male. So why is this disorder thought of as a *female disorder*?



Dr Ray Lemberg Ph.D pictured with Eric Strother
Dr Lemberg is a consulting Eating Disorder Specialist who joined the Prescott House in 2009. Eric coordinates the program on a daily Basis.

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Tradition II : A story from the AA Grapevine

For our group purposes there is but one ultimate authority...a loving God as He may express himself group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants..... they do not govern.

SHORTLY after I returned to the office from lunch, the phone on my desk rang. It was a late autumn day during my first sober AA year.

"Did you know J-----B ----- got drunk?" asked the AA acquaintance on the line.

Such momentous news overwhelmed me. J ----- was the chairman of our group. I had considered him Mr. AA himself. Now I felt that the whole movement would soon totter under this disastrous blow, unless someone rushed to the rescue. A brilliant new leader would have to be found, quickly.

Well, how about me? I had been a club president a couple of times in school. Surely, my ability would be a great boon to the Fellowship.

"But he's so young!" I could hear someone exclaim. (I was chronologically twenty-seven, emotionally minus one.)

By this time, I had tidied up my desk, made some excuse to the boss, grabbed my briefcase, hat, and coat, dashed to the subway, and ridden halfway to the old church building we used as a clubhouse for AAs in Manhattan in 1945. I carried with me about as much sense as a flea plotting to run a kennel.

Surprisingly, everything seemed calm when I arrived. No doubt some committee somewhere was already, privately, trying to find someone who could save AA. How could I let them know I was willing?

At the clubhouse, though, all I could do was smile graciously at everyone around, cheerily reassure some new wretch from my lofty eminence of ten sober months, and chin a bit with other seedy statesmen. I even, for the first time, sprang for several

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The Suite Life

by Don Z



WHEN WILLINGNESS CAME UPON ME

The Prescott House was my fifth treatment center in two years. I was stubborn, arrogant, unwilling to listen, unwilling to change. “Self will run riot” aptly described my life. Of the first four treatment centers I attended, two kicked me out for using (yeah, I found a way) and I began using again only hours after finishing the other two. I had lost my job, spent all of my savings from 25 years of working, was deep in credit card debt, had been kicked out of my house (no surprise there), was living in cheap hotels, had been arrested many times, was facing multiple felonies, had my head split open--but survived, was poisoned--but survived and nearly died twice with septicemia, double pneumonia and a serious strange infection near the brain (that figures). Despite all of the damage and consequences, I couldn’t stop using. I had lost all ability to “manage” my using (oh I tried, but it’s not possible). The obsession owned me. By the time I arrived on the steps of the Prescott House, I had finally given up, I had reached rock bottom, I wanted to die.

Then willingness came upon me. Nothing mystical, it just happened. How and why I don’t fully understand. What I do understand is that for me, I had to reach a bottom that was low enough to make me willing, but not so low that I was dead. In my case, that was a fine line. This story is not unusual as I have many friends who have shared similar stories with me.

My first few months in the Prescott House were hell on earth. Once I sobered up and began to think clearly, I felt incredibly deep pain over all of the damage and harm I caused others and myself. I cried every day for at least three months, praying that God would just let me die. God answered that prayer by saying no--and then helped me walk through the pain and learn a new way of life. In the beginning of recovery, the best I could do was to learn to live life again one moment, one step at a time.

For me, willingness was a major key to my recovery. I was up against what I thought was an insurmountable wall of pain and trouble, but I was willing. I didn’t want to get up early and walk 50 minutes in the freezing cold just to go to a meeting, but I was willing. I didn’t want to find a sponsor and work the steps, but I was willing. I didn’t want to make amends, but I was willing. I didn’t want to do chores every morning, but I was willing. I didn’t want to participate in groups where people told me all of the bullshit they saw in me (yes, there was a lot), but I was willing. I didn’t want to listen to confrontations without responding, but I was willing. I didn’t want to do volunteer work for two hours a day and not get paid, but I was willing. I had to flip hamburgers for near minimum wage, but I was willing. I had finally given up; I was finally willing. That is the best thing that could have happened to me.

Slowly, life began getting better as the AA way of life took hold. Today, I continue to work the steps and practice the AA principals in all my affairs, have a sponsor, a sponsee, go to meetings, continue to turn my will and my life over to the care of God on a daily basis, have learned to let go of my resentments (not perfect at it, but willing) and trust God with my life. I have learned to be honest with myself and with others, I don’t bury my feelings, I take life one day at a time. **I am back with my family and able to be a husband to my wife and a father to my children.** I paid off my credit card debts and am back working in my chosen field of work. **The promises are coming true.**

Looking back nearly five years later, I am grateful to be alive and sober. This incredible adventure in life began when I finally became willing. From that, everything else seemed to follow.

E.D.'s : It's ok to talk about it

From front page

The reasons are many, but a main contributor to this false perception of eating disorders is rooted in our society's dysfunctional ideas of what *men* should *act* like.

Prescott House is now taking a much closer look at this issue that men often struggle with alone. **We are one of the few programs in the country** that help men overcome this disorder beginning by making it o.k. to talk about it with other men. These issues take shape in many ways: Anorexia, Bulimia, Binge Eating Disorder, Muscle Dysmorphia (a.k.a. Body Dysmorphic Disorder), and compulsive exercising among others. If you or someone you know struggles with these issues, let it be known, we don't have to suffer in silence anymore.

Fact: Did you know "Ana's Song" by Silverchair is about lead singer Daniel Johns' struggle with Anorexia?



Healthy Chunky Lentil Soup*

1 ¼ cups lentils, picked over and rinsed , 1 cup water or vegetable stock

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil 1 teaspoon fine-grain sea salt

1 large yellow onion, chopped Pinch of paprika or chile powder (optional)

2 cups diced butternut squash (1/4 – inch dice) torn, fresh basil leaves, for garnish

1 (28 ounce) can crushed tomatoes Freshly grated Parmesan cheese, for garnish

Good – quality olive oil, for garnish

Bring 5 cups of water to a boil in a large sauce pan, add the lentils,

and cook for 20 minutes, or until tender. Meanwhile, heat the oil in a heavy soup pot over medium heat, then add the onion and sauté until tender, about 3 minutes.

Stir in the squash, tomatoes, and water and continue cooking until squash is tender, about 10 minutes. Drain the lentils and stir them in, along with the salt and paprika (or chile powder). Let the soup return to a gentle simmer, then taste and adjust seasoning if needed. Serve, topped with the basil, Parmesan, and a drizzle of olive oil.

Serves 4 to 6. *From *Super Natural Cooking* (Swanson, 2007).

Staff Members & Graduates On Their Way to San Antonio

Dayton T along with his wife Joya and friends Ann, Harry K , Greta S. and John M are excited to attend the ICAA.

The 2010 International Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous will be held July 1-4 in San Antonio, Texas with the theme "A Vision for You". A.A. members and guests from around the world will celebrate A.A.'s 75th year at this event with big meetings held Friday night, Saturday night and Sunday morning in the Alamo-dome. Other meetings, scheduled or informal, will take place throughout the weekend in the San Antonio Convention Center and local hotels.

Registration opens in the Henry

B. Gonzalez Convention Center on Wednesday June 30, 2010 at 8:00 a.m. Registration will continue Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., and Saturday from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The opening Party in the Park starts at approximately 8:00 p.m. Thursday evening, July 1 and ends at midnight.

Marathon meetings will begin at midnight on Thursday, and run around the clock until Sunday morning. Meetings start at the Convention Center on Friday at 9:00 a.m. and continue until 5:00 p.m., with the same schedule on Saturday.

Friday night and Saturday night from 8:00 to 10:00 p.m., we gather in

the Alamodome stadium for Big Meetings. The Flag Ceremony will take place before the meeting on Friday night, and Saturday we will have an oldtimers meeting, where A.A.s with more than 40 years of sobriety will share.

The closing meeting will take place in the Alamodome on Sunday from 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.



cups of coffee.

Throughout the afternoon and evening, however, no one mentioned the vacant chairmanship. So, finally, I brought it up over coffee after the meeting. "Isn't it too bad about J ---- ?" I brightly blurted.

Only one old-timer paid attention. His look seemed to probe uncomfortably close to my deepest secrets, but his voice was kind as he said, "Well, just because J ---- got drunk doesn't mean *you* have to drink."

The idea was so breathtaking, I just shut up.

But my mentor continued, "You see, we'll get somebody else to do J ---- 's job. We rotate chores around here, you know. There's really no honor connected with AA offices or titles, just work. And it's often dirty work at that."

Although our Twelve Traditions had not yet been put into words, the truth, the spirit, and the sense of our Traditions was guiding those who helped me.

The shattering of my fantasy of eminence in AA was one lesson in what was to become our Second Tradition: that AA has no bosses. And that fact, only slowly learned, even more reluctantly accepted, but finally embraced, is greatly responsible for my sobriety. To stay sober, I had to learn that I could not be a boss in AA, no matter how much I wanted to or tried to.

There had been an earlier lesson on the obverse of that truth: that no one in AA could boss *me*, either. Upon discovering, my very first day in AA, that there was no place to sign up, no formal rite to initiate or mark me as a "member," I had asked with puzzlement, "But how will you know if I stay sober?"

"We won't," I was told. "But you will."

My first AA conversation had been an ever-increasing series of shocks, but this was almost too much. No one would check up on whether I had a drink or not! I felt relief, coupled with mild twinges of panic (Was it possible for me not to get drunk unless something or someone forcibly prevented it?) and wry anger (Dammit, this was a dirty trick! Why wouldn't "they" give me some magic thing to keep me safe?).

"No one in AA tells us what to do, or scolds us for not doing it," my first AA friend had explained.

Now, twenty-five years later, I am convinced that, as much as anything, that truth about AA heated up my determination to belong to the Fellowship.

But appreciation of the truth did not spring forth full-grown. To whittle down an egotism like mine takes years (It still sprouts unexpectedly, sneakily) and many experiences similar to my short-lived dream of the AA "presidency." If I never became a power and a glory in AA, it wasn't for lack of trying.

Just a few months later, I actually did become chairman of a new, small group. I summoned "my" other officers to a meeting and informed them of the new organization and the new rules that I was setting up. And in a few days I got drunk.

In fact, I remember the preparation of written bylaws for four separate groups in New York City in the 1940's. We just did not trust each other or our successors. Each of those "business" sessions for framing such documents, as you no doubt suspect, was a comedy that could have been titled *Full Moon Over the Madhouse*. The records of our labors have long since disappeared, but the groups did survive and now flourish beautifully without such appurtenances. Also surviving is a lesson that can be drawn from this experience: Those who did not get their way in the squabbles over laws frequently got drunk, and some of them did not survive.

I truly believe that our Second Tradition, like all the others, is important for my individual survival, as well as for that of every AA group and our Fellowship as a whole.

At still another time in my life, I was again chosen to be chairman of a group, after serving some apprenticeships. On the night of the election (No one else wanted the job), despite my previous experience as a chairman, I was enormously moved. I felt very happy and even proud to receive from my group something that felt like an honor.

Big deal! At the very next meeting, the entire group turned on me. It was not personal, you understand. It was just that the coffee was too weak that night and the meeting had run overtime.

In every single AA job, I have received gripes and criticism; yet it has been rewarding to learn to listen to criticism, to evaluate it, to use it or reject it, and then to go on doing the job the best I could. In all honesty, I can say there were some pats on the back, too. But I did learn that, no matter what AA title I might briefly hold, I had absolutely no authority over any AA member. And, of course, no AA member, group, committee, office, or board has any authority whatsoever over me or any other member. (It has to be love, not government, that keeps AA stuck together.) This has the effect of keeping us all on one level in AA, and makes brotherhood easier than it would be if some of us were higher, others lower. I have at last come to like the fact that for AA purposes the final authority is a loving God (whatever concept of a benign Greater Power that word may represent to each of us) as expressed in the consensus of us all.

Suppose it were otherwise. Suppose we had layer upon hierarchical layer of drunks scrambling for higher and higher rungs of AA power and fame. Suppose we had to elect representatives to sit in some *governing* body (instead of the strictly *advisory* councils which our Intergroup committees and the General Service Conference are). Or what if we had to choose a national president!

Can't you just hear the nominating speeches and electioneering slogans? Can't you just hear the debates? Can't you just hear sobriety groaning under the strain, then the ice in the glasses, the cans and corks popping, and the sound of mass dt's that would surely result?

Fortunately, AA never puts us under such stress, thanks to our Second Tradition. Two things about the group conscience, however, still bother me. One is the fact that the Tradition does not say an *informed* group conscience. Once, we discussed all evening just what kind of quarters our central office should move into. Not one of us had ever searched out or tried to lease office space. Another time, we went on and on about procedures for electing regional members of AA's General Service Board, but only two people in the room had ever read *The Third Legacy Manual* (now revised and titled *The AA Service Manual*). If we had been better informed, our group decisions would probably have been wiser.

B. L. Manhattan, New York