

BILL WILSON'S LETTER TO DR. CARL JUNG, JAN 23, 1961

The below is the text of the letter dated 1/23/61, written by Bill Wilson to the eminent Swiss psychologist & psychiatrist Dr. Carl Gustav Jung. Bill considered it a long overdue note of appreciation for Dr. Jung's contribution to A.A.'s solution for alcoholism. The Big Book refers to part of the story on pages 26 & 27.

My Dear Dr. Jung:

This letter of great appreciation has been very long overdue. May I first introduce myself as Bill W., a co-founder of the Society of Alcoholics Anonymous. Though you have surely heard of us, I doubt if you are aware that a certain conversation you once had with one of your patients, a Mr. Rowland H., back in the early 1930's, did play a critical role in the founding of our Fellowship. Though Rowland H. has long since passed away, the recollections of his remarkable experience while under treatment by you has definitely become part of AA history. Our remembrance of Rowland H.'s statements about his experience with you is as follows: Having exhausted other means of recovery from his alcoholism, it was about 1931 that he became your patient. I believe he remained under your care for perhaps a year. His admiration for you was boundless, and he left you with a feeling of much confidence. To his great consternation, he soon relapsed into intoxication. Certain that you were his "court of last resort," he again returned to your care. Then followed the conversation between you that was to become the first link in the chain of events that led to the founding of Alcoholics Anonymous. My recollection of his account of that conversation is this: First of all, you frankly told him of his hopelessness, so far as any further medical or psychiatric treatment might be concerned. This candid and humble statement of yours was beyond doubt the first foundation stone upon which our Society has since been built. Coming from you, one he so trusted and admired the impact upon him was immense. When he then asked you if there was any other hope, you told him that there might be, provided he could become the subject of a spiritual or religious experience - in short, a genuine conversion. You pointed out how such an experience, if brought about, might re-motivate him when nothing else could. But you did caution, though, that while such experiences had sometimes brought recovery to alcoholics, they were, nevertheless, comparatively rare. You recommended that he place himself in a religious atmosphere and hope for the best. This I believe was the substance of your advice. Shortly thereafter, Mr. H. joined the Oxford Groups, an evangelical movement then at the height of its success in Europe, and one with which you are doubtless familiar. You will remember their large emphasis upon the principles of self-survey, confession, restitution, and the giving of oneself in service to others. They strongly stressed meditation and prayer. In these surroundings, Rowland H. did find a conversion experience that released him for the time being from his compulsion to drink. Returning to New York, he became very active with the "O.G." here, and then led by an Episcopal clergyman, Dr. Samuel Shoemaker. Dr. Shoemaker had been one of the founders of that movement, and his was a powerful personality that carried immense sincerity and conviction. At this time (1932-34) the Oxford Groups had already sobered a number of alcoholics, and Rowland, feeling that he could especially identify with these sufferers, addressed himself to the help of still others. One of these chanced to be an old schoolmate of mine, Edwin T. ("Ebby"). He had been threatened with commitment to an institution, but Mr. H. and another ex-alcoholic "O.G." member procured his parole and helped to bring about his sobriety.

Meanwhile, I had run the course of alcoholism and was threatened with commitment myself. Fortunately I had fallen under the care of a physician - a Dr. William D. Silkworth - who was wonderfully capable of understanding alcoholics. But just as you had given up on Rowland, so had he given me up. It was his theory that alcoholism had two components - an obsession that compelled the sufferer to drink against his will and interest, and some sort of metabolism difficulty which he then called an allergy. The alcoholic's compulsion guaranteed that the alcoholic's drinking would go on, and the allergy made sure that the sufferer would finally deteriorate, go insane, or die. Though I had been one of the few he had thought it possible to help, he was finally obliged to tell me of my hopelessness; I, too, would have to be locked up. To me, this was a shattering blow. Just as Rowland had been made ready for his conversion experience by you, so had my wonderful friend, Dr. Silkworth, prepared me.

Hearing of my plight, my friend Edwin T. came to see me at my home where I was drinking. By then, it was November 1934. I had long marked my friend Edwin for a hopeless case. Yet there he was in a very evident state of "release" which could by no means account for by his mere association for a very short time with the Oxford Groups. Yet this obvious state of release, as distinguished from the usual depression, was tremendously convincing. Because he was a kindred sufferer, he could unquestionably communicate with me at great depth. I knew at once I must find an experience like his, or die.

Again I returned to Dr. Silkworth's care where I could be once more sobered and so gain a clearer view of my friend's experience of release, and of Rowland H.'s approach to him.

Clear once more of alcohol, I found myself terribly depressed. This seemed to be caused by my inability to gain the slightest faith. Edwin T. again visited me and repeated the simple Oxford Groups' formulas. Soon after he left me I became even more depressed. In utter despair I cried out, "If there be a God, will He show Himself." There immediately came to me an illumination of enormous impact and dimension, something which I have since tried to describe in the book "Alcoholics Anonymous" and in "AA Comes of Age", basic texts which I am sending you. My release from the alcohol obsession was immediate. At once I knew I was a free man. Shortly following my experience, my friend Edwin came to the hospital, bringing me a copy of William James' "Varieties of Religious Experience". This book gave me the realization that most conversion experiences, whatever their variety, do have a common denominator of ego collapse at depth. The individual faces an impossible dilemma. In my case the dilemma had been created by my compulsive drinking and the deep feeling of hopelessness had been vastly deepened by my doctor. It was deepened still more by my alcoholic friend when he acquainted me with your verdict of hopelessness respecting Rowland H. In the wake of my spiritual experience there came a vision of a soci-chain style. If each sufferer were to carry the news of the scientific hopelessness of alcoholism to each new prospect, he might be able to lay every newcomer wide open to a transforming spiritual experience. This concept proved to be the foundation of such success as Alcoholics Anonymous has since achieved. This has made conversion experiences - nearly every variety reported by James - available on an almost wholesale basis. Our sustained recoveries over the last quarter century number about 300,000. In America and through the world there are today 8,000 AA groups. So to you, to Dr. Shoemaker of the Oxford Groups, to William James, and to my own physician, Dr. Silkworth, we of AA owe this tremendous benefaction. As you will now clearly see, this astonishing chain of events actually started long ago in your consulting room, and it was directly founded upon your own humility and deep perception. Very many thoughtful AAs are students of your writings. Because of your conviction that man is something more than intellect, emotion, and two dollars worth of chemicals, you have especially endeared yourself to us. How our Society grew, developed its Traditions for unity, and structured its functioning will be seen in the texts and pamphlet material that I am sending you.

You will also be interested to learn that in addition to the "spiritual experience," many AAs report a great variety of psychic phenomena, the cumulative weight of which is very considerable. Other members have - following their recovery in AA - been much helped by your practitioners. A few have been intrigued by the "I Ching" and your remarkable introduction to that work.

Please be certain that your place in the affection, and in the history of the Fellowship, is like no other.

Gratefully yours,

William G. W. / Co-founder Alcoholics Anonymous

Volume VI

Spring 2011



The Prescott House Alumni Newsletter

The Front Door

Sobriety Birthdays:

Spring

Harry K., Ryan D.,
Justin D., Ethan E.,
Tim A., Mark McG.,
Don Z., Mark H., Alec F.

Stay in Touch:

alumni@
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SAVE THE DATE: SUMMER GOLF OUTING AND BBQ

Saturday, July 23, 2011

Golf: Prescott Golf and Country Club

BBQ: Prescott House

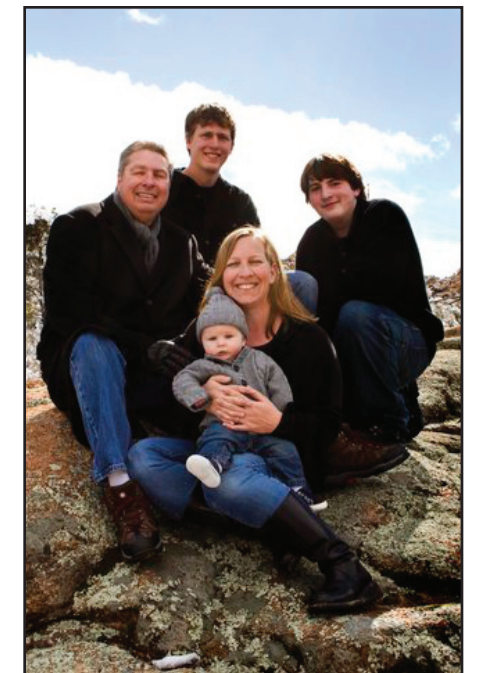


Dayton Turberville has been named Executive Director.

In January 2011 Dayton Turberville was named Executive Director of Prescott House. Dayton has been a gift to the Prescott community. He has spent thirteen years in the addiction field including primary treatment, private practice and facilitating men's groups. Dayton

served as adjunct therapist for three years prior to coming full time to the Prescott House six years ago. He was Clinical Director when he accepted this new role.

Dayton and his family welcomed their newest member in September 2010.



The Suite Life

by Wes W.

I found myself in Prescott, Arizona, at 25 years old, confused, lonely, sad, frustrated, angry and entitled. I was never supposed to be here. It was not supposed to happen like this. I am better than these people. I come from a good family. My friends are successful. I am.....wait, a mess. Undoubtedly and undeniably on the road to ruin, no matter how much I tried to dress it up or put a face on it. I could not keep a job and my friends were growing tired of my foolish antics. I had been thrown out of half of the bars from Dallas to New Orleans, been bailed out of trouble multiple times, yet I knew that because I am Wes W., things are going to magically fall on my lap. After having gambled and drank the better part of a decade away, I knew that something had to give.



Having no idea about how much I would have to give, the hardworking staff at the House was willing to “take” it out of me. Thank God. After arriving from an unnamed primary treatment center, I was a little taken aback by the surroundings. I remember comparing them, at the time, to a Vietnamese P.O.W. Camp. Sheesh! I would like to think, that, maybe at that moment, my fate was sealed. The next 4 months in Mike’s group (and subsequent months with Anne and Greg), I felt that I could do nothing right. I was forced to feel things, and care about others, a genuine caring, that I had not felt in a long time. I learned that is not about the money, the status, or any other superficial items. It’s about getting healthy. It’s about letting go. It’s about recovery. It’s about sharing. It’s about caring. It’s about the community. It is NOT about me. The world is not out to get me. I am not unique. These seemingly simple truisms had eluded me for my entire life, and it took my peers and the staff of the Prescott House to realize that it was about getting back to the basics. After graduating from “The House,” I made the no-brainer to stay in this little town I could not wait to get the hell away from as soon as I got there. Those two and a half years of my life in Prescott are the most rewarding years I have known, as I had the opportunity to see others grow, along with the experience of sponsoring a few of the guys coming through. Moreover, there is something to be said about getting together with your buddies all working that \$9 an hour job, playing video games and the occasional round of golf.

Although I moved back home to work for a family member in the program, I quickly found that home, sometimes, was not exactly how I remembered. People move on. They didn’t stop drinking or using simply because I did. Furthermore, turning wrenches and attempting to help with the books at a family business with the expectation of one-day running the show did not quite turn out as planned..... Expectations, anyone? I had, and still have, lessons to learn. Where did I turn to when I needed to talk to someone? To guys I went through the house with, friends that are just as close to me as the guys I have known for 25+ years and stood in their weddings.

The bonds of support and friendship created inside the P-House were never more evident than what I witnessed surrounding the untimely death of a fine young man. Uniting from all corners of the country, alumni, BROTHERS, were there to grieve and to be with the family. The events, while tragic, served as a reminder to me the insidiousness of this disease. It does not discriminate. It does not care how smart, funny, charming, bright, witty, or athletic you are. It reminded me how fortunate I am, and instilled a newfound and much needed sense of gratitude.

Even though my plan may not have worked out back home, where has my Higher Power taken me? I have to believe to a better place. Another Prescott House connection was there when the decision was made to leave New Orleans and a job as a house manager and driver opened up for me. While it may not be where I saw myself when entering the house, I feel like it’s a hell of a place to be, and am grateful for the chance to help those new in recovery. Plus, it’s never too bad when the sun is shining 350 days a year.

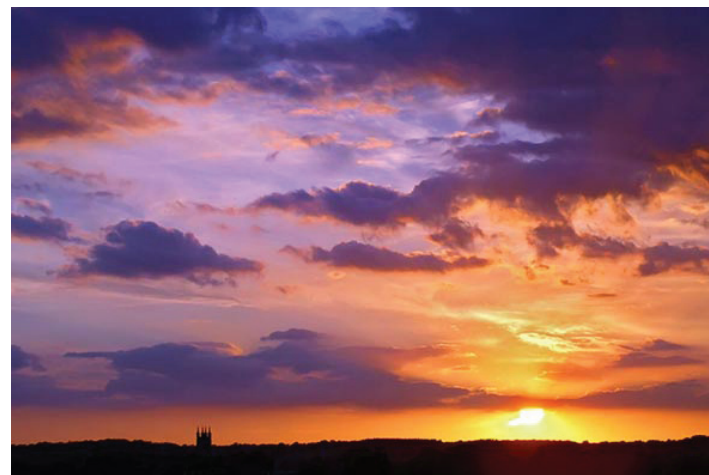
Thanks,
Wes

RECOVERY DIET

HEALTHY EATING TIPS FOR RECOVERING ADDICTS

- ***Eat** regularly. You are less likely to experience the cravings and low blood sugar that can lead to relapse if you eat three regular meals and two in-between snacks each day.
- ***Drink** plenty of water. Dehydration can be a problem during recovery so be sure to drink lots of water—filtered, if possible.
- ***Eat** protein rich foods such as lean meats, poultry, seafood, beans, nuts, seeds and tofu. You need protein to produce the chemicals in your brain that make you feel good, as well as to replace tissues damaged by the substance abuse.
- ***Eat** a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables either raw or lightly cooked. They are loaded with the vitamins and minerals you need to recover and feel good.
- ***Eat** fiber foods, including whole grains and beans to help restore health and tone to your digestive tract that may have been damaged by substance abuse.
- ***Eat** healthy fats for flavor, satiety and good health. This includes foods such as olive oil, avocados, nuts and seeds. Fats are important for the health of your cell membranes, which is basic to how you feel, and thus to your recovery.
- ***Enjoy** a small piece of good quality dark chocolate. It can enhance your mood as well as please your taste buds. Just don’t overdo!
- ***Take** a good quality vitamin/mineral supplement with particular emphasis on Vitamin C, B vitamins and zinc to restore the levels of these vitamins in your body. Although, it always better to get your vitamins and minerals from foods, a supplement can help fill in the gaps until your nutrient status is reestablished.
- ***Limit** saturated fat by choosing lean meats and dairy products.
- ***Limit** processed and packaged foods. These are generally loaded with sugar, salt, trans fats and other chemicals that may slow your physical recovery. They will also fill the place in your diet and food budget that should be taken by the nutrient dense foods that are necessary for good health. Limit or avoid caffeine. It can affect your mood and irritate already inflamed digestive tissues.

Camp Closure: “I will remember for forever”



We rolled up to the Prescott House with nothing more than a pillow. It was me and six of my closest friends. We were going on closure Campout. It was very comforting knowing that the six men that I would be accompany me on the trip were guys that I have grown extremely close with during my 9 month stay at the Prescott House. The mood was light and I could see everyone was really excited to go.

We started helping by packing the van. (The amount of food that was brought would make you think we were leaving for a month, not a night). We drove for only fifteen minutes and arrived at the campsite..... The first thing we did was hike to a flowing creek where we separated. Our facilitator asked us to write about what the future looked like for us. I picked a spot directly next to the flowing creek, dipped my head in the water and began writing. When I finished I met up with everyone. Everyone read what they wrote, to each other. Afterwards, we all hiked back and set up camp. After eating lunch our BIG hike began. We hiked for thirty minutes up a steep hill. At the top was an enormous tree. After having a “minny” meeting and experiencing some awesome “things”, we hiked back down the mountain where we collected fire wood. We then drank some of the strongest coffee known to man. When night fall came, we ate the best T bone steaks I have ever had. We the shared some great stuff about our pasts, and where we are today. Many laughs and Smores followed.

The weather was perfect and cool enough, but not too cold. We woke up, had breakfast and participated in one more project. The whole trip consisted of so many belly laughs, good food, and enjoying nature. The counselors were great. It will be an experience I will remember forever!

Sean H. and Friends