

Hope Memory: Remembering an Old-Timer

We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.

Dick McCann: “My first meeting was four doors down from my house. They told me to come back and not a lot of people were asking me back to places I’d been. I kept coming back and never found the need to leave.”

Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

McCann: “My god dammed Higher Power saved my ass.”

Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God, *as we understand Him*.

Believe in something even if it’s a tree or mountain at first. I just as well call him God—I’m not a religious man but I do believe that no human power could have helped me, and God knows I couldn’t help myself.”

Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

McCann: “My mother asked me why I didn’t date good girls. I said I wasn’t looking for good girls. Today I’m just glad to be sober. I cannot deceive myself and think I’m not a drunk. I prefer being a sober drunk.”

Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

McCann: “I sponsored a guy who was just a few months sober than I was. We took each other’s inventories and it was like the blind leading the blind. There’s nothing like one drunk helping another. We got through the steps, all thirteen of them!”

Were entirely ready to have God remove all our human defects.

McCann: “The last time I was wrong was in 1956. Keep it simple. Don’t analyze everything to death.”

Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

McCann: “I was stopped for speeding the other day. The **//!!* State Patrol pulled me over. I saw him eye balling my TransAm. I thought, ‘glad I’m not drunk.’ He looked in and saw me and said, ‘Oh, you’re an old fart. Slow down.’”

Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.

McCann: “The Blonde Bomber asked me for a ride (after Hope) in my new car. I said no at first. You know those squirrels that come into the program looking for the hot ones. (Laughing) I had to call and apologize and she’s been hooked on me ever since.”

Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

McCann: “I’ve never met anyone too dumb to get this program, but I have met some who were too smart. Make amends when you need to, listen, and let it go.”

Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

McCann: “I don’t lie about my alcoholism, and I don’t miss my home meeting. If I’m not in the obituary or sick as hell, I show up. We’d all go out in miserable weather conditions to get our booze didn’t we? We can make our meetings on time.”

Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understand Him.

McCann: “Shut up and listen! And don’t drink! Keep the plug in the ***!!!! jug.”

Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice in all our affairs.

McCann: Don’t date anyone with less than a year sobriety and if he/she gets drunk, take care of your **own** business. Don’t mess around with wet drunks—you can’t help a wet one. And don’t drink! I’m not saying that twelve step calls aren’t important, but I never met an active drinker who made any sense. You’ve got to take care of your own sobriety and nothing should compromise your own good standing. If you meet someone who pisses you off, ask them what step they’re working! That’ll get ‘em. Shit, might even make ‘em more pissed off, but it’s not your problem.”

One last good one. Dick sure had a creative, *straight at ya* sense of perspective.

McCann on buying a new washing machine: “The guy pointed out this model to me and hell, they all looked the same. He said *this* one would be good on dainties. I grabbed the NASCAR shirt I was wearing and told him, ‘This is as dainty as I get!’”

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