

CONTENTS

<i>Chapter</i>	<i>Page</i>
PREFACE	xi
FOREWORD TO FIRST EDITION	xiii
FOREWORD TO SECOND EDITION	xv
FOREWORD TO THIRD EDITION	xxii
FOREWORD TO FOURTH EDITION	xxiii
THE DOCTOR'S OPINION	xxv
1 BILL'S STORY	1
2 THERE IS A SOLUTION	17
3 MORE ABOUT ALCOHOLISM	30
4 WE AGNOSTICS	44
5 HOW IT WORKS	58
6 INTO ACTION	72
7 WORKING WITH OTHERS	89
8 TO WIVES	104
9 THE FAMILY AFTERWARD	122
10 TO EMPLOYERS	136
11 A VISION FOR YOU	151

PERSONAL STORIES

PART I

Pioneers of A.A.

DOCTOR BOB'S NIGHTMARE	171
------------------------	-----

A co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous. The birth of our Society dates from his first day of permanent sobriety, June 10, 1935.

	<i>Page</i>
1 ALCOHOLIC ANONYMOUS NUMBER THREE	182
<i>Pioneer member of Akron's Group No. 1, the first A.A. group in the world. He kept the faith; therefore, he and countless others found a new life.</i>	
2 GRATITUDE IN ACTION	193
<i>The story of Dave B., one of the founders of A.A. in Canada in 1944.</i>	
3 WOMEN SUFFER TOO	200
<i>Despite great opportunities, alcohol nearly ended her life. An early member, she spread the word among women in our pioneering period.</i>	
4 OUR SOUTHERN FRIEND	208
<i>Pioneer A.A., minister's son, and southern farmer, he asked, "Who am I to say there is no God?"</i>	
5 THE VICIOUS CYCLE	219
<i>How it finally broke a Southerner's obstinacy and destined this salesman to start A.A. in Philadelphia.</i>	
6 JIM'S STORY	232
<i>This physician, one of the earliest members of A.A.'s first black group, tells of how freedom came as he worked among his people.</i>	
7 THE MAN WHO MASTERED FEAR	246
<i>He spent eighteen years running away, and then found he didn't have to run. So he started A.A. in Detroit.</i>	
8 HE SOLD HIMSELF SHORT	258
<i>But he found there was a Higher Power that had more faith in him than he had in himself. Thus, A.A. was born in Chicago.</i>	
9 THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM	268
<i>This worldly lady helped to develop A.A. in Chicago and thus passed her keys to many.</i>	

PART II

They Stopped in Time

- | | | |
|---|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 1 | THE MISSING LINK | 281 |
| | <i>He looked at everything as the cause of his unhappiness—except alcohol.</i> | |
| 2 | FEAR OF FEAR | 289 |
| | <i>This lady was cautious. She decided she wouldn't let herself go in her drinking. And she would never, never take that morning drink!</i> | |
| 3 | THE HOUSEWIFE WHO DRANK AT HOME | 295 |
| | <i>She hid her bottles in clothes hampers and dresser drawers. In A.A., she discovered she had lost nothing and had found everything.</i> | |
| 4 | PHYSICIAN, HEAL THYSELF! | 301 |
| | <i>Psychiatrist and surgeon, he had lost his way until he realized that God, not he, was the Great Healer.</i> | |
| 5 | MY CHANCE TO LIVE | 309 |
| | <i>A.A. gave this teenager the tools to climb out of her dark abyss of despair.</i> | |
| 6 | STUDENT OF LIFE | 319 |
| | <i>Living at home with her parents, she tried using willpower to beat the obsession to drink. But it wasn't until she met another alcoholic and went to an A.A. meeting that sobriety took hold.</i> | |
| 7 | CROSSING THE RIVER OF DENIAL | 328 |
| | <i>She finally realized that when she enjoyed her drinking, she couldn't control it, and when she controlled it, she couldn't enjoy it.</i> | |
| 8 | BECAUSE I'M AN ALCOHOLIC | 338 |
| | <i>This drinker finally found the answer to her nagging question, "Why?"</i> | |

	<i>Page</i>
9 IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN WORSE	348
<i>Alcohol was a looming cloud in this banker's bright sky. With rare foresight he realized it could become a tornado.</i>	
10 TIGHTROPE	359
<i>Trying to navigate separate worlds was a lonely charade that ended when this gay alcoholic finally landed in A.A.</i>	
11 FLOODED WITH FEELING	369
<i>When a barrier to God collapsed, this self-described agnostic was at Step Three.</i>	
12 WINNER TAKES ALL	375
<i>Legally blind but no longer alone, she found a way to stay sober, raise a family, and turn her life over to the care of God.</i>	
13 ME AN ALCOHOLIC?	382
<i>Alcohol's wringer squeezed this author—but he escaped quite whole.</i>	
14 THE PERPETUAL QUEST	388
<i>This lawyer tried psychiatrists, biofeedback, relaxation exercises, and a host of other techniques to control her drinking. She finally found a solution, uniquely tailored, in the Twelve Steps.</i>	
15 A DRUNK, LIKE YOU	398
<i>The more he listened at meetings, the more he came to know about his own drinking history.</i>	
16 ACCEPTANCE WAS THE ANSWER	407
<i>The physician wasn't hooked, he thought—he just prescribed drugs medically indicated for his many ailments. Acceptance was his key to liberation.</i>	
17 WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY	421
<i>This young alcoholic stepped out a second-story window and into A.A.</i>	

PART III

They Lost Nearly All

- | | | |
|---|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 1 | MY BOTTLE, MY RESENTMENTS, AND ME | 437 |
| | <i>From childhood trauma to skid row drunk, this hobo finally found a Higher Power, bringing sobriety and a long-lost family.</i> | |
| 2 | HE LIVED ONLY TO DRINK | 446 |
| | <i>"I had been preached to, analyzed, cursed, and counseled, but no one had ever said, 'I identify with what's going on with you. It happened to me and this is what I did about it.'"</i> | |
| 3 | SAFE HAVEN | 452 |
| | <i>This A.A. found that the process of discovering who he really was began with knowing who he didn't want to be.</i> | |
| 4 | LISTENING TO THE WIND | 458 |
| | <i>It took an "angel" to introduce this Native American woman to A.A. and recovery.</i> | |
| 5 | TWICE GIFTED | 470 |
| | <i>Diagnosed with cirrhosis, this sick alcoholic got sobriety—plus a lifesaving liver transplant.</i> | |
| 6 | BUILDING A NEW LIFE | 476 |
| | <i>Hallucinating and restrained by sheriff's deputies and hospital staff, this once-happy family man received an unexpected gift from God—a firm foundation in sobriety that would hold up through good times and bad.</i> | |
| 7 | ON THE MOVE | 486 |
| | <i>Working the A.A. program showed this alcoholic how to get from geographics to gratitude.</i> | |
| 8 | A VISION OF RECOVERY | 494 |
| | <i>A feeble prayer forged a lasting connection with a Higher Power for this Mic-Mac Indian.</i> | |

	<i>Page</i>
9 GUTTER BRAVADO	501
<i>Alone and unemployable, he was given two options by the court, get help or go to jail, and his journey toward teachability began.</i>	
10 EMPTY ON THE INSIDE	512
<i>She grew up around A.A. and had all the answers—except when it came to her own life.</i>	
11 GROUNDED	522
<i>Alcohol clipped this pilot's wings until sobriety and hard work brought him back to the sky.</i>	
12 ANOTHER CHANCE	531
<i>Poor, black, totally ruled by alcohol, she felt shut away from any life worth living. But when she began a prison sentence, a door opened.</i>	
13 A LATE START	535
<i>"It's been ten years since I retired, seven years since I joined A.A. Now I can truly say that I am a grateful alcoholic."</i>	
14 FREEDOM FROM BONDAGE	544
<i>Young when she joined, this A.A. believes her serious drinking was the result of even deeper defects. She here tells how she was set free.</i>	
15 A.A. TAUGHT HIM TO HANDLE SOBRIETY	553
<i>"God willing, we . . . may never again have to deal with drinking, but we have to deal with sobriety every day."</i>	
APPENDICES	
I The A.A. Tradition	561
II Spiritual Experience	567
III The Medical View on A.A.	569
IV The Lasker Award	571
V The Religious View on A.A.	572
VI How to Get in Touch With A.A.	573
VII Twelve Concepts (Short Form)	574