

Big Book Comes Alive Study Group

Joe & Charlie Audio Workshop

WEEK #14

Basic Instincts of Life

(Session 19 -0:16:39.)

J & C I think we have to face the fact that in 1937/38/39, when Bill was writing the Big Book he was not a spiritual giant. He was not a great student of human nature. Bill was a night school lawyer and New York City stock speculator yet he was able to write one of the most spiritual books the world has ever seen dealing with human nature. Surely, surely God took a hand in the writing of the Big Book and used Bill's hand to write the book.

But by 1950/51/52 Bill knew a lot more about spirituality, a lot more about human nature, a lot more about we alcoholics than he did back in the 30's. He'd studied with some of the greatest minds in the world for a period of years. And I think he felt that he had some new information that he could give us that would make it easier for us to work the steps according the Big Book Alcoholics Anonymous.

Basically that's what he says in the 12 and 12, that the Big Book has always been the basic text and always will be. You simply can not work the program out of the 12 and 12. I see lots of people try it. But they can't do it because there are no directions on how to work the steps. And I think that's why a lot of people love it. They can get in it and dance around and philosophies and they never have to do anything except talk. But there is some information in there that is absolutely invaluable, that if we can see it and understand it and accept it, it makes the working of the steps out of the Big Book so much simpler and so much easier.

And these three basic instincts of life that Joe's talking about, he taught me in step 4 in the 12 and 12 more about what makes me tick and what makes me do the things I do and act the way I act. He taught me there more in 2 or 3 pages than I had learned in some 40 years of living at that time. Let's look at them for just a moment. I think it will make it a lot easier to be able to see why we need to make our decision in three plus it sets us up really with information for step 4.

Now in your handout sheets you've got a little picture in here about the middle in there somewhere I think it's page 7 and 8 in your handout material, which says the basic instincts of life which create self.

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GLOSSARY OF WORDS USED IN STEPS FOUR AND FIVE

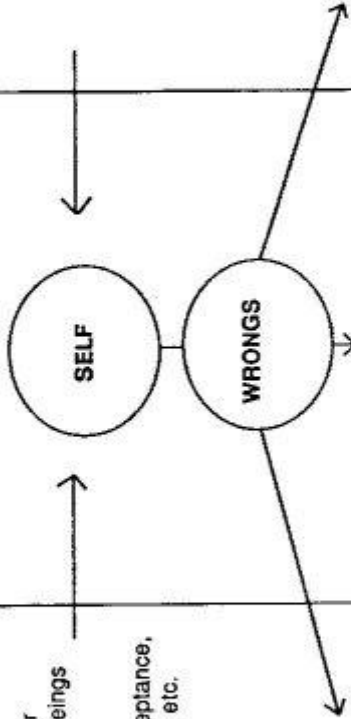
EXACT	- Very accurate, methodical, correct
NATURE	- The essential characteristic of a thing
WRONG	- Acting, judging, or believing incorrectly
FAULT	- Something done wrongly, an error or mistake
MISTAKE	- To understand or perceive wrongly
DEFECT	- Lack of something necessary for completeness -- Same as shortcoming
SHORTCOMING	- Falling short of what is expected or required -- Same as defect
SELF-CENTERED	- Occupied or concerned only with one's own affairs -- Same as selfish
SELFISH	- Too much concern with one's own welfare or interests and having little or no concern for others -- Same as self-centered
SELF-SEEKER	- A person who seeks only or mainly to further his own interests
DISHONEST	- The act or practice of telling a lie, or of cheating, deceiving, stealing, etc.
FEAR	- A feeling of anxiety, agitation, uneasiness, apprehension, etc.
FRIGHTENED	- A temporary or continual state of fear
INCONSIDERATE	- Without thought or consideration of others

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BASIC INSTINCTS OF LIFE WHICH CREATE SELF

SOCIAL INSTINCT	SECURITY INSTINCT	SEX INSTINCT
<p>COMPANIONSHIP—Wanting to belong or to be accepted</p> <p>PRESTIGE—Wanting to be recognized, or to be accepted as a leader.</p> <p>SELF-ESTEEM—What we think of ourselves, high or low.</p> <p>PRIDE—An excessive and unjustified opinion of oneself, either positive (self-love) or negative (self-hate).</p> <p>PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS—Our relations with other human beings and the world around us.</p> <p>AMBITIONS—Our plans to gain acceptance, power, recognition, prestige, etc.</p>	<p>MATERIAL—Wanting money, buildings, property, clothing, etc. in order to be secure in the future.</p> <p>EMOTIONAL—Based upon our needs for another person or persons. Some tend to dominate, some are overly dependent on others.</p> <p>AMBITIONS—Our plans to gain material wealth, or to dominate, or to depend upon others.</p>	<p>ACCEPTABLE—Our sex lives as accepted by Society, God's principles or our own principles</p> <p>HIDDEN—Our sex lives that are contrary to either Society, God's principles or our own principles.</p> <p>AMBITION—Our plans regarding our sex lives either acceptable or hidden.</p>
<p align="center">RESENTMENTS</p> <p>Feelings of bitter hurt or indignation which comes from rightly or wrongly held feelings of being injured or offended.</p>		<p align="center">HARM OR HURTS</p> <p>Wrong acts which result in pain, hurt feelings, worry, financial loss, etc., for others and also self.</p>



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And he said that

**All human beings are born with three basic instincts of life.
They are God given,
They are absolutely necessary for survival of the human race
Therefore they are a good thing.**

The first thing he talked about is the **social instinct**. And he said all human beings are born with the desire to be liked, to be accepted, to be respected by other people. He said all human beings were born with the desire to come together in groups with other people. He said if we didn't have those desires and cared nothing for each other that the world would go into complete anarchy, dog eat dog situation would reign, and eventually under those conditions the human race would fail to survive.

Now he used several terms under the social instinct. He uses the term

companionship...that's nothing more than wanting to belong or to be accepted.

So many of us grew up on the outside of the crowd looking in, wanting to be and knew we could not be. He uses the term

prestige...that's wanting to be recognized or to be accepted as the leader of the group.

And the world needs leaders. I guess somebody back in the old caveman days had to say "John, get behind that tree with your spear. Jack you get over there with your club. And Mary-Jo and I will run this sucker through here and we'll have something". Somebody's got to do that. Most people will take one of two directions. Either let me be a part of or let me be the leader of. And in either case it's based upon what other people think of us.

self-esteem...is what we think of ourselves.

And that's usually high or low based upon what other people think of us or what we think other people think of us. If they seem to like us and accept us we feel pretty good towards ourselves. If it feels like they reject us and they don't want us then we feel pretty lousy towards ourselves.

Pride. And I'm glad I got into the habit of going to the dictionary. I always thought pride was something you ought to have. All I ever wanted to be as a young boy growing up, I wanted to grow up to be a man who walked tall with pride and just a little bit sideways like John Wayne does.

Until I looked it up in the dictionary and it says

pride... is an excessive and unjustified opinion of oneself.

We either think too well of ourselves or too little of ourselves. In either case it's not the truth.

personal relationships... is our relations with other human beings and the world around us.

ambitions... are the plans for the future.

To be liked, to be accepted, so on and so forth.

All human beings have these things. Now if I want to be liked and accepted and respected by the world and the people in it the first thing I've got to do is decide, well what do they want from me?

Society teaches us those things as we grow up. It'll vary in different parts of the world. One part of the world perhaps it's a good education. Another part of the world it's to be large landowner. Another part of the world it's to have a large family. Any number of things based upon where we live in the world.

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And as we grow up and they teach us these things and we ourselves set goals for ourselves as to what we want to become in the future. And if we're going to reach the goals that we set for ourselves we're going to have to work at it. You can't just be a bum and sit on your duff and be successful and people like you and accept you. If it's a good education you're going to have to work at, whatever it might be.

By the same token we're going to have to make some sacrifices. There are some things that I would really like to do as a human being that are very pleasurable and very exciting that if you catch me at it you're not going to like me at all. And I don't think you and I would do the work necessary to reach the goal nor make the sacrifices necessary unless we get a reward for doing so. And the great reward, Bill said it in his story when he said **I had arrived**.

God how many of us have done it. We set that goal and we just literally worked our tails off for years and the day we reach the goal and they pat us on the back and they say "Ah Joe you're a fine fellow, you're a good man, you're doing great". There's a feeling that comes over us which is one of those indescribably wonderful feelings. Great, great feeling. The only thing wrong with it, it seems to be just a temporary feeling. No sooner do we reach the goal, we get the praise, we get the recognition, we get the prestige from it and we look around we say "Is this all there is to it?" And we set another goal. And we work and we work and we strive and we strive and we sacrifice and we reach the new goal and we get the praise and recognition, feels great, doesn't last long and we set another goal.

It seems to create within we human beings an insatiable desire for more and more power, more and more recognition and we're not getting it fast enough or they're not giving it to us the way we think they ought to, so what do we do about it? Well we start taking shortcuts.

We start doing a little lying, a little conning, a little manipulating, a little stepping on other peoples toes and climbing on their backs and the instant we do so we create pain and suffering for others. They in turn retaliate against us and create pain and suffering for us.

Plain that a life run on self-will could hardly ever be a success.
Under those conditions we will always be in collision with people, places and things.

Second basic instinct he talked about is the **security instinct**. Now, I know that in AA we try to live one day at a time. But I also know that just about everybody in this room has got an insurance policy. The purpose of the insurance policy is to protect ourselves in the future. Bill said all human beings are born with the desire to be secure in the future. He said if we didn't have that desire we wouldn't provide the food, the clothing, the shelter, the things that we need to survive. And next winter we would just simply freeze to death or the next drought season we would starve to death. So this desire that we have to be secure in the future is a God given thing and it is necessary for our survival. Now once again if you're going to be secure in the future you have to decide well what is it that I need in order to be secure?

Society usually teaches us those things as we grow up and it varies in different parts of the world. In one part of the world you only need \$4. In another part of the world you need \$4,000. In another part of the world maybe you need \$4,000,000. In another part of the world you 198 coconuts. Whatever it is that they use to measure, trade and barter with. Based up what we're taught, we set goals for ourselves and we begin to work at it. Now if you're going to be secure in the future you can't just sit on your duff and be a bum. You're going to have to work, you're going to have to make some money, you're going to have to invest it.

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At the same time you've got to sacrifice. Hell we can't blow it all today and be secure tomorrow. And I don't think you and I would do the work necessary to reach the goal or make the sacrifices necessary if we didn't get a reward for it.

Once again the great reward is that great feeling that comes at the moment of successful completion of the goal. How many of us have done it? We set the goal for the new dress, for the new shoes, for the new suit, for the new drapes, for the new couch, for the new home, for the new car, for the new piece of property, for the new business and we work and we work and we strive and we strive and the day that sucker is paid for and nobody can take it away from us. What a great, great feeling that is. Hell back when I was a kid hardly anybody owned their own homes.

Once in a great while somebody would buy a home and they would sacrifice everything they had to pay that sucker off and the day they paid it off the feeling was so great they would call in the neighbors and we would have a great party and celebrate it by burning the mortgage. How great that was. The only thing wrong with it is that it's just a temporary feeling. No sooner got the sucker paid off that I looked around and his house is bigger than mine. Yah and he's got a Cadillac and I'm driving a Chevrolet. And he's got a Brooks Brothers suit and I bought mine at Kmart. And that causes us to set another goal. And we work and we work and we strive and we strive and we reach the new goal, feels good, doesn't last long, we set another....seems to create an insatiable desire for more and more and more and more. And we're not getting it fast enough. They're not giving it to us like we think they should. So what do we do? We take shortcuts. We lie, we cheat, we con, we manipulate, and the instant we do we hurt other people. They retaliate against us, creating pain and suffering for us.

Plain that a life run on self will can hardly ever be a success.

Third basic instinct he talks about is the **sex instinct**. He said all human beings are born with the desire to have sex. Now, it may get turned off by bad teachings or bad happenings but he said all human beings are born with the desire to have sex because if we don't have sex we can't reproduce ourselves. And if we don't reproduce ourselves, sooner or later the human race is going to fail to survive.

So just like the other two, if you're going to reproduce yourself through the sexual act you're going to have to work at it. Hell you can do more work in three minutes of sex, if you can last that long, than you'll do all day digging a ditch. Don't you older fellows remember how it used to be when we got through with it? My God you'd just fall over sideways, the sweat is just pouring off of you, and you can hardly get your breath. You feel like you've died, gone to heaven and come back two or three times. Gets excited doesn't he? And I don't think you and I would do that kind of work if we didn't get a reward for doing so. And the great reward is that great feeling we get both physically and emotionally at the moment

of the successful completion of the sex act. One of the greatest rewards that a human being can experience. But also just like the other two it seems to be just a temporary feeling. Hell you no sooner get through doing it that you get to thinking about doing it again. And it's such a pleasurable and exciting thing that the next thing you know you get to thinking about doing it in different ways. Then you get to thinking about doing it in different positions. Then you get to thinking about doing it with different people.

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And the next thing you know we're doing it at the wrong time in the wrong way with the wrong people and the instant we do so we create pain and suffering for others. They in turn retaliate against us, which creates pain and suffering for us.

**It's plain that a life run on self will can hardly ever be a success.
The fulfillment of these things are so pleasurable
that all human beings from time to time will overdo in one or more of these areas
and create pain and suffering for others.**

You'll notice on that little chart there's a circle called Self. That's where self-will comes from, from these three basic instincts of life. You'll also notice coming out of the self circle there is one called wrongs which is another word we need to look at.

Somewhere we got the idea that wrongs meant a list of dirty filthy nasty items. But if you go to the dictionary and look it up you'll find several definitions of it.

**wrong - incorrect judgment of other people = resentment
wrong - incorrect believing = fear
wrong - are the harms and hurts that we do to other people**

Now it's easy to spot a selfish, self-centered human being. One who is running on self-will, not running on God's will. A selfish, self-centered human being is always madder than hell. Damn him. Damn her. By God I'll show them. They're not going to treat me that way. Blahdy blahdy blah blah blah. . A selfish, self-centered human being is always scared to death. Can't depend on God. Can't depend on other people. And if we're an alcoholic reaching the end of the road we can't depend on ourselves any longer and we're running absolutely scared to death all the time. . A selfish, self-centered human being, in order to fulfill the basic instincts of life are always overdoing and creating harms and hurts for others. Then we've got to be scared to death of what they're going to do when they catch us. And even if they don't catch us, if God dwells within each of us, we know the difference between right and wrong and guilt and remorse associated with those things begin to eat us up.

A person who's mind is filled with resentment. A person who's mind is filled with fear. A person whose mind is filled with guilt and remorse **does not feel good.**

And eventually searching for a way to feel better we begin to think about the sense of ease and comfort that comes at once by taking a couple of drinks. Next thing you know we believe we can drink and we end up drunk all over again. So at the very least we're going to have to do something about this selfish self-centered human being and it seems the only way you can do anything about that is through God's help because God made self-will. And only God has the power to overcome that. And at the very least we're going to have to do something about these resentments and these fears and this guilt and remorse in order to find the peace of mind, serenity and happiness for good long term sobriety.

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Step 3 - How It Works

(Session 20 -0:13:19.)

J & C You know if every human being in the world today could fulfill these three basic instincts at the level that God intends there would be no conflict on earth today. But all human beings have self-will.

All human beings from time to time will overdo in one or more areas creating conflict for others and for themselves. I never knew that. I just knew I was always in trouble. I just knew I was always madder than hell. I just knew I was always scared to death. I knew guilt and remorse was eating me up but I didn't know where it came from. See they gave me the rules but they never taught me how to play the game. AA has taught me how to play the game. And now that I know how to play the game I don't break the rules anymore and I don't hurt other people and I'm not scared to death and I'm not filled with guilt and remorse. This is the greatest information I have ever seen about what makes me tick and what causes me to do the things that I do. Joe.

Big Book p. 62, par. 1, line 3 *"Whatever our protestations, are not most of us concerned with ourselves, our resentments, or our self-pity?"*

J & C It's not that I thought too well of myself, or that I thought too little of myself. It's that I thought of myself only. That was my problem.

Big Book p. 62, par 2., line 1 *"Selfishness, self-centeredness! That, we think, is the root of our troubles. Driven by a hundred forms of fear, self-delusion, self-seeking, and self-pity, we step on the toes of our fellows and they retaliate.*

Sometimes they hurt us, seemingly without provocation, but we invariably find that at some time in the past we have made decisions based on self which later placed us in a position to be hurt."

J & C You know alcoholism: I, self and me. You see if you don't have a God in your life, and I didn't, there's only one thing left to live by and that's the satisfaction of these basic instincts of life. And I tried to live my life based upon the satisfaction of those basic instincts. And I overdid in many, many of those areas.

Big Book p. 62, par 3, line 1 *"So our troubles, we think, are basically of our own making. They arise out of ourselves, and the alcoholic is an extreme example of self-will run riot, though he usually doesn't think so.*

Above everything, we alcoholics must be rid of this selfishness. We must, or it kills us! God makes that possible."

J & C Can't heal a sick mind with a sick mind. Only God makes that possible.

Big Book p. 62, par. 3, line 19 *"And there often seems no way of entirely getting rid of self without His aid. Many of us had moral and philosophical convictions galore, but we could not live up to them even though we would have liked to. Neither could we reduce our self-centeredness much by wishing or trying on our own power. We had to have God's help."*

Big Book p. 62, par 4, line 1 *"This is the how and the why of it."*

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J & C You see he told how it works. Then he told us why it won't work because of selfishness and self-centeredness. And now he's going to tell us how it really works.

Big Book p. 62, par 4, line 1 *"This is the how and the why of it. First of all, we had to quit playing God. It didn't work."*

J & C Everything I read leads me to believe that this is a God directed world. Now if it is a God directed world then those of us who have been self directed and those of us that have tried to direct everything and everybody around us ...we've been trying to do God's job for him. We're not God, we've just been playing at being God. And the book says we're going to have to quit doing that if we want any peace of mind, serenity and happiness in the future. I think

One of the great mistakes I see today in AA is people trying to force themselves to be better. And self-will cannot overcome self-will.

Only God can overcome self-will.

So if we want any peace of mind, serenity and happiness it looks like we're going to have to turn to God and let him be the Director. Let him do his job, which is direction.

Next direction.

Big Book p 62, par 4, line 28 *"Next, we decided that hereafter in this drama of life, God was going to be our Director."*

J & C Not our suggestor, our Director. He's got his word back now. From here on it'll be directions.

Big Book p. 62, par 4, line 30 *"He is the Principal; we are His agents. He is the Father, and we are His children. Most Good ideas are simple, and this concept was the keystone of the new and triumphant arch through which we passed to freedom."*

J & C And what is that idea of this concept. That he is the principle and we are his agents, He is the Father, and we are His children, **he is the boss, I work for him.** Now when I first got into this area of the 3rd Step I used God like you would an errand boy. I said, God please help me to stay sober, and by the way, while you're at it, help me get my wife back. Which one? The second one, I don't want that first one back. That first one didn't drink, she was mean and ugly. I like the one that drank.

God get me a job by the way pick up a little extra money for me, I need some money. I used God like you would an errand boy, send him out like that. And after I got sober I got to reading in that other book, that big, big book and in the front of that book.

There's a story about this fellow he worked for six days and rested. Now to my knowledge he didn't have to go back to work anymore. So it looks as though if there's any work being done around here it's going to be me doing the work. He's the principle, we're the agents, He's the Father, we're the children, He's the boss, I'm the employee.

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Most good ideas are simple, and this concept was the **keystone** of the new and triumphant arch through which we passed to freedom.

Now he's referring once again to that wonderfully effective spiritual structure.

Step 1 Willingness	Foundation
Step 2 Believing	Cornerstone

Now he tells us what we're building. A triumphant arch through which we're going to pass to freedom.

He said the keystone to that arch is a simple little idea that we're going to let God be the Director

You know in the old, old days when they built arches, the stones were all stacked loosely without mortar, and they began to lean together and there was a center stone up here called the keystone.

If it was cut right, it would support the entire arch, but if it wasn't, it would slip out and the arch would collapse.

Well the keystone of the new and triumphant arch through which we're going to pass to freedom, is this simple little idea - that we're going to let God be the Director. For most of us that's the first time we ever had that idea. If we once had it as children we lost it somewhere. Instead of letting God be the Director, we we're the director, cause we told God what we wanted. God do this, God do that, God give me this, God give me that, God if you do this for me, I'll do that for you. And now only did we direct God we directed everybody around us. Now we can quit doing that. We're going to let God be the Boss from this day on. Now that is a radical idea for people like us. This is the decision that we're making

Big Book p. 63, par. 1, line 1 *"When we sincerely took such a position, all sorts of remarkable things followed. We had a new Employer. Being all powerful, He provided what we needed, if we kept close to Him and performed His work well. Established on such a footing we became less and less interested in ourselves, our own little plans and designs. More and more we became interested in seeing what we could contribute to life. "*

J & C You see I was always a taker. And takers are losers in life. Contributors are those that win I've noticed.

Big Book p. 63, par. 1, cont. *"As we felt new power flow in, as we enjoyed peace of mind, as we discovered we could face life successfully, as we became conscious of His presence, we began to lose our fear of today, tomorrow or the hereafter. We were reborn. "*

J & C You know they used to come over to my house on Monday night from that little church about two blocks from my house, and these guys wanted to talk to me about being reborn. And you know what I did for them, I'm drinking and man it's Monday night football, and they'll be talking about reborn about 8 o'clock they'd be knocking, and I'd run them off, I'd say you guys get out of here, it's Monday night football, I don't want to talk to you, get. And that's the way I did with those guys, and I didn't understand this reborn then at all. And I got to reading in that other book when I got sober and there's this story in there and this guy's name was Nicademus. And Nicademus was about like me, just dumber than a stump. And he asked that guy, what do you mean by being reborn. Do you mean I've got to go back into my mother's womb? See how dumb he was?

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And he looked at him and shook his head and said Nicademus don't you know you can't do that? Didn't you go to the University? Aren't you educated? You can't do that.

**When I'm talking about being reborn
I'm talking about the renewing of your mind.
Old ideas cast aside, new ones accepted.
Reborn in my mind**

I understood that then. And now I'm ready to do business, I'm ready to do the third Step. And I knew what they did on Sunday morning at that little church up there about 11o'clock, and I couldn't wait till I got there. And they basically asked people to come down and do the third Step prayer. So I waited till next Sunday, got there about 3 or 4 minutes till 11:00, I didn't want to get there too early I might hear something that would help me. I got there about 3 or 4 minutes till 11:00 and sure enough they asked people to do that and I came down there and I did, just as the book says,

Big Book p. 63, par 2, line 1
Maker, as we understood Him:

"We were now at Step Three. Many of us said to our



Step 3
Prayer

**God, I offer myself to Thee -- to build with me and to do with me
as Thou wilt. Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Thy will.
Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I
would help of Thy Power, Thy Love, and Thy Way of life.**

May I do Thy will always!

We thought well before taking this step making sure we were ready; that we could at last abandon ourselves utterly to Him."

J & C And I don't know what exactly happened that particular morning, but I do know this. From that Sunday morning till this moment, my life hasn't been the same. It's as if I been walking on the dark side of the street all those years and all of a sudden I'm on the sunny side of the street. And I don't know what happened except I do know that my life has changed. Thank God.

Big Book p. 63, par. 2, line 20 "We thought well before taking this step making sure we were ready; that we could at last abandon ourselves utterly to Him."

J & C I think the word utterly means completely, whole heartedly, all the way, the entire ball of wax. I hope you don't make the mistake I did. The first time I took Step 3 I got on my knees, which I very seldom did in those days. I said God, I offer myself to Thee -- to build with me and to do with me as Thou wilt. Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Thy will.

Take away my difficulties..... so on and so on and so forth. And as I finish it up I said now this applies to my alcohol, don't fool with my sex life. Stay out of my money. I can handle that too. God probably said, What an order, I can't go through with it. I said you take the alcohol and I'll take care of the rest.

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Today I realize the fallacy in that is as far as I know God doesn't even drink, he don't want the alcohol, He's wants me, and He wants all of me.

Just think. If God could direct my thinking in all areas, it might even become better in my sex life, if might even become better in my money areas. If might even become better in all areas. When my thinking becomes better in all areas then surely my life will become better in all areas too. I think we need to realize this is really

To do it again later on. I think there's a valid reason behind this. I am told that we alcoholics are born to live in three dimensions. We are born to live with God, with ourselves, and with our fellow human beings.

And if we are praying with other human beings for the first time, we are beginning to get ourselves back together in all three dimensions the way God intended in the first place.

We alcoholics are the funniest people in the world. We'll let our families see us on our knees in the bathroom hugging the porcelain bowl, puking our guts up, morning after morning, after morning. We come to AA and try to straighten out our lives, and we're ashamed and embarrassed to let people see us prayer. Isn't that something? Praying in the company of other human beings is always better. Anybody I work with that I sponsor I require that they take Step 3 with me for two reasons. Number one, if they take it with me I know they have taken it. That's the only way I know for sure. But the real reason is that every time we do it together it means more to me. And it has more strength and more power for myself. I think it's a great idea.
