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PHIL 202

October 9, 2019

One Page Assignment

ONE PAGE ASSIGNMENT #5

Consequences? Do they count? In the Narcotics Anonymous Basic Text it is stated “When we are beaten, we become willing”. In 12-step recovery, it is a commonly accepted fact that consequences define our long term success. Those who do not die a pitiful death of hopeless despair and instead are lucky enough to survive to find recovery usually have suffered great consequence leading to their clean time. For many, it costs their life. It is truly the rare story that someone developed a habit they deemed out of control and thus requiring lifelong concern in the early stages of drug or alcohol abuse.

I am a person in recovery from all mind changing mood altering substances. I am mindful that even with over 3.5 years clean I need maintenance to support my decision to stay clean. For some, consequences are smoking away their retirement account, paying the drug dealer with credit they can't repay, or losing good general health to addiction. For others it's the loss of a marriage, taking away their children, getting a chronic illness, being removed from society to an institution such as a jail, or a near death experience or terrifying detox that gets and keeps them clean. Those consequences portend a psychic shift in outlook on life that there is a greater will for me than to die in addiction and to instead of putting my delusive wants, needs, and desires first I have to accede to the will of others and realign myself to society. The Narcotics Anonymous Basic text cited above also states, “when we use, we lose”. Recovery can also be restated as deciding one doesn't want to continue losing at life. This is what I decided.

The hedonistic calculus states that “no one’s person pleasure is greater than another’s”. To recognize this in recovery means that we align ourselves with other’s on an equal plane, that everyone is in some way important and we are not to ascribe a greater value to ourselves in any situation than another merits share of. In our addiction, we repeat a self-aggrandized bombastic almost megalomaniacal cycle of self-centeredness where we present ourselves as all-important. This self-serving egomaniacal mode of living is worse than self-indulgent. The addict becomes trapped by isolation that might best be characterized by the phrase “it’s lonely at the top” ... of a delusion they’re in control when reality to everyone is they’ve completely gone mad in their own sphere of influence and are in critical need of help. This characterizes the extreme of a stage of preoccupation before the downfall.

After the downfall, upon detox and facing the facts, only then can needs be assessed and damage control be implemented to remedy the wake of consequences left behind by an out of control ex-using addict.

It is my intuition that the experience of an ex-using addict seeking recovery, whether in a small or large sphere of influence, can also be aptly represented by megalomaniacs, whether in a small or large sphere of influence.