

Introduction

*The brain is a terrible master, but
A wonderful servant*

The addict is ruled by his addicted brain. The disease is seated in the primitive brain (sometimes called the reptilian brain) in the area of the limbic system. This area generally services our basic needs for food, shelter, warmth and safety. It is below our conscious thought brain but exerts profound influence upon it. The disease causes the brain to somehow code our drugs as necessary for survival. To that end we do things we might not ordinarily do in order to obtain our drugs and maintain our high. Actions taken in extreme circumstances, as life saving moves, are often incorporated into the actions of the drug seeking alcoholic/addict.

One definition of a bottom is:

*When you can't lower your standards fast enough
to keep up with your behavior.*

Much of our program is directed towards focusing our minds off ourselves.

- *Prayer & Meditation*
- *Service*
- *We turn our minds to someone we can help*
- *Working with others*

In the next couple of days we will explore our trust issues, coping mechanisms, 'old ideas', and various techniques to keep our mind as a servant and not a master.

Trust

Establishing and maintaining long-term sobriety is the goal of our Twelve Steps. A major obstacle, in working the steps, engaging and working with a sponsor, finding a higher power, which you can effectively utilize, and integrating into our meetings and the recovering community, is lack of trust. Our trust issues often date back to our early childhood and family of origin. The limiting factor in all loving, intimate and working relationships is trust or more accurately lack of trust.

We are going to explore, discuss and do some group exercises to identify our core issues relating to trust. Further we will introduce ways to address these issues and become more trusting, and therefore more loving, more accessible and more able to help others.

Learning trust is not unlike learning to swim. You can read about swimming, watch videos, scan the Internet, watch other people swim and talk with swimmers. However, to learn to swim, at some point, you must get into the water. Similarly with trust, we have to engage with people and extend and earn trust. I hope we can establish and maintain a safe and trusting environment this weekend and exercise our highest level of trust.

Coping Mechanisms

From our earliest days we develop behaviors and strategies to best suit our needs and combat the adversity of our environment and stresses of life. Depending upon how successful these behaviors are, and how our family and surroundings reward them they become fixed, as our “go to” approach to life’s challenges. One of our first coping mechanisms is crying. It precedes language and is applied to a variety of situations. We cry when we are hungry, uncomfortable, lonely, and fearful. It is a challenge, often poorly met, for parents and caregivers to pay the appropriate amount of attention to the crying baby without lavishing such a marked reward, making such a fuss, that it encourages and reinforces that behavior. As language develops, in the normal and healthy child, the use of crying subsides and the expression of our needs and wants becomes a function of language. At this time, we subconsciously develop techniques of body language, as well as, some manipulative techniques. We shall discuss other coping mechanisms and techniques of early childhood and beyond.

It is helpful at this point to discuss operant conditioning.

Operant conditioning: *A learning process in Psychology in which the likelihood of a specific behavior increases or decreases in response to reinforcement or punishment that occurs when the behavior is exhibited, so that the subject comes to associate the behavior with the pleasure from the reinforcement or the displeasure from the punishment.*

When a naturally occurring behavior is rewarded, you increase the frequency of that behavior appearing. When it is punished, the frequency of that behavior is diminished. We must now address the concept of behavioral extinction.

***Extinction** is a behavioral phenomenon observed in both [operantly conditioned](#) and [classically conditioned](#) behavior, which manifests itself by fading of non-reinforced conditioned response over time. When operant behavior that has been previously reinforced no longer produces reinforcing consequences the behavior gradually stops occurring.^[1] In classical conditioning, when a conditioned stimulus is presented alone, so that it no longer predicts the coming of the unconditioned stimulus, conditioned responding gradually stops. For example, after [Pavlov's](#) dog was conditioned to salivate at the sound of a metronome, it eventually stopped salivating to the metronome after the metronome had been sounded repeatedly but no food came. Many [anxiety disorders](#) such as [post traumatic stress disorder](#) are believed to reflect, at least in part, a failure to extinguish conditioned fear.^[2]*

A reinforcement schedule is the ratio of behavior to reward. That is, if every time the behavior is displayed the reward is given that is a continuous reinforcement schedule (one to one ratio of stimulus and reward). If the reward schedule is variable and unpredictable it is called a variable reinforcement (reward) schedule. A good example of a variable reward schedule is the slot machine.

It is noteworthy that the hardest behavior to extinguish is one rewarded on a variable reinforcement schedule. Our alcoholism and addictions follow this variable reward schedule. This results in negative experiences and consequences do not stop, or extinguish our addictive behaviors.

We can all think of many potent rewards like food, money, sex, attention and various prizes and trophies. The most profound reward, based upon extensive psychological testing is not a positive reward (attaining something) but the removal of a negative stimulus. Something takes away pain, angst or social anxiety. In this regard, alcohol and other drugs are an extremely potent, yet very subtle reward.

The fact is, or as I like to say, the **Zen of recovery** is that we fail at *not doing*. Our hope in stopping behaviors, addictions, intrusive thoughts and bad habits is replacing them with something more positive. I was no good at not drinking and using other drugs but I have successfully replaced those habits with the 12 Step program and meetings. We behave very much like a young child. If a baby has a bottle and you want to take it away that will provoke crying or other forms of protestation. However, you can trade a ball for the bottle, a stick for the ball, a cookie for the stick and an interactive game or activity for the cookie.

It is encouraging to realize that good habits are as hard to break as bad habits.

“We tried to hold on to our old ideas but the result was nil until we let go absolutely”

Almost all of our *character defects* are rooted in old ideas, bad habits and obsolete coping mechanisms.

Rewards & Punishments

Attention is a profound reward, especially for children. We crave attention from our family, which we often code internally, as love. It elicits a dopamine release, which is a potent neurochemical reward. In this case, attention and its inherent rewards are so potent that even negative attention, which might be expressed as some form of punishment, is rewarding and it elicits the brain chemical response that reinforces the behavior. Hence, the reinforcement for acting out and clowning as well as more acceptable behaviors like excelling in sports, school and various musical endeavors.

In some families attention consistently elicits negative reinforcement, which results in the child learning to become “invisible”, isolating or just staying away from home. This also encourages the coping mechanism of lying. The roots of lying are inherent in avoiding negative reinforcement, gaining attention and accolades and building false self esteem.

Regardless of how dysfunctional our families were, we unwittingly create the atmosphere we grew up in, because it is familiar and we have adapted to it. If we came from a chaotic household we generate chaos. If we were abandoned we push people away, isolate and wonder why we are feeling so bad. If we were scolded or yelled at, we often elicit those behaviors from sponsors and authority figures.

Consistency

Consistency is necessary, but not sufficient for healthy childhood development. If “good” behaviors are consistently rewarded, and “bad” behaviors are negatively reinforced, or punished the child quickly learns what is expected of them. They behave, in such a way as to increase rewards and diminish punishments. Unfortunately, some parents are consistent in their abuse, or neglect so the reinforcement works but doesn’t produce socially acceptable behavior or a healthy psyche. As you can surmise, variable reinforcement, that is, inconsistency is very confusing, or at least not edifying for the child. Not only doesn’t the child learn which behaviors to maintain and which to delete. Further confounding this scenario is the fact that behaviors that are reinforced on a variable schedule are the hardest to extinguish. For example, dad comes home drunk, sometimes he’s like Santa bringing gifts and heaping praise on the family members while other times he is sullen, scolding and physically abusive. Why don’t the abused leave sooner-because of the inconsistency or variability of the abuse.

Behavioral Sobriety

“Grasping and developing a manner of living which demands rigorous honesty

Admitted...the exact nature of our wrongs

Became willing to make amends

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

Our ‘*character defects*’, ‘*shortcomings*’ addictive behaviors and ‘*wreckage of our past*’ are rooted in our coping mechanisms (survival mechanisms) and ‘lessons’ we learned growing up. During the process of working the steps and continuing to ‘*practice these principles*’ we realize that many of these coping mechanisms and behaviors are no longer necessary or working for us, any more. Identifying obsolete and maladaptive mechanisms, finding their origins and replacing them with sober adult behavior is the essence of behavioral sobriety.

THIQ and The Disease Concept of Alcoholism

T.H.I.Q. --Biochemical Culprit T.H.I.Q. was discovered in brains of alcoholics in Houston, Texas by a scientist named Virginia Davis who was doing cancer research. For her study she needed fresh human brains and used bodies of homeless winos who had died during the night and were picked up by Houston police in the morning. She discovered in the brains of those chronic alcoholics a substance that is closely related to Heroin. This substance, known to scientists, is called Tetrahydroisoquinoline or THIQ. When a person shoots heroin into their body, some of it breaks down and turns into THIQ. The Alcoholics studied had not been using heroin so how did the THIQ get there? When the normal adult drinker takes in alcohol, it is very rapidly eliminated at the rate of about one drink per hour. The body first converts the alcohol into something called Acetaldehyde. This chemical is VERY TOXIC and if it were to build up inside us, we would get VIOLENTLY SICK AND COULD DIE. But Mother Nature helps us to get rid of acetaldehyde very quickly. She efficiently changes it a couple of more times - into carbon dioxide and water -which is eliminated through kidneys and lungs. That's what happens to normal drinkers.

It also happens with alcoholic drinkers, but with alcoholic drinkers something additional happens. What Virginia discovered in Huston has been extensively confirmed since. In alcoholic drinkers, a very small amount of poisonous acetaldehyde is not eliminated. Instead it goes to the brain. There through a very complicated biochemical process, it winds up as THIQ Research has found the following:

1. THIQ is manufactured in the brain and only occurs in the brain of the alcoholic drinker. It is not manufactured in the brain of the normal social drinker of alcohol.

2. THIQ has been found to be highly addictive. It was tried in experimental use with animals during the Second World War when we were looking for a painkiller less addicting than morphine. THIQ was a pretty good pain killer but it couldn't be used on humans. It turned out to be much more addicting than morphine.

3. Experiments have shown that certain kinds of rats cannot be made to drink alcohol. Put in a cage with very weak solution of vodka and water, these rats refuse to touch it. They will literally thirst to death before they agree to drink alcohol. However, if you take the same kind of rat and put a minute quantity of THIQ into the rat's brain -- one quick injection -- the animal will immediately develop a preference for alcohol over water.

4. Studies done with monkeys, our close animal relative in medical terms, show the following: (A) Once the THIQ is injected into a monkey's brain, it stays there; (B) You can keep the monkey dry, off alcohol, for 7 years. Brain studies show that THIQ remains in place in the brain.

The alcoholic's body, like normal drinkers, changes the alcohol into acetaldehyde and then it changes most of it into carbon dioxide and water, which in the end kicks out through the kidneys and lungs. However, the alcoholic's body won't kick all these chemicals out. The Alcoholic's brain holds a few bits back and transforms them into THIQ. As THIQ is accumulated in the brain of an alcoholic, at some point, maybe sooner, maybe later, the alcoholic will cross over a shadowy line into a whole new way of living. It is not known by medical science, at this time, where this line is or how much THIQ an individual brain will pile up before one crosses this line. Some predisposed people cross the line while they're teenagers, or earlier. Others cross in their 30's or 40's and others after retirement. But once this happens the alcoholic will be as hooked on alcohol as he would have been hooked on heroin if he'd been shooting that instead. With the loss of control, the complex symptoms have become chronic. All aspects of physiology have become progressive and incurable. Now it is clearly a disease.

GOOD NEWS: (1) Alcoholism is a disease; (2) Alcoholism is not the alcoholic's fault; (3) Alcoholics can get proper treatment for the disease, which begins with telling them these facts; and (4) The alcoholic can be relieved of guilt (5) The alcoholic can take on responsibility for arresting their disease (6) The alcoholic can refuse to put more THIQ in their brains and refuse to activate the THIQ that is already there (7) Alcoholics can and do recover.

For more information please visit the following links: Relation between heroin and alcohol THIQ--Biochemical Culprit Technical Document Regarding This, pharmacology, and biology TRUTH, Costs, Don't, Facts, How, Why Should I Care, Laws, Numbers, T.H.I.Q., Life You Can Give Your Children, Your Stories, What You Can Loose, Jul 17, 2003 • 2:53 PM An additional note from me, kk: When Antabuse is taken, the drug blocks the metabolic breakdown of Acetaldehyde. Antabuse forces Acetaldehyde to remain and build up. I have been there, and taken, it and drunk on it. It is a bad, bad drug that can cause kidney and liver damage... not a good recovery choice. It goes along with the old aversion therapy. Kobe kemple • kobe@saw.net • 503.224.9737 • 45°31'18" N • 122°41'4" W

Assignments

During our last retreat we addressed the following questions and had an outstanding group discussion. I hope you will revisit these questions or address them for the first time, if that is the case.

How did your parents express love to you?

What earned your parents approval?

How did you get your parents to pay attention to you?

How did your parents discipline you?

In addition please write out some answers and thoughts about the following questions.

What techniques did you utilize to get attention?

Which people while growing up were consistent?

Which inconsistent?

How did you learn and utilize dishonesty?

What were your escape mechanisms?

When and how did alcohol and other drugs become an escape mechanism or coping mechanism?

More Assignments

What were some of your coping mechanisms?

Which coping mechanisms are still working, which aren't?

What current behaviors would you like to diminish or eradicate?

What current behaviors would you like to enhance or increase?

Self-Centered to God-Centered

Agenda

- Self-Centered to God-Centered
 - Sober and Miserable
 - Powerless over everything
 - Spiritual Malady
 - Need for God
 - Changing my mind
 - Faith and Surrender
 - Rocket Ship
 - Escape velocity
 - Not my life

Disclaimer:

This talk and writing is only my experience and by no means a mandate on how anyone should think or believe when it comes to God or spirituality. The journey of recovery and spiritual transformation is an individual adventure and unique experience. My only intention is to inspire you to seek a greater consciousness so that your thought life will be placed on a much higher plane.

Greg's talk: Going from Self-Centered to God-Centered

So there I was, **faced with a new reality, and that's Living Sober**. Living life, and not drinking. How do I do that? For me, **when I'm sober, just sober and that's it, I'm not happy. I'm Sober and Miserable. And Sober and Miserable is impossible**. Eventually, I'm going to break down, and I'm going to decide that drinking, even with those horrible consequences that I know are going to happen, is Way better than this Sober and Miserable situation. **If you're going to take away the bottle and the bag, you have to give me something better**. You have to give me Sober and Happy. When I figured this out, I began to understand the true nature of my alcoholism, that it's not about how much I drank, or what happened when I drank, it's really much more about what I'm like when I don't drink. You see, my problem is not drinking, **my problem is sobriety**. I can't live with myself sober. I can't live in society sober. I can't keep a job, I can't keep a girlfriend, I can't be a good friend, I can't care about my family, I simply cannot live happy sober with myself. Why? Because I'm stuck there with myself, in my head, every day of the week, without escape.

Fortunately, there is a solution. When I came to AA, and went to meetings, I heard other alcoholics telling their story, and sharing their experience, strength and hope. And when I listened closely, I could see my future. I got a clear picture of the problem, and the solution. I could see what life would be like if I kept drinking, and what life could be like sober.

The problem, all my suffering stems from me being powerless over Everything. We're not just talking about alcohol. Yes, I do have a physical craving for alcohol, sorta like when I open a

Self-Centered to God-Centered

tub of Ben & Jerry's ice cream, that lid is not going back on. Just throw it in the trash. Anything that's good, that makes me feel better, I want more. I also have a mental obsession. When I see others drinking with impunity, I think, why am I different from them. I can do that too. I just need to figure it out, and I can learn to control my drinking. Try it a few times and you become like the Jaywalker (pg's 37-38 Big Book).

Most importantly, what I suffer from is a **spiritual malady**. What is that? What is a spiritual malady? This is the ISM part of Alcoholism. This is the root of all my troubles. You see, somewhere along the way of growing up, I decided that the world is a mean place, very unfair, and horribly boring, and in order to survive, I had to toughen up, and I had to control the people around me to see the world the same as I did. Well, this is hard to do as a fifth grader that still plays with Legos at night, and dreaming about superheros. Everyone wants to be more powerful than they really are, right? I needed a power greater than myself to help me be that person I always wanted to be, and when I finally got alcohol in me it was truly a spiritual transformation. I was immediately transformed into a badass, girls were interested in me, and I could control those around me. This is probably why alcohol is also called spirits. Because its spiritual. I was transformed immediately. And when I got this new power, I couldn't put it down, I had to have more and more, and then it turned on me. I started to notice that all my friends were disappearing. I was losing that magical power to control the people around me, to be the life of the party. I didn't know it then, but I now know that my drinking was scaring them. I was drinking with an intensity that scared people. No wonder. One night, me and the few friends I had left decided it would be a good idea to throw firebombs in a nightclub. That's insane, and I paid the price. We didn't get caught that night, but about a year later, I was running the streets of SF, and got busted. That was the beginning. That got me into the rooms, and after 30 days, the rest of my wreckage caught up to me, and I was looking at a long prison sentence. I was scared out of my mind, and **I needed a solution. I knew drinking would just make it worse, and I was stuck, not drinking was miserable.** This is when I finally sat down with my sponsor and I was willing to surrender to a new plan. My plan got me to this point and I needed a new plan.

To get started, I had to wrestle with some tough questions. How do I become convinced of my powerlessness, and the need for a power greater than myself? How do I turn myself over to something that I don't understand, that's invisible? Here's where I got to a very important turning point that many go through in early sobriety. And that's to change our mind, and make a decision to do something we don't believe in. It says if you've decided you want what we have, AND you're willing, THEN you're ready. Then it says, we Decided to turn our Will and lives over to Care of a Higher power. You see, this decision thing is pretty important. I like to think of it like buying shoes. I can struggle with the decision, but as soon as I make it, I'm so excited that I want to wear the shoes home. I want to implement your new decision right away. The opposite is like going to the gym because my doctor mandated that I go. It's going to feel like pain because I'm resentful and resisting my plight. But if it was your decision, then it's not pain you're experiencing, its effort and growth. You can't wait to go to the gym.

In the case of sobriety, we often resist making a decision because our Alcoholic mind looks at step 3 and says, I can't turn myself over to something I don't know is there, to something that's

Self-Centered to God-Centered

allowed such atrocities to happen in the world, to something that I decided long ago doesn't exist. **You see, what my alcoholic mind is being asked to do is to reverse the decisions that I made long ago.** Remember, it says Some of us tried to hold on to our old ideas, and the result was Nil, until we let go absolutely. What that means is we get zero results until we change our mind. The Doctor's opinion said a psychic change is necessary for an alcoholic to achieve sobriety. **So here I am faced with this impossible decision.** To be sober and miserable and eventually go back to drinking because I can't stand it anymore, or to accept spiritual help, to let down my guard and be open enough to actually change our minds. The force that enables this to happen is honesty, open mindedness, and willingness that occurs in the first step.

I didn't know how to be honest. The last thing I wanted was to face myself. I was afraid of what I might find on the inside. Someone important said, know the truth and the truth shall set you free. You see, the truth is like a bright light that shines in the darkness and exposes all the lies that has been powering my denial. **What made me willing to look is the pain of the wreckage, and this impossible situation of sober and miserable. It opened me up to not only hear the truth, but to know it deep down inside of me, at my inner most self.** This is why it says, Know the truth. You have to know it deep down on the inside, 100%. This is when I admitted to my innermost self I was alcoholic and admitted I was truly powerless, and that I needed a higher power.

Powerless is a beautiful thing. It's the bedrock of everything spiritual. It's the most spiritual word we have in our steps. It forces me to acknowledge that I can't do this on my own, that I need another power. It takes me to the root of all my troubles. Our book says that selfishness, self-centeredness, that is the root of all our troubles. What Bill is really talking about there is powerlessness. **I'm NEVER going to be able to control the world to my liking.** And even if I do get lucky, and control some things to my liking, I'm never satisfied. I want more. My ego steps in and says, look at all my power, look how great I am. And if I don't get what I want, my ego says, look at all these bastards getting in my way. I'm always going to be powerless over Everything, and I need a power greater than myself.

What's genius about AA, is that it's not about trying to convince me of what the Higher power, God, whatever you want to call it, is or isn't, because AA is not a religious philosophy. **The only thing that AA does, is convince me of the need for God,** as I understand it, her, him. Doesn't matter what God is. In my experience, **the only two things that AA has tried to convince me is to keep coming back, and that I need a power greater than myself.** If AA tried to convince me of anything else, I would have never made this program, it would have been too much for me to accept.

As a result of making a decision, I was able to do these steps. The only way to do the steps is when you're surrendered. **It's by deflating my ego enough to surrender to a higher power, and working the rest of these steps that I was able to experience a new God center, or a spiritual awakening.** What is a spiritual awakening? That's Sober and HAPPY. Maybe not happy all the time, but at least not, Sober and Miserable.

Self-Centered to God-Centered

The only way to get this is to experience it. "The spiritual life is not a theory, we have to live it." That means that a spiritual awakening does not happen intellectually. The only way to have this awakening is to experience it, to live it. I can't just lock myself in a room and intellectually learn this program. **The ego deflation process cannot happen under our own guidance. The way the ego survives is to keep us separate and living locked in our self-centered world.** So, we need each other, we need these meetings, we have to get involved, we have to admit to another person our defects, and make amends, and carry the message. All of this involves other people. The hardest part about step 5 is that we admitted to not just ourselves, and God, but that we also admitted to another person. That's the hardest part. That takes humility. This would be so much easier if we just had to admit to ourselves and God. That's easy. Then we make amends directly to people we harmed. Again, that involves other people. We just can't do this on our own. And why is that? There is absolutely no way to deflate our egos to the point necessary to have this spiritual awakening. You see in order to go from Self Centered, to God Centered, **I have to have a new center.** And that's what these steps do. It gives me a new center, a psychic change, a new operating system (for the technical geeks). In other words a complete transformation. Sober and HAPPY. Why is this spiritual awakening so hard? Why doesn't God just simply take away all of this. After all, we had a perfect release from alcohol, why not everything else? The answer is that if this was easy, we wouldn't appreciate it so much. **The being Happy part comes from an intense gratitude that will make you cry.** It will bring you to your knees, and you'll just want to run around hugging others and carrying this message to pass it on. That's why this is hard. The best things in life are always the hardest. Go get it, be fearless and thorough from the very start.

Your Rocket Ship to a 4th Dimension

It's not a question of God doing for me what I cannot do for myself, it's really a question if I recognize the great reality that underlying the totality of everything, including me, is God.

As soon as we admitted the possible existence of a Creative Intelligence, a Spirit of the Universe underlying the totality of things, we began to be possessed of new sense of power and direction, provided we took other simple steps. Pg 46

When I explore my physical world, I can see that my body is an advanced biological machine. It might be the most sophisticated machine in the universe. My body is made up of pulleys, pumps, an electrical system, communication system, the most advanced computer code ever seen (DNA), etc. It's an amazing biological machine, and even more amazing, it runs on biofuel. Put some vegetables, fruit, and grains in me, and I can go for days. Wow, howa does that work? Where does all of this energy come from? But what's even more amazing is that which cannot be seen in the physical world. Look at my eyes. They are lenses that reflect images to an optic nerve. What is it that receives those images, and actually sees, and processes the information. We call it consciousness, but what is this consciousness? How is it that I think, feel, and examine, and solve? None of this can be fully explained by science. Or for that matter, how is it that you take a seed you can hold in your hand, put in the ground, add some water and light, and next thing you have is a pomegranate tree? Life and consciousness is a miracle. The question is, do I recognize it, or do I think that I'm really running my life, and it's up to me to

Self-Centered to God-Centered

make my life? Did I create myself? Whose life is this anyways?

Is God doing for me, for all us, what we cannot do for ourselves? Do we see it?

One of my greatest turning points was the realization that my life is not my life. This happened when I was facing my most terrifying fear, and I was entering the unknown. Would I survive? What would happen to me? I kept repeating the 3rd step prayer, offering myself to Thee. Then I realized, looking at my hands, whose life is this? What am I really offering? Did I make myself? Did I have anything to do with me being here? Of course not. I'm just here. I realized that my life is God's life. I and life are the same, inseparable.

When I was a child, and I decided the world was a mean place, and that I needed to toughen up, I didn't decide that I needed God to do for me what I couldn't do for myself. I did the opposite, I decided I had to do it, all on my own. That's when I turned towards self reliance, and away from God. In my world, there was nothing that was going to help me. What's mine was mine, and what's yours was sometimes mine too. The only thing that ruled my world was self-reliance. My ego took over my consciousness and all that mattered was controlling others so no one could hurt me emotionally. Emotions were a form of weakness. I sought power in the bottle, and drugs, and whatever outside me. And there was never enough to fill me up.

Our book says that we pursue this delusion of control to the gates of insanity and death. I've known many who have committed suicide. Anyone who commits suicide is not killing their true self, they're killing their ego that has convinced them they are separate from everyone, that everyone is against them, that they are not enough, that they are better off to be dead. Anyone who reaches this ultimate desperation is killing a stranger, a delusion that has become their identity.

Chuck C said there is one problem, and that is conscious separation. And there is one solution, and that is conscious contact. How do we get this conscious contact? How did it get put inside of me?

Our book says we will be rocketed into a 4th dimension. That metaphor perfectly describes what it takes **to go from self-centered to God-centered**, from conscious separation to conscious contact. Think about our Universe, galaxy, solar system, sun, and planet. The force that holds it together is gravity. This invisible force is still a mystery how it works. The further away you get from a planet, the lower the gravity. Although it still exists. The sun's gravity holds the planets together, even the Moon's gravity controls our ocean tides.

I have found that there are **similar forces at work in my mind**. At the center is this part of me known as Ego that has a strong gravitational pull. The only way to escape this gravity of my ego is to have a rocket ship that will get me far enough away to escape the pull. This is called the **escape velocity**. Every planet is different to how much escape velocity is needed. To escape the Earth's gravitational pull, you must travel 11.2 km per second. Jupiter is 59.6 k/s. Similar to

Self-Centered to God-Centered

the planets, the bigger your ego, the more escape velocity you'll need. To power this rocket ship, you need rocket fuel, and powerful engines. **The fuel for this mental rocket ship is called humility.** The engine is God. The humility comes from lightening your load. Letting go of your pride and all your attachments. Any extra baggage has to go. You pump in willingness, open-mindedness, honesty, forgiveness, acceptance, and surrender, and you're ready to blast off. All that's required is to hit the ignition switch. That's the decision to turn everything over to God, and blast off into the unknown. **When you escape the gravity of your ego, you will experience this new freedom and peace.** It truly is a ***fourth dimension of existence of which we had not even dreamed.***

Selected Quotes from Big Book:

If you are as seriously alcoholic as we were, we believe there is no middle-of-the-road solution. We were in a position where life was becoming impossible, and if we had passed into the region from which there is no return through human aid, we had but two alternatives: One was to go on to the bitter end, blotting out the consciousness of our intolerable situation as best we could; and the other, to accept spiritual help. This we did because we honestly wanted to, and were willing to make the effort. Pg 25-26

If, when you honestly want to, you find you cannot quit entirely, or if when drinking, you have little control over the amount you take, you are probably alcoholic. If that be the case, you may be suffering from an illness which only a spiritual experience will conquer. To be doomed to an alcoholic death or to live on a spiritual basis are not always easy alternatives to face. Pg 44

When we became alcoholics, crushed by a self imposed crisis we could not postpone or evade, we had to fearlessly face the proposition that either God is everything or else He is nothing. God either is, or He isn't. What was our choice to be? pg. 53

The great fact is just this, and nothing less: That we have had deep and effective spiritual experiences* which have revolutionized our whole attitude toward life, toward our fellows and toward God's universe. The central fact of our lives today is the absolute certainty that our Creator has entered into our hearts and lives in a way which is indeed miraculous. He has commenced to accomplish those things for us which we could never do by ourselves. pg 25

Much to our relief, we discovered we did not need to consider another's conception of God. Our own conception, however inadequate, was sufficient to make the approach and to effect a contact with Him. As soon as we admitted the possible existence of a Creative Intelligence, a Spirit of the Universe underlying the totality of things, we began to be possessed of a new sense of power and direction, provided we took other simple steps. We found that God does not make too hard terms with those who seek Him. To us, the Realm of Spirit is broad, roomy, all inclusive; never exclusive or forbidding to those who earnestly seek. It is open, we believe, to all men. pg 46

Self-Centered to God-Centered

Just to the extent that we do as we think He would have us, and humbly rely on Him, does He enable us to match calamity with serenity. pg 68

Greg's Talk - Other Notes for Handout

Self will run riot

This is the root of my problem. If I'm going to run the world, that means I need to control you all. Anything I can do to get things going my way, and I did. And you all didn't like it. And a wall came up between you and me. And I got cut off from you, separated, isolated, alone. And when I was cut off from my brothers and sisters I was indeed cut off from my higher power. **Self will run riot caused me to be absolutely alone on the other side of a wall that I had built. That's the essence of being spiritually sick.**

Bondage of Self

Bondage of self is emotional bondage. I can't live in this world. Really, I can't live with the cards I've been dealt. Lack of power is my dilemma. That means I cannot control my emotions that I think is caused by you. These emotions are sticky, it's like a spider web. The more I fight it, the more I get tangled and wrapped in a cocoon. The spider is King alcohol and it's going to get me if I stay there too long. What sticks me to the web is resentments, guilt, pride and ego. The only way to get unstuck is to let go. To let go I have to know what I'm letting go of, and that's why I have to do honest self appraisal. I have to see my part. And my part is always a fear, an insecurity that makes me reliant on what you do for my emotional well being. As long as I am reliant on what you do, I will always be disappointed, because people will never be perfect and do as I expect them to do.

Need for God

Remember that we deal with alcohol—cunning, baffling, powerful! Without help it is too much for us. But there is One who has all power—that One is God. May you find Him now!

This should say, remember that we're dealing with Greg's Brain - cunning, baffling, powerful! Without help it is too much for Greg. I can't handle this world. I can't handle my thoughts, my emotions, my life. **The "cunning, baffling, powerful" part of my disease is to keep me separated from all of you and from God.** It tells me that all of you are the problem, not me. It tells me that if I only manage well, and keep the outside world out, all will be good.

Without help it is too much for me, and there is One who has all power-- that One is God, may you find Him now! What I need is a God of my own understanding that is all powerful and relieves me of this bondage of self that keeps me separated. **This God cannot be my own intellect.** My intellect is cunning, baffling, powerful because it constantly needs to be fed with

Self-Centered to God-Centered

external gratifications. It is in a constant state of fear and want. Dr. Silkworth said, it's restless, irritable, and disconnected until it gets that sense of ease and comfort from a few drinks or something else.

One problem: Conscious separation. One Solution: Conscious Contact. (Chuck C.)

Seeking

Does God exist? How do I find a God that I don't believe in?

I've been all over the map on this question. Whether I'm fervent either way, there is always a little bit of doubt. What if God does exist, or doesn't? Whether you believe or don't believe, you're in the same boat. Why? Because it's the unknowable. The only way to know, and find great reality that lives deep down inside, is to seek.

We found that God does not make too hard terms with those who seek Him. To us, the Realm of Spirit is broad, roomy, all inclusive; never exclusive or forbidding to those who earnestly seek. It is open, we believe, to all men. Pg. 46

Those who seek find. Those who knock it is opened.”

– C.S. Lewis

The way you go from not having God in your life, to having God in your life, is to make a decision to have God in your life. How does one become an Atheist? They make a decision to become an atheist. How does one become a non-atheist? They make a decision to become a non-atheist.

When you make a decision to let God into your life, to give God a chance, to see what happens, don't expect the room to fill up with light, or God to speak to you. Just know that as you open yourself up to God, and you stop resisting God, that God will start helping you immediately in ways you might not notice. Just know that He's there with you, and you and Him are just walking hand in hand. Soon you will start noticing that God may be speaking to you through people in the rooms. You're feeling better today than you did yesterday. People seem to be treating you nicer, and you're actually saying hello to people you don't know. Then you have this new willingness to change your mind even more so you can get more of this wonderful new joy and happiness that you're experiencing. That's it, that's the first spiritual experience! And over time, it gets better and better, as you become more willing to do even more of this program and draw nearer to God. You just have to keep seeking, and doing everything you can to remove all those old ideas inside of you that are blocking you from experiencing God even more.

Getting into the Moment

Resentment is the past

Fear is the future

Step 3 is making a decision to turn your will and life over to the care of God.

If your will is the future, and your life is the past, then...

Step 3 is making a decision to turn your future and your past over to the care of God.

The present is a choice to go to God or not, what's your choice to be?

Self-Centered to God-Centered

- We are driven through pain towards the realization that God is everything, or He is nothing.

Not knowing

What is Surrender? The act of Surrender is to submit yourself to a greater power.

The hardest part of surrender is not knowing what will happen to me. Is this a loving Power, or a Hostile power? In war, you surrender to a hostile power. In recovery, we surrender to a loving power. My experience has shown me this is a loving power that wants wonderful things for me.

Faith and Surrender

If God had come to me in the beginning and said, "Greg, I'm going to take away your two favorite things, alcohol and drugs. And then I'm going to stick you in prison for two years. When you get out, your sponsor is going to kick your ass into going to college. You're going to be around a bunch of punk kids that know nothing about life like you do, but you're going to find that you love school. You have brains to use, so use them! Then you're going to get to live in Mexico for a couple years, come back and start a career that will be highly successful. You're going to get married, have kids, and get a home that will bring you lots of stress. But you're going to feel content and have a purpose in your life. You'll be able to carry this message to others."

If God had come to me and said all of this would happen, I would have signed up no problem. But that isn't how God works. If we know what is going to happen, Faith and Surrender are not necessary. **Faith requires Surrender, and Surrender requires Faith.**

When I'm in Faith and Surrender, I'm able to receive the Loving Help that God is offering me. Help is everywhere! It's not the asking for help that is hard, its the receiving the help. Its me getting out of the way, and deciding what is best for me, that makes me able to receive. I must take away my judgements of what is Good and Bad. Seventh Step prayer, "My creator, I am now willing that you should have all of me, Good and Bad." Third step prayer, "God I offer myself to Thee to Build with me and do with me as Thou Wilt." I must become that soft and moldable putty that God can build with me.

**

Emotional Sobriety - Spider Web of Emotion

When I have turmoil inside it is because I'm full of fear and unhappy. I feel like a failure, and not able to manage my life successfully. It feels like I'm trapped in a spider web of uncontrollable emotions. The more I fight these feelings, and struggle, the more I become entangled. What keeps me stuck to the web are attachments to my reputation, my pride, my resentments to the people that let me down, my envy of others that have what I want, and my complete inability to

Self-Centered to God-Centered

control the world to my liking. These attachments are self-centered fears that my reputation has been lost, my job and livelihood are at risk, I'm going to lose what I've worked so hard to obtain, and everyone will see me as a failure. I know that I need to relax and let go of these unreasonable fears that are just stories in my head. If I can accept life on life's terms, and let go of these attachments to a false identity, the glue that sticks me to the web of emotions will be removed. I will be able to break free from this bondage of self. If I can develop a new awareness that these are just thoughts and feelings, I can get a new perspective, and realize that these fears have created a false perception of me. I can get an arm free. Then I can get a leg free, and eventually, I can completely relax and experience a state of surrender. I will be free and at peace. I pray to God for help to do this. Please God, I surrender my life and will. Please help me relax and break free of this bondage of self. Thy Will be done, not mine.

When I came to AA, I was completely wrapped in a cocoon and the spider was coming down the web to eat me. I was so tangled and lost, that I didn't know my own powerlessness and unmanageability. I thought I was controlling my alcohol, when really it was controlling me.

Selected Spiritual Reading

Eckhart Tolle - Power of Now

What is the EGO?

Pg 18. The term ego means different things to different people, but when I use it here it means a false self, created by unconscious identification with the mind.

To the ego, the present moment hardly exists. Only past and future are considered important.

This total reversal of the truth accounts for the fact that in the ego mode the mind is so dysfunctional. It is always concerned with keeping the past alive, because without it - who are you? It constantly projects itself into the future to ensure its continued survival and to seek some kind of release or fulfillment there. It says: "One day, when this, that, or the other happens, I am going to be okay, happy, at peace." Even when the ego seems to be concerned with the present, it is not the present that it sees: It misperceives it completely because it looks at it through the eyes of the past. Or it reduces the present to a means to an end, an end that always lies in the mind-projected future. Observe your mind and you'll see that this is how it works. The present moment holds the key to liberation. But you cannot find the present moment as long as you are your mind.

PAST PAIN: DISSOLVING THE PAIN-BODY

Pg 30. The pain-body, which is the dark shadow cast by the ego, is actually afraid of the light of your consciousness. It is afraid of being found out. Its survival depends on your unconscious identification with it, as well as on your unconscious fear of facing the pain that lives in you. But if you don't face it, if you don't bring the light of your consciousness into the pain, you will be forced to relive it again and again. The pain-body may seem to you like a dangerous monster that you cannot bear to look at, but I assure you that it is an insubstantial phantom that cannot prevail against the power of your presence.

Pg 37. THE EGO'S SEARCH FOR WHOLENESS

Another aspect of the emotional pain that is an intrinsic part of the egoic mind is a deep-

Self-Centered to God-Centered

seated sense of lack or incompleteness, of not being whole. In some people, this is conscious, in others unconscious. If it is conscious, it manifests as the unsettling and constant feeling of not being worthy or good enough. If it is unconscious, it will only be felt indirectly as an intense craving, wanting and needing. In either case, people will often enter into a compulsive pursuit of ego-gratification and things to identify with in order to fill this hole they feel within. So they strive after possessions, money, success, power, recognition, or a special relationship, basically so that they can feel better about themselves, feel more complete. **But even when they attain all these things, they soon find that the hole is still there, that it is bottomless.** Then they are really in trouble, because they cannot delude themselves anymore. Well, they can and do, but it gets more difficult.

As long as the egoic mind is running your life, you cannot truly be at ease; you cannot be at peace or fulfilled except for brief intervals when you obtained what you wanted, when a craving has just been fulfilled. Since the ego is a derived sense of self, it needs to identify with external things. It needs to be both defended and fed constantly. The most common ego identifications have to do with possessions, the work you do, social status and recognition, knowledge and education, physical appearance, special abilities, relationships, personal and family history, belief systems, and often also political, nationalistic, racial, religious, and other collective identifications. None of these is you

Pg 39. **The ego's needs are endless.** It feels vulnerable and threatened and so **lives in a state of fear and want.** Once you know how the basic dysfunction operates, there is no need to explore all its countless manifestations, no need to make it into a complex personal problem. The ego, of course, loves that. **It is always seeking for something to attach itself to in order to uphold and strengthen its illusory sense of self, and it will readily attach itself to your problems.** This is why, for so many people, a large part of their sense of self is intimately connected with their problems. Once this has happened, **the last thing they want is to become free of them; that would mean loss of self.** There can be a great deal of unconscious ego investment in pain and suffering. So once you recognize the root of unconsciousness as identification with the mind, which of course includes the emotions, you step out of it. You become present. When you are present, you can allow the mind to be as it is without getting entangled in it. The mind in itself is not dysfunctional. It is a wonderful tool. Dysfunction sets in when you seek yourself in it and mistake it for who you are. It then becomes the egoic mind and takes over your whole life.

ADDICTION AND THE SEARCH FOR WHOLENESS

Why should we become addicted to another person?

The reason why the romantic love relationship is such an intense and universally sought-after experience is that it seems to offer liberation from a deep-seated state of fear, need, lack, and incompleteness that is part of the human condition in its unredeemed and unenlightened state. There is a physical as well as a psychological dimension to this state.

On the physical level, you are obviously not whole, nor will you ever be: You are either a man or a woman, which is to say, one-half of the whole. On this level, the longing for wholeness - the return to oneness - manifests as male-female attraction, man's need for a woman, woman's need for a man. It is an almost irresistible urge for union with the opposite energy polarity. The root of this physical urge is a spiritual one: the longing for an end to duality, a return to the state of wholeness. Sexual union is the closest you can get to this

Self-Centered to God-Centered

state on the physical level. This is why it is the most deeply satisfying experience the physical realm can offer. But sexual union is no more than a fleeting glimpse of wholeness, an instant of bliss. As long as it is unconsciously sought as a means of salvation, you are seeking the end of duality on the level of form, where it cannot be found. You are given a tantalizing glimpse of heaven, but you are not allowed to dwell there, and find yourself again in a separate body.

On the psychological level, the sense of lack and incompleteness is, if anything, even greater than on the physical level. As long as you are identified with the mind, you have an externally derived sense of self. That is to say, you get your sense of who you are from things that ultimately have nothing to do with who you are: your social role, possessions, external appearance, successes and failures, belief systems, and so on. This false, mindmade self, the ego, feels vulnerable, insecure, and is always seeking new things to identify with to give it a feeling that it exists. But nothing is ever enough to give it lasting fulfillment. Its fear remains; its sense of lack and neediness remains.

But then that special relationship comes along. It seems to be the **answer to all the ego's problems and to meet all its needs**. At least this is how it appears at first. All the other things that you derived your sense of self from before, now become relatively insignificant. You now have a single focal point that replaces them all, gives meaning to your life, and through which you define your identity, the person you are "in love" with. You are no longer a disconnected fragment in an uncaring universe, or so it seems. **Your world now has a center. the loved one**. The fact that the center is outside you and that, therefore, you still have an externally derived sense of self does not seem to matter at first. What matters is that the underlying feelings of incompleteness, of fear, lack and unfulfillment so characteristic of the egoic state are no longer there - or are they? Have they dissolved, or do they continue to exist underneath the happy surface reality?

If in your relationships you experience both "love" and the opposite of love - attack, emotional violence, and so on - then it is likely that you are confusing ego attachment and addictive clinging with love. You cannot love your partner one moment and attack him or her the next. True love has no opposite. If your "love" has an opposite, then it is not love but a strong ego-need for a more complete and deeper sense of self, a need that the other person temporarily meets. It is the ego's substitute for salvation, and for a short time it almost does feel like salvation.

But there comes a point when your partner behaves in ways that fail to meet your needs, or rather those of your ego. The feelings of fear, pain, and lack that are an intrinsic part of egoic consciousness but had been covered up by the "love relationship" now resurface. Just as with every other addiction, **you are on a high when the drug is available, but invariably there comes a time when the drug no longer works for you**. When those painful feelings reappear, you feel them even more strongly than before, and what is more, you now perceive your partner as the cause of those feelings. This means that you project them outward and attack the other with all the savage violence that is part of your pain. This attack may awaken the partner's own pain, and he or she may counter your attack. At this point, the ego is still unconsciously hoping that its attack or its attempts at manipulation will be sufficient punishment to induce your partner to change their behavior, so that it can use them again as a cover-up for your pain.

Every addiction arises from an unconscious refusal to face and move through your own pain. Every addiction starts with pain and ends with pain. Whatever the substance you are addicted to - alcohol, food, legal or illegal drugs, or a person - you are using something or somebody to cover up your pain. That is why, after the initial euphoria has passed, there is so much unhappiness, so much pain in intimate relationships. They do not cause pain and unhappiness. They bring out the pain and unhappiness that is already in you. Every addiction does that. Every addiction reaches a point where it does not work for you anymore, and then you feel the pain more intensely than ever. This is one reason why most people are always trying to escape from the present moment and are seeking some kind of salvation in the future. The first thing that they might encounter if they focused their attention on the Now is their own pain, and this is what they fear. If they only

Self-Centered to God-Centered

knew how easy it is to access in the Now the power of presence that dissolves the past and its pain, the reality that dissolves the illusion. If they only knew how close they are to their own reality, how close to God.

Avoidance of relationships in an attempt to avoid pain is not the answer either. The pain is there anyway. Three failed relationships in as many years are more likely to force you into awakening than three years on a desert island or shut away in your room. But if you could bring intense presence into your aloneness, that would work for you too.

Select Spiritual Quotes

Whenever you become anxious or stressed, outer purpose has taken over, and you lost sight of your inner purpose. You have forgotten that your state of consciousness is primary, all else secondary.”

– Eckhart Tolle

“To recognize one's own insanity is, of course, the arising of sanity, the beginning of healing and transcendence.”

– Eckhart Tolle

“The primary cause of unhappiness is never the situation but thought about it. Be aware of the thoughts you are thinking. Separate them from the situation, which is always neutral. It is as it is.”

– Eckhart Tolle

“Awareness is the greatest agent for change.”

– Eckhart Tolle

“Being spiritual has nothing to do with what you believe and everything to do with your state of consciousness.”

– Eckhart Tolle

“It would seem that Our Lord finds our desires not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased.”

– C.S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory, and Other Addresses*

Self-Centered to God-Centered

Notes:

family home near Manchester Vt. “doing a lot of drinking, living alone and moodily brooding.” Ebby recalled that Roland had had “a thorough indoctrination in the OG principles” and “passed as much of this on to me as he could.” Accepting that his only hope lay in a conversion experience, Ebby too placed himself in the “religious atmosphere” of the OG. After staying with Roland for a while, he relocated to New York where he moved in with one of the “brotherhood” at Calvary Rescue Mission, a homeless shelter and chapel for drunks run by the Oxford Group. While Ebby was living at the Mission, he learned of Bill W’s desperate situation and decided to pass along the message that he’d received from Roland Hazard.

Upon Ebby’s arrival, Bill “immediately felt that there was something different about” him. When Bill asked “what’s up?” Ebby replied “I just fell in with a group of people, the OG’s. I don’t go along with all of their teachings by any means. But those folks have given me some wonderful ideas. [HANDOUT#2] “I learned that I had to admit that I was licked ... that I ought to take stock of myself and confess my ideas to another person in confidence ... that I needed to make restitution for the harm I had done others ... that I ought to practice the kind of giving that has no price tag on it, the giving of oneself to somebody ...that I should pray to whatever God I thought there was for the power to carry out these simple precepts And if I did not believe there was any God then I had better try the experiment of praying to whatever God there *might* be.”

Although Bill continued to drink, he “could not forget what [Ebby] had said. “In the kinship of common suffering *one alcoholic had been talking to another.*” Over the next week or 10 days , Bill paid a drunken visit to Calvary Mission, then checked into Towns Hospital for what proved to be his last round of detox. After a visit from Ebby, who restated the “neat, pat little formula” he’d already passed along, a despondent Bill tried “the experiment of praying to whatever God he thought there *might* be” and his prayer was answered in spectacular fashion:

4
“Suddenly the room lit up with great white light. I was caught up into an ecstasy ...It seemed to me ... that I was on a mountain and that a great wind, not of the air but of the spirit, was blowing.”

Concerned that he might have been hallucinating, Bill checked in with his physician Dr. Silkworth, who assured him that he was “not crazy. There has been some basic psychological or spiritual event here.” As Dr. Jung had said, “Sometimes spiritual experiences do release people from alcoholism.”

As soon as Bill was discharged from Dr. Silkworth’s care, he began working with alcoholics at Calvary Mission and Towns Hospital. By mid-January he had enlisted the help of Sam Shoemaker, the Rector of Calvary Episcopal Church. At the same time, Bill and his wife Lois began attending OG meetings at Calvary House, which stood adjacent to the church, and were impressed by the Group’s success in helping people change their lives.

Bill, on the other hand, was having no success at all in changing the lives of the drunks he reached out to at Calvary Mission and Towns Hospital. “At the end of 6 months nobody had sobered up.”(ACA 65) In April, he shared his concern with Dr. S who responded with what Bill subsequently called “a great piece of advice. Without it, AA might never have been born.” “Look Bill,” he began, “you’re having nothing but failure because you are preaching at these alcoholics ... [and] you top it off by harping on this mysterious spiritual experience of yours... No Bill you’ve got the cart before the horse, You’ve got to deflate these people first. So give them the medical business and give it to them hard. Pour it right into them about the obsession that condemns them to drink and the ... allergy of the body that condemns them to go mad or die if they go on drinking. Only then can you begin to try out your other medicine, the ethical principles you have picked up from the Oxford group>”

Chapter Seven / 'PASS IT ON'

then opened an office in a downtown Ak-
Both his scholarship and his professional
able when he was sober.
ing his office, Dr. Bob started drinking
ually in such difficulty that his father in St.
er doctor out to Akron to bring him home.
st and recuperation in Vermont enabled
n and his medical practice. After a "whirl-
hip, he and Anne Ripley married in 1915,
ney bought a home, and in 1918 their first
Another child, Sue, was adopted.¹
e of Prohibition, Bob started drinking yet
was that he was now safe, because soon
ig available anyhow! He continued to drink
920's, and both his practice and his family
the early 1930's, he and his family were

ear period, Dr. Bob had worked out a grim
d him to drink and somehow still maintain
Careful never to go near the hospital while
would stay sober until four o'clock in the
ally a horrible nightmare, this earning mon-
nuggling it home, getting drunk, morning
oses of sedatives to make it possible for me
and so on ad nauseam," he wrote. "I used
my friends, and my children that I would
mises which seldom kept me sober through
s very sincere when I made them."
that way of life, the Oxford Group mem-
o Dr. Bob because of their apparent "poise,
s. They spoke with great freedom from em-
I could never do," he wrote, "and they
s finally split from the Oxford Group, that
influenced the Fellowship.

APR 20, 1933
Akron, Ohio

'DINNER JACKET REVIVAL' WAS BEGUN AT HOTEL MAYFLOWER LAST NIGHT



—Times Press Photo

Russell Firestone, left, and Dr. Frank N. D. Buchman, before the meet-
ing, at the left. At the right a scene as the dinner jacket revival
meeting got under way. Mr. Firestone is speaking. Left to right are, Reginald
A. E. Holme, Oxford; Sir Walter Windham, London; Rev. Walter F.
Tunks, rector of St. Paul's Episcopal church, and Mr. Firestone.

**Oxford Group Hits Stride
In Akron Modern Revival**

**Buchman and Followers Begin Personal Meetings Today in
New-Style Evangelism; Score Will Fill Pulpits Sunday:
Hundreds Throng First Session to Hear Converts**

By DON STROUSE

The Oxford group of dinner jacket revivalists started about
the serious business of winning Akron to Christ today, after a
whirlwind opening meeting last night that drew close to 2500
people to jam two improvised meeting houses.

"Personal evangelism—one man talking to another or a
woman discussing problems with another woman was the order
of the day. The clergy of the city got together with Dr. Frank
N. D. Buchman, founder of the group, to talk over things that
bothered them, and about 400 women gathered in Hotel May-
flower ballroom for the first women's meeting.

Another public evening meeting
will be held tonight in the tea-
room of the A. Palsky company.
The overflow crowd that is ex-
pected will be cared for at the Y. W.
C. A. auditorium, corner East
Bowery and South High streets.

Fill Pulpits Sunday
Arrangements were made today
by members of the group to fill
the Akron pulpits with converts
today morning and evening, and
to care for and baptize a num-
ber of converts during the day.
The Y. W. C. A. will have a
special service at 7:30 p. m.