

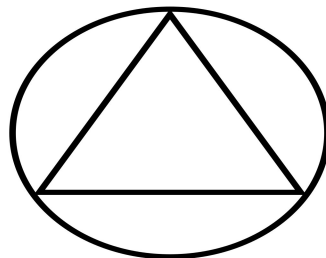
# The Tributary

Area 76 Newsletter

Summer 2018



Alcoholics Anonymous  
[area76aawyoming.org](http://area76aawyoming.org)



"It is easy to let up n the spiritual program of action and rest on our laurels. We are headed for trouble if we do, for alcohol is a subtle foe. We are not cured of alcoholism. What we really have is a daily reprieve contingent on the maintenance of our spiritual condition."

Alcoholics Anonymous Pg. 85



## **Abstinence vs. Sobriety.....One Man's Opinion**

**You won't find this in the Big Book, at least not in these words; but I draw a significant distinction between abstinence and sobriety.**

**I was told early in my recovery that "Surrender" is, "Quiet acceptance of my life as it is right now. Not as I would like it to be; or, would otherwise have it be...but, to accept it as it actually is at that present moment in time."**

**That doesn't mean I have to like it or approve of it; but, if I want real Sobriety I have to accept the reality that my life is what it is...RIGHT NOW. That is surrender.**

**And, from that surrender and Acceptance comes Serenity. I have no hope for serenity without first accepting the reality of my life as it is RIGHT NOW...regardless of how bad it may be.**

**And, from serenity comes Sobriety.**

**Of course, all of this is founded on the fact that we're not drinking. But, for me Sobriety is a frame of mind. It's a barometer of where I am in my spiritual journey at any given moment in time.**

I like to back into that definition; i.e., my Sobriety is a product of my Serenity; and, my Serenity is a product of my Acceptance; and, my Acceptance is a product of Surrender. I SIMPLY CANNOT HAVE SOBRIETY WITHOUT SURRENDER, ACCEPTANCE AND SERENITY.

With that definition of Sobriety, I will admit that there have been several times in my recovery (my last drink was May 24, 1982) that I have sat across the table from a newcomer who was...at that particular moment....more "Sober" than I.

My sobriety is a series of present moments. It's not about what I was five minutes ago, or what I might be five minutes from now. It is a matter of what and where I am at this particular moment - RIGHT

NOW. I once heard a speaker say that, "Yesterday is a canceled check. It has no value today. And, tomorrow is a promissory note that likewise has no value today. But, today....this moment RIGHT

NOW....this is your cash." The speaker admonished us (metaphorically) to "Spend your cash baby, spend your cash." He certainly was not advocating fiscal irresponsibility. Rather, he was making the point that RIGHT NOW is all that we really have. Everything else is either history or hope....but, this moment - RIGHT NOW - is for real. Acceptance of that fact is "Surrender".

In short, I measure my abstinence in decades, but I measure my sobriety in moments.

Carl P.  
Lander