

"Welcoming the Newcomer" Recorded Talk Outline

As given to The Lake Oswego Action/Participation Speakers Meeting by Bob B.

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Why do we do this?

Like the flicker of the candle in the wind, it doesn't take much to make it go out.

It's like a train. We couple in, connect up. The engines are Bill W, Dr. Bob, The Big Book, and the examples of others. The car in front, pulls us along. We pull those behind us. The only way to uncouple is to stop. Sometimes we end up on the siding, alone, watching the Streamliner pass us by on the mainline. The trick is to not let go! Front and back.

Vic's welcome of me.

He spoke of himself in a gentle manner.

I made a deal with myself:

Don't take the first drink – Don't miss meetings – Try to keep an open mind, until I figured out what an Alcoholic was.

10,588 days – 1512 weeks – start of my 30th year

How I do It?

Newcomer at a meeting:

- Notice them – early, nervous, sitting alone, you haven't seen them before.
Don't be afraid of people who don't look like you.
It helps to come early and stay late.
- Say Hello – I'm Bob B.– whole name – we're not anonymous from each other.
We're not embarrassed to be here.
Look them in the eye – don't be distracted – They're skeptical – Good, firm handshake – Get on their level, sit down with them.
- Act like you're interested, as if this conversation was meant to happen.
Ask their name, and remember it – write it down quietly if you have to.
"Is this your first AA meeting?"
"Having some trouble?"
Listen to them.
Prompt them as if they were afraid.
"What got you to AA?"
- I tell them that they would be smart to decide now, that they are here to listen. Tell them to pass if called, so they aren't thinking about what to say.
- I suggest that they look for the similarities, not the differences.
- Talk to them afterwards.
"How'd you like the meeting?"
"Would you mind if I gave you my telephone number. I'd like you to feel free to call me whenever you want."
As you're writing your info, ask, "Would you like to give me your numbers?"

Friends send someone to you:

- "Tell me about yourself." Family, Married, Drinking?
"When did you last drink or use?"
"Have you ever tried to quit before?"
"Do you want to now?"
- Don't wait for them to ask you how it works.
Tell them your story – 90 day deal –
- Get them to the meetings – Fr. Toner
- Schedules – literature – Big Book

Follow-up:

- "Hi, this is Bob B. from the Loyola Group, I'm just calling to see how your week's going."
Encourage them to return to the meeting – plan to meet them before or after.
- Look for them at the next meeting. Again, pay attention to them.
- Don't be afraid to ask them if they have stayed clean and sober.

Attitude:

- We can't drive them away; we can be a part of God's Will for them, and ourselves.
- Des and Bob
- Don't be afraid to tell them what to do, if you know what to do. You do!
We're not selling; we're giving away.
Be honest
 - No need to show-off. They don't need to like me. I might not like them. So what! It's a damn good thing that Vic acted like he cared about me.
 - We don't need their permission to share what has been given to us.
- "Look them right in the eye and tell them, 'My experience tells me that if you choose to half-ass this thing, you'll get a half-ass result. That's not enough! If you don't like your life the way it is—change it. If you don't know how—listen up. The room is full of people who aren't any smarter than you, but they do know how to quit drinking and change their lives.'"
- Reno Motel – I didn't kill him, nor did I save Don E..
- There is no shame in this disease! They don't know how we got it. We have it forever, and we can live with it. We arrest it. Many of us know that word!
It's a disease that shows itself in our conduct: The things we do that we don't want to do, and the things we want to do, that we don't do.
- Men and Women – Penises and vaginas.
Groups should protect their newcomers from the AA predators.
- I don't rush them – keep it very simple. My words will make him think!
"If you think Booze and Drugs are hurting your life, or your family's life, you might want to give this Program a real hard look. The best way I've found to do that, is by going to meetings."

What's the Goal?

- To make the EFFORT.

What can the results be?

- Look at me. I'm Vic's best work!