

# พบกันอีก

Keep coming back!

September - October 2009

Vol.1, No.1

Thai A.A.



-  **Phramong kutkloa hospital, BKK**  
Tel 0-2354-7600 – 28 ext 93189
-  **Suan Prung psychiatric hospital, Chiang Mai**  
Tel 053-280-228-46
-  **Aom Koi hospital, Chiang Mai**  
Tel 053-467-014 (Drug addiction)
-  **Chiang Mai Drug Treatment Center**  
Tel 053-268-037-41
-  **Khon Kaen Drug Treatment Center**  
Tel 043-345-391 – 2
-  **Nakorn Pranom, Nakae group**  
Contact khun Suksan 081-056-7345
-  **Kud Chum hospital, Yasothorn**  
Tel 045-789-426 ext 206, khun Kong 085-1029555
-  **Phol hospital, Khon Kaen**  
Tel 043- 414-710 – 12 ext 135
-  **Udorn Thani hospital**  
Tel 042-247-181 (psychiatric department)
-  **Pak Thong Chai hospital, Nakorn Rajasima**  
Tel 044-441-011 (Drug addiction)
-  **Chum Pae hospital, Khon Kaen**  
Tel 043-311-044 ext 239 (Drug addiction)
-  **Nang Rong hospital, Buriram**  
Tel 044-624-531 (Drug addiction)
-  **Korn Sawan hospital, Chai Ya Pum**  
Tel 044-889-022 (Drug addiction)
-  **Phra Yuaen hospital, Khon Kaen**  
Tel 043-266-045 (Drug addiction)
-  **Wapi Pratum hospital, Maha Sarakham**  
Tel 043-799-110 (Drug addiction)
-  **Khon Kaen Psychiatric hospital**  
Tel 043-227-422 ext 2612, 2613
-  **Apakorn hospital, Sattahip naval base  
Chon Buri**  
Tel 038-437-172 (psychiatric department)

## ACTIVITIES



12 steps and Buddhism Workshop

By Ajarn Santikaro

November 21-22, 2009

@ Khon Kaen Drug Treatment Center.



## Printed Material

**Booklets:** Living sober, As Bill sees it, DAILY REFLECTIONS, If your spouse is an Alcoholic, Suggestions for beginners meeting, A PROGRAM FOR YOU: A Guide to the Big Book's Design for Living, Willpower's not enough: Recovering from Addictions of Every Kind, Twenty-Four Hours a Day, Am I an alcoholic?, Questions and answers about Sponsorship, Suggestions for opening an A.A. meeting in a hospital setting.

**Pamphlets:** Introducing A.A., Suggested daily actions, Some thoughts on living without alcohol, If you are a health care professional, A newcomers ask, 44 Questions, Is A.A. for you ?, This is A.A, Details regarding A.A ,What happened to Joe.

One Day at a Time = ใจดีวันหนึ่ง



## ฟื้นฟูสภาพ... Recovery

"Freedom & new life in A.A."

By Kaek (Khon Kaen)

★ In recovery, change is gradual and is a process. As I go along the path of recovery, I learn more about AA. I begin to see things differently. I begin to see things from AA's point of view of. Drinking alcohol may be OK for those that are non-alcoholics but as alcoholic, I must give up our right to drink etc.

As alcoholics, I am not prone to give in to anything easily. I cannot imagine life without alcohol but in the 1st step, I must admit that alcohol had I licked and that I cannot use alcohol safely and that I cannot manage own lives on our own. The 2nd and the 3rd hard to believe because since I was scientific backgrounds, believing in an unseen power seems hard to accept but what is the alternative. I may still believe in science, I have to come to believe in this unseen power of our choosing in order to **live free of alcohol**.

✂ The next thing I must to **trust sponsor, repeat steps, aware program, A.A. is practice must to work constantly. Meetings, literature will not result in recovery but work the steps and follow my sponsor's guidance to the very best of ability.**

**I am grateful for AA which is the very breath of life for the suffering alcoholic.**

Truly grateful for all the help and support from the medical profession. The importance of their work cannot be too overstated and to be much admired. They have given freely of themselves without reservations. Even when we were drinking to the point of collapse, we were still unwilling to admit that we were very sick and that we had a problem. Denial of reality is the hall mark of alcoholism. We were self centered and self absorbed to distinguish the true from the false. Eventually though, driven by the scourge of alcoholism and its attendant suffering. When I sober I willingness, take pride and honor in work with the medical profession that can help alcoholics who suffering same me.

Thank for Higher Power for giving a new life, freedom, serenity and peace. The Higher power is a power which is everywhere and in all things. 😊



## Overcoming Cultural Differences With Language of the heart, by May May.

มิตรภาพ... Fellowship

We have to thank Mr. **Johnny** for helping start the Thai AA group in Khon Kaen, and he brought in Ms. Arunee (nurse Aoy) who is a kind and patient person to help as well. It all started with Mr. Johnny asking his friends from Bangkok to visit the AA meetings in Khon Kaen, and we agreed and joined with fun and delight. At that time there were about 5-6 Thai members in the group. We all help with the translation from Thai to English and vice versa, and the language issue was somewhat of a problem. But the truth is that we only need to look into each other's eyes to see what the other person is feeling. We could feel the warmth by just sitting together in the same room. In the past we were alone and lonely with the feeling of complete emptiness inside, and that has led to hopelessness and despair. But when we were with another person who understands those feelings, it brought us the feeling of warmth that could not be explained in human language.

**Language is a barrier that we can overcome.** Thai culture and western culture are clearly different. But if we look at the drinking culture and problems that result from drinking, then we can see that anywhere is the same (maybe it is even the same on Mars). We cannot simply look at the drinking culture only, because problems result out of our drinking. Although AA originated in the western culture, personally I think it is easy and simple understand because they are talking about drinking that causes problems, living life without drinking and spiritual recovery - which are the main axles. **Culture is like the or outer covering or shell, in which the surface color is different. More important is that we join together in helping each other "live life without drinking."** We must learn how to live differently, a **new way of life**. The old way of life was not working and had led us to the alcohol. I once thought that quitting alcohol would make me very fearful and felt that I would be better off dead rather than not be able to drink alcohol the rest of my life. But in AA we learn to live life by not drinking **one day at a time**, and that made us feel heartened.

What do we get from helping others? It helps us stay sober for today. How does it help us stay sober? We get immersed in doing things talking to people. We temporarily forget about our desire to drink, or it reduces our free time and loneliness considerably. We get to know more people and learn to live with other people. We become less fearful of people, and more importantly to **have fun**. If we were to not drink and not have fun, that would be surely be quite torturous and suffering.

**My advice is to do something for the group, with the group or help the group, and that will help yourself not to drink for today...**



## How to Begin A.A.?



In 1935, two alcoholics met at Akron, Ohio. Both of them were in a state of hopelessness. The people around them, not understanding the disease of alcoholism were much ashamed of them. One of them was Bill; a stock broker by trade and the other was Dr. Bob who was a famous surgeon and had for many years tried to get sober. Both of these men had reached such a point in their drinking that their very lives were at stake. Both of them had been institutionalized several times going in and out of hospitals and had come to believe their situation as hopeless.



Their meeting was a most amazing co-incidence. They both discovered the strangest thing. Their discovery was that when one alcoholic helps another alcoholic that he could remain sober and is temporarily relieved from the obsession to drink. The next thing they did was to take this discovery to a lawyer; a suffering alcoholic. At the time, the lawyer was in the hospital for the treatment of alcoholism and those around him had pretty much given up hope for his recovery. He however became sold on the idea that Bill and Dr. Bob presented and got well, thus adding yet another alcoholic to their number. The message of recovery was initially not presented to those that held high positions in society but instead were given to the low bottom drunks on the street. Most of these street drunks had nowhere to live and Bill had many of them come and live in his home. Bill's wife Lois had to work double time, not only was she the bread winner of the household since Bill was unemployed but she also took care of the home front. This went on for several months and although Bill had given his all to help these drunks, all of them returned to active drinking. Bill tried to instill in them the spiritual nature for the arrestment of the disease from active drinking only to hear that, "all that stuff is OK for you but as for us, we would rather drink".

One morning Bill awoke to find that things were missing from his kitchen. Some alcoholic had stolen items from his kitchen to sell in order to get more alcohol. Bill felt deeply sorry for his wife who had worked so hard and the strain was visibly apparent. As a young woman, Lois had been quite a beauty but now she look old a weary. Bill felt that he had failed in his quest to help other alcoholics stay sober and was most discouraged. It was then that Lois uttered the most wondrous words that was to change the course of AA. She told Bill that even though no one had gotten sober as a result of Bill's attempts, that he (Bill) himself was sober. This revelation made such an impression on Bill and gave him the much needed encouragement to continue the work of helping others.

The ones that had gotten sober as the result of this new way of living were not daunted when their message was not accepted. They continued to try. They no longer felt that their efforts were wasted since these activities kept them sober. It mattered not that the ones they were trying to help did not get sober.

The work of helping alcoholics get sober was not done on a full-time basis. There were no financial rewards yet they continued the work tirelessly.

By 1937, a small group of 20 people had gotten sober through the method prescribe by Bill and Dr. Bob. This they believed was a miracle indeed. The group of sober drunks decided to put down in print their experiences in order to reach a wider circle of alcoholics. There were many problems along the way and the publication was delayed several times. It was when the sober alcoholics number nearly 100 that the book was finally written and published in 1939. The book was the accumulation of the experiences of the then sober alcoholics.



เพื่อนของ AA  
Friend of A.A.



## *Twelve Steps and Alcoholics Anonymous.*

The 12 steps which is an integral part of the AA program was adapted from the ideas of the then celebrated Dr. C. G. Jung (perhaps the greatest psychological mind the world had ever known) and the Oxford group which had been founded by Frank Buckman for the purpose of helping the many who had strayed away from the pure spirituality of old and the experiences of the then sober alcoholics. Furthermore, Bill and Dr. Bob put together the 12 traditions of AA. The steps were to help the individual recover and the traditions were to keep the unity among the budding AA groups.

AA is an autonomous program a does not have any affiliation with any outside sources. It does not accept donations and is self supporting through its own contributions. In this way, AA can remain autonomous and concentrate on its primary and only objective of staying sober and helping other alcoholics achieve sobriety.

The idea of "A Higher Power" need not be viewed as a strange and foreign idea. The concept of a Higher Power does not refer to any particular religion or deity. It is a power greater than oneself that each individual may choose for himself. At first, this higher power could be the AA group itself. Surely, the power of the group is a power greater than oneself and has helped many alcoholics remain sober. As the alcoholic has more experience with this way of life, he may choose to change his concept of A Higher Power anytime he chooses. One learns to rely on this higher power for strength and support through prayer and meditation, (step 11). A Higher Power can mean anything from Right Living, the concept of the goodness of the universe or just plain asking for guidance to do the next right thing.

The 1st step tells us that we were powerless over our alcoholism and that we could not manage our own lives. This needed to be accepted at the very deepest level. Since we were powerless, we had to find a power with which we could live and that power had to be greater than ourselves. That is step 2. While drinking, the alcoholic was actually insane and this power could and would restore one to sanity. In the 3rd step we surrender our will and our lives over to this power for guidance and strength. We then must look at our past and take a moral inventory i.e. the truth about ourselves good or bad. We then admit and accept the harm done to self and others and made direct amends to those we had harmed except when to do so would injure them or others. We then practice an on going self appraisal and when we were wrong promptly admitted it. We engage in daily prayer and meditation in order to know our Higher Power better. If we do these things, we have been assured that there will be a spiritual awakening which simply means our old ideas are automatically discarded and are replaced by a new and better way of seeing the world.

AA is not run by professionals. It is run by the AA members themselves each taking responsibility for certain tasks as trusted servants and not as a leader or a boss of any kind. These tasks or service positions are constantly rotated thus giving the newer members a chance to serve.

There are 2 types of AA meetings. One is the 'open' meeting where anyone can attend whether they are alcoholics or not. The second is a 'closed' meeting to be attended only by those who have a desire to stop drinking. In addition to meetings, we have spoken earlier of Sponsors. Each AA member gets to choose anyone to help him work the AA program. A sponsor is anyone who has had experience in living the AA way of life, has worked the steps and is willing to devote time and energy in helping another recovering alcoholic. It is recommended that the sponsor be of the same sex.

*Source: some part from Lesson Learned from A.A. in Thai Hospital Setting 2008 project*

*, by Col.Pichai Saengcharnchai, M.D. Department of psychiatry and neurology, Phramongkutkiao hospital.*

