

Recovered or recovering

This is a common point of debate in every part of the AA world I suspect.

As I have continued my study of our Basic Text, the answer finally became very clear. Step one has two separate and distinctly different parts.

"(Part 1) We admitted we were powerless over alcohol (hyphen)

(Part 2) that our lives had become unmanageable."

The story of the man age thirty on page 32 shows the two parts clearly. He was powerless over alcohol: "Once he started, he had no control whatever." From the point of alcoholism, his life was not unmanageable as he managed his decision to not drink for the next 25 years,

Powerless? Yes. Unmanageable? No.

"These observations would be academic and pointless if our friend never took the first drink, thereby setting the terrible cycle in motion.

Therefore, the main problem of the alcoholic centers in his mind, rather than in his body." page 23.

Bill's description of being recovered is in the paragraph beginning at the bottom of page 83 and on through the next little paragraph on page 84. Then on pages 84 and 85 we are told our sanity has returned. Our insanity is (once we have taken the pledge, vow, whatever, to never take another drink) we go and walk into a liquor store, pub, etc and start drinking. Now we're powerless over our body and our mind. Chronic alcoholics or alcoholics of the hopeless variety.

Of course, Bill introduced the Big Book by stating: "We, of Alcoholics Anonymous, are more than one hundred men and women who have recovered from a seemingly hopeless state of mind and body. To show other alcoholics precisely how we have recovered is the main purpose of this book."

And on page 132 he wrote: "We have recovered, and have been given the power to help others."

If we believe the Big Book contains our Program of Recovery as the only real authority in our Fellowship, then there can be no argument. Somewhere between Step Three and Step Nine, we are promised we will become recovered. At Step Three on page 63, we are

hopeless alcoholics. By the time we have worked our way through the next twenty pages, we will have recovered from a seemingly hopeless state of mind and body.

Recovered? Yes. Cured? No. If we return to drinking, the allergy is still alive and well. We will again be physically powerless over alcohol.

The idea that we are forever "recovering" is utter nonsense. Rather than debate this I suggest (if the answer to that question is important to the person who wants to know) they carefully read the Big Book beginning with the "dust cover" and don't miss a word until they find the words, "May God bless you and keep you -- until then."

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