



## Episode 2 Transcript

An Agnostic Reading of the Alcoholics Anonymous Big Book

Hey, it's Mike Z with the Agnostic AA. And this is episode two of an agnostic reading of the Big Book. It's basically a step study. So we are on the foreword to the first edition. So let's just get started.

You know. Oh, I meant to say last time, and I didn't, but, you know, hopefully you're reading along.

You have your own book, and you are, you know, underlining as, I suggest, and or anything that you find interesting or have questions about, of course. Feel free to leave questions in the comments and I'll respond with my opinion. Which, by the way, that's all that this is, is my opinion of my experience with the big book, the 12 steps, all, of course, from an agnostic point of view.

So anyways, foreword to the first edition. This is the foreword as it appeared in the first printing of the first edition in 1939. We have Alcoholics Anonymous, or more than 100 men and women who have recovered from a seemingly hopeless state of mind and body. So. Right, right there. I have noted a sponsor told me this, that that's a lie.

It wasn't a 100. At least not when they first started. The collective of writing the book, it was mostly written by Bill W with some others input. But Bill was primarily the writer. There was like 30 or 40 when they started, like in 1937 or something. But by the time they got to publication, by the time they were writing the foreword, I suppose, there was 100.

But the reason I point that out is there's a lot of, you know, wonderful ideas in the book. But a lot of it is a bit exaggerated. And, full of hyperbole. So just enough, I, I, you know, read the book with a grain of salt and find the value that you can find in it. And of course, I'm going to proceed now with my agnostic point of view.

Blah blah, recovered from a seemingly hopeless state of mind and body. It's interesting that they said recovered. That is, you know, goes back to the original argument that, that we had in the last episode. And we'll have again, are we recovered or recovering? As always. You know, I kind of subscribe to the statement in the book later where it says we have a daily reprieve based upon our spiritual fitness.

Now, spiritual, you know, that's based upon my, emotional sobriety, my, stability, etc.. Moving forward to show other alcoholics precisely how we have recovered is the main purpose of this book. That's, of course, in italics. And of course, when they use italics, that means they want us to pay special attention to it. I have that underlined.

They're going to show us in the book how you know, how they did it and and what worked for them.

For them. We hope these pages will prove so convincing that no further authentication will be necessary. I have that underline. It was illustrated to me, by various sponsors.

You know, there's

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no other further authentication needed. A is the way in the light and the word of God that

whatever little culty, if you ask me. But I think the author's original intent was just that's just their hope, right? Because, at the time, there wasn't any other options. Right. AA was happened because all of the things failed for them.

There's other choices today. There's other interpretations. There's better understandings. There's better understandings of even this book. So if you run into somebody who's like, AA is the only way. Yeah. For you, for you, AA was the only way. It may not be the case for others. So. Put that in your pipe and smoke it. Anyway, we think this account of our experience will help everyone to better understand the alcoholic.

Many do not comprehend that the alcoholic is a very sick person. And besides, we are sure that our way of living has its advantages for all. So I had. Alcoholic is a very sick person. You know, in retrospect, yeah, I was, and I still can be. And unfortunately, I don't have alcohol to blame anymore. But I am recovering.

I am recovered, at least, from needing to have a drink every day. So credit where credit's due. I got that from going to AA and now expanding into other things. And also, it's important that this is this is a way of life. Now the whole fellowship and the collinear. So that can happen in there. You know, not so much.

But, you know, the few friends that I have, the practice of the 12 step, the daily reflection, of my own behavior. Looking at my own discontents, my resentments. Doing many fourth, fifth steps, which is the 10th step. But that is all useful to me. That's what I'm sharing. And that is a new approach to life for me.

Instead of reaching for a drink, I reach for a pen and paper if I have to. I call another, person in recovery whose sobriety I respect. Right. People who can hear my complaints. People who can help me see. Get some perspective versus the bar. Right. The best solution in the bar was. Yeah. That sucks. Have a shot.

Well, that worked, but it stopped working. And I prefer this way of life. So it is a way of life. It's not just a hey, man. Look, if you're just here for tune up. Okay, great. You know, get tuned up, go back on out, you know? I'm just personally done with that. I feel like I've moved past that.

And I'm looking for something more, in my life than alcohol. Moving on. It is important that we remain anonymous because we are too few at present to handle the overwhelming number of personal appeals which may result from this publication being mostly business and professional folks. I have that underlined. We could not well carry on occupations in such an event.

We would like it understood that our alcoholic work is an avocation. For those who don't know, avocation is passionate hobby. But you know, you got the world's information in your pocket, probably with your phone book, your phone. So look up the look up. Any words you don't understand when writing or speaking publicly about alcoholism, we urge each of our fellowship to omit his personal name, designating himself or herself instead as a member of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Very earnestly, we ask the press also to observe this request, for otherwise we shall be greatly handicapped. We are not an organization in the conventional sense of the word. There are no fees or dues whatsoever. That's true. The only requirement for membership is an honest desire to stop drinking. We are not allied with any particular faith sector denomination, nor do we oppose anyone.

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We simply wish to be helpful to those who are afflicted. We shall be interested to hear from those who are getting results from this book, particularly from those who have commenced work with other alcoholics. We should like to be helpful to such cases. Inquiry by scientific, medical and religious societies will be welcomed. So, back on the previous page, I had, underlined being mostly business or professional folk underlined.

That's true. That's who founded AA originally the original 100. It's grown much more than that. Lots of blue collar, white collar, unemployed, ployed, employed, stay at home spouses, etc., etc.. It's a much bigger organization than when this was originally written. I also have underlined, that alcoholic work is an avocation, right, a passionate hobby.

Nobody's, really making money from AA at the very, very top. There are some, elected members who are making some money, but it's nominal. There's a real, position within AA that, no individual can profit from it. Now, that said, agnostic AA does accept donations. Whether it's just a like or a comment or share or cash, you know, it takes, time and effort to, produce, quality content, which we're striving to do here.

But you're under no obligation, right? And if we're going to be biblical, what is that fucking phrase? The worker is worth their value or something. You look it up if you're biblical.

Anyway, it's predominantly just an avocation for people. We carry the message, right? When I work with somebody in a 12 step capacity, it's free.

Period. That's all there is to it. You know, I give of my time. People understand my point of view or adopt and create their own point of view and get sober or not. It's all up to them. My time's free. I don't charge for that. Making videos. I'm not charging for this either. But, you know, if you want to buy me a coffee, I'm not going to complain anyway.

When writing or speaking publicly about, blah blah blah. I already read that right. You know, for the anonymity aspect, it does ask that we designate himself instead as a member of Alcoholics Anonymous. Almost nobody, does it that strictly, like, you know, we say our first name at least. And for me, I put the Z on the end because in the room, there's lots of MCs in the world.

So, for some uniqueness identification, I put the Z. Mike z anyway. That's that. Now, it is really important. In my experience, AA truly has no fees or dues whatsoever. We do contribute to the basket, at the meetings or, to zoom meetings, etc.. Because, we want to continue to see those places operate, but it comes out of our individual pockets.

That's, you know, a truth. And you don't have to chip in, right? You don't, you know. Now, in reality, if you keep going to a meeting month after month, day after day, and, drink the coffee and eat the cookies and never put a dime in, and, like, we can tell that you do have some money.

Yeah, you're probably going to get a little bit of shunning or dirty looks, etc., right? If I helped you kick in. It's all I'm going to say about that. Again, so I had that underlying the only requirement for membership is an honest desire to stop drinking. Actually, I even have the honest exit out because that's been dropped.

In, in the preambles that people read at the meetings because, yeah, a lot of people have a desire to quit drinking, but it's not honest. Not really. And that's okay. It helps, it helps to get sober if you have a true desire to quit. But, you know, anyway, it's been dropped. And then, you know, the only way is to the writers of the

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book in AA, in its core principle, is to just be helpful to those who are afflicted.

And that's what I'm trying to do here. Trying to help, the agnostic types like me to find the value in the 12 steps and hopefully get sober. You know, that's what I'm doing anyway.

All right, that's it for the foreword to the first edition. Next time we're going to do forward to the second edition. Forward to the second edition is long, and it'll just be more palatable, I think, as one episode. So, be sure to leave any comments or thoughts that you have. We respond as we can, sure to like and subscribe.

See you next time.