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Constant X of the Alcoholic Personality

Jean Carpenter

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CONSTANT X OF THE ALCOHOLIC PERSONALITY

A RESEARCH STUDY ON THE
PERSONALITY FACTOR IN ALCOHOLISM

by
Jean Carpenter

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

School of Graduate Studies
Western Michigan University
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The problem of alcoholism is one of the oldest problems in the history of mankind. Today it ranks world-wide as a major public health problem. Yet, constructive study and research on the subject did not gain much momentum until about 1935.

With the organization of Alcoholics Anonymous in 1935, the awareness of the problem spread, fanwise, throughout the fields of religion, medicine, and psychiatry. Alcohol had once presented a baffling and seemingly unanswerable enigma. But now there was a glimmering of hope in each of these separate fields that the answers might lie within its own particular realm.

The National Committee for Education on Alcoholism was founded in 1944, by Marty Mann. This organization, now known as the National Committee on Alcoholism, has done much to further educational work and to influence public thinking in regard to the illness of alcoholism. In a report made in 1958, by Marty Mann to the National Health Forum, it was noted that at least twenty million or more people in this country alone were suffering, directly or indirectly, from the effects of alcoholism.¹

The approximate membership today of Alcoholics Anonymous is 300,000. Over 8,000 groups in eighty countries are active. These figures alone establish the vital drive and impetus behind this dynamic movement against alcoholism.

Alcoholics Anonymous

There is a great flux of superficial knowledge circulated today about the Alcoholics Anonymous program. The public in general thinks that ex-drinkers get together, drink coffee, and discuss their previous drinking escapades.

Those who probe more deeply know that it is a spiritual program, that the alcoholic lives but one day at a time without alcohol, and that he tries to help others with the same vital problem as his own. Group therapy is given entire credit for possibility of return to sobriety and a normal life.

These conceptions, superficial as they are, are probably all that are necessary to be known. No one but the true alcoholic can thoroughly comprehend and understand the deeper and underlying significance of the A.A. way of life.

He has traveled a long road before admitting defeat. By the time he reaches the doorway of Alcoholics Anonymous he is spiritually, mentally, and physically bankrupt—in that very succession. On the road back to sobriety, he regains these values in reverse order: first he becomes well physically,

---

then mentally, and then spiritually.

There are drunks--and there are alcoholics. The drunk drinks because he wants to. The alcoholic drinks because he has to. The drunk can quit drinking at any time he so desires. The alcoholic is completely unable to resist the compulsion.

This necessity of differentiating between the drunk and the alcoholic has long been realized. It was, in fact, recognized as early as the period of 4 B.C. to 63 A.D. At that time Seneca wrote in his Epistolae Morales that the word "drunken could be used in two ways--one in the case of a man who is loaded with wine and had no control over himself, and in the other of a man who is accustomed to get drunk and is a slave to the habit."\(^3\)

This distinction is not one of superficiality or affected word usage--it is a basic technicality necessary to the modern understanding of alcoholism as a disease. Many pamphlets are published by the Alcoholics Anonymous organization and by various welfare societies which explain the danger signals of potential alcoholism. There have been various lists of questions made to help an individual determine whether or not he is an alcoholic. But the main point that distinguishes the alcoholic from the heavy drinker or the social drinker rests in one word--"Compulsion." And this compulsion is far

too powerful to be overcome by coffee or by words on tape recordings which are sometimes released to the public by Alcoholics Anonymous.

The fact remains that this program works in the light of divine inspiration, and is unquestionably one of the greatest channels toward the good of mankind in the world today.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF PREVIOUS STUDIES

Previous studies made on the subject of alcoholism point consistently to the personality factor. It appears that a basic type of alcoholic personality is probable but that this basic type has not been completely understood nor distinctly discerned in previous research.

One authority noted in 1952, that drunkenness provided the largest single category of offenses for which arrests were made in the United States and that about 3,000,000 persons in this country were believed to drink to excess. Alcoholics were regarded by Elliot as "disorganized individuals" who sought to escape life's difficulties through the "dubious euphoria" of alcohol. This particular theory was concluded by the observation that alcoholism was, after all, merely "symptomatic of maladjusted personality." 4

Psychiatrists have consistently pointed out that alcoholism was only a symptom of deep seated psychic disorder. Few of them have contended that anyone was "born an alcoholic." Emotional immaturity, in its broadest sense, has often been stressed as a major contributing factor.

Examples of Experimental Studies

A group of sociologists, under the direction of Dr. Edwin H. Sutherland of Indiana University, conducted a survey of thirty-seven attempts by other researchers who had sought to determine what personality factors, if any, could generally be associated with alcoholism. The results of this study were totally inconclusive. The summary of the report stated that any type of personality, "happy, sad, introvert, extrovert, can become an alcoholic."5

The medical profession has generally contended that the alcoholic needed a personality change. Dr. Edward A. Strecker, Chairman of the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Penn, School of Medicine, reported in a paper for the American Medical Association that alcoholism was an adult escape mechanism motivated by emotional immaturity. This immaturity was produced in childhood when parents dominated the child to the extent that he could never become "equipped to grown-up impersonal relationships."6

At a panel of the 1950 meeting of the Medical Society of the State of New York, disagreement on the origins of the illness was noted. One school of thought favored the psychogenetic theory. Another favored a physiologic origin. The

6Ibid., pg. 12.
only point on which there was complete agreement was that further research was definitely indicated.\textsuperscript{7}

In another study, Klineberg stated that both alcoholism and drug addiction were "not only causes, but also the effects, of personality difficulties."\textsuperscript{8} They represented, in many cases, escape from a social world which was otherwise unbearable.

Dr. Karl Menninger tied the theory of alcoholism in with the Freudian concept of the two dominant tendencies, to live and to die. He observed that one of the forms of chronic self-destruction, without active participation of the individual, was alcoholism. He explained that even the layman realized that people sometimes drank themselves to death, but that what the layman did not know was that "the original difficulty in such cases is not the alcoholism, but the underlying personality defect."\textsuperscript{9}

By a recent research on alcoholism, alcoholics were divided into two categories: essential alcoholics and reactive alcoholics. Essential alcoholics were described as those who began drinking to experience intoxication at an early age. These addicts were unable to drink socially for any length of time, as their drinking always ended in intoxication. No clear

\textsuperscript{7}Ibid., pp. 14-15.


drinking pattern was displayed, for they drank addictively "in the absence of discernible factors which might, in the case of other addicts, result in a reactive addiction."\textsuperscript{10}

This study further described the reactive alcoholics as those who did not show an early history of alcoholism. Many used alcohol socially for a number of years, but they seldom reached the point of intoxication or "binge" drinking. There were often periodic or continuous patterns in their drinking. Usually they tended to become addictive relatively later in life than the essential addicts, and their drinking was apparently based on their reactions to life situations which they felt to be intolerable.\textsuperscript{11}

This sampling of the theory field has brought out many viewpoints, but primarily it has shown the recurrence of one vital factor...Personality.

But what particular constant of personality? There has been no stable and unified answer to this question.


\textsuperscript{11}Ibid., pg. 138.
CHAPTER III

NATURE OF THIS STUDY

This is to be a study of the factors of personality which appear to be contributing causes toward alcoholism. It is a search for one, or possibly more, personality constants which are inherent in individuals addicted to alcohol. Interview, personal contact, and case history methods were used to develop the data presented here. The information was gathered and developed from systematic interviews with persons known to be having problems with alcohol.

Self-concept was studied in the cases of individuals who had, at least temporarily, arrested their compulsion for alcohol and were thus able to delineate their problem. Self-concept was also the basis of the interviews with practicing alcoholics. The self-concept in many of these cases, however, was so distorted in the face of reality that it was necessary to supplement or revise the impression by observation of the predominating, existing, and apparent qualities of personality and behavior reactions. Even so, the self-concept contained a constant or could be clarified by analysis.

It was realized that the ideal way of validifying these concepts was to supplement them with objective personality tests.
This, however, was impossible on two counts. The presently practicing alcoholics could not be tested in this manner. Most of them were jail habituants, hospital cases, or recurrent skid-rowers. Others, who were not in these categories, were individuals who realized the serious nature of their plight but who lacked the courage for subjecting themselves to actual testing.

Among the other group on which this research was based, members of Alcoholics Anonymous, there were two conditions that barred the possibility of personality tests. By far the most important factor was the nature of the organization itself and the imperative anonymity which was maintained among the members.

The other factor was psychological in nature. There was a belief, particularly among members who had arrested their drinking compulsion for over a period of many years, that it was wrong to question this miracle of sobriety by delving into the subject of "why" they were alcoholics. They "accepted" the fact that they were alcoholics. That, to them, was enough. To these extremists in thought, there was the idea that not only was it not right, it was radically wrong and possibly dangerous, to question in this way.

This belief did not develop from personal opinion. The basis for it was found in various sections of A.A. literature. In one instance, the statement was made that:
To those of us in A.A., how we became alcoholics is not important. The important thing is the realization that we are alcoholics and that, if we hope to survive, we must stay away from alcohol completely.\(^\text{12}\)

In another instance, there appeared the following statement:

\begin{quote}
There is probably no end to the reasons you will find if you ask why people become alcoholics. The reasons are not important.\(^\text{13}\)
\end{quote}

However, the majority of the alcoholics questioned were interested in the nature of this research and were anxious to co-operate in obtaining any findings which contributed to the present knowledge of alcoholism and which helped other alcoholics. It was realized that there was vital need for more research on the subject. Also, there was the proven truth of the statement that only an alcoholic could understand an alcoholic.

Dr. Bob, one of the founders of the A.A. program, expressed this understanding as a central theme of the fellowship, by quoting his own experience when approached by another alcoholic:

\begin{flushright}
AA For The Woman, \(\text{(New York: Alcoholics Anonymous Publishing Co., 1951.) pg. 7.}\)
\end{flushright}

\begin{flushright}
The Alcoholic Employee, \(\text{(New York: Alcoholics Anonymous Publishing Co., 1952.) pg. 11.}\)
\end{flushright}
He was the first living human with whom I had ever talked who knew what he was talking about in regard to alcoholism from actual experience. In other words, he talked my language. He knew all the answers, and certainly not because he had picked them up in his reading.

The American Public Health Association presented the Lasker Award for 1951, to Alcoholics Anonymous in recognition of the organization's success with this public health problem of alcoholism. The text of this award noted this element of understanding among alcoholics by stating that "Alcoholics Anonymous works upon the novel principle that a recovered alcoholic can reach and treat a fellow sufferer as no one else can." The text concluded by suggesting that this great venture in social pioneering may have a vast potential in the treatment of many other ills of mankind.

It was for this reason of understanding that this research was conducted strictly within the circle of alcoholics themselves.

Some experimentation was done with the questionnaire. This method was promptly discarded. Those individuals who could contribute the most could not be counted upon to co-operate fully by this method. It was difficult to present an adequate conception of the nature of the problem in this way. But most

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important, personal contact and personal reaction were necessary.

Weaknesses inherent in these methods were realized, and case histories were consequently selected to establish findings where objective testing was impracticable. Broad studies of the entire problem were made concerning contributing factors of substantiation.

Much of the pilot work done in subjective evaluations of personality as part of this study was done with a practical end in view. There appeared to be little reliability or validity on specific items by these efforts, but the results as generalizations were shown to be relatively stable and valid. In other words, although precise measurements were not obtainable, generalizations were reliable. This was particularly true in this area of research. Because all of these individuals were addicted to alcohol and shared a common problem, there was a sameness apparent in their personalities. This was not necessarily a "likeness" of personality; it was more an underlying link which held together the otherwise unique combinations of personality traits.

The Self-Concept

Raimy defined the self-concept in 1943, as "what a person believes about himself." Self-concept alone was never

considered a sufficient explanation of behavior. Some sub-
stantiation was needed, either by objective methods, case
histories, or observed behavior.

The viewpoint of the alcoholic had to be understood
in order to find the underlying organization. The puzzle of
his behavior had to be solved in terms of his own perceptions
of himself. It had to be recognized that the perceptual field
of each individual was the universe of experience in which he
lived and which he felt to be reality. The fact that one al-
coholic understood another alcoholic was vital to this under-
standing.

Many self-concept scales at Vanderbuilt University
showed that alcoholics could be separated from non-alcoholics
on the basis of self-concepts.17 It is true that individuals
tend to identify with other individuals who share a common
problem or seek a common need. Alcoholics share this need
and this problem. As they express it, "With us, to drink is
to die."

The fact was stressed by Krech and Crutchfield that
the traits which most individuals of a given group shared
equally, were often as important to the understanding of
personalities as were the traits in which they differed.18

17Ibid., pg. 154.
18David Krech and Richard S. Crutchfield, Elements of
The inspection of the pattern of various individual's traits, or the profile technique, made it possible in this study to index profile similarity.

Reasons For Increased Validity of Self-Concept

There were reasons to believe that data gathered from alcoholics who had succeeded in arresting their compulsion to drink, were more valid from the self-concept viewpoint than was ordinarily the case. These individuals had previously undergone a thorough moral inventory and fearless self introspection. This moral inventory and self introspection was called a "suggested" step toward the recovery from alcoholism. But to every member of Alcoholics Anonymous who worked the program successfully, this step was regarded as one which "must" be taken.

Rigorous honesty was essential toward achieving sobriety. For only through this channel was the alcoholic able to discover, or re-discover, himself and to rebuild his life without the use of alcohol.

Another factor in this increased validity was due to the understanding one alcoholic had for another. This use of "understanding" had a deeper and more basic meaning in this connotation. It was an understanding of mental alcoholic reactions. It was the ability of one alcoholic to project
himself into another alcoholic's mental world.

This understanding was evinced in the ability of individuals within a self-contained group to understand when any one of themselves tended toward alcoholism at certain intervals whereas other persons, closer to that individual and including his own family, did not sense it.

This understanding was evident in cases in which an alcoholic was called upon to sit with a patient suffering from delirium tremens. Both the visual and auditory sensations of these patients took many terrifying forms. These forms could often be traced through the history of the individual to something, perhaps dating far back into his childhood, which had been a horrifying or shocking experience to him.

As a concrete example of this understanding, the alcoholic who sat with a DT patient did not try to dissuade him of the existence of his nightmare world by telling him that it did not exist. He projected himself into that other world, for he had been there himself. He observed and feared "with" the patient, whether that distorted world was a terrifying experience of being crushed by wheels of trains that rumbled toward them, pictures on the wall that came to life and walked out of their frames, or masses of coiled snakes that waited to spring. This companion alcoholic reasoned, shared, and understood—but he did not deny.
Basic to this understanding was the experience of having
gone through this same intense suffering and knowledge of the
vivid reality of that distorted world. He knew the only tem-
porary comfort he could give this patient was that of sharing
and of understanding so that he did not suffer through that
hideous world alone. And this alone-ness, he knew, in that
world was as frightening as the illusions.

On a milder scale, the hearing of voices, the obsessions
of persecution, the threats and accusations—all of these
aspects of advanced stages of alcoholism represented, to the
non-alcoholic, sheer insanity. But those who had known these
things discussed them among themselves without running the
risk of being mis-understood. To alcoholics, and to alcoholics
alone, those phenomena made sense.

For these reasons—the self-searching and thorough
moral inventory that each individual who followed the Alcoholics
Anonymous program had made, their recognition of the basic
necessity of honesty, and the understanding between alcoholics—
the major portion of this study was made with members of that
organization. This source of data was more reliable than that
obtained from practicing alcoholics whose world was too foggy
and distorted to distinguish unbiased reality or to recognize
true perspective about themselves or the world around them.
CHAPTER IV

THE PROBLEM

This study was made with a view to determining the possibility that there was a certain constant of personality which was inherent in all alcoholics and to identify the nature of this constant. The term used to identify this unknown quality was, in this study, referred to as the $X$ Constant.

It was believed that this $X$ Constant, once identified, might prove to be the root from which the alcoholic tendency grew into a compulsion and an obsession. This $X$ Constant, when present within an individual's personality, drove that individual toward, and eventually into, chronic alcoholism. It was hypothesized that if this $X$ Constant were found to exist, it would explain the fact that the individual concerned embarked upon a course of self-destruction through alcoholism which he recognized as pure self-destruction but which he was powerless to combat.

This $X$ Constant, once identified, might be shown to be the determinant of personality which, when present, led the individual to addictive drinking and, when absent, allowed an individual to drink heavily, dangerously, and too much, but yet not addictively.

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X was that constant of personality which contributed to alcoholism. Using this as the hypothesis on which this study was based, it was necessary to discover the nature of this yet unknown and yet un-named constant. It was believed that X, undiscovered and unknown in its own right, was, necessarily, a combination of known personality qualities. These known qualities were referred to as personality constants A, B, C, D, and E. What were these A, B, C, D, and E qualities that combined to make up this X Constant?

If interviews with alcoholics concerning personality factors which they felt to have played an active part in their alcoholism revealed no pattern, the theory of the X Constant could not be substantiated. If, however, definite personality patterns emerged to the extent that classification, compilation, and analysis could be made, the composite X Constant could be firmly established as a valid theory.

In order to specifically designate this X Constant, it was necessary to make broad studies of the economic and social status of the individuals interviewed. It was necessary to obtain case histories in order to prove that there was this possibility of a personality quotient. As the alcoholics often admitted, there was always an "excuse" to drink, but there was never a true "reason" to do so. Among the "excuses" ran the social and economic conditions and the circumstances surrounding
the individual, the experiences he blamed, and the rationalizations which he made. But, since it was admitted that there was no true "reason" for drinking, and yet the alcoholic was compelled to drink, was it possible that the only available reason was the presence of the X Constant within the alcoholic's personality?

This search, then, was made to determine what basic personality qualities were characteristic of individual alcoholics and whether or not these qualities could be united into one separate entity known as the X Constant, that quality of personality inherent in those addicted to alcohol.

Only two basic definitions were necessary for this study. One was for alcoholism; the other was for personality.

Selection of suitable definitions for both of these terms was extremely difficult. There were as many definitions for alcoholism as there were scattered theories concerning its nature. The baffling, complex, and many-faceted nature of the subject itself defied simple definition.

The elusive nature and the myriad patterns of personality made this definition even more difficult. A compilation of varied definitions which started with the fifty collected by Allport in 1937, and extended through many that have since been advanced, showed one point clearly. There was still no one universally accepted theory of personality.
Due to these difficulties in specific terminology, it was decided to select some few suitable definitions for the building of a composite conception of each of these factors.
CHAPTER V

ALCOHOLISM DEFINED

Alcoholism today is considered an illness or disease. There were various ways in which it differed from other known diseases. There was a stigma attached to this particular illness because of a former belief that alcoholic addiction was a moral sin.

This illness could not be treated as other illnesses were because of lack of knowledge concerning it, because of lack of resources for treatment, and because of the alcoholic's unpredictable symptoms and behavior. But by far the greatest difference between this disease and others was the fact that it was not purely physical, nor was it purely mental. It did not respond to simple treatment. Alcoholism was a three-fold disease: physical, mental, and moral. Complex factors were involved in which all three phases needed consideration.

This conception of alcoholism as an illness was not modern, although it was not generally accepted until recent years. Marty Mann, in her study, traced this idea back over some period of time.

According to her history, she noted that Dr. Benjamin Rush wrote a scientific paper in 1785, in which he referred to
drunkenness as "an odious disease." Dr. Thomas Trotter of Edinburgh in 1788, referred to alcoholism by stating that he considered drunkenness, in medical language, to be strictly speaking, a disease. He added that this disease produced actions that disordered the functions of health. According to him, it was a disease produced by a "remote cause." In 1830, a report was issued by the Connecticut Medical Society which inquired whether an institution should be established for intemperate persons since it was realized that the current method of sending alcoholics to jails or workhouses was a failure. This study also stressed the vital need of starting some research on the subject immediately.\(^{19}\)

After this long struggle to delineate and define alcoholism, any definition suitable for today's usage necessarily conceded it as, basically, an illness or disease.

**As A Compulsion**

It has been explained that the heavy drinker drank because he wanted to. The occasional drunk went on his sprees. The social drinker drank because he enjoyed it. But the alcoholic drank because of compulsion. That compulsion was the nature of the disease of alcoholism.

Further, the compulsion was both mental and physical. It was true that an alcoholic could take a certain amount of

alcohol and perhaps not continue to drink any more at that particular moment. But the mental and physical urge was kindled, and although he managed to control his drinking on repeated occasions, the moment the alcohol had built up in his system to a certain point, there was no resistance to the compulsion.

It has often been pointed out that when a true alcoholic takes a drink, the reaction is similar to that of pouring gasoline on a fire. When the normal drinker takes a drink, the reaction is that of quenching his thirst, or of pouring water on a fire.

The simplest and most used terms concerning alcoholism today were coined by Dr. William Silkworth, who was well-known both for his work with alcoholics and for his early recognition of the power of the Alcoholics Anonymous movement. He made combined use of the terms "physical compulsion" and "mental obsession."

As Progressive, Incurable, Arrestable

There were other points that needed recognition. One was that the disease was progressive. An individual once started down the road to alcoholism became progressively worse. It became progressively more impossible to combat the craving for alcohol. The results became progressively more severe as the individual went through simple stages of intoxication,
later passouts and blackouts, hallucinations, delirium tremens. Finally the point was reached where the individual, unable to turn back, was faced with the blank prospect of opening only one of three doors—insanity, death, or total abstinence. The first two doors were open to him—he had only to step through. The third was barred and bolted and sometimes too great a barrier to break through.

The second point which needed inclusion was the fact that the disease was incurable in that once an alcoholic had crossed the border line to compulsive drinking, he could never again tolerate any alcohol in his system without, either immediately or later, reverting to his alcoholic pattern. This was inevitable, for the first drink developed within the alcoholic an intense craving, both physical and mental, which will-power could not alleviate.

There was definitely no cure. This was shown by the number of non-drinking alcoholics who had arrested the compulsion and had experienced many years of complete sobriety. Yet, the minute that they again touched alcohol, the one drink set the compulsion into motion and they would inevitably be drunk, for they could not stop. These instances also showed the extreme progressiveness of the disease. The only hope for the alcoholic was not to take the first drink—only in this way could the disease be arrested.
In the early stages of alcoholism there was a dependence on liquor to do things for the individual which he could not do alone. This dependence went into compulsion during the middle stages of the addiction. During the last stage, the alcoholic drank only to live and lived only to drink.

Final Definition

Bill W., one of the founders of the Alcoholics Anonymous program, gave a detailed description of alcoholism in an address presented to the Medical Society of New York at an annual meeting in 1944. Some of the aspects of the disease he described as follows:

...Alcoholism is a complex malady; that abnormal drinking is but a symptom of personal maladjustment to life; that, as a class, we alcoholics are apt to be sensitive, emotionally immature, grandiose in our demands upon ourselves and others; that we have usually 'gone broke' on some dream ideal of perfection; that failing to realize the dream we sensitive folk escape cold reality by taking to the bottle; that this habit of escape finally turns into an obsession, or as you gentlemen put it, a compulsion to drink so subtly powerful that no disaster however great, even near death or insanity, can, in most cases, seem to break it; that we are the victims of the age-old alcoholic dilemma: our obsession guaranteed that we shall go on drinking, but our increasing physical sensitivity guarantees that we shall go insane or die if we do.20

Taking all of the former concepts into consideration, the following condensed definition was finally taken for this study:

Alcoholism is an illness characterized by a physical compulsion coupled with a mental obsession for alcohol. As an illness, alcoholism is progressive, incurable although arrestable, and, unless arrested, a fatally terminating disease.

There were two groups of individuals interviewed for this study. The members of Alcoholics Anonymous were those individuals who, through the A.A. program, had arrested the illness of alcoholism. They were still alcoholics, and they knew that they always would be—but they were sober alcoholics.

The individuals in the other group, referred to as practicing alcoholics, were those who had not succeeded in arresting the compulsion and, consequently, were having serious trouble with the effects of alcohol.
CHAPTER VI

PERSONALITY DEFINED

Many previous efforts have been made to analyze the problems of the alcoholic. Many theories have been advanced as to whether there was or was not a true "alcoholic personality." Some theories favored the assumption that there were definite personality types, such as the "criminal personality," or the "delinquent personality." Others rejected this viewpoint. Just as one theorist definitely stated that "Behind the scenes of obsessions and compulsions there is an identifiable personality type," other writers as definitely denied its existence.

Both religion and medicine utilized certain basic principles from which they approached the subject of alcoholism. Both were based on the personality of the individual and differed only in the way in which they suggested recovery. Medicine stated that the alcoholic needed a personality change. Religion believed this change to come about through a spiritual change of heart. Alcoholics Anonymous combined the two concepts into the term of "spiritual awakening."

In this study, it was not a matter of concern as to


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whether or not the "alcoholic personality" existed as a type. The matter of concern was what constant of the total personality contributed toward alcoholism? What determinants explained the existence or development of this constant in some individuals and not in other individuals under fairly equal circumstances?

In other words, what was this X Constant of personality which, when present, led one man into alcoholic addiction and, when absent, allowed another individual to drink in moderation or in excess and yet not develop into compulsion?

Norman Cameron, in his discussion of the behavior disorders, asked a similar question in his quest for the causes of schizophrenic disorders in some persons and not in others. His answer to this was that the schizophrenic disorganization and desocialization appeared to develop most readily in the anxious and solitary individual who was both socially immature and socially inept. He noted further that practically all of these individuals relied heavily upon fantasy as a technique for overcoming frustration or for resolving conflicts just as an alcoholic relied upon alcohol for escape. His conclusion was that, in the case of the schizophrenic, he "has not succeeded in establishing himself firmly in his culture...." [22]

This conclusion was also applicable to the status of the alcoholic and to the nature of his personality problem.

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Basic Considerations

After much study and review of multitudinous existing definitions of personality, it was determined that selection of a single definition for the purpose of this study would have inevitably been guided only by personal preference. There was neither proof nor disproof of adequacy. There was no need to insist upon tight definition, for regardless of the particular conception applied, many other conceptions applied equally as well for the purpose of the establishment and discernment of the $X$ Constant. Regardless of specific definition, as long as the personality was regarded in totality and this totality was made up of various ingredients as a result of perceptions experienced, almost any definition was applicable. However, some conceptions were considered basic to the present purpose of the term.

It was not the biological factor alone that produced personality differences. Reactions of other people were involved. The personality was always subjected to interplay between social and biological factors. Any individual was subject to the reactions of other individuals toward him. Some people were more sensitive to these reactions than others. Some people tended to constantly misinterpret reactions toward themselves. Whether an individual was well-favored or
ill-favored, whether he was liked or disliked, whether he was accepted or rejected—all of these matters were subjected to that individual's perception of himself in the eyes of the world around him.

There was much evidence of this factor in the study of the alcoholic's perceptions and reactions. He invariably tended to read into spoken words connotations which were not there—perhaps he desired these connotations there; perhaps he resented their presence. Regardless, so long as they were perceived by him, they were reality to him, and he reacted accordingly. In this study, his personality was the recorded reflection of his perceptions.

It was important to an adequate personality to be able to share perspectives common to one's own society. When this was impossible, inadequacy resulted. Whether this resulted from early experience or from later distortion was of little moment. It was equally responsible in either case, for the failure to establish the capacity for self-acceptance, for positive self-regard, and for the ability to identify with other people.

Combs and Snygg described the importance of this understanding in the statement: "The key to understanding behavior whether it be our own or other people's lies in large measure in the skill we develop in the exploration and understanding of
the nature of people's perceptions."

**Individuality of Personality**

Personality was individual and unique. Aldous Huxley wrote of alcoholics in this regard. He noted that some alcoholics seemed to have been biologically predestined to addiction. Others, he noted, embarked on slow suicide as a result of imitation or good fellowship. To others, it was not merely this—a matter of chemistry or social reaction. Further, it was a matter of metaphysics which followed the thoughts of William James whom he cited as follows: "to escape the prison of our individuality, an urge to self-transcendence."

The whole organism or person was personality. According to German theorists, we needed knowledge of the historical past and also of the present cultural setting of an individual in order that his personality be understood.

Almost all typologies of personality were based on the assumption that it was characterized by a more or less enduring structure. Almost all agreed that there were intrinsic traits of personality.

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(Article from Saturday Evening Post series by Aldous Huxley entitled "Drugs That Shape Men's Minds.")
Personality was the entire individual. Personality was a uniqueness of behavior. The concepts which formed the personality were the perceptions about the self in any particular field. It was the perceptual field of self. Self and personality, one and the same, represented complete reality to the individual. It was for this reason that when an alcoholic arrested his illness and his craving for alcohol that his personality underwent a change and developed along different lines due to his changed perceptions of himself and of his world.

Personality was the individual as a total functioning person. Personality was not only the reason for behavior; it was behavior itself. It was not only the reason for reaction; it was reaction itself.

In short, for this study, a combination of existing theories was used. Precise individual definition was excluded. Personality was simply considered as the total person. The following conception of the total person was devised.

Personality--Theory of the Mirrored Trap

To every individual, self was all-pervasive. This self perceived the universe as through a series of mirrors which revolved around him.

Through the perceptions and interpretations of this
self, the mirrored reflections were transmitted and became an integral part of the individual.

If the images reflected were distorted, as was the case with the alcoholic, the interpretations built upon these distortions were equally ill-conceived. But, to the individual, each reflection represented truth, for each was based upon his own unique perception and inevitably became an integral part of his personality. Reflected were his past, his present, and his vision of the future.

Thus, personality was the sum total of these reflections upon the individual self as he found himself within the mirrored trap of the universe of which he was a part.
Figure 1

THE MIRRORED TRAP

Illustration Showing Mirrored Reflections, the Sum Total of Which Represent the Unique Personality of the Individual.
CHAPTER VII

RESEARCH PLAN

With Members of Alcoholics Anonymous

A research plan entitled "A Suggested Step" was presented at numerous closed group meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous. The presentation of this plan consisted of three parts.

An article was prepared which explained why the members of this organization, as alcoholics who were well qualified on the subject, should participate in an endeavor to determine what personality constant every alcoholic might have in common. The article was non-technical in form and content in order to secure complete interest and co-operation from the members of the groups.

Group discussions were held on the subject, and several members agreed to seek further findings in contacts among other groups including some prison and hospital groups to which they had access.

Each individual was asked to furnish a self-concept of the personality factor which he felt, in his own case, contributed the most toward his alcoholism. This was accomplished by personal interview rather than by general group
A chart was shown which depicted a five-pointed star. Each point represented one of the five personality traits which the survey was to point out as inherent in the greatest number of self-concepts. It was explained that when the final tabulations of the survey were made, these five qualities could be determined. The combination of these was to represent the X Constant for which the search was being made— the X Constant inherent in the personality of every alcoholic.

The complete plan was presented as shown in the following chapter.
"I am an alcoholic, and I need your help!"

There was a time when this was my cry. It was a desperate and a hopeless cry, for mine was a shattered world. It was a world of loneliness—a world peopled with grotesque and weird figures that existed only in a warped and twisted imagination.

Yet these figures were as real and terrifying to me in that midnight world of alcoholism as the sunlight is real and beautiful to me in my world of today.

Suddenly, in answer to my cry, there was A.A. There was God. There was light and life. And over all, in my bright new world, there was great humility and gratitude.

Surely, all of us who have been so fortunate as to have found this new A.A. way of life, owe an eternal debt of gratitude to God as we understand Him, to the divinely inspired program of Alcoholics Anonymous, and to the alcoholic who still suffers.

We do Twelfth Step work. Is this enough to repay this
eternal debt? I cannot believe that it is. There is much more waiting for us to do. There is a lot to be learned about alcoholism.

Medicine, psychiatry, and religion have been searching, but none of them have completely found the answers. The answers lie within ourselves, for we are the alcoholics. It is up to us to pioneer upon new pathways to knowledge.

Most of us, when we came into A.A., immediately embarked upon a frantic introspection. We asked ourselves "why" we were alcoholics in the first place. But in seeking the answer, we were like the mouse in the maze.

Then we seized the First Step. We admitted and accepted the fact that we were alcoholics, and we ceased to question "why."

But there is a "why" for everything that exists in the world. For every effect, there is a cause. The more roots that knowledge of a given subject has, the more chance for growing that knowledge has. And "why" is a sturdy root of every known fact in the world.

So "why" is an alcoholic? Within ourselves, and within ourselves and other alcoholics only, lies the answer. This is the challenge presented to us. We have, all of us, paid a high price for our alcoholism. This high price that we have paid has qualified us to meet this challenge.

Here, then, is the problem for the Twelfth Step Research:
The Problem

$X$ represents that quality of personality which contributes to alcoholism. Every one of us may have this $X$ Constant in his personality. Otherwise we would not be alcoholics.

What is this $X$ Constant? So far, the identity is unknown. $X$ represents some personality constant, as yet unknown and un-named, which may be inherent in all of us who are alcoholics. How can we determine this $X$ Constant?

$X$, undiscovered and unknown, must be a combination of other personality qualities which can be represented in letter form by $A$, $B$, $C$, $D$, and $E$. What are these $A$, $B$, $C$, $D$, and $E$ qualities that combine to make up the $X$ Constant?

That is what we will first have to determine. We must honestly discern the basic qualities of personality which have led us, individually, into alcoholism. Then, by pooling our information and analyzing the results, it may be possible to discover which five personality traits we recognize as factors contributing to alcoholism.

By way of illustration, the five points of a star are represented by five predominant personality constants. The combination and integration of these go into the formation of this inherent $X$ Constant for which we are seeking and by reason of which we are alcoholics. This may aid in the understandings
of alcoholism by medicine, psychiatry, and religion.

But more important to our own thinking and our own recovery, the finding of this X Constant may aid in our own understandings when we hear that lonely cry from the midnight world:

"I am an alcoholic. I need your help!"
$X$--The quality of personality that contributes to alcoholism.

$A, B, C, D, E$--Qualities of personality which go into constant $X$. 
CHAPTER IX

THUMBNAIL SKETCHES

Fragmentary Notes

From the Life Histories of Alcoholics

Many case histories were recorded and individually considered and compared. From these, the following examples were selected for inclusion with this study.

These members of Alcoholics Anonymous came from many walks of life. Their backgrounds, their abilities, their ideals, and their ways of living were varied, often widely separated. Their stories were diverse in many ways, and the age span of the individuals covered many years. The oldest member included was in his seventies; the youngest was in his twenties. Yet, with all of the diversity that appeared in these stories, there was a thread of sameness which ran throughout each one; a thread which stemmed from the common problem of alcoholism which was constantly paramount in each life.

It was impossible to include an extensive analysis of each case history. But in order to show the consistency of these self-concepts, it was thought valuable to include the following observation as an example.
M._, the first case cited in the following reports, said that her entire life had been colored by the feeling that she was on the outside, looking in. In her own words, "No one ever seemed to want me for myself....I carried a terrific chip on my shoulder....The chip is still sometimes on my shoulder, but I am finding a degree of happiness."

M._ found sobriety through the program of Alcoholics Anonymous. She had found it through attendance, faithful attendance at many different groups in various locations. A short time ago, and since the writing of this report, M._ sent a letter to the group which she had attended for nearly two years in which she stated that "I have had the feeling for some time that I was not wanted in your group--that we were not included in your little clan."

The basic personality characteristic was deeply embedded. In this mirrored trap of the universe, she was still, according to the reflection she perceived, outside looking in. Yet she had succeeded in arresting the illness and compulsion of alcohol. She did not drink.

Similar observations could be made on other cases if space permitted. But the patterns were there. And just as consistently as each delineated trait of personality fitted, mosaic-like, into the whole of the individual personality, so all of these individual personalities fitted, again mosaic-like, into a group pattern representative of alcoholism.
Case One:

M.____, housewife: I was the child of a broken home. My parents were divorced, and although they gave me all of the material things in life, I always felt as though I were on the outside looking in. No one ever seemed to want me for myself. This feeling stayed with me as I grew up, and I carried a terrific chip on my shoulder. This carried over into my own first marriage. I had started to drink gradually, but alcohol became more and more of a necessity to me. Through my compulsion for it above everything else in the world, I lost my husband and my child. My whole world revolved around my next drink. I felt even sorrier for myself after my divorce. I was still on the outside, but now there was not even anywhere to look in. Nobody wanted me. I kept on drinking.

Finally, mentally and physically beaten, I found A.A. By that time I was so sick and tired of being sick and tired that I managed to get a grasp on the program and have not had a drink since my first meeting. That first meeting gave me hope. More than that, it made me feel that these people were my kind of people. They seemed to show an interest in me for myself.

Today I am happily married and, for the first time in my life, feel that I am wanted because I am me. There have been dark moments, and we have had our share of troubles—bad trouble.
on a couple of occasions. But I didn't drink to escape them. I think my childhood loneliness led me to be very emotionally immature. I needed alcohol to give me a feeling of self-confidence and assurance.

Case Two:

B.: I grew up in an eastern city and spent a happy boyhood. My folks were pretty well-to-do, and I had every chance to live a normal right kind of life. My father, a professional man, was quite well-known and respected. He was pretty disappointed in me, I guess, by the time I had tried several different colleges and either gave them up or they gave me up because of my drinking pattern. We gave that up finally, and Dad set me up in business for myself--the bar business. I didn't last long here either.

I went through a couple of business failures through drinking and decided I was just no good. I didn't want to worry the family any more so I left home and bummed around the country getting odd jobs, getting in and out of local jails, mostly on drunk and disorderly charges. Always, though, when things got too tough for me, I'd wire my father for money or to get me out of trouble.

The last jail I was in was a hot, miserable jail down in Florida. I'd just been released and started to hitch-hike north. I was beat. A motorist picked me up. We stopped at a
tavern for beer (at his suggestion, at that), and he ran out on me, leaving me to foot the bill. I hadn't any money. For the first time, I was desperately scared. The jail was too recent with me. I couldn't bear facing it again. I ran out and took to the highway. I ran as far as I could and then just stopped by the side of the road utterly finished. Right now, for the first time in my life, I knew I couldn't depend on my father again. I stood here alone on that hot, dusty highway--penniless, desperate, holes in my shoes, and my only possessions the ragged clothes I had on.

I prayed. And something happened. I didn't know then what it was. I don't know today--but that prayer was answered in some way I didn't understand. I guess the only thing to describe it was what we call a spiritual awakening.

My desperation was gone. A motorist picked me up and brought me all the way north. He talked to me about Alcoholics Anonymous and took me to a meeting that night. I haven't had a drink since. That was about three years ago.

I feel I owe my life to A.A. and that God directed me to it that moment that I stood on the highway, hopeless, helpless, and all alone. In that moment, I seemed to know that I had always been afraid to depend on myself and out of this fear my pattern of alcoholism had grown. That feeling of transformation that I experienced at that moment was so strong--that
is why I am so deeply grateful. That, I think, is why I was able to accept and try to follow the A.A. way of life. After making such a mess of life my own way with alcoholism, I am content to turn that will of mine over to a Higher Power. And, with the guidance and help of that Higher Power, I am no longer afraid of depending upon myself instead of falling back on my father as I did all my life before when things got rough.

To me, This A.A. program is complete surrender. I was ready, and I am thankful that it came to me in time. I have a good job as restaurant manager; I have friends; and I am happy.

Case Three:

F.—— At the age of 21, I was calling myself a big shot. I was a success, the manager of a wholesale business with forty men working under me. Five years later, I was flat broke—no job, no family, no money. It was all through alcohol. By the time I was 35, I'd hit every skid row in the country from New York to Los Angeles. I was a coast-to-coast panhandler and bum. And I was a good one. I fancied myself pretty much of a psychologist the way I could peg a good touch and a bum one. There's no use going into that story. It's just a bum's story—freight cars, flop houses, and canned heat.

The turning point in my life came with one little incident. A man on a New York City street handed me a buck
and told me I could do one of two things with it: I could get myself a bottle of wine or I could get a room and a bath and go to a meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous. Being a chiseler, I did both—first the wine, and then the A.A. meeting. I went to the meeting thinking I could make a touch. I left the meeting thinking of a new way of life for myself.

I made it. It was a long way back up. But in the last eight years I've only touched booze once. It was a three day drunk. Here I was, money in my pocket, good liquor to drink, gay companionship—all those things I used to dream about in skid row days. And all this three day drunk gave me was the despair and misery that go hand in hand with alcoholism. This, I walked out on. I took a long look at myself. Why was I throwing this good life I'd learned away? I was married now, had a job, and was happy. I learned a lot from that drunk.

Pride—that was always my downfall. You think there's pride here? You should see the pride down on Skid Row—it's a fierce pride. There's nothing to stop it. I still have to watch that pride of mine and my self-will. I still have to live one day at a time. I have to be honest with myself and everybody else. I gave up one job where I was making a lot of money a couple of years ago because, in my heart, I knew it wasn't honest. Other people can handle things like that. An alcoholic can't—he has to be able to look at himself and
like what he finds, or if he doesn't like it, he has to accept himself for what he is and count on God to help him make the most of what he is.

Case Four:

S.____, cook: My alcoholism didn't spring from any complexes or anything like that. I started out to make my own living when I was pretty young. I wanted to be a cook. I started drinking young because everybody said if you wanted to be a good cook, you had to drink. So I did. I started drinking when I was about fourteen years old. I liked the stuff and developed a further taste for it learning to be a cook. It didn't bother me for a long time. But it kept getting worse and worse. I was drunk all the time. I couldn't hold a job. They said I was a good cook when I wasn't drunk, but it got so that no one would take a chance on me. I gave away more meals than I collected for. My wife left me. I went through blackouts and delirium tremens. I was in bad, bad shape mentally, physically, and morally when I found Alcoholics Anonymous. But I didn't have any complexes—I just liked to drink. I liked the taste and I liked the effect.

It's been eleven years now since I've had a drink, thanks to A.A. My wife is back with me, and we're happy. I spent about eight of those years trying to go around and pay back things I had stolen to get booze or places where I had stolen bottles. I used to steal wine and bags of peanuts. I
don't know why, the peanuts—I never liked them. But for the last couple of years, I think I've pretty well paid back the wrongs I did. My biggest wish all my life was to buy a brand new car for myself. I have one now. I want to help other alcoholics, and I've tried for years to start a group in my town. I think maybe now I'm getting it started, but there were a lot of nights those years that I sat and waited and waited trying to have an A.A. meeting and nobody showed up. I wish my son could get it. He's been in jail a lot over drinking. Maybe he'll have to go the same hard way I did, but I hope that he won't go as far down. One thing though, no one can ever conquer the compulsion to drink unless they want it more than anything else in the world. I may be drunk tomorrow, but I know I'm sober today, with God's help.

Case Five:

W.____, minister: I was a solitary drinker. It had to be that way. This was a town of good people. They were people I loved, and I could not let them down. I couldn't let anyone know I drank—at least not how much and how often. But I knew; my wife knew. I desperately tried to keep my own children from knowing. But there was a drunk driving charge; then there was another. Now the town knew, and my children knew. And I could not stop.
God, to me, was everything. I had all faith in Him. But my prayers had no answer when I prayed not to drink. Finally, after considerable notoriety and utter misery brought on by my overwhelming compulsion for alcohol, I found Alcoholics Anonymous. There I found sobriety.

I spent a lot of time trying to piece my life together, literally, of course, but also mentally while I took my own inventory. In high school, I had been a star athlete. In my senior year, I was selected the most outstanding and most likely to succeed young man in the class. I had been rather successful as a businessman. Yet, only a few years later, I was a compulsive and addicted alcoholic.

I could not blame my alcoholism on the world, for the world had always been kind to me. The only misfortunes that ever befell me were those I incurred upon myself through this incomprehensible craving for alcohol. I loved God, and I loved mankind. I hated alcohol and what it was doing to me, but there was no release.

There are those who perhaps cannot understand the fact that a minister could become an alcoholic. Well, it's possible. One way that I can look at it today (I haven't had a drink for several years now) is that through my own experience with alcohol I can more readily help others who come to me with the same problem. For me, Alcoholics Anonymous succeeded where everything else had failed. Maybe it was necessary for me to go
through what I did. With all my faith in God, I had to learn through this program to pray: Not my will, but Thy will be done.

Case Six:

B.____: I think maybe I always had the potentialities of being an alcoholic. I was just a little boy when I started fooling around with white gas. When I was about seven, I used to sneak down to the foot of our cellar steps and inhale fumes of white gas from a couple of big jugs they kept it in down there. Pretty soon, after I'd stick my nose down real close and inhale hard, I'd find myself floating up somewhere on the rafters. That feeling I loved. Then when I got older, I could sort of recapture this unreal feeling with alcohol. Besides, when I was a teen-ager, I was pretty wild. I liked the big shot feeling alcohol gave me. It got me in a lot of trouble, too.

I have a terrible temper. I never blacked out when I was drinking. I always knew what I was doing, but I would get mad and do things I wouldn't plan to do until right before they happened. I got to worrying about insanity that made me do those things. Even though I knew the things I was doing I couldn't control my wild temper when I was drinking. And once I got started drinking, I couldn't quit for days or weeks. I know I'm pretty young to be an alcoholic, but I know I am one. I was afraid to come to Alcoholics Anonymous. I was
afraid they wouldn't accept me. I'm always afraid people won't accept me because I always do what I feel like doing or say what I feel like saying.

After I started A.A., I didn't want to change overnight. That's why I'm having trouble making the program all the way. But it's a big improvement. I'm trying to get the spiritual part. The way I see it, whether you drink or not depends on what you want the most--booze or sobriety. I've had enough of the booze; I want the sobriety. I'm not afraid of very many things, but I'm afraid of myself--afraid of what I've done to myself when I start drinking and can't stop. I think I'm going to make the program if I just keep living without a drink for one day at a time. Controlling my temper--that's the thing with me.

Case Seven:

M.__: I always stayed pretty aloof from alcohol when I was younger. I didn't drink at all as a girl, and when I went to a girl's college, I rather looked down on drinking and even on smoking. Things like that just didn't appeal to me. At college, I was active in the student council and in the religious group.

I was married during my last year at college, and from then on my husband and I carried on quite an active social life. Both of us drank socially and enjoyably. I don't know exactly
when I started drinking compulsively. I got so I wanted a drink for a headache, when I was tired. It was a cure-all. Then I got so I took a drink in the morning the first thing and could continue to nip most of the day. Our children were almost grown-up, and I didn't have much to do to interest me.

I knew I was drinking entirely too much and knew that I would continue to do so as long as I was alone so much. I managed to cut down on it a little, a very little. I took a job as librarian. This helped. But now the necessity to drink was based on fatigue instead of on boredom. There was always some dire necessity to drink. I think I had become something of a hypochondriac thinking up things I needed alcohol to cure.

I tried every way not to drink. I started taking pills and tranquilizers. I took phenobarbitol to calm myself down and benzedrine to give me a lift. I had several doctors supplying me without knowledge that I had other sources for the pills. But I still kept on drinking. They weren't sure whether or not I would pull through my last alcoholic-tranquilized binge. That was a couple of years ago. Having tried everything else, I turned to A.A. It took a while, but I haven't had a drink now for almost a year. If I tried to analyze my drinking, I would say that I have been a compulsive drinker for ten years or so. I am forty-five now. You can't tell when you cross the borderline. But I do know that there were very few days during those years that I did not drink, sometimes just a little, sometimes to the blackout stage.
I have blamed my drinking on many things, usually on little things. Loneliness had a lot to do with it, and yet there was no reason for me to be lonely. I wanted to escape from something, and yet I liked everything pretty well and had no concrete thing in mind from which to escape. I guess it was just to escape myself.

Today, I am fairly happy and find that it is necessary for me to stay very busy if I am to stay away from alcohol. Also, I have learned from trial and error during my efforts to stop drinking, that only one small drink will inevitably lead to a drunk. The minute I have a drink I want to keep on with it even though I know I will be completely drunk. An alcoholic certainly has to remember to live only one day at a time.

Case Eight:

J.____: I think if any one thing made me an alcoholic it was egocentricity. I was always right. No one could tell me anything. I wanted everything my own way and in my own time. I was very timid in a crowd. I always had a lot of viewpoints, but by the time that I got around to expressing them it seemed nobody was there to listen to them. I could change all of that with alcohol, because then I could demand attention—so I thought.

I came into Alcoholics Anonymous when I was only twenty-one years old. That was twelve years ago, and at that time people said I was too young to be an alcoholic. They said I
had a lot of good drinking years left ahead of me. That made me mad. I didn't want to be an alcoholic anyway. I loved to drink.

I didn't come to A.A. with any desire to stop drinking for good. I was shooting an angle. My wife was ready to divorce me but had agreed to see first what A.A. could do for me. I wanted my wife, and I wanted my children. I remember one time when I was drunk I told my wife I was going down to the basement and hang myself. I still remember how long I sat down there wondering why she didn't come down and try to talk me out of it and feeling sorry for myself because she didn't seem to care. In fact, when I went back upstairs, she told me she wished I had.

I went to A.A. just to make an impression. About three weeks later I had scheduled a drunk for myself. My wife was out of town. I started my drunk. It lasted only two days, and that ended it. I haven't had a drink since, which is about twelve years. A.A. had made its impression on me instead of the other way around. I sometimes still want to drink. I serve drinks to my family and friends. But I know that one drink for me would be a drunk, and I have lived too happily without alcohol for the past twelve years. I have a serenity that was not in my life before, and I know that I can do almost anything in the world except to touch alcohol. It bothers me when I look at my children and realize that I, much more than
they, am emotionally immature. I am glad that I found the A.A. way of life when I did.

I don't know whether I've ever really helped any other alcoholics or not. I've certainly tried, but one man I tried to help died of acute alcoholism. Another went to an insane asylum. I have seen so many tragic destinations for the alcoholics who were unable to arrest their illness. My thought is always the same: "There, but for the grace of God, go I."

Case Nine:

E.___ : I drank as an escape from everything. There was never a more miserable or self-pitying drunk than I was. Every business set-back or social slight or little failure or, you name it, sent me into a profound attack of self-pity. I would shut myself up in my room for days on end wishing I were dead but never having the courage to attempt suicide. I wouldn't see anyone or talk to anyone. I would just brood. My wife kept me supplied with liquor when I ran out. Not that she wanted me like that, but certainly I wasn't in any shape to go out and get it, and I went insane without it. I hated the world; I hated myself; and, most of all, I hated the booze that was making me like this. I didn't even like the taste of it, but I had to have it to bear even living. These extended solitary drunks sometimes ended in hospitalization. Always
they ended in periods of anguish and remorse.

As a child, I had a great love of the church and of anything spiritual. I think you would say I was a more than average religious man. But my alcoholism had brought me to the point that I almost denied God. I know I did when I was drunk and thought that God had deserted me.

But when I found Alcoholics Anonymous, this deeply spiritual feeling which I had had as a child returned to me and became overwhelming. My recovery from alcoholism through this program was rapid because of my immediate and unquestioning acceptance of the spiritual side of it. I think it's much harder for alcoholics who have no understanding such as this which came back to me from childhood. I think I developed, or that there was developed within me, a more complete serenity upon accepting the fact that my life should be turned over to the care of God than most people experienced. To me, from the moment I accepted this A.A. way of life, it was a program of completely surrendering my will over to the will of God. I want to do the best I can where God wants me to be. If He wants me to be a street cleaner, I will try to be a good one. If He wants me to be a banker, I will be an honest one. It's been a long time since I have had a drink. But with all of the alcoholics I've worked with during this time, I've never seen a sorrier one, or a more self-pitying one, or a more miserable one than I was.
Case Ten:

G.____: I often wonder why my four brothers can drink a lot without any trouble, and still I turn out to be an alcoholic. I know I suffer what they call grave emotional and mental problems. I often say I've been on all three floors of a mental hospital and have a diploma to prove it. I've been in a couple of them. Shock treatments did me a lot of good, but you have to have a strong heart to live through those institutions.

But I know my main trouble is alcohol. I can't handle money. I go berserk every time I get any money in my pocket; I wind up in a tavern. At least I always used to before I got into A.A. Now I know by living one day at a time and not having a drink that day, I can stay sober.

I want to go back to playing in dance bands. I'm a drummer. But every time I try it, I go back to drinking. It's more important to me today not to drink than to play in a dance band.

I'm sure I know what caused my alcoholism. I never could do things as well as other people could. It isn't the fact that I resent not being able to do things as well; it's the other people I resent for being able to do them better. I guess it's an inferiority complex. I've been around, not always on, the A.A. program about ten years. I had a few slips.
They weren't worth it. Drinking will only lead me back into an institution. But fear alone never kept an alcoholic from drinking. I'm grateful to the Twelve Steps of A.A. for the sobriety I have today.

Case Eleven:

G, lawyer: I did a lot of social drinking when I was young. I drank my way through law school with flying colors and good marks. My career started the same way. Liquor never bothered me. I drank because I enjoyed it and it was the accepted thing to do.

But, after a few years, what I was doing with alcohol and what it was doing to me wasn't the accepted thing. I had to drink the first thing in the morning to get over the night before. I had to have martinis with lunch, or for lunch, in order to get over the morning. Every night I indulged in serious drinking.

My practice suffered; my wife threatened to divorce me; I could not think well and could remember less. But I kept doggedly on, blaming everything but alcohol, which I knew in my heart was the trouble. But I never lost the feeling that if worst came to worst, I would be able to handle everything very capably.

It was not until I found myself in a mental hospital that I recognized the severity of my problem. And I believe that all
I actually recognized even then was a terrific resentment toward my wife whom I thought was responsible for my plight. But things had gotten beyond my control. Upon being released, I attended Alcoholics Anonymous. I sneaked in at that time and hoped that no one would recognize me. I still didn't completely blame alcohol. But the A.A. program worked for me. I haven't had a drink for over eleven years. I am happier than I ever was in my drinking days. And I have saved some other marriages which alcohol threatened to destroy.

Case Twelve:

C.____: There was only one thing in the world I ever figured was more powerful than I was. That was the bottle. It was more powerful because it was the only thing that could get me into trouble when I didn't want to get in trouble. I think some of us are potential alcoholics from the start. The first time I tasted home brew, I was fourteen years old. I kept on drinking it till I was drunk. I drank a lot. A little later on there were fifteen solid years that I went in for heavy drinking, and I mean almost round the clock drinking. In that fifteen years, I doubt if the days I didn't drink would have amounted to a two month period. It didn't keep me from doing things. I thought I did everything better than anybody else; I was completely competent and confident in myself; I could tackle anything and make a go of it.
That is, I could until I tried to stop drinking. I didn't come into A.A. to quit drinking. I came in for two reasons—one was to please my wife, and the other was to keep my job. Some people didn't seem to know how competent I was. They say alcoholics are immature. Well, we are. An alcoholic that turns to A.A. is in the same helpless state that a child is that needs parents. We are just as helpless when we meet defeat in our battle with the bottle as a child. We need parents to help, but we're too old for that. We turn to God.

There are two things I ask God every day. Those days have run into years now, but it's just as important that I still ask God every day. One is not to take a drink that day. The other is to ask God's will for me that day. Sometimes, as the day wears on, I forget my prayer. I have an incorrigible temper. When I can stop and ask myself before my temper explodes "God's will for me?" then I can think a minute. Sometimes I forget. But I firmly believe what I've heard a lot of others say too—no one who makes this prayer takes a drink that day. It took me a long time to get any understanding of the A.A. way of life, but I don't ever want to lose what I have learned of it. The thing I had the most trouble with was believing my life was unmanageable. I knew it was when I drank. I said I was a pretty competent fellow. When I look back on it now it doesn't look as if I was very competent, but I guess I still have that idea of superiority or something.
The way I look at it now, I think when anyone has defeated the power alcohol gets over him, he can do about anything in the world—but just one day at a time.

Case Thirteen:

B.____: Today I can honestly say I'm glad I'm an alcoholic. I used to think people were liars when they said that. I used to look at the fellows in A.A. who had lost their families, had been in prisons, jails, hospitals, and on skid row. I thought they were right—they were alcoholics. But I couldn't say I was. I've never been in jail. I wasn't a skid row character. What I completely failed to realize was that all those fellows stood at one time where I was standing then. In retrospect, I can see that if I had continued drinking the way I was that all those things could, and probably would, have happened to me by today if I should still have been alive.

A couple of years prior to my coming into A.A., I had lost everything in a business venture. I honestly wished that I could blame it on being an alcoholic. But at that time I knew I really wasn't an alcoholic, and drinking had nothing to do with it. In looking back, now I can see that my thinking even at that time was purely the thinking of an alcoholic.

I have had some trouble trying to follow the program in turning my life and will over to the care of God. It's easy for me to turn the big things over to God, the things I
know I can't be responsible for. For example, when one of the children was ill, seriously, I knew it was in God's hands, and that way I could accept His will, because I knew it was something not in my power to control. But it's the little things that I can't accept and rebel at. It's the things I feel are in my own hands and that I'm running completely by myself. For instance, sometimes I've thought I made a pretty good business deal. I don't count God in then. I forget about that. I don't stop to think that really I didn't do anything at all by myself.

But today, I can honestly say I'm grateful that I am an alcoholic and have learned this pattern of life. I wouldn't go back to social drinking. I feel sorry for the social drinkers now.

As to the insanity part of it, I can't even quarrel with that. I know I was insane, even in small things. There were many years that I always slept on the davenport because my drink was beside it. About five in the morning I'd get up and go to bed. I thought everybody lived like that. Now I've found out that most people don't live that way. In fact, I don't know of any of my friends now who do live that way.

I think of all the things I did during those drinking years and realize that I did the same things other people went to jail for, even some of the things that other people went to prison for, but somehow blind luck kept me from either. All
that I can say is that, but for the Grace of God and for the A.A. way of life, I would by this time undoubtedly right now be where all these other fellows were, or had been, who hadn't stopped drinking in time. It was inevitable for me the way I was going, and it wasn't far away. I can stay sober as long as I live only one day at a time.

Case Fourteen:

R.____: I was only twenty-three years old when I first found Alcoholics Anonymous. That was two years ago, and I'm glad I found it when I did. I started drinking at the age of thirteen, and in that ten years I know I became as confirmed an alcoholic as possible. I guess I wasn't addicted to alcohol all of that time. But I do think some of us are potential alcoholics from the start. That first time I tasted alcohol I didn't quit drinking till I was drunk. And then it was always that way afterward. I had a lot of trouble with my parents over my drinking, so I quit high school and left home. I missed my mother a lot and used to go back and see her when I knew she was alone. Now that I've quit drinking, I'm thinking about going back home and finishing high school even if I am pretty old for it.

I was about eighteen when I started to worry about insanity. I was married then, but my wife had taken the baby and left me. I was all alone in the house and wanting to see my mother. I had all the shades pulled down, and I was afraid
to go outside. I don't know how long I'd been drinking then, but all of a sudden I heard some people talking in the kitchen. I knew there couldn't be anyone there. I crawled from the living room to the kitchen. I couldn't even walk. When I got to the kitchen, they were in the bedroom, whispering. I knew they'd come after me, and I was plenty scared. I crawled around the house for a long time looking for them, but they were always in a different room. I heard them whispering about how they could sneak up on me. Now I realize that those hallucinations were a close call to delirium tremens. And I don't know yet how long I stayed locked up in that house. I remember, a long time later, I was still wishing I could see my mother. A car pulled up in front of the house, and my mother and grandmother came up and knocked on the door. They were really there, and I wanted to see my mother. But somehow I was too afraid to go to the door. They went away.

On another occasion, the police came after me. My wife had called them. I armed myself with a claw hammer and dared them to come in and get me. They did. I don't remember much about that time, but they said I was pretty wild. When I'm not drinking, I'd never dream of being anything like that.

But that's just an example of how my life was going. No wonder I got to worrying about insanity. The more I worried, the more I drank. I tried A.A. finally. My wife and I got back together when I did that. But I didn't make it right away, and she got a divorce last year. I love my wife and my little
girl. But somehow, it seemed to me I couldn't fight the divorce. It was my own fault and I just had to accept it. I couldn't give up the liquor in spite of what it was doing to me and my life.

I live A.A. now and am fairly happy. I know I can't change the past. The only thing I can change is myself. To me, sobriety is the most important thing in the world. Without it, I have absolutely nothing. The things the older fellows talk about—hallucinations, DTs, wrecked homes, jails—they've all happened to me even at my age. I'm glad I found this program and this way of life in time and before the booze had me down so far I could never come back. I'm back now. My self-respect is back. I'd lost it completely. I've been through a lot with alcohol. Maybe I'm glad. It's over. If it had not been for alcohol, perhaps I would never have found God or this new life.

Case Fifteen:

B.____: I can't say too much about my drinking. I just drank because I wanted to and have drunk solidly and steadily for about thirty years. I never lost a job, although there were a lot of things I got ideas about and probably could have done more with the ideas and my life if I hadn't always been so wrapped up in drinking. It got so my wife couldn't stand me. I didn't know why. We'd been married fifteen years pretty
happily—at least I thought. But I got so I didn’t want any friends in the house and wouldn’t go out anywhere myself. All I wanted to do was drink, drink, drink myself into a stupor, get up the next morning and have to have a few drinks to go to work. I hadn’t an interest in the world outside of this. But I couldn’t break the pattern. A couple of years ago, my wife went to a lawyer about a divorce. I was pretty surprised because I didn’t think she’d go through with it. The lawyer urged A.A., but I wouldn’t hear of it and somehow we straightened things out, but pretty soon I was back in the alcoholic rut and couldn’t pull myself out. This time, I knew she was serious about the divorce. I came to A.A. for the first time a little less than a year ago and haven’t had a drink since. I don’t think I ever drank because of anything except that I wanted to. That’s the main thing, you have to want sobriety more than you do liquor. My wife and I are happier than we were in all the other years put together in this short time that I haven’t been drinking. We go to church and are starting to go out with our friends and have them in our house again. I joined the church a few weeks ago. Church means a lot to me today. But the Alcoholics Anonymous program is all that ever got me sober. I know that today I won’t take a drink.

Case Sixteen:

J.____: I came into A.A. a couple of years ago and really threw myself into the program. When I had been in a
couple of weeks and hadn't had a drink, I got my wife back and
my job back. I even made a couple of talks on the evils of
alcohol for church groups. Then the women in the church wanted
me to talk to their group. I did a lot of work among the
young people in the Sunday School. I decided that A.A. had
steered me right and gotten me sober and that God and religion
were going to do the rest. So about three months after my
initiation into A.A. (and I was in pretty bad shape when I
found A.A.--or it found me) I was drunk again. This time I
couldn't seem to get off of it at all.

Every alcoholic knows remorse for the things they have
done and excruciating anxiety as to the things they might have
done and don't know about. Well, all these feelings were mag­
nified about a hundred percent for me on that drunk. I had
found sobriety. Everyone was patting me on the back and saying
how wonderful it was the way I was making such good talks.

Of course I went back to A.A. There was nothing else for
me to do. I didn't make any more talks. I just concentrated
on myself. This is a selfish program. If any one defect of
character ever made me an alcoholic, it was selfishness. But
even with all my good intentions and selfishness I kept having
slips.

I was in a hospital recently, not for alcoholism. But
while I was there I had a lot of time to think. And it's an
odd thing--I kept having a dream. I would fall asleep and
almost every time, I would be dreaming I had a glass of beer in
my hand. I would be holding it and ready to drink it, and every time the thought would come into my mind that I wouldn't want to die and meet God while I had this glass of beer in my hand. I don't know how many times this dream came to me. Sometimes I was at a bar, or sometimes just walking—but always the beer was in my hand, and always I was terrified about meeting God.

That dream makes me wonder a lot now. It wasn't like the dreams you read about people having when they are about to die. I wasn't even seriously ill, but the dream made such an impression on me that I feel as if there was a meaning for it. I'm going to keep on going to church. Incidentally, I never went to church before getting some spiritual belief through my first meetings of A.A. But I know now that much as I have come to believe in God and in the church, it is association with other alcoholics, living the A.A. program, and attending meetings to keep me always aware that I always will be an alcoholic that will keep me sober instead of the church.

Case Seventeen:

C.____ : I don't think there's any question as to what quality of personality contributed to my becoming an alcoholic. It's a question of intolerance. I was intolerant of everybody and every thing. I still am. At the time I came into A.A., I
would have done anything humanly possible to quit drinking. I'd lost everything--family, friends, home, job, self-respect. I hadn't anything left except a craving for alcohol.

There was one morning in my life when I came out of jail. I needed a drink. My only possessions were the clothes I had on. I was sick. I hated the world, myself, and everything in the world. I guess most of all, I hated what I had become. I think that morning if I hadn't gotten a drink by panhandling I would've killed someone for it if necessary. I needed it so badly.

But a little later that day I made contact with Alcoholics Anonymous. I got straightened out and got a job and got back on my feet. But I never got my wife and my daughter back. My daughter's grown now. She's never spoken to me in all these years. A few times she's seen me, but she'd go out of her way to avoid speaking to me. I haven't had a drink for about eleven years now, but she still won't have anything to do with me. That's one of the things drinking brought me. There's nothing I can do about it but accept it. I keep hoping that maybe someday she'll feel differently about me.

But after I went to Alcoholics Anonymous that day I did everything in my power to stay sober. I prayed. I went to meetings. I tried to help other alcoholics. Then I went out and got drunk. I didn't believe it about a first drink making a drunk. I didn't mean to get drunk. I thought I would try just one shot and a beer. I stayed drunk for eight years after that--almost solidly.
I came back into A.A. after that eight years and haven't had a drink since. I'm still intolerant. Defiance has a lot to do with it too. But I know that anyone can make this program if I did it. I see people having trouble with this program and I tell them how I work it. Then they resent it. But I can't let myself worry too much over anyone else. I'm sober and I'm going to stay that way twenty-four hours at a time. But I have to start my days every minute sometimes when I get all snarled up. I can honestly say that the desire to drink left me years ago. I have no craving, no compulsion, for alcohol. But I also know that if I should take just one drink I would not quit, and this time I might not be given another chance.

Case Eighteen:

P.____: I know that selfishness has been a main contributing factor in my becoming an alcoholic. When I was a little girl I adored my father and I was very jealous when he didn't devote all of his attention to me. I resented my mother. When I grew older, my father and I used to drink a lot together. Then I think my mother resented me quite a lot. Even to this day my mother reminds me time after time about what a preposterous child I was and about the couple of times I bit the women at her bridge club because I didn't want them to come to our house. I guess they didn't come back and she never did quite forgive me.
My father and I drank a lot together, and then when I was married my husband and I drank a lot. But I guess that he wasn't an alcoholic and I was. I wound up in a mental hospital.

All I ever thought about was myself. I had five beautiful children, but I can't say that I ever really appreciated them. I didn't want the responsibility of them. My husband has them since our divorce and I like to go see them. In fact, I miss them quite a lot sometimes but I guess I'm just too selfish, or maybe it's simply immaturity on my part, but I don't want any responsibility at all. I have tried hard to make the A.A. program and am sure someday I will.

Just recently I was remarried. My husband is an alcoholic too. Since our marriage he has been in one automobile accident and has had a heart attack—both due to drinking. It's harder for two alcoholics together. Both of us know what alcohol is doing and how powerless we are over it. I hope we can manage to get back to the A.A. way of life. Right now, when one of us is all right, the other isn't. It isn't working; yet both of us know the answers if we could just apply them.

Case Nineteen:

D____: I never thought that I was an alcoholic until a year ago. It's odd, but I always blamed other things. When I was sixteen I started drinking quite a lot. The girls I ran around with didn't drink, but I went with one boy steady and we
drank pretty much alone. I quit school to get married, and we had one child.

My husband didn't drink so much now because he was too busy making a living. That shows how alcoholism can affect one person and not another. Although we drank so much before we were married, my husband just voluntarily quit when he assumed the responsibility of us. I kept on. One day I just looked around the apartment and at my little boy who was asleep and decided I was tired of the whole thing. I walked out and never went back. My husband took my little boy to his parents and they brought him up. He's grown up now and married. He and his wife are having the same trouble that we had except that he is the one that is doing all the drinking. He has been in a lot of trouble with it but, so far, they have stayed married.

After I left my husband and child I went home and got a job in a tavern. I used to go home at night after work and often I would just curl up in the car and sleep so my mother wouldn't hear me coming in drunk. But of course I didn't ever think about being an alcoholic.

The first time alcoholism as a problem entered my life consciously was during my second marriage. And then it wasn't me. My husband couldn't control his drinking at all. Finally I couldn't put up with his drinking any longer. Of course I drank too. Both of us were working. But he wouldn't come home
for days at a time. When I started divorce proceedings he attempted suicide. The outcome of that was that he went to a mental hospital and I stopped divorce action.

When we were together again, the problem of alcoholism came in full force. We loved each other, but he couldn't quit drinking. I had reached the point where, physically, alcohol was affecting me so much that I had had to cut down on it. But he kept on. So I didn't have a problem—he did. He tried A.A. He quit drinking for a year and a half. We were very happy and during that time I drank very little.

He had a good way of helping other alcoholics and I don't know how many he got started on the road to sobriety. But he has been drunk ever since that one year and a half of sobriety. This time I went ahead and got the divorce. He has been unable to conquer the compulsion for alcohol. But it took all of those years to show me that I was really using the excuse of his alcoholism to cover up my own dependence on it. I turned to alcohol for everything. It was a crutch to me to get over difficult periods of my life.

I know today that all of my problems which I blamed on other people were really due to my own weaknesses. I know now that all my life I tried to change other people and thought I was pretty much beyond reproach. Self-pity had a lot to do with it. Yet everything I felt sorry for myself for was the very direct effect of my drinking. I have to go to A.A.
meetings and associate all of the time with alcoholics. All of us are trying to reach a spiritual way of life and we have the common problem of alcohol to fight.

When my husband was in Alcoholics Anonymous, I had learned to say that I had no power over alcohol where it affected him. Now that I have accepted the fact that I too am an alcoholic I have accepted the fact that I am powerless over alcohol in regard to myself. My only assurance of sobriety is not to take that first drink, and the only way I can do it is not to look back toward the past or forward toward the future, but to live one day at a time.

Case Twenty:

C.____: I came from a middle class family and had all the advantages of a rather well-to-do family in a mid-western city. Things were pretty easy for me to do and I became general manager of an interior decorator firm in Chicago. I was never really dishonest, but I used to let a lot of things slide financially because I knew all these things were in a way keeping me in an inexhaustible supply of alcohol. That was my only real necessity of life as I saw it. Some of this financial sliding came to the attention of the company one time while I was on vacation. They brought the matter up when I came back, and with good alcoholic self-righteousness I told them
if they felt that way about it they could have the manager's job. They needed me because I was good. I didn't need them.

I stamped out of the place feeling sorry for them because they were losing such a good man. I went to another city and started my own firm. Fortune was kind to me again, and my firm was very successful. There was only one thing. My drinking had progressed so terrifically that there were not any moments of the day that I wasn't under the influence of alcohol. I had gotten to the point where I always had to look out in the morning to see if my car was there and wonder where I had been and how I had gotten home.

The next stage in this progression was that I started having a series of minor automobile accidents. These were all accepted quietly by concerned parties as I was a respected citizen in the community and always paid for any damages I had incurred. But the time finally came when my license was revoked. It took a good deal of effort, but arrangements were made so that I could drive because it was necessary in order for me to work.

During this period, I was driving home one evening after work. I remember stopping at a stop light, but that's all I do remember. It seems I went right through the red light and hit a car, demolishing both cars and seriously injuring the woman who was driving the other car. This accident cost me my
home, my business, and all my self-respect. My wife and my one son stood by me. I had a lot of friends. None of them showed up to help me when I was in jail. I paid for the accident in a manner which I felt far out of proportion, and I am still paying for it.

But to tell the truth, this terrific episode in my life awakened in me more the reaction of surprise than anything else. I had never thought anything like this could happen to me--to anyone else, yes, but not to me.

At the time of this accident, as I say, I was a well respected citizen in the community. I was active in church work and civic and community affairs. Everyone said I drank too much, but people were tolerant of me and my escapades. But when I found myself in jail, this was another thing that I had always thought could never happen to me. My son brought a man from Alcoholics Anonymous to talk to me.

At that point, of course I was at the end of my rope. I meant to move to another location, entirely away from this part of the country. It was the old pattern repeating itself, but there was a difference. This time I felt I would be doing the community a favor by getting myself out of it. Alcohol had turned my old attitude of superiority into one of inferiority.

I went to an A.A. meeting. I haven't had a drink since that first night I attended, six years ago. I didn't leave that
community. Today I am happy. I have my own self-respect back. I will be continuing to pay for that accident for probably the rest of my life, but that I have to accept.

I honestly think, and I have thought a lot about it, that my alcoholism stemmed from a feeling of rejection in childhood. I loved my mother very much, and although my parents gave me everything that apparently a child should need, I always had some sort of intangible feeling of wanting something or missing more love from my mother. I think I always used alcohol to try to make me something I wasn't. I always wanted to see myself as something else.

Case Twenty-one:

P.____: There was no doubt about my early life. I was a pampered and spoiled brat of a well-to-do middle class family. As a teen-ager, I always had money in my pocket and a big car to drive. I guess I was considered a nice enough boy but pretty wild. I had started to college when the war broke out. I immediately enlisted, full of enthusiasm. It didn't take me long to work up to an officer's rank. I had only one thing in mind—that was staying in liquor because even at this time I hated the dull feeling that complete sobriety gave. I always had to have a little lift. The medical corps gave me access to alcohol.

When I went overseas my main thought was that whatever
might befall me, I primarily had to be within reach of whiskey and nothing else came near that thought in importance. None of my overseas experiences—and there were some gruesome ones—but none of them caused me as much concern as that terrific anxiety of keeping whiskey within reach. Physically and mentally my system was crying for it.

I went through the war and came back into civilian life with this same intense craving for alcohol. I had had trouble with the authorities about my drinking. But more than that, I realized the trouble I was having with myself and my life. I never had a moment's peace of mind. I knew I wasn't far from insanity. But I couldn't do anything about it. A day without alcohol was unthinkable.

I tried various cures and doctors and hospitals. Of course I was all right when I was in a hospital, but the minute I got out into circulation again I would resume the uncontrollable drinking.

Since I came into Alcoholics Anonymous I have gained sobriety. I don't understand the power of alcohol. I remember those years filled with intense craving for it. I have found, since being on this program, that this intense craving is not there until I touch the first drink. One drink of alcohol seems to set up a compulsion within my system so that drunkenness is the only and inevitable outcome. I would like to be a social
drinker—I still would. But I know from trying it, after experiencing months of sobriety and thinking the desire and addiction was conquered, one drink throws me back into that old rat race of getting my hands on another drink fast enough. I can't do it alone. I need God and the A.A. way of life.

Case Twenty-two:

B. __: My husband committed me to a hospital because of alcoholism a couple of years ago. This particular hospital usually required alcoholic patients to stay three months, but in my case they made me stay six months. They didn't even seem to be too happy about releasing me then. But they did, and when they did, I decided if I was that much of an alcoholic I might as well be a good one, so I went in for really heavy drinking.

I just submerged myself in alcohol. It got so I didn't like to keep having the neighbors looking out their windows at me when I came staggering home from taverns drunk, so I started drinking alone at home. I say alone, but I had five children. My husband works on a boat, and he's gone for usually a couple of weeks at a time. I always tried to be fairly sober on the week-ends when he came home. He did everything short of murder me I guess to keep me from drinking. But I would stay drunk, very drunk, for two to three weeks at a time.

The court took my children away from me. I didn't want to quit drinking. I thought I liked to drink. I don't know what
I liked about it. I was awfully sick most of the time and never knew quite what I was doing. I was terribly afraid of staying alone, but I was alone and drunk almost all the time.

I would hear strange noises all night long and would creep around the house peeking out of the windows. We don't live in a very good neighborhood and there are a lot of strange looking characters around. I was continually afraid. Mostly though, I was afraid of myself and my wild imagination. I used to see all kinds of things, and they were so real to me. One night I looked out of my window and saw phosphorescent looking creatures out in the garden. They were from another planet, and I was all alone and helpless here in the house trying to keep them from getting in. I had all kinds of hallucinations like that--but I kept on drinking.

I didn't come to Alcoholics Anonymous because I wanted to quit drinking. I lived in sickness and fear and complete terror, but I still wanted to drink. I had to drink to live. But I wanted my children back. My baby was only a little under two years old and I was afraid she wouldn't even know me if I didn't get her soon. So I tried A.A. I made a couple of road tests and almost got put back into the hospital. I did go back into a hospital after one of these week long binges. It wasn't for alcoholism. It was because I had a mis-carriage with my sixth child.
After this I was really in earnest about stopping drinking. My whole life became wrapped up in A.A. like it is now. Some days I had such an uncontrollable urge to drink that I would go down to the A.A. club early in the morning and just sit there, afraid to go out. One day I sat there for fourteen hours. This paid off. I am to get my children back. The court had put them in foster homes for the past year. Now they think I will be able to take care of them. Self-will made me drink. I resented being told that I couldn’t do something. I had to find out for myself.

Case Twenty-three:

C._____: I can honestly say today that I'm glad I'm an alcoholic. My own experiences have helped me a lot in understanding the children in my classes. I think you can spot a potential alcoholic when he's pretty young. The kids have a lot of emotional instability. I think there should be a course in alcoholism required in every curriculum. The young people ought to know what it's all about. It might save them a lot of misery later on.

Drinking has often jeopardized the various positions I have held as principal, superintendent, and school teacher, but I never lost any positions. I was a social drinker. But every time I did any social drinking, I went on home and continued as a solitary drinker. I was hospitalized for alcoholism and went through having DTs. I don't think I would ever live through that
again, and I wouldn't want to. It was after that that I came into Alcoholics Anonymous.

I haven't had a drink for a good many years now. I have done a lot of work with other alcoholics. Even if we can't see what good we do, and they keep on drinking, I have seen it happen often that the seed was planted and the person would finally get sober. Also, I've worked with a lot of alcoholics that I saw committed to institutions, and they have never come back out. I have seen others die of acute alcoholism—and that's a no good way to die. I've done a lot of study on the subject of alcoholism including work at Yale and with various state boards. I'm convinced that one of the most important things in the world today is educating our young people in regard to alcohol.

Case Twenty-four:

D.____: I started my drinking career when I was twelve years old. I didn't have any home life and pretty soon I was hopping the freight cars, living with bums and in the jungles, and drinking canned heat. I remember how as a kid I was traveling all over the country on these freight cars. I would look at the lights in the houses and wish I had a home like those people that lived in houses. I was always drunk and always on the bum. Any money I could lay my hands on, stealing or any other way went for cheap wine. I've spent over half my life today
in jails or penitentiaries.

Once I had just finished serving a penitentiary sentence and had been released. I got drunk right away of course. I read in the paper where an old woman, an antique dealer in town, had been murdered. I didn't know whether to give myself up or not. Finally I decided I would go ahead and admit I did it although I knew it meant another penitentiary stretch. But I was afraid they would find out I did it and maybe it would be better on me if I voluntarily turned myself in. They kept me in jail for awhile and then found out that I wasn't even in the vicinity when the old woman was murdered. They found the killer, and it wasn't me. But I knew exactly how I had done it and everything. Alcohol had made that crime such an obsession to me that they couldn't make me believe I hadn't done it. It took me a long time to really believe that I wasn't guilty.

I'm not feeling sorry for myself, but I know my alcoholism sprung from my childhood. I was really a waif and nobody wanted me. I got defiant at the world. All I wanted to be was drunk. I never had a chance. Maybe if I'd had a home I wouldn't have spent over half my life in prisons. I got more defiant there than ever. I never had any affection from anybody. I'm married now, and my wife and I both are alcoholics and both of us are on the A.A. program. If you think one alcoholic has a hard time getting along, you should see two alcoholics trying it together.
But I'd rather be dead than go back to that old life of drinking and prisons and hallucinations and DTs and hate all of the time. This is a way of life I never knew existed. I know there is a God, and I know that with His help I can stay sober if I only do it one day at a time.

Case Twenty-five:

E.____: I wasn't a skid row drunk. I was intelligent, well-educated, popular, and well-liked. At least, that's what I thought. I had a nice home and a lucrative managerial job. We had lots of parties and I met all my guests by shoving a highball into their hands before they were well inside my door. I always had my own highball in my other hand. This went on for a good many years. I worked hard; I drank harder. But drinking kept progressively consuming more and more of my time until I was finally drinking the clock around. My memory was no good any more. I was unable to meet clients and talk rationally. Of course I didn't realize at the time how little sense I probably made about anything. All I knew was that it kept taking more and more liquor to keep me going. Finally, I just quit working altogether so I could drink.

This period of my life lasted until I was practically and almost literally penniless. My wife stayed by me--I don't know why. I tried doctors and cures. I tried every imaginable way of changing my drinking pattern, but nothing did any good.
I was at the end of the road spiritually, physically, and mentally. What concerned me more at the time was the fact that I was at the end of the road financially. I needed money for liquor.

There wasn't any Alcoholics Anonymous in town, but I had read about it in another city. So I went there and attended a meeting. That town was about forty-five miles away. I drove over there night after night to attend meetings. I think that nothing short of death would have kept me away. I knew if my drinking pattern continued I would soon be dead. I continued this for over a year, and I didn't have a drink. Then some of us got together and organized a group in our own city. It has grown into a strong organization here now. I realized at those first meetings that I wasn't too far away from becoming a skid row bum. I realized it could happen to anyone when it came to alcohol. It had almost happened to me. After I started getting myself in shape, I started to work my way back up. It certainly wasn't at all easy. But to me this was an entirely spiritual program. Living one day at a time, I found I had to accept things. It had taken me a long time to become addicted to alcohol, and alcohol was not going to let go of me easily.

A lot of little things bother me. A little over a year ago I let all these little things crowd in on me. I had quit attending A.A. meetings because of business demands on my time.
I thought I didn't need it any more. I hadn't had a drink in twelve years. I decided to take a drink on a social basis. I knew after all this time that one drink wouldn't hurt me. Also, I had a little nagging feeling in the back of my mind that I was cured and maybe I could once again become a social drinker.

This trial drink was proof that I couldn't. I stayed drunk for two weeks before I could imaginably quit. I'm convinced now that once a person becomes an alcoholic and a compulsive drinker that he can never again safely take any alcohol into his system. I was lucky. After a miserable and drunk two weeks, I managed to get back to the A.A. way of life and association with other alcoholics.

A friend of mine died last week who didn't have that second chance. He was sober for nineteen years. Then he took one social drink. Two months later he hadn't drawn a sober breath. And last week he died of acute alcoholism. I am very grateful for my second chance and want to always keep aware that I will live and die an alcoholic. But I want to die a sober alcoholic.

**Case Twenty-six:**

E.____: I'm not one of those who was lucky enough to come into the A.A. program and never have another drink. A good twenty-five years of my life has been ruled by alcohol, and anything that has such a hold over a person that long doesn't give
up very easily. But I've learned a lot about alcohol, and I'm not a compulsive drinker any more--most of the time.

At first I thought the desire for alcohol was physical. It is, right after you have been continuously drinking. But that physical desire wears off when the alcohol is completely out of your system. Then I thought it was completely mental. I had slips. But every time I turned to alcohol it was because I was mad at something or somebody or depressed or worried. I wanted to quit thinking about whatever it was that upset me.

Then, after six months of sobriety, another thing has happened that is confusing. I was perfectly happy, and nothing was bothering me--at least consciously. One night I was driving to a meeting, and an absolutely uncontrollable urge to drink came over me. It shouldn't have been physical because I hadn't had a drink for six months. It shouldn't have been mental because I was on an even keel with the world. What was it?

I don't know the answer except that it is proof of the statement that once a person is an alcoholic he will always be one. I went on to the meeting. I drank later that night intending just to give in to the compulsion that one evening and then leave it alone. I stayed drunk five days. Whatever kind of desire makes an alcoholic need alcohol, that desire is very powerful.

For those few minutes I had that compulsion I was as shaky as if I'd been on a six weeks' drunk. My face broke out
in a cold sweat because I needed the alcohol so much. And
even after delaying the desire for a couple of hours, I couldn't
combat it. That experience taught me that it isn't either
purely mental or purely physical, but it is a completely over-
powering desire to an alcoholic.

Case Twenty-seven:

J.____: My experience with alcohol has showed me that
the desire for it is mental. At least it's mental when there
isn't the physical need that anyone has who's been drunk for
some time.

During the years I drank, I was always the first one at
the bar when it opened in the morning. I had to have a couple
of shots so I could make it to work. Sometimes I was so shaky
I could hardly get the glass to my mouth for that first drink.
But there were other times, many times, that I got up in the
morning and wasn't shaky. I could dress and shave and get down
to the tavern like any normal person. But the minute those
doors opened, something happened in my desire for alcohol. By
the time the drink was set in front of me I would be just as
shaky and just as much in need of that drink for my nerves as I
could be with the most violent hangover. So it must have been
mental. I was used to those morning shots and must have reacted
physically, even when it wasn't necessary, as sort of a self-
justification or rationalization for getting that alcohol I
wanted so powerfully even when I didn't have the physical need for it.

Case Twenty-eight:

V.____: I know I'm an alcoholic. No one that wasn't a confirmed alcoholic would let anything run their lives and not be able to help it the way alcohol has run mine. I spent two years one time in a jail in Kentucky where they kept me on charges of assault with intent to kill. Yet, to my knowledge, I never saw the man in my life until the day I saw him in the courtroom. He weighed a mere 250 pounds; I was a strapping 130 in weight. But I have no recollection of the night the assault with intent to kill took place any more than I have of ever laying eyes on that man before.

A short time back I left home with eighty cents in my pocket. Ten days later I came back with still a few cents left. I'd covered a lot of the state and all these ten dollar checks I'd left in my trail started rolling in. Of course they were no good. But we managed to get that straightened out and get the checks covered. But that was the last straw to me. I had to do something about my drinking.

I'm a musician. My wife and I play the clubs. But she said she wouldn't play any more because I can't withstand the temptation to drink. I can't give up music any more than I ever could alcohol.
We had fifty-two engagements for the whole summer, and we canceled them—all but one I forgot. Then I got a card from this one, and we were due to play. I was confused and didn't know what to do. I asked the priest and he told me we should play because we had said we would and we shouldn't let them down. Then I asked the minister who had been trying to help me about alcohol and he said it would be an eternal sin on my soul if we did do it. We played, and I drank.

I'm new on A.A., and I want to make the program more than anything else in the world. My life can't go on like this. I've been in jails all over this country and even in some foreign ones and it's all due to drinking. I'm a tool and die maker, but I haven't had any work for a long time. They ask me where my tools are. I had $750 worth of them, but I sold them all for $40.00 for booze. I want sobriety in the worst way. I tried religion and they were good people that tried to help me, but I just got more confused.

It's a life and death matter with me. Much as I love my music, I've come to realize that if I can't have it and sobriety, I'm going to have to try for sobriety first before alcohol has wrecked my life so completely that it can't be salvaged.

Case Twenty-nine:

T.____: I was never in jail for drinking and never lost a job. Yet, the last five years that I drank I stopped every day
on the way to work for a couple of shots. I stopped every
night on the way home for more than a couple. And every night
of my life I bought a pint for the evening. Every Friday night
it was six pints of whiskey I had to take home—two for Friday,
two for Saturday, and two for Sunday. If that wasn't alcoholic,
I don't know what was. I bought pint bottles because they fit
under the car seat.

My drinking covered a period of about thirty years. But
although I drank very heavily, it was only during this last five
years that it began to bother me. My final breakdown came when
I had a vacation. I was painting my house but mostly I was busy
consuming a case of booze I had laid in for the occasion. After
three days of this, I called my wife where she worked and told
her I'd really had it, to put me in a hospital, anywhere—I
couldn't go on. She got me in the alcoholic clinic a couple of
days later. They started me on anabuse. I don't think I could
have made it without anabuse. It's a bridge for that first
crossing over into sobriety. After several months on anabuse,
I came into A.A.

People had wanted me to contact A.A. before, but I never
would because I'd seen a few fellows in at the bars drinking that
I knew talked A.A., and I didn't think it was any good if they
were still drinking after trying it. I know now that they weren't
in A.A. They were just around it. And people that want to drink
should stay away from A.A. They might keep someone away from it that really faced a life and death proposition in alcohol like I did.

I never had a drink after coming into A.A. All of us alcoholics are would-be perfectionists, but we want to take short cuts and that doesn't work. I used to get my wants all mixed up with my needs. I know now that my needs will be taken care of today, and that's all I ask. Sobriety is the most important thing in the world to me.

My wife and I can laugh now at some of those things that happened in the past. At the time, those things were tragedies. The day I came home from the clinic we made an agreement that the past would be a closed book. Neither of us would mention it. We would make a fresh start. We did, and these have been the happiest five years of our married life. Anyone that lives with an alcoholic gets a strange and warped viewpoint too. The wife or the husband has about as much rebuilding to do as the alcoholic himself has. We have to get sober for ourselves. We can't do it for anyone else. But the husband or wife plays a big part even though the final outcome has to lie within the alcoholic alone.

Case Thirty:

F.____: I know that my drinking was built up out of childhood resentments and experiences. I was an adopted child,
and I never had any real affection. My highest ambition was always to play football, but my stepmother wouldn't let me because she said she was afraid I'd get hurt. But the biggest thing was I found out she was unfaithful to my step-father. I resented that terribly and I think it colored all the feelings of my later life toward all women. I don't trust them. I don't trust my own wife, or at least I'm awfully jealous. I never used to think I was an alcoholic. A couple of years ago I went over with a shotgun thinking I would kill my stepmother, and then after that I decided maybe I didn't know what I was doing when I was drinking.

I know self-pity is the main cause of my drinking. I can recognize that fact, but it's hard for me to get over it. I haven't had a job for over six months, but I get more on welfare than I would on the jobs that I have found by the time I counted the money I'd spend for gas and lunch. When I worked I got $2.80 an hour, so there's no sense in me working for $1.80 an hour. I get $55.00 a week without working.

I tried A.A. eight or nine years ago and stayed sober for six months so I know it works. It's harder this time. I get to feeling sorry for myself and don't care about anything so I just have to drink. That's what I did when they offered me $1.80 an hour--that's an insult. I wouldn't work for that if I never work again.
Notes on Fore-going Case Histories

What was the significance of the fore-going case histories? The greatest significance was pattern, both individual and mass. A careful study of each case history combined with a careful study of the total picture provided a basis from which an \textit{X Constant} of personality seemed to emerge. The \textit{X Constant} was yet in embryo form, but it was beginning to be a distinguishable entity.

Time, for the alcoholic as for all other human beings, passed swiftly and brought changes. But there was an added dimension to the alcoholic's conception of time. For to him, a moment's change in thought might mean the difference between life and death. Among a group of A.A.'s the thought was often voiced: "This time, a Higher Power handed me another coupon. But we never know when there will not be another coupon left for us in the coupon book of God." There was good reason for this thought, for one did not have to look far around in the alcoholic world to find evidence of coupon books that were empty when the alcoholic again returned to the bottle. They knew that, to them, to drink was to die.

Only a short time has elapsed since these thirty case histories were made.

One man said: "I know I can't change the past. The only thing I can change is myself. To me, sobriety is the most important thing in the world." Two weeks later he lay close
to death as a result of an automobile smash-up which was the result of his tangle with alcohol and the unpredictable blackout which he suffered.

There was another coupon left for him this time. He lived. He says again as he said before: "I've been through a lot with alcohol. Maybe I'm glad. It's over. If it had not been for alcohol, perhaps I would never had found God or this new life." (Case Fourteen)

One woman said: "Some days I had such an uncontrollable urge to drink that I would go down to the A.A. Club early in the morning and just sit there, afraid to go out. One day I sat there for fourteen hours. This paid off. I am to get my children back....Now they think I will be able to take care of them." The court returned the children to her. But they have already taken them away again, for her sobriety was short lived. As she said, "I had to find out for myself." (Case Twenty-two)

In these two cases, the pattern was repeating; and each repetition was more violent than the last.

The other twenty-eight individuals represented here were maintaining sobriety and following, or trying to follow, the A.A. way of life.

Many more case histories were studied. Some additional ones, in abbreviated form, are shown in Appendix A.
CHAPTER X

THE STORY OF AN ALCOHOLIC

(This is the story of one alcoholic's life as he revealed it. Within the story was the clearly definable alcoholic pattern at an early age. Yet how long it took him to recognize it as such! This pattern found a counterpart in many of the histories gathered. Environments differed; circumstances differed. But there was always the stability of repetition with which the pattern repeated itself again and again. And always, recognition was slow.)

"Today I am happy; I do not drink. I used to ask 'Why? Why did God allow me, an ex-con, a skid-row bum, this wonderful opportunity to help my fellow man? Why did he permit me to carry the message to alcoholics who still suffer?' But then I thought 'Who am I, to question God's infinite wisdom?'....

I was an alcoholic long before I knew I was an alcoholic. As a young boy, I went to church. I did not swear, for even at that time there was something of an inferiority complex. I wanted people to think well of me. I was afraid to do anything to change their conception of me in this respect. In fact, I was something of a sissy.

In school, I was always one of the top pupils in my class. But I had an intangible feeling that somehow I wasn't as good as the other children. I couldn't put my finger on it, but somehow the feeling was there.

I always associated with older children because I
looked older than I was. I started drinking early because it gave me courage. At thirteen, I was stealing liquor, although even at that age, I was ashamed to let the other kids know that I drank for false courage. After drinking, I had the feeling that I was the big wheel and that everyone, including myself, knew it.

When I was fifteen, I bought some beer--I could get in the saloons in those days--for myself and the other boys. The other boys got drunk. Their parents sent the police out after me. Up popped the fear again. Out of loyalty to the saloon keeper I wouldn't tell where I had gotten the beer, so I ran away. That was it.

After running away from home, I could exercise my own will and do as I pleased. That was always important to me. And always, drinking was concerned. But, after knocking around for awhile, I decided to straighten up and go back home and finish school. My parents always went to bat for me, and I knew they would be glad for me to be home and going right again. But I didn't finish school; I became involved with my first wife. I was sixteen years old--she was ten or twelve years older.

Even then, I lied inevitably, telling her I was twenty instead of sixteen. Of course there was no such thing as an 'alcoholic' in those days. I was a plain drunk. My wife and I separated a short time after our daughter was born. I started going with my wife's cousin. Consequently, we got a
divorce and I married her cousin.

We lived together and would have been happy if it had not been for my drinking. I drank constantly. Our baby was three months old and I would look at my wife and my baby and hate myself, for I had a great love for them both. I was full of remorse for my drinking and for the things that I did when I was drunk. Yet I couldn't stop. I figured life wasn't worth living because of things I had done to my first wife and one daughter and which I was now repeating with a second wife and child.

The Bum Rap

Coming home one night during a drunken rampage, I was sick, broke, tired of living—but still drinking. (Previous to this time, I had had a good job as assistant credit manager in a store but had quit my job.) I threw a brick through a jewelry store window. A few days later I was picked up by the police. I had sold quite a lot of the jewelry.

I got sent to prison for ten to twenty years. They said it was a $10,000 robbery and charged me with that. I didn't actually get over eight or nine hundred dollars worth of jewelry at the most. The jewelry store was the one that got the $10,000 worth of insurance. I figured the jeweler netted himself about $9,000 on the deal. I thought it was a bum rap.

I did three years and eight months of this time in the penitentiary. Then my people got me out on special parole.
Here began the insanity part of the deal. I had developed a terrific hatred of jewelry stores. Anything I could do to a jewelry store I did. But this three years had done nothing to lessen my compulsion for alcohol. I got roaringly drunk en route home from the penitentiary.

To my wife, this was it. She had spent three years and eight months waiting for me while I was in the penitentiary. To her, it didn't make sense that I couldn't even get home to her after this time without being drunk already. She was going to get a divorce.

But she didn't. I went back to the store where I had worked and got my old job back. We had another child. My drinking progressed terrifically. I kept thinking: I have a wife I love--two children by this wife, one by my first wife--a bum rap in the penitentiary--an insane hatred of anything or anybody connected with jewelry stores that had done all this to me--I thought I must be no good, and life was intolerable. I kept thinking; and I kept drinking. This pattern was to repeat itself many times in my life. I see this now as I look back. At that time, all that mattered to me was where the next drink was coming from. Both then and now, I know that I loved my family.

Home life became more and more unbearable. I made trip after trip to Oklahoma. I had a girl friend there, connections there with friends, and I always managed to make money there in one way or another. I would stay away for eight or nine months
at a time. My jewelry store hatred developed. Every time I could work up enough credit in a jewelry store I tried to get even by buying up stuff and getting out of paying for it. I gave things away I got from jewelry stores and thought I was getting even. This was the insanity part of alcohol.

I still remember my wife's parting words when, after taking off for Oklahoma time after time, she finally said, "If you leave here again, when you come back, you're going to find a brand new donkey in your stall."

I left again anyway. This trip I determined to make my last. When I returned this time I had all intentions of going home for good.

Our house was built in an L shape. This night when I got home, I started to knock on the door. Then I noticed a crack in the curtains. The lights were all on and I could see all through the house. I peeked through the crack. My wife had done exactly what she had told me she was going to do. She was in this man's arms.

I didn't knock. I kicked the door down and went in. I blustered around and called her names and called the man names. He was pretty scared and ran out. My wife told me she was finished with me. I could do anything I felt big enough to do, but she was through with me. I climbed back into my car and headed back for Oklahoma.

This time I was gone six or eight months. I got lonesome
for my wife and came back. She was living in an apartment. Her mother had the children. I knocked at her door. I said I wanted to see the children and give them a hundred dollars. I had it in my pocket.

"We don't want your hundred dollars," my wife said. "You are going to need it more than the children do. I am divorcing you."

From Robbery To Attempted Murder

She was right about the hundred dollars. I was loaded the night I stood at her apartment door. Three days later I was flat broke. Things went from bad to worse. I went to Evansville, Indiana.

It was during the presidential campaign of Al Smith. We were all drinking sugar alcohol bought in half pint cream jars. One night three of us fellows were in an alley drinking this. One of the fellows was complaining about Al Smith being a Catholic. He called him a Catholic ____ , and the other fellow nearly killed him. I got in and got the fight stopped and picked the fellow up off the ground and tried to get him on his feet. Then he made the remark again, so I knocked him down and left him lying there in the alley. It was a small incident, but it was typical of many. It was the alcoholic insanity.

A good hustling town is a good gambling town, and there are always lots of prostitutes in it. These prostitutes will buy anything they think is stolen. We went to stores and bought
cheap hose, told them they were stolen, and sold them for a buck a piece. We worked up a good racket. We sold everything—jewelry, hose, perfume. And this racket helped me satisfy that old revenge against jewelry stores.

I got to going with one of these girls, and I started living high on the hog. I didn't have to do anything. Anything I wanted I got.

One fellow was pretty jealous of her. In fact he was married to her. They weren't living together. But one night when I was there he came and started pounding on the door. It was a Sunday night. There was a cement walk between this house and the next house. She told me to climb out the window and she would get rid of him. But he heard the window open or somehow knew something was up. He came down the cement walk between the two houses.

That's where I made my second big mistake. I shot him—and I shot to kill. I had done a good many stick-ups and always carried a gun with me during this time. But this was the first time I had shot to kill. It was through fear.

So I shot this boy and thought that I had killed him. I checked in at the Vendome Hotel under an assumed name. This alone proved I was insane. I didn't look like the Little Lord Fauntleroy type after this act and at three o'clock in the morning. Three hours later, the police had me.
They held me to see whether or not this boy would die. But he didn't die. They charged me with attempted murder. I got another ten to twenty years in the penitentiary.

My parents were broken hearted at this. They went to bat for me again, and I came out of the Indiana state prison due to their efforts after serving shortly over three years of my time.

Even with that ten to twenty years they gave me I still didn't think booze was my trouble.

After Indiana and the penitentiary, I walked out and said "This is it. I'm going to be a smart guy. I'll never get back in the penitentiary again." But I had no idea of being honest. I was looking for the big money this time. And I looked for booze the minute I got outside the prison gates.

A Third Marriage

I moved my headquarters to St. Louis. I got a job as manager in a large furniture store and made good money. I was about twenty-seven years old. Between the time that I was out of the Indiana prison and St. Louis I had covered a lot of territory. I spent time in California, Texas, and Mexico.

In the furniture store one day, a wealthy Jewish girl came in wanting to furnish her apartment. She bought the furniture from me. A couple of days later she was back looking for a console phonograph, she said, but she wasn't looking for that. She told me how beautiful her apartment was and I
suggested that I come up to look at it. That was it—I knew then. She and I bought whiskey in five gallon kegs and had it delivered.

Naturally I quit my job. This was what I had been waiting for. Then one morning she said "This isn't right. Isaac worked himself to death making this money, and now we're just throwing it away."

She talked to her lawyer and got one of my automobiles away from me. I got another job as credit manager in a St. Louis clothing store, but this wasn't very exciting.

I went to California, then back to Texas during the oil boom. Another fellow and I made a lot of dough. The oil boom was on in Muskegon and there was more money around there than people had any use for. So I got an apartment there. I went to work in the oil fields and worked for the chief of police.

My girl friend's sister went to the police one day though and told them my girl friend and I were living together and weren't married. Police went to check up and asked her for the marriage license. She said we had one but that it was in her trunk in Milwaukee. The police came out to question me, and I said we weren't living together—that she was just my housekeeper.

They took me to the police station. I had been in two penitentiaries and didn't want any more of prison. The chief of police said there would be a co-habitation charge placed against
if I didn't marry her the next day. So I did.

I didn't want to marry her. I had another girl friend. But she said we would marry to get out of the co-habitation charge, get a divorce right away, and go our separate ways. In typical alcoholic thinking, I was still going with, and supposedly engaged to, a stenographer whom I had known for some seventeen years. But I had recently fallen in love with another woman whom I wanted to marry, and I thought this spoiled all my plans.

There was a divorce. I quit my job—married to one woman, engaged to another, and in love with a third whom I married the day after the divorce became final.

The Pattern Repeats

This was my fourth marriage. My wife had a fine job. But I went to work anyway. Things began to look pretty good. But the bottle, which had never been absent, came back into my life more strongly than ever. After this marriage I thought work was made for mules and niggers and I wasn't going to do it. Another fellow and I robbed a man, and I got fifteen years in Michigan.

By now I was a confirmed drinker. I was a skid row bum. There was no God, for He would not have permitted me to do the things I did. Everyone was a phony to me. I had a right to live my own life and I intended to do it.
I went to Jackson—still planning. I was insane. Now I can see that. But at that time I couldn't. When I got out I was going to show everyone. I did. I got drunk on the way home. My wife took one look at me and started crying. My sentence had been fifteen months to fifteen years. I had done eleven months and twenty-eight days of that time. I was out on two year parole, forty-five years old. I wanted to continue to drink but, above all, I also didn't want any more of prison. There was this constant prison threat hanging over me. This was fear, but no fear was strong enough to combat the compulsive power of alcohol. I kept on drinking.

The Beginning of Change

To make it look better I tried to use some con on the parole officer. I heard about Alcoholics Anonymous. I had developed a beautiful inferiority complex by this time. Years ago I had been a member of the Elk's Club. Some of these fellows in A.A. were members of the Elk's. I hated them for it—they made me feel inferior.

These fellows hadn't been in prison or on skid row like I had. Maybe they thought they'd been through the mill, but none of them had done the things I had. At least, that was what I thought. I said "These guys can't get to understand. They can't have a problem like I have—they just can't have. They don't know what it is..." I hated these people, the world, and myself. I had come to the conclusion that if there
was a God, He was for women and children and wanted no part of me. I stayed sober with A.A. for six miserable months. Then I went back to drinking for two years.

The New Life

These two years were violent years. I hurt everyone and everything that came in touch with me or that I came in touch with. Yet, somehow, I stayed out of serious trouble with the law. I had learned a lot in prison to help me about that.

After these two years I went back to Alcoholics Anonymous. I was completely beaten. I accepted the fact that I was suffering a three fold disease. It was this or spending the rest of my life in prison or in an institution. There was no in between alternative. I was falling off bar stools, blacking out, passing out.

Then, and only then, did I accept and come to believe in a Power greater than myself that could restore me to sanity. For I also knew I was insane with this compulsion for alcohol. I have not done all this completely yet.

I don't think anyone is born an alcoholic, but I acquired these tendencies from thinking other little boys were better than I. Hidden deep within me were all of these defective characteristics that finally came out.

It was a terrific price I paid--hurting everyone I touched and everyone I loved. I still think perhaps if my second wife
had stayed with me I would have straightened out. But you never know about what might have been.

Prison? Well, prison wasn't too bad. After you become institutionalized and put your time in quarantine you become a part of prison life. Regardless of what penitentiary I got in there would be someone that knew me. Before I got out of quarantine there would always be a good job waiting for me. There was shop boy in the tailor shop, the best job in the place one of the times. In Jackson, it was all set for me to be librarian in the agricultural school. After you've been in one of these you know the ropes. You know whose hand to shake and you start shaking it. I'm not trying to paint a pleasant picture of prisons. They aren't. But there are ways just like in anything else.

There was one of my friends going out of Jackson the day I went in. He waved goodbye to me and said he'd never be back in there again. Within ten days he was back. Alcohol was like that. There was no A.A. in prison then--it didn't go into prisons until 1946.

I haven't had a drink now for a little over twelve years. I don't care why I'm an alcoholic--it was the escape that I could find within a bottle for the build-up of false courage; it was the making of an extrovert out of an introvert. But I could worry so much about the why of my past that I wouldn't do anything about my present.
I won't let that bother me. My past has been too black. There has been too much trouble.

I have found the answer. I may be drunk tomorrow--but today I won't take that first drink. I work the A.A. program one day at a time. Maybe prison life taught me some of this--one day at a time. Time takes care of everything and heals everything.

I would have killed someone. The state of Ohio and the state of Indiana kept me from killing someone else. The state of Michigan saved my own life, saved me from killing myself. I hold no malice, none whatsoever against prison or those who put me there, no malice whatsoever against anyone. One day at a time I learned in prison--live one day at a time and don't mark the days off or you get ahead of yourself.

The world is a different place in these twelve years. I can look at things in their proper perspective. I have learned how to live. I've quit rationalizing and justifying the things I did. I have had many happy years in A.A., and it has been a pleasure to carry the message, to help other alcoholics, to give this happiness away.

Maybe I had to go through all of this to help someone else, to tell them how I have been helped. Many years of good and happy living, and somewhere along the line I have lost all desire to drink. Yet, I am still just one drink away from a
drunk. I know one drink would plunge me into that pit of alcoholism again. And I may not have another chance.

With alcohol, I could make myself in my own thoughts anything I wanted to be. Then comes the time you see yourself in your proper perspective and you don't like what you see. You quit being phony then. Now I can see myself as others see me--in my own proper perspective, and I can't use the bottle any more. I want to live in the world of reality and accept reality. I lived in the make-believe worlds too long."

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Within this one man's story lay the fear, the loneliness, and the defiance which haunted so many alcoholics. There was the admitted inferiority complex rooted in childhood which came back in many shapes and forms to cause trouble in later life. There was the rationalization which was sprung from bitterness and frustration, and there was the now freely admitted "insanity" which the practicing alcoholic often refused to accept or admit.

It was the story of many alcoholics wrapped up into one. This was the mirrored trap. There were many composites for the building of the X Constant within this man's personality. What was the sum total of these composites?
The second part of this research consisted of personal contacts and interviews made with still practicing alcoholics. Fifty people were contacted by personal interview. Included in this study were desperately ill alcoholics who feared for their sanity and had called A.A. as a last resort when they had actually hit bottom with alcohol and knew they could not quit drinking.

Many of these individuals were in serious trouble and in jail. Some were doubly frightened at the acts that they had committed for they suffered blackouts and remembered nothing of their actions. Others found themselves in jail one week end following another on drunk and disorderly charges, but they were unable to change the pattern. There were those who had been given up by their own doctors and psychiatrists or had been frequent patients in mental or alcoholic hospitals. But the story was always the same--they could not quit drinking.

In most of these cases, self-concepts proved of no great value. Some were in jail only for drunkenness, others for more serious charges which stemmed from the drunkenness. Some were hospitalized by either forced or self commitment. There were
also those who were still battling the bottle alone and getting
deeper and deeper into the mire of alcoholism from which they
were totally unable to extricate themselves. They had lost
families, homes, self-respect, and self-confidence.

In all of these cases, the individuals were unable to
find the answer to their problem and continued in their alcoholic
patterns in spite of themselves.

The technique of the research was changed from self­
concept of the individual to observation and rating of that
individual by the observer. In the majority of these cases,
it was impossible to determine definite and innate personality
characteristics, but the outstanding characteristic behavior
of these individuals revealed itself in a definitely observable
and discernable pattern. This was balanced against the self­
concept for recording.

Also, general social and economic conditions surrounding
these individuals were observable. Definite patterns of alco­
holism emerged here. Definite patterns emerged also in the
circular design effected by alcohol and traumatic experiences
which seemed interwoven in the lives of the individuals around
whom they seemed to pull a net. This data was studied and
recorded in its broad aspects in order to discover the light
it shed on the understanding of the individual alcoholic and
the X Constant within his personality. Case histories were
made and sifted for the finding of the personality determinants
which contributed to, and were the quest of, this study.
CHAPTER XII

THUMBNAIl SKETCHES

From The Lives of Practicing Alcoholics

If the recording of case histories of practicing alcoholics were of great scientific value in the study of alcoholism, certainly much more would have been known of the problem than was known today. Case histories were made by social workers, doctors, psychiatrists, industrial firm researchers, and many other individuals who sought to find the answer to the alcoholic addiction.

But the practicing alcoholic was not co-operative the majority of the time. If he were co-operative, he was still confused. He could, when he would, reveal what he perceived to be the truth about himself. This was all he could reveal.

It was true that one alcoholic understood another alcoholic. The world of psychiatry recognized this fact. Dr. Silkworth, in his description of the new approach to psychotherapy in chronic alcoholism, emphasized the realization that "The ex-alcoholics capitalize upon a fact which they have so well demonstrated, namely: that one alcoholic can secure the confidence of another in a way and to a degree almost impossible
of attainment by a non-alcoholic outsider."\(^{25}\)

Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick made further reference to this belief when he stated that "When we talk to an alcoholic, he knows that never having been in his place we cannot understand his plight. But when an ex-alcoholic, who has been in the depths himself and has taken the Twelve Steps to freedom, talks to an alcoholic, amazing results can follow..."\(^{26}\)

This theory of the lack of a bond between alcoholic and non-alcoholic was substantiated countless times by members of Alcoholics Anonymous. They admitted lying to psychiatrists, doctors, ministers and others who tried to help them. Many alcoholics told of defiance toward psychiatrists when they had been referred to them. Others, who spent their own money for the services of psychiatrists and desperately wanted help, told of an inability or an unwillingness to tell the truth about themselves. The common bond of alcoholism made it possible for one alcoholic to talk freely to another alcoholic without fear of being ridiculed or misunderstood. They talked one another's language, and this language made sense between them.


\(^{26}\)Ibid. Appendix E:d, pg. 324, citing Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick in his autobiography, The Living of These Days. (Harper, 1956.)
Yet even with this understanding and with an earnest attempt at co-operation, the practicing alcoholic lived in a world in which alcohol ruled and colored his perceptions. He was forced to rationalize and to justify his perceptions, for these images, distorted or warped as they might be, were all he knew of reality. These images and reflections were his world.

There was a sameness in the recorded cases. At times, there was an almost parallel quality in the comparison of one case to another. Always present in these case histories of practicing alcoholics was a mixture of defiance, self-pity, and a predominant quality of either inferiority or superiority.

For example: In the first following case cited, H.____'s personality appeared to the observer to be a tangle of self-pity, defiance, and a certain superiority in spite of his obvious maladjustment. His own self-concept verified and substantiated the observed behavior traits. Yet, when compared to the life history as told by the alcoholic and presented in Chapter X, there was a sameness and a parallelism which was undeniable.

Would the case history of H.____, taken thirty years hence, show inferiority as the root of the alcoholic addiction?

Would the case history of that other alcoholic, taken thirty years before, have shown that same tangled mass of self-pity and defiance and have been as little indicative at that
time of inferiority as the root complex?

Inferiority, in either of these cases, was not a projected trait. H. boasted that he really knew how to fool the doctors and the psychiatrists. He bragged that he had the court wrapped around his little finger. He evaded prison sentences. He was, in his own perception, entirely too smart for any of them.

In the case of the other alcoholic, who had arrested his alcoholism and was able to perceive with clarity the importance of an inferiority complex rooted in childhood, there was even less projection of this quality. An observer saw a man of dynamic personality, a man full of self-confidence and assurance, and a man who accepted his world of reality with courage.

The following case histories were included to show this sameness of pattern among the practicing alcoholics who found this problem too large for them to handle and who were, so far, unable to find the way to sobriety:
Case One A:

H.___ was sent to boys' reform school when he was twelve years old. He had held up a pedestrian at gunpoint and taken a few dollars from him. He had been drinking in order to have courage for his hold-up. His father was a wino; his mother was very religious. The family, of which he was the only child, was often on relief as the father went on extended drunks.

H.___ was classed as a delinquent when he was released from reform school. Alcohol was always involved in his troubles. He went into the service where he continued to get into trouble by drinking. The woman he married was considerably older than he. She also drank constantly, and their life was a series of quarrels and resulting jail sentences. They had three children, all boys.

The most serious happening during this married life occurred when H.___ returned home unexpectedly, found a man with his wife, and attempted to cut the man's throat with a broken beer bottle. The man recovered, and H.___ was released after a short jail sentence. At that time he vowed that he would kill the man at a later date.

H.___ spent the next two years in and out of local jails. He was sent to the alcoholic clinic and kept there for three weeks. The doctors at the clinic advised that there had been no change noted in his behavior during the three week period. They felt that he was definitely an alcoholic and that he
was potentially dangerous when he was drinking. He then spent a couple of months at the state hospital and apparently left with as little difficulty as he had entered. He did not pay for hospitalization at either institution.

Since that time he seldom worked. Much of his time was spent in jail. His wife divorced him. He failed to support his children as specified by court. Some of the charges made against him were of major nature, but always some extenuating circumstances were found which saved him from prison sentences. For example, at one time he hit a child while he was driving and, since the child was not much hurt, the accident was blamed on poor visibility during a snowstorm. This accident was not attributed to drinking.

He was currently serving a six months jail sentence based on parole violations. The following statements were made by H.____ at different intervals during the past two years:

"I know I can't drink when I'm in jail, but the minute I hit the street again, watch out. I don't know what's the matter with me, but I can't quit drinking. It really scares me. Once I wakened up from a blackout way up high on the catwalk at the construction company. I had six bottles of beer with me, but I don't know how I got way up there. The last I knew I was in Ann Arbor...."

"I'd be all right if women would leave me alone. They throw themselves at me. I'm always getting into trouble with
their husbands, but they just won't leave me alone....

"I know half the Big Book (Alcoholics Anonymous) by heart: but I guess I'm sicker than most people. Other people don't drink like I do and don't get into all the trouble I do with it. I think if they hadn't been so mean to me in reform school, I'd be all right today. I was just a twelve year old kid. Who'd be afraid of a twelve year old kid? They always pick me up now when there's an armed robbery in the vicinity. Sometime I'll fool them. But if I do, they'll never catch me....

"They didn't do anything for me at the state hospital. I put my foot down on shock treatments. Finally I got mad at all the stupid doctors there and really told them off. Then I left....

"They'll never send me to prison. I've got the court wrapped around my little finger. I don't mind being in jail so much. But it isn't fair. I can't even collect my unemployment when I'm in there. That's not right. Maybe I'm full of self-pity, but I've never gotten a decent break. If people would just leave me alone I'd be all right. I've got what it takes...."

Case Two A:

H.____ was of Turkish nationality. He called Alcoholics Anonymous when he discovered that, much as he wanted to, he could not seem to resist the urge to drink. He said he didn't really
think he was an alcoholic because there were months at a time when he did not even care whether he drank or not. He said that about every six months he went on terrific binges, always wound up in serious trouble, and remembered very little of the happenings during the time that he drank. At the time he called A.A. he was just off a three week drunk which involved the loss of his job, numerous fights, jail, a wrecked car, and the threat of divorce. Several people who knew him and liked him very much admitted that he was particularly unpredictable and often violent and dangerous when he drank.

He did not accept the Alcoholics Anonymous program because he said it did not agree with his religion. He tried it for a little while on the basis that he did not need belief in any one conception of a God. It was only necessary to conceive of a Higher Power. He went along with this idea but completely balked at the mention of insanity, for he said that although he knew he drank too much, he was never insane.

His history showed a record of many automobile smash-ups. His most recent accident, the result of taking a dare to back through a plate glass garage show window, cost him $850.00. He said that this certainly was not insanity as he knew perfectly well what he was doing at the time. He was jailed several times during the past year on intoxication and drunk driving charges. According to his own story:

"I saw my whole family shot down by the Nazis, my mother,
my father, my brothers and sisters. I thought when I got over in this country everything would be good. In the old country they don't put you in jail for an accident when you're drunk. They say you're sick. You're not responsible if you're drunk....

"I can't be an alcoholic. Sometimes I don't drink for months at a time. Sometimes I can't go past a tavern without going in; something just pulls me in there whether I want to go in or not. I can't go to Alcoholics Anonymous. My boss is too religious. He tries to make me go to church, but I won't. He can't make me go to his church...."

Case Three A:

E.____ blamed his alcoholism on different things every time he was in trouble. His most recent decision concerning his problem was that "I want to get even with God. I want retaliation against God for the things I don't have."

He was consistent in only two things: he never blamed himself, and he was always sorry for himself. He was an extreme hypochondriac and was never without one ailment or another.

He had four children, all boys. He was out of work a great deal of the time, and his family lived on welfare. He was full of resentments at the world and the way it treated him. He seldom looked for work when he was unemployed because he said there wasn't any and he did not want to waste his time looking.

His drinking had progressed to the stage in which he often
suffered blackouts and hallucinations. According to his wife, during his last drunks he spent his time throwing knives at the wall. He also sat on the floor, waved his arms up and down, and said he was a little bird flying to God. She had him put in jail because she was frightened when he began kicking out the windows of their apartment. He later said he had no recollection of breaking the windows and was frightened when he thought of what he might have done.

He came home from this jail sentence badly beaten up. He remembered nothing of being taken to jail, but he said that he was attacked by sex maniacs while he was in his cell. He apparently had no recollection of his violent resistance to the arresting officers.

Upon release at this particular time, he turned to anabuse and to tranquilizers. There were times when he used tranquilizers to the extent that he was mentally befogged and physically un-co-ordinated in ordinary movements such as walking. In his present condition, he mixed tranquilizers and alcohol much of the time. He said anabuse kept him from drinking, but that when he wanted to drink, he just didn't take the anabuse so it wasn't really much help to him. The following statements were made by him at various intervals:

"My drinking's due to depression. I wish I were dead most of the time, but I haven't courage enough to commit suicide. I drink because I can't stand my wife....I drink because I love
my wife and she doesn't understand me....I drink because I've always wanted a little girl, and my kids are all boys....I drink because I'm not unfaithful to my wife, but I'm always afraid I might be sometime....

"There's no question about it. The desire for alcohol is purely physical. I don't mentally want to drink, but my body needs alcohol. I have headaches. When I drink they go away. There's just something in an alcoholic's physical make-up that needs alcohol. I was in the medical corps in the army and I learned all about medicine. I know as much as a lot of the doctors do. I could get a job in any hospital, but they don't pay enough to make it worth my while. I can't afford to work for what they'd pay me. I'd rather sit and not do anything than not get paid for what I'm worth....

"They came and took my refrigerator yesterday. Who do they think they are? They didn't have to pick on me. Banks have plenty of money. They knew I wasn't working and couldn't pay for it. They can put me in jail if they want to. The new jail looks pretty comfortable. I'll never pay them anyway. That was my refrigerator and I needed it. They shouldn't have taken it....

"Anabuse is all right. I didn't drink when I took it. But when I knew I was going to drink, I just didn't take it. I think the reason I drink is that my father rejected me. I started drinking when I was a kid. My parents were very religious
and they didn't like me to drink. My father always picked on me. I don't want to be the same way with my boys, but I guess I am. Sometimes I just wish they'd hurry up and grow up and support me for a change....

"I'd like to get a job on a ship. I don't get seasick too often. I got a job last week, but I only worked a half day and my arm hurt. I went to a doctor and he said I shouldn't think of trying to work. That's the way things go for me after I haven't had a job for six months. Everything happens to me. It isn't fair...."

**Case Four A:**

F.____ was a woman in her late forties. Four years previously she was committed to a mental institution for severe depression. She was there for some time. Shock treatments apparently helped her condition. Before being institutionalized at that time, she tried to combat her depression by use of alcohol, although she had never been addicted to alcohol or used it much in the past. Her time in the mental hospital amounted to almost a year.

She said she thought her life was pretty difficult when she was released from the hospital. She was divorced and was attempting to keep her semi-invalid mother and her two teen-age children with her in her home. She worked as a waitress during the day and was enrolled at a business college
during the evenings.

She said she started drinking heavily to overcome worry, fatigue, and loneliness. When she came into Alcoholics Anonymous, she said she felt her alcoholism stemmed from self-pity, but she was not sure in her own mind that she was an alcoholic. She said she would like to curb her drinking before she actually became one. She was particularly worried because her children were so upset by her drinking pattern. They threatened to move away somewhere, anywhere, if she kept on drinking as she was.

One night, during the past year, she went out on a drinking party with some people she met in a tavern. She wound up in jail for the first time in her life. She said she could not believe that this could happen to her. A couple of weeks later she was arrested on a drunk driving charge. According to her own story, she so thoroughly resented this that she continued to drive on a revoked license. She was picked up a week later for drunk driving on a revoked license.

This episode made her realize that she must quit drinking. She said that it seemed there were only two choices open to her. If she did not drink, she became so unbearably depressed that she felt that she could not go on living. Yet she saw that her drinking had reached the point that when she did drink she was completely irresponsible for her actions and often had no recollection of where she had been or what she had done over the period during which she drank.
She found herself unable to get a job. Financially, she was in difficulties with house and car payments. She decided, however, that regardless of what happened she would not touch alcohol and risk another jail episode. She did not have a drink for several days. She was taken to a psychiatrist, and he insisted upon immediate hospitalization because of her dangerously depressed state. Shortly before she was returned to the mental hospital, F.____ said:

"I can't go on living this way. If I drink, I just get in jail. If I don't drink, I can't stand the pressure. Everyone takes advantage of me. I wish I wouldn't believe everybody. I'm too gullible, and then I always get hurt. I don't lie to other people. Why does everyone have to lie to me?...

"The finance company's suing me. I can't get a job. It's too much for one person to bear. I don't want to be an alcoholic. I don't even think I am really. It's just that I know if I ever went back into the hospital I would never, never come out of there alive. I couldn't go through shock treatments again. It just seems like I have to drink. Then I don't worry about the hospital and shock treatments...."

Case Five A:

J.____ was the father of six small children. The family lived in a small shack several miles out of town. The children
were poorly fed and even more poorly clothed. The smaller ones had never owned shoes. J.___ spent the most of his earnings on liquor and showed no indication of caring whether his wife and children had anything to eat or to wear.

J.___ was fortunate in that his employer showed complete confidence in him because he felt he was a good worker. This employer took him back time after time when his alcoholic escapades landed him in jail. J.___ convinced his employer that the whole trouble lay with his wife and that she drove him to drink.

This employer had great faith in the Alcoholics Anonymous program. He contacted this organization and asked that someone work with his employee. He outfitted the man in a new set of clothes, for he said that anyone who attended A.A. needed to look presentable.

At this particular time, J.___ narrowly missed being sent to the state hospital. He had been in jail many times on drunk charges, and the court was at the point of referring him for psychiatric treatment. According to J.___'s own story, he often took his gun, late at night, and went out to shoot at stray dogs and cats or anything that moved. He particularly enjoyed this when he was drinking or after he had been drinking a lot.

J.___ did not care for the Alcoholics Anonymous program. He said that he was capable of handling his own drinking problem.
and could quit drinking at any time he so wished.

His wife, in spite of his indifference to herself and the children, stood by him. She knew that he went with other women. Further, she was afraid of him when he was drunk. She said there were times when she kept him from entering the house by arming herself with a shotgun. She finally divorced him as a result of a particularly violent quarrel in which he broke her arm. He was angry when he found out that their expected sixth baby was due within the next couple of days, and he said this time was inconvenient for him and he didn't know that he wanted another child anyway.

The loyal employer finally gave up on him. J.____ was presently serving a six month jail sentence because he cashed a series of bad checks and left town. He was returned to the local jail after he was located in Detroit. According to J.____:

"Maybe I'm an alcoholic. Maybe I'm not. I drink because I want to drink. I'm glad my wife's having another baby. It serves her right for all the things she's done to me and all the trouble she causes me....

"I don't need God. I can take care of my own life. So I drink too much. That's my business. I don't think there is a God anyway. What's He ever done for me? Everything I ever got, I got myself. As long as there are women with money in the world, J.____'ll get along all right. All the women go
for me. Maybe if women would leave me alone I wouldn't drink so much."

Case Six A:

D.___ came from a middle class family who apparently tried to do all they could for him and for his alcoholic problem for many years. But, according to D.___, after they had gotten him out of so many jams during his life, they finally had "washed their hands of me, and I can't count on them any more."

D.___, in his early thirties, had gone through three marriages and had bummed his way around most of the United States. He finally reached the conclusion that the only answer for him lay in Alcoholics Anonymous. He contacted a local group of A.A. where he told his story of alcoholism and said he had learned from previous experience that he needed to live by the A.A. program. He said, consequently, the first contact he made in any town to which he moved, was contact with A.A.

He became an active member of the local A.A. group. He secured a responsible, although not high paying, job in a local retail store. For three months he did not drink. During this three month period he was so good on his job as clerk and so enthusiastic about the business that the owner of the store gave him complete charge. But after this three month period, D.___ simply disappeared without notice. He left everything except the cash drawer in order when he left on Friday evening.
Two weeks later he wired friends for bus fare from somewhere in Ohio. It was sent to him, but he failed to return at that time. Later, he said that they would not allow him on the bus in his drunken condition so he resumed his drinking with the money sent.

When he finally returned about three weeks later, his employer took him back. He promised that he would not drink again and that he would return the money he had taken. He took the job back and said he was grateful for the confidence displayed in him. However, he did not get back on the A.A. program. He said he meant to at a later date but that for the present time he was afraid to quit drinking because of the physical and mental condition he knew he would face if he did not have the alcohol in his system. He drank continually and was unable to go to work on any morning without several shots of whiskey. The employer still liked D., but finally he was unable to keep him in the store. After being fired from this job, D. drank so much that he was unable to secure another job.

He was arrested several times. The last jail sentence he served was based on an indecent exposure charge. He said he remembered absolutely nothing of the whole week before his arrest. He was surprised when he found himself in jail and even more surprised at the charges placed against him.
He was sent to a hospital for psychiatric treatment. After several months, he was released. He immediately resumed drinking. He was unable to secure work and, at the last report of his whereabouts, he was said to have been located in a mission on Chicago's skid row. At various intervals D.____ blamed his alcoholic addiction on several different things:

"I know I'm an alcoholic, and I'm glad of it. Through alcoholism, I have found God. I know there is a God, and I know that as long as I turn my life and my will over to Him, He will take care of me. It's only when I take things into my own hands that my life gets messed up. A.A. is the first thing I look for when I hit a town. It's the only thing that ever got me to quit drinking. I have to associate with other alcoholics; they are the only ones that understand me. I'm happy when I'm sober....

"One time when I was in a hospital I learned to do leather work. I spent two whole months making my wife a purse. She threw it at me when I gave it to her. She wants me to come back to her, but I won't....For a while I thought my wife and I might get back together, but she still doesn't understand me so I don't want anything to do with her....I'd like to have my kids back....I've lost everything through alcohol. If my wife would just give me another chance maybe I could make it....

"I miss my kids. I'm going to try to get them away from my wife. I called her last night. I could take care of the
"Everyone really worries about me when I drink. I had my landlady and my boss real upset over me. My landlady says I'm like a son to her. She prys into my affairs too much. I know she means well, but I can live my own life. The boss says he'll fire me if I don't quit drinking. But I know he won't. It's good the way I take responsibility. I really work when I'm there. He couldn't get anyone else to take all that responsibility for the amount of money he pays—so what if I do drink too much?..."

Case Seven A:

M.____ was at one time a nurse in the alcoholic ward of a large city hospital. She said that after all she had seen of the effects of chronic alcoholism and the suffering it caused its victims, that she had never expected to find herself on the other side of the fence. Yet, at the age of thirty-five, she recognized the fact that she was powerless over alcohol and said that she knew she was too close to insanity from it to continue in her present pattern of drinking.

She had five children, the oldest of whom was eleven. Her husband, with the Corps of Engineers, had an adequate income, but she said they were always financially pressed because regardless of how much money they had, they spent it mostly on liquor. Her husband drank heavily but apparently
not compulsively. He never missed work because of the effects of alcohol nor were his usual plans disrupted through drinking.

M.___ was alone with the children most of the time as her husband worked on a government ship. She said that she never realized that one could be an alcoholic unless one drank whiskey. She drank only beer except when beer was not available. Then she would turn to almost anything else with alcoholic content. She drank from the moment she got up in the morning, at intervals all day long, until she went to bed at night. For the past year she had tried to keep the children from knowing how much she drank. Her eleven year old boy worried a great deal about her when the father was away.

She tried to quit drinking by turning to barbiturates, but the effects they had on her were frightening. She agreed with her doctor when he told her she must necessarily leave the barbiturates alone as she was allergic to them. That left her with nothing but alcohol to settle her nerves.

She made several calls to Alcoholics Anonymous. She was always in a highly excited state when these calls were made. Often, the next day, she did not remember calling. Although members of the organization went to see her as she requested, the first few contacts found her too intoxicated to help her in any way. She said she was desperate about her drinking and was terrified as to the welfare of her five children because of her own unpredictable actions.
Both she and her husband admitted that something drastic had to be done about her inability to leave alcohol alone. The alcoholism had just reached the stage in which she was beginning to get into trouble with the law. The police were called by a beauty operator when M. refused to pay her bill on the grounds that the operator had unfairly charged her a summer rate and she was a year round inhabitant and could not be so charged. She became quite violent at the police station, although a few days later she laughed about the situation and said that she never would have thought of such an excuse for not paying a bill had she been sober.

A couple of weeks after this episode, she threatened suicide and ran out to the end of the pier and defied anyone to keep her from drowning herself. Her husband called the police this time, for neither he nor the neighbors knew what to do. Finally another alcoholic was called to go out and talk with her. She said later that this act rather frightened her as she didn't know how to swim at all and undoubtedly would have drowned.

During these months of violent drinking she made long distance calls over the country. She ran up large telephone bills and had no knowledge of whom she had called. They had the telephone disconnected. She said that after that she drank even more because she was often afraid because there was
no telephone in case anything happened to her.

After several other experiences such as this, she said she felt sure she was an alcoholic. She was unable to combat the desire for alcohol although she did attend the A.A. meetings. She said that she thought eventually she would be able to make the program if she kept on attending meetings. She blamed her drinking on her husband and said that if he would not drink, she would also quit. He did quit, but she was unable to do so. She said that she did not feel that her compulsion for alcohol was due to herself, but rather to circumstances beyond her control which made it necessary for her to drink. As she expressed it:

"If I could just take something for my nerves I'd be all right. I don't want to drink. I can see what it's doing to me. I was in that hospital and saw all the suffering from alcoholism that anyone would ever need to see. I don't know what's the matter with me except that I'm not honest. I go to A.A. meetings and say I haven't had a drink. Well, everyone knows I have. But I feel guilty and don't want anyone to know it. Yet I know I can't fool another alcoholic about it....

"I always want to be able to do what I set out to do. I'm hard-headed and have a one track mind. With everything else I've always been able to do this, but no matter how many times I tell myself I'd rather be dead than take another drink,
I can't stick with it. Sometimes I'm so sick that I know I'd rather be dead. But I keep on drinking. It's insane--but I can't help it. I can't quit alone. My kids need a mother. I can't even quit drinking for them. What kind of a mother am I? ..."

Case Eight A:

G.____ worked in the office of an insurance and real estate company. Several times, at the company's expense, he was sent to hospitals for alcoholism, and twice he had tried the Keeley cure. Each time he was hospitalized, he resumed drinking immediately upon release. He said he was never actually drunk but that he nipped a little all of the time because he didn't feel well otherwise. His employer said that although G.____ never appeared to be actually drunk, he continually lost clients because he said things that he would not have said in a completely sober state.

During the year that G.____ came to A.A. meetings he said that he did not drink at all and apparently was satisfied that people believed this. He was never in a state of complete intoxication and, on the other hand, he was never completely free from the influence of alcohol. According to his employer, he continued to hide medicine bottles of rum throughout the office in order to keep his daily supply. G.____, during all of this time, complained of headaches and said he could not
understand why he did not feel well since he had given up drinking completely.

The company finally had to disperse with his services after they tried sending him for a cure for a final time and he showed no change in his drinking pattern. He was unable to secure another job. He said he worried a great deal about insanity. His conversations were not very coherent and his thinking appeared to be quite confused according to these conversations. The concept he gave of himself was:

"I've given up on everything now. The cures didn't work. It isn't my fault. I keep thinking I'll come back to A.A., but it didn't do any good for me either. I wouldn't drink if my head didn't hurt. I can't sleep unless I drink.... I wouldn't have lost my job if my boss had just shown a little understanding. I never got drunk. I never hurt anybody in my whole life but maybe myself....

"I don't want to go out and help other alcoholics. If they drink, that's their problem. I've got my own problems. Nobody ever helped me. If my boss had understood my problem I'd still have a job today, but I don't know what's going to happen to me now. I've got to do something.... It isn't fair the way no one wants to give me a chance...."

Case Nine A:

B.____ was a business executive in charge of personnel
in a large company. For years he was a social drinker. In his position as personnel manager, he suggested to many employees who had alcoholic problems that they attend A.A. When he realized his drinking was compulsive, he himself turned to Alcoholics Anonymous. He attended a few meetings and quit, for he said that he could not afford to be known as an alcoholic. He felt that his anonymity was not protected. He found six months of sobriety during this time with A.A. He then quit going to meetings and resumed his drinking.

Upon the death of one of his sons, he turned even more to alcohol. He suffered a cerebral hemorrhage and was not expected to live. When he did recover from this, he was urged not to drink. The warning apparently had little effect on him, however, as he continued to drink even more heavily. He was forced to accept a position inferior to the one he had previously held, and he said he was very unhappy in his work.

For the past two years, his drinking pattern consisted of drinking after work and on Fridays and Saturdays. He seldom drank early in the day during the week. He said that, although his religion had nothing to do with it, he did not drink on Sundays. According to his wife, he spent each Sunday terrifically ill. The day was spent as a time of wondering whether he would pull out of it and go back to work on Monday or go into convulsions as he had done a couple of times before. At these times he was rushed to the hospital. Yet he kept on with this pattern.
His major worry centered around his son. They had been close companions, but B.____ realized that his alcoholism was separating him from his teen age boy. According to B.____'s version:

"Above all, I don't want to lose the respect of my son. So far that hasn't happened, and I can't let it. I keep saying I won't take a drink. But the minute five o'clock comes, I can't help myself...."

"The reason I drink is that I don't like my job any more. There's too much pressure. I never did drink on Sunday. It isn't against my religion or anything. I just never did it no matter how much I needed a drink on Sunday morning. I've gotten so I hide bottles around the house and out in the garage now. I never used to do that. My wife doesn't understand my drinking. I just drink because I feel I have to---no reason...."

"I enjoyed the A.A. meeting I went to. Those are nice people, but I'm always too tired at night to go. The other thing is, I can't afford to let other people know about my drinking."

Case Ten A:

J.____ was in jail on a drunk and disorderly charge when he was first contacted by members of A.A. He showed great interest in the program as both he and his brother, who was also often in jail, were both fighting alcoholism. J.____ said he
was never in any trouble except when he drank. When he drank he got into fights or into quarrels with his wife. He usually wound up in jail. He accepted the A.A. program enthusiastically and worked hard at organizing a group in his own town. He and his co-partner in this venture failed to agree on many thoughts, so J.____ gave up on the venture after a week's trial.

J.____ often expressed the opinion that he felt that the world owed him a living. He said that he had lived the greater part of his life without taking much responsibility and without working. He said he had no intention of working if he could get around it. He particularly stressed the fact that since his back was injured in the war that the government owed it to him to support him and his family. At one time his wife said she had to actually steal milk for the children because J.____ had used up all their welfare and other donated income for drinking. J.____ approved of her theft of the milk, for he said the world certainly owed the baby a living. He spent a good deal of time in jail and was finally given a prison sentence. He absolutely failed to contribute any support for his family. The following requests which he made from time to time were indicative of his attitude:

"Would you mind coming by the jail and bringing me some Chesterfields? They only have Luckies here, and I don't care much for them. I have to smoke Chesterfields...."
"When I asked to borrow your station wagon, the least you could've done was put more gas in it. You knew I wasn't working. I didn't get half my stuff moved, and we have to be out of the house by noon tomorrow. If you get the tank filled for me by morning I can move the rest of my stuff....

"I've never begrudged the baby milk in my life. But I hurt my back during the war. After all, the government owes me something. I couldn't work if I wanted to. Sure, I think the world owes me a living. I went to war, didn't I? What am I getting out of it? There isn't any excuse for the things people do to me. They're even trying to get my television set away from me because I can't make the payments."

Case Eleven A:

C.____ was a housewife. She and her husband sometimes drank socially, but not to any great extent. C.____ said she did not start drinking a great deal until her two daughters were grown and she was left with too much spare time. She finally broke down physically to the extent of needing hospitalization. She went into an institution for alcoholism. After several weeks there, she came out physically sober and immediately contacted Alcoholics Anonymous. On this program she achieved complete sobriety immediately and did not touch alcohol for seven years.

After seven years she quit attending meetings and
shortly afterward resumed drinking, always by herself. It was not many months until she drank at intervals from morning until night. She never became actually drunk but was always under the influence of alcohol. Two years later, she realized that she was getting back into her previous state and would not be able to continue this pattern much longer. In her words:

"To me, this is an addiction. That is the only word for it. I can see where it's leading me, yet I can't fight it. I know this can't continue, but I can't bring myself to giving it up. I drink whiskey, always with a little water. I never drink it straight. I know better than this. Those seven years of sobriety were the happiest seven years of my entire life, I think. I wasn't always happy even then. There were worries. But it was nothing like this. I know there's no answer for me except A.A. I've got to get back on the program, but I'm just not ready yet. I can't give it up yet....

"All of us have troubles and problems whether we bring them on ourselves or not. We all need help at one time or another. I know I do. Without my faith in God, I'd have been lost. He has kept me through all my life although I often wonder why. He must have a purpose in keeping me alive, even though I drink too, too much. Maybe someday I'll know His purpose. Maybe sometime I can quit drinking again. Now I can't face the thought of a day without alcohol."
Case Twelve A:

B.____ contacted Alcoholics Anonymous late one night. She had managed to crawl, she said, for she was unable to walk, down a long flight of stairs from her apartment to a telephone booth on the street. She was found in her apartment a few minutes later. She was on the verge of DTs. She apparently had not eaten for some time, and the apartment was strewn with vodka, whiskey, and beer bottles. She was alone and had no idea where her husband could be located. A doctor was called for her; although hospitalization seemed advisable, this was not carried out. It took about three days for her to get back into any rational state.

According to her own story, which was later verified by her husband and even more substantially verified by future repetition of this pattern, this was only one of the many times that she had been in similar condition but each time she became worse. Her husband, for the past year, had determined to leave her when she started drinking.

When she was physically able to get out, she attended an A.A. meeting and determined that she was never going to drink again. She said that she had seen her brother close to death from alcoholism and had never realized that she was following the same path. She did not have a drink for several months. Her husband refused to return to her although he said he was willing to support her and was willing to give her any amount of money as long as she did not spend it for liquor. He said
that he had no sympathy for the theory that alcoholism was a disease. He was a heavy drinker himself, but alcohol never interfered in any way with his life. After several months, he did move back into the apartment with her. Since he did not hold with the theory that alcoholism was a disease, he often suggested that one drink would not hurt her if she used will power and did not drink any more.

After her six weeks of sobriety, which she said she honestly thought were the happiest six that she had ever known, she said she looked at a bottle of vodka on the shelf of a drug store and automatically bought it, rushed home in a state of near panic in order to get the drink quickly enough, and immediately drank the whole fifth. That ended her attempted sobriety, and her drinking progressed in intensity until she had again drunk herself into a serious mental state. She often suffered hallucinations during her periods of intense drinking.

At this time, B.____'s mother was very ill and was not expected to live. B.____ blamed her present drinking on this fact. She made one trip to see her mother, but her relatives disapproved of her drunkenness and did not wish her to stay. It was with great difficulty that she was located when word was received of her mother's death. She refused to go to the funeral and said she would never regret this refusal. Yet, a few months later, she attributed her drinking to this exact refusal and said that it constantly worried her because she had not gone.
She moved to a different city, contacted A.A. there, and was sober for a while as she worked with three other women alcoholics who were having trouble with their drinking. While she attempted to help these other women, she did not drink herself. Then the pattern repeated itself. According to B.:

"My family doesn't want me to associate with the drunks in A.A. They don't understand about it. They say I'm not an alcoholic--but I know I am. A.A.'s the only thing that can keep me sober. I wish my family would leave me alone...If my husband wouldn't drink, I wouldn't drink. But he can't expect me to quit if he has liquor around all the time...

"I'm always thinking of somebody else and trying to do things for other people. Everyone says if I'd just think of myself sometimes, maybe I'd be better off....

"I feel as if I owe my life to this group of A.A. If it weren't for this program, I know I'd be dead by now. It's always been the loneliness I can't stand. Life is so lonely--I'm always so terribly lonely...."

Case Thirteen A:

N. had many friends. To all outward appearances, he was a very brilliant man and a good business man. Yet, in a period of ten years or so, he had built up three successful businesses; all three had ended in failure. He admitted that he had drunk them up. When his last business attempt began to fold
under him and his wife decided to leave him, he realized that he needed help with his alcoholic problem.

He blamed his excessive drinking on the fact that he needed to drink for business and social reasons. He said no one could close a business deal without alcohol. N.'s wife said she did not know which way to turn. She did everything in her power to keep him from drinking too much. She said she could not stand by and watch him so completely destroy himself, but she did not know what to do. She realized his capabilities and she understood alcoholism as an illness. She knew he was powerless over his desire to drink once he had started. She tried to stay with him in order to keep him out of trouble. She tried drinking with him. But they had six children to whom she needed to devote most of her time. She did not know how she could take care of the six children by herself if it became necessary to leave him.

Shortly after this time, they became the parents of twin boys. With eight children to support and a business which was not doing well, N. drank more excessively than ever. He attributed this to financial problems rather than to alcohol itself. He said that he drank only beer because that didn't cost him anything. He kept it in his store. He also admitted that often he ran out of beer for his customers because he drank it all, and needed it all, for himself.
He tried Alcoholics Anonymous and came to a few meetings. He said he thought he had bigger problems to face than any of the other members who had successfully attained sobriety. After a short while he quit coming at all. He said he had talked to his priest and that his priest had advised him to regulate his drinking on the basis of drinking a bottle of beer every two hours and that his difficulties with alcohol would be over.

He lost his home and his store. He tried working for someone else. Within a few months he had worked himself up into a high paying position because of his extreme capabilities. He was in that position at the present time, and his family was happy. He was not the type of man to admit defeat easily and once said that, outside of alcohol, he could handle any situation in the world. He said he was confining his drinking mostly to week-ends. Further, he said:

"I believe in my religion. I went to a retreat last week and the priest told me I had too much on the ball to give up. He said with my mind and my background I could make it without anyone else's help. So I'm going to try to quit drinking alone. I'll make it all right this time....

"I don't know what's the matter with me. I keep telling myself I won't drink, and then everything crowds in on me. I know alcohol has been responsible for all my trouble. Whoever said alcohol was cunning and baffling was right. I can't quit drinking alone, much as I've tried...."
C.____ had a long history of trouble with alcohol. He said he started drinking as a young boy. His father was in the liquor business in Chicago. He said he lived in a rather tough neighborhood and that all of the boys there drank a lot. He did not become seriously involved in any trouble because of his drinking. He said he drank only to have a good time. He enlisted in the army and had a good service record although he encountered some difficulty with authorities because of his drinking escapades.

He said the first time he really wondered about this terrific compulsion he had developed for alcohol was while he was lying in an army hospital bed. He looked across the hall and saw the nurse's cart which carried a little tank full of alcohol for the medical instruments. He said he had an absolutely irresistible desire to drink that, so he sneaked across the hall and drank it. He was very ill from the effects and began to wonder if he could possibly be an alcoholic. According to his story, he repeated this performance at another time when he drank some cleaning fluid when nothing else was available.

When he returned home from the service, he married. Although both he and his wife enjoyed drinking, it became apparent that his compulsion for alcohol was abnormal. He made two attempts at suicide.
He tried the Alcoholics Anonymous program and spent about twelve years around it. Part of the time he drank. Part of the time he stayed on the program and stayed sober. He said that when he drank, he was miserable all of the time because of it, but he was unable to stop. When he worked the A.A. program, he did this with an equal amount of zeal and was very influential in helping other alcoholics attain sobriety. He finally spent a year and a half without touching alcohol. He said this was the happiest period of his entire life and that he had found a serenity and a peace of mind which he had not previously known was possible. He was happy in his work, and he was an inspiration to other alcoholics who wished to follow in his pathway to sobriety.

After this year and a half, he quit attending A.A. meetings in spite of the fact that he had organized a group which met every week.

It was only a few days after his first drink that he found alcohol a necessity to him again. Soon he started missing work. He and his wife were divorced. He wrecked his automobile and spent several weeks in a hospital as a result of that accident. It was thought that the injury he received might result in partial paralysis, but he recovered more fortunately than expected. A few weeks later he was taken back to the hospital, this time with a heart attack. All of these events happened in less than a year's time after he started
drinking again. He recently said that he did not believe himself to be an alcoholic. Before this time, he had said:

"As long as I ask God's help in the morning, I can stay sober for one day at a time. As for my drinking again, I'm not too sure I will be given another chance if I do. The fun went out of drinking for me a long time ago. I realize that all alcohol can ever bring me again is trouble, and I don't want anything to do with it....

"I have sobriety today. After all those years I drank, I never took time to look at myself honestly. When I did look and took a complete moral inventory, I didn't like the kind of a guy I was. I had to change myself. I couldn't change the world to suit me. I was the one that was wrong. This isn't a sissy program. Alcohol's a powerful adversary. I put A.A. before everything else--before my wife, before my job, before everything--for I know if I don't have sobriety all of those things will be lost to me too."

Case Fifteen A:

P.____ was a sixty year old woman who was often picked up by the officers and put in jail for drunkenness. She lived on a monthly pension but seldom had enough money to carry her through the month because she used most of it for wine as soon as she received it.
Because she had drunk so much and for so long, she seemed to show little chance for recovery from her addiction. At times when she was in jail, she was remorseful about her drinking and blamed it completely for the state in which she repeatedly found herself.

She had been the only child of a socially and financially prominent family. Friends who had known her when she was young said that her father lavished every luxury upon her. She started to drink when she was very young and apparently had never realized the complete deterioration through which alcohol was taking her.

When she let alcohol take over her life (according to her drinking companions, many of whom now maintain sobriety) she did nothing that checked the downward path. She spent many years in the "jungles" of the city with the winos.

Following one of her last arrests, a man and his wife felt that she could be straightened out. They took her into their own home. They bought her a complete new wardrobe and outfitted her with everything they thought would be conducive to making her want to leave wine alone. Her normal surroundings pleased her very much, and she seemed comparatively happy for a week or so. Then she started mentioning liquor. The house was not within walking distance of a tavern. But after three weeks of more and more discontent, she finally set out on foot to seek a tavern. She was not located until several days later.
By that time she was very drunk and in another town. Since that one short interval of sobriety she has resumed as a wino and stayed drunk all of the time that she could secure liquor. As she said during one of her jail sentences:

"Isn't it just awful that I do this? I know it's just the liquor that does it to me. I know it's wrong. But all my friends come around me the minute my check comes, and then we all get to drinking...I used to be pretty once. Don't I look old now?..."

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Throughout the cases studied there was defiance; there was self-pity; and there was bitterness. The practicing alcoholics blamed the world. Almost any of them would have gladly shattered that mirrored trap of the universe around them. Yet, their perceptions of themselves were more acceptable. They rationalized; they justified; and they pitied themselves and knew that if situations were different, they themselves would be different. It was not believed that these self-concepts rendered valid conclusions although they guided observation. (Additional case history is included in Appendix B.)
CHAPTER XIII

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL FACTORS AND THE X CONSTANT

Alcohol--Its Indifference and Power

All alcoholics had one major thing in common--their complete helplessness against the power of alcohol once it had really taken hold of their lives. It was found that race, sex, social or economic status, family or loner--none of these things either made an individual and alcoholic nor kept him from becoming one.

Included in this research were individuals from many walks of life--socially and economically affluent and poverty stricken, both men and women, individuals of different nationalities, those with family ties and those with none. Their common problem and their major problem, alike, was alcohol.

The skid row bum and the socialite were equally incompetent to combat the adversary alone. Many professions were represented. Priests, ministers, lawyers, doctors, school-teachers, judges, affected by the disease of alcoholism had no more power, of their own volition, to combat alcoholism than had those of less fortunate educational or professional status.
Admittedly, the former had more resources for adjustment; they usually had more adequate guidance in regard to the problem. But regardless of the outer circumstances, it was as though a magnet within the individual personality drew each alcoholic into an inescapable web.

What was this X constant that was affected neither by affluence nor by wealth, neither by intelligence nor by will power?

A booklet distributed among police personnel of the Chicago Police Department for their guidance in handling the problem of alcoholism opened with the following statement:

Don't confuse the issue by believing you have to be a bum on Skid Row or a habitual drunkard to be an alcoholic. Those places on Skid Row are just the future addresses of the alcoholics who are not wise enough to arrest their disease.27

Variables

Alcoholism, however, presented a more far reaching problem and a problem immediately affecting a greater number of people when observed in individuals in the lower socioeconomic class. Many factors entered into this.

An alcoholic would rob, beg, and, sometimes as an attribute to the fore-going, even kill in order to satisfy

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27 Pamphlet distributed by the Fellowship Club of the Chicago Police Department with the approval of Mayor Richard J. Daley and the Commissioner of Police.
his addiction. The middle or upper class individual, although he deprived himself and his family of the necessities of life in order to satisfy his demand for liquor, did not have to resort to really violent measures.

The social pressure pattern was largely responsible for many basic reaction patterns among alcoholics. As was noted in a social research study, middle class aggression was termed "initiative," or "ambition," or "progressiveness." In the lower class, this study pointed out, it more often appeared as unabashed physical attack:

The lower classes not uncommonly teach their children and adolescents to strike out with fist or knife....Husbands and wives sometimes stage pitched battles in the home, wives have their husbands arrested, and husbands try to break in or burn down their own homes when locked out. Such fights with fists or weapons....occur sooner or later in many lower class families. They may not appear today, nor tomorrow, but they will appear if the observer remains long enough to see them. 28

Such incidences predominated in the experiences of many of the alcoholics concerned in this study. When the alcoholic blacked out and did not remember his actions, he did many things that he would not consciously do. Yet, it was seldom that he deviated extremely far out of his cultural pattern. It was within the borders of this lower class group that the knife

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stabbings, bottle fights, and violent marital quarrels broke out frequently. Wives often called the police to put their husbands in jail. These men were frequent week-enders in jail while they sobered up.

Another reason that the upper class individual was not so often involved in drunken disorderliness was the fact that his family and associates endeavored to shield him as a matter of family or class pride. He was more likely to be among acquaintances who showed more concern for his protection or who showed more responsibility in keeping him out of trouble. Week-ends in jail were not an accepted custom.

Many concrete examples of these incidents were noted. To illustrate, there were some teen-agers who found their step-father drunk. They clawed deep gashes in his face with their fingernails as he lay unconscious. Then they dragged him outside and left him the snow to freeze had someone not happened to find him.

There was a man who found himself coming out of a complete blackout on a high catwalk of a construction company. It was in the middle of the night. He had no notion as to how he had gotten up there, how to get down, or even what town he was in. Yet, he still clutched a six pack of beer.

There was the man who lived in a little shack several miles from town who came home drunk and broke his wife's arm on the day before she expected their sixth baby. There were
many such incidents. All of them were found among the lower socio-economic class.

The middle class individual also, having the necessary funds available to make restitution for damages he incurred, often evaded arrest or notoriety for his drunken escapades.

Therefore, although alcohol was impartial in selection of its victims, behavior structured by the class of society in which the individual circulated—associates, family, friends, and even law enforcement agencies tended to keep the ordinarily respected member of the community out of trouble as much as possible. The lower class individual was left only with the prospect of jail sentences and inability to pay fines.

In cases of alcoholic women, this economic factor was of utmost significance. Some of these women felt that much of their trouble with alcohol was due to the fact that financially they needed help to secure liquor. They frequented taverns to obtain drinks. This led many of them into subsequent brawls, arrests, husband trouble, and other contributing factors which did not face the woman who was financially able to obtain liquor when she needed it.

Contradictorily, yet significant, was the fact that a great many of the women of the lower socio-economic group expressed favor for bar-drinking companionship. Many felt that this companionship urge was responsible, to a great degree, for their habitual drinking. The majority of the women in the
middle and upper group did their heaviest drinking in the confines of their own homes without, at least for a time, knowledge of this by the society whom they knew might pity—but would definitely condemn.

The incidents of car smash-ups and fatal or injurious accidents during alcoholic blackouts or simply poor judgment after drinking was common to both groups. Here too, the lower class individual was more subject to severe consequences. This was due partly to the fact that he did not have responsible associates to look out for individual or class welfare, and he was less able to make satisfactory financial restitution.

The widespread effect of culture and subculture on the alcoholic has received increasing recognition during the past few years. E. Rubington, of the Yale Center of Alcohol Studies, blamed the failure of dealing constructively with the chronic drunkenness offender on the fact that he was dealt with as an individual rather than as a member of a culture. He urged tracing the patterns and meaning of membership in that particular culture.²⁹

CHAPTER XIV

TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCES AND THE X CONSTANT

According to the present study, alcoholism showed the same relationship toward traumatic experiences that was found in the relationship of other behavior disorders.

In an extensive study on traumatic neurosis, it was explained that "Case histories show that major frustrations, those which produce fixated reactions, may occur at any age or any period of life. But these extreme or traumatic experiences clearly are not the only sources of maladjustment."30 It further stated that there was much evidence to support the theory that human traumatic neuroses ordinarily occurred only when predispositions were present.

This was substantiated in the case of alcoholism by the present study, for in no case did trauma make a person become an alcoholic.

Traumatic experiences led individuals toward escape from reality. Acute suffering or a life suddenly plunged into chaos was relieved by the temporary anesthetic effect

of alcohol. But this temporary dependence upon a bottle for relief did not destine an individual to alcoholism.

To the majority of persons, as soon as the sudden and acute need for escape wore away, the desire for alcohol also died away in much the same manner a candle flame burned to the end of a wick and slowly flickered out, never to flare up again. In other cases, this flame was simply extinguished at will when the undesirous effects exceeded and over-rode the anesthetic benefit derived.

Many individuals sought relief in alcohol upon the death of a loved one, some major financial crisis, physical disability, or any other form of chaos which either suddenly uprooted them or which gradually wore them down by tension. Many of them drank excessively and often dangerously for periods of weeks, months, even years. Yet they were willing and capable of giving it up when either necessity or desire demanded that they should again face reality.

Other individuals, under the same shattering circumstances, found that the compulsion, once started, was too powerful. Their drinking was a necessity, often unwillingly but always urgently, conceded to above everything else. Even with the sure knowledge that they were plunging headlong into destruction, there was no escape from this compulsion.

What was this predisposition? What was this X Constant of personality which was responsible for this powerlessness
in the face of alcoholism and inevitable self-destruction?

Childhood Experiences

Traumatic experiences of childhood, however, often haunted the alcoholic. Many alcoholics pointed to these as fore-runners or basic factors which led up to their personality problems. They felt that they drank to seek forgetfulness of early rejection, as a release from early-built guilt complexes, or as a counter measure against a defiance which had its roots in childhood.

Alcohol intensified and magnified the problem. Rather than forgetting, the alcoholic drank and, when drinking, went further back—remembering. This, the alcoholic knew; he knew it was reverse psychology. But he rationalized, and he kept on drinking. Some few recognized in this phenomena an actual enjoyment in wallowing in self-pity and thus releasing all responsibility upon the present. Others recognized only the self-pity which they had rationalized into being justifiable by reason of the hostile external world which was against them.

What quality of personality within the alcoholic would not let him relinquish these haunting, unhappy childhood memories? Why was he driven helplessly into alcoholism through them while other individuals, many with equally or even much more unfortunate childhood experiences, shook them off or simply relegated them into their proper status of significance?
Traumatic Experience Through Alcohol

Although traumatic experiences did not make an individual become an alcoholic, through alcohol he brought many traumatic experiences upon himself and those around him. Once an individual crossed over the intangible and undefinable borderline on which alcohol became a compulsion and a mental and physical necessity, he was unable to turn back. One drink was now too many, and a thousand were not enough.

There was a circular pattern. The alcoholic drank to forget grief and, while drunk, brought more grief. He then drank to forget this grief, and so on in a vicious and never-ending circle. It was what those who had arrested their disease of alcoholism referred to as "the rat race," or "the squirrel cage." It was what this study referred to as "the mirrored trap." But whatever name was utilized, there was no escape unless this pattern could be broken.

What quality of personality drove these individuals on to create more and more destruction to themselves and those around them? Love was no barrier. Alcohol, responsible for the heaping of one sorrow upon another into the life of the individual, was yet the only central point around which his life revolved. What quality of personality led alcoholics on to self-destruction and, with equal indifference, let those in whom this quality was absent, escape the tragedy of alcoholic addiction?
CHAPTER XV

RESULTS OF STUDY

This study was based on the theory that the only reality known to any individual was his own perception of himself and of the universe around him. He perceived this self and this universe as through a series of mirrors which revolved around him. These mirrored reflections were transmitted and became an integral part of that individual.

Whether these reflections were distorted or clear, whether they were comforting or frightening, whether they were kind or hostile—they were reality as he perceived it. The personality was caged within, and there was no escape from these mirrored reflections. This was the mirrored trap. The individual's interpretation of this mirrored trap was yielded through self-concept.

The self-concept studies in which one hundred members of Alcoholics Anonymous co-operated in furnishing data yielded 395 separate answers as to the primary contributing factors which had caused their own addiction to alcohol. Each individual felt that, in his own particular case, from one to four factors were evident. Yet, these 395 factors given fell into only

- 166 -
fifteen different answers. They were divided as follows:

1. Fear—in all its many forms .................. 49
2. Escape ......................................... 39
3. Defiance—usually stemmed from childhood..... 38
4. Inferiority Complex .......................... 35
5. Self-pity ....................................... 32
6. Lack of self confidence ........................ 31
7. Immaturity ...................................... 31
8. Childhood Experiences ........................ 29
9. Intolerance ..................................... 24
10. Loneliness, boredom ............................ 18
11. No complexes—simply taste and effect ....... 18
12. Depression and Elation ......................... 15
13. Egocentricity—Pride .......................... 14
14. Persecution Complex .......................... 12
15. Resentments .................................... 10

The factor which most interested the members of this organization was that of resentments, which fell into fifteenth place on the list. Resentments, as understood in this program, were deadly to the alcoholic. Much study, discussion, and personal inventory was devoted to this subject of resentment. It was believed that this factor would overshadow any other contributing causes to alcoholism that an A.A. member would note, for it was always stressed that no alcoholic could tolerate resentment without eventually drinking. As these people often said, "An alcoholic cannot afford the luxury of resentment as a normal person can." Yet, this was fifteenth on the list of contributing factors.

The explanation finally figured out for this seeming discrepancy was that resentment was a deadly enemy to the alcoholic. But it apparently was a result, rather than a cause,
and the other factors, underlying, pushed resentments into being. Resentments were basically prompted by fear and self-pity.

A great deal of writing has been done on the subject of the alcoholic and his resentments. One writer, a priest and an alcoholic himself, observed that, in his opinion, self-pity was actually nothing more than a resentment "turned inside out." He went further to say that resentment was the foundation for most of the troubles in life for all of the human race. "And, in alcoholics—it is without exception the prelude to the bottle." 

Practicing Alcoholics

The second part of this research consisted of observations made by contact with practicing alcoholics. Self-pity was the most predominant characteristic and was apparent in one hundred percent of these cases, in either greater or lesser degree. This held true whether the individuals were jail cases, hospital cases, or simply help wanted alcoholic cases.

This self-pity was not always yielded through self-concept. Most of these people saw themselves wronged by others or by God, and these were the reflections perceived by them from within their mirrored trap. There were many reasons and

31 Father John Doe (Father Pfau), Sobriety Without End (Indianapolis: SMT Publishing Company, 1957.) pg. 181.
32 Ibid., pg. 182.
excuses and theories advanced by them as the contributing causes of their alcoholism. They recognized the weakness within themselves through which they could not combat the compulsion of alcohol. But, according to their self-concepts, this compulsion was forced upon them by something or someone other than themselves. But whatever factors they perceived, these factors wrapped them in an aura of self-pity which was apparent and unquestionably obvious to the observer.

In these alcoholics contacted in jails or those who were frequently arrested for drunkenness, there were three outstanding characteristics noted. These were self-pity, defiance, and a strong persecution complex. Of those contacted who were hospital cases, the most outstanding characteristics noted were fear, escape, depression and self-pity.

These individuals refused to face facts and reality. To themselves, this was not apparent. The only reality that they knew was that which they perceived in the reflections from the mirrored trap. In these reflections they saw themselves and the universe—self-perceived and self interpreted.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feeling</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fear</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Escape Inability to face facts</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defiance</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inferiority</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-pity</td>
<td>32</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of self-confidence</td>
<td>31</td>
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<td>Immaturity</td>
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<td>Childhood experiences</td>
<td>29</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intolerance</td>
<td>24</td>
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<td>Loneliness - Boredom</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>No complexes for taste and effect</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Depression vs Elation</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ego-centricity - Pride</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persecution complex</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resentments</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Final Tabulation

The final tabulation based on this research showed that the personality qualities A, B, C, D, and E represented the five following factors most noted as contributing to alcoholism:

A. Fear
B. Escape
C. Defiance
D. Inferiority Complex
E. Self-pity

According to this research, the X Constant of personality inherent in those addicted to alcohol was a complex combination of some or all of these five factors. However, it was also apparent that no one of these factors was inherent in every alcoholic to a great extent, although all of the individuals admitted a degree of each constant.

The other important conclusion made was that, although in some cases the alcoholism was felt to be rooted in these qualities of personality, in other cases the order was reversed; these qualities found roots, or at least were magnified, and were actually the results rather than the causes of alcoholism.

For example, whereas one individual felt that an inferiority complex which stemmed from childhood led basically to his addiction to alcohol, another individual felt that an inferiority complex, in his own case, was the distinct result
of his inability to cope with alcohol. He was led, also, to a feeling of inferiority because he did not understand his own actions which resulted from his addiction.

Also, every individual who had gone far down the path of alcoholism was a bundle of fears. If the quality of fear was within the individual, alcohol magnified it. If it was not existent to a great extent, alcohol produced it.

Fear, escape, defiance, inferiority complex, and self-pity--these were the five constants of personality revealed by this research as those which contributed toward alcoholism. These were to be the components of the X Constant as perceived through self-concepts of alcoholics themselves. From within themselves, these qualities emanated; from the mirrored trap they reflected and became an integral part of the individual's personality in the form of the X Constant.
DEFIANCE

Figure 4
Personality Traits Contributing To Alcoholism

DEFEAT

ESCAPE

SELF-PITY

INFERIORITY

Complex

FEAR

I

II

III

38

32

39

49

50

51
CHAPTER XVI

ANALYSIS OF FACTORS

According to the results of this research, the $X$ Constant of personality inherent in those addicted to alcohol was a combination of the five factors: Fear, Escape, Defiance, Inferiority, and Self-pity. It was necessary to correlate and to integrate these five factors into the single $X$ Constant. To the alcoholic, the connotations understood by these qualities at times differed from the generally accepted definitions. The following analysis of the five traits was made.

Fear

Fear, as understood by the alcoholic, was not the rational and logical fear of the normal person. It was an intangible and undefinable sort of fear—a fear of many things. It was a fear rarely based on solid or explainable foundations. It was a fear formed of a complex network of the past, the present, and the future, all of which rambled around in the alcoholic's mind and imagination until it reached unbearable proportions.

It was a fear which, if the alcoholic tried to express it in concrete terms, made him appear ridiculous or on the verge
of insanity to the so-called normal person.

As an example of this, an alcoholic tried to explain his fears to a psychiatrist. He said he was deathly afraid of horses. He was terrified at the thought of standing on a high bridge or of finding himself on a mountain peak looking down.

There were no horses. There were no mountain tops. There was no occasion for his standing on a high bridge. Yet, hard as he tried, these were the only fears that he was able to conjure up out of his mind. The fear was undeniably within himself; he honestly tried to find a basis for it. Yet these incongruous fears were all he was able to put into concrete terms. The consultation took place in an eastern city. There were few horses on the city streets. The individual had never seen a mountain peak in actuality.

This man did not find sobriety or release from the compulsion of alcohol through psychiatric treatment. Years later he secured sobriety through the spiritual belief which he built up from the Twelve Steps of the Alcoholics Anonymous program. He also secured, with sobriety, release from his fears.

The psychiatrist may have been able to make a diagnosis from these specifically mentioned items. But the alcoholic knew that it was impossible to thus specify his fear into any objective category that made sense. His fears did not permit
channeling toward direct objects, and the attempt to do this led only to forced, false, and unreal decisions however sincerely they were made. It was, as alcoholics learned who had succeeded in arresting their alcoholism, a blanket fear--fear in all its many forms, irrational and deeply inherent.

This first factor of fear was born within the personality and was directed from within the individual toward the outside world. The alcoholic was afraid of himself, for himself, and of his perception of himself. Alcohol magnified and intensified this fear. One individual who had been addicted to alcohol for some twenty-five years finally reached the point that he was utterly terrified to cross a street. He could not bring himself to go out of his house. He said he kept asking himself what he was afraid of, but he had no answer. He was afraid of no concrete object or situation which he might encounter. He was afraid only of his perception of himself, and this perception of himself was all he had of reality. This particular pattern was common to many of the self-concepts of alcoholics. It was mentioned by many who had been addicted to alcohol for much shorter periods of time. This was a fear which finally resolved itself simply into fear of fear itself. The individual perceived himself as afraid--afraid of fear.
Escape

Escape, the second factor, was often considered by many authorities in the medical and psychiatric world as the chief cause of alcoholism. Yet there was considerable misunderstanding of this term as it applied to the alcoholic. This factor, also, was born within the personality and went out toward the world; it was not brought from the outside world in.

The alcoholic did not seek escape from the world as often appeared to be the case. He sought escape from himself. He did not drink to escape a problem; he did not drink to escape grief. He drank to escape himself in the face of those things because of the inevitable instability which he knew existed within him.

This was the basis of the geographical cure attempted so often. The alcoholic told himself: "If I were somewhere else and started over, I would be all right. I wouldn't drink." This geographical cure did not work. As every alcoholic who tried this later admitted, this did not work, for regardless of where he went, he could not escape himself. And self-escape was paramount.

It was in this factor of escape that the X Constant began to take shape. There was fear inherent in the alcoholic's personality. This fear of perceiving himself as he did, led him to escape from his own perception of himself, his own reality.
This was proved true in countless cases, whether the situation was a trivial matter or a shattering traumatic experience. There was the case of a brilliant young physician. He had every prospect of a fine profession ahead of him. He was considered a good doctor and was well liked and respected. Yet, within two years after receiving his medical degree, he was disbarred. He was considered a hopeless alcoholic by himself, by members of the medical profession, and by all those who knew him. He told of how, while he was yet in medical school and while he ranked academically high in class, he compulsively turned to alcohol before every exam that he took even though he knew the material thoroughly. He felt that he had to escape his own reactions, for he could not bear his own instability in case he should not meet up with his own expectations. After the abrupt ending of his brilliant career, he found himself seeking odd jobs--dishwashing, anything to pay for a bottle of cheap wine. He said he tried to panhandle but did not have the courage or the personality to make a go of it.

He saw himself thus pictured in the mirrored trap. This was the brilliant young physician--dishwasher, drunkard, a beggar who did not have the courage to beg. He could not face this reflection of the mirrored trap. He needed escape, escape from nothing else but himself. He planned his final escape when he locked himself into his cheap room, laid in as much cheap wine as he could buy, and surrendered himself to what
he felt was certain death—and escape. Here, very near death, he was found by members of Alcoholics Anonymous.

There was the case of the alcoholic who told of his complete submergence into alcohol upon the death of his wife whom he loved very dearly. He was a young man, and people pitied him. Many years later, he saw that submergence as merely the giving in to a compulsion already firmly established within him. But the loss of his wife and the pity he received, to him at that time, formed a justification for giving in to this compulsion which was over and beyond the experience itself.

Defiance

Defiance, the third factor, often stemmed from childhood. This, also, was directed from within the individual's personality toward the outer world. In this outer world, he saw himself projected amid unfortunate and unconditional hostility. One alcoholic believed he drank because he wanted to defy God; he sought retaliation against God whom he blamed for his worldly circumstances and for his perception of himself amid them.

This trait of defiance, so predominant among practicing alcoholics who found themselves in conflict with society, added another step to the building of the final Constant. These individuals built within themselves a defense with which to challenge hostility, a hostility which often was not actually there.
In their anxiety to meet a challenge and to justify themselves as they perceived themselves, they often read meaning into words which was not intended. They often perceived motives behind actions when these motives were non-existent.

There was a sameness in this quality that was found in the fear constant. If there were no reason for either of these constants to exist, a reason was manufactured. The alcoholic needed some measure of justification for himself as he perceived himself reflected by the mirrored trap.

**Inferiority**

Inferiority, the fourth factor, was named as a contributing cause of alcoholism by many individuals. There was considerable difference of opinion as to whether the inferiority complex was the result or the cause of the alcoholic problem. Some individuals stated that the inferiority complex definitely preceded the addiction to alcohol; others felt that the complex arose because of the inability which they faced when they tried to cope with alcohol. In either case, the quality was found to be present although its origin apparently differed within different personalities.

The alcoholic often expressed his feeling of inferiority through defiance as he attempted to secure balance; he often sought to obliterate the feeling of inferiority through escape
from himself by means of alcohol. He also sought, through
defiance, to shield himself from fear.

Inferiority itself stemmed from fear. The individual feared his own reactions which were so highly unstable and unpredictable even to himself. The smallest decision became a monumental experience. He was afraid of being wrong. When he was actually wrong, he could not bear this perception of himself. When he felt there was a chance that he would be wrong, he could not take the chance of his unpredictability in case he failed. Many alcoholics felt that they were perfectionists and, obviously falling far short of perfection, they were unable to face themselves. They were unable to face these reflections from the mirrored trap which showed both themselves and the universe as far from perfect.

Self-pity

Self-pity, the fifth factor, contained elements of the fore-going in each case. Self-pity was the subject of much discussion among members of Alcoholics Anonymous. It was the only one of these five factors which was believed to stem from the outside world and make its way into the personality instead of, as was true of the other qualities, stem from within the individual.

All practicing alcoholics who called for help with their drinking problem were, without exception, immersed in self-pity. It was a quality which stayed strongly with an
alcoholic during the first period of sobriety. It accounted for many a relapse into alcoholism after an individual had made a glowing start on the A.A. program. Yet, when an individual succeeded in arresting his illness of alcoholism, this was the first quality that he began to lose.

He learned to accept the things he could not change rather than feel sorry for himself because of those things. He learned to make a courageous effort to change those things he could. Most of all, he learned that it was himself alone that he could change; he could not change others. Self-pity, when it hit the barrier of sobriety, merged into a quality of acceptance.

The practicing alcoholic was often insulted by the suggestion that he was filled with self-pity. His usual reaction was: "If they would let me alone...if they would do this." For in the mirrored trap in which he found himself, they were responsible for the unfortunate images which were reflected.

The alcoholics who had returned to sobriety were able to perceive these reflections in a truer light. They were able to see themselves as self-pitying creatures with whom they themselves had no sympathy. They realized that the only way that these reflections were to be changed lay in the changing of themselves. They had to either change themselves or, again, escape themselves. The reflections had to be acceptable to themselves. Otherwise, they knew they would drink.
CHAPTER XVII

THE X CONSTANT DEFINED

These five qualities, Fear, Escape, Defiance, Inferiority, and Self-pity built up into one personality constant of which each was a part. The final definition of the X Constant, as based on this research, was Self-energizing Instability.

This inherent quality was revealed as the basic factor of personality which led to alcoholic addiction. It was the basis of emotional instability which most alcoholics possessed to an extreme degree. It was the basis of emotional immaturity.

The life of every human being was a series of challenges and decisions. But the so-called normal person reacted to these challenges and made these decisions, whether they were large or small in nature, with some degree of habit characteristic to his personality. There was some predictability possible, at least to himself, as to how he was likely to respond to circumstances or situations.

There was never this assurance to the alcoholic. Because this Self-energizing Instability was the basic foundation of his personality, he had no means of predicting, gauging, or planning his own reactions, in regard either to himself or to the world. It was as though he had always in his hand a Roman
Candle, and he had no way of knowing when that candle would explode or which direction it would take.

Faced with a challenge at one moment, the alcoholic could, and would, tackle it successfully with superior confidence and with little effort. Faced with that same challenge at another moment, (nothing had changed, but he had changed) that challenge appeared so monumental to him that he could not face it in any way whatsoever. He never knew what to expect of himself. With utter self-confidence he sometimes conquered the seemingly impossible; and with an attitude of just as utter self-defeat, he was sometimes unable and unwilling to tackle the simplest problem.

This Self-energizing Instability accounted for the fear, for the escape from self, for the feeling of inferiority, for the necessity for defiance, and for the self-pity. It was basic to all of the other qualities of personality which alcoholics felt contributed to their alcoholism. The magnitude that the making of a simple decision often assumed, stemmed from this Self-energizing Instability.

It was believed that this was the primary reason for the success of the Alcoholics Anonymous program in so many cases. Once the individual came to believe that he could turn his will and his life over to the care and direction of a Power greater than himself, the necessity of knowing what he would do under different circumstances was no longer of
paramount importance. He surrendered his own will. Along with this, he surrendered the need of knowing how he might react. He no longer needed justification for his own unpredictable reactions. He learned to accept himself, accept the world, and refuse to question. The Self-energizing Instability was still there. He accepted it.

It was recognized by all individuals who arrested their illness of alcoholism, that once the borderline was crossed and drinking became compulsive, there was no turning back. As they agreed--once an alcoholic, always an alcoholic. But they could attain and maintain sobriety so long as they did not touch the first drink and thus set the compulsion in motion.

The Self-energizing Instability was inherent in each such personality. It would always be present. But when the desire for alcohol was conquered, this Self-energizing Instability was also accepted on the same basis that life itself was accepted--by living one day at a time and relying with dynamic faith upon a Higher Power to take care of that twenty-four hours.
CHAPTER XVIII

SUMMARY

This research was made with a view to determining the possibility that there was a certain quality of personality inherent in all alcoholics and to identify the nature of this quality. Since this particular quality was yet unknown, it was assumed that it was made up of certain other personality traits which were referred to as A, B, C, D, and E. It was necessary to determine the qualities represented by these five attributes in order to build the composite quality which was being sought. This final quality of personality was referred to in this study as the $X$ Constant.

It was believed that this $X$ Constant might be shown to be the determinant of personality which led a person into alcoholic addiction.

One hundred members of Alcoholics Anonymous were interviewed, and they furnished self-concepts of the personality traits which they felt to be of vital importance in contributing to their own alcoholism. Fifty practicing alcoholics were interviewed—all of these were jail cases, hospital cases, or simply cases of individuals who asked for help with their drinking problem.
Personal contact and interview was the method used for obtaining the self-concepts. Case histories were made, and observations of characteristic personality traits were recorded. Some of these case histories were included within this study.

A broad study was also made of general factors which affected the alcoholic patterns of individuals. This study included the economic and social factors, the effect of traumatic experiences, and patterns of arrested alcoholism through statistics made on a small group of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Results

The results of this study showed that in the cases of one hundred members of A.A. who were included in the study, and with the total of 395 answers to the question, only fifteen definite characteristics were felt to be contributing causes to alcoholism. The five factors which received the highest rating and thus were taken to represent the personality qualities A, B, C, D, and E were these:

A. Fear...........named by 49 alcoholics
B. Escape......... " " 39 "
C. Defiance........ " " 38 "
D. Inferiority.... " " 35 "
E. Self-pity...... " " 32 "

The other ten characteristics noted, in order of their frequency were: lack of self-confidence, immaturity, childhood
experiences, intolerance, loneliness and boredom, no complexes but liked the taste and effect, depression and elation, egocentricity and pride, persecution complex, and resentments.

In the study of the fifty practicing alcoholics who still coped with the problem, the characteristics noted by observation and reaction attitudes were:

A. Self-pity (The alcoholic who called for help with his drinking problem)

B. Self-pity (Alcoholics in jail or who were frequently arrested for drunkenness)
   Defiance
   Persecution Complex

C. Fear (Those alcoholics for whom hospitalization was, or had been, necessary)
   Escape
   Depression
   Self-pity

Identification

These five qualities of personality were analyzed in the connotative meaning given to them by alcoholics. It was shown that, due to the curious nature of the illness of alcoholism, it was particularly difficult to distinguish between the causes of alcoholism and the effects of alcoholism. These were closely interwoven. Whereas one alcoholic attributed his alcoholism to a definite personality trait, another alcoholic acknowledged that trait but believed it to be, in his own case, an effect rather than a cause, of his addiction.

The $X$ Constant, built of these five components, was finally defined as Self-energizing Instability. The Self-energizing Instability was believed to be inherent in the personality of all individuals who were alcoholics. It was
apparent in the most trivial matters which came up in the lives of these individuals. It accounted for their terrific inability to make and trust their own decisions. It was equally apparent when these individuals were faced with traumatic and shattering experiences which came into their lives. They were never able to predict their own reactions when they were challenged by sorrow or adversity. And they met success with as much unpredictability as they met failure.

The success of the Alcoholics Anonymous program in so great a percentage of cases was shown to be based upon a recognition of the fact that the alcoholic had to accept himself. When he was able to accept himself and his own Self-energizing Instability, when he was able to surrender his own will over to a Power greater than himself, he no longer needed to feel responsible for this Self-energizing Instability. He accepted it. Only in this way was it possible to obtain release from the compulsion for alcohol.

It was believed that, as shown by this research which was conducted wholly among alcoholics themselves, the chief factor of personality which contributed to alcoholism and was inherent in the personality of every alcoholic was the quality of extreme Self-energizing Instability.
Perhaps alcoholism, like poverty, famine, and war will exist as long as the human race exists. Certainly, there was never a time in the history of mankind that any one of these four was totally absent from the scene.

Civilization has done much to alleviate the recognized evils of poverty and famine. And war, in spite of bringing inevitable tragedy and death, has always been directed toward the fulfillment of some dream.

Alcoholism differs from these other destructive forces in that alcohol itself is not harmful. In many cases, it is used for the good of mankind. It is believed that only three out of every hundred people who drink become addicted to alcohol. It is estimated that the life of each alcoholic touches on, or affects, the lives of forty other people. Yet even this is a small percentage of the total population.

Today, the destructive force of chronic alcoholism is recognized by many, although understanding of this force lags far behind this awakened interest. It is particularly difficult to understand the alcoholic, for it is only in recent years that the alcoholic has had any chance of understanding himself.
As bits of knowledge from the alcoholics' combined understandings of themselves are pieced together, a pattern of knowledge emerges. Each additional pattern that is brought to light by research may be woven into a whole which may eventually become strong enough to overshadow the web of alcoholism. Danger signals may be found and recognized; this recognition may serve to check the ever increasing surge of alcoholic addiction. This alcoholic addiction is not an overnight step; it is a long road, and many detours may be taken en route if the danger signals are known and heeded.

This study revealed Fear, Escape, Defiance, Inferiority, and Self-pity as five components of personality which entered into the Constant, Self-energizing Instability. To some individuals, these represented the cause of alcoholism. To others, they represented the effects. But these two elements were as closely interwoven as Self-energizing Instability and alcoholism were interwoven. In one hundred per cent of the cases studied here, the two elements were present.

There has been proof, as the alcoholic grew to understand himself and the nature of his addiction, that the illness of alcoholism could be arrested. This having been established, the next step would be to find a way of prevention before the hold had been taken.

At the top of the scale, happiness went hand in hand with the effervescent cocktail or the sparkle of champagne. But at the bottom of the scale, only the outstretched hands
of insanity and death awaited the individual who followed the path of addiction.

Every minute bit of knowledge concerning alcoholism is of importance. These bits of knowledge may erect a barrier of understanding strong enough to halt, or to discourage, those individuals who unwillingly travel this road of self-destruction. They need help; they cannot turn back alone. Yet, is it not possible that enough danger signals may be discovered and erected to keep newcomers from trespassing into the alcoholic world?

Self-energizing Instability has been shown by this study to be the personality constant which inevitably accompanied alcoholism. In what way can this danger signal best be put to practical use? There is great potential for further research on this combination.

The world of alcoholism is the midnight world. There are many entrances and few exits. Many who enter into it are never again able to return to the world of sanity and sobriety. Much thought has been directed at the opening of the exits of the alcoholic world so that those imprisoned therein might escape. Just as vitally important, for the good of mankind, is the barring of the entrances so that fewer individuals will find themselves involuntarily drawn within.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books


**Pamphlets**


Pamphlet distributed by the Fellowship Club of the Chicago Police Department with the approval of Mayor Richard J. Daly and the Commissioner of Police. Entitled: "To Police Personnel--For Your Guidance in the Handling of The Problem of Alcohol." (non-dated).
APPENDIXES
APPENDIX A

The following case histories in abbreviated form are a continuation of those which were made with members of Alcoholics Anonymous and presented in this study, Chapter Nine:

Case Thirty-one: (Male, railroad employee)

H.____: "I think that the most important thing that happens to an alcoholic when he finds sobriety is that he finds creativity somewhere within himself. I like to paint, but I never knew it until I started looking around me. I couldn't do this through the bottom of a bottle....I've made quite a study on the factor of fear, because I think that fear has a lot to do with the making of an alcoholic. I used to be afraid of everything--now all that fear is gone. Of course I still have a normal type of fear, but that old inexplicable fear is gone. I know that today I can do everything, within reason, that normal people can do--except, I can't touch alcohol. I've learned to make decisions. I've learned that once a decision is made, to stick to it. I used to wonder what I would do with my spare time if I ever quit drinking. But today, and ever since I attained sobriety, I've found that there is never enough time to do all of the things that interest me. I try to find time to paint, for I think all alcoholics particularly need creative expression."

Case Thirty-two: (Male, schoolteacher)

B.____: "I think my trouble started in childhood. We lived in a tough city neighborhood, and my mother used to dress me up in Little Lord Fauntleroy clothes. I used to make my way to school in these amid the jeers of the big boys. I was timid and afraid and a cry baby. But I wasn't little for my age, and after a few years I did a complete turn-about in the other direction. I got tired of the jeers, and once I found out I could take care of myself, I went all the way in that direction. I picked fights. I think alcoholics are like that. We're never satisfied with doing anything half way. So I went from an over-abundance of timidity to an over-abundance of aggressiveness. I never had a drink of alcohol, however, until I was twenty-one
years of age. Immediately, I went in for an over-abundance of alcohol. I could never do anything in moderation. I drank alcohol; I read about alcohol; and during my college days, I wrote term papers on alcohol. When I could quit drinking in no other way, I turned to psychiatrists. In this same manner of over-abundance, I was not satisfied with one. I went to several of the best ones I could find or hear about. One of them suggested to me that I might be an alcoholic. That made me furious. I would be anything—but not an alcoholic. It took me a good many more years to find this out for myself.

Case Thirty-three: (Male)

B. ___: "I drank all my life as far back as I can remember. When I was a little kid about seven years old I used to stand outside the saloons and wait for my dad to come out. Then I would try not to let him see me and I would follow him home. I was always afraid. I was afraid of the dark, and I loved my dad more than anything or anyone in the world. He was all I had. He was always drunk....I've seen almost all of my relatives die violently as a result of being drunk. I've looked into the caskets at their funerals and wonder if I would go that way too. Yet, I was never sober at one of those funerals. I came to the point where I couldn't drink and quit; I kept blacking out, but I kept drinking. Jail was where I usually wound up. I lost my driver's license for eight years.... I hated everyone in Alcoholics Anonymous when I first came. But now I haven't had a drink for almost two years. I don't even like to say that, because I've heard people say that and then be drunk the next day. I don't want to be....I never knew how to pray before. I don't know much about it now, but I try. There is too much that is bad in my life to think about, but I keep going back—I keep thinking of the past. I've found sobriety by living a day at a time, by not drinking a day at a time—but I've never lost the bitterness. For me, to drink is to die. To me, the A.A. way of life is the most important thing in the world. Without sobriety, I have nothing. Every time I see a drunk stagger down the street I know that but for the grace of God, there go I. I owe my life to this way of life and my sanity that I have today to A.A."

Case Thirty-four: (Male)

T. ___: "I never could question the sanity part of this program, for I was certainly insane when I drank. I used
to have an insane urge to pull fire alarms when I got drunk. They would throw me in jail for it. But every time I got drunk I'd do it again. The funny thing is, I didn't have a drink for over a year and a half. I was comparatively happy for that period of time. Then I started drinking again and the same thing happened. I started getting thrown in jail about the fire alarms. I know drinking is a disease and I know it's progressive. The last time I drank I smashed up my car and didn't even remember being out in it. That's never happened to me before, and I've been drinking since I was twelve years old. I think defiance has a lot to do with my trouble with alcohol. My older brother always could make friends, and I couldn't. I think I got defiant trying to be as good as he was at things."

Case Thirty-five: (Male)

P.____: "I grew up delinquent all the way. My family gave me up. A judge once told me that society would be better off without me and that he would put me behind bars for life if there were any way to do so. As it was, all he could do was to send me to the penitentiary—which he did. Today, that judge and I are good friends. I like to work with the fellows in the penitentiary who are interested in A.A. Recently, I've been working with a youth movement on the alcohol problem. I'll tell you one thing about these kids I'm working with—ninety-nine percent of the cases, these tough kids would be all right if they could be taken away from their parents. Someone said the other day that I was doing a lot of good with these young people. Well, I'm not doing anything. God and A.A. are responsible. These kids are really tough. I do know that most of them could be straightened out if they were put in foster homes. But where their home life is so bad, their chances aren't good. There are a lot of potential alcoholics in this delinquent population."

Case Thirty-six: (Male)

D.____: "Maybe it was easier for me to give up alcohol than for some people because, according to the doctor, he was about to give me up. I was slated for the clinic but then I decided to try Alcoholics Anonymous first. It worked. I haven't touched alcohol since I started on the program. I have a seventeen year old boy who drinks all the time. He's been in a lot of trouble and spent a lot of time in jail already."
But we can't talk about it. Maybe he'll have to learn the same hard way I did. I won't let him bring beer and liquor in the house. That's all I can do."

Case Thirty-seven: (Male)

H.____: "I took a long time to get into Alcoholics Anonymous. Yet I'd been desperate about my drinking for a long time. The reason it took me so long was that I thought 'They won't accept me. The minute they find out who I am, they just won't accept me.' I've always been a pretty gregarious character and I liked the companionship I found in the taverns. But the taverns got so they didn't want me. And they were the only places I felt at home. I was always pretty much of an extrovert, but I think it took alcohol to make me one, because I was always pretty much afraid of not being accepted too...I wouldn't give anything for my sobriety today. I still talk too much, but I'd rather be a sober talkative guy than a drunk one. And I only feel at home now around other alcoholics. I didn't know before there were characters like me--but I've found there are."

Case Thirty-eight: (Male)

S.____: "When Jack Alexander's article came out on alcoholism, I was spending a year in an insane asylum for alcoholism. One of the attendants knew my problem and brought me the article to read. I read it, and for the first time in my life, I thought I'd found something about this alcohol problem that made sense. I thought 'I think I could talk to another alcoholic.' And I decided to try it when I got out. I still had a good many more months in the institution before I got the chance. When I got out of that hospital I was pretty determined not to drink. But the good doctor there had told me that when he got a little tense or upset he just kept a bottle of beer in the refrigerator to calm him down. He told me to do that--just the one bottle. That was all I would need. For even at that time, not much was known about alcohol and the fact had not been established that even one drink was too much for an alcoholic...I didn't have a drink for two weeks after my release. Then I stood at the beer barrel and watched the fellows drink. All I could think about was what the good doctor had said--one beer. So I stood there and had eighteen. I was not sober for quite a long time after that initial drink.
But the turning point in my life was when I found the Alcoholics Anonymous program. It has been over twelve years now since I've touched alcohol. There are many qualities of sobriety, and these qualities keep building with time. Some of the times I think of my wasted years in a mire of alcoholism. But most of the time I am thankful for the happiness of the sober years. I even notice that the trees have leaves; I can enjoy good companionship; I love good food. I didn't even know there were such things in my drinking days. But above all--I find serenity and happiness in my faith in God."
APPENDIX B

It was believed that the material contained in Appendix B would offer more insight and provide more information on the problem studied than would additional case histories of practicing alcoholics.

The first part of this section contains the recent self-concept offered by H.____, Case One A, page 120. This story was given as follows:

"I've always thought that things that happened to me when I was small had a lot to do with my alcoholism. I was born with a crippled left leg and they tell me I didn't learn to walk until I was four years old or so. Of course I don't remember all these things, but my parents have told me. They said I was quite sick my first five or six years and at several times the doctors gave up hope of saving my life. I've always carried these things my mother told me in my mind. Somehow they don't go away. I never forget them.

They told me that when the Lindbergh baby was kidnapped, the report somehow was spread around that I was that baby. The authorities took me away from my parents for a while until they could prove I wasn't. Dr.____, here in town used to always call me Lindy. He was a good friend of mine, but he never quit calling me Lindy because of that deal.

I drank as far back as I can remember. Mother didn't drink, but Dad did--all the time. He could never see any harm
in giving a little kid wine and beer. He used to think it was funny when I staggered around and sometimes fell down. I always had access to liquor and I always intended to drink as much as I could get hold of. My intentions were always to get drunk.

When I was seven years old I was stealing drinks. By the time I was nine or ten, I had found a source for booze. There was always wine. My first trouble as a result of drinking was when I was ten years old and pulled an armed robbery on the street. A friend of mine and I had been drinking, and we had found the gun in his parents' dresser drawer. We thought it would be fun to do some big time hold-ups.

In February of '41, I was sent to the reform school. I wouldn't have been there so long except for the fact that I made several escapes. Once they caught me in Chicago, once in Indiana, and once in Michigan. I didn't get out until September of '45.

While I was in reform school I underwent a complete personality change. I was a quiet, timid little kid, and I used to let them bat me around. Finally I started feeling bad about being kicked around from pillar to post by everyone from the supervisors down. I remember how I used to say to myself 'I'm not going to let anyone push me around when I get out of here'. This became an obsession with me. I meant to push right back. I was mostly on the defensive around other people.
I started my serious drinking after getting out of the reform school, but I managed to stay pretty well out of trouble. At least I stayed out of serious trouble until I was sixteen. Then I got into trouble with a girl and was given the choice of marrying her or going into the service. I took the service. There I had pretty good access to liquor and went through a lot of drinking stages.

At first, I think I drank to feel older, or at least to make people think I was older. When I was eighteen, I started drinking at the NCO Club. I was an exhibition drinker there. I ordered it by the pitcher instead of by the glass and I'd drink the whole thing down without taking a breath. I always tried to get to the NCO Club between 5:30 and 6:30 when there were the most people there to see me show off. It sounds pretty silly now—but all that I wanted was attention—and I got it. I'd get violently sick on the stuff. But the attention was what I wanted so I figured it was worth it. I got into trouble drinking too much too often. My first four and a half years in the service went along without too much trouble although all my leaves were invariably spent in jails for drunkenness.

The first time anyone took much note about my drinking problem, outside of throwing me in jail, was one day when the commanding officer told me he wouldn't recognize me if I ever came in without a hangover. But I never did.
When I was on guard duty overseas, I always equipped myself with my thermos which held a fifth of wine. Then I switched to coffee royales so they wouldn't be so likely to catch me. I had my share of the off brands—torpedo juice, cleaning fluid, lemon extract and saki. I'd sent a lot of money home. When I came home on leave I got drunk and stayed until my money ran out and then didn't go back for thirty or forty days. I spent three months in the stockade for this. That was where I learned to get drunk on gasoline by putting a blanket over my head and inhaling gasoline fumes. It at least makes you light and giddy, and it also makes you sick. But it was the best I could do at the time.

My first experience with skid row was in Denver. Then there was Los Angeles. I used to always think I wouldn't go near Main Street when I got to Los Angeles. But the minute I'd get to town, I'd hit for the sleazy bars and no good people. I had some more experience in the stockade for being AWOL and spent most of six months' time in the black box punishment cell. I was finally discharged with a bad conduct discharge from the guardhouse. After a long drunk, I got a job.

I became a week-end drinker so I could get to work. For two years and two months, I didn't miss a day's work and was never late on the job. Then I quit the job to drink. When I quit this job there wasn't any future. I'd quit voluntarily. Actually, when I went in and told the foreman I was quitting it surprised me even more than it did him. But having made the
statement, I wouldn't retract it. The foreman offered me a raise and a promotion. But I'd said I was quitting, so I did.

Then I really started bouncing in and out of jails. I used to roll people when they were drunk. We counted up my cards in this jail from 1946 and found ninety arrests for just here alone besides a lot of overnight stays. I was in jails in California, Michigan, New Mexico, Colorado—almost everywhere I've ever been and I've been around a lot. Being in jail didn't always keep me sober. I've gotten pretty drunk in some of the jails too.

When I went to the state hospital last year I sort of got off on the wrong foot. I was a week late getting there because I got drunk on the way. I went there voluntarily, but it was because I had to.

I'd spent thirty-four days in the alcoholic clinic and the counselor didn't want to release me. I had to go to the state hospital on voluntary commitment with a promise to stay six months. I only stayed three months. I got off on the wrong foot there in another way because the first morning I was there I saw some alcohol in instrument trays and drank it. It made me pretty sick.

Their intentions were good at the clinic and at the hospital, but I don't think their chances of making anyone sober up are very good. At least, the clinic was a hundred per cent for alcoholics.
The first time I was at the clinic they asked me a lot of questions. Then they wrote down my answers and sent them to the probation officers, so I didn't trust them after that.

Coming into A.A. was the best thing that ever happened to me. I was never in trouble unless I was drinking. A.A. was the first place I ever felt people understood me at all. Other people always said I was different. They'd wonder why I'd walk miles for a drink. Blackouts always mystified me. I don't get falling down drunk. I can make people think I'm sober.

I'm in here now for six months on parole violations. I went to the mental health clinic but I thought the people there were crazier than I was. The only thing they knew about me was what I told them. And I told them whatever I chose. They didn't help me any. They said it would be best for me to quit drinking because with my temperament and with alcohol it might be quite possible that I would commit murder when I was drunk sometime. They told me that at the alcoholic clinic too.

It bothers me sometimes about all the people I've beaten up. It really does. I can't believe people who say they lose the desire to drink. The religious angle is a hard pill for me to swallow.

I haven't had a drink since I started on this jail
sentence. That was January fifteenth. That's the longest I can ever remember not having a drink. I worry about what I'll do when I get out. Sometimes my desire to stop drinking is the most important thing in my life. The next day I revise my plans.

It's a funny thing about religion. I used to think I wanted to be a priest. I'm almost completely divorced from religion of any kind now. I've gotten bull headed about it.

I can't think of any reason to drink except the urge. Once I get to feeling that urge, I'm going to drink. I used to blame a lot of things—like missing my kids or my wife or something like that. They're all excuses—it's just the urge I can't combat.

The judge told me it would be the state hospital or the prison for me next time. I don't see why I can't make a useful citizen either. That's what he asked me—why didn't I? He said I was considered a menace to myself and to others and that I'd have to straighten out or they'd have to do something with me.

I wonder if there's a chance.....

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The second part of this Appendix presents an artist's conception of the mirrored trap and the alcoholic's dilemma. Within the mirrored trap he saw aspiration, and he saw defeat; he saw high ideals, and he saw disillusionment; he saw insanity facing him, and he saw death. He was not in search of recognition for he said he did not care whether his picture carried his signature or not--his name was signed on one of the tombstones and dated 1971. He said he would give himself ten years. He was not in search of sobriety, for he said that he intended to continue drinking.

The paintings which he made while he was serving a six months jail sentence attracted a good deal of attention. A one man show was arranged for him so that his paintings could be displayed. Immediately upon his release from jail he put his paintings into safe keeping so that he would not dispose of them before the show was held. He then started drinking. He said he felt that if he gave up alcohol, his creativity might be taken from him. In his own words:

"I would like to explain my stand on self degeneration. It is my contention that for any endeavor, good or evil, normal or abnormal, we construct our own cage. Once committed and the first step taken, we very carefully lay the foundation for a building that will imprison us for life, never once realizing that we are building our own prison with a full
life time sentence....

"I said, 'I will continue to drink.' What a sneaky way to rationalize weakness! Yet I feel that there is, and must be, destructiveness of talent before creativity can be effective to its highest degree. The greater the talent, the greater the self destruction....

"I have arrived at that phase in my life where one more bridge is to be crossed. It may be a make-shift, jury-rigged affair but effective for the purpose in mind. My purpose?--To look into the eye of this demon that gnaws incessantly beneath my psychic life and which gives rise to this unholy desire to communicate the images reflected there. For this, I must move outside of the insipid order of accepted things. To reach that stage I must get intoxicated to a degree that borders on the divine and the idiotic. In short, I must drink--I must drink, and nothing can deter me."
FIGURE 5 - An Artist's Conception of the Mirrored Twin