

1939 AA Big Book Study

Opening Readings

TITLE PAGE (Third page in from the cover with writing) Read the sentence, then read below:

“The story of how many thousands of men and woman have recovered from alcoholism”

These are the dictionary definitions for some of those words:

The = A, one, unique

Story = Factual accounts

How= action word, meaning “The actions taken”

Recovered= To be returned to a normal state of health after an illness

Alcoholism= Described by the authors as “a seemingly hopeless state of mind and body”

SUMMARY- Alcoholics Anonymous is defined by the authors as “One unique factual account of the actions taken by many thousands of men and woman and as a result of taking those actions they all state that they have been returned to a normal state of health after suffering from a seemingly hopeless state of mind and body”

PREFACE (Pg. xi - Second paragraph) Read the paragraph, then read below

There are three main points in this paragraph that tells us more about this book and why we are studying it:

1-This book is the basic text, it is a textbook which is meant to study, learn and take action from what we learn. What are we going to learn? How the authors recovered, so we may be able to take the precise same actions and recover ourselves.

2- The first portion of the book is where we will find the description of the AA program, that is the first 196 pages, 32 in the roman and 164 in the Arabic numbers. That is what we will be studying today in detail.

3- There has been strong sediment against any radical changes made to this book in the 3 opportunities they have had to make changes as we are now in the 4th edition printed in 2001.

Why have they not made any radical changes? Because it still works the same today as it did in the first edition printed in 1939

FORWARD TO FIRST EDITION (Pg.xiii - First paragraph) Read the paragraph, then read below:

There are 6 declarative statements made by the authors in this paragraph:

Sentence 1- The authors are more than 100 men and woman who have recovered from a seemingly hopeless state of mind and body

Sentence 2- The main purpose of the authors writing this book is to show us “precisely” how they recovered

Sentence 3- “No further authentication is necessary”, meaning- we don’t need any other books to learn how they recovered.

Sentence 4-This book is an account of the authors’ collective “experience”. AA is always presented as - ”This is what we were like, this is what we did and this is what we are like now and If you are interested in having what we have, we will be happy to show what we did to get it”. We never tell anyone what they must do in AA.

Sentence 5- Many do not comprehend that the alcoholic is a very “sick” person. Alcoholism is always described in this book as an illness, never as a disease. An illness is defined as “a condition that prevents the normal functioning of the mind and/or body. As a reminder, the authors stated that they suffered from a seemingly hopeless state “of mind and body”.

Sentence 6- “Our way of living has its advantages for ALL” – ALL means everyone, which is why this meeting is open to anyone and everyone interested in a spiritual way of living.