

So Changed a Life

The author's story, "Fear of Fear," appears on page 330 of the revised edition of Alcoholics Anonymous, published in 1955.

Now, after these happy years, what do we have?

We still, thank God, have each other.

AA has taught us to be grateful. That sounds trite, but gratitude is the one thing neither one of us knew before AA.

Our families can trust us again. As for our friends, most of them, with the exception of our church friends, are in our Fellowship. And what friends!

Physically, we are in better shape (and I do mean shape) than when we came in—two shaky, befuddled people.

My life has completely changed. George found it tough going financially for quite a while, so my gals in AA asked me why I did not find myself a job. For years, I had been a housewife, with absolutely no knowledge of office work. One of our AA gals got me a start in one of the very swanky advertising agencies, as a receptionist. Not much was required of me, but to be

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a receptionist at my age was something. It was fun, not much money and not much work, but fun.

Through the advertising-agency work, I gained enough confidence to look for a job that would mean more responsibility and thus a better salary. I came to my present job and have been here for almost eight years, getting advancements each year. After I had been here a few months, George also got started again in his profession.

Working has been quite an experience for me. I had always done volunteer work at my children's schools, our church, and our AA Intergroup office; but getting along with people who were my bosses and were paying me good money was a new and, for me, a frightening thing. My AA principles had to be applied not just one day at a time, but every minute of each hour.

The politics of an office were strange to me. I have always been honest in all my dealings, even while drinking, but this office hanky-

panky was new. The thing that really concerned me was the fact that the people did not believe me at all times. When I called to say I was sick, I really was sick. The other gals sort of snickered at me when I said, "I do not tell lies." I do love my workaday life, and I know if I had tried it about nineteen years ago, I would not have had the serenity to take it as I do now.

Friends ask us why we continue to go to meetings, do Twelfth Step work, and speak at other groups. They ask, "Isn't eighteen years enough time to prove you have the alcoholic problem licked?" My answer is always the same: that I love my AA. It is the one fellowship that has given us our lives, freedom, and happiness. We are not reformed drunks—but informed alcoholics.

I know to whom I owe my gratitude: my fellow members of AA. I hope I shall never forget to be grateful. *C.F., Manhattan, N.Y.*



WHAT a change in our lives since that day eighteen years ago when George and I came into AA! We were two spiritually, mentally, and physically beaten people. Our children were ashamed of us; our family did not want any part of us. Our drinking friends (the only ones we had) were almost as far gone as we were, so we were two lost lambs—more like goats, I would say. We were afraid of asking anyone for help (if we even knew we needed help), fed up with each other, ready to call the whole thing off, without the strength to know where to look for help.