

This is a good example of what happens here in this action program called AA:

When you hit a bottom with alcoholism it feels like you are dying. It's very much like being shipwrecked at sea, and you're out in the middle of the ocean all alone, thousands of miles from land. You're treading water and you're going to die and you know it and you're hanging on as hard as you can and it's a losing battle. You're getting tired and all of a sudden you see coming across the water towards you two goofy looking guys in this invisible boat. As a matter of fact you don't even understand how they are sitting on top of the water, there is nothing there, they're just kinda on top of the water coming toward you. They come up to you and they say, "My name is Bill and my name is Bob, we're from Alcoholics Anonymous, we have God and these beautiful 12 Steps that will solve all your problems," and if you're like me you say, "Get away from me, you guys are wacky, you have nothing there for me and my problem, get away from me." And they row off.

Now you are starting to get in a lot more trouble and you're finding it harder to stay above water, when over the horizon comes this big chrome ocean-liner that says "Treatment Center" on the side and they've got psychiatrists, psychologists, and they've got biofeedback technicians and vocational rehabilitation specialists, and they've got people with many doctorate degrees. People that you suspect "a guy of my complexity and depth" must surely need. And you get on board the SS Treatment Center and out into the water you go and it's amazing and intellectually very stimulating. You're cracking the secrets of your illness and you're getting insights and it's just fascinating.

Twenty-eight days later over the side you go, you must leave the ocean-liner. And there you are trying to treading water and you're just worn out and you watch that ocean-liner go off into the distance and you have your graduation chip and it's hard and you don't know how much longer you can take this, and just when you're about to go under for the last time here come those two jerks in the invisible boat. "My name's Bill and my name's Bob and we're from Alcoholics Anonymous. We have God and these beautiful 12 Steps that will solve all your problems." You think they have nothing, it's just a delusion, get away from me, it's now just annoying.

And if you're lucky they pull you on board and there you are sitting on top of the water and you don't even know how you are sitting there. Some of us find ourselves at eight, ten, twelve months sober, sober long than it's ever been since you drank your very first drink and you're not sure how this is happening. And you say, "What do I do," and they say, "Row," "Row what?" "Just pretend, just row." And a funny thing happens, because the more you row that boat of meetings, Steps & service the more substantial it becomes. And if at any time you get comfortable enough in that boat to stop rowing, what happens is it starts to disappear again. It's an exact spiritual cause and effect, based not on what I think but only on what I do.

We need to have a sponsor that we are accountable to and transparent with, who doesn't care much about how we feel but is very concerned with what we do. And if you want to see them give you a talking to just come late to a meeting or leave your phone on during the meeting, all kinds of stuff like that. If we exhibit behavior where we think we are more important than AA, a good sponsor will set you straight, always encouraging us to act like someone who respects what's going on here. You can't get help from something you don't respect, and self-serving, self-obsessed, self-focused, self-absorbed people like us don't care about anything but ourselves. Sponsors push us to continually take actions in our lives and have accountability on what we do. They don't care if we feel like a good example of the Program, they only care that we act like one. Right actions will change your life.

Clancy I.