

If God didn't make it, don't put it in your mouth!

By Snow P.

Unlike the soldier's tombstone who was "ne'er forgot whether he dieth by musket or by pot" in Bill's Story, (page 1, Big Book) "Yes, but I'm different" was going to be on my grave marker.

In my twenties when I crawled into the rooms, sticking around and going to meetings every day until I wasn't different any longer was truly a gift from God. God was surly watching out for me long before I acknowledged He existed.

It's funny how I take for granted that newcomers can get the basics more readily than I did. I have heard a rash of people lately at different meetings talking about how they need to take sleeping pills. Aren't sponsors still telling them what they told to me and everybody else long ago, "NOBODY EVER DIED FROM LACK OF SLEEP, GET OVER IT!"

After years of abuse, my mind and central nervous system were shot. I had an amphetamine habit that helped me ingest as much alcohol as I could without passing out until the last possible minute. It was like being awake and unconscious at the same time! Of course, I didn't much consider that my brain could explode. When I detoxed in the rooms, in front of God and everyone, I didn't know I could have died from the withdrawal of so many chemicals, I was just blessed with more grace to get through it.

I had to learn strange new things, like how to eat regular meals. I knew how to broil chicken, make poached eggs and whiskey cake, but that was about it. More lessons from sponsors. I also could not sleep at all the first year. I had the screaming memes, and was extremely wide awake. It took a whole home group of adults in recovery to get me sober and they took turns babysitting me. During the many nights of terrible loneliness there was someone wonderful there, an older sober man named "Pete the Plumber." Pete was not a sleeper and would stay on the phone with me sometimes until 3 in the morning. I haven't the vaguest idea what we could talk about for that long, nor who would want to listen to my nonsense, but Pete did. He would calm me down and talk to me in promises and language I didn't understand until I thought I could fall asleep, one night at a time. When I got my 90 day pin, Pete gave me a Big Book signed, "Thank You" Pete the Plumber, 6/21/75.

The inscription looked strange as I had no idea what he was thanking me for. I had kept him up babbling all those nights, what was he was thanking me for? What a strange crowd I had fallen into. In time, I moved away and got on with what has been a wonderful life. I heard Pete died sober last year. He'll always be an important part of my foundation, as all those old timers were. They told me exactly what to do, how to get and stay sober and free of all substances that could change the way I feel. "Feelings will not kill you," they said, "a drink will."

After surviving many excruciating experiences, deaths, and challenges without a drink or any kind of pills, I do believe if God didn't make it, it doesn't belong in your mouth. Yes, it may hurt and be uncomfortable, but as my first sponsor said, "Get off the cross and join the parade!" They later termed this, "tough love" but it's just directions to a life that has been beyond my wildest dreams. I went dogsledding on Mendenhall Glacier last week in Alaska, watched Hubbard Glacier calving and landed in a small plane on Ruth Glacier. It was one breathtaking experience after another. I was overwhelmed with gratitude and all the grace I have been blessed with. It is just about 90 days

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