

# Alcohol took my 'right to reason'

My name is Harold, I have a terminal disease that has three results if I do not treat it. They are either death, insanity or to continue living a miserable life of continual pain and suffering. These few things that I am about to say are my own opinions.

I remember back to times in the last twenty years when I picked up my first drink of each day and said to myself . . . "To hell with it!" . . . That's what I said and it got worse and worse. Everything I worked for I said "to hell with it." Material things and family were involved. That was my excuse to drink!

But I wasn't saying to hell with them, I was truly saying the hell with me. I gave up my rights as a human being. A drink of alcohol took away my right to reason and to think of how to handle situations the proper way. I lost the rights for my family to listen to me because who wants to listen to a drunk! I lost the right to have trust of people to loan me money because I also lost the right to work for people because they couldn't depend on me!

There is one right that alcohol could not take away from me. The last of my human freedoms . . . the right to choose one's own attitude in any given circumstance; to choose my own way.

And there were always choices to make. Every day, every hour offered the opportunity to make a decision, a decision which determined whether I would submit to character defects that threatened to rob me of my very self. Would I become a plaything of alcohol?

Renouncing my freedom and dignity to become solidly molded into the form of a drunk. A man with no morals, dirty and unclean physically and mentally, lacking sleep and sufficient food.

On February 7, 1983, I chose to enter a treatment center at Mt. Edgecumbe, Alaska. From there I began my quest for freedom from my disease of body, mind and soul. While in that treatment center I heard about a long term treatment Center called Nugens Ranch.

I said to myself I must go to any lengths, so when I finished my thirty day treatment program at Mt. Edgecumbe I caught a plane out of Sitka to arrive at Anchorage and from there by van to Nugens Ranch in between Wasilla and Palmer. A man was there to meet me with stacks of papers for me to sign on rules, regulations, clients rights, etc. . . . But in my mind what I signed was not the things I had to do but to me I was signing "my right to live."

I began my program on March 11, 1983, and the few short months that have whizzed by for me I've gained the courage to change the things I can and the wisdom to know the difference.

My attitude to my life today is full of gratitude for a place to be offered a helping hand by the ranch, its employees, my spon-

sors and most of all Alcoholics Anonymous.

Many have given so freely of their time for me and now I've been dry long enough to begin some sober thinking of how I can carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

If I can plant a seed of hope in at least one alcoholic in out of

perhaps 1,000 I know the ranch will have done its job.

To whomever reads this you'll notice I'm talking more of good things today because that's what I want for myself. All I need to do is accept myself as I am today and I'll have a good chance of continuing to change to a better life. I believe now in

life after death because I'm a living example. My old life is dead and my new life is born and I'm just eight months old now.

The big book gave me some promises like . . . "things will get better . . ." They are better now! It's kind of exciting to

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# Right to reason

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know that will keep on as long as I don't take that first drink. I can't hardly wait until I'm over a year old and am able to walk and run a little and I know as long as I can keep an attitude of gratitude I can be able to thank God for I don't

know what else He has in store for me for the rest of my life! Let God's will be done for you too.

*\*The above letter was written by a resident of Nugen's Ranch. If you would like more information write Box 87-1545, Wasilla, AK. 99687.*