



# resentment

\*spiritual malady

## Session One

When a drunk has a terrific hangover because he drank heavily yesterday, he cannot live well today. But there is another kind of hangover which we all experience whether we are drinking or not. That is the emotional hangover, the direct result of yesterday's and sometimes today's excesses of negative emotion—anger, fear, jealousy, and the like. If we would live serenely today and tomorrow, we certainly need to eliminate these hangovers.

### **Resentment - from Latin - means to "re-feel"**

#### **NOUN**

1. **bitter indignation at having been treated unfairly.**

A resentment is a perceived hurt or injustice that makes us feel angry. We believe that another person or thing has hurt us or someone we love. We can feel like a victim - powerless, put upon, at a disadvantage. We seethe at being unable to make other people act as we think they should. A resentment can last for years and negatively influence the way we think about life and ourselves. When we examine our resentments closely, we almost always discover that our resentments are based on fear. We are afraid of losing something or being denied something we want.

### **why resentments are dangerous**

It is plain that a life which includes deep resentment leads only to futility and unhappiness. To the precise extent that we permit these, do we squander the hours that might have been worthwhile. But with the alcoholic, whose hope is the maintenance and growth of a spiritual experience, this business of resentment is infinitely grave. We found that it is fatal. For when harboring such feelings, we shut ourselves off from the sunlight of the Spirit. The insanity of alcohol returns, and we drink again. And with us, to drink is to die. If we were to live, we had to be free of anger. The grouch and the brainstorm were not for us. They may be the dubious luxury of normal men, but for alcoholics these things are poison.

BB of Alcoholics Anonymous

### **why we hold on to our resentments**

It's distracting: I can focus my rage and anger on someone else instead of me. It's easier to point out their character defects than to look at my own.

It's easier to hold a resentment than to work at letting it go.

It's more comforting to be a victim than to look at my part in the situation.

Justifying a resentment gives me a sense of moral superiority.

My shame and guilt feel less if I concentrate on someone else's.

My resentment gives me an excuse to live and act in anger.

I can live in the past rather than face my day today.

### **common fears behind resentments**

- Fear of Losing emotional or financial security
- Fear of having ambitions blocked
- Fear of not being recognized as worthy or important
- Fear of what other people think of me
- Fear of loneliness or rejection
- Fear of looking incompetent or stupid
- Fear of being unlovable
- Fear of someone knowing something bad about me

### **homework**

**Pick a resentment that you can journal and talk about at the workshop. It doesn't have to be the biggest or worse resentment you have. Find one that you can discuss and work through with others.**