



## Carrying the Message By Norma A.

Accepting an offer to speak to an AA group or gathering is an honor and a privilege!! The Big Book recommends we share our experience, strength, and hope. The following is a guideline to doing just that, so that what God has done in your life might be more effectively communicated. The Big Book says:

"God, I offer myself to Thee-to build with me and to do with me as Thou wilt. Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Thy will. Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of Thy Power, Thy Love, and Thy Way of life. May I do Thy will always!"

Step 3 tells us to bear witness to others. This means you have the important role of being an eyewitness of God's Power, Love, and Way of Life!! Therefore you are, as the Big Books states in another place "an agent of God!!" -i.e. God's reporter!! You are not trying to convince anyone (that's the job of King Alcohol anyway and/ or the pain of obsessing) just provide authentic account of what happened to you in the last few months or years in your recovery.

Your story is unique!! You are the only authority on your life!! Because of the fact that is a personal account, it has more credibility for others hope to help. In sharing what is real to you, you are actually creating an intimacy with others that can be that place someone can walk from "Bridge of Reason toward the desired shore of faith."

Because there are important things you will want to share with others, it is important to first write them down, then become familiar with it, so you don't forget or get nervous and blank out. It says in the Big book that we should "grow in understanding and effectiveness". Bill talks about preparing our message, and taking time to present our story. What God has done in your life could be vital for someone else

to hear!! Don't risk relying on memory- unless you have a very good one!!

Your experience, strength, and hope comes in three parts, according to the Big Book:

1. **"What I was like:** not all the stuff that happened, particularly, but what kind of a person were you? What were your character defects, the manifestations of self that caused your failure and brought you to your knees?? What was your life like because of it? This is important to share, and shows humility if you can be honest. Events around this can be shared if they illuminate the "dark cranny of the past." Remember, too, our book says: Showing others who suffer how we were given help is the very thing which makes life seem so worth while to us now. Cling to the thought that, in God's hands, the dark past is the greatest possession you have - the key to life and happiness for others. With it you can avert death and misery for them.

2. **"What happened"**- describe your "bottom." What made you come to terms with your addiction/obsession? Did you have a Step One experience? What finally broke through your denial and helped you realize that you are one of us?? When did you reach out for help, or become a member, and what transpired in the time afterwards?? Did you have a Step 3 experience that was significant? When did you most experience the Power of God? The Love of God? Find the Will of God in your life??

Did you learn some life lessons along the way??

What has God taught you through:

Failure??	Poverty??
Pain?	Grief?
Depression?	Waiting?
Disappointment?	Illness?

3. **"What it is like now"**—This is the best part!! How has recovery, God, the fellowship, living our way of life made a difference today?!! Talk about your new purpose, your new sense of belonging, your new plan for life today

What have you learned from the fellowship?? From your sponsor?? From other individuals who have had some impact in your recovery??

Through all this, is there any one thing you are most passionate about, and feel it essential to share? What is it you would like to share, more than anything, with a newcomer? Reach them with your heart, and carry the message, that God could and would if He were sought.!!