

Title:

Practicing Alcoholic - Professional Sot

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Summary:

a gallon and a half of Scotch Whiskey a day... every day... seven days a week until he was broke and in DTs

Keywords:

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Article Body:

Welcome to the short version of the life of a friend of Bill W. When dealing with the intoxicated, you might want to keep in mind the caveat of Oklahoma's Favorite Son and the esteemed movie actor, cowboy philosopher, political humorist, and Cherokee Indian Will Rogers who proclaimed, "I have Indian Blood in me. I have just enough white blood for you to question my honesty!".

He countered the white man always ready to take pride in and brag about how his ancestors arrived in America by quipping, "my ancestors didn't come over on the Mayflower but they met it". A thought that gives the Tennessee Mountain Man a chuckle to this day.

What has Will Rogers to do with this subject? Well, for a teetotaler who has been dead since 1935 he had some sage insights into modern day politics as well as the fallacy of over imbibing in fire water. Insights appreciated by the Criminal Defense Lawyers Association like, "Our constitution protects aliens, drunks and U.S. Senators" (ouch!), and he has at least one Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) Chapter as well as a Rehab and Recovery Center named after him.

A few days ago the computerman unexpectedly encountered some former colleagues and friends of Bill W. They had once enjoyed a close relationship. Soon a young man in their company looked at the computer man and asked, "are you a practicing alcoholic?". To which he replied, "no... no I'm not", and walked away with a smile on his face.

Just before getting out of hearing range, an alcohol and drug counselor was heard explaining to the young man, "He used to be our chaplain".

"Really?"

"Yep, and you would have been better off asking him if he drinks."

"Why?"

"His answer would have been, not since the invention of the funnel."

"So, you know him pretty well. Does he have a problem?"

"No. No problem. And, he will tell you he stopped practicing in 1968 when he found Chevas Regal. He had found the answer. He was a professional. He no longer had a problem drinking - his practicing was over. He had learned to love it. His trouble was with stopping which he didn't do until 1990. He was one of the few people a bar tender couldn't switch to the house brand after a few drinks. He liked what he liked, and he knew every time someone tried to switch him. It would be like trying to sneak a Sprite in on you when you were expecting a Dr Pepper."

"Okay. So, he no longer drinks? Or, does he?"

At this point the conversation was lost, so let us hear it straight from the horse's mouth - uh, pen.

There being no legal booze in the state, the computer man lived next door to a bootlegger as a child. Like the drug dealer, the old man used up all his profits. Having seen the bootlegger setting passed out, upright in a straight, ladder back, chair with a white foam stretching all the way to the floor the child said, in his mind, "I will never be like that".

Then came a war in a far away land called Vietnam, and the child - now a young man with a wife and children of his own found himself in a strange land he did not know, among a people he could not understand with strange religions and customs and living in fear. Here he learned to never say never.

There were, of course, too many reasons to count. But then any friend of Bill's knows any excuse will do. How about the reasons to keep it together? Like many soldiers there he got his Dear John Letter, his wife had an affair with another, and had their children seized by the state which was hard to do in those days. Upon securing the return of the children, they were told they did not have a daddy - he got killed in Vietnam.

At the height of his addiction, he drank a gallon and a half of Scotch Whiskey a

day... every day... seven days a week until he was broke and in DTs and could no longer afford his beloved fire water. Bouncing checks wherever he could get one cashed, he was drinking the cheapest whiskey he could find at the unbelievable rate of three (3) half gallon bottles a day.

His liver? Oh, God is good. It still works. And, although he would drink nothing for years, he now drinks one or two shots of Scotch or a beer most days. And, on other days, he consumes no alcohol. His primary care physician says, "look, you have CHF and cancer - if it helps, use it man, addiction is the least of your worries now".

He does not however, recommend it to anyone. AA is right in their stance that alcoholism and addiction are diseases of mind, body, and spirit. It doesn't simply attack one of these areas, but all of them to some degree.

Susan Yarrawonga sums it all up on "Yahoo! Answers" in her answer to the question, "Is it possible for a true alcoholic to only drink socially or on the weekends?".

She said, "There are practicing alcoholics and non-practicing alcoholics. A non-practicing alcoholic is a teetotaler who used to be a practicing alcoholic.

There is a saying that for an alcoholic one drink is too many and 100 is not enough.

Most alcoholics who try to drink socially or only at weekends fail miserably. With supreme and extreme will power an alcoholic may perhaps be able to drink in moderation but this is highly unlikely."