

"BIG BOOK" GLOSSARY

Abandon	To give oneself over to a feeling or emotion without restraint or control.
Abjectly	Worthless; low; in a sunken or degraded condition.
Abstain or Abstinence	To refrain voluntarily from an action especially from eating some foods or from intoxicating beverages.
Ad Infinitum	Without end or limit
Agnostic	One who denies that man possesses any knowledge of the ultimate nature of things.
Allergy	A condition of heightened susceptibility to a substance that when taken in similar amounts is innocuous (harmless) to a majority of the same group.
Alloy	A substance composed of two or more metals or materials.
Altruistic	The principle involving the sacrifice of self in the interest of others.
Amend	To change or modify for the better. To put right. (Does not mean to apologize.)
Annihilation	Reduce to nothing, wipe out of existence, destroy.
Antagonism	Actively expressed opposition, hostility or antipathy.
Antipathy	Natural aversion. An instinctive dislike.
Armistice Day	Used before the official adoption of "Veteran's Day" in 1954. Refers to the end of WW I.
Ascertained	To make certain; find out or determine definitely by test or examination.
Askance	With disapproval or distrust.
Atheist	One who disbelieves or denies the existence of God
Augury	The art or practice of foretelling events. A prediction.
Avocation	1) A subordinate occupation pursued in addition to one's vocation or job. 2) Diversion or distraction.
Bathtub Gin	Homemade liquor produced in a home still or kitchen during Prohibition period of 1920 through 1933 (See Prohibition).
Bedevelopment	State of being bewilderingly disordered or confused.
Belladonna	A medicinal extract from a European poisonous plant.
Bout	Outbreak. Attack
Brainstorm	A state of cerebral excitement due to continued nerve strain causing temporary mental derangement.
Calamity	A state of deep distress or misery caused by major misfortune or loss.
Capitulate	To surrender to an enemy on conditions agreed upon.
Chicanery	Deception by artful evasion or escape. Trick.
Cipher	An insignificant thing or individual. Non-entity
Commence	To have a beginning. Start.
Commendable	Worthy of confidence or notice. Praise
Concede	To acknowledge grudgingly.
Conception	The process of forming or understanding ideas or abstractions. A general idea.
Confidential	Private. Secret
Consternation	Amazement or dismay that hinders or throws into confusion
Constitutionally (incapable)	Relating to, inherent in, or affecting the fundamental makeup of something or someone.
Contention (Contentious)	Contest. Debate.
Contingent	Dependent on or conditioned by something else.
Controversy	A discussion marked especially by expression of opposing views. Dispute. Quarrel.
Conviction	The state of being convinced of error or compelled to admit the truth. A strong persuasion or belief.
Countenance	The whole form; appearance; support
Crux	Unresolved question. Puzzling or difficult problem.
Debris	The remains of something broken down or destroyed.
Diffident	Lacking self-reliance
Diligently	Characterized by steady, earnest and energetic application and effort.
Disconcerted	To throw into confusion. To disturb.
Debacle	A flood carrying masses of debris. Ruin.
Debauch	1) To lead away from virtue or excellence. 2) To corrupt by intemperance. (see Temperance)
Delirium tremens	A mental disturbance characterized by confusion, disordered speech and hallucinations coupled with violent tremors induced by excessive and prolonged use of alcoholic liquors.
Delusion	A false belief regarding self that persists despite the facts.
Demoralization	To destroy the normal functioning. To throw into disorder.
Denizen	An inhabitant. Citizen.
Deportment	Behavior
Doggerel	A kind of verse devoid of sense or rhythm.
Dubious	Of doubtful promise or uncertain outcome. Questionable as to value, quality or origin.
Earnestness	In serious reality. Serious in speech or action.
Erstwhile	Formerly
Egocentric	Limited in outlook or concern to one's own activities or needs.
Emphatically	Expressing oneself in forceful speech or take decisive action.
Epoch	A point of time from which succeeding years are reckoned. Era. Date.
Evangelist	One who has militant or crusading zeal.
Fallacious	Deceptive.
Fatal	Causing death. Bringing ruin.
Fellowship	Community of interest, activity, feeling or experience.
Fettered	To be confined or restricted. To restrained from action. Confined. Hampered
Frothy	Empty. Frivolous.
Gorge	Mass of matter that chokes up a passage.
Immutable	Unchangeable. Invariable. Unalterable. Permanent
Immune (Immunity)	Exempt. Not susceptible or responsive to something.

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Imperious	Domineering. Dictatorial. Overbearing.
Impunity	Exemption or freedom from punishment, harm or loss.
Incomprehensible	Incapable of being understood. Unintelligible
Indignant	Filled with or marked by anger aroused by something unjust, unworthy or mean
Inexplicable	Incapable of being explained, interpreted or accounted for.
Intimated	Communicate indirectly. Hint.
Longshoreman	One who is employed at a seaport to load and unload ships.
Keystone	Central stone of an arch.
Lethargy	Morbid drowsiness. Unnatural prolonged slumber.
Levity	Lightness of disposition. Trifling. Gaiety
Lucrative	Producing wealth. Profitable.
Luster	Brightness. Splendor.
Maelstrom	A powerful, often violent whirlpool sucking in other objects.
Manifestation	Clear, plain display or revelation.
Martyr	One who sacrifices their life or something of great value for the sake of principle.
Materialize	To come into existence. To appear suddenly.
Moral	Of or relating to principles of right and wrong in behavior.
Nadir	The lowest point.
"Nip of the wringer"	In the 1930's washing machines of the day were "wringer washers" which had a tub for washing the clothes and a double roller arrangement above the tub to wring out the wet clothes (there was no "spin drying" in those days). If you got your hand in the wringer portion of the washer it hurt like the devil and could crush your hand. "Nip" refers to quickly pulling your fingers out of the wringer before it grabs your whole hand.
Obsession	A persistent disturbing preoccupation with an often unreasonable idea or feeling.
Obstinate	Adhering to an opinion, purpose or course in spite of reason, arguments or persuasion.
Perverse	Obstinate. Intractable. Contrary.
Phenomenon	A rare, significant, observable fact or event.
Plague	A disastrous evil or affliction. An epidemic disease causing a high rate of death.
Pomp	An ostentatious display. Pageant. Vainglory.
Prejudice	Opinions formed without due knowledge or examination. "Old ideas"
Premeditation	Consideration or planning an act beforehand that shows intent to commit that act.
Prodigious	Extraordinary or monstrous in bulk, quantity or degree.
Prohibition	Period in America when the manufacture, distribution or sale of alcoholic beverages was illegal. From January 1920 to December 1933.
Professor Langley's Flying Machine	Harvard Professor who, in 1896, became the first person to build an un-manned heavier than air flying machine. His first manned heavier than air flying machine crashed into the Potomac River (Washington DC) on Dec 8, 1903 - just 9 days before the Wright Brothers flight.
Prophesied	To make a prediction. To speak as if divinely inspired.
Prosaic	Belonging to the everyday world. Commonplace.
Queer	Differing in some odd way from what is usual or normal.
Recoil	To draw back because of distaste or fear. To spring back to a starting point.
Reconcile	To restore to friendship or favor. Adjust.
Remonstrances	A document formally stating points of opposition or grievances.
Reprieve	To delay punishment. Temporary respite.
Resentment	A feeling of displeasure at something regarded as a wrong, insult or injury.
Retaliate	To get revenge. To repay in kind.
Robust	Having or exhibiting strength or vigorous health.
Row	A noisy disturbance or quarrel. Brawl.
Ruthlessly	Cruel, merciless, savage or ferocious.
Schism	A split or division.
Self-centered	Concerned solely with one's own desires, needs or interests.
Self-seeking	To strive for or endeavor to be the subject of ones own consciousness.
Selfish	Influenced by personal motives to the disregard of the welfare or wishes of others.
Servile	Pertaining to, characteristic of or befitting a slave or servant. Meanly submissive.
Sordid	Dirty, Filthy, wretched, squalid.
Sot	A habitual drunkard.
Squander	To spend wastefully or foolishly.
Tedious	Tiresome because of length or dullness. Boring.
Temperance	Moderation in or abstinence from the use of intoxicating drink.
Transcended	To rise above or go beyond the limits of. Exceed.
Trivial	Of little worth or importance. Insignificant
Trudge	To walk or march steadily and carefully.
Utopia	Pertaining to the imaginary island where the most perfect system of laws and institutions existed. Ideal. Visionary. Perfect.
Utterly (as in utterly hopeless)	Absolute. Total
Vestige	Remains of something pre-existent.
Vicissitude	The quality or state of being changeable. Natural change or mutation visible in human affairs.
Virtuous	Possessing or exhibiting strength or valor. Moral.
Writhing	To twist with violence.

In order to discover the meaning of the words in our basic textbook, *Alcoholics Anonymous, as they were written*, we have prepared this glossary using Webster's Daily Use Dictionary published in 1934. Because the purpose of our textbook is to explain "precisely how we have recovered", we believe it is important to understand what the words meant when they were written, not as they are interpreted in our 21st Century language.