

The Magical Mystery Tour



By Roger C.

There are many things over my lifetime that have led me to understand that life is indeed a Magical Mystery Tour.

My earliest memory is when I was nine years old. I remember being in my back yard with a somewhat older boy and girl. He said to her: "You know a baby can be born in your belly, don't you? And it will be in your belly for nine months." She nodded. I hadn't known that that is how humans were born. I was totally stunned. Later on I learned how women became pregnant. My reaction: that too to me is a mystery. Indeed. And I have always considered it a bizarre, and magical, mystery.

My mother was a very religious person. We went to church every Sunday. And I attended a Catholic school, and recited the Lord's Prayer every morning. Finally, at the age of nineteen, I quit believing in a God. None of the God stuff made any sense to me. A God, a Heaven, a Hell and a Purgatory?

If I was a good enough person when I died, would I be in purgatory for years and years and in Heaven for an eternity? That made zero sense at all to me.

In order to better understand all of this I ended up getting a BA (Laurentian University) and an MA (McGill University) in Religious Studies. In all those years in the universities there was zero evidence of the existence of a God. So these

days when I go for a walk why do I see so many churches? Makes no sense to me at all. It strikes me as a key ingredient of the insanity of humanity.

Around that time of my life, I began drinking a lot. I became an alcoholic. At the time it was the solution to the pollution of my life. I didn't particularly like my life so I created the booze solution.

Well, of course, it made my life worse. Much worse. And this lasted until I was sixty.

Over that time I ruined two marriages and both ended in divorces. I had blackouts. I drove my car even when I was drunk. One day I got a DUI and my brother sent me to a rehab facility. I finally realized that drinking was absolutely ruining my life. I had to stop. And it is only when an alcoholic understands that he or she has to stop drinking that it will actually happen and his or her life will then be truly better. So, I quit drinking on March 8th, 2010 – some fourteen years ago.

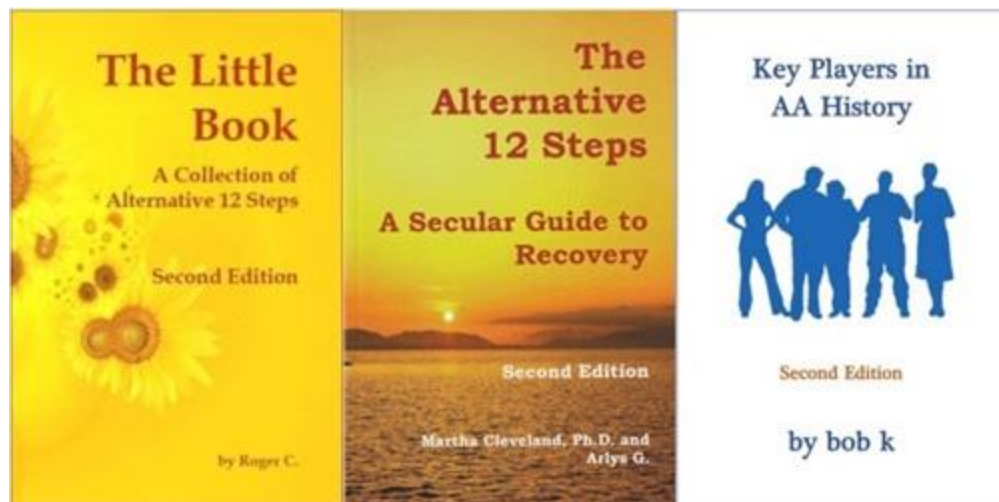
At that time I started going to AA meetings. But, frankly, it turned out that I couldn't stand them. There was too much God stuff. The Big Book – often a part of traditional AA meetings – refers to God (or Him, etc.) 281 times in its first 164 pages. And its 12 Steps refer to God six times. And how do most of these meetings end? Well, with the Lord's Prayer. Not only that, I was told at these meetings that if I didn't believe in a God I wouldn't stay sober. Traditional meetings claim that they are not religious. The only proper and relevant answer to that: bullshit. Pushing the God on people and doing the Lord's Prayer is religion.

At around that time, I was able to find a secular AA meeting launched by Joe C. (author of the book [Beyond Belief](#)) and I began going to it every Thursday and Saturday. It is called Beyond Belief Agnostics and Freethinkers. I loved the meeting. After attending it for only six months and being roughly one year sober, the meeting was booted out of AA in 2011. Why? Because we used a secular version of the 12 Steps! We were booted out by the Greater Toronto Area Intergroup (GTAI) because there was no God in our Steps. And it took six years until the GTAI was forced to allow our group back in to their list of Alcoholics Anonymous groups.

God! As a child I had had God pushed on me and then again as an alcoholic in recovery at the age of 60 at traditional AA meetings and then our secular AA meeting is booted out of Alcoholics Anonymous. My reaction to all of this: God dammit!

When we were booted out of AA in 2011 that is exactly when and why this website was created. The website was active for 11 years – posting a total of 742 articles written by people from around the world – with the last one posted in mid-June 2022. And then after two years, we decided to post articles again! One every week for a year with the first one on June 16th, 2024.

Let me also mention that when AA Agnostica was active, a number of books were published. Here are three of the eight (more information about each is available on this website):



And why were they published? Well, when I got sober in 2010 there were very few books about recovery from alcoholism that I found helpful. As I mentioned earlier, for me the Big Book has way too much God stuff. I didn't enjoy reading it, especially the We Agnostics chapter. And that's why I published a number of books, one of them being [The Little Book](#). It has twenty mostly secular versions of the 12 Steps, four interpretations of each of the Steps – by people like Gabor Maté whose most recent book is *The Myth of Normal* and Stephanie Covington whose book is *A Woman's Way Through the Twelve Steps* – and finally an essay I wrote called The Origins of the 12 Steps.

I also got permission from the authors, Martha and Arlys, to republish [The Alternative 12 Steps](#), which was originally published way back in 1991. It is a very popular book, as it should be.

And I have published two books by my friend, bob k, the fellow who taught me and my wife how to play golf! One of those books is called [Key Players in AA History](#). The first edition was published in 2015 and an updated second edition was

published in 2023. It is a very well researched history of the founders and early members of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Okay, let's get back to the Magical Mystery Tour!

When I am outside I am stunned by what I see. I simply can't believe that there are so many different trees and flowers. How many kinds of trees are there? There are over 73,000 different kinds of trees! And flowers. How many different flowers? Well, there are over 400,000 different flowers on planet earth! A staggering number that, at the very least, evokes awe.

I also end up staring at the clouds, the sun and, later in the day, the moon. It's all a part of living on Planet Earth. And there are also the cosmos, the universe and galaxies. As Salwa Salah, a philosopher, put it:

Some estimates suggest that there could be as many as 10 trillion galaxies in the universe, with each galaxy containing billions of stars. It's an awe-inspiring thought to consider just how vast and incomprehensible the universe really is.

Incomprehensible indeed.

So, finally, this question: what do I think living my life is all about? That's the question I asked myself way back then, when I was 19 years old and quit believing in a deity. Well, I'm going to be silly and mention my favourite band, The Beatles. Life to me is well described in the name of one of their albums, an album released in November, 1967. It's a Magical Mystery Tour. Surprisingly I enjoy each and every day. It's my tour. The magical mystery one. And the title of the last song on the album is "All You Need Is Love."

I agree. That's no doubt one of the best parts of the magical mystery tour of life.
