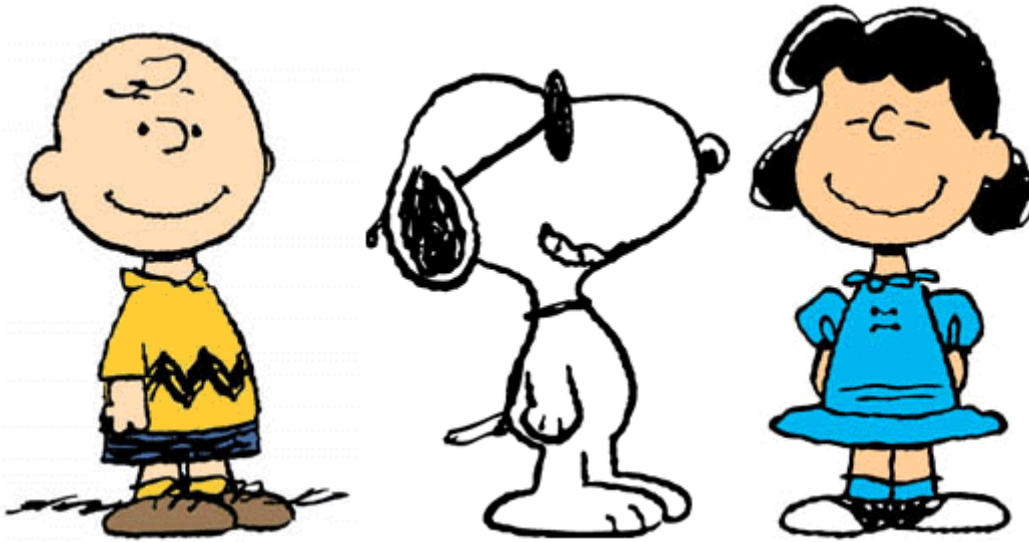


"YOU'RE AN ALCOHOLIC, CHARLIE BROWN!" December 2, 2003



(Charlie Brown Theme)

SIGN: DISTRICT 90 PRESENTS

SIGN: A HAPPY JOYOUS AND FREE PRODUCTION

SIGN: YOU'RE AN ALCOHOLIC CHARLIE BROWN!

SIGN: FEATURING THE BEERNUTS

SIGN: WITH PROFUSE APOLOGIES TO CHARLES SCHULZ

(Jazzy Peanuts music plays)

CHARLIE: Man, I don't think this AA thing is working out for me. I mean, I've been sober for nine months, but I feel like something is still missing in my life. Maybe I should get some help.

(walks over to stage right where Lucy is behind her psychiatrist booth)

CHARLIE: Hi Lucy. I need to talk to somebody.

LUCY: Well, that's obvious, Charlie Brown. What's your problem today?

CHARLIE: I guess what I am worried about is...

LUCY: *(cutting him off)* I know! You're wondering how much Rogaine you should use, right?

CHARLIE: No, that's not it, I...

LUCY: *(cutting him off again)* Wait I got it! You want to know where you can buy another shirt besides that same tacky one you've been wearing for 50 years, correct?

CHARLIE: Um...no, what I want to know is...

LUCY: *(cutting him off once more)* How I keep looking like a supermodel?

CHARLIE: NO! I want to know why even though I've been an AA member for some time now I still don't feel content. I feel like I'm out of balance.

LUCY: You blockhead! That's because you are only balancing on two legs!

CHARLIE: What? What are you talking about Lucy?

LUCY: Okay, imagine AA is like a three-legged stool. One leg is recovery which you have started on by working the steps with your sponsor. I'm not going to comment on your choice of sponsor right now, by the way.

CHARLIE: Your brother Linus is a great sponsor, Lucy. Anyway, go on.

LUCY: The second leg is unity. You did join a home group didn't you?

CHARLIE: Yes, the Cartoon Men's Stag Group.

LUCY: Cool. The third leg is Service. That's what you're missing, Charlie Brown. A three-legged stool won't stand if it only has two legs. Those three

legs I've mentioned are the three legacies of AA: Recovery, Unity, and Service.

CHARLIE: So what is service in AA all about, anyway?

LUCY: Well, it all boils down to carrying out our primary purpose of staying sober and helping other alcoholics achieve sobriety. It can take many different forms. From greeter to secretary to general service to coffeemaker; there are a ton of ways to help.

CHARLIE: How do I get started?

LUCY: I would talk to your sponsor and other AA members. Have you ever been to a Unity Day? They usually focus on service.

CHARLIE: Yeah, I went to one two weeks after I first got sober and I stayed for a few minutes, but I couldn't understand a word they were saying.

LUCY: I think you were still in denial mode then.

CHARLIE: No, I really couldn't understand them. They talked like this (*imitates the weird sound adults on Peanuts specials make*) "wu-wump-wa-wump-wu-wump wump".

LUCY: Oh. Well, anyway, I think you should give service a try, Charlie Brown.

CHARLIE: I don't know if I'm ready for that.

LUCY: Stop being so wishy-washy! If you don't want to drink, you'd better get involved in AA and not be a spectator!

CHARLIE: Uh, okay. Thanks Lucy. Hey, can I make an observation?

LUCY: What's that?

CHARLIE: Since you have been in the program, you sure have changed a lot.

LUCY: How do you mean?

CHARLIE: Well you are so nice and helpful now and you used to be the crabbiest, most vile, evil, ill-tempered, vicious, wicked, slimy, deceitful, conniving,...

LUCY: (*cutting him off*) ENOUGH ADJECTIVES ALREADY! I GET IT! Do you need anything else?

CHARLIE: No I guess that's it.

LUCY: Okay see you later.

CHARLIE: Wait! Aren't you going to say "five cents please"?

LUCY: No, I don't charge for advice about AA stuff. Why don't you put that nickel in the 7th tradition basket? Oh and add a dollar and ninety five cents to it when you do.

CHARLIE: You're not going to charge me? Wow, you know, if I still didn't have so much pent up resentment against you I might actually kiss you!

LUCY: Hey! Don't push it! I'm not so sober and serene I can't still knock your block off!

CHARLIE: Okay see you later Lucy.

(*Charlie Brown gets up and walks to stage left where Linus is sitting*)

LINUS: Hi Charlie Brown.

CHARLIE: Hi Linus.

LINUS: So what's going on? I detect a little bit of uneasiness in you. Are you still thinking about how you finally got up the nerve to talk to that little red-haired girl you had a crush on and she called you a round-headed creep?

CHARLIE: No, that's not it, Linus. I talked to Lucy and she suggested I get involved in some sort of AA service.

LINUS: I think that's a great idea. I know it has helped me tremendously.

CHARLIE: Oh really? What kinds of things have you done?

LINUS: Well, let's see, I started out as the coffeemaker and then became group secretary. I'm also on the 12th Step call list at the Intergroup.

CHARLIE: You mean like when I called the Intergroup office for help because I woke up naked on top of Snoopy's doghouse after a blackout?

LINUS: Exactly Charlie Brown. Just last night I had a guy call me and say he had been coming to meetings for a week, but couldn't take all the God stuff and was seriously considering drinking again.

CHARLIE: What did you tell him?

LINUS: I just shared my own experience with him. I told him I too had railed against the idea of God when I first came in the program, but then I read the Big Book and the part in Bill's story where Ebby says "why don't you choose your own conception of God?" hit me hard. I knew then that I would be okay and that I actually already had my own conception of God.

CHARLIE: What is it? Jesus? Buddha? Allah?

LINUS: No, The Great Pumpkin.

CHARLIE: (*sarcastically*) Shocker.

LINUS: Anyway, the guy I was talking to said he would try to have a little more willingness and actually I'm going to meet him at a meeting tonight. I think getting into service is a great idea, Charlie Brown.

CHARLIE: It sounds cool, I guess. I don't know that talking to strangers on the phone is necessarily my thing though.

LINUS: That's okay there are lots of different things for you to do in AA. You might want to talk to Schroeder about what he does.

CHARLIE: Okay. Thanks Linus. Listen, can I ask you a question? Don't take this the wrong way, but if AA has helped you with so much stuff, how come you still suck your thumb and carry around your blanket?

LINUS: Oh, that's not related to AA. I quit smoking last week and in addition to my Nicorette patch the blanket and my thumb help get me past the rough spots that's all. Well, I have to go down to the pumpkin patch to meditate. Take care, Charlie Brown.

CHARLIE: Okay, see ya Linus.

(Linus exits)

(Charlie Brown walks over to stage right where Schroeder is)

CHARLIE: Hi Schroeder.

SCHROEDER: Hi Charlie Brown. It looks like you have something on your mind. Did you get your kite stuck in the kite-eating tree again?

CHARLIE: No, I was just trying to pick people's brains about AA service and maybe find something that I can do. What kind of service do you do?

SCHROEDER: Well, my primary form of service work right now is the Corrections Correspondence Service.

CHARLIE: What is that?

SCHROEDER: It is where sober members of AA correspond through the mail with members who are incarcerated.

CHARLIE: You mean in prison?

SCHROEDER: That's right.

CHARLIE: That sounds great! I've heard those prison girls are really hot. As a matter of fact, I've seen a few movies.

SCHROEDER: No, it isn't like that, Charlie Brown. It's about recovery. In my letters I sometimes write about other things like hobbies and sports, but recovery is the main focus. And guys write to guys and girls write to girls to avoid any mixing of motives.

CHARLIE: Oh. I think I'd be scared to write to someone in prison. We would have nothing in common. I've never been to the big house before. I mean, I did a couple of stints in juvy but that's a whole different story.

SCHROEDER: You'd be surprised by how normal inmates are, Charlie Brown. I've never been to the pen, by the grace of God, but the feelings we share as alcoholics are the same.

CHARLIE: So tell me why you chose to do that kind of service?

SCHROEDER: What I like about it is that it is service that I can do at my own pace. I can fit it around my piano practice. Also, it only costs the price of a stamp.

CHARLIE: Man, I bet those guys are glad when they get a letter from you!

SCHROEDER: It works both ways, Charlie Brown. I would much rather get a letter from a recovering alcoholic than bills or junk mail.

CHARLIE: You've got a point there. Can I ask you something? Why would you drink in the first place, Schroeder? I mean, you don't seem to have the problems I do. You have it all together. I mean, you're a musician! A regular chick magnet!

SCHROEDER: Well, the only chick I have managed to magnetize is Lucy who makes me nauseous. I drank to feel cool, Charlie Brown. I had fun for a while, but eventually my drinking started to affect my music. I hit my bottom when one morning I tried to play Beethoven's Fifth symphony and it sounded like Britney Spears' "Oops I Did It Again". I knew then I was in serious trouble.

CHARLIE: I see. Well, thanks for the info on the Correctional Correspondence Service, Schroeder.

SCHROEDER: No problem. Think about doing it, Charlie Brown. They often have hundreds of inmates who are waiting for outside members to write. But I know that it isn't for everybody and that's okay because there is always something else to do in AA. You might talk to Peppermint Patty about service, she's pretty active. Well, I need to practice Charlie Brown, take care. I hope I helped.

CHARLIE: Okay, see ya Schroeder.

(Schroeder exits--Charlie Brown walks over to stage left where Peppermint Patty is)

CHARLIE: Hi Peppermint Patty.

PEPPERMINT PATTY: Hiya Chuck! What's the matter, you look kinda sad. I mean sadder than usual. Are you still bummed about getting all those rocks for Halloween instead of candy?

CHARLIE: No, I'm over that. And I'm not sad, Peppermint Patty. I'm just painted that way. Say, how's that copyright infringement lawsuit coming along?

PEPPERMINT PATTY: Well, I won the first round but those York Peppermint Patty people have some pretty good lawyers. So what's shakin' Chuckster?

CHARLIE: I'm trying to decide what AA service I should get into.

PEPPERMINT PATTY: Oh, well then you have definitely come to the right person! Have you ever heard of general service, Charlie Brown?

CHARLIE: General Service? What's that? Like the AA armed forces?

PEPPERMINT PATTY: Don't make me call you a blockhead, Chuck. No, general service is the name we give to things that groups could not do on their own like make uniform literature and publish an international magazine or have a consistent public information strategy. I am what they call a General Service Representative or GSR. I go to assemblies and district meetings and share what my group thinks about various issues concerning AA.

CHARLIE: I didn't know they had ranks and titles in AA.

PEPPERMINT PATTY: Well, the titles in AA just describe the job we do, Chuck. They don't bring honor or glory to anyone. Every year AA sends

what they call agenda topics to all the registered groups in the U.S. and Canada who then discuss them in their groups.

CHARLIE: What specifically are the agenda topics?

PEPPERMINT PATTY: Some are things that we may be considering changing like adding new books, videos, pamphlets, public service announcements and others are discussion and review items of various ways we carry the message.

CHARLIE: So after the groups discuss them what happens?

PEPPERMINT PATTY: That's where I come in. GSRs get the informed group conscience of their groups and then attend assemblies and let their delegate, who represents their particular geographic area, know what they think about the agenda topics. The delegate then goes to an annual conference in New York in April with all the other delegates and they along with other conference members hash out what should be changed or not.

CHARLIE: Oh so this is like the politics of AA.

PEPPERMINT PATTY: No way Chuck! That's a common misconception! AA general service has a similar structure as politics with voting and representation and the like, but here's the crucial difference: politics is all about getting power, money and prestige and AA general service is about carrying out our primary purpose. Plus, the groups are in charge, not the people who meet in New York.

CHARLIE: So what do you like about all that, Peppermint Patty, it sounds like a lot of work.

PEPPERMINT PATTY: Well, I feel obligated to be a part of AA as a whole because that's why AA was around when I needed it. I have met people from all over our area, that's from Monterey on up to the Oregon border and from other states as well. I've learned patience and so much about different ways to carry the message.

CHARLIE: All that stuff sounds interesting, but it also sounds complicated. Do they just allow certain kinds of AA members to do it?

PEPPERMINT PATTY: Are you kidding? Look, Chuck, I'm a D-minus student who has a weird little girl who follows me everywhere calling me sir and no one said I wasn't welcome. Yes, general service can be confusing at first but basically it is all about communication.

CHARLIE: Hey, where is Marcie anyway?

PEPPERMINT PATTY: She and another one of my sponsees are doing H & I tonight at the county jail. Listen, I strongly recommend general service Chuck, but there are many things in AA that you can do. I suggest giving it some serious thought. It can really enhance your sobriety.

CHARLIE: Okay, thanks Peppermint Patty. I better go feed my dog. See ya later.

PEPPERMINT PATTY: Bye Chuck.

(Peppermint Patty exits Charlie Brown walks over to stage right where Snoopy is)

CHARLIE: Hi Snoopy. Are you hungry? *(Charlie Brown picks up his dog dish)*

SNOOPY: *(thought balloon)* "WHAT DO YOU THINK, BLOCKHEAD?"

CHARLIE: You know, Snoopy you really have it good being a dog. I mean, your days are filled with running around, digging, chasing cats, sniffing butts...

SNOOPY: *(thought balloon)* "AND EATING! HELLO?!"

CHARLIE: It sure beats being an alcoholic let me tell you.

SNOOPY: *(thought balloon)* "WHO CARES? FEED ME!"

CHARLIE: Sorry, I didn't get a chance to play fetch with you today, boy, but I have had a lot of important stuff on my mind.

SNOOPY: *(thought balloon)* "ME TOO. LIKE KIBBLES AND BITS."

(Lucy enters stage left holding a football)

LUCY: Hey, Charlie Brown! How about running and giving the football a good kick? My sponsor said that I should try to make amends to you by letting you kick it.

CHARLIE: Really! Wow! I can finally kick it?

SNOOPY: *(thought balloon)* “YO! ROUND-HEADED KID! MY DINNER!”

CHARLIE: *(to himself)* But what if Lucy can’t help herself and yanks the ball away?

LUCY: Come on, Charlie Brown!

CHARLIE: No, I’m not going to keep doing the same thing when I know what the result will be. I’m also not going to just be a visitor at AA meetings. I’m going to get involved. I’m going to go call Linus now and tell him I want to be a coffeemaker!

(Charlie Brown hands Snoopy his dog dish and exits)

LUCY: Rats! *(Lucy exits)*

(Snoopy looks at his dog dish and then looks around helplessly)

SNOOPY: *(thought balloon)* “GOOD GRIEF!”

(“Charlie Brown” by the Coasters plays)

THE END

