

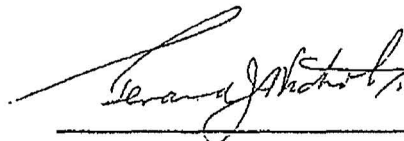
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Father Rex Brown (date of birth 16-2-37) of Catholic Presbytery, Tweed Heads, N.S.W. 2485 spent from 12-9-84 until 28-9-84 at Damascus. He admitted to drinking alcohol each day. His admitted daily intake was four or five Scotches and about a bottle of wine each day. Since 1979 he has been, on medical advice, taking 50 mg Tenorman once daily. While admitting this intake of alcohol he denied that he had a problem.

During his stay at Damascus he did what was asked of him and attended groups and also AA meetings. His conversation showed him to be out of touch with reality. He constantly referred to himself as a "helper" and saw himself as such rather than as one needing help. One could observe his mood swings which are consistent with the condition of alcoholism. When faced with facts about drinking he was prone to rationalise and it was evident that his repression of unpleasant memories had become habitual.

It is essential for the recovery of such persons that they be honest with themselves and in their dealings with others. Father Brown's denial of his alcoholism and his refusal to accept total sobriety as the only solution for him again illustrates the fact of his being out of touch with reality. Recovery cannot occur if when not drinking the patient remains out of touch with reality by blaming others for his troubles or using defence mechanisms, such as denial or projection to explain his behaviours. This, in my opinion was what Father Brown was doing.

At the time of his leaving Damascus Father Brown was invited to maintain contact with me. I felt that he needed ongoing support and with it could possibly come to terms with his condition. He did not maintain contact.



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Gerard J. Nichol