

# ***The Faust Treatment***

By Ex



Faust Manley Yates  
'Little faith in material things'

# A father figure helps 'bottomed-out' alcoholics

**A** MAN WITH the sinister name of Faust Manley Yates has become a father figure to many "bottomed-out" alcoholics in the Puget Sound area.

In the jargon of students of alcoholism, "bottomed-out" is a pit of experience which varies with individuals. It applies equally to the Ph.D. in fall-for-dream-driving and the logger in a Skid Road gutter. Each has hit a traumatic "bottom."

Yates was named Faust by his dirt-farming parents in Jefferson County, Neb., because the opera was playing in town when he was born.

He presides as head counselor at Olalla Guest Lodge, a nonprofit treatment center on a knoll across West Passage behind Vashon Island. Though he properly should be called Mr. Yates, everyone calls him Faust and the Postal Service even delivers mail to "Mr. Faust."

I know because I spent four weeks there recently with 35 other "guests" absorbing the Faust treatment for alcoholism. Like many when I left I felt it ever tempted to sample the sauce again I would see Faust's face over the rim of the glass saying:

"You have no mental defense against alcohol."

The voice echoes from the crevasse of a country-mile grin with the boom and doom of thunder. Faust estimates Olalla has handled more than 1000 guests in the past four years and statistics on short-term recovery are high.

The problem with alcoholics and treatments is that the only long-term success data that are firm will have to come from autopsy reports.

Faust is a strong advocate of the approach used by Alcoholics Anonymous, one of kindness, sympathy and insight. He opposes aversion treatment.

Aversion treatments use drugs to make the alcoholic reject alcohol by inducing nausea and violent vomiting.

Faust may be something of a perfectionist, and he says most alcoholics are tainted with perfectionism, but he is aiming at long-term recovery.

his interest in the place. Of the original five, one died of cancer and one slipped.

Remaining are Faust, Dorothy Hall and Jack Murray.

Other facts: Thirteen acres, dormitories for men and women, high-protein diet, three seminars and discussions daily and an A. A. meeting every night. Guests have come from the priesthood, bar (legal profession), medicine, teaching and Skid Road.

The rates, \$140 a week. Stipulated stay four weeks.

A cure? No, a treatment.

"We give you the tools and the rest is up to you," said Faust.

Guests are free to return at any time for counseling and coffee without charge. All staff members are recovered alcoholics, including a Tacoma emergency physician who lectures once a week.

Saturday night is an open A. A. meeting and members arrive from around the Puget Sound area.

A CYCLONE FENCE around Olalla was put up by the government for the Nike base and it still serves to keep people out, not in. Gates on the road are open day and night but a four-week isolation is a key element in the treatment. Guests are warned that they won't be completely detoxified for four to six weeks and complete body recovery from the influence of alcohol may take 18 months to two years.

Guests arrive in all shapes — from in, to out of. Generally the men are in worse condition than the women, who usually lay up before making the trip.

During my stay, a man arrived not at all aware where he was or how he got there. That night he was heard yelling, hung up near the top of the cyclone fence he tried to climb. He was 20 yards from the open gate.

Next day he asked me where he was. Olalla. What do they do here? They help you quit drinking. Does it work? If you want to quit, they can help a lot. If you don't, forget it.

He rested up another day, got some of the wrinkles out of his belly and left via the open gate.

Some who leave Olalla abruptly do it with overtones of guilt. A few weeks before I arrived two men who wanted out slipped away at night

most attempts to rehabilitate the alcoholic . . . A. A. is the best treatment . . . It is a spiritual problem, a personality problem . . . You can't get to a person's mind unless you treat him with food and kindness."

What produces a man like Faust? If his life is any example, it takes a lot of knocks and bottle-scars and the growth of a deep reverence for humanity.

He was educated in a one-room country school and by correspondence courses through Colorado State Teachers College, a time teaching, a time playing fiddle in country dance bands ("I always called it a violin"), a depression, divorce, time at hard labor, time in mental hospitals, time working as a nurse, a lot of time with books, books on religion, philosophy, medicine, alcoholism and history.

In 1955, he was found one Sunday in an alcoholic coma on the floor of his shack near Fircrest by a bootlegger friend—a broken-down prostitute, who had been sober six years through A. A. The pipe in the shack stove was broken and the room filled with smoke.

Faust said she got him to A. A. and he hasn't had a drink since.

The fact that he was found near death Faust regards as a miracle. And today it is difficult when you hear him speak to believe that he ever could have hit that kind of bottom.

Faust's figures are in a telegraphic style without a wasted word, with solid allusions to proper medical and philosophic authority, always to the point and put in easy, simple terms.

His time in mental hospitals in the early 1940s spurred his heavy aversion to the aversion handling of the alcoholic. Telling of that period Faust says:

"I was locked up like an animal, hounded by guards and had to learn to live with confinement on a level of survival. Forced treatment is no cure. It takes insight into self and humanity."

"After going to A. A., I took a job as an attendant at Western State Hospital in the geriatrics ward and studied practical nursing. It forced me to reach back into my earlier schooling and put it into action. I felt I was growing again. That was important."

IF THIS IS FAUST'S drunkalog, you hear little of it in Olalla lectures when he presides. His major effort is teaching the 12 steps of A. A. and leading discussions about the films and re-

STRIKING AT OLALLA is the nonprofession-al atmosphere. No butterfly nets, jaw-breaking medical terms, bearded experts, white coats, staff detachment or cold subtleties.

Photo: The heavy stress on A. A. philosophy

Stuart Detachment, on Court Street.

Despite the heavy stress on A. A. philosophy in treatment, Alcoholics Anonymous neither supports nor endorses Olalla Guest Lodge. As a matter of policy, A. A. doesn't endorse any treatment center anywhere. This doesn't mean the organization (approximately 500,000 members worldwide) has no faith in centers; it means only that it is too busy doing its own thing.

A glimpse of Faust is a view of prairie grandeur. At 74 he is well over six feet, erect, well over 200 pounds and well over booze for 17 years.

"I am not a religious man," he says. But he declares his outlook is highly "spiritual." Others might call it a concern with moral philosophy. He stresses "spirituality" and "spiritual growth" in individuals. He dresses in a floppy hat, old coat sweater, open-throat shirt and wears both belt and suspenders.

"Why," a guest once asked, "do you wear both a belt and suspenders — a man with strong spiritual beliefs?"

Faust didn't bat an eye.

"It's because I have such little faith in material things," he said.

Olalla grew from a small meeting of A. A. members in 1969 and the availability of an abandoned Nike missile fire control center on a hill overlooking West Passage and Vashon Island. The five A. A. members hearing retirement age decided it might do as a place to help alcoholics.

The site was leased for a year and then purchased. The understanding was that if any of the five fell off the wagon he or she must sell

two men who wanted out slipped away at night by digging under the fence. They would have been ashamed to walk out the gate.

Faust has a direct but kindly manner of getting to the bottom of things. He keeps a shot glass on his lecture desk as a reminder of why everybody's there.

"No matter what a person's problems or organic defects are, alcoholics wouldn't have damaged lives if they stayed away from alcohol," Faust says.

What are some of the center's intramural problems?

Take the case where a male and a female guest were emitting romantic vibes during withdrawal.

Faust met the case head-on. He confronted the man in an open meeting.

"Our program says that you must be prepared to go to any length to give up drinking," Faust said. "What would you be willing to give up? Would you be willing to give up sex in order to quit?"

"Do you mean drinking girls or sober girls?" asked Mr. Z.

It brought laughs, but he and she split after ward.

The point is that Faust discourages alcoholics from emotional attachments until they have put the bottle into perspective and their lives in order.

Faust's approach to alcoholism derives from two things: his own disasters with the jug and a conviction he puts like this:

"Prestige, power and money have wrecked

and leading discussions about the films and recordings run for the guests.

It's the guests who have the drunkalogs, and some are still in living color when they arrive.

The Army veteran crying on his first night: "Help me! Help me! Somebody help me!"

He is pacing back and forth in one of the rooms.

The businessman's wife on her second Olalla tour.

The aging boxer who went lame trying to resume roadwork after a week's food and rest.

The man from Massachusetts. He couldn't forget the night he got drunk and stole the metal statue in a park with a cherry picker and sold it to a junk yard.

One of the most sensible persons I met during my stay was an attractive older woman, an alcoholic sober 12 years. She had reached a despondent period in life and feared she would resume drinking. She checked into Olalla before she slipped.

Today I can look out my study window, down West Passage behind Vashon Island and imagine I see the shadow of land around Olalla Cove, about a mile below Olalla Guest Lodge. And it's then I think I hear again the boom of Faust's voice, saying:

"You have no mental defense against alcohol!"

Do I?

The author is a former drinker who wrote a series on alcoholism which appeared in The Times July 9, 10, 12, 1972.