



Suffolk Intergroup Association Bulletin

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Meetings & Events In March

03/04

* SIA Officers' & Chairpersons'
Meeting

7:30 PM – SIA office

03/11

* SIA Orientation - New Reps

7:00 PM – Cleary School,
Ronkonkoma

* SIA Meeting

8:00 PM – Cleary School

03/21

* GSO Orientation

7:30 PM – Trinity Lutheran
Church, Rocky Point

* Suffolk GSO Meeting

8:00 PM – Trinity Lutheran
Church, Rocky Point

03/19

* Public Information Mtg.

7:30 PM – SIA Office

03/26

* SIA Treatment Facilities

Meeting – 7:30 PM – SIA Office

No second chance this time

One evening I attended a meeting with my sponsor (Joe). One of the people in the room shared how he took a trip to Wilson House (Birthplace of Bill Wilson, co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous). Wilson House has now been converted into a Bed & Breakfast and is restored to its original charm in the mountains of East Dorset, Vermont. We listened as this person exclaimed how their pilgrimage gave them a real connection to our fellowship and how this will forever impact their sobriety. After the meeting, Joe and I agreed how each of us had always wanted to take a spiritual journey like the one we just heard about. Within a couple of days, the reservation was made and the trip was mapped. Approximately one week before we were set to go, Joe called to ask if I would mind if a couple joined us for the trip. Like us, they've always wanted to do something like this but didn't have the transportation to get there. Joe had already called the Wilson House and they would accommodate his friends. From the tone of his voice I could tell that this meant a lot to him and he was convinced this was the "right thing." I agreed but I remember thinking to myself, rather unenthusiastically, "What about ME, I thought this would be all about ME" (yea, I know).

So came that Saturday Morning in late July. When we picked up George and Cathy, one couldn't help but notice that they were beaming with Gratitude not only for being able to make this trip but also for being in each others' company. I then understood why Joe wanted them to join us. At the time, I was 40 years old. Joe as well as Cathy and George were in their 50s. Joe and George had a special bond as they had both been to Vietnam. Cathy Shared with me that she had been to Woodstock and the Fillmore East. She instantly became a hero to me!

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From the Archives

Just a reminder to one and all that the Archives Committee meets the first Thursday of every month (6:00pm) at the SIA office in Patchogue. We are starting to build momentum here with some volunteers but have tons of work still to do. You too can help. We are looking for volunteers. If you are a typist---or do other secretarial type work--- researcher, photographer, or just love the history of Alcoholics Anonymous, you can bet we can find some way of putting you to work. We also bet you will love doing this unique form of service. Archives work has been described as carrying the message to the next generation.

We are looking for people from the Bay Shore area who might be able to help us fill in some of the blanks about the histories of some of the groups in that area. Bay Shore's connection with AA goes way back to the 1940s. Around 1947, there was a regular luncheon meeting held there and things just blossomed from that point. Of all the areas in Suffolk County, Bay Shore has had the most different meetings over the years and most of there we have no information on....New Way, 12 Steps of Hope, Big Book, Third Step Workshop, Miracle on Park, Room For Sobriety, Lambda, Hope For Today, Young People, Sunday Sobriety, Staying Sober, Latarnik, Staying Sober, YMAA Men's Meeting to name a bunch. Maybe someone of you knows something about who started these meetings, some background on them and for those meetings that no longer exist why that is so. Any memories you could share would be appreciated. History is a wonderful thing to save and a terrible thing to lose!

The Traditions

At the last SIA meeting, I stated that I would continue to write about the Concepts. However, after careful consideration came to the conclusion that because the Concepts were an outgrowth and, in a sense, the "why" of the structure of A.A. and the Traditions, perhaps we should address the Traditions first.

Tradition I: Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.

"Each of the other eleven Traditions explains one specific way to protect the unity of the Fellowship and the A.A. group. Those early members quickly recognized power-drivers as potential group-wreckers. And they're still around – the members who are always sure that they're always right – the members who are happily ready to assume all the burdens of leadership and grimly unwilling to share them, let alone give them up. But a group does need officers. How can we cope with this dilemma? Tradition Two provides the answer.." *

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I stared out the window looking at the hills of New England for the next four hours as my three companions laughed and sang, word for word, these oldies songs most of which I had never heard. I have to admit that I never had so much fun on a long car ride as I did watching these “hipsters” carry on. The entire weekend went on to be one of the very best times I’d ever had and that was in complete contrast to how I had originally thought things would turn out. We prayed, went to meetings, visited the graves of Bill & Lois and grew in our spirituality. By the time we had returned to Long Island I had made two very dear friends and had learned that things work out best when it’s not “all about ME.”

A few months later, we all ran into each other at a meeting. We agreed that we would make arrangements to go on another weekend retreat/pilgrimage. I could really feel the excitement in every one as we put together an agenda. The following morning Joe called to inform me that later that night George suffered a massive heart attack and went home to God. We discovered why it was so important that George and Cathy joined us. We don’t often get a second chance to do the “right thing.”

My name is Chris and I’m an Alcoholic, I’m also the new Editor for “Our” Bulletin. The reason I’m sharing this story is because when I first volunteered for this commitment I was told that I’m in but I would have to wait for a while to be voted in at the SIA Meeting. That gave me a month and a half to think about and that’s too long for this Alcoholic. I was planning my exit strategy when the memory of this Pilgrimage reminded me how we seldom get a second chance to do the “right thing”. For that I’m grateful and I pray that God will guide me to fulfill this commitment. I also hope it inspires some of my fellow AA’s to get involved in service. Thank you for letting me share.

WE NEED VOLUNTEERS

The Friends of Bill and Bob Committee’s 9TH Annual Dinner Dance

The Friends of Bill and Bob Committee is looking for volunteers to help us organize our 9th Annual Dinner Dance and our annual Dinner Cruise on the Great South Bay. We need volunteers to keep the Committee going. Monthly meetings will begin in March with day & location of meetings to be determined. Spread the word...

Please call: Nancy B. 631-654-1150 for details and to volunteer for Committee

Tradition II: For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority . . . a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants . . . they do not govern.

I left formal church going a while ago, and sobriety hasn't sent me back to organized religion. I am left with a tremendous feeling of gratitude for the structure of Alcoholics Anonymous. As long as we try our best to live by our Traditions, we may never have to face the trials some denominations or religious institutions have come up against.

There is no hierarchy in Alcoholics Anonymous. Isn't that great? We have one ultimate authority, a loving God; and that authority is never wrong, and is not subject to human failure. Our method of discipline is incredibly effective. We follow rules as individuals or groups, or we die. Of course, there are no rules, just suggestions and Traditions.

The chairman of our board of directors has no authority over any member. Our trustees, a dedicated and trusted group of alcoholics and non-alcoholics, put in long hours of hard work. They are paid nothing, and they also lack authority over anyone. We elect area delegates every year and are not surprised by the dedication and self sacrifice of these 93 members. And none of these trusted servants would consider flaunting Tradition by standing for re-election.

With what wonderful Traditions have we been blessed! A simple membership requirement; group autonomy; one primary purpose; no outside affiliation, or even an opinion on outside issues; self support; non-professional; unorganized; and anonymous. Throughout our Fellowship, rotation is practiced, sometimes rigorously, sometimes not. We seem to have learned, at nearly every level of service, that no one is so bad that we can't endure him/her for one term, nor is anyone so good that we must have him/her for a second term.

Those outside our Fellowship may look at us with amusement or disbelief. Why not a system of dues? Why not professionals? Why not permanent positions? Why not someone in charge? We know why not. It wouldn't work. We seem to have been guided by a power greater than any one of us. This power seems to have allowed us to make our own mistakes and learn from them. When our groups were falling apart, and our Fellowship was close to disintegration, Bill was able to use our mistakes and successes and put together our Twelve Traditions. When it became clear we needed some guidance for the Fellowship as a whole, he wrote our Twelve Concepts for World Service. And as our need for new leaders grew, new leaders appeared.

My job? To live by the principles of Alcoholics Anonymous as best I can; to share my experience, strength and hope with regard to our Traditions and Concepts, as well as our Twelve Steps; to serve where I can, as well as I can; to understand that the Responsibility Pledge applies to me.

I can't keep A.A. going, and neither can you. But we can, for as long as God chooses to allow us to exist.

Concept I

"Final responsibility and ultimate authority for AA world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship."

Concept II

"When, in 1955, the A.A. groups confirmed the permanent charter for their General Service Conference, they thereby delegated to the Conference complete authority for the active maintenance of our world services and thereby made the Conference-excepting for any change in the Twelve Traditions or in Article 12 of the Conference Charter-the actual voice and the effective conscience for our whole Society."

Yours in service,
Terry L

Things we cannot change:

A long time member of the Holbrook Love and Share Group passed away:

Sergio M. T. 12-21-07

Sergio died at home in the loving care of his wife Kay and family. Sergio was 67 years young and "All knew him loved him" we will miss him greatly. Sergio was also a member of The Matt Talbot retreat movement Group #33

Anyone wishing to send a card may do so addressed to our group and we will forward them:

Holbrook Love & Share
PO Box 591
Holbrook, NY 11741
Attn: Kevin V.