



The Suffolk Intergroup

# BULLETIN

Volume 41, Number 2

JUNE 2014

## NON-AFFILIATION

**"An A.A. group ought never endorse, finance or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose."**

The sixth of our 12 Points of A.A. Tradition is deemed so important that it states at length the relation of the A.A. movement to money and property.

Too detailed to print here, this Tradition declares in substance that the accumulation of money, property and the unwanted personal authority so often generated by material wealth comprise a cluster of serious hazards against which an A.A. group must ever be on guard.

Tradition 6 also enjoins the group never to go into business nor ever to lend the A.A. name or money credit to any "outside" enterprise, no matter how good. Strongly expressed is the opinion that even clubs should not bear the A.A. name; that they ought to be separately incorporated and managed by those individual A.A.s who need or want clubs enough to financially support them.

We would thus divide the spiritual from the material, confine the A.A. movement to its sole aim and insure (however wealthy as individuals we may become) that A.A. itself shall always remain poor. We dare not risk the distractions of corporate wealth. Years of experience have proven these principles beyond doubt. They have become certainties, absolute verities for us.

Thank God, we A.A.s have never yet been caught in the kind of religious or political disputes which embroil the world of today. But we ought to face the fact that we have often quarreled violently about money, property and the administration thereof. Money, in quantity, has always been a baleful influence in group life. Let a well meaning donor present an A.A. group with a sizeable sum and we break loose. Nor does trouble abate until that group, as such, somehow disposes of its bank roll. This experience is practically universal. "But," say our friends, "isn't this a confession of weakness? Other organizations do a lot of good with money. Why not A.A.?"

Of course, we of A.A. would be the first to say that many a fine enterprise does a lot of good with a lot of money. To these efforts, money is usually primary; it is their life blood. But money is *not* the life blood of A.A. With us, it is very secondary. Even in small quantities, it is scarcely more than a necessary nuisance, something we wish we could do without entirely. Why is that so?

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*I Am Responsible...*

*When anyone, anywhere,  
reaches out for help,*

*I want the hand of A.A.*

*always to be there.*

*And for that:*

*I am responsible.*



## ViewPoints:

My home group (East Seatauket Sober Just for Today) has a special way of keeping in touch with our members. We created an email address and any group members who wish to list their own email addresses in our "group directory" can do so. Obviously, participation is completely optional, but in the several months since we have been using this system, no one has opted out and everyone has enjoyed the benefits of being kept in the loop of what is happening within their home group. As Long Islanders and as a daytime group that attracts more retirees, we have several "snowbirds" who spend the winter months in warmer climates. The emails from the home group keep them connected and up-to-date with news, anniversaries, and the happenings of their home group.

Setting up an email address is easy. In our case, we selected gmail because it is free, easy to use, and widely known. Our address is simply the initials of our group: [ess-jft@gmail.com](mailto:ess-jft@gmail.com). When setting up the account, a profile had to be created, meaning that gmail (or whichever service is used) wanted to know who it was going to help stay connected with the rest of the cyberworld. Since individual members can relapse or become ill in other ways, go on vacation, suffer accidents, or meet their Higher Power at any moment, our choice was to make up a

## KEEPING IN TOUCH

"fictional" profile. When gmail asked for a name, we entered Wilson N. Smith. When they wanted a date of birth, we entered June 10, 1935 (the date of Dr. Bob's last drink). For a home address, we entered the address of our meeting place. Finally, for our phone number, we again entered the phone number of the location where we meet. I advised the good folks who work there (it is the number of a church office) that if anyone calls looking for Wilson N. Smith, to please take a message. Then a password was made and shared with the co-chairs of our group and we were up and running!

We do not send out a lot of emails; usually only one or two per month. When they are sent, the sender sends one to his or her own personal email address, then sends BCCs (Blind Courtesy Copies) to all the group members who have requested to be included in the list. The B of the BCC is crucial; it ensures that no member's email address is

*(Continued on page 3)*

## STEP SIX

When I first encountered Steps Six and Seven, I thought to myself, "Finish Step 5, go home, affirm that I'm ready to change, take a nap. Bang! Two steps in as many minutes! That's my kind of step work!" Even in the Big Book, Steps Six and Seven get short shrift: Step Four gets an entire chapter, Steps Six and Seven get eight sentences between them. The longer I've been around, however, the more I realize these Steps embody the heart of my program on a daily basis.

Bill writes in the 12 & 12 that "...all AA's have 'become entirely ready' to have God remove the mania for alcohol from their lives. And God has proceeded to do exactly that." Well, that may be how it was for Bill, and more power to him if it was, but for this alcoholic it was necessary to come to meetings, to talk to other alcoholics, to make an effort to listen and to learn from listening

*Even in the Big Book, Steps Six and Seven get short shrift...*

(something that did not come easily to me). In short, being "entirely ready" means being willing to do the work. As the old-timers in my group used to tell me, "Your Higher Power will move mountains, but you still have to work the shovel."

The second thing that this Step tells me is that I don't get to decide when and to what degree my defects of character are going to be removed. My sponsor still reminds me that no one is rendered "white as snow". In my sponsor's words, "Our defects become manageable, they never disappear entirely."

So what does this translate into? Willingness and acceptance. Willingness to put the effort in to achieve the goals that I hope for, and acceptance when I don't get what I want when I want it. Acceptance, too, that I am a flawed human being and I will sometimes fail to put in the amount of effort that might otherwise have brought success. Then willingness (again) to pick myself up and give it another try.

This cycle of willingness and acceptance, effort and change, on a daily basis, is what Step Six means to me now. If I intend to stay sober, if I intend to get in the future the sort of rewards that I have gotten from the Fellowship in the past, then the practice of the underlying principles of Step Six must be a part of my daily life.

Brian C. —

Lake Grove Group



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### AA DONE DIFFERENTLY

Dear Editor: My wife and I were on vacation in Acapulco and I went to a meeting off the main strip. The meeting was conducted entirely in Spanish, but I was able to follow much of what was being said with the help of a man next to me who spoke some English. The meeting was very memorable.

When I first sat down, I was told I had to find another seat because the one I had chosen was "reserved." It seems that seat was used by a member of the government and someone had tried to kill him at a recent meeting.

The meeting began with a reading of the Twelve Steps followed by the ringing of a ship's bell. If someone entered the meeting late and had been drinking, they began the meeting again from the beginning with the reading and the bell so the latecomer would not miss anything. This happened three or four times during the

meeting.

Wayne, Patchogue Group

Dear Editor: For several years I made regular trips to Muncie, Indiana. Whenever there I would make a point of hitting some meetings. All the meetings I went to were at a clubhouse. The one meeting that always fascinated me was this one Step meeting. An excellent meeting all around but they didn't use either the Big Book or The Twelve and Twelve. As they would announce before the meeting started, their group conscience was to use a book written by a certain fellow instead. This fellow had gotten much fame as part of a duo who would travel all around doing Big Book studies. Just a guy named Joe you might say.

The first time I heard this I was aghast. This was heresy. This went against every Tradition I was taught. But I had to remember I was on their home territory and this was their decision. As I would attend this meeting many times, I saw that the earth didn't open up and devour these heretics not did lightning toss us asunder. In fact nothing happened except for a

great meeting every time. What it did teach me was tolerance. It also forced me to dig deeper into researching the how and why of so-called outside literature and how many times the misinformed mistakenly misinterpret this. I could have taken the head strong rigid approach and stormed out of these meetings. Something told me to stay and over time, I learned to learn at this meeting.

Bob, Kings Park Group

### ATHEISTS AND AGNOSTICS

Dear Editor: In regard to your recent atheist/agnostic issue: I LOVED IT. I saved a couple of copies for myself for future use with newcomers who struggle with a Higher Power or no Higher Power. Thanks to those who wrote it. Kim, Babylon Group

*Dear Kim: Thank you for the kind words. I'd like to take the opportunity to point out to others who might find the March issue useful in the future that it can be downloaded or printed from the SIA website. - Ed.*

## **TRADITION SIX**

*(Continued from page 1)*

We explain this easily enough; we don't need money. The core of our A.A. procedure is "one alcoholic talking to another," whether that be sitting on a curbstone, in a home, or at a meeting. It's the message, not the place; it's the talk, not the alms. That does our work. Just places to meet and talk, that's about all A.A. needs. Beyond these, a few small offices, a few secretaries at their desks, a few dollars a piece a year, easily

met by voluntary contributions. Trivial indeed, *our* expenses!

Nowadays, the A.A. group answers its well wishers saying, "Our expenses are trifling. As good earners, we can easily pay them. As we neither need nor want money, why risk its hazards? We'd rather stay poor. Thanks just the same!"

Originally published by  
Bill W.

in  
The A.A. Grapevine  
May, 1948

## **Keeping in Touch** *(Continued from page 2)*

shared with anyone else without them doing so on their own. When we do send out emails, it is usually to announce upcoming anniversaries, remind members about business meetings, to update members on which Steps we will be discussing during the coming month, or make any other announcements. Most recently, we sent an email to advise those who had requested copies of the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition of the Big Book that their copies had arrived. While our group is not looking to put the USPS out of business by closing out P.O. Box addresses, perhaps it's time for more groups to consider the option of using emails for inter-group communications to announce individuals' and groups' anniversaries. For any groups looking to stay in touch as we continue to share our primary purpose, feel free to reach us at [essift@gmail.com](mailto:essift@gmail.com).

Peter S. — East Setauket Sober Just for Today



## Group History of the Month

### East Moriches Group

First Presbyterian Church  
387 Montauk Highway  
East Moriches

The East Moriches Group was originally in Center Moriches at the St. John's barn. There exists a copy of the original letter in Alcoholics Anonymous World Services Archives.

August 13, 1964

Dear Sirs:

A new group, a closed discussion group, has been formed in Center Moriches, Long Island. We would appreciate any literature available to us and any information as to procedures when starting a new group. The chairman is Helen L. Brookhaven, L.I. The treasurer is Ruth S. of North Bellport, L.I. Mail can be sent to me the secretary.

Alice A.

The original members wanted to start a new group due to tensions within. A new meeting was started on Frowein Road (the bypass), in East Moriches at the Lutheran church in the mid 1970's. Eventually there was a conflict with the Pastor over smoking in the church and the meeting folded.

The original members then returned to the Barn for a short time before being asked to leave because the church had other plans for the space. Some members went to Mastic at this time and started the Herkimer Street meeting. They decided to take the meeting to the First Presbyterian Church in East Moriches. Some of the members were Marty, Chris, Sheila, Tony, Midge and Rich N. to name a few. This was in the late 1970's and the meeting remains there today.

The group met on Monday and Saturday nights. Attendance grew quickly. In the early 1990's the group voted to add a Wednesday night meeting as well. There are 4 meetings a week now with two on Saturday. The group is regularly well attended and is strongly tied to service commitments and the traditions. It celebrated its 43rd anniversary in July 2007. The celebration was an area event. We look forward to being here for the suffering alcoholic for many more years to come.

Submitted September 12, 2006



*The back entrance of the First Presbyterian Church in East Moriches through which you'll find the East Moriches Group*

### The Push

A newly sober man and his wife are awakened at 3:00 AM by a loud pounding on the door. The man gets up and goes to the door where a drunken stranger, standing in the pouring rain, is asking for a push.

"Not a chance," says the husband, "it is 3:00 AM in the morning!" He slams the door and returns to bed.

"Who was that?" asked his wife.

"Just some drunk guy asking for a push," he answers.

"Did you help him?" she asks.

"No, I did not, it's 3 AM in the morning and it's pouring rain out there!"

"Well, you have a short memory," says his wife. "It wasn't that long ago that it could have been you at the door. I think you should help him, and you should be ashamed of yourself! God loves drunk people, too, you know."

Properly chastened, our friend does as he is told, gets dressed, and goes out into the pouring rain. He calls out into the dark, "Hello, are you still there?"

"Yes," comes back the answer.

"Do you still need a push?" calls out the husband.

"Yes, please!" comes the reply from the dark.

"Where are you?" asks the husband.

"Over here on the swing," replies the drunk.



### **The Bulletin**

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### **Please note:**

Inclusion of articles and announcements in The Bulletin does not constitute endorsement by Alcoholics Anonymous or Suffolk Intergroup Association. Rather, members of Alcoholics Anonymous have been encouraged to share their experience, strength and hope through this publication. Opinions expressed are those of the writer unless otherwise noted. Suffolk Intergroup makes these articles and announcements available solely as a service to the reader.

Brian C., Editor

### **Next Up on the HotLine:**

#### **June Commitments**

District 110– Paul S, Phone Captain

Smithtown Serenity

District 230– Jeff A, Phone Captain

Stony Brook Discussion

District 50– Ron A, Phone Captain

Home for Dinner, Dix Hills Groups

District 100– Dave S, Phone Captain

Coram-Farmingville Open Arms

District 80– Donny and Woof, Captains, TBA

#### **Thanks to May's Hotline volunteers:**

John K, District 30: Northport Free at Last; Rich W, District 250: Southampton; Bob P, District 220: Mt. Sinai; Bob L, District 40: Huntington groups (special thanks to Felicia).

### **Intergroup Officers**

Chairperson Fred H. Chairman@suffolkny-aa.org

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Webmaster Martin ..... Webmaster@suffolkny-aa.org

### **July Meetings**

**Archives Committee:** 7/2/2014 8:00 PM SIA Office

**Institutions Committee:** 7/16/2014 7:00 PM SIA Office

**Public Information Committee:**  
7/15/2014 7:00 PM SIA Office

**SIA Monthly Business Meeting:**  
7/8/2014 Cornell Co-Op Ext

**7:00 PM** New Group Rep Orientation

**7:00 PM** Share-a-Thon

**7:30 PM** Hot-Line Captains

**8:00 PM** Intergroup Meeting

**SIA Officers & Chairs:** 7/1/2014 7:00 PM SIA Office

**Suffolk General Service:** 7/18/2014 8:00 PM  
Trinity Lutheran Church,  
Rocky Point

**Third Legacy Committee:** 7/22/2014 7:30 PM SIA Office



# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## 2014 BIG MEETING

This year's theme:

“STAYING SOBER THROUGH SERVICE”

Committee Chairs – Volunteers – New to Service

New to Sobriety – All Are Welcome

Sponsored this year by Suffolk General Service

Contact SIA office for meeting date and time



## “DEAD MEETINGS KILL DRUNKS”

Ten years ago, the meeting list was filled with meetings that no longer existed. In order that this situation not happen again, every group is required to contact SIA once each year to let us know you are still in existence. The deadline for contact is October 1st. If we have not heard from you, your group will be dropped from the meeting list. Don't let this happen: contact the Intergroup office.

### The Still Suffering Need Your Help!

The SIA Public Information Committee brings information about what AA is and what we do and don't do to members of the public who might deal with the still sick and suffering alcoholic at work or in social or religious contexts. We need your help. Any AA member can join us. The PI Committee meets at the SIA office in Patchogue on June 17th at 7:00 PM. The best Public Information tool we have is the living example of a sober member of A.A. We need you to help show that it works.

**We're on the Web!**

[www.Suffolkny-aa.org](http://www.Suffolkny-aa.org)

## !! GROUP ANNIVERSARY !!

PLEASE JOIN US TO CELEBRATE  
BABYLON MID-ISLAND'S GROUP  
ANNIVERSARY!

June 14th, 2014, 6 to 11 P.M.

United Methodist Church

21 James St., Babylon



## We'd Like to Hear From You...

Write us and tell us what you think of, well, pretty much anything A.A. related. We'd like to make the Bulletin the voice of the members of A.A. in Suffolk County. This means YOU! Tell us what we're doing right; tell us what we're doing wrong; share your experience with others.



# SIA – ARCHIVES

IS HAVING AN



**FOR AA'S WHO ENTERED  
THE ROOMS OF SUFFOLK COUNTY  
IN THE 50's, 60's & 70's**

We want to permanently record your  
experience in the rooms for the future

**When: Saturday June 14<sup>th</sup>**

**Time: 10am to 1pm**

**Where: SIA Office**

**More Info: [archives@suffolkny-aa.ny.org](mailto:archives@suffolkny-aa.ny.org)**

**Coffee and Bagels will be served.**



The Huntington Group at Old First Church

presents

# Big Book Unplugged

A 12-Week Series on  
the History and Program of Alcoholics Anonymous  
as it appears in the Big Book

Led by Richard H.  
Trustee of Dr. Bob's Home in Akron, OH

*BYOBB*  
(bring your own big book)

**Every Sunday from 7:30 to 8:30 PM**

**From June 15, 2014 – August 31, 2014**

In the downstairs room of

Old First Church

125 Main Street, Huntington, NY 11743

Contact information available through the  
Suffolk Intergroup Association