



The Suffolk Intergroup

BULLETIN

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ORGANIZATION?



You want to see our organization? We don't need no stinking organization!

Tradition Nine in the 12 *and* 12 focuses on the spirit of service and how important our service committees are "...to bring sobriety within the reach of all who want it." In my early recovery, I somehow missed the next two sentences, "If nobody does the groups chores, if the area's telephone rings unanswered, if we do not reply to our mail, then AA as we know it would stop. Our communication lines with those who need our help would be broken" (page 175). Obviously, no AA member would want, or let, this happen, right? I certainly would not, or so I thought, but slowly discovered a flaw in my thinking (one of many!).

As I progressed in my recovery, I began attending my group's business meetings and took commitments. I (half-heartedly) listened to reports from our group's GSR and SIA representatives about the activities of various committees at the county and area levels, and their efforts to carry AA's message. But usually the hour was late, since our business meeting was held after our recovery meeting, and these reports were given after we took care of our group's business. In my more charitable moments, I was grateful that the committees were busy and I assumed that they were taking care of all of the needs beyond my group. I did not hear the parts about needing any help or if I did, that somebody on the committee would take care of that need. I did not give these matters any further thought.

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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: Bill on Emotional Sobriety

I think that many oldsters who have put our AA "booze cure" to severe but successful tests still find they often lack emotional sobriety. Perhaps they will be the spearhead for the next major development in AA; the development of much more real maturity and balance (which is to say, humility) in our relations with ourselves, with our fellows, and with God.

Those adolescent urges that so many of us have for top approval, perfect security, and perfect romance urges quite appropriate to age seventeen prove to be an impossible way of life when we are at age forty-seven or fifty-seven.

Since AA began, I've taken immense wallops in all these areas because of my failure to grow up, emotionally and spiritually. My God, how painful it is to keep demanding the impossible, and how very painful to discover finally, that all along we have had the cart before the horse! Then comes the final agony of seeing how awfully wrong we have been, but still finding ourselves unable to get off the emotional merry-go-round.

How to translate a right mental conviction into a right emotional result, and so into easy, happy, and good living? Well, that's not only the neurotic's problem, it's the problem of life itself for all of us who have got to the point of real willingness to hew to right principles in all our affairs.

Even then, as we hew away, peace and joy may still elude us. That's the place so many of us AA oldsters have come to. And it's a hell of

a spot, literally. How shall our unconscious, from which so many of our fears, compulsions and phony aspirations still stream, be brought into line with what we actually believe, know and want! How to convince our dumb, raging and hidden "Mr. Hyde" becomes our main task.

I've recently come to believe that this can be achieved. I believe so because I begin to see many benighted ones, folks like you and me, commencing to get results. Last autumn depression, having no really rational cause at all, almost took me to the cleaners. I began to be scared that I was in for another long chronic spell. Considering the grief I've had with depressions, it wasn't a bright prospect.

I kept asking myself, "Why can't the Twelve Steps work to release depression?" By the hour, I stared at the St. Francis Prayer..."It's better to comfort than to be comforted." Here was the formula, all right. But why didn't it work?

Suddenly I realized what the matter was. My basic flaw had always been dependence - almost absolute dependence - on people or circumstances to supply me with prestige, security, and the like. Failing to get these things according to my perfectionist dreams and specifications, I had fought for them. And when defeat came, so did my depression.

There wasn't a chance of making the outgoing love of St. Francis a workable and joyous way of life until these fatal and almost absolute dependencies were cut away.

Because I had over

the years undergone a little spiritual development, the absolute quality of these frightful dependencies had never before been so starkly revealed. Reinforced by what Grace I could secure in prayer, I found I had to exert every ounce of will and action to cut off these faulty emotional dependencies upon people, upon AA, indeed, upon any set of circumstances whatsoever.

Then only could I be free to love as Francis had. Emotional and instinctual satisfactions, I saw, were really the extra dividends of having love, offering love, and expressing a love appropriate to each relation of life.

Plainly, I could not avail myself of God's love until I was able to offer it back to Him by loving others as He would have me. And I couldn't possibly do that so long as I was victimized by false dependencies.

For my dependency meant demand, a demand for the possession and control of the people and the conditions surrounding me.

While those words "absolute demand" may look like a gimmick, they were the ones that helped to trigger my release into my present degree of stability and quietness of mind, qualities which I am now trying to consolidate by offering love to others regardless of the return to me.

This seems to be the primary healing circuit: an outgoing love of God's creation and His people, by means of which we avail ourselves of His love for us. It is most clear that the current can't flow until our paralyzing dependencies are broken, and broken at depth. Only then can we possibly have a glimmer of what adult love really is.

Spiritual calculus, you say? Not a bit of it. Watch any AA of six months working with a new Twelfth Step case. If the case says "To the devil with you," the Twelfth Stepper only smiles and turns to

another case. He doesn't feel frustrated or rejected. If his next case responds, and in turn starts to give love and attention to other alcoholics, yet gives none back to him, the sponsor is happy about it anyway. He still doesn't feel rejected; instead he rejoices that his one-time prospect is sober and happy. And if his next following case turns out in later time to be his best friend (or romance) then the sponsor is most joyful. But he well knows that his happiness is a by-product, the extra dividend of giving without any demand for a return.

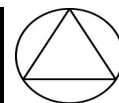
The really stabilizing thing for him was having and offering love to that strange drunk on his doorstep. That was Francis at work, powerful and practical, minus dependency and minus demand.

In the first six months of my own sobriety, I worked hard with many alcoholics. Not a one responded. Yet this work kept me sober. It wasn't a question of those alcoholics giving me anything. My stability came out of trying to give, not out of demanding that I receive.

Thus I think it can work out with emotional sobriety. If we examine every disturbance we have, great or small, we will find at the root of it some unhealthy dependency and its consequent unhealthy demand. Let us, with God's help, continually surrender these hobbling demands. Then we can be set free to live and love; we may then be able to Twelfth Step ourselves and others into emotional sobriety.

Of course I haven't offered you a really new idea, only a gimmick that has started to unhook several of my own "hexes" at depth. Nowadays my brain no longer races compulsively in either elation, grandiosity or depression. I have been given a quiet place in bright sunshine.

Bill W,
Grapevine, January 1958



Step Nine: Made Amends

Why would I need to apologize? I work hard so why can I not play hard? After all if I am hurting anyone I am only hurting myself am I not?

It took me several arrests for drunk driving to get the message that whether I like it or not, I AM an alcoholic

After all, how many times before had I uttered those threadbare words "I am so sorry and I will never will do that again". At those times I said it, I meant it, however the remorse was short lived and I was doomed to repeat the same acts over and over again until such time as I was forced to admit to myself that I AM an alcoholic.

I really believe that the first the first day I came into the program, I began my Ninth Step.

When I began my journey through the Twelve Steps I began to realize that this was a very serious activity. This was nothing to be taken lightly. Each Step has a purpose and a meaning that (if followed) would lead to a life that has value.

When I reached the Ninth Step I had some misgivings. I had been in meetings where I heard people describe various reactions to their apologies. Sons and daughters yelling at the person offering apologies and declaring to never have anything to do with this person again. But I also

heard family members be glad and in tears welcome them back into the family circle.

Armed with the knowledge that no matter what happened, I was doing the right thing, I was doing it for myself and I was doing it to stay sober, I began. I was very fortunate in the reaction of my family. Since I had been sober for awhile and they had noticed that I was a changed man from the railing drunk who kept getting arrested for drunk driving. Since I didn't have to go to "the office" any more, there were no managers to apologize to so my Ninth Step was limited to a fairly small circle of people. Small though the circle may be, these were the people closest to me and those people that I had abused the most.

This program (which I chose to ignore, denigrate and make fun of) has taught me that as long as I keep the following I will not drink:

- Twelve Steps
- Twelve Traditions
- A home group
- A sponsor
- A commitment

Bob S, Northport Trinity

Hot-Line Is Good, Groups Could Be Better

The SIA Hotline is up and running as a viable service of Suffolk County SIA. This is due to the commitment, diligence and tenacity of the Area Phone Captains. It seems some of them must hit the highways and by-ways to solicit members to take a mere 12 hour stint on the Hotline in hopes of helping a fellow alcoholic. Recently, it was reported that a captain had to go to four groups in order to get 14 willing alcoholics to man the Hotline. Honestly, I was surprised and a bit dismayed. On the plus side, there are groups that are requesting the opportunity to man the

Hotline and do service. That warms my heart and encourages me knowing there are those of us who are still "willing to go to any lengths" to remain sober.

Each month the names of the Areas, the Phone Captains and the participating groups are listed in the SIA Bulletin. It is our attempt to show the appreciation we feel for their commitment and willingness.

Currently, Suffolk County is divided into 16 phone areas; we only have 13 Phone Captains however. That means there are a number of towns and groups which will never be afforded the privilege of manning the Hotline. Two areas : Area 60 (Brentwood, Central Islip, Hauppauge) and Area 200 (Cutchogue, Greenport, Mattituck, Orient

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Group History of the Month

Sag Harbor Men's Group Old Whaler's Presbyterian Church 44 Union Street Sag Harbor

This group began in Andy McD's basement and then moved to the Queen of Apostles Retreat House in North Haven with the help of John O'B.

In 1968, Andy's house burned down and he then bought another one in Southampton. A now-sober nephew of Andy's said that there were A.A. meetings in Andy's new basement before the meeting moved to North Haven. This meeting goes back to 1968 and then moved to North Haven some time in 1969. After this move, the meeting was then listed with the A.A. World Services in 1969.

At that time, there was a Brother Bill living there who was an alcoholic. Bill was instrumental in having at least two other groups also start there. Joe R. told me that the site of the retreat house was very spiritual, beautiful and peaceful with a water view of Peconic Bay. Another reason for the meeting to begin there was that it was very isolated and private and some of the members were local businessmen. This men's meeting had eight to twelve men coming and in about 1974 the meeting had grown to fifteen to twenty two men. It met every Monday at 8PM.

In February of 1985, the meeting moved to The Old Whaler's Church in Sag Harbor, only a five minute ride from the original meeting place. When the Pallottine Society of the Catholic Apostolic sold the land, the deal did not go through until the late spring of 1985 because the grave site area had to be moved after the spring thaw. The A.A. meeting took occupancy in February of 1985.

I did my third qualification at this meeting in 1988. The room had about thirty five men and thereafter each time I would go to the meeting about thirty five men were there. Each time that I went, I heard a no-nonsense

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Old Whaler's Presbyterian Church





113-8 Bay Ave. / P.O. Box 659, Patchogue, NY 11772 (631) 654-1150

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

Intergroup Officers

Chairperson Fred H. Chairman@suffolkny-aa.org

Alt Chair Vikki B. Alt-chair@suffolkny-aa.org

Treasurer Bob W. Treasurer@suffolkny-aa.org

Corr. Sec Anne B Corsec@suffolkny-aa.org

Recording Sec Daniel W. Recsec@suffolkny-aa.org

Committee Chairs

Answering Service Dolores Phones@suffolkny-aa.org

Archives Jim O. Archives@suffolkny-aa.org

Bulletin Brian C. Bulletins@suffolkny-aa.org

Corrections Paul Correct@suffolkny-aa.org

Grapevine Mike C. Grapevine@suffolkny-aa.org

Literature Mike W. Books@suffolkny-aa.org

Meeting List George D. ... Meetings@suffolkny-aa.org

Office Manager Joe M. Siaoffice@suffolkny-aa.org

Public Information Kevin .. Pubinfo@suffolkny-aa.org

Schools Eileen Z. Schools@suffolkny-aa.org

Special Events Dawn C. SpecEvent@suffolkny-aa.org

Third Legacy Kevin C. ... Thirdleg@suffolkny-aa.org

Treatment Fac. Tom M. Treatment@suffolkny-aa.org

Webmaster Martin Webmaster@suffolkny-aa.org

Next Up on the HotLine:

September Commitments

9/7- 13- Rich W District 250
Outstanding Sobriety, Westhampton Beach

9/14-20- Ron District 50
TBA

9/21-27 - Pat District 270
East end groups

9/28- 10/4 Bob L District 40 Cold Spring Har-
bor groups

Thanks to August's volunteers:

District 210 - Willie, Riverhead Groups

District 240 - Don, Bellport Groups

District 110- Paul, Holbrook Love and Share

District 80— Woof

District 40 - Bob L., Melville Sweet Air

October Meetings

Archives Committee: 10/1/2014 8:00 PM SIA Office

Institutions Committee: 10/15/2014 7:00 PM SIA Office

Public Information Committee:

10/21/2014 7:00 PM SIA Office

SIA Monthly Business Meeting:

10/14/2014 Cornell Extension
Riverhead

7:00 PM New Group Rep Orientation

7:00 PM Share-a-Thon

8:00 PM Intergroup Meeting

SIA Officers & Chairs: 10/7/2014 7:00 PM SIA Office

Suffolk General Service: 10/17/2014 8:00 PM

Trinity Lutheran Church,
Rocky Point

Third Legacy Committee: 10/28/2014 7:30 PM SIA Office



ANNOUNCEMENTS



I went to AA once...no one was there!

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, update your group information, stay listed

2014 BIG MEETING

SOBRIETY THROUGH SERVICE



Committee Chairs – Volunteers – New to Service
New to Sobriety – All Are Welcome
Sponsored this year by Suffolk General Service



SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 13th 2014
TRUE NORTH COMMUNITY CHURCH
1101 LAKELAND AVE, BOHEMIA
6:00 PM TO 9:00 PM

COMING SOON TO A BULLETIN NEAR YOU!



INTERVIEWS FROM THE ARCHIVES OLD-
TIMERS OPEN HOUSE!

What was AA like in the '50's,'60's and '70's?



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.

The Freedom To Live Group

of Smithtown, meeting on Wednesdays at 12:30, wishes to clarify their meeting list entry: They are a women's group, but they are not handicapped accessible. They have a ramp and elevator, but no bathroom accommodations for a wheelchair.



TRADITION NINE

(Continued from page 1)

Fast forward, I have been truly blessed to have had opportunities to serve AA at the county and area levels. One experience stands out. I was asked to chair one of our area's committees for which I had no direct involvement, but did have related service experience. I set out to learn all that I could, read the GSO material and spoke to others who had the commitment in the past. I got a list of the committee members, sent e-mails, made announcements and posted information about when and where our first meeting would be held. I picked up refreshments, went to the meeting and waited. Nobody showed up. Over the next few days of phone calls to contact numbers, I learned that many were not involved, rotated out, were nominated but decided not to serve, other things came up, and various other reasons that meant I did not have a committee.

This commitment involved carrying the message outside of AA, so I already had a list of requests. With the help of my service sponsor, I began letting people know that there was no committee (a service taboo)

and began working on putting one together with the assistance of other service entities to cover commitments.

The question that still remains for me is: Do service committees somehow take away the individual AA member's responsibility to do 12 Step work? When I look back over my own early thinking, it seemed to me that everything was being done by the service committees, so I was not needed. Sure, there's the Responsibility Declaration that states, "When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there and for that, I am responsible." But I thought everything was covered. My attention span missed the last three words.

When I shared this experience with others, I learned that I was not alone and that as a result, some requests for AA information, speakers, participation in health fairs and other events are declined by our service committees because the person chairing the committee cannot do it all. While much 12 Step work does occur in the true spirit of service, one person is not a committee. Therefore, some opportunities to carry our AA message to those who need our help are lost. To paraphrase an old comic strip, we have met the committee and they are us.

Linda C. — 12 Steps of Hope

HOT LINE GOOD (Continued from page 3)

and Southold) have not had captains for quite awhile. Area 90 (Bohemia, Bayport, Blue Point, Oakdale, East Patchogue, Patchogue and Sayville) is losing Dave from Bohemia Way of Life group as their captain due to increased work responsibilities. I am requesting that some one from each of those areas step up and fill these vacancies. There is support available for you, should you take on this valuable service.

I would like to thank Dawn C. from Coram Steps to Life for acting as my right hand person on the Hotline. She acts as the substitute phone switcher when the captains are unable to switch the phones occasionally. What a gift to me and the Hotline. Interestingly- she says the same thing to me! That's how it works! DOLORES K.

SAG HARBOR MEN (Continued from page 4)

meeting that talked about recovery and how to keep it. They always looked after the newcomer!

One story that I know in complete detail follows. In 1993, John B. showed up at this meeting for a couple of weeks with no time behind him. The group made him Chairman and told him to go to other meetings, get a speaker, and come back the next week to run the meeting. John did this. Then, with more slips and not going to meetings to stay sober or getting a speaker, he just came. The group kept him as Chairman and got the speakers for him to help him get sober. I know this story is accurate because after John got sober, with the great help of this meeting, he came to my house and asked me to be his sponsor.

Russell M. September 2006



Suffolk County InterGroup
ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS
THREE LEGACIES
ANNUAL SHARE-A-THON
Unity Service Recovery

DATE: SUNDAY-OCTOBER 12, 2014

TIME: 9:00AM-4:30PM

LOCATION
ST. JOSEPHSCOLLEGE
Waverly Ave
Exit 51 Sunrise Highway
PATCHOGUE, NEWYORK

Friends old and new
Food for your tummy too
Workshops we can all use
Memories you'll never lose

So Mark Your Calendar & Spread The Word...

So We can Spread The Joy!!!!!!

AA Workshops ... Yoga & Meditation ... L.I.C.Y.P.A.A.
Handicapped Accessible – Spanish Speaking-Alanon
Old Timers - Young People - Gay/Lesbian meetings and lots more