

THE SUFFOLK INTERGROUP

BULLETIN

MAY 2016 Volume 43, Number 1

*"That Feeling of Uselessness and
Self-Pity Will Disappear."*

- The Promises (#5)

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GOODBYE TO SELF PITY

The fifth promise of Alcoholics Anonymous suggests, "That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear." Prior to recovery my attitude was, "Why am I who give so much and ask so little treated so shabbily?" I was drowning in self-pity.

Being raised in the south Bronx as one of ten kids, I suppose it's true that I've played the role of victim for a good portion of my life. I hated being poor and felt the world was depriving me of my rightful title and position in society.

It never occurred to me that if we believe something strongly enough it actually becomes a reality. An often quoted Shakespearean axiom is "*There is nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so.*"

There's an ancient story of a monk being chased by a tiger and he found himself at the edge of a cliff. There was a vine hanging over the cliff and he hastened to lower himself on the vine to escape the tiger. As he was descending, he saw another tiger waiting for him at the bottom of the cliff. Looking up, he noticed a rat chewing at the vine.

At that very instant he noticed a wild strawberry growing out of the side of the cliff. He plucked it and enjoyed the best tasting strawberry he had ever had in his life.

It's only a story, of course, but there is a message in it for me. That monk may very well have been in the final moments of his life and he still knew enough to get the best out of the present moment.

Metaphorically speaking, life continually sends me tigers but life also sends me strawberries. I hadn't been able to enjoy the strawberries because I had always been too damned worried about the tigers. I make better choices today and I'm grateful for the awareness that attitude is vitally important as we face the various vicissitudes of life.

I remember feeling afraid as a kid and thinking that the mere presence of fear within me made me a coward. I didn't realize that one of the definitions of courage is the willingness to do the right thing in spite of fear.

When I stray from the light of reason that AA so freely offers me, I am still capable of falling back into the morass of uselessness and self-pity but on this particular day, at least, I will not turn my back on AA.

-Ed H.



Group History



Bridgehampton East End Young People Queen of the Most Holy Rosary 2350 Montauk Hwy., Bridgehampton

A phone call with group member Phillip provided the information for this group. He credited Christine and Steve as being the "catalysts" for getting this meeting off the ground. The two co-founders still attend on occasion.

Phillip, who is now 2 1/2 years sober, spoke glowingly of A.A. and his recovery. "I started over". He is currently living in Sag Harbor. He attends school now in Manhattan but believes in one of the basic tenets of Alcoholics Anonymous - giving back. "I do a whole lot of service". He is a General Services Representative.

EEYP meets every Thursday with the following format:

First Thursday - Speaker Meeting.

Second Thursday - Step Meeting,

Third Thursday - Speaker Meeting

Last Thursday - Living Sober.

The group celebrated its first anniversary on November 11, 2003. It was in existence for about one year before it made its appearance on the meeting list. "It's a young people's meeting but we keep the doors open to anyone." Phillip estimated that 90% of those in attendance are under thirty years of age and of the others, a good percentage are people who had gotten sober young themselves.

In its year and a half, "lots of people have come through the doors, kids who had gotten in trouble or were encouraged to check it out by their parents who are also in recovery". Most don't return but they have been given a positive introduction to A.A. and more importantly have seen that they could get sober while still young. Phillip emphasized that this young people's meeting is not "a social thing". There is serious recovery and the focus is on the steps.

As is true of many East End meetings, attendance dwindles over the winter season. This past winter, Phillip said at many meetings "I was the only one there" but he persevered. Now with school out and the summer crowd out in force, the attendance averages between ten and twenty people each week

Phone interview with Group member Phillip June 28th 2006

The Archives Committee is always looking for volunteers to help save our Alcoholics Anonymous history. Contact the SIA Office at 654-1150.



GATHER THE ROSE OF LOVE

"Since defective relations with other human beings have nearly always been the immediate cause of our woes, including our alcoholism, no field of investigation could yield more satisfying and valuable rewards than this one."

This statement from the "Twelve and Twelve" is a poignant one since few places in our literature speak of explicit causes of alcoholism. Many years ago, when still drinking, I stood at my father's coffin and whispered to him, "If you had given me what I needed when you were alive, I might be able to feel something now but as it stands I have nothing to give." I believed at the time that my father had never loved me. It never occurred to me, however, that I was still free to love him. I failed in that responsibility.

For a long time, the one regret I had in sobriety was that I hadn't been aware of my responsibility to love and had been refusing to love my father. Throughout my life it seems as though I'd been squeezing the world by the throat trying to make it love me, not realizing I first had to become a loving person in order to attract love into my life.

In my early sobriety I saw an image on the bulletin board of a local rehab; it was a bottle of booze complete with skull and crossbones under which a caption read: *"It's ironic that you should have embraced me when you were seeking love, for I have not one drop of compassion for you."*

I was sober a few years when it occurred to me that I had never embraced my sons, who were man-sized at the time. My wife helped me through this awkwardness by suggesting we should have a "family hug night" one night a week. My sons and I had admitted feeling a bit awkward the first time we embraced but afterward we all agreed we felt liberated. We no longer experience awkwardness when embracing each other. We feel only love. Love is the way.

My father's name was on my Eighth Step list and about a year and a half after I'd made the list he came to me in a dream. In the dream I asked his forgiveness because I was not the son I might have been because of my alcoholism.

My father forgave me. Perhaps a dream therapist or a psychiatrist or some other scientifically-minded person might suggest the dream was unreal. Actually though I don't care what anyone thinks about it. I know the relationship with my father has been healed. We are reminded in the St. Francis Prayer that it is better to love than to be loved.

Poet Edmond Spencer poignantly suggested, *"Gather the rose of love whilst yet is time."* -Ed H.

CAME 2 BELIEVE

Where is everyone?
I just feel so alone.
I've tried all the numbers.
I've picked up the phone!

It's two in the morning
Now what do i do!?
I'm restless, insane,
irritation... i stew.

How did i get here,
this alcoholic Me.
A rhetorical question,
but to Him or to thee.

I was told by a sponsor,
My admission was free.
Let go and Let God
The ticket to sanity.

So here i still sit,
phone numbers no more.
My spirit just broken,
Sad, tired and torn.

I set out before,
destination in sight.
But my will, i can't do it.
I just don't have the might.

I get down on my knees,
I give up the fight.
And I came to believe
That He could.
That night.

-Rae S.

The *Huntington Group* - 70th Anniversary!

*** Please join us in Celebrating Our Group Anniversary on Sunday May 22, 2016 at 6pm ***

The one, most indelible impression anyone has of the Huntington Group, is of their experience upon entering our Home Group...One would have to walk around to the back of the church, down a set of stairs, above which was a light so bright, like a beacon illuminating the darkness and through a door (that if not held while closing, would slam so profoundly loud that all sense of stealth would be lost). And there, a LONG hallway, which seemed miles long, would be at your feet. As one trudges down this hallway, with a most noticeable downward slope, one begins to realize just how undeniably low drinking has brought them. Feeling the weight of each step, the echoes of laughter and people talking would reverberate and get louder as you would get closer and closer to the meeting...Finally, after journeying down this hallway, a feeling of wanting to turn around and run would be met by one of our humble giants, "Eddie the Cat", a short black gentleman wearing a beret and a big smile so wide and white, would welcome you to the Huntington group, with a sincerity and serenity that would soothe any troubled soul.

It was then, the feeling of isolation was whisked away as a sense of belonging was realized. As you would walk into the meeting, with smoke so thick, you could hardly see the other side of the room, you would be greeted by strangers who turned out to be "good friends" you hadn't yet met, with a sincerity few newcomers ever knew and an understanding few ever had. As a sense of relief filled the smoke filled air, another of our humble giants, "Black Mary" aka: Mary U., would come over and size you up in an instant - she would warmly shake your hand and welcome you. But! If anyone tried to give her any B/S, she'd then be toe to toe with you and tell you to "take the cotton out of your ears and stick it in your mouth, sit down and get stupid and if you were stupid, to get stupid-O". Mary had a heart of gold and all the time in the world for you, but no time for any B/S. Tough Love permeated the rooms then. There were also other likeminded humble giants in our midst, Clint F., Ed C., Sam R., Bob W., Joan W., Tom "the Butcher", Jimmy and Dick S., Polly F., Charlie N. and Cass (R.I.P.). Also Harry M., Dot W., Jack K., Phil C., Dianne T., Charlie Z., Tim W., Carrie N., Inge S., Carl and Dave....Nowhere else could you find such a consortium of characters with colors so different, vivid and vibrant, yet united in a unique Spirit of Fellowship that knew no bounds, as we all together, "Trudge the Road of Happy Destiny".

Our group, like all AA groups, were busy following the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions with the goal of helping another alcoholic achieve sobriety. There were many problems solved by group conscience. Many members gave outstanding service to the group, extending themselves to both individual members and to the Huntington group. Devotion to the Principles of AA is the reason our Group is still in existence.

- 1940 - "The First Group" of AA's meet in Huntington and possibly earlier. They would meet in members homes, hence the term "Home Group" was born. Letter from Bill Wilson -Thanking members for their service.
- 1941 August 7 - "PROBLEM DRINKERS START CHAPTER OF ORGANIZATION HERE. Known as Alcoholics Anonymous - Perhaps the strangest organization in history, with membership drawn from all walks of life in the bonds of a common slavery, is establishing a chapter in Huntington, with PO Box 444 for discreet communications." (Long Islander News)
- 1941 Sept. 25 - Members of Huntington AA address Huntington Welfare Forum. Educating the forum about how the AA program works through its members to help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.
- Date Unknown - Suffolk County Group of Huntington Disbands Due To War(WWII).
- 1945 March 1 - Alcoholic Anonymous Reorganizing in Huntington, Bid Liquor Addicts to Join the Group (L.I. News)
- 1946 January 9 - Wednesday, Suffolk Alcoholics Anonymous Unit Holding First Meet in South Side Civic Association, 1925 NY Ave. at 8:30pm. (Meetings became too big for meetings in members homes.) - (L.I. News)
- 1947 January 3 - Letter From Bill Wilson: Congratulating the Huntington Group on Anniversary (SIA Archives)
- 1960 June 22 - Huntington Group warmly welcomed to meet at Old First Pres. Church, for a "6 month Probationary Period". (Perhaps the church had No Idea as to what to expect, with a bunch of Alcoholics in their basement?)

"Til We Meet Again" ... Tim

*****ANNOUNCEMENTS*****

Aprils SIA Monthly Business Meeting Oops:



To all Rep's,

I would like to apologize for the meeting being cancelled on 4/5/16 in Riverhead, at the Cornell Cooperative Extension.

I was *not* made aware I needed to call ahead for the key to be left for pick up.

I want to let everyone know I take sole blame for this error. The Alternate Chair (Tom) and I attempted to contact everyone who signed in from the last meeting at True North Church. Some calls were answered and some were left a message on voice mail.

Going forward I will make sure of the access to the building and this should not happen again. Once again I would like to apologize to all the reps that made the trip for nothing.

Kevin D.

SIA Chair

BUSINESS MEETINGS and SIA reps

Dear A.A. members,

Part of our purpose is to help other alcoholics achieve sobriety. In order to do that effectively in Suffolk County an intergroup effort has been made through the work, the cooperation and the contributions of many groups in this area. We need the support of every group. May we suggest that at your next business meeting the members of your group consider these questions:

- 1) *Do we have an active S.I.A. representative?*
- 2) *Have we sent our current list of officers to the S.I.A.?*
- 3) *Have we actively participated in 12th Step calls?*
- 4) *Have we contributed to the financial support towards efforts of the S.I.A. to reach the suffering alcoholic?*

If the answer to anyone of these questions is "no" perhaps your group can take some action which will make your group's efforts even more positive in the near future.

AN ONLINE SPEAKER EXCHANGE!!!

If your group is interested in developing and participating in an online speaker exchange please email to Tom M., the alternate chair at alt-chair@suffolkny-aa.org

A RIVERHEAD SPEAKER EXCHANGE!!!

We are exploring the possibility of an indoor location in the Riverhead area. The event would start at the stated time and help serve the East End. Your group input will help guide us. If your group does not participate in SIA monthly meeting send an email to Tom M., the alternate chair at alt-chair@suffolkny-aa.org

ONLY ONE MORE CHAIR TO FILL! PLEASE HELP!!!

**PLEASE STEP UP to help in the
vital work Intergroup does!**

**We still need the following position
filled:**

Third Legacy Chair: This person works to increase individual and group awareness of, support for, and participation in Intergroup and other AA Service organizations by educating groups about service work and provides speakers on service and Traditions.

Hot Line MAY Commitments

May 1st Dom Area 50 Babylon Bridge to Sobriety

May 8th Bob Area 220 Mt Sinai Group

May 15th Frank Area 110 Ronkonkoma Rebos

May 22nd Mike Area 230 Port Jefferson Into Action

May 29th Daniel Area 90 Bohemia Together

Thank you April Volunteers!

April 3-9 Dave S Area 240 Brookhaven Sunday Group

April 10-16 Pat M Area 270 Spiritual Solutions Sag H.

April 17-23 Rich Area 250 Hampton Bays Group

April 24-30 John K Area 30 Northport Free At Last

Intergroup Officers Contact Info:

Chair- Kevin chairman@suffolkny-aa.org
Alt Chair- Tom alt-chair@suffolkny-aa.org
Treasurer- Wayne treasurer@suffolkny-aa.org
Corr. Sec.- Dawn corsec@suffolkny-aa.org
Recording Sec.- William recsec@suffolkny-aa.org

Committee Chairs

Answering Service- Ron phones@suffolkny-aa.org
Archives- Bob archives@suffolkny-aa.org
Bulletin- Mary bulletins@suffolkny-aa.org
Corrections- Lee correct@suffolkny-aa.org
Grapevine- Lee grapevine@suffolkny-aa.org
Literature- Laurie books@suffolkny-aa.org
Meeting List- Zoe ... meetings@suffolkny-aa.org
SIA Office Manager- Cheryl. siaoffice@suffolkny-aa.org
Public Information- Jack pubinfo@suffolkny-aa.org
Schools- Eileen schools@suffolkny-aa.org
Special Events- Patrick specevent@suffolkny-aa.org
Third Legacy OPEN! ... thirldleg@suffolkny-aa.org
Treatment Facilities- P.J. ... treatment@suffolkny-aa.org
Webmaster- Troy websup@suffolkny-aa.org

June Meetings

Public Information Committee: **Wed. 6/15/16 7:00 PM**
SIA Office, 113-8 Bay Ave., Patchogue

SIA Monthly Business Meeting: **Tues. 6/7/16 8:00pm**
True North Community Church, 1101 Lakeland Av., Bohemia

- 7:00 PM New Group Rep Orientation
- 7:00 PM Share-a-Thon
- 8:00 PM Intergroup Meeting

SIA Officers & Chairs: **Tues. 6/28/16 7:00 PM**
SIA Office, 113-8 Bay Ave., Patchogue

Suffolk General Service: **Fri. 6/17/16 8:00 PM**
True North Community Church, Lakeland Ave., Bohemia

Treatment Facilities Committee: **Fri. 6/21/16 7:00 PM**
SIA Office, 113-8 Bay Ave., Patchogue

Special Events: Email Chairperson above
Archives Committee: Email Chairperson above
Third Legacy Committee: Check with SIA Office



It's AA's BIRTHDAY!

!!! DANCE THE NIGHT AWAY !!!

♦ IT'S POT LUCK SO BRING A DISH TO SHARE!

♦ 50/50 RAFFLE!



JUNE 10TH 2016

Time: 7pm – 11pm

TRUE NORTH CHURCH

1101 LAKELAND AVE.

BOHEMIA, N.Y. 11716

VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED

CALL PATRICK AT 631-428-8797

EMAIL: specevent@suffolkny-aa.org

