



BULLETIN

Visit your Suffolk County AA Website at: <http://www.suffolkny-aa.org>



Myths and legends abound in history. George Washington never chopped down a cherry tree. It is doubtful that Betsy Ross ever sewed a flag. Abner Doubleday didn't create a game called baseball in Cooperstown, New York. And Alcoholics Anonymous was not founded on June 10, 1935.

According to A.A. history, Dr. Bob insisted on going to the American Medical Association convention in Atlantic City---as he had done every year for the previous twenty years. He swore to both Bill W. and his wife, Anne, that he would be fine and dandy; they had no need to worry. In fact, their apprehensions were right on the money. He wasn't long on the train before he would start his last glorious bender. He would continue drinking at the convention and the train ride home. When he got home he would go through a three day detox. Since he was set to perform a surgery, he was given a beer to ward off his jitters. That was his last drink! Supposedly that was June 10, 1935.

The only hitch in the official timeline is that records have shown that the AMA convention didn't even start until June 10. So it would have been impossible for Bob to have taken a train to and from Atlantic City, attend a convention, come home and detox in three days. Some AA historians believe June 17 is probably closer to the actual date.

What does it mean in the grand scheme of things? Nothing at all. Our founders were far too busy trying to stay sober and get others sober to be keeping accurate records. The fact that Dr. Bob stopped drinking and would remain sober until he passed away in 1950 is the real cause for celebration. The date itself is symbolic.

Think of this around July 4th when you hoist the flag that Betsy Ross didn't really design and turn on television to watch a baseball game that Doubleday didn't invent. In fact, the Continental Congress declared independence on July 2, 1776 not July 4th. But that's another story for another day.

Archives Bob



The GOOD News is:

You Get Your Feelings Back;

The BAD News is:

You Get Your Feelings Back

This is often heard in the rooms. I heard this and thought, "Bring it"! I didn't think I had *that* many feelings that I drank and numbed away. As a new-comer, people would always say this to me. I had no idea what was coming.

Within the second month of my sobriety, the blank hit the fan! I was crying constantly in meetings and became ashamed of that. Thank goodness for the wonderful people in my life who wouldn't let me leave the meetings. I was crawling in my own skin and sobbing to the point that I had TOTAL ugly girl crying face. I didn't want to pick up, but I didn't want to feel this. I made the phone calls, but I already had an alternative in mind; one that I used as a release back in high school. After I hung up the phone, I self-harmed. Luckily it only looked like I was scratched by cat, but I was in shock that all these years later that thought had popped into my head.

I was honest with what I did. YOU HAVE TO BE HONEST. And I was then able to use the support of AA to move back onto the beam. (To put you at ease, I have not self-harmed since).

But this is a reality we deal with once we get sober. There are so many feeling for the first time and we're not using the tools. Feelings are not facts, but they are dangerous.

At this point in my life, I am off the beam again. I am miles away from it! But today I have tools. My toolbox is full of my support group with wonderful, life-saving people, the literature, my higher power, and meditating.

Michelle K.

THIS BULLETIN NEEDS YOUR HELP!

We need YOUR participation!

Please help and send in

- your articles!
- your experiences!
- your announcements!
- your comments!
- your artwork, poems, photos, etc.!

Send to Brian at:

bulletins@suffolkny-aa.org

IN THIS ISSUE

- | | |
|----------|--|
| Pg.1 ... | – MYTHS AND LEGENDS |
| Pg.2... | – THE GOOD NEWS IS... |
| Pg.3... | – STEP SIX
– PEACE AND LOVE |
| Pg.4... | – GROUP HISTORY:
STONY BROOK FREETHINKERS |
| Pg.6... | – MEETINGS AND CONTACTS |
| Pg.7... | – ANNOUNCEMENTS |
| Pg.8... | – GUIDELINES FOR FINDING A
SPONSOR |

ONE PERSON'S OPINION REGARDING STEP SIX

*Were entirely ready to have God remove all
these defects of character.*

Do defects become removed entirely? I wonder! Several of the defects of character I had many years ago seem to still be with me. They are not as obvious, however, because I'm no longer acting out on them. Nonetheless, the potential remains. When I'm off the AA beam my defects rear their ugly heads. We learn in Step Seven that self-centered fear is the chief activator of these defects.

It seems we are capable of displaying very fine personality traits. Yet we are just as capable of displaying the most ignoble and despicable traits. The choice is ours. Perhaps Higher Power doesn't entirely remove our defects because in doing so, we would be deprived of choice. When I was still "acting out" I didn't know there was a choice.

Today I know that regardless of what is happening around me, I will always have the prerogative and the responsibility of choosing what happens within me.

The people I encounter in my life are as close to God as I'm ever going to be while I'm still in this body. As I distance myself from people, I distance myself from God. No one person is entirely good or entirely bad, he is simply displaying one side or the other of his potential character.

It seems as if there is a duality to man's nature. I may choose to operate from my "Higher Self" or "Lower Self," and the choice is entirely mine. I can no longer blame God or Satan. I'm grateful for the awareness.

All we need do is become entirely ready; with a little bit of luck, the defect we are most fond of will be the last one to be removed.

An ancient axiom suggests that when a man dies he leaves behind him all that he has and takes with him all that he is. - Ed H.

Around the AA Campus

On April 1, 2017 Lake Ronkonkoma's 65 year run of a 9:00 P.M. Friday night meeting was ended. The time was changed to 8:00 P.M. The late evening champion still remains Southampton which has been meeting at 9:00 P.M. on Saturday since 1947---70 years. Later meetings were once the norm in AA, as it was felt members should go home to have dinner with the family, then go to their meeting. The Valley Eight O'clock Group was so named because of the unusually early time at which it met. Your editor can remember going to the Bohemia Workshop meeting on Sunday at 9:00 PM, which would not infrequently last until 1:00 AM Monday.

PEACE AND LOVE

There's a metaphysical axiom that suggests if I want something to manifest in my life I have to want it for everyone else first. Sounds a bit foolish on its face but there's a ring of truth in it for me. If I want understanding I must learn to be understanding of others; if I want kindness I must demonstrate kindness to others; if I want love, I must become a loving person.

"Give what we need" may be another metaphysical axiom. If we need a pat on the back, we give pats on the back. If we need a hug, we give hugs. If we need encouragement, we give encouragement. If we need respect, we must respect others.

As a kid, I was told the story of the little boy who was very angry at his parents and ran from his house screaming "I hate you, I hate you." Almost immediately thereafter he came back trembling and told his parents there was someone in the forest yelling to him, "I hate you." His parents took him outside and told him to yell the words, "I love you" and this is the precise message that was echoed back to him. **We get back from the world what we give out to the world.**

I remember hearing as a kid, "To have a friend, be a friend." That's pretty much saying the same thing. If I need friendship, I must offer friendship to others. There was a time in my life when my attitude was "I don't need anything or anybody" and I hasten to assure you it was a miserable way to exist. I fully acknowledge my need for people today.

When my wife and I were caring for our grandkids, I definitely learned something from them.

(Continued on Page 5)

Notice: SUBMISSION DUE DATE for July's Bulletin is June 20TH!

Send your submissions to Brian at: bulletins@suffolkny-aa.org

Group History

Stony Brook Freethinkers

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

380 Nicolls Rd.

Stony Brook, NY 11790



A freethinker is "a person who rejects accepted opinions, especially those concerning religious belief." Brian C., who started this meeting, has held this philosophy for the thirty plus years he has maintained sobriety through Alcoholics Anonymous. Staying open-minded and having been very active doing service work, he had contemplated for a long time starting a meeting like this. The thought started percolating around 2005 when the Brian who started the Bay Shore Freethinkers asked for Brian C.'s advice on starting that group, but it took prodding by a believing friend, Mary K., who was a some-time congregant at the UU Fellowship, to get things moving.

The first meeting of Freethinkers was on January 16, 2015. The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship has opened its doors to Alcoholics Anonymous over the years and this was the latest in a long line ranging from gay meetings to women's meetings. It is, however, the only one held there as of this writing.

If you walked into this room for the first time, it seems like any other A.A. meeting--- except the focus is on the secular. In the spirit of fairness, the regular Twelve Steps shades are on one side and the agnostic Twelve Steps are on the other. The day a member of the Archives Committee attended, there was no evidence of censorship. What is being offered here is another alternative for those who may struggle with the more traditional focus on God. A statement read at the start of each meeting says, "[Freethought groups] don't recite prayers at the beginning or ending of their meetings nor do they suggest that a belief in God is required to get sober or to maintain sobriety. If the readings at these meetings include AA's suggested program of recovery, then a secular or humanist version of the 12 Steps is sometimes shared. While these groups are intended to be accommodating to atheists, agnostics and secularists of all stripes, any AA, non-believer or believer, is welcome."



There are anywhere from six to twelve attendees each week on Friday at 7:30 P.M. (Currently about 20, and a Wednesday night Step meeting has been added—Ed.) Since there are people who show up regularly each week, it is apparent this is supplying a much needed service. In addition, the curious stop by to check it out. They, too, may realize that this is just another meeting. People are sharing about how they

(continued on next page.)

FREETHINKERS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4)

struggled and eventually triumphed over our common disease. The Agnostic Steps used in that process are listed below and carry the same life-saving message:

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol-that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe and to accept that we needed strengths beyond our awareness and resources to restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to entrust our will and our lives to the care of the collective wisdom and resources of those who have searched before us.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to ourselves without reservation, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were ready to accept help in letting go of all our defects of character.
7. With humility and openness sought to eliminate our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through meditation to improve our spiritual awareness and our understanding of the AA way of life and to discover the power to carry out that way of life.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

SIA Archives Committee September 8, 2015

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

Peace, Love, Etc.

(Continued from page 3)

Children may intuitively know that if they give hugs they will in turn get the hugs they need. They seem to have a wisdom that grownups may not fully appreciate. Kids don't have the "sophistication" to mistrust the world and as a result they may very well have more clarity in their vision than do adults.

I didn't feel loved until I took the risk to love others. Whatever gives us a reason for getting up in the morning is a good thing.

My first attempt at expressing love was awkward, to say the least. A buddy of mine in my early sobriety was Hank B. He was dropping me off after we had been at a Retreat and before getting out of the car I said, "*Take care Hank; peace and love and all that faggy stuff.*" He laughed loudly. Later, when I reflected on why I needed to express myself that way to Hank, I came to the realization that I was being apologetic for having had a sensitive thought.

I was raised on Willis Ave in the south Bronx and it seems we didn't think it was too masculine to have sensitive thoughts. Now that may have been all me. Maybe no other guy felt that way and perhaps I simply assumed they did. Although the closest we ever came to expressing love on Willis Ave was "*Wow, you see the knockers on that one.*"

As I grew in sobriety I continued to learn about love. When parting from people today I wish the person "**Peace and Love**" and I have gotten to the point whereby I genuinely want the other person to experience peace and love.

I changed the greeting on my message machine to the following: "*Hello, you beautiful child of the universe; neither Terry nor Ed can come to the phone right now; please leave a message at the beep and one of us will get back to you. Peace and Love and have yourself a good day.*"

If my reason for getting up in the morning is to love the world, I'm destined to have a spectacular day.

Ed H.

Around the AA Campus

New group at the old Sayville Library location (corner of Collins Ave and Middle Rd.): Open Books meets on Tuesday morning at 9:30 A.M. and Thursday evening at 7:00 p.m. Both are open Big Book meetings



July's Business Meetings

> Public Information Committee:

3RD TUESDAY OF MONTH

Tues. 7/18/17 7:00 PM

***SIA Office, 113-8 Bay Ave.
Patchogue***

> SIA Business Meeting:

2nd TUESDAY OF MONTH

Tues. 7/11/17 8:00pm

***Cornell Cooperative Extension
423 Griffin Ave.***

Riverhead

>7:00 PM *Archives Committee meeting*

>7:00 PM *New Group Rep Orientation*

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

> SIA Officers & Chairs:

LAST TUESDAY OF MONTH

Tues. 7/26/17 7:00 PM

***SIA Office, 113-8 Bay Ave.
Patchogue***

> Suffolk General Service:

3RD FRIDAY OF EVERY MONTH

Fri. 7/21/17 8:00 PM

>7:00 PM *General Service new Rep meeting*

***True North Community Church
Lakeland Ave.***

Bohemia

> Treatment Facilities Committee:

3RD TUESDAY OF MONTH

Tues. 7/18/17 7:00 PM

***SIA Office, 113-8 Bay Ave.
Patchogue***

> Big Meeting Committee:

3RD THURSDAY OF MONTH

Thurs. 7/20/17 7:00 PM

SIA Office, 113-8 Bay Ave. Patchogue

Contact your Intergroup chairs!

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.- Tara recsec@suffolkny-aa.org

Answering Service- Ron phones@suffolkny-aa.org

Archives- Bob archives@suffolkny-aa.org

Big Meeting - Jean Marie ... siaoffice@suffolkny-aa.org

Bulletin- Brian bulletins@suffolkny-aa.org

Corrections- Lee correct@suffolkny-aa.org

Grapevine- Lee grapevine@suffolkny-aa.org

Literature- Laurie books@suffolkny-aa.org

Meeting List- Brodey ... meetings@suffolkny-aa.org

Public Information- Jack pubinfo@suffolkny-aa.org

SIA Office Manager- Cheryl. siaoffice@suffolkny-aa.org

Schools—Jack schools@suffolkny-aa.org

Share A Thon- Rob share@suffolkny-aa.org

Special Events- Patrick specevent@suffolkny-aa.org

Third Legacy OPEN! ... thirdleg@suffolkny-aa.org

Treatment Facilities Jackie. ... treatment@suffolkny-aa.org

Webmaster- Troy websup@suffolkny-aa.org

See what it's about!

A THIRD LEGACY Chair is needed!

PLEASE HELP!

email:

chairman@suffolkny-aa.org

*****ANNOUNCEMENTS*****

THIS BULLETIN IS LOOKING FOR A NEW LAYOUT ARTIST/EDITOR!

TRAINING AND SOFTWARE PROVIDED

PLEASE CONTACT BRIAN AT bulletins@suffolkny-aa.org

NEED HELP...

I finished all 12 Steps with my Sponsor. I read, raise my hand, took the Speaker Exchange commitment for my group and for that, I am responsible. I actually want to do the right thing ...
... Suffolk County Community College has asked AA to begin our Speaker Exchange at 8:00 AM. In December, except for two cars, the lot had been emptied out at 8:00AM! I was disappointed, by being on time. In March I was disappointed again. Yes, I belong to the Online Speaker Exchange and use it, but I need to fill in my vacant spots which the website exchange did not fill. I am asking you to reach out your hand to another alcoholic (me) by being there at 8:00 AM on Saturday, June 10. Thanks, Rick

We need your old books you're not using!

Treatment facilities committee looking for AA members to donate any AA approved books for treatment facilities. You can drop them off at the SIA office at 113-8 Bay Ave., Patchogue Mon-Fri 9-3pm and Sat 9-1pm OR contact Jackie at:

treatment@suffolkny-aa.org



Around the AA Campus

The "Selden House of Gain" group is celebrating its 1st Group Anniversary on Thursday, June 29th 2017. We invite you to join us for Lunch starting @ 12 Noon followed by an "OPEN" meeting at our regular time, 1PM.

***Location: Grace Presbyterian Church,
425 Hawkins Rd, Selden.***

42nd Annual SIA Share-A-Thon

What is the Share-A-Thon?

The Share-a-Thon is a free open single day event that takes months of working together to plan. During the day, over 60 workshops created by groups across Suffolk County, with various topics are available to attend. Breakfast and lunch crews keep everyone fueled up while information tables are open for everything AA has to offer in service. The day is topped off in the auditorium with a new "best home group" competition! Then our sobriety countdown and spiritual speakers from AA and Al-Anon. As you can imagine help is needed at all different levels and times of the day, so sign up and be part of a wonderful event! Any questions, please email us at: Share@suffolkny-aa.org

A Guide to Choosing a Sponsor

When I walk into a shoe store, there are hundreds of shoeboxes available to purchase. The first thing I do is to go to the Men's section, and then select the type of footwear I need: sneakers, dress shoes, boots, etc. Let's consider boots, since I plan to go on a Journey, and the going might get rough sometimes. The next consideration is boot Size, because I want the boots to specifically fit me and my needs. I need to have the boots fit me and not me to fit the boot! Since I believe the trails I will be taking for the rest of my life will sometimes be on rocks and rough gravel, I want a good substantial sole that, along with my soul, will keep me safe on the trail. If a salesperson were ever to ask me "How much are you willing to spend?" I could respond with "I will spend anything! Don't you know that this journey is about my life and death?" ... but I won't.

Good hiking boots are really a good find! They are tough on the trail, but the leather tops seem to know just where to bend, and when to bend. They accommodate, eventually becoming comfortable with my own skin. They are meant to be used and become worn. Anyone with a seven month old pair of boots that still looks brand new, hasn't really seen very many good places ... yet. Beat up boots mean your journey has shown you some nice things in your new life.

Well, that is pretty much what choosing a Sponsor/Guide is all about. I must be comfortable with him, he must seem to fit my needs at the time. Unlike any shoe store that I have seen, my Sponsor/Guide is free! He wants to help me on my journey, as others have helped him. He will be tough when he needs to be, and know when to bend when he must. He will do his best to help me along my Journey. He wants me to travel Life.

It sometimes happens that "the shoe doesn't fit". It is now that I must decide what my True Priority really is, and it is not so- cial. This is one advantage of not choosing a Guide/Sponsor who is someone I know. It might be better to choose someone that I don't know because, sometimes I must let my boots go ... they are not serving me well ... I must select another pair. This is easier if the initial selection was not based upon an earlier friendship. The boot was to be used, not saved. It was supposed to help me and not add another difficulty in my travel ... there will be enough of those! Good sponsors know this and will wish you well with your next Guide. If my second sponsor turns out to be Great! (for life), I must not begin thinking that he would have been perfect for me when I first entered the program. It is possible that the first sponsor was perfect for me when I began, and the second one was perfect for me from that point forward. There is a plan for all three of us. Your Top priority must always be your sobriety ... you need to get a sponsor soon.

Good sponsors will always feel that they had a hand in my early sobriety, and wish me the best for the next leg of my journey. My best "Thank You!" to him is hiking to a special spot, maybe a vista or a waterfalls deep in the woods, and saying "Wow. I never knew a place like this existed! It was here for so long, and I just didn't know it. I am grateful for the work you did in letting me see this new Life." The boots will hear it.

Rick

