

Volume 48
Number 2

THE SUFFOLK INTERGROUP **Bulletin**

June, 2020

Visit your Suffolk County SIA Website at:

<http://www.suffolkny-aa.org>

Inside:
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Coronavirus
Thoughts From Some
Fellow Alcoholics

The Suffolk Intergroup Bulletin

June Business Meetings

Due to Covid-19 these meetings may be held online. For further information visit:

<https://2020.suffolkny-aa.org/groups/sia-general-meeting/>

LAST TUESDAY OF THE MONTH

Tues. 6/30/20

SIA Business Meeting: 8:00 PM

Archives Committee meeting: 7:00 PM

New Group Rep Orientation: 7:00 PM

**True North Community Church
1101 Lakeland Ave., Bohemia,
NY 11716**

Public Information Committee:

THIRD WEDNESDAY OF MONTH

6/17/20 7:00 PM

SIA Office, 113-8 Bay Ave. Patchogue

SIA Officers & Chairs:

Treatment Facilities Committee:

THIRD TUESDAY OF MONTH

Tues. 6/7/16/20 7:00 PM

Suffolk General Service:

THIRD FRIDAY OF MONTH

Fri. 6/19/20 8:00 PM

New GSR Orientation: 7:00 PM

SIA Office, 113-8 Bay Ave. Patchogue

A Message from SIA Web Support

The website has continued to see increased traffic and many more visitors. In the past month we've made many changes to the website, relocated the new website to the top level domain and moved to a new hosting platform. Fans of the 6 Million Dollar Man would be proud -- better, faster, stronger.

<https://suffolkny-aa.org/>

We've also relocated the old site to
<https://classic.suffolkny-aa.org>

Please direct any comments, updates, corrections, or suggested changes to the Web Support:

websup@suffolkny-aa.org

Group Email Address

Claim your group's SIA email account TODAY:

<https://suffolkny-aa.org/groups/group-email/>

Online Meetings

To learn how to find and join online meetings, please visit our online meeting page:

<https://suffolkny-aa.org/online-meetings/>

To see all online meetings for today in the Meeting Finder visit:

<https://suffolkny-aa.org/meetings/?tsml-type=ONL>

Online Contributions to SIA

Learn more about the why and the how continued 7th Tradition Contributions are necessary for SIA to continue it's mission of helping groups carry the message:

<https://suffolkny-aa.org/7th-trad/>

General Services

Physically Distanced but Digitally Connected The Alcoholics Anonymous Message Carries On Amid Coronavirus (COVID-19)

May 11, 2020

Contact: pressinfo@aa.org

A.A. in the digital age has certainly taken on a new meaning in these challenging times. Alcoholics Anonymous is not a place or an event; it exists in the hearts, minds and help freely offered by its members.

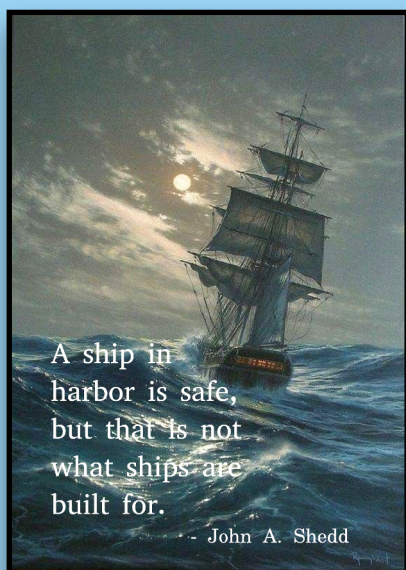
Most recently, Coronavirus (COVID-19) has affected many A.A. groups that normally would meet in- person. The General Service Office (G.S.O.) of Alcoholics Anonymous U.S./Canada, which functions as a repository for A.A. members and groups who are looking for shared experience from the A.A. Fellowship, has some general experience to share regarding this issue.

Some A.A. members have shared that meeting online has been an adjustment and has at times had its challenges. Adhering to state/provincial and federal guidelines, many A.A. members have switched from “in-person” meetings to digital meetings, on platforms such as Zoom, Google Hangouts, Conference Calls, GoToMeeting and What's App, allowing the group to continue to focus on A.A.'s primary purpose: to carry its message of recovery to the alcoholic who still suffers.

In a sense, however, this current experience is not necessarily new for A.A. From its earliest beginnings, the A.A. founders recognized the need to reach beyond the face-to-face transmission of the A.A. message, giving rise to the development of A.A.'s basic text, the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*. This book and other A.A. materials which are widely available on multiple platforms – digital, audio and video – has literally circled the globe and opened the door to recovery for thousands of alcoholics looking for help. Even prior to this pandemic many A.A. members around the world – whether homebound, living in remote areas, or service members stationed in far-flung places – have counted on participating in A.A. remotely through A.A. literature, phone calls with other members, correspondence by letter or email and meetings online.

While many A.A. members are for the first time reporting the shift from in-person meetings to digital platforms, for many alcoholics around the world, remote connections and digital platforms are how they initially encountered and maintain their recovery in A.A. even prior to the pandemic.

Many A.A. groups have shared with G.S.O. that they are now finding great connection in digital meetings and want to offer that same experience to anyone who has yet to attend their first meeting. There are a number of other A.A. resources as well and those seeking help with a drinking problem can get local A.A. information through G.S.O.'s website https://www.aa.org/pages/en_US/find-aa-resources or download G.S.O.'s free of charge A.A. W.S.Meeting Guide App.



Around the AA Campus

Still being under the coronavirus cloud has not stopped us AAs from finding new approaches to get together for meetings. Even if it means via telephone or computer, we are not letting this stop us from working our programs. Step Three in the 12 and 12 mentions the resourcefulness of those who were in battle during World War II. Salerno beachhead didn't get us drunk, neither will this.

The Archives Committee will be collecting stories about Covid-19 and Suffolk AA. These will be put together in a history to be saved for future generations. This is unprecedented in our time.

Have you more than 30 years sobriety? How about being interviewed and share your stories of what Alcoholics Anonymous was like back when you started? Your memories are important! Leave word at archives@suffolkny-aa.org

Finally. Heard at a Zoom meeting: Sobriety is like pizza. When it's good, it's really, really good. When it's bad it's still pretty darn good.

Hang in there.

The Archives Committee
is desperately seeking people to help with our website.

Check it out at
suffolkAAArchives.com

The Email Addresses of your Intergroup Chairs

Chair - Jean Marie - chairman@suffolkny-aa.org

Alt Chair - Lee - alt-chair@suffolkny-aa.org

Treasurer - Laurie - treasurer@suffolkny-aa.org

Recording Sec. - Zoe - corsec@suffolkny-aa.org

Corresponding Sec. Stacey - recsec@suffolkny-aa.org

Archives - Jack - archives@suffolkny-aa.org

Archivist - Bob - archives@suffolkny-aa.org

Bulletin - Fran, - bulletins@suffolkny-aa.org

Corrections - Robert - correct@suffolkny-aa.org

Grapevine - Jackie - grapevine@suffolkny-aa.org

Hot Line- Jeff - phones@suffolkny-aa.org

Institutions - Kathleen -
institutions@suffolkny-aa.org

Literature- Tommy - books@suffolkny-aa.org

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

Public Info - Danny - pubinfo@suffolkny-aa.org

Office Manager - Michael, -
siaoffice@suffolkny-aa.org

Schools - Phil - schools@suffolkny-aa.org

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

Special Events- VACANT -
specevent@suffolkny-aa.org

Third Legacy - Jim - thirdleg@suffolkny-aa.org

Web Support- David - websup@suffolkny-aa.org

SIA Volunteers - volunteers@suffolkny-A.A.org

**Dix Hills Group
Methodist Church
400 Deer Park Road
Dix Hills, NY 11746**



Like its counterpart, Dix Hills Sunday Sobriety, the Dix Hills Group has found a home and stayed put. It began meeting around 1971/72 and has camped out at the Methodist Church ever since, just as the Sunday Sobriety has stayed put at St. Matthews all its time. This speaks volumes about the wonderful relationship both groups have had with their hosts. Many groups, for various reasons, resemble wandering troubadours as they move from place to place. Not so the Dix Hills crowd. Here is a prime example of consistency, much like the sunrise and the sunset.

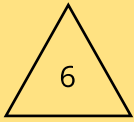
Originally, the group gathered on Tuesdays at 9:00pm, which was not such an unusual time for a meeting to start back then. In the early 1980s Thursday meetings were added including the women's meeting that would break off one day and become what is known today as Women on Wednesday. As is the case with other groups, the line-ups have changed over the years. Big Book, step, beginners, closed discussion and open have alternated between Tuesdays and Thursdays in an effort to meet the changing needs of its members until settling upon its current schedule.

Steadfastly, the Dix Hills Group has kept its doors open for approximately 40 years. Maybe some AAs reading this brief history can shed some light on the why, who and how of this reliable team.

SIA Archives

May 22, 2012

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



The Suffolk Intergroup

Sobriety in the Time of the Coronavirus

Stacey Y.

In the time of Covid-19 I am most concerned about the newcomer who is unable to meet alcoholics in person and to receive their guidance directly.

Thanks to the AA program, I have been sober for 27 months, after 30 years of trying on my own.

I had visited rooms twice before, for a month or two, but nothing had stuck with me. I saw the 12-Steps “shade” and rejected all of it as too God-centered. I heard a lot of hair-raising drinking stories, and decided that I wasn’t so bad after all – a problem drinker, not an alcoholic.

I left the rooms both times and continued to drink. And drink and drink. This problem of ours never gets better with time, only worse. After another 15 years I reached the point of desperation and returned to AA.

I was fortunate to attend a Big Book Study meeting close by and was finally introduced to the long-version *program* of Alcoholics Anonymous. I realize that attending meetings and receiving the support of AA Fellowship is enough for some people to achieve sobriety. I needed more than that. I needed to take the 12 Steps with the help of my sponsor.

On my own, I had tried many strategies to quit drinking. Reminders, punishments, rewards, locking up the liquor cabinet and mailing myself the key (I kid you not). But I never once for a moment considered a spiritual solution for my problem. Never even occurred to me. I thought that I was a fine human being already, and spirituality was for religious people. AA can teach you an awful lot about yourself and your pre-conceived notions.

I hope that the on-line meetings are enough for newcomers to help them stay sober. But for those for whom it’s not enough, I hope that they take the next step and get a Big Book, and a sponsor to help them go through it. I hope the men and women who have taken the steps offer their guidance. I hope the newcomers stay on the line after the meeting and ask someone to help them learn the program. It worked for me.

David V.

Sometime in 1995, I visited the Word-Wide Web for the first time. I had visited the internet prior to this, but in its labyrinth of text-only usenet forums and chat rooms, I found no firm soil to grasp.

The Web was different. It was visual, more intuitive and more inviting. One of the first things I did was look for information that, in retrospect, allowed me to take my first tentative steps out of the closet to which I had previously consigned myself. Steps which I had found impossible to take in person, face to face. It was to prove the beginning of my journey of self-discovery and self-acceptance.

Thus is the power of technology to connect people with Truth and with each other over vast distances in relative safety.

Some will no doubt quickly point out there is a dark side. The same technology can be used to mislead, confuse and divide. But there are light and dark sides to most things in life.

I can’t help but reflect on this part of my story during quarantine. I think of all the fearful, confused and isolated drunks out there looking for help when AA meetings have moved online.

For every person who found it ‘impossible to get sober without face to face meetings’, there is probably someone else who was able to summon the courage to enter a virtual room where they might not have been able to do so in person.

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.

Anywhere includes online meeting spaces as well.

Sobriety in the Time of the Coronavirus

Roy D.

Pandemics have a way of shaking up our daily routines. In many way things have changed.

Most of us have not been to an in-person meeting in months, and fellowship, so critical to our sobriety, feels different. There are no

handshakes or hugs, no sharing of refreshments before the meeting, and no meeting after the meeting in the parking lot. Face to face with my fellow alcoholics now takes place behind a screen.

To stay sober, I have to practice flexibility and resiliency. Online meetings have popped up at a remarkable pace, and I attend several of them a week from the safety of my home.

The phone is still heavy, but I try to connect with another alcoholic on a daily basis. I do service for my group by chairing a weekly step meeting, and am fortunate to have a commitment outside the group level with Suffolk General Service. I read AA and other spiritual literature every morning before spending a few moments in silent contemplation.

Continued social isolation has impacted me though. More often than before the pandemic I feel out of sorts, and find myself wallowing in self-pity. Fortunately, I have AA to remind me that "this too shall pass" and not to take myself so damn seriously! When I do so, I become aware of how good I really have it: I've got a home, enough money to buy food, and despite a few of us getting Covid-19, a family that is generally healthy.

I never put much thought into how we humans would respond to a global health crisis, but here we are in the midst of what may be the most impactful event that any of us will face in our lifetimes. So even though AA looks and feels a bit different during this pandemic, we are still bound together in our primary purpose and will stay sober if we persevere in taking life one day at a time.

Fran H.

Because my husband and I are home a lot anyway, he works at home and I haven't worked for a while, the pandemic hasn't changed my life dramatically.

Sure, I can't go to the gym or to my workshops at OLLI, a program that offers workshops on a number of interesting topics. I can't get together with my friends for lunch or dinner or go to book club meetings. And my kids haven't been able to come out for a weekend to spend time with us. All things I really enjoy. But these are small sacrifices in a time in which many people are suffering the loss of a loved one or struggling with the virus, or are facing a failing business or economic hardship.

The pandemic has strengthened my awareness of how blessed I am and how I am able to live in a state of gratitude. We've done what we can to deal with the situation as it's been presented to us. We've had a lot of Zoom and Face-Time get-togethers with my kids as well as with my sister and her family and had a lot of fun doing that. My son made a beautiful Mother's Day slide show for me with him playing the guitar. We've all become more aware of how much we mean to each other and love each other.

My sobriety has benefitted a great deal from the online meetings. I can still see my A.A. friends on-screen even if I can't see them in person. And it's good to know that these meetings are widely available to alcoholics everywhere.

I do feel a bit bad for my niece, who has just graduated from the Berklee College of Music and couldn't be part of a commencement ceremony. But they had an online graduation and several of her family members and friends did a drive-by parade to congratulate her as she stood outside, in the cold, in her cap and gown. She had a wonderful day, just as I had a wonderful Mother's Day and birthday. People all over are finding creative ways to reach out to each other and to say just how much they mean to them.

The pandemic has enhanced my knowledge of how good life has been to me and how I am able to live in a state of gratitude, something I became much more aware of and more appreciative of in Alcoholics Anonymous.

Sobriety in the Time of the Coronavirus

Brian C.

When you have been sober for a long time, your program, like life generally perhaps, takes on certain habitual aspects. At least mine does. For those of us who live alone, some of those aspects, like the meetings we have attended for years and the after-the-meeting trips to the diner with friends, have become an important part of our social lives. "Sheltering in place" to mitigate COVID-19 definitely looked like it was going to have effects on our lives that I, for one, did not like the thought of, especially when it became obvious that we were going to have to shut down meetings. Like many people, old-timers or not, my biggest concern was whether it would prove possible to stay sober through the current unpleasantness without the support of meetings to attend. I need not have worried. Like many of the worst things that ever happened to me, the inability to stay sober has never occurred, except in my mind where the thought could make me anxious and unhappy.

I have certainly been around long enough and gone through enough in sobriety to know better. "I don't like it" is not the same as "I can't get through it", no matter how much my ego tells me it is. Plus, I have evidence that you don't need the meetings I'm used to in order to stay sober. We are blessed in Suffolk County with about 700 meetings a week. In my travels over the years, I have been to places where you might have to drive 40 miles to the nearest meeting, or there might only be one or two meetings a week in an area. People still stay sober. In 1946, Captain Jack, who was the captain of an oil tanker, started Loners International. This is the part of AA that serves those people who are on ships at sea, in remote military bases, in scientific outposts, or just so far removed from "civilization" (think northern Alaska in the winter) that they can't make meetings at all. The Loners have been staying sober for almost 80 years without meetings. Initially, they would write letters to each other; later, they would radio, if that were possible; more recently, they phoned; now they can get on the internet, just like I can. Point is, they stayed sober without face to face meetings and so can we.

Which brings me to the one thing that has suffered during the pandemic: Tradition Four. No group, (and no individual, in my not so humble opinion) should do things that adversely affect other groups or AA as a whole. The law applies to us just as it applies to everyone else; there are no exceptions for AA members. (Believe me, I tried that on judges when I first got sober.) It dismays me to see that some groups are meeting in parking lots, parks or various public spaces. Sometimes in parking lots of facilities where other groups have their regular meetings. There have been complaints about such meetings. I know that the police have been turning a blind eye to this; that does not mean we should continue to do it. AA has a spotless reputation in the public mind; we have inherited it from those who came before us, let us try to preserve it for those who come after. Should the coronavirus have a resurgence, as it is all too likely to do, and the public is looking for someone to blame, we should not want people thinking of the AA meetings they saw in public when everything was supposed to be shut down. Even if it doesn't come to that, the churches and other buildings that have hosted our groups for so long might decide that they no longer want us if we have been meeting in their parking lots when we have been told not to. If virtual meetings aren't cutting it for you, have a half dozen alxies in your back yard for a meeting. Invitation-only meetings are not a new thing in AA and you're not breaking a Tradition by having one. For that matter, hold a ten person meeting in a park, with social distancing. Act as if you are a sober and responsible adult for the sake of AA.

**Suffolk Intergroup
Association of
Alcoholics
Anonymous presents
THE OTHER 24**

**Monthly workshops on
the traditions and
concepts will be held at
6:30 pm on the first
Tuesday of every month
at the SIA office in
Patchogue 118 Bay Ave (On
Terrell) Patchogue**

**The July workshop will
be held on Tuesday July
7th at 6:30 pm**

**We will be covering
Traditions 7 & 8**

**A link to this is available
on our public calendar**

**DUE TO COVID-19 THIS
MEETING MAY BE HELD
VIA GOOGLE HANG
OUTS**

The 12 Traditions

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.
2. 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.
3. The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose — to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.
6. 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.
7. Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities