



NEWSLETTER

Volume 14, Number 2, May 2015

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

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DO YOU CHERISH YOUR SOBRIETY

Do you wish that everyone who suffers from the disease of alcoholism could find the AA program ?

Do you know that there are professionals still in the dark when it comes to AA?

Do you know that there is something you can do to carry the message to those who need it?

It's easy ! Just get an Adopt-A-Pro folder from your Home Group and personally give it to your doctor, your minister, your boss, your attorney or perhaps to a police contact. They will be sure to thank you and your joint venture just might save the life of a lost and suffering alcoholic.



CARRYING the MESSAGE



Spreading the Word

From my first drink it was on.

I drank non-stop from fifteen to age twenty-eight when I landed at the Betty Ford Center. Hitting a bottom after being diagnosed with an autoimmune condition, I was drinking, smoking pot and taking handfuls of Valium from the moment I woke up. I called my dad and asked to be put in a hospital, any hospital, because I thought I was going to die.

After much Sturm and Drang those first few days in captivity, pacing, sobbing, smoking cigarettes and begging to be left alone when called to group, I finally calmed down enough to realize it was the first time I had stopped since I was fifteen. Not only stopped drinking but stopped heading aggressively, swiftly and dangerously toward a brick wall. I had to be cloistered and surrounded by folks like myself to recognize that I had been barreling down the highway in the wrong direction.

The eye opening four-week stay resulted in a spiritual awakening followed by my staying sober for six months. At which point I experienced my worst nightmare, the death of my big brother in an alcohol related demise. I promptly decided to take up alcohol again. Go figure.

The next fifteen years, I sporadically pieced together chunks of abstinence, be it three weeks, six months or two years at a time. Sometimes these moments of clarity came by way of fear, often they came on the heels of guilt and once, a three-year sobriety 'kick' as I so arrogantly called it, originated from a betrayal that literally pissed me off into being a better person.

My husband had left me. Perhaps he was tired of being married to a fragile alcoholic. Fragile as a flower himself, I was the rock in the family but also a binge drinker extraordinaire. I didn't drink at home but every time we went out or had a party, which I happily planned as an excuse to get loaded, I took the opportunity to drink myself into oblivion. I'll never know how hard that was for him or what it exactly looked like. "Bye" he used to say when I started drinking.

When he walked out the door after a decade, I bull headedly decided not to be the victim in

that story and threw myself into AA, got a sponsor, was secretary at my meeting and stayed sober for nearly three years. As much as I thought I was, I wasn't living the program, I was still self will run riot in my work life, it was Hollywood so everyone else was too but it didn't make for a very spiritual lifestyle. In fact that was what was lacking, the spiritual element. It was all headstrong fun. It was fun but I was aiming to get whatever I could get out of anything I was involved in. I was pushy, beyond ambitious and pretty ruthless.

I managed to get a famous director to write a screenplay based on my play, I raised a million dollars and mishandled the money like the oblivious little criminal I was, thinking I had won the lottery. When we failed to raise the rest of the money for the movie the project came to a screeching halt, as did my sobriety.

I slipped and slid for the next seven years until Jan. 30th 2015. It wasn't going broke, or getting cancer that got me sober. It wasn't embarking on an academic career and drinking myself into a stupor in front of the professors at 2 Universities that it was my job to impress... and it wasn't being carried out of a bar in a gurney like Brittany Spears and taken to the hospital last year. In fact so headstrong was I, those things barely

registered with me. It didn't bother me that I was getting stumbling drunk every time I drank. Obviously I hadn't set the bar too high. What brought me this, God willing, last time, was the realization that my self worth was in the toilet. It dawned on me that I was not capable of surviving the things life threw at me without self-destructing.

I came to this realization after a guy I met at a Christmas party showered me with a manic amount of affection. Surprised but easily persuaded in just a few weeks, I was all in. Lonelier than I ever realized, I was sure that this person was sent from the heavens to love me unconditionally and forever. A little over a month later, with as much contempt and coldness as he had shown adoration, he unceremoniously pulled the plug.

I proceeded to crawl into bed and ingest enough pills and booze to tranquilize an elephant. The feelings of abandonment were way out of proportion regarding something I never asked for in the first place. As I dangerously gobbled Xanax and Klonopin and chased them with bottles of red wine, beer and cigarettes, I got my 'aha' moment. If a stranger could ruin me in six weeks I was not as strong as I thought I was.

I was in fact not only sick in my

head but deeply and spiritually sick. With my fiftieth birthday looming in the short distance and the possibility of the second half of my life matching the first, I decided to take care of my alcoholism and addiction. I stopped everything on my brother's birthday Jan 30th 2015, 22 years after his death. It was a birthday present to him but truly a present to myself.

I feel like I am home again.

There isn't a doubt in my mind that I am where I belong. In the rooms of AA, with the only ones that truly understand this mental and spiritual illness, I feel strong again. It feels like my first time in Alcoholics Anonymous because I am approaching it from the spiritual level first and foremost. I am also going to meetings every day to be a part of the fellowship and listen and learn from those who are living sober and have for decades.

I find incredible inspiration in the men and women here. They are my heroes and who I want to be as I grow up. I read the big book now with happy tears of recognition, so thankful that I found my way back. I am willing to do whatever it takes now to stay away from the thing that will surely kill me as it did my brother and father before me. I want to break the pattern.

Submitted by AA member:
Erin C



You answered the call !!

A few months ago Moore County school members approached us with a request. They wanted 40 *Big Books* in English & 40 in Spanish to be installed in their libraries and with their student counselors.

ALCOHÓLICOS
ANÓNIMOS



We were overjoyed and when we put out the call for help you AA groups and individual members were quick to respond.

Not only were we able to supply the books that they requested but we also included 40 *Living Sober* books in both languages. This was truly a group effort and we thank each and every one of you.

Intergroup of Moore Co.

TRAVELING HIGHLIGHTS

*You're sick of hangin' around
and you'd like to travel
Get tired of travelin' and you
want to settle down
I guess they can't revoke your
soul for tryin'
Get out of the door and light out
and look all around*

-Robert Hunter

Random Ramblings on Moving Around.

I have found through my own experience and the stories of others that we alcoholics are always moving around. Whether it is fidgeting and foot tapping at a meeting, quick get a moving truck cause we're outta here, or making a big dramatic move across the country, we are always in motion.

I grew up in New Jersey in an alcoholic house and family. I was born thirsty. As a child I often heard "why can't you sit still? What is wrong with you?" I went to college. And then another college. And then the Navy. I traveled around following the Grateful Dead and Phish from town to town.

I worked in corporate America and in my 20's all it took was a raise and the promise of a better boss and I would leave my job

and move to a new one.

By better boss I mean more tolerant of my drinking, hangovers and erratic behavior. Commute two hours each way to NYC? No problem, the hangover would wear off on the train ride in and the ride home was beers in brown paper bags.

By my early 30's I was living in a small town and had several high functioning dysfunctional friends who drank like me. I was offered a corporate relocation to Northeast Florida and the tailor made geographic cure made perfect sense.

My wife at the time thought getting me away from my friends was a good solution. never thinking that moving to a Florida beach community would just be a bigger play ground with more fellow crazies. I felt the move was important because I had that nagging feeling that something was very wrong and I had no idea what it was or how to fix it. So let's all move to Florida and everything will be perfect!

It took several years and the inevitable crash and burn occurred. I went to my first meeting at a clubhouse a few blocks from the beach. Got a sponsor, or I should say he got me. He told me we would do service work to stay sober. This involved putting up a flyer

offering free help to anyone moving. And boy did a lot of people move around in AA. There were the people that stayed sober and were moving into much nicer places. There were people just coming back moving out of nice houses into small dirty apartments. There were situations where only one person in the house was moving out.

I learned that few alcoholics prepared for the move at all. We would show up and nothing would be packed. Time to get to work. I learned that moving a sleeper sofa down two flights of stairs is hard work. In my first year of sobriety I spent many Saturdays packing, moving and unpacking others.

My wife and I made a major move in 2013. We were living in Florida while my mother, her sick husband, the kids and the grandkids all lived in the Southern Pines area. And they all needed grown up supervision. So it was time to move to North Carolina!

So, in between, we planned a month long trip across America to San Francisco driving on back roads only, no highways. We picked the major national parks we were to visit and set off traveling one day at a time. We never scheduled ourselves further out than each day.

HISTORY OF AA

Marty Mann

"The First Lady of A.A."



Few people realize that Marty Mann was one of the most influential female

members of A.A. She authored the chapter "Women Suffer Too" in the second through fourth editions of the Big Book and was, at one point sponsored by Bill W. himself.

Marty Mann got sober in 1940 and although she relapsed several times she went on to become a leader in the movement of educating the public on Alcoholism and it's acceptance as a disease.

Pulled into Santa Fe, New Mexico and really liked it there. Simply stayed another day and explored more. With time, a good car and a navigation system we really did live one day at a time. That mind set allowed us to be amazingly present and connected when exploring the incredible grandeur of our national parks. God was present when we were present. Homeless and jobless never felt so good. Because we were moving around.

Moving in sobriety is another adventure. I was very involved in my AA community in Florida. I never went to a meeting without knowing most of the people. I had the same sponsor for over a decade. I came here and was a newcomer with sobriety. The transition has been more challenging than expected.

If you have moved in sobriety you know that nobody does AA the right way except where you got sober. And sponsor transition is tricky for me. But I live an AA life and no matter where I am or how much moving around I do I always have a home in the welcoming arms of my sober community of AA. I love this program.

Written and submitted by:

AA member Brian T.

Through Marty Mann's efforts the *National Council on Alcoholism* was founded, where she became director. By all accounts, she was one of the most spellbinding speakers the American public has ever seen. Even audiences initially skeptical of her message (that an alcoholic is a sick person who can be helped), ended up enthusiastically supporting her. For most of her 24 years as director of NCA, she maintained a speaking schedule of over 200 talks annually.

Marty Mann lived until 1980. Her last A.A. talk was at an International A.A. Convention in New Orleans, She passed away two weeks later from a stroke at the age of 75.

Advocacy continues to this day working to gain parity in health care for alcoholics and addicts, advocacy that Marty Mann began back in 1945.

AA member: Marilyn R,
Newsletter historian

MEMBERS MUSINGS



When I was asked to write something for the Newsletter the first thing I did was reread some of the previous "Member's Musings". I became apprehensive. I really did not think I could be as positive and upbeat as the offerings I had read. I am not an AA cheer leader.

Then I looked up the definition of 'musing'. It means contemplative or absorbed in thought. Oh, *Think, Think, Think*. I do that all the time, even though I have been advised against it. I've got this.

An older gentleman from New York used to attend the Saturday Noon meetings at the Wilder Building when I was 'again' new in recovery. After every share he would conclude with this phrase, "don't drink, go to meetings and it's different for everybody."

I always listened to him but, other than 'don't drink, go to meetings and it's different for everybody' I could not tell you very much about him or what else he shared. I often

wondered why he concluded with this phrase. Why did he always say the same thing? Years later I realized that he was saying it for me.

I was introduced to AA in 1979. Since then I have been through three 28 day treatment facilities and have had several periods of five or more years sober. (I use the word 'sober' as dictionary.com and Merriam Webster define it.) My personal experience is that I have never picked up a drink when I regularly attend AA meetings. It was after I stopped going to meetings that I drank. So I understood 'don't drink and go to meetings'. It took me some time to get the part about 'it's different for everybody'.

Oddly, I got it one day when I was watching a re-run of 'Two and a Half Men'. Allen, a forty something single dad, was dating an actress/model named Kandi. In one episode Allen had been very generous lavishing gifts upon Kandi. She told him that for his efforts he was entitled to extra special bonus sex. "What's that?" he asked. "It's anything you want it to be", she answered.

That's when it hit me. AA is like extra special bonus sex. As long as I have a desire to stop drinking and go to meetings with the primary purpose of staying sober, AA can be anything I want or need it to be. *It is different for everybody.*

After all, in my time in the fellowship, I have run into members who treat AA as a religion, a family, a social club, a cult, a lonely hearts club (but only after a year, of course) and even a debating society and they are all staying sober. Mine is primarily a disease of isolation so I rely heavily on the 'F' word in my recovery. I stay sober with a good healthy dose of fellowship.

I grew up an only child in Florida. In my teenage years I found golf and spent many summer days alone on the public golf course next to our house. The best thing about the game was that I could play it by myself. I spent many a day with Arnie, Jack and Lee battling for the Masters title.



But from a distance all an on-looker would see was a teenage boy, golf bag slung over his shoulder, as he walked the fairway playing four different golf balls. It was easier for me to play with my imaginary group than to make friends with the other boys my age. As part of the fellowship I am never alone.

My father never told me he loved me. Boo Hoo! He wasn't supposed to. Men don't talk about or share their feelings.

So it really surprised me on day when a girl walked into the meeting hurting and desperately wanting to stop drinking. I do not remember what she said that day but I do remember how she made me feel. Her sincerity touched my heart and I felt what I can only describe as true compassion. I got her a *Living Sober* book after the meeting. It was about all I could do. I saw her the other day. She is working on seventeen months sober. You go, girl !

At another meeting we were having many periods of silence. I double dipped and shared how hard it had been for me to share in meetings at first. By sharing and becoming a part of the meetings I had taken a huge step in my recovery. Looking at a group of newcomers seated against the wall, I encouraged anyone to share who never had before.

There was, of course, another moment of silence when I was done and then a young man who I was not even aware of spoke from the back of the room. "You are talking about me," he said and went on to share part of his story for the first time. Tears well up in my eyes whenever I talk about that. I have real feelings today.

Once I shared at a meeting that spirituality is like soylent green. No one got it. Sometimes I try to be funny and the more obscure the reference the

funnier I think it is going to be. (Google 'soylent green' if you're interested). The point I was trying to make is that to me spirituality is people. I cannot sit at home alone in my easy chair and be spiritual. It's all about how I treat and interact with others.

Then, there are those really special times such as I have described when I get that connection. It is that feeling that is my evidence of a power greater than myself, whatever that may be.

For me it is all about the fellowship. Speaking only for myself I have come to believe that one alcoholic talking to another is the secret of AA and the power is the group.

By the way, don't drink, go to meetings and it is different for everybody.

Written by:
AA member Gene G.



"I just drink to forget ...
but I can't remember what
I'm forgetting"

SPOTLIGHT ON



Primary Purpose Group

This group meets at the First Baptist Church in So. Pines on Monday and Thursday nights at 7 pm. About 40 members are in attendance on Monday nights with approx. 20 newcomers that attend the newcomers meeting. A large group is in attendance on Thursday nights which is a Speaker Meeting.

The Primary Purpose Group concentrates on the basic AA services of carrying the message to the alcoholics who still suffer. All areas of AA service are in place and functioning in this group. There is also focus on correctional institutions, public information, treatment/detox facilities, cooperation with professional community, newcomers meetings & recovery related workshops and panels

The Primary Purpose Group holds that action is indeed the "magic" word and members of this group are the outside sponsors of AA meetings at Morrison Correctional Inst., First Health detox patients and Samaritan Colony.

DISTRICT 52

NEWS

New District 52 officers
elected
for 2015 & 2016

DCM: Vic L.
Alt. DCM: Jason W.
Treasurer: Gloria C.
Secretary: Rebecca R.

District 52 held it's
business meeting with the
new officers in attendance
on Sunday April 12th
at Samaritan Colony.

They are still making plans
for meetings, and special
events for the year but have
locked in these two events.

District 52

Business Meeting

2 PM, Sunday
June 7th
Central Carolina Bldg.
in Sanford

UNITY DAY

Saturday June 13th
1 pm .. Aberdeen bldg.

Area 51 Archive display
speaker
Newton P. Archivist

Hot dogs, hamburgers
and fellowship !

GSR's

(General Service Reps)

Critical to AA

The basic process of keep-
ing our Home Groups and
Meetings connected to the
AA Organization starts
with our GSR's and their
attendance at District 52
meetings.

District 52 is made up of
Moore, Hoke, Richmond,
Lee and Scotland counties
& meetings of the GSR's
from these groups are held
four times a year. They
also attend Area (State)
assemblies twice a year.

Sandhills Intergroup

A central office established
to aid all the groups and
meetings in Moore County
in the common purpose of
carrying the AA message to
the alcoholic who still
suffers.

We are funded solely by
the AA groups in our
county and we need and
ask for your input.

- 1) 24 hr. Answering Serv.
- 2) A Website
- 3) Moore Co. Meeting List
- 4) Publish a Newsletter
- 5) P. I. Committee

Published & distributed by

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