



WILMINGTON AREA INTERGROUP NEWSLETTER

## Step 11

**Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out**

I stood outside of Union Hill Presbyterian Church in Danville, N.J. I hadn't been sober for long. I had broken up with my fiancée, lost my driving privileges (DUI), and was depressed. Other than that, my life was rolling along just fine! I was explaining my sorry state to a friend (and anyone else who might listen) who referred me to her mother who had several years sobriety.

Mom asked me if I had ever tried meditation? I scoffed, associating meditation with a group of hippies sitting in a yoga position, chanting ohm. One attempt at meditation while I was still drinking hadn't solved my problems. Staring into the fireplace one night listening to a meditation tape and drinking wine, I "fell asleep" and cut my chin when I fell onto the fireplace sill. Needless to say, I laughed at her question and went my way!

But today, I have a totally different view. My wife and I set aside a definite period of time each morning to pray and meditate, separately.

I cannot speak for my wife Nancy, but this is how I do it. For years due to back problems, I've had to regularly stretch my hamstrings against a wall or door frame. After I joined AA, my former sponsor moved in with me as my tenant. I paid attention to how he had stayed sober for so many years. Daily, he read the *24 Hour-A-Day* book and the newly published *Daily Reflections*. So I began to read these daily meditations each while I stretched my hamstrings. This made him laugh, but it has kept me sober for almost 28 years. I also say the third and the seventh step prayers, a prayer from my church, and a meditation application called "Daily Calm."

Every person I know with long-term recovery, does some form of daily prayer and meditation. Some of my sponsees, take my advice and pray and meditate daily. Most who do not, go out!

Bill B.

## Step 12

**Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.**

I remember speaking with Mary K. when I was a newcomer and at a 12<sup>th</sup> Step meeting and she said if you can't practice principles in all of your affairs, you better not have any affairs. Say what? I had no idea what principles were at the time but was familiar with the type of affairs I had been having in my drinking days. I found out if I was "seriously alcoholic" there was only one course of action as laid out in the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous that sufficiently practiced will give an alcoholic a spiritual way of living and a daily reprieve from a drink of alcohol.

We can become transformed and begin to pass on our experience, strength and hope to suffering alcoholics seeking recovery. This initial transformation begins with Step One with complete surrender and honesty. If we are PAINSTAKING in our efforts, there are things we can expect after Step Nine, such as "a new freedom and a new happiness." With incorporating the spiritual principles of Honesty, Unselfishness and Love the recovering alcoholic can begin to carry the message. Meetings are one of the best ways to carry the message by sharing our experience, strength and hope with the newcomers. Sponsorship is another way to carry the message by helping a newcomer understand what these principles of recovery mean to our transformation and sobriety.

There are many ways to "carry the message". AA has many service positions; at the group level, the Intergroup, the District, the Area and GSO. Experience has shown that we must "give away" what we have received in recovery in order to keep. In other words, one alcoholic helping another.

This quote from pgs. 42 & 43 in the book Alcoholics Anonymous sums up the Twelve Steps. "Quite as important was the discovery that spiritual principles would solve all my problems. I have since been brought into a way of living infinitely more satisfying and, I hope, more useful than the life I had lived before."

Anonymous

## A Note from the Chair of Board

Hurricane Florence affected all our lives, some of us more than others. For Intergroup, we had to work without power for nearly a week and try (remotely) to help groups find spaces to meet. Special thanks to Ashley for answering the phones, and Linda for keeping the website updated so we could find meetings. One of my favorite meetings was an impromptu, word of mouth meeting behind the Fellowship Center with everyone sitting on lawn chairs. We all were so grateful just to be around each other after days without our usual meetings.

Florence (and then the following tropical storm) also prevented us from holding Board elections as planned in September and then again in October. It looks like we are on schedule for November though. Elections will be held on Thursday, November 8 and elections for officers will occur at the December board meeting. We will introduce you to the new board members and officers in the next issue. Thank you to everyone who has expressed an interest and willingness to serve!

On a personal note, it has been a privilege for me to serve on the Intergroup Board and as Chair for the past year. In the past three years we have faced many challenges, but we have worked together to get through all of them. They say if nothing changes, nothing changes, and I am looking forward to new leadership. I know the new board will continue to enjoy the strong commitment of everyone in the Wilmington area AA community to ensure that Intergroup is able to continue serving the groups, and any individuals who want to get sober. Thank you all for the opportunity to be a part of this amazing organization.

As always, if you have any comments, questions or concerns, please reach out to the Intergroup office, me or anyone else on the Board.

Yours in service,

Susan P., Board Chair

## Birthday Club

Birthday. Anniversary. Celebration day. Regardless the name, the anniversary of the date we pick up a white chip and join A. A. is an important one.

A very special way to celebrate and give back is to make a donation to Intergroup. One dollar for each year of sobriety makes a small dent in our pockets. But each one of those dollars is a significant amount that Intergroup can put to good use helping carry the message of sobriety.

It is simple to contact the Intergroup Office to find out how to make this important contribution.

## From the Office

First, I hope everyone is recovering as well as can be expected from Hurricane Florence. For those who are still dealing with the after effects of the storm, our thoughts and prayers are with you.

The Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year Alkathons will be taking place at the Fellowship Center. All Alkathons begin at 6pm and continue through the night and morning with a meeting every even hour. Dinner will be served after the noon meeting of each Alkathon. Any side dishes or donations would be greatly appreciated.

Next, our Annual Gratitude Dinner Dance is set for Sunday, December 2<sup>ND</sup> at the Wilmington Convention Center. Schedule: doors open at 5:30pm, delicious dinner at 6:30pm, Guest Speaker Connie C. from Easton, MD at 8:00pm the 50/50, raffle and silent auction items at 9:00pm and then dancing! Please come and join your friends in a night of celebration, fellowship and gratitude to AA.

Tickets are \$30.00 per person and must be bought by **Nov. 14<sup>th</sup>**. Please consider buying one to donate to someone who may not be able to afford it. Tickets will not be sold at the door, so get yours now at the office or at [www.wilmingtonaa.us](http://www.wilmingtonaa.us). Your Homegroup can reserve a table with a purchase of 10 tickets. A "Will Call" table will be set up at the dance for your convenience as well.

Because of the hurricane, contributions to Intergroup for September were extremely low. Researching contributions, I found an article, "Historical Background of Self-Support." In September 1950: "lack of voluntary contributions led Bill to issue to the Fellowship a five-page plea for support." "Without A.A.'s Services we'd often fumble that new man or woman just coming in the door; ... and spoil the main chance of those millions who don't yet know." In the November 1957 Grapevine, Bill wrote "Respecting Money," in which he juxtaposed outside contributions and self-support: "Our spiritual way of life is safe for future generations if, as a society, we resist the temptation to receive money from the outside world. But this leaves us with a responsibility -... (w)e cannot skimp when the treasurer... passes the hat. Our groups, our areas, and A.A. as a whole will not function unless our services are sufficient and our bills paid."

As 2018 draws to a close, please consider putting an extra dollar in the basket or making a donation to Intergroup.

Lastly, effective November 7<sup>th</sup>, I will resign as Office Manager for Wilmington Area Intergroup. I am forever grateful and thankful to you all for the opportunity and trust bestowed upon me to have served our AA Community.

In the Spirit of Service,

Linda H.

## Tradition 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.**

There are many facets to this tradition, but the power of it is summed up with this line from *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*:

Here (in Alcoholics Anonymous) was something rare in the world—a society which said it wished to publicize its principles and its work, but not its individual members.

The power of the program would be and is apparent to those who might benefit from the life we try to live. We quietly spread the word about the program (committees that cooperate with the professional world, for example). We quietly let others tell the story of A. A. successes (Jack Anderson's piece, and others). And the program grew and strengthened.

What was tried to be avoided was individual A. A. members touting their successes openly and publically, then reflecting badly if they failed.

It means to me as an A. A. member, I may freely discuss the principles of A. A. without trying to “sell” or promote the program and myself publically.

My own entry into sobriety was due in large part to attraction, not the promotion. I had no clue what A. A. was. But I had the opportunity, over the course of a few months, to see in someone a profound way of living—without alcohol. It was a way life foreign to my way of thinking. When I made the connection that that way of life was due to A. A., I had to re-order my thinking and my life. I was attracted into A. A. by the warmth of the flame.

Anonymous

The Boiled Owl Coffee Club podcast comes out of Greenville NC. It is hosted by Don and Sam, both members of Alcoholics Anonymous who like listening to other alcoholics' experience, strength, and hope. They interview people who have recovered through the program of Alcoholics Anonymous. What brought them to the rooms, what steps were difficult, and what amends surprised them. New episodes are posted on the 1st and 15th of the month. Where does the term “Boiled Owl” come from? Possibly page 158 in the Big Book.

## Tradition 12

**Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.**

(I took these few paragraphs from a Grapevine Article September 1971 written by B. L., Manhattan, NY )

“Every so often, I must ask myself, “Who do you think your are, anyway?” That question ties me to the guide-post which is our Twelfth Tradition, much as a rope tethers a grazing mule. When hooked to it, I am restrained from roaming into dangerous territories of vanity and self-pity. They always seem to be beckoning, trying to entice my hungry ego with their greener-looking fodder, and overindulgence in either could lead me back to drunkenness.

Circling this Tradition, trying to get inside its meaning by logic or some other route, time after time I have felt pulled up short by the discovery that here, in this context, “anonymity” has one simple meaning, personally applicable to me.

Newspaper, magazines, TV, movies, and radio only rarely find any particular one of us important enough for the public to care whether we are sober or not. When they do, the Eleventh Tradition amply cover that situation, in my opinion. (It never was intended to keep us from revealing our AA membership privately, however.)

But here in the Twelfth, the term “anonymity” strongly suggests to me something more than that, something at the core of nearly all AA teachings. As of today, to the best of my understanding, that something more is **humility**.

The word humility suggested to me the sensation of being humiliated. I found it hard to understand why and how that would help me stay sober. Humiliation had been one of the most painful parts of my drunkenness; did AA want me to endure more of it, sober?

It was therefore a great relief, that first year, to hear humility discussed for hours and hours over nickel coffees in an all-night Grand Central Station cafeteria. Humility, I was told, did not mean being a doormat, never standing up for oneself; instead, it meant just being open-minded, no longer sure that **I** knew all the answers.”

I think for me the idea of placing principles over personalities rings true when I can remain teachable and hear the message of recovery no matter what personality is delivering it. And in turn, being able to carry the message of recovery to any personality who is suffering. We keep this spiritual foundation of anonymity of our Traditions alive by staying humble and practicing the Twelve Steps of AA which will lead us to a “Power Greater than Ourselves.

Anonymous

## Wilmington Area Intergroup, Group Contributions

The Wilmington Area Intergroup Office serves groups in Brunswick, Columbus, Pender, and New Hanover counties to better carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous to the suffering alcoholic.

**Your contributions keep the Intergroup Office functioning.**

### Group Contributions

Thank you to all the groups who make contributions in support of your Intergroup. It helps us carry the message.....

### September/October

Across the River	Keep It Simple
At the Crossroads	Living Sober
Back to Basics	Men Living Sober
Brain Damage	Midday
Coastal	Midtown
Complete Abandon	New Whiteville
Conscious Contact	Oak Island
Daily Reprieve	Ogden Serenity
Each Day a New Beginning	Primary Purpose
Eustabaphalus	Proceed Towards Sobriety
Ezy Duz It	Reaching Out
Fresh Beginnings	Serenity by the Sea
Friends of Intergroup	Sisters in Sobriety
Happiest Hour	Southport
Inside/Out	Sunset Serenity
How Dry I Am	Topsail Island
Just a Meeting	Turning Point

### How can I Engage in Service Work?

It's probably not productive to rate one form of service work "better" than another. But one which ranks pretty high is the "Night Owl" phone—the overnight and weekend answering service for the Intergroup Office.

Often, the first contact with A. A. is a telephone call to a local Intergroup. Whether by the active alcoholic in very real need of help, a family member looking for assistance, or by visitors looking for a meeting, each call is important. Callers often need help at times other than usual business hours, so we have 24 hour phone coverage.

After-hours calls are forwarded to a special cell phone. A detailed instruction packet with contact numbers and meeting information accompanies the cell phone. A. A. volunteers handle the phone calls, and give out meeting information, treatment center numbers, and have a list of 12<sup>th</sup> Step volunteers who can return calls to those needing help.

It is common for a group to volunteer to take the phone for a month, with the phone being passed around members of the group. Other arrangements are possible. Individuals can also take the phone during certain times. Handling the phone is a great way for a sponsor/sponsee to join for service work. Please contact the Intergroup Office for more information

### News Flash

*Footwork* is now available online. Go to [wilmingtonaa.us](http://wilmingtonaa.us) and follow the easy-to-follow instructions.

## From the Archives

The 22<sup>nd</sup> National A.A. Archives Workshop was held September 28-30 of this year. I had only recently stepped into the position of Archivist at Wilmington Area Intergroup, and when I saw an ad for the convention in the Akron (OH) newsletter, I decided that it would be a timely opportunity to educate myself about the basics of running an A.A. Archives. So I made my airline and hotel reservations, paid my registration fee and when the date arrived travelled to Lombard, IL about 20 miles west of downtown Chicago.

Meeting archivists from across the United States and Canada and attending workshops dedicated to refining skills including writing local and group histories, preparing archives presentations, collecting oral histories, and taking care of your repository was inspirational. Experts were most willing to share their experience and answer questions about organization software, collection scope, and the mechanics of preserving our precious artifacts.

I had the chance to meet the Area 51 Archivist, Keith M., who runs the archives in Raleigh, NC. He has proposed that the archivists within the state of NC meet to exchange ideas and information. My hope is that there may be information within the Area 51 Archives which will fit within the scope of the Wilmington Area Intergroup Archives, established in 1983.

Attendance at this convention started me making lists of potential Archives projects. The need for an Archives Committee to implement decision making and project planning is at the top of this list. This Committee is responsible for establishing policies, budgets, and procedures. Through its group conscience, it undertakes and maintains final responsibility and authority for the use of the Archives (A.A. Archives-Guidelines). There will be training, so don't be intimidated by lack of familiarity with this type of service work.

Please contact me if you have an interest in being on the committee or volunteering for projects once the committee is formed. I am at the Intergroup Office on Thursdays from 9 AM to noon. Come and take a tour or call me at 910-794-1840 or email at [intergroup@wilmingtonaa.org](mailto:intergroup@wilmingtonaa.org) with Archives in the subject line.

Carol A.

### News Flash

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## Got a Home Group?

One of the questions I often hear asked of newcomers, aside from “do you have a sponsor?”, is “what’s your home group?” AA Pamphlet P-16 (The AA Group . . . where it all begins) states that “most A.A. members . . . have found it important to belong to one group that they call their “home group.” This is the group where they accept service responsibilities . . .” Having a home group has been a crucial part of my recovery since I first walked into the rooms and I go to my home group every time meets. I also go to a lot of other meetings—some of them only once or twice a month. Even after being sober a while, it often is way too easy to walk in just as the meeting is starting and then leave as soon as the meeting is over, with very little interaction aside from a casual hello as I walk past someone. But it is much different with my home group.

Having a home group means that I show up at that home group each time it meets. And I show up early for the meeting before the meeting, and I help with cleanup when it ends. I participate in the business meetings, and most importantly I have a commitment in that group. It’s a lot more than simply attending the meetings.

So what is a commitment? It could be anything from helping to set up the meeting, making coffee and bringing cookies, to handling the groups finances, being the General Service Representative or the Intergroup Representative. Perhaps my group has greeters to welcome people (especially the newcomers) to the meeting. Each group decides for itself what it needs and finds group members to take those jobs.

Perhaps the most important part of having a home group is that I have a group of people with whom I share what’s going on—people who can take me aside when I veer away from Alcoholics Anonymous, and who know me. The people in my home group are in many ways closer to me than my own family. My job is to do whatever I can to make sure my group stays viable, and to never say no to whatever my home group asks of me. If I am asked to greet newcomers, I do it willingly. The same goes for making coffee, bringing cookies, etc. The Responsibility Statement states that “I am responsible whenever anyone, anywhere reaches out for help.” Helping to maintain a strong AA home group is just one of the ways I can make sure that “the hand of AA” is always there. I always found time to drink, and now, sober, I can always find time to give back to my group, and to AA.

Anonymous

## Dates to Remember

**NCCYPAA** 1st and 3rd Fridays, 8:15 p.m., Fellowship Center

**Intergroup Board of Directors**, 2nd Thursdays, 5:30 p.m., Intergroup Office

**Full Intergroup Council**, 2nd Thursdays of odd-numbered months 5:30 p.m., Fellowship Center

**CPC/PI** 2nd Thursdays, 4:00 p.m., monthly, Port City Java, Barclay Commons, Shipyard Blvd

**Events Committee**, 1st Thursdays, 6:00 p.m., Intergroup Office, all welcome

## Wilmington Area A. A. Intergroup

The Wilmington Area A. A. Intergroup office serves Districts 03 and 04 and provides the following:

- A large stock of AA books, pamphlets, meeting schedules, medallions, chips, and other items;
- A telephone hotline, with the much-appreciated help of volunteers. This is often the first contact of hope for someone suffering from alcoholism;
- Fellowship activities directly related to AA, such as the Founders' Day Picnic, holiday Alkathons (and meals!), the annual holiday speaker/dance/dinner event, and many others;
- Mailboxes for groups so information is quickly distributed;
- A place for some fellowshiping and perhaps a cup of coffee.

## Invitation

**What:** Gratitude Dinner and Dance  
Speaker, Dinner, Dance, Fellowship

**When:** Sunday, December 2

**Where:** Convention Center

**Time:** Dinner 6:30  
Speaker 8:00 Connie C.  
Dance 9:00

**How:** Tickets at Intergroup, at [wilmingtonaa.us](http://wilmingtonaa.us), and by individuals.

## INTERGROUP HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

Please note that the Intergroup office is closed on the following holidays:

New Year's Day  
Martin Luther King Day  
Memorial Day  
July 4  
Labor Day  
Veteran's Day  
Thanksgiving Day  
Thanksgiving Recovery Day  
Christmas Eve or Day After Christmas (depending on whether Christmas falls on a Saturday or Sunday)  
Christmas Day

## Our Common Welfare

*Each member of Alcoholics Anonymous is but a small part of a great whole. A.A. must continue to live or most of us will surely die. Hence our common welfare comes first. But individual welfare follows close afterward.*

—T\_r\_a\_d\_i\_t\_i\_o\_n\_\_O\_n\_e\_\_(L\_o\_n\_g  
\_F\_o\_r\_m)\_

It is hoped that our common suffering as alcoholics and our common solution in A.A. will transcend most issues and curtail negative behaviors that could jeopardize the safety of anyone attending an A.A. meeting. Nevertheless, Alcoholics Anonymous is a microcosm of the larger society we exist in. As such, problems found in the outside world can also make their way into the rooms of A.A. For this reason, groups and members discuss the topic of safety — to raise awareness in the Fellowship and to seek through sponsorship, workshops and meetings, to create as safe an environment as possible to carry A.A.'s message of hope and recovery to the still-suffering alcoholic.

100M – 9/17 (GP) F-211

## SAFETY CARD FOR A.A. GROUPS

*(The General Service Office has made this optional statement available as an A.A. service piece for those groups who wish to use it.)*

### Suggested Statement on Safety

Our group endeavors to provide a safe meeting place for all attendees and encourages each person here to contribute to fostering a secure and welcoming environment in which our meetings can take place. As our Traditions remind us, the formation and operation of an A.A. group resides with the group conscience. Therefore, we ask that group members and others refrain from any behavior which might compromise another person's safety. Also, please take the precautions you feel are necessary to ensure your own personal safety, for example, walking to your car in a group after a meeting. If a situation should arise where someone feels their safety is in jeopardy, or the situation breaches the law, the individuals involved should take appropriate action. Calling the proper authorities does not go against any A.A. Traditions and is recommended when someone may have broken the law or endangered the safety of another person.

Service Material from the General Service Office

## News from Oak Island

### Help Promote the Lighthouse Retreat with a Click

Thanks to Sara V. for creating a new webpage for the Oak Island Lighthouse Retreat. The webpage is still under construction with additions of speakers, schedule, and registration. You can help promote the retreat on the internet by searching for "Oak Island Lighthouse Retreat" and clicking on the page. Increasing the number of hits will help move the site up in the search listing.

#### Camel Club Events

**November 24, Club Cleaning by Day by Day and Breakfast Club.** Check with the group chairperson for day and time.

**November 24, 10:00 a.m. Sisters in Sobriety anniversary meeting.** Family members are welcome to attend.

**December 7, 6:00 p.m. Sunset Serenity anniversary recognition**

