



FOOTWORK

WILMINGTON AREA INTERGROUP NEWSLETTER

Step 1

Step 2

We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.

Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

The night I picked up a white chip, I knew I was an alcoholic. The white chip was a public admission of that fact. Acceptance was not an issue; I was ready to start A.A.

After accepting down in my soul that I was powerless over alcohol, I had to find a higher power that could help me stay away from a drink. This step has been referred to the Open Minded step.

However, the concept of unmanageability didn't really register. After all, I still had a job, driver's license, and a few other vestiges of a "normal" life.

I found that by attending a meeting every day I could benefit from others sharing their experience, strength and hope. There is a lot of strength in the group. "We" help each other. What we can do together that the individual "I" cannot do alone.

In fact, had you asked me the day before I picked up that chip, I'd have told you that all was well in my world. I had gotten rid of an unappreciative wife. I was no longer in touch with those needy kids. I had no debts. (I just wasn't paying.) I had an appreciative girl friend (until she questioned my drinking). I had a two room apartment and my friend, alcohol. An answering machine with no tape allowed me to ignore calls and messages. Sure seemed like a good life at the time.

With that in mind my first higher power was "Good Orderly Direction". That became the GOD that I prayed to. I knew the "Direction" my life was headed before I quit drinking was not a good one.

But as I hung around Alcoholics Anonymous, the cobwebs were swept from my thinking. It was through extensive and extended talks with my sponsor that the degree of unmanageability became clear. What in the world had I been thinking?

I always believed that there was something in the universe that was all powerful. I spend time walking the beach and there is no question that the tides are very powerful. I believe "Keeping It Simple" is key with this step. As long as an alcoholic is seeking a higher power, the person will find that they will come to believe in a Higher Power of their own understanding.. That explains the first word "Came" in the step. The belief in a higher power develops over time and every individual can come to their own belief of their higher power.

A few questions honestly answered opened chinks which let me see how well I had been (mis)managing my life.

Donna B. used to call her higher power "my buddy God" and would speak to Him like a friend. Our literature says no human power could relieve our alcoholism but that God could and would if he were sought. I believe seeking is key.

Is it usual to be on a first name basis with more than a few bill collectors?

Don't most people have a couple of attorneys phone numbers memorized?

Doesn't everyone pay a psychologist just to complain about how the world is mistreating him?

Isn't everyone estranged from their kids?

What's wrong with living in an un-air conditioned van during the summer months?

Doesn't everyone sponge bathe in rest stop bathrooms?

Who needs more than a mattress, black and white television, and road-side salvaged kitchen furniture for his two-room apartment?

These and many more cleared the air for me. I developed a better appreciation and understanding of "unmanageable" and a deeper understanding of the whole of Step One.

Anonymous

Attending meetings, Sponsorship, reading the Big Book, learning and incorporating the steps in our lives will certainly help to understand a Higher Power.

Anonymous

Happy New Year?

Starting off the new year sober is certainly cause to be happy. Instead of those old resolutions that never get very far, drop by the Intergroup Office and sign up for some good old fashioned service work. And while you are at it, join the Birthday Club or the Faithful Fivers. Office staff will be able to get you started.

A Note from the Board Chair

After a tough end of the year in our community with Hurricane Florence and the tropical storm, we are starting off 2019 with new faces on the Board and a new office manager. We are looking forward to more opportunities and changes to better serve all of you!

Here are the Board members for 2019 (new members are noted with an asterisk *):

Officers

Chair - Will S. (Term Ends (T/E) 2020)
 Vice Chair - Donna C. (T/E 2020)
 Treasurer - Dara G. (T/E 2019)
 *Alternate Treasurer - LeeAnn P. (T/E 2020)
 *Secretary - Cindy W. (T/E 2020)
 *Alternate Secretary - Penny C. (T/E 2020)

At-Large Members

Barry M. (T/E 2019)
 *Bill T. (T/E 2020)
 Butch V. (T/E 2019)
 Colin H. (T/E 2019)
 Sam R. (T/E 2019)
 Susan P. (T/E 2019)

As a reminder, the Special Events Committee meets on the first Thursday of every month at 5:30 in the Intergroup office. All AA member are welcome to come and help plan events!

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,

Will S., Board Chair

From the Office

Greetings and salutations to those I trudge this road of happy destiny alongside. I am humbled and honored to take the mantle as the incoming Wilmington Intergroup office manager. It is my intention to build upon the legacy of my predecessors and continue to provide the invaluable resources and services that my fellow alcoholics in recovery have come to expect from the intergroup office.

The bookstore inventory is being restocked for 2019, the January printing of the 2019 Where and When has commenced, and the website is constantly updated to reflect accurate AA meetings and district information for District 03 and District 04 (New Hanover, Brunswick, Pender, and Columbus counties). A new year also offers new opportunities for service to the local AA community – both as a volunteer to answer our hotline as well as provide office assistance to myself and Ashley. Please drop by the office or contact us via telephone to secure a time slot for volunteering.

When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, we want the hand of AA always to be there. You can help fulfill this mission by signing up to answer our Night Owl phone – which is the point of contact for all those seeking to reach out through our hotline outside of regular business hours. Desperation is no respecter of the time of day, and with your monthly commitment to answer the call we can meet the need of the alcoholic still suffering. Groups are encouraged to represent the hand of AA as well, which allows this responsibility to be shared among members. Just call the office to claim your month of service and then drop by to pick up the phone, as well as resources to help you direct those in need to more assistance.

It's a New Year, and yet we know that sobriety happens one day at a time. I look forward to meeting you all along this path – where we can do together what we could never do alone.

Live Easy But Think First
 David G.

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.

Tradition 1

Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.

As I learned, the traditions are the glue that binds a group together, and by extension Alcoholics Anonymous. This binding agent evolved from the many missteps made as A.A. evolved. *A.A. Comes of Age* tells the stories.

Each of my sponsors has been an advocate for understanding and applying traditions, and through them I developed a huge respect for our traditions.

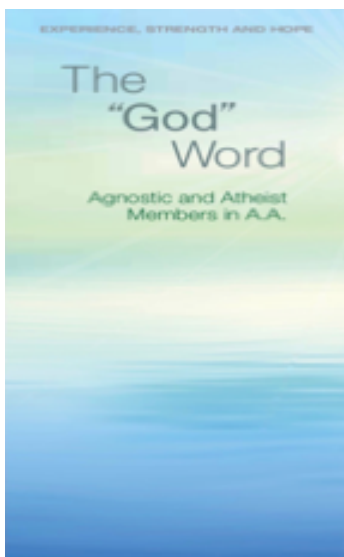
Tradition One starts us out and is a cautionary note with an enormously reassuring message.

For me, it is pretty simple. I maintain my relationship with A.A. on a face-to-face basis through meetings, sponsorship, fellowship, home groups, and so on. In doing so, I solidify and unite with individuals in the fellowship for the purpose of staying sober. When other individuals do the same, WE unify and have a common bond and purpose. In this manner, we keep A.A. a vital and vibrant part of our lives. This common welfare allows us to help ourselves and other alcoholics stay sober—our personal recovery.

Cautionary note? Indeed it is. I take it at face value when it says in *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*: “We stay whole, or A.A. dies.” And if A.A. dies, I probably won’t be far behind.

Reassuring? Again, indeed it is. Unified in fighting the common enemy, A.A. can keep the wolves away from the door. (“Rarely have we seen a person fail...”) If we do our part in keeping A.A. unified, we can individually achieve personal recovery.

Anonymous



Pamphlet of the Month

The General Service Office has recently published a new pamphlet called “The “God” Word - Agnostic and Atheist Members in AA.” This pamphlet (number P-86) was initially published by the Great Britain General Service Office and was just released here in the United States. The pamphlet contains the perspectives of individual members who identify as agnostic or atheist.

Of particular importance are the words of Bill W. in the introduction which state “. . . *Let us always try to be inclusive rather than exclusive; let us remember that each alcoholic among us is a member of A.A., so long a he or she declares.*” The introduction goes on to say “Whatever you do, please don’t let someone else’s religious beliefs prevent you from finding the solution that is available to you through Alcoholics Anonymous.”

Tradition 2

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

I want to refer to the first tradition that states our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity. Without unity, A. A. cannot survive.

Each A. A. members’ life depends upon living life based on spiritual principles. Each group’s sole authority is a loving God as he expresses himself in our groups’ conscience.

Leaders are but trusted servants. They do not govern, they serve. That necessitates the rotation of group officers and trusted servants at the local, district and area levels. None of these positions such as the DCM (district committee member), GSR (general service representative), or the Intergroup Representative allows any one person to give orders. All decisions are made at the group conscience level and passed on to the elected officer.

All groups make decisions for A. A. as a whole after being well informed on what they might be voting on. Group decisions are made with everyone having a voice. Tradition Two follows along with the “open mindedness” of Step Two. It allows all who have ideas and thoughts on decisions to be heard and then a group conscience can make a democratic decision.

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.....

Contributions for November/ December

164 Big Book
Acceptance
Across the River
Brain Damage
Breakfast Club
Carolina/Kure Beach
Complete Abandon
Daily Reprieve
Easy Duz it
Happiest Hour
Inside Out
Joe & Charlie
Just a Meeting
Leland Morning Edition
Men Living Sober
Men's Night Out
Midday
New Tabor City
One Day at a Time
Only Today
PTS
Serenity by the Sea
Shallote
Sunset Serenity
Tuesday Night Mens
Turning Point
Women's Lunch Bunch

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 12th 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

WCYPAA Chili Cook-off

If it's January, can the Chili Cook-off be far off?
Obviously not. Join us for fun, food, and frivolity.

February 2, 12:00-3:00, at the Church of the Reconciliation, 7500 Market Street.

<https://wcpaa.com/>
Check it out for more info.

From the Archives

The Wilmington Area Intergroup Archives ended the year in a swirl of activity. In November, the archives were asked to develop a display for the December Gratitude Dinner/Dance. Luckily, I had recently attended the National A.A. Archivists Convention and had spent some time strolling through the display room looking at the posters exhibited by other A.A. archives. Often these displays highlight histories, significant events, or meaningful individuals in the A.A. community.

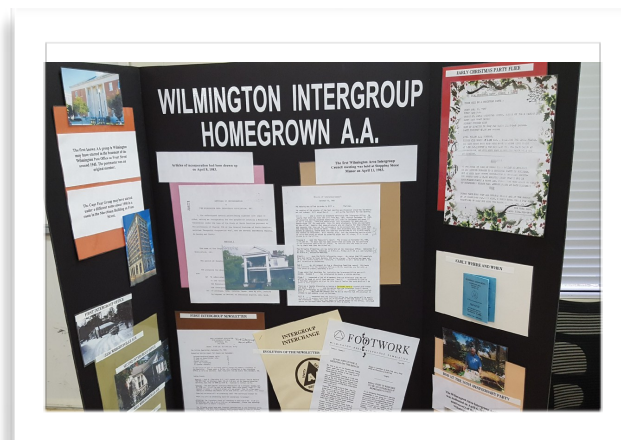
As I had recently done an inventory of documents and mementos in our archives, I decided to create a chronology of significant events in the Wilmington Area Community over the years. Researching this topic included not only organizing and duplicating the visuals for the project, but interviewing several “long timers” about their remembrances of the specific events included.

The display entitled “Wilmington Intergroup-Homegrown A.A.” attracted the interest of one new volunteer, and is available for loan to groups having celebrations or events. Come by the Archives office to take a look, or call or email me at the Intergroup offices.

The Archives also now has an established committee, including volunteers from both Districts 3 and 4. We plan to gather in late January to review anonymity and confidentiality in the context of the archives. We will have the opportunity to explore our individual interests in archival activities such as interviews with long timers, group histories, research on specific topics related to local A.A. and assisting local members with their research related needs. A trip to the Area 51 Archives in Raleigh, NC will be planned for some time this spring. We will also be discussing digitizing the archives at a beginning level.

Please contact me if the above activities appeal to you as service activity.

Carol A., Archivist



Carol A., our archivist, has put together this portable display briefly describing A.A.’s history in Wilmington. It is available if you wish to display it at special events. Contact Carol through the Intergroup Office.

Keeping Sober Holiday Season, Weddings, Birthdays—most any occasion.

Whether it is Super Bowl Sunday, a favorite cousin’s wedding, Ground Hog Day, or any old Thursday, newcomers may feel that without a little alcohol to grease the ways, they are lost. The experience of countless members suggests otherwise: such events can be met head-on, survived, and even enjoyed without alcohol. Here are twelve ways we have done so.

1. Line up extra A.A. activities: pick up an extra meeting or two, do a little volunteering at Intergroup, take another alkie to a meeting, call you sponsor, etc.
2. Host other alkies: have a party for A. A. buddies, have an after-meeting social activity, take a newcomer out for coffee.
3. USE that telephone list most newcomers are given. If you don’t have one, ask for one.
4. Find A.A.-oriented events to attend.
5. Graciously bow out of drinking occasions you used to attend. No excuse or reason is needed, just a polite, “No thank you” will suffice.
6. If you must go somewhere alcohol is served, take another A.A. friend with you.
7. Go late and leave early.
8. Take your own transportation-don’t rely on someone else to be able to leave when you want to.
9. Don’t sit around feeling sorry for yourself (see above).
10. If it is January, don’t project about Ground Hogs Day or July 4th celebrations—keep it in the day.
11. Enjoy the event for what it is and how you can enjoy it with your sober friends.
12. If this is your first such event sober in a while, imagine what it will be like to wake the next morning with no hangover!!

Dates to Remember

WCCYPAA January 15, 6:30 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, 5:30 p.m., Intergroup Office, all welcome

If you have recurring events or meetings you want listed here, please contact the editor.

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.

Upcoming Regional Events

Gratitude Retreat	January 10-13	Myrtle Beach, SC
52nd Tar Heel Mid-Winter Conference	January 17-20, 2019	Raleigh, NC
Hilton Head Mid-Winter Conference	January 25-27	Hilton Head, SC
WCYPAA Chili Cook-off	February 2	Ogden, NC
Crystal Coast Round-up	March 22-24	Atlantic Beach, NC
Oak Island Lighthouse Retreat	May 10-12	Fort Caswell, NC

News from Oak Island

Help Promote the Lighthouse Retreat

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.

January 26, 11:15.

Camel Club General Membership Meeting and Chili Cook-off. Get acquainted with the Camel Club operations and goals and hang around for the chili cook-off. Feel free to bring your favorite chili, cornbread, or dessert.

Singleness of purpose

“Singleness of purpose is essential to the effective treatment of alcoholism. The reason for such exaggerated focus is to overcome denial. The denial associated with alcoholism is cunning, baffling, and powerful. Unless alcoholism is kept relentlessly in the foreground, other issues will usurp everybody’s attention.

Since mental health workers often admire the success and geographic availability of Alcoholics Anonymous, they understandably wish to broaden its membership to include other substance abusers.

Given a choice, nobody wants to talk about alcoholism. In contrast, drug addiction commands newspaper headlines, research funding and the attention of clinical audiences.”

(George E. Vaillant, M. D. Class A (nonalcoholic) trustee, A.A. General Service Board. This quote is from an interesting article by Dr. Vaillant and can be found at aa.org.)

During my first six or eight meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous (four of them before I realized I was an alcoholic), I related to what was said about drinking alcohol and miserable living. Later, I related to what was said about living a good life without alcohol.

Today, in meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous, I am focused on finding the solution for my problems with alcohol and I am focused on helping others find solutions for their problems with alcohol. I had this driven home by each of my sponsors. The solutions for my other problems, whether they be gambling, over-eating, sex, drugs, or whatever, I will take to the appropriate fellowships (O.A., N.A., C.A., G.A., etc.) or to trained professionals. I will not muddy the waters in an A.A. meeting talking about, for example, my gambling issues. However, I will gladly talk to anyone with similar problems, **outside** meetings of Alcoholic Anonymous.

Tradition Five (“Shoemaker, stick to thy last”) is directed towards the group, and I personally try to incorporate it.

In explaining singleness of purpose to me, one sage made it very simple: “The title of the book (and name of the program) is *Alcoholics Anonymous* for a reason.

Stephen L.

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 Flash

Footwork is now available online.

Go to wilmingtonaa.us and follow the easy-to-follow instructions.

News Flash

Also available on-line and free of charge is **Box 459**, the quarterly newsletter from the A.A. General Service Office.

Go to aa.org/pages/en_us/box-4-5-9-news-and-notes-from-gso

