

Intergroup Association of
Nassau, Inc.
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aa.org
Business # 516.292.3045



**THIS
TOO
SHALL
PASS**

This is an overview of information concerning developments in Nassau AA in response to COVID-19. The COVID-19 reality is an ever-changing matter. We ask you to stay in touch, use the resources listed below, and support each other in the spirit and practice of AA during this difficult time.

AA Meetings

For a current list of AA meetings temporarily closed, go to, www.nassauny-aa.org > "Meeting Finder" > select "Any Day," "Any Type" and "Temporary Closure." The Meeting Guide app will also have updates about temporary meeting closures. This list is only as good however as the information coming in. (See below.)

To report a temporary meeting closure, email, meetinglist@nassauny-aa.org Provide the group name, NIAA ID# if known (look to the right of the group name in the printed list), and meeting location.

Telephone based AA meetings at Sober Voices Group, tel. 712-432-0075 (may be a toll call), Pass Code: 654443#; daily meetings, 12PM and 10PM, Friday-Saturday, 12AM; all EST.

For information about online AA meetings, go to, www.aa-intergroup.org.

As of today:

- To communicate with Intergroup, email info@nassauny-aa.org or phone 516-292-3045.
- The Intergroup office is closed until further notice, and there will be no in office meetings including the monthly Traditions Workshop, Reps and Steering Committee meetings.
- Contact, literature@nassauny-aa.org if you need books, and we will see what we can do.
- Our phones will continue to be answered 24/7 though call forwarding only, and additional volunteers are needed to support this. Contact nightbook@nassauny-aa.org to volunteer.
- All shortly upcoming off-site Intergroup sponsored events are cancelled and/or will be rescheduled.
- Watch for information on our website for further event changes including any rescheduling.

We will see if we can develop virtual alternative for some of our activities.

For a more detailed memo and resource list from Intergroup on COVID-19, go to our website, www.nassauny-aa.org.

Other AA Information

For information about events scheduled by Nassau General Service Group (NGSG) and its response to COVID-19, go to, www.aanassaugs-ny.org or dcmc@nassau.aaseny.org

For information about events scheduled by South Eastern NY AA (SENY) and its response to CORVID19, go to, www.aaseny.org or chair@aaseny.org.

For information about events scheduled by AAWS/GSO and its response to CORVID-19, go to, www.aa.org or tel. 212-870-3400. A memo from GSO on COVID-19 is available on our website.

Health and Public Health Information

For the latest health and public health information (non-AA governmental resources offered for information only), go to:

Federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), www.cdc.gov.

New York State Department of Health, www.health.ny.gov/.

Nassau County Health Department, www.nassaucountyny.gov/1652/Health-Department

AA, Intergroup and COVID-19

Not since hurricane Sandy has AA in Nassau faced as significant a challenge to its ability to keep AA accessible as is now presented by COVID-19, the novel coronavirus. But in true AA fashion, we're inspired by how our community is coming together to find ways to stay connected and keep active in our primary purpose to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

In a recent conversation with a representative of the New York State Department of Health, Intergroup was advised that the Department did not believe the necessary density limitations and social distancing required for public and individual health and safety in the face of COVID-19 can be achieved in typical AA meetings, and that members should seek out meetings by phone or online in everyone's interest.

Intergroup is monitoring developments, will respond as appropriate, and will comply with all governmental mandates as things evolve. Watch our website for new information. At the same time, we do not run local groups. Also, we are neither medical nor public health professionals or officials, and we will not presume to offer information, guidance or experience beyond our depth.

For now, out of an abundance of caution and in support of public health efforts to slow the spread of the coronavirus, our office will be closed, and all Intergroup sponsored gatherings expected in the coming weeks are either cancelled or will be postponed. (Follow our website for specifics as available.) At the same time, we are looking to develop telephone-based or virtual meeting spaces so we can keep things going at Intergroup. Also, watch for options as we try to set up ways to push new information to you, possibly through some kind of opt in for text or email messages via the website.

We are still answering the Intergroup phones 24/7 through the call forwarding arrangement you know from the Night Book, and now, more than ever, we need individual members and groups to step up to support this effort. Contact, nightbook@nassauny-aa.org to join us.

We also strongly suggest members and groups become familiar with the public health recommendations and requirements coming from government sources, and heed that guidance in the interest of all. (Links to Federal, State and County resources are available on our website.) Stay alert as information and guidance from government changes.

As some groups may find themselves unable to meet, groups are encouraged to have contingency plans in place to help members stay connected including telephone lists, email addresses and information about telephone and online AA meetings. Some telephone and online AA meeting information is available at the back of our print Meeting List and on our website along with access to instructions for setting up virtual meetings.

You can find a current list of meetings temporarily closed on our website. Go to, "Meeting Finder," and select "Any Day," "Any Type" and then "Temporary Closure." The Meeting Guide app will also have updates about temporary meeting closures. These lists are only as good as the information coming in, so groups that cannot meet should let us know of temporary closings at meetinglist@nassauny-aa.org

A more detailed letter from Intergroup and additional information to support AA in Nassau are found on our website as will be any new information as it develops under the "COVID-19" link off the home page.

This is an evolving situation, so please keep in touch with us, info@nassauny-aa.org

We are always stronger together, and please know we will support you with everything Intergroup has.

There is no need to panic or over-react, but prudence and faith are appropriate now as always.

Intergroup Association of Nassau, Inc., Steering Committee

Intergroup Association of Nassau County.
April Chairman's Report



To all members of Nassau County AA, the COVID-19 virus pandemic has affected our meeting schedules and created some serious problems. We had to make the executive decision to close our Nassau County Office on March 16th 4:45 pm, in order to keep our members safe!

As of now, The Steering Committee will be using an online conference tool called "ZOOM." We had a tryout this week and it worked out just fine. We can conduct all our business with it. Many groups have also been using this App to hold regular "meetings" online, which have proven very helpful.

Our April, and most probably May Intergroup Reps Meeting *will be held ONLINE*. This will be done using ZOOM, and the process is as follows: You must first download the ZOOM App -

Once you have successfully downloaded the ZOOM App., follow this link to go to the Intergroup Reps meeting - log on at 7:15 pm, you may have to wait a bit for the host, Jim M to log on.

[HTTPS://ZOOM.US/J/5546705146](https://zoom.us/j/5546705146)

MEETING ID: 554 670 5146

(MEETING PLATFORM WILL OPEN AT 7:15)

Our HOTLINE needs phone volunteers to answer the phones for different shifts during the day or night. This is in the process of being worked out now. *All AAs with at least six months sobriety can answer phones;* either during the day or at night. (9am-1pm), (1pm-5pm) or nitebook hours (5pm-9am) call the Hotline and leave name and number with the volunteer answering the line.

The office phones are (516 292-3045) and (516 292-3040). When you call the Hotline, ask to speak to Steve Sh.-2nd Vice Chair, IANC, or Karen, the Nightbook Chair.

The Night book will still be in place until the list of volunteer groups runs out.

Helping Karen and Steve will be Kenny H., the 12-Step Contact Chair, and Karl C., our Office Manager.

We will be posting a web newsletter though our Web Chair Cory B. and Newsletter Chair Steve S. this month and for the duration of the emergency. Our meeting closures are on the Intergroup Association of Nassau website. (www.nassauny-aa.org) & on the meeting guide App.

There are phone meetings which are located on the back of our Meeting list booklet Telephone based AA meetings at Sober Voices Group, tel. 712-432-0075 (may be a toll call), Pass Code: 654443#; daily meetings, 12PM and 10PM, Friday-Saturday, 12AM; all EST. and on our website along with access to instructions for setting up virtual meetings.

- Share a Day will be postponed till October if possible, at St. Joseph!
- Please, if you are sick or vulnerable to this Virus be safe!

In Love and Service,

Kevin McH.

Chair of Intergroup Association of Nassau Inc.

chair@nassauny-aa.org

AA GRAPEVINE

Due to the current changing health situation, many AA meetings across the U.S. and Canada are finding it safer to close. To help members during this time, we are giving everyone **free access** to most of our 2020 Grapevine and La Viña issues. Please share with your fellows.

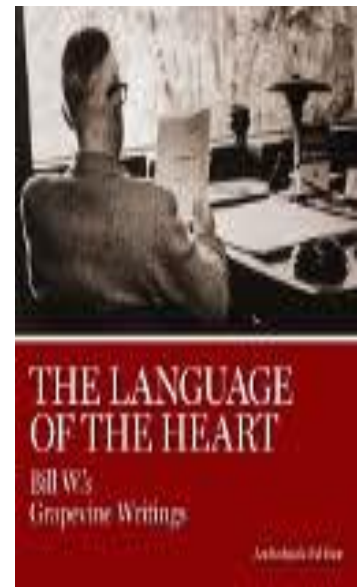


www.aagrapevine.org/we-are-here-to-help

Find on our Youtube channel some original audio stories as well as other important information.

www.youtube.com/aagrapevine

Literature— About the AA Grapevine. Part 1



TWO YALE SAVANTS STRESS ALCOHOLISM AS TRUE DISEASE

At the launching of *The Grapevine*, we wish to express our hearty congratulations and best wishes for the success of this new publication. The intention to contribute a note on the Yale Plan Clinics in the first issue of your Journal, confirms our belief in the close relation between the interests of Alcoholics Anonymous and the broad studies we are undertaking on all aspects of alcoholism. The first Yale Plan Clinic, which are at New Haven and Hartford, were established by the Laboratory of Applied Physiology of Yale University in cooperation with the Connecticut Prison Association. This most recent venture does not stand by itself, but is closely integrated with the research and educational activities of the Laboratory. These three activities represent a broad scheme in which rehabilitation of the alcoholic and the prevention of inebriety are equal goals. The Clinics have served several purposes and it is hard to say which purpose ranks first. As long as the general public is not aware of the fact that alcoholism is a disease, the most important object of the Clinics is to spread this idea until it is fully accepted. For the time being, this object may be placed ahead of the guidance of alcoholics. Another object is to further the development of community resources which could be utilized in the rehabilitation of alcoholics. At present, in many cases therapy must be undertaken at the Clinics because of the scarcity of other resources. But when these facilities shall have been developed, based, perhaps, on recommendations coming from the experience

of the Clinics, the latter will limit their activity solely to the guiding of alcoholics to those facilities which according to diagnosis seem to be the most promising in the individual case. Such guidance is being practiced at present at the Clinics in bringing suitable cases into contact with the local group of Alcoholics Anonymous. It goes without saying that one of our objectives is to further interest and confidence in Alcoholics Anonymous among those who have not heard of it or who are inadequately informed. The contacts of the Clinics with the courts, with various departments of State government and with civic agencies will contribute greatly to being able to obtain adequate understanding of the nature of alcoholism, of the utilization of the existing, and the development of social facilities. The Clinics in giving physical examinations to all alcoholics who come for advice bring to their attention physical ailments which are too frequently neglected. The treatment of such ailments does not lie within the activities of the Clinics, but the Clinics facilitate contacts with hospitals or private practitioners. The Clinics have been in operation only two months and thus a report on "results" is not justified. It is however worth reporting that out of 70 alcoholics who up to date have availed themselves of the Clinics, 22 have come without being "referred," but solely from their own desire for help. The remainder have been sent by their relatives, the courts, social agencies, hospitals, and private practitioners. Local groups of Alcoholics Anonymous have sent four more alcoholics for diagnosis of nervous complications or for physical examination. Numerous inquiries have been received from court officers and municipal administrators throughout the country concerning the feasibility of estab-

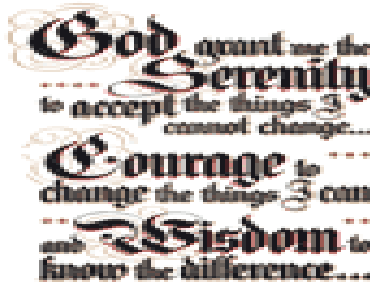
lishing clinics in other cities. The indications are that there is a wide interest in the rehabilitation of alcoholics and that only direction is needed to give it full display. The problem of the alcoholic is too great to be solved by any one person or even by any one organization. The cooperation of all individuals and all organizations, based on mutual respect and understanding of each other's aims, is needed to bring success to the efforts of all those who are interested in helping back the alcoholic into the life of the community.

New Haven, Connecticut
Howard W. Haggard
E. M. Jellinek

"GRAPEVINE" IN BOW

A big misadventure seems an undebatable verdict upon a story which I shot down after a question at them. "All right," I said, "the story didn't bring me any paper. Nobody found it in a one book. It didn't just grow like Terry. Come down, now. How's it all going?" "Well," she answered, "it was just something that was in the air. Everybody, at some time or other, has had the bright idea, but here in AA, paper! Then—hang—Cleveland had one; so why not us, here in the Metropolitan area? We figured it like the paper out of the writing stage and put it into print." With that she sat about up. In the silence that followed I looked three people over. Very average. A cabinet; a radio script writer; an author; a bookeller; an art director; a wife and mother of two. "Do you realize," I said, "that you people are sticking your necks out to here? Starting a paper up all by your lonesome. Not putting it to a vote and all that kind of thing."

(Continued on page 8)



The AA Grapevine has been offered to the Fellowship monthly since its first issue June 1944. It is the "International Journal of Alcoholics Anonymous," also referred to as, "Our meeting in print." Online, find it at www.aagrapevine.org.

Did you know the following? Co-founder Bill W. used the Grapevine to introduce AA to the "Twelve Traditions" starting with an April 1946 article entitled, "Twelve Suggested Points for AA Tradition." The "AA Preamble" first appeared in the June 1947 Grapevine in an effort to concisely set out what AA was and was not for an increasingly interested public. The ubiquitous AA slogans set in a stylized font (1956–57), the image of the Man on the Bed (AA Number Three, Bill D., with Bill W. and Dr. Bob at his bedside, 1955) and common use of the Serenity Prayer all were introduced to AA through the Grapevine. The "Declaration of Unity" was written by a Grapevine editor (1965). A number of the personal stories published in the second, third and fourth editions of the "Big Book" first appeared in the Grapevine. The Spanish-language edition of the magazine, *La Viña* was first offered in July 1995, and now appears bi-monthly. The Grapevine is entirely support by sales of the magazine and its related books and items. It receives no part of the contributions given to AAWS/GSO.

There are many ways for members and groups to contribute their experience to the Grapevine. You may easily submit stories, jokes, photos or artwork either digitally online or through the mail. There is also a portal for submitting a recorded story.

Also, in these difficult times with some meetings shuttered, the Grapevine remains a ready tool for helping us stay connected, one drunk to another, in the spirit of AA's Twelfth Step and Fifth Tradition. Consider sending a gift Grapevine subscription to that member you know whose recovery may be especially challenged by limits imposed on our ability to readily attend face to face AA.

Next month, we'll talk about some of the many items available from Grapevine beyond the magazine itself, and the use of the Grapevine as a Twelfth Step tool as suggested above.

In other matters, the 70th General Service Conference will not meet face to face for the first time in its history but will be a virtual gathering. The literature agenda partially discussed in the March newsletter will go forward as will your opportunity to advise our delegate what your group thinks about proposed considerations for the "Big Book," "Twelve and Twelve," the "Preamble" and a possible fourth history book among other items. Members should watch for information about accessing the virtual SENY Pre-Conference assembly to have their voice in these matters.

Closer to home, the Intergroup office is temporarily closed "out of an abundance of caution and in support of public health efforts to slow the spread of the coronavirus." There may nevertheless still be some who want access to the books and other AAWS/AAGV items we offer. Contact me at the email below, and we'll see if we can arrange to get the literature you need to you as circumstances at the time may allow.

Hope this is helpful.

Bill C., Literature Committee Chair

516-292-3045 or literature@nassauny-aa.org

Our 7th Tradition - As Vital as Ever

Tradition 7 says. "Every group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions." Idea being that each member is responsible for his or her own recovery.

With changes coming so quickly, it's easy to forget about the couple of bucks we typically drop into local A.A. baskets. But before you assume that "digital meetings" mean no more A.A. expenses (NOT TRUE!) please read on about how you can continue to support A.A.'s vital Twelve Step work!

Thanks to some shared experience from our A.A. friends in Marin County, California, we know contributions from A.A. members can still be gathered *digitally* even during an online meeting. Apps like [Venmo](#) and [PayPal](#) (and others - we're not 'endorsing,' just sharing helpful info!) make it possible for members to transfer a few bucks to a group treasurer. Setting up an individual account for a homegroup treasurer on these platforms is free and easy, and the treasurer can then share their account info with home group members during online meetings.

Once the group treasurer receives contributions, she/he can pass on some of those dollars to Intergroup and the General Service Structure via usual methods like mailing a check to Intergroup or Nassau General Services, or making an online contribution to the General Service Office (via [online contributions](#) at AA.org).

Homegroups

Should we keep paying our rent? That's a great question for groups to tackle at their next digital business meeting. Some things to consider: the folks who've provided space and a roof over our heads may still have employees to pay, utility bills, etc. While it's not our responsibility to keep other organizations afloat, it is within our principles to consider how our actions may impact cooperative relationships with our non-AA friends.

After an extended closure, groups may experience a large influx when people are motivated to re-join the fellowship in person. Additional literature for newcomers and refreshments for larger groups will be easier to handle if a healthy treasury awaits the reopening of your homegroup's doors. Groups can tackle such questions in the usual manner -- by seeking the "group conscience" -- via whatever remote channels the group chooses for staying in touch.

Nassau Intergroup Services

Our phones are ringing more than ever. Our website is getting hit on like a "cute-enough" drunk at closing time. And while our electric and heat bills will likely go down a bit during our closure, the lease must still be paid.

Our service committees are also beginning to explore how we might still carry the message into institutions, to local professionals, and to the general public. We're a resourceful bunch. If our founders could transmit the A.A. message via *postal mail* in 1939, surely, we can do the same with all our fancy gadgets and tools!

General Service Structure

Districts, Areas and the General Service Office have ongoing expenses as well. Expenses for events that have been postponed may still need to be met. Service committees will still be striving to Twelve Step. And way down at the bottom of our service structure, GSO employees deserve our continued support - their salaries and healthcare are crucial to their ability to continue providing service to all 60,000+ groups in the U.S. and Canada.

So, if you can - dig deep!

NIGHTBOOK



COVERAGE NEEDED "COME ONE.....COME ALL"

Can you or your group step up and help our hotline by answering the phones from 5 pm to 9 am?

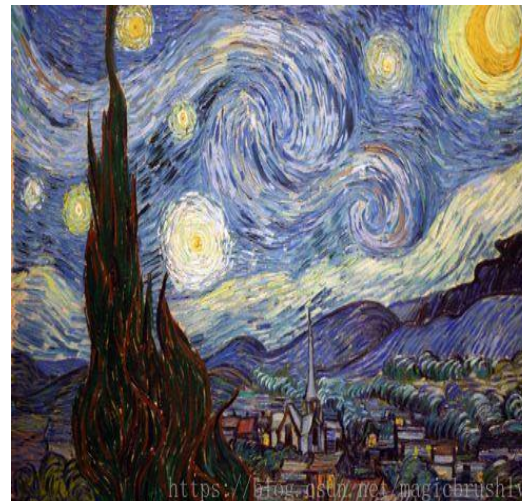
In this time of crisis, I know it might be difficult for groups to be able to get a week together to cover the phones. It all depends on who has whose phone number. **NO PROBLEM AT ALL**. If you would like to sign up as an individual OR as a group, please contact me at nightbook@nassauny-aa.org or leave me a message on 516-292-3045. We need to be available by phone to help the next alcoholic!

Service and giving back are a big part of how we stay sober.
Will you please HELP?
The Nightbook coverage would not be a success without people like you!!

A big thanks to the groups who helped last month:

No Frills, Bellmore
Albertson Searingtown Discussion Group
Solution Group, Williston Park
Stepping Stones, Oceanside

Yours in Service,
Karen G.



Just Another Storm

By an A.A. member

A few years ago, when Superstorm Sandy hit, my homegroup in Long Beach lost what looked like "everything." The building where we usually met had taken several feet of seawater during the "surge", and our coffee pots and boxes of A.A. literature were literally washed away.

Cell phone service was knocked out for a few days too, leaving many of us feeling alone and overwhelmed. Drunks are resourceful, though. When we need something -- really need it! -- we take action to get it. And as sober members of A.A., we also take action to make sure others can get what they need too.

Somebody had a group email list and started reaching out to plan for a meeting at someone's house. Somebody decided to "stake out" the meeting location at the regular time in case any newcomers dropped by looking for help. Somebody found a way to notify Intergroup to let them know the meeting was temporarily suspended, so the website/meeting list could be updated.

We started meeting in each other's homes. Then for a few weeks we met at a local rec center. Then we moved to the library of a local school. We got new coffee pots. We got new books. Eventually we even got our old meeting space back. And with each move, we let Intergroup know.

After all, like our Big Book says, our meetings are largely intended "to provide a time and place where new people can bring their problems." For that to happen, they must be able to find us!

Over time, it became clear that the things that were "loseable" were also replaceable. But there was one thing that didn't need to be replaced, because it's not "loseable." This Fellowship.

That first Saturday morning after the storm, we looked around that fireplace-heated living room of one of our members, and in the eyes of our brothers and sisters we saw a profound truth: that nothing can threaten who we are. That we are not just a box of books, or a coffee pot, or a room at a particular time.

We are Alcoholics Anonymous. A "spiritual entity." A "society of alcoholics in action." In the past few weeks, we've been seeing a similar wave of action. Online meetings are cropping up, and the info is being shared widely. Members are checking up on each other and making sure newcomers know of the new resources that are becoming available. Outreach through our various service committees continues, although via new and innovative ways.

Our Intergroup Office is eager to hear and share the amazing solutions that local groups, like Bill used to say, are "hammering out on the anvils of experience." Please reach out to info@nassauny-aa.org with any solutions you'd like us to pass along.

We've weathered the storm of alcoholism. We've weathered Sandy. We'll weather this too -- together.

From the Newsletter Editor: Steven S.

Before this pandemic there were wars, riots, and natural disasters. We faced all these things as a country and a community. *This Too Shall Pass...*

However, in saying that If you ever needed a time to pray, now is the time to practice. It does not require much effort other than the willingness to do so. I pray for *all* those on the front lines battling this war on this virus and wish them nothing but strength to carry on the good works they do. Hopefully we all come out of this resilient and the world becomes humbler place as result of it. May God keep you safe.

Please help me help another alcoholic with your slogan experience that helped motivate you through your sobriety....email: news@nassauny-aa.org

“Series on Slogans”

My last meeting, I attended there was a woman who shared that I knew from the rooms of AA. She is a familiar face, and this is a small intimate group so there are little or no distractions. When she shared it was like she was speaking in tongues (Latin). I mean, she didn't realize it, but she said 4 slogans in her two-minute share. My ears went up like a dog hearing his masters command. I had no problem asking my friend to write an article, and she had no problem doing service. These slogans also emphasize how important it is to take the first step and know that it is a correct one. AA slogans motivate you to constantly hang in there and not let your efforts go to waste.



So, after a meeting a few weeks ago Steven S. the newsletter editor ambushed me into writing this article about my experiences with the AA slogans.

I said yes because I owe my life to my higher power and the rooms of AA. I was told many years ago that when someone in AA ask me to do to do something you don't get to say no. So, here's my take on the slogans.

The first AA meeting I walked into; I didn't even notice the slogans that were in the room because I was terrified of being there. It took some time and some months later for me to go to the meetings and I remember walking into this room, and I noticed everything because I just wanted to know what all this stuff was about. I saw that they had all these little sayings around the room.

I saw one that said *one day at a time*, I saw one that said *let go and let God, first things first* and then one that really caught my attention was, *think, think, think*. The sign was upside down and it made me laugh. I started going to that meeting, of course I went late, and left early. But I always looked around that room and I was fixated on the sign that said *“think”, “think”, “think”*.

One night when I was there this guy came up to me who I thought was the Grand poohbah of AA, he said, “how's it going?” I said to him, “I'm good, I got to tell you people something, I've been coming here for weeks and that sign over there that says, *think, think, think* has been upside down and nobody notices it. He looked at me with a smirk on his face and replied, “that sign is upside down for a reason”. It's to show newcomers like you, when they come in that hopefully you'll see one day that you're thinking is upside down while you're drinking, so keep coming back and then he walked away.

I thought to myself okay moron and I sat down in the back of the room. Now I knew in my head that I was smarter than all these other people! Well I'm happy to say that some years later I can say I'm grateful for all those slogans that I saw because, today they exist in my life, they really do!

These Days I can look back and see that I stay sober only by the *grace of God* and only *one day at a time*. It is by the *grace of God* that I don't drink but, I must take part in my own recovery daily. AA works because I work it. I now know that sobriety is a journey not a destination, it took years for me to learn that and I'm grateful for the journey. It has been a good one for the most part, I also learned for this alcoholic, *faith without works is dead*.

For me it is essential to keep coming back and continuing to grow. I'll be forever grateful to my higher power and the people in the rooms of AA for having patience, kindness, tolerance and love for me and my belligerent attitude.

I am certain I'm headed in the right direction and I have plenty of company. I don't ever have to feel that way again if I don't want to. So, if you are new or just coming back, *it works if you work it, you are worth it*, keep coming back!

By, Patty E. Sobriety without End, Malverne, N.Y. 11565 F.R.O.G. FREELY RELY ON GOD



Step Four - Courage

"Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves"

When I took a seat at my first AA meeting, I remember being confused and angry. I was confused because I had doubts about whether I belonged in my seat; was I too hasty in my decision to walk into this room? Was I just looking for attention to soothe a bruised ego, for people to agree with me that I was right and had every reason to be angry, scared and upset? I was seriously confused. My anxiety and anger were both off the charts, my thinking was as organized as a sackful of kittens. I was craving relief from these uncomfortable feelings and my sweaty palms by the idea of taking a drink. Perhaps, I thought, I needed "one last hurrah," a good spree to *really* convince myself that I belonged here.

Then came the evening where I got a sponsor. Turns out I knew him from professional school, and I didn't really like him much then, and didn't know what to make of him now. To my surprise, I just saw him in the back of the room, standing, his arms folded and grinning at me. *What the hell is he grinning at?* I thought. Did he want to mock me? To make me feel worse than I already did. All those thoughts dissipated when he stuck out his hand to me with a sincere smile that said: *"I know what you're feeling now; I was there."*

He became my sponsor and my best friend. It's funny how the world turns out sometimes, right? You just never know. He told me we had to get busy. He picked up a paperback copy of the *Third Edition of Alcoholics Anonymous*, and told me: "Start reading this, especially the first couple of chapters, and then, even if you're not up to it, I want you to read chapter five - *"How It Works."*

We quickly began the Step work. I had no trouble with Steps One and Two. Even though I had steady employment, and a family, I knew that my life was unmanageable, anger off the charts, anxiety, suspicion, and dependence, especially at the end of the day on the blessed bottle above the stove in the cabinet. I tried on numerous occasions to quit drinking - *entirely*; but to my awakening horror, I found I could not. I tried to cut down. I told myself at night *I'm only going to take one slug from the bottle and go to sleep.* However, the "one slug" became a third, fourth and a fifth: always ending up with my throwing up into the nice new porcelain toilet on the main floor of the house.

I knew, not thought, that *no human power could relieve me of my alcoholism.* I believed in the God of my understanding. I was raised in the Jewish Faith, and although I was not one for ritual observance, I did pray, and I did believe. Then, bereft of all human hope for help, I was ready for Step Three: I became ready to turn my will and everything I had over to the care of my God.

I liked playing the victim. After all, wasn't the reason I drank because of the injuries done to me by others? Hadn't they shot my ego down, made me feel "less than?" I was not aggressive enough in my choice of college or work after professional school. It was people and their damn institutions that were keeping me down. Alcohol made the bad feelings go away - or so I thought. Personal inventory? "YES!" I told my sponsor. "I can't wait to *give it to all those bastards that did me harm.*" Boy was I ready to go on that one; and putting it down on paper? Wow, that made me feel better right away.

My sponsor started laughing at me. "What makes you think that *you* had no part in all these slights and wrongdoings done to you??" I was flabbergasted. He then told me about the Seven Deadly Sins: He explained that these were really measurements of our own human failings. The idea was to show me that me and my attitudes; more so than the deeds of others, was responsible for my problems and troubled mind.

Before we got into discussing these things, my sponsor calmed me down and eased my sense of deflation somewhat by relaying to me his own experience with, and this was the key word: *instincts* run amok. That was the first mantra I learned to discover was the real, root and reason for my alcoholic drinking pattern. He told me some of his stories. I remembered what he was like in college, and we both laughed as we remembered those stories. I felt an immediate kinship. *Here was the connection with someone who understood me* that I was seeking! Now we looked in earnest at the Seven Deadly Sins, and I applied them to all the people and things I blamed for my problem drinking: Pride, lust, greed, anger, envy, gluttony and sloth. Pride headed the list. How many people had wounded my pride? Many!

I saw that these things, when listed on paper in front of me, with names, deeds done by others, and what part of my ego they hurt, had caused me problems because of my *attitudes* towards them. It was no easy thing to list these things as glaring defects of character; they were only half of the problem. Yes, sometimes others *did hurt me*, but no matter where my fault lies in each situation, I'm resentful because I fail to see that they suffer just as I do. We all share the same exact fears, and at times, exhibit the same behaviors. This was a freeing realization.

When I allow the behavior of others to anger me by word, thought, or deed, I pause now and see their actions for what they truly are. I see that they're acting out on one of their many fears. Maybe this is the great challenge of the sober life. I think of the wisdom of St. Francis when he said that the act of understanding is better than that of being understood. I am still learning, with the wisdom gained by the writing out of my Fourth Step; to come to terms with the old feelings of not being good enough to quickly turn that around. Learning to see in others, the feelings and faults that tortured me, is the key to a mature and outgoing love that is the basis of a sober life.

Tradition Four:

“Each Group Should Be Autonomous, Except in Matters Affecting AA as a Whole”

I think of the basis of autonomy in an AA group, or Service entity as coming as a direct result from the Second Tradition; that says in part “Our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern.” This is part of the great paradox of AA: Leaders who do not govern. How does our fellowship, or any organization for that matter run on principles such as this? The essence of this is “caring without controlling.”

There is no body of laws or directives from “up above” that tell a group what to do, or how to behave. The definition of the word autonomous is simply “not subject to control from the outside.” The Traditions are only suggestions - on how to conform just enough so that a sick and suffering alcoholic has the freedom to discover his own path and his own choices to becoming sober, and then how to pass it along to others. Along with a “directed autonomy” governed by spiritual principles, comes a Recovery that will LIVE by spiritual principles.

Every person’s sobriety is his or her own; not forced into any sort of conformity. It enables us to see the workings of a group conscious and a loving God in our Fellowship; especially in business meetings, and in our anniversaries where stories of true unfettered Recovery enrich our own lives.

Looking at our Traditions as a whole, they are representative of our Second Legacy of AA Unity. Everywhere on the planet you find an AA meeting, an alcoholic should find the same sense of welcome, warmth and love that he or she can find in the meeting around the corner from their house. Yes, our meetings are autonomous, but conformity is a must in several areas. The basket must remain a spiritual entity where money and spirituality mix, because the funds placed in the basket have a sole purpose - helping a suffering alcoholic to find a solvent, secure meeting place, with refreshments and coffee - the old “standby” and trademark of an AA meeting.

We are autonomous, yet we cannot let any outside agency sponsor us or financially support us, lest we become beholden to an outside cause and lose track of our Primary Purpose - helping the alcoholic.

We are autonomous, and although we may pay a qualified AA member for his electrician’s services, we NEVER pay for Twelfth Step work.

We are autonomous, and though people may speak about Recovery on the airwaves or on social media, they are NEVER to identify their Recovery as coming from Alcoholics Anonymous. We don’t endorse any new medical breakthroughs in the field of alcoholism. That sort of thing remains out of our purview.

We are autonomous, and even though political tensions in the nation remain at a high, AA NEVER has an opinion on these outside issues. An AA when confronted with the question of “exactly what happens at AA meetings,” the AA answered, “we just tell our stories and people listen.” How much more can we “Keep It Simple” than that.

The second part of Tradition Four states “. . .except when to do so affects AA as a whole.” This is very serious. Think of a bunch of building blocks stacked on top of one another, like a child does when playing. If one of the middle blocks - acting like it has too much autonomy - gets placed wrong, falls, and causes the tower to fall, the welfare of the tower is destroyed.

Now how in practical terms can the autonomy of a group harm AA as a whole? Right now, in the present we have seen examples of this. We are amid a viral pandemic. Governmental authorities are not allowing *any* types of groups or organizations to meet indoors, or even together outdoors because this presents a terrible health crisis. AA is facing one of its most serious challenges now. Thanks to the miracle of the Internet and social media and phone, AA groups can have “virtual” or online meetings to continue to spread the message without spreading the illness. AA is autonomous and yet we must obey the authorities in the communities we meet in.

We always say, “there is no such thing as an AA Police,” and this is correct. However, groups that have continued face to face meetings in complete disregard of public health ordinances put AA at risk. If, for example, local press would find such a meeting, no matter how many thousands of lives AA has saved, or how many local drunks have found contented sobriety, this one bad move would gain a maelstrom of unwanted and negative press coverage. *This* affects AA as a whole.

(Tradition Four continued)

If one person catches the virus, and they have been a regular attendee of the meeting that is still going on face to face, and God forbid the individual or a close family member dies, it could affect the reputation of AA as a whole.

Now, we said earlier that there are no AA Police. However, the trusted servants who sit as chairs and heads of the various Service committees, along with General Service Reps, DCM's and chairmen, etc., are what is known as "The Guardians of the Twelve Traditions." It is a responsibility of these trusted servants to go to these groups or contact them by phone or e-mail to tell them they must not meet for the good health and safety of the AAs who attend these meetings, and advise them to seek alternatives. We would be remiss in our responsibility to those we serve if we did NOT do this.

No one can force these groups NOT to meet face by face; we can only advise against it, as was just explained AAs our duty to those we serve. However, we can and have taken action in the form of not mentioning any groups like these to people calling our hotline or looking up meetings on our website. Our only aim, with the Traditions as our guide, is to provide good, safe Recovery meetings to the sick and suffering alcoholic, and in times of this unprecedented crisis, direct them to phone or online meetings.

In Trusted Service

Steve Sh.,

Albertson Searingtown Group



The Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi is affectionately known as The Eleventh Step Prayer as it appears in the book "12 Steps and 12 Traditions" in the reading for the eleventh step.

It apparently dates from the early part of the 20th century, and its author is unknown. It was found in Normandy in 1915, written on the back of a holy card of St. Francis. The version that follows is from the "12 and 12" and differs from the original.

Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace!

That where there is hatred,
I may bring love.

That where there is wrong,
I may bring the spirit of forgiveness.

That where there is discord,
I may bring harmony.

That where there is error,
I may bring truth.

That where there is doubt,
I may bring faith.

That where there is despair,
I may bring hope.

That where there are shadows,
I may bring light.

That where there is sadness,
I may bring joy.

Lord, grant that I may seek rather to comfort,
than to be comforted.

To understand,
than to be understood.

To love,
than to be loved.

For it is by self-forgetting that one finds.

It is by forgiving that one is forgiven.

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**Or phone 516-292-3045 business hours 9-5
and leave a message with phone rep**

Nassau County General Service

contact: Annabel dcmc@aanassaugs-ny.org

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Meditation



What Is Step 11 of AA?

“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.”

Here are six simple methods to try, to help you begin your meditation practice today:

1. Guided meditations

There are hundreds of resources online that have a huge supply of guided meditations and music to help sooth your soul. 2. Candle Staring
If you have trouble focusing, you can light a candle and stare at it. Your attention will be held. If your mind races, just observe what it is doing and let those thoughts release.

3. Mantra

Repeating words over and over again, can help you find calm and focus. You can choose from a number of Sanskrit mantras like the Gayatri Mantra, which has meaning in its words and sounds, or you can even make up your own. It doesn't matter what you choose, just that you feel good about your choice.

4. Visualization

Another easy and down-to-earth meditation technique is to picture an idyllic being or setting in your mind. Focus on the picture and let yourself embellish it as much or as little as you need to.

5. Present Moment Meditation

Close your eyes and begin to focus on your breath. Take a few moments here then allow your focus to broaden to your body and the sensations that it's feeling. Now expand your focus to anything touching your body, noticing those sensations. Lastly, expand your awareness to everything you can hear and sense. Now reverse this process and come back, one step at a time to your breath.

6. Become the Observer

Focus on becoming the observer of your mind. Close your eyes and focus on the spot about an inch above of the spot between your eyebrows (Third Eye Chakra). Begin to watch what your mind and body are feeling, thinking and doing.

Start with 5 minutes and build up to 10,20,30.

Start your day or find a time where you have quiet time for you and your higher power.

Do not beat yourself up when you quiet your mind. The most experienced Buddhist monks who meditate daily have thoughts that cloud their minds with distracting thoughts.

A Prayer During Times of a Pandemic

May we who are merely inconvenienced,
Remember those whose lives are at stake.

May we who have no risk factors,
Remember those most vulnerable.

May we who have the luxury of working from home,
Remember those who must choose between
preserving their health or making their rent.

May we who have the flexibility to care for our children
when their schools close,
Remember those who have no options.

May we who have to cancel our trips,
Remember those who have no place to go.

May we who are losing our marginal income
in the tumult of the economic market,
Remember those who have no margin at all.

May we who settle in for a quarantine at home,
Remember those who have no home.

During this time when we cannot physically
wrap our arms around each other,
Let us yet find ways to be
the loving embrace of God to our neighbors.
Amen.