

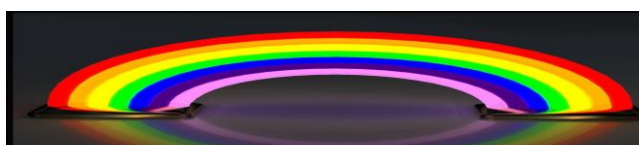
Intergroup
Association of Nassau,
Inc.

361 Hempstead Turnpike
West Hempstead, NY 11552-1329

516.292.3040
(24/7 hotline)

<https://nassauny-aa.org>
Business # 516.292.3045

June 2020



Everything is going to be OK

We continue to offer help via telephone and chat to those in need of a meeting.

****Our newsletter is hyper-linked to help you navigate various sites****

note* To click on link and navigate a site or email download a pdf file.

Stay Connected

Go on our intergroup website
<https://nassauny-aa.org>
for virtual AA meeting links
and updates in Nassau County

- [NYC: Stay Healthy – Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [Governor Cuomo Signs the 'New York State on PAUSE' Executive Order](#)
- [Governor Cuomo Issues Guidance on Essential Services Under The 'New York State on PAUSE' Executive Order](#)

Keep Occupied

Help us Keep our phone lines well-staffed during this difficult time.
Contact our 24/7 hotline and ask to be added to our emergency contact list

A Return to Ordinary Meetings?

This month Alcoholics Anonymous celebrates its 85th year reaching out to the suffering alcoholic with its life-saving program of recovery. Yet in all those 85 years, neither wars, nor massive financial downturns such as we experienced in 2008, nor storms such as Katrina in 2005 or Sandy in 2012, have so impacted and altered the everyday life of our Fellowship as has the current COVID-19 pandemic.

The public health and safety demands stemming from the spread of the virus shuttered ordinary face to face access to AA, denied us our International Convention, wreaked havoc with our finances, and forced all of us to find different approaches to carrying the message and connecting one drunk to another.

To our credit as a Fellowship and as individual people in recovery, we have found our way. AA meetings and events have continued in virtual spaces as groups and members cooperated with the public health efforts. Our Intergroup hotline has continued to be answered 24/7. The AA message has continued to be carried in many ways and places.

Now many of us are expectantly, perhaps anxiously or impatiently, looking ahead to a relaxing of the rigors of the NYS PAUSE implemented mid-March, and the progressive return of face to face AA as Nassau is allowed in coming weeks to slowly reach for the new normal of social interaction before the virus is fully quelled. That most likely means limitations.

With that in mind, it may be helpful for members and groups to begin talking in the next few weeks about what that transitional actuality may look like. No doubt the short-term reality will see some continuing limits imposed on our AA way of life as public health officials seek to avoid a resurgence of the virus in the county.

To help us responsibly prepare for the reopening of face to face AA, the following questions (and others as may come to us as we begin to share) may help jump start that important conversation and preparation.
(Continued on next page)

Some Questions to Consider in Planning the Reopening of Face to Face AA

Meetings and Events:

1. Have you discussed with your landlord (LL) their readiness to have you resume meeting? Is such a conversation needed?
2. Does the LL impose any restrictions on the meeting over and above those required by Federal, State and County (government) public health authorities to resume meeting?
3. How will the group accommodate the LL's requirements if any? Be specific.
4. Is the group aware of any requirements coming from government (such as the wearing of masks, meeting size limits and social distancing) that might restrict, or shape resumed meetings?
5. How will the group accommodate any requirements coming from government that might restrict its meetings? Be specific.
6. If the meeting is restricted by LL and/or government requirements, how will the group try to assure cooperation when participants choose to flout the requirements.
7. Are there additional voluntary suggestions coming from the LL or government for safely resuming meetings?
8. Are there additional ideas supporting safely resuming meetings?
9. Will the group need to provide any extra supplies (such as disinfectant or masks) to maintain/support the meeting?
10. Will the group need to consider disinfecting common surfaces before or after meetings?
11. Are there concerns related to the sharing of books, the common handling of the basket or the provision of refreshments during meetings?
12. Does the group have access to additional rooms where overflow could be accommodated?
13. Are meetings in parking lots and/or public spaces a way to handle overflow?
14. If in the past the group typically drew more attendees than can now be effectively accommodated under any restrictions, how will that be handled?
15. Is the group prepared to turn attendees away if their attendance violates any new meeting requirements?
16. If the group has a greeter, will their role change be considering any of the above?
17. How will all group members support the group's managing any new responsibilities taken on to resume meeting?

18. Has the group considered how it will respond if requested to cooperate with local health department contact tracing efforts?
19. Has the group considered not reopening until such time as it can meet unrestricted?
20. When will the group reopen, and how will that reopening be communicated locally?
21. If the group has been meeting via Zoom or some other virtual platform, will those meetings continue in any form after the group reopens?
22. Are there ways to combine face to face and virtual meetings as one?
23. What lessons for carrying the message (Step 12 and Tradition 5) have been learned during this time of challenge?
24. Have we become more sensitive to accessibility issues routinely experienced by some members even before this time of challenge?
25. Has the group continued to pay rent for its meeting space even though not meeting?
26. Should the group seek forgiveness or a refund for rent due or paid for the time it could not meet?
27. If the group embraced an electronic channel for receiving contributions (such as Apple Pay, Cash-App, Google Pay, PayPal, Venmo or Zelle), should it maintain that channel once it is meeting again?

We consider these questions just a start as we begin to talk about the transition back to face to face AA in Nassau County.

Also, Intergroup and Nassau General Services are discussing mounting in the near future a Zoom-based workshop on the realities of bringing back face to face AA.

Watch the Intergroup and General Service web sites for more information as it becomes available.

Intergroup Association of Nassau, Inc.,
Steering Committee



What to Do When Other People Aren't Social Distancing

I was recently on our afternoon hike with my wife and kids, dutifully wearing our masks and observing social distancing guidelines. Suddenly a runner without a mask passed us from behind, huffing and puffing his breath cloud into our shared air as he came within two or three feet of us. I was irritated that a person potentially could expose us to the coronavirus when we were doing our best to protect ourselves and others.

If you are being strict with your social distancing, chances are there are people around you who are being less careful. While the majority of Americans seem to understand the need to **limit contact with others** to slow the spread of the coronavirus, people vary widely in their social distancing practices. Maybe you wear a face mask religiously in public, while many around you go maskless. Or maybe some people seem oblivious to the six-foot distance guidelines that you faithfully observe.

You might be more careful about social distancing than some of your friends and neighbors, or even the people you live with. Maybe your spouse does not take the virus as seriously as you do, or your teenaged kids act like you are freaking out for no reason and ignore your pleas to social distance.

What can you do if you find yourself in a situation where others seem to be throwing caution to the wind?

Safety Considerations

First, be incredibly careful about confronting a stranger about their social distancing practices. This topic is highly charged and has become a major point of contention in the debate about how and when to restart the economy.

Attempts to change others' behavior could potentially trigger a violent reaction, as **has happened several times**. You also risk prolonging contact with someone who is at an elevated risk for carrying the coronavirus, given their disregard for social distancing; if they approach you and start yelling, you could get infected.

If you notice a persistent problem, contact those who are responsible for the space—for example, the manager of your grocery store or the authorities who oversee your local trails.

Beware of Catastrophizing

Keep in mind that the risk is low for contracting **COVID-19** from very small deviations in the social distancing guidelines. For example, if a fellow hiker stumbles and briefly comes within five feet of you, it is unlikely you have just contracted the virus (which would also depend on their carrying it). While it might be frustrating to feel like others are not doing all they can to keep their distance, avoid making yourself more distressed than necessary.

Be Generous

I recently discovered that a family member and I had quite different views on what constituted effective social distancing. We follow remarkably similar practices, which I believed to be close to 100 percent compliant with the recommendations, while they saw us as being more like 89 percent compliant. I was shocked to learn that what I saw as an A+, they gave a B+! So those who are less careful than you might think they are doing a bang-up job of social distancing.

Aim to make the kindest possible interpretation for why others are not being as scrupulous about social distancing. It may not be that they are “selfish,” “arrogant,” or “uninformed”. They might just have a different understanding of risk and of the need to take precautions and might think they are being quite careful.

Maybe they think, for example, that it's okay to get close to you in the grocery store since you're both wearing masks (though the CDC guidelines say to “keep at least 6 feet between yourself and others, even when you wear a face covering”). Similarly, many people don't seem to know that **their leashed pets also need to maintain social distance**. Making a different judgment about the reason behind their behavior can make you feel less upset by it (even if the actions themselves are no less risky).

Communicate Honestly to Loved Ones

Let friends or family members know if you are concerned about their social distancing practices. You may not change their minds or their behavior, but at least you will know you did what you could to protect them and those they encounter.

Be clear and firm about where your boundaries are

Do not feel pressured to change your behavior if local family or friends try to convince you to hang out with them. Even if they say you are being “ridiculous” or “paranoid,” you do not have to compromise what you believe is right and what you are comfortable with.

The biggest challenge may come when you and a family member you live with do not see eye to eye on social distancing. Talk openly with your loved one about your concern, using positive assertive communication:

- Take ownership for your thoughts and feelings, rather than making accusations. For example, say, “I worry that you're going to bring the virus home to Grandpa,” rather than, “You're being really stupid and selfish.”
- Say what is on your mind as calmly and rationally as possible. The fear you feel about the virus will likely lead to anger, but an aggressive tone will just put the other person on the defensive and lead nowhere.
- Listen to the other person's perspective. Try to understand their thoughts and feelings, rather than listening only for what you disagree with. You may not agree with their conclusions, but it helps to know where they are coming from. If they feel truly heard they may also be more willing to consider changing their behavior.

Control What You Can

Trying to make others do what you want is unlikely to work and usually only leads to frustration. Ultimately you can only control yourself. You cannot force your fellow pedestrians to give a wide berth on sidewalks and trails, for example, but you can take measures to stay as far from them as possible. You might need to limit your exposure to public spaces to the least busy times of day or avoid narrow trails that make distancing difficult.

Remind yourself of the value of accepting the limits of what you can control. This requires a deep level of acceptance, which does not mean resignation. You can care about this issue a great deal, even as you acknowledge that your control is limited.

Some suggestions ..., BY: SETH J. G.

Chair's Report for June 2020: IAN



The Steering Committee has been discussing the re-opening of the Intergroup Office when the local authorities believe it is safe to do so. Currently, we do not think it is wise to implement the six-foot social distancing guidelines between members with masks at the office, especially for those individuals with pre-existing comorbidities. Intergroup tasks can still be maintained with occasional visits by steering committee members such as collecting mail and having remote day and Nightbook phone reps to answer questions and give guidance to virtual AA meetings.

We can still use Zoom for Intergroup Reps & Steering Committee meetings. We still need to figure out a way of selling literature by ordering by phone and setting up a pickup curbside delivery on only a few days of the week. As with all of Nassau County's AA Groups, we will have to see how all the state reopening guidelines will affect us going forward in July and August.

There was a Zoom meeting of The Intergroup Liaison Committee on May 17, and there was a topic brought up by myself about giving each county Intergroup a voice and vote at the SENY Area Assemblies, which Chicago and Arizona are already doing at their respective area assemblies. There are approximately 13 Intergroups in SENY Area 49, and there would be a total vote for each (12 counties plus the Spanish District).

Although we can discuss this amongst ourselves, it would need to be proposed by GSRs from our area at a SENY Assembly, and a change to SENY's bylaws would be necessary to accomplish this.

Please bring this back to your home group for a discussion and let me know what they say about the idea?

On May 20th the Intergroup Association of Nassau County's Bylaws Committee met to discuss how our bylaws might be updated to include a description of the duties of an Assistant Treasurer's position and whether it should be an elected position going forward, or if it can be a nominated position to the Steering Committee. We also discussed language also on some sections. We have our Current Bylaws at our Reps meeting available and it is on the website for anyone interested in downloading them.

Please be safe and stay healthy this Summer!

Kevin McH

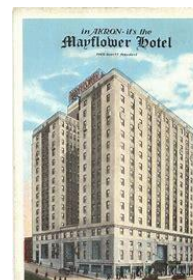
Chair, Intergroup Association of Nassau INC.

85TH ANNIVERSARY OF WHEN BILL W. AND DR. BOB MET – MAY 12, 1935



It was Saturday, May 11th, 1935, Bill Wilson had been sober for 5 months and for the first time felt the fear of picking up a drink again. He was staying in the Mayflower Hotel in Akron after having a promising business deal fall apart. It finally came to his consciousness that despite the fear of not being able to stay sober, he was staying sober because of trying to help others. Even though he had no success with any other alcoholics for the first 5 months of his sobriety. He knew that he needed to find another alcoholic, but not one to preach to, one that will help himself stay sober. Through a series of phone calls, he was put in touch with a member of the Oxford Group, Henrietta S. She had just the one for Bill to help, Dr. Bob S. They met for the first time the next day; Mother's Day, May 12th, 1935. The place where Bill was left with two options; drink or find an alcoholic to work with:

THE MAYFLOWER Hotel



The location of where Bill W. and Dr. Bob first met:

THE GATE LODGE



Bill was stranded in Akron with no money to get back to New York. He was invited by Dr. Bob's wife Anne to move into their home:

DR. BOB'S HOUSE



ZOOM MEETINGS: WHAT'S WORKING? WHAT'S NOT?

“Things that are working well: Having a person to do tech support who is a Zoom expert from their job. Having a meeting with the tech chair weekly, 30 mins prior to the meeting. Having the host call on people to share, as opposed to the speaker. Muting all participants except the person speaking/sharing and putting the chat on “host only” during the meeting. Having newcomer callers elected by the group so that new people don’t have to share their number with the entire meeting, although the chat is open after the meeting, so people can share their numbers with the full group or message people individually, if they like.

What is not working: We have opted not to use a password but have a link that has a password embedded because the password seems to cause a lot of confusion. Having a group Zoom and group Venmo account was not working for autonomy and being self-supporting, so we checked with our treasurer and then got our own. We did not hold a group conscience about security issues. The chair spoke to several members of the group and other groups and made changes necessary in accordance with guidance available.” -Anonymous Contributor

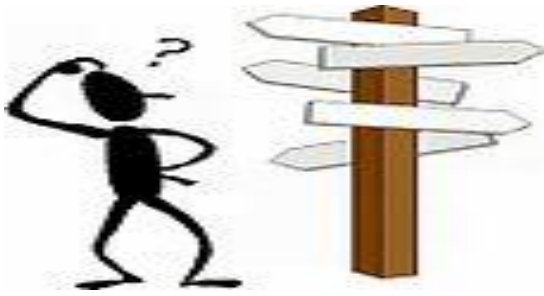
“For security, we keep screen sharing and recording disabled, all participants muted during the meeting (without the option to unmute themselves) and the chat function set so that messages can only be sent directly to the chair. We also have three appointed security service positions dedicated to keeping an eye out for disruptive behavior. They are set as co-hosts and have the power to turn off participants’ video and/or audio or remove them from the meeting entirely if need be. To keep the meeting as accessible as possible, we do not use a password or waiting room.

We have had one instance of a group of trolls joining the meeting but with these settings the meeting was able to proceed without disruption as the designated security personnel removed them. The trusted servants of the meeting also elected to create four appointed service positions (two men and two women) dedicated to reaching out to newcomers. During the meeting, anyone new is encouraged to privately share their contact info with the chair, who then passes it off to the designated outreach group, who can in turn introduce them to other members of the fellowship. This is a relatively new initiative but has so far had success with ensuring newcomers have a safe and private way to reach out for help. Additionally, once the meeting is over, the chair turns the public chat feature on so that anyone who wishes may share their contact info with the group at large if they are comfortable doing so.” -Trusted servant from Up the Tubes (meets Wednesdays at 8:30 p.m.)

“My biggest challenge in moving meetings online has been that many of our less tech-savvy members are wary. Many will only dial in, foregoing video. I have set up two meetings without passwords but used a waiting room and must admit people manually. I prefer not using a password because that creates yet another bit of information folks need to punch into their phone, and adds another barrier for the tech-wary. I feel like we want to make this process as painless as possible because isolation kills. Along these lines I am extremely interested in hearing about other platforms folks may have used that could make things easier and more secure for the nervous.

On Friday, my home group (which I did not host) got bombed. We did not have a waiting room or a password, but afterwards we held a group conscience and implemented both. We also formalized the online meeting host as a service position, making me the co-host. At the other two meetings I host, we have had a couple of brief group conscience meetings about minor points like whether we list on the WAIA website but have never formally made the host a recognized position. Being a host requires you pay attention to administration during the meeting and distracts from listening to the message. On the other hand, rotating positions usually last at least six months, and since this is all so new, I do not feel like this is an urgent need just yet (despite my occasional grouching). I think it is more important we find stable, secure, easy ways to connect that will get as many drunks online as possible. And to do that, we probably need tech savvy folks in a more prominent role until we get this sorted out. I would also note that I am paying for the Zoom account used for the two meetings I host.” -Anonymous Contributor

Finding a Meeting



In the best of times, finding a meeting was an amazingly simple task, grab a printed meeting book, check for a local (or distant) meeting of whatever type you were in the mood for and off you went. No meeting book handy, no problem, just check out the list on the website or make use of the "Meeting Guide" web app.

Now in the age of PAUSE things are quite a bit more challenging. Printed meeting books are of no use at all because all meeting places are closed. The meeting list on the website was taken down since all meetings listed were tied to a physical location. The web app also became instantly out of date.

Today, members discovered virtual meetings and started setting them up. Now you could attend a local meeting or one in Florida, Paris or anywhere else. Nassau Intergroup (IAN) started posting them on a "Virtual Meeting" listing page. All a group had to do was submit meeting information to the webmaster@nassauny-aa.org and it would get added.

New York Intergroup started providing hosting services for groups that were interested and provided complete directories to all meetings that requested that it be listed. Within a short time, a group of very dedicated volunteers had managed to revamp the "Meeting Guide" program to include online and telephone meetings and the web app returned to be a valuable tool for finding a meeting.

Now, using the "Meeting Guide" for a Nassau meeting will show you the information needed to plug into an on-line meeting. If a listing appears to show it as a face-to-face meeting being available, be sure to scroll down and verify that it is a listing from Nassau Intergroup and not one of New York Intergroup's (their listings are not being updated at this time).

As restrictions are rolled back, we will try to keep things as up-to-date and as accurate as possible. Please be sure to forward any updates to your meeting information to the webmaster for updating on the website and in the app.

Looking to the future, some groups will be returning completely to the old meeting place, some will have to find new locations while others might even settle on a combination of face-to-face and virtual, either separately or combined (already being labeled as a "hybrid" meeting).

Whatever path your home group chooses to take, please be sure to keep us informed.

In Loving Service,
webmaster@nassauny-aa.org
Cory, Webmaster Chair

NITEBOOK COVERAGE HELP NEEDED / KEEP BUSY



We are still in the need of phone reps to answer the hotline! If you would like to help out as an individual or as a group, please contact me at 516-292-3045 or send an email to nightbook@nassauny-aa.org.

We are incredibly grateful for all the support we have received to date....

I would like to especially say thank you to all the groups who helped with the night book last month:

- Point Lookout
- Young by the Beach
- Moonlight Group (Bellmore)
- Seaford at Wantagh

Yours in Service,
Karen G Nitebook Chair



HYBRID MEETING: submitted by an Intergroup Rep.

So, what is a hybrid meeting you may ask? It is a simple combination of both a "skin" and a "virtual" meeting simultaneously. For this article I am just going to quote some random thoughts that I found on AA forums for your perusal. If you have anything you would like to share or add please write me at News@nassauny-aa.org and I will look into writing a follow up to this article. "I don't think Hybrid meetings is a good idea. I may be wrong but having a camera in a regular AA meeting does not sit well with me. When we go to a Zoom meeting, I am personally choosing for myself to go online, not for anybody else. I can also not share my video if I want. I think the anonymity of an in-person meeting needs to be preserved 100%."

"I'm glad we are talking about hybrid meetings. I am in the high-risk group and I know many others who are also. While there are some that will want to rush back to face-to-face meetings, others like myself, will have to wait. For us hybrid meetings offer a way to connect with our local friends in AA." One group in our district held daily hybrid meetings for about 2 weeks before it closed, and I hear it was quite successful (I only virtually attended it once). During that time, they had less than a dozen physically attending so they were able to setup a laptop at the end of the table(s). Hybrid meetings may not be for everyone, but the pure on-line meetings have their drawbacks also. It's just another way we can serve another demographic, at least until we can all join hands again."

"A few of us are going to test simple ways and look at technologies that can be used to have hybrid meetings" ... There are huge advantages for newcomers, detox, treatment centers, those confined, in hospital etc. The traditions help with the issues that arise, and ultimately, it is the group conscience that will decide the course. Providing options, that serve the primary purpose is the focus. This is interesting, i.e. the belief that somehow, a camera can gossip. Any technology is only as honest as the human using it. Those who choose not to respect traditions, are at fault, not the camera or mic. "My personal experience is the mindful use of technology has served the primary purpose in a positive way. My anonymity has been broken only by people, not technology. Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, cellphones, smartphones, tablets... all used to break anonymity... by the users... no different than in person meetings, it's never the eyes or ears... it's the user."

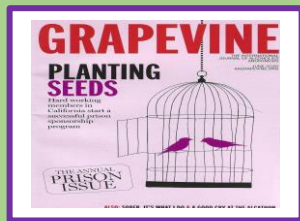
"Each group is autonomous and will decide what they feel is best to serve the member and still suffering alcoholic". My Homegroup has a number of members who are considered high risk for complications and we don't want them to have to choose risking their life to attend the homegroup or go find an online meeting where they don't have the years of shared experience. Therefore, what we are doing is we will connect a Bluetooth speaker with a good quality microphone and placing it in the center of the room. The phone that is connected to the Bluetooth speaker will be using the dial in phone number for our zoom meeting. This protects everyone's anonymity and allows everyone to hear and share with everyone else no matter if they are in person or online. We are finding the microphone on a good quality Bluetooth speaker is quite sensitive and does well.

As someone who is in the vulnerable population, I likely will not be able to attend in person AA meetings until there is an effective vaccine. Yet, I need the meetings to stay sober. I get the anonymity part. Perhaps someone can use their phone to connect to the virtual meeting with video off. Then the phone can be placed in the center of the table or passed to the current sharer. The virtual attendees can of course then connect with video on and at least see each other. That sounds like a great solution. I know for myself and how scared I was when I first started going to A.A. meetings I parked my car around the corner. I did not want anybody to find out I was going to AA. I know, for myself, if I knew the meeting was being videoed, I would not have gone and would have felt betrayed if I found out later it was. I get that the Zoom meetings are great and have brought AA to people with physical limitations or a host of other reasons. We are going to continue using this technology going forward, that is great. I just do not feel cameras in a meeting is a good idea. If meetings go back to totally in person, that will leave a big chunk of AA sitting out with far fewer ways to fellowship. I have seen too many relapses in this challenging circumstance. I would like to see more options.

Here in my state in Australia, some restrictions have been lifted this week so AA can meet in groups of 10 or less. A small number of groups are now trying to operate by holding tiny face-to-face meetings. One of the AA groups that had moved to a Zoom Meeting is now running as a hybrid. The meeting is led online by the chairperson and zoom host who are both still operating from home. A small number of members are gathering in a park near the normal venue (the venue is still unavailable to them). Those meeting face to face in the park are sharing a common laptop or using their phones to join in the zoom meeting. If any of the members in the park are concerned about their online anonymity, they can simply stay out of range of the laptop camera. So, effectively they are getting both things - meeting with some members face-to-face at the same time as participating in a larger zoom meeting. We are moving into winter weather here soon, so the group is hoping to get access to their venue again and continue this practice indoors. It seems to be a working compromise for this group.

In love and service,
Tim B.
Seaford Serenity Group

Literature— About the AA Grapevine, Part 2



This month we return to the conversation we started in [April](#) about the AA Grapevine, the “International Journal of Alcoholics Anonymous,” also referred to as, “our meeting in print,” and our Spanish language edition of the magazine, *La Viña*. (For *La Viña* and related Spanish language offerings, select the [La Viña](#) link on the Grapevine website home page, www.aagrapevine.org.) Each Grapevine issue offers a varied and spirited look into Alcoholics Anonymous as experienced and shared by its members and sometimes its friends. It’s the next best thing to being there. This month we look briefly at the Grapevine as a 12th Step tool.

In January 2020, the Grapevine launched the “[Carry the Message Project](#)” which encourages AA members who are already enjoying the legacy of recovery to offer a gift subscription to the Grapevine to another alcoholic—a friend, sponsee, newcomer, as an anniversary gift, and so on—or to an interested and willing third party such as a doctor’s office or institution through which an alcoholic who still suffers might chance to find AA through the magazine’s pages. (We’ve all read those assorted magazines in a doctor’s waiting room. One of those magazines could be the AA Grapevine.) Under the Project too, you can offer a gift subscription anonymously to someone registered with Grapevine as being in need and interested but who cannot presently afford it. Full details may be found on the website. Look for, “[2020 Carry the Message Project](#).”

Getting a Grapevine subscription in the mail? What do you do with an issue after you have finished with it? While Grapevine would probably love for everyone who reads the magazine to be an active subscriber, Grapevine is quite happy to see you pass your copies along. Pass them on to other members at your home group (when we get back to such meetings) encouraging them to do the same, or consider donating back copies to Intergroup’s Institutions and Corrections committees which in turn send them into the various institutions into which we bring meetings. Drop off your back issues to the office for Institutions and Corrections once we get back to our normal office routine.

It bears repeating that the Grapevine is offering complimentary access to all 2020 content as a gesture of support to the Fellowship in these difficult COVID-19 challenged times. Look for, “[Grapevine and La Viña are here to help!](#)” on the home page. From there too, check out Grapevine’s [YouTube](#) channel.

In our final installment on the Grapevine probably next month, we will look at the many available offerings beyond the Grapevine and *La Viña* magazines.

In other matters, the 70th General Service Conference held its historic virtual meetings beginning the end of April and concluding last month. The Conference Literature Committee was able to take a selective look at its agenda items, taking action if it saw fit on some items, and referring other items forward to the 71st General Service Conference Literature Committee. (See the Literature article in the [March](#) Intergroup newsletter for a selective overview of the 2020 Conference Literature Agenda, or review the full agenda at www.aaseny.org under, “[From the Delegate](#),” then, “[Final List of Agenda Items](#).”) We hope to have something back on the disposition of this year’s Literature Agenda by next month.

Also concerning literature, the 2020 AAWS catalogue of “[Conference-Approved Literature and other AA Material](#)” is available on the website, www.aa.org. Go to, “[AA Literature](#)” to download a copy. (The hard copy catalogue will be available in the Intergroup office once we reopen and reorder literature.) There are no price increases, and prices are “normalized” across titles meaning prices for books of a given title will be the same regardless of format (hardcover, large print, CD, DVD, Braille) with the exception of softcover and abridged versions. (This effectively lowers the prices for some titles in certain formats.) Prices for all pamphlets decrease by 20%. Price adjustments will be reflected in the cost of items at Intergroup as we replace inventory.

Closer to home, the Intergroup office is, as of this writing, still closed in response to the demands of the public health effort against the spread of COVID-19, and literature sales remain shut down so long as the office is closed. As the regional response to COVID-19 evolves including business reopening plans under the guidance of NY State and Nassau County, watch our [website](#) for any changes in Intergroup’s office practices as they develop. We expect the return to normal activities will come cautiously and slowly but are hopeful we see the light at the end of this long, sad tunnel.

Until then, we stay apart so we can stand together. Stay safe, stay home, stay positive, and stay connected. Hope this is helpful.

Bill C., Literature Committee Chair 516-292-3045 or literature@nassauny-aa.org

Step Six



We are entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

With the entire globe in the palm of his hand, Covid-19 banged on my front door, yelling “You think alcohol is something to be feared? You ain’t seen nothin’ yet! Clearly, he had never come face to face with a genuine, bona fide alcoholic in recovery who had somehow found the courage to choose faith instead of fear.

When I approached Step Six in my second year of sobriety, my Higher Power had already performed the miracle of curing my alcohol addiction, so I felt great relief at the prospect of giving up all the character defects that had kept me hurting myself and others. I loved the program and the progress I was making, and had already become less aggressive, calmer, more loving. The only things I felt unwilling to give up were *Ben and Jerry’s Cherry Garcia Ice Cream* and that flirty little mocha pastry at the Chinese buffet my husband and I normally frequented once a week. But those delicious character defects had kept fear a million miles away from my front door . . . until now.

Could I maintain my emotional sobriety as the Covid bully stood on my front step, up to his ankles in unsanitized groceries, waiting for me to let him in? This was the biggest test yet as I contemplated living in isolation 24/7, coping with the only virus in our house: *FEAR*. Faced with the Step Six challenge of being willing to be willing to maintain a very loose grip on my character defects while holding the hand of my Higher Power, could my faith pass the pandemic test? That ugly masked bandit was everywhere, waiting patiently to rob us all our health, our peace, our sanity.

Now, almost three months later, the Covid-19 bully has inspired me to be an even stronger warrior for peace as I fight fear, one day at a time. The first thing I did was ask my husband Tom, a news junkie, to help me maintain my emotional sobriety by keeping me informed on a *need-to-know* basis. Thrilled that I was no longer the anxiety riddled, panic-stricken wife of yesteryear, he agreed, and even changed our alarm clock setting from CNN to 80’s pop. And every day, instead of scary news reports, he sends me funny, heart-warming animal YouTube videos and inspiring Facebook postings. I think my attitude seems to have become contagious as Tom allows himself to loosen his grip on fear, if only for a few minutes at a time. Together, we enjoy cooking, walking in not-too-crowded parks and beaches, and Facetiming our seven grandkids. Never rushing to say goodbye, we play audience to their Tik Tok routines, and when it all ends, we choose not to live in the sadness of waving goodbye without a real hug as the iPad goes blank.

Indeed, for this Baby Boomer, *virtual* is no longer a dirty word: I have become a grateful “Baby Zoomer,” jumping from meditation sessions and AA meetings to good old-fashioned phone calls with AA sisters. I get to pay all this gratitude forward, and mostly I am grateful that I am *not* grateful that the liquor stores are open.

My gratitude list feels like a big fat fear eraser: *Blue Bloods* reruns that I never had time to watch on Wednesday nights; electricity that brings my home group and hundreds of alcoholics from all over the world to my house every single day of the week; the laughter between Tom and me that doesn’t feel guilty in the midst of all the chaos; our health, and the health of family and friends who have had the virus and are now doing well; our ability to throw ourselves into nightly *Rummikub* games while eating homemade banana muffins and chocolate chip cookies - which, alas, come under the category of things I am not willing to give up. . .yet.

Somehow, despite all the catastrophic, heartbreaking, fear-provoking ripples of Covid-19, maintaining my emotional sobriety in a safety zone of peace and harmony has become a priority. My world has become smaller, but it can hold thousands of people in a week’s worth of time, all seeking peace and sobriety. I am willing to be willing to surrender all my character flaws and trust my Higher Power. Even during the storm, with the nasty bully of a virus trying to get into my back door if he cannot get in the front, my faith has deepened into trust. This is the miracle of Step Six.

I heard a story the other day about a medieval monk who was trying to prevent both Fear and Death from entering the city gates during a plague. Cautiously, he approached Death. “How many people are you going to take? “A few. Maybe half,” he responded nonchalantly. Then the monk turned to Fear and asked the same question. “None,” replied Fear. The monk was shocked. The people were overcome by Fear during the trying months of the plague, and when the worst was over, the monk turned to Fear in disbelief. “I thought you said you wouldn’t take anyone!” “I didn’t,” he replied nonchalantly. *They chose me.*”

I have identified the enemy. He wants me to bark at my husband, snap at a sponsee, eat (delicious) cookies. So every evening when the only day I have is done, I pray that I will feel entirely ready to ask my Higher Power to remove my character defects, and, most especially, my fears, in the morning sun. I make a conscious choice to be a warrior for peace, no matter who is trying to huff and puff and blow my house down.

By, Louise M. Albertson Searingtown Group @Temple Judea

6th Tradition



An AA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the AA name to any related facility or outside enterprise lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.

When I first came to AA and saw the traditions hanging in the front of the room, I thought what many newcomers think: God, that is boring. I was already doing mental editing on ways to “improve” the steps and I did not see how the traditions would have any bearing on my life. It was some time before I heard someone refer to the traditions in a way that made them click: “The steps show us how to live but the traditions show us how to live with each other.”

Tradition Six reminds us of our duty to the program and our duty to each other. We are individuals that make up groups and those groups make up the entire population of AA. Yet, within all those groups and all those people - there is no leader. There are no designated representatives. No single person or group can speak for AA by endorsing a business, a candidate, or even a toothpaste. We are not in the business of business. We do not need our name on a building to prove to the world that the program works. We are all living, breathing examples of the power of AA.

I am sure there was pressure in those early days of AA to capitalize on the success of the program or to use it to influence promote social causes. How tempting it must have been for the early founders to think of the potential financial windfall within their grasp. Bill, allegedly, was influenced by the trajectories of earlier temperance groups such as the Washingtonians, who were undone by involvement in social and political issues of the day. For AA to work, we all must focus on helping and supporting each other. Tradition Six ensures we maintain that focus without the distraction of outside causes or influences. It separates our spiritual work from the material world.

I once attended a business meeting where 30 minutes of vigorous debate was spent on styrofoam vs. paper coffee cups. Can you imagine if we all had to decide whether to endorse a treatment facility? It reminded me that we are alike, but we are not the same. Those differences are an incredible strength if we do not let them distract us from our common welfare. Our primary purpose and the purpose of each group is what keeps us together, it is the common bond we share that ensures AA will stick around for all suffering alcoholics. Tradition Six prevents us from allowing outside issues to drive a wedge between us. Taken together, the traditions ensure we maintain a framework that keeps the focus on service, on fellowship and on unity. There is nothing boring about that.

By, Liz C. Albertson Searingtown Group @Temple Judea

Your invited to a scheduled Zoom meeting

Traditions Workshop

SUNDAY June 14th, 2020.

Tradition 6

Hosted this month by: Bill C. Serenity by the Sea, Long Beach

Time: This is a recurring meeting every 2nd Sunday of the month 10am-11am

Meeting ID: 467 421 2768

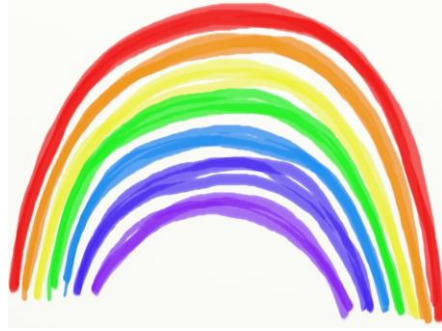
Password: 304861

Sponsored by: Intergroup Association of Nassau Inc.

From the Newsletter Editor Chair,
Steven S. News@nassauny-aa.org

WHY RAINBOWS?

Rainbows are a sign of hope, indicating that there is always a light in the dark. There shall always be a solution to a crisis. But most importantly, there is no evil that lasts a hundred years. Even though different parts of the world are universally showing rainbows as a sign of optimism, the meaning of rainbows across history has had diverse meanings.



Everything is going to be OK

The first rainbow banner picture appeared in Italy, the most affected country from the European Union with approximately nineteen thousand deaths. In major cities like Rome, Turin and Milan, Italian citizens showed their support by hanging hope messages on their balconies with a message, "*Andrà tutto bene.*" (Everything will be fine). Later, these banners appeared in other countries such as Spain and the United Kingdom. In the United States, children drew rainbows in solidarity, sending their warm messages to health officials and state governors who are struggling to keep their communities safe.

THE COURAGE TO CHANGE THE THINGS I CAN

Series on Slogans *Please help me help another alcoholic with your experience with slogans that helped motivate you through your sobriety....email: news@nassauny-aa.org*

"Well, what are you going to do about it?"

Eventually anxiety ridden conversations with my sponsor would find their level when he asked me this question. You see, I have always been rather good at finding problems and over analyzing them...but not so good in the solution department. A little over a year ago this deficiency caught up with me in such a serious way I was rendered completely hopeless for the first time in my life.

I still remember the day quite clearly even though I was well intoxicated. It was the second week of my fourth or fifth new job in as many months; and of course, I had again made the mistake of taking the first drink that morning. This quickly led to several other drinks. As was my habit, I continued to drink periodically throughout the day so I could function and "perform my job". At some point, while checking the pizza dough I got my hand caught in the stand mixer and that was IT. I was behind in so many aspects of my life, paranoid and anxious all the time. I was completely isolating from family and friends, and now I could not work. The bottom had completely fallen out.

I told the guys I was going out for a smoke, grabbed my stuff and left. I remember walking up and down the stairs at the train station as my thoughts oscillated between suicide and fear of death. It was only through the compassion of others and divine providence that I wound up in the psych ward at the hospital that night. The same was true for the journey to a therapist, crisis center, rehab and eventually a sober house.

Somewhere along the way I became willing to participate in my own recovery. I did the steps honestly and to the best of my ability. I remember the exact moment I felt the third step alive in my life for the first time - when I finally agreed to do an honest self-inventory. With the help of my sponsor I came to realize that I was a willing victim of the misery in my life. Again, he posed the question "Well, what are you going to do about it?"

It turns out that the things in my life I was most afraid to face were the gateway to my freedom. It is only when I accept the especially important role, I play in my own life that I can develop the courage to act, and to act with the correct motives.

I saw the doctor last week and he told me I am a miracle. Honestly at first, I thought it was really kind of corny. But with time to reflect I realize my life is exponentially better than it was a year ago. Sometimes I am physically staggered when I think of the compassion and help that has come my way. I fell from grace. I was carried by selfless people until the lights finally came back on, and then those people taught me how to get up on my own. Now I stand as a free man with the love and support of my fellows. I am once again enamored with the business of living which is nothing short of amazing.

I am ever grateful to the people and the process that has filled me with "The Courage to change the things I can."

Daniel S.

**Please direct all
communications to:**
P.O. Box 459
Grand Central Station
New York, NY 10163
Fax: (212) 870-3003

“These are the facts of our history that show the need at all times for a safe reserve fund in the Foundation. This is the money that guarantees the operation of A.A.’s world services, rain or shine.”

—*The Language of the Heart*, page 139

May 12, 2020

Dear Conference members,

With so much happening over these past few weeks – including intense preparations for the 70th General Service Conference, committee meetings, board meetings, and other ongoing work in the office (in a virtual/telework environment) – the landscape across our organization seems to change every day.

Among these shifts have been the realities of our own financial situation. It’s no secret that businesses and organizations from every sector have felt the economic impacts of this global health crisis, and we are no different. As a result, due to steep declines over the past two months in revenue from group contributions and literature sales, management and the boards have increased our focus on costs and expenses of office operations.

To that end, on April 22, the General Service Office made a request to the Trustees’ Finance and Budgetary Committee and its chair, Leslie Backus, for an emergency drawdown of \$3 million from the Reserve Fund. This request was due to the decrease in book sales and contributions caused by the global pandemic. After a review of the cash flow analysis, the committee agreed to forward the request to the General Service Board. On Thursday, April 30, the General Service Board approved the \$3 million Reserve Fund drawdown. Over the past week the office has begun that process and will continue to access funds as they become liquid in our bank accounts.

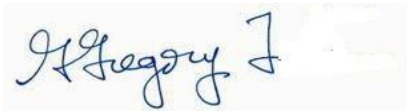
The decision was made after reflecting upon the primary principle behind the prudent

Reserve Fund that A.A. has maintained for decades: “To provide the financial resources necessary to continue the services of G.S.O. and the Grapevine in the event of emergency or disaster...” (The A.A. Service Manual, page S72). The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, especially in New York City and the downstate region, is a true public health emergency. State and City regulations have restricted the operations of non-essential businesses since March. Our office at 475 Riverside Drive has been shut down to the nonprofit tenants since Friday, March 27, when we moved to 95% telework status for our employees, and there are no immediate indications of when this will change.

Further, the unexpected financial situation brought on by the public health crisis has required several layoffs or temporary furloughs of workers in roles that can no longer be covered by salary continuation. While this has been an incredibly difficult decision, our goal and responsibility is to maintain a sustainable, responsive organization to serve A.A.’s needs and requirements.

In addition to the objectives noted above, we are now focused on providing support for our General Service Conference, which will take place Saturday, May 16 to Tuesday, May 19. We will be utilizing a virtual platform to conduct Conference business, and our team has been demonstrating an “all hands on deck” approach to ensure that the event is successful for the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. While this is not something we envisioned even a few months ago, I am so proud of the resiliency and incredible work that has gone into planning. More discussion and reports on G.S.O. and AA Grapevine finances will be shared with you at the Conference.

This information and all that will be reported at the Conference are intended to be shared with the Fellowship, to keep the groups informed on Seventh Tradition funding of needed services, so that a true group conscience can be achieved in this difficult time for all. Sincerely, in love and service,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "G. Gregory T." The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "G" and "T".

G. Gregory T.
General Manager

Prayers from the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous



“I earnestly advise every alcoholic to read this book through, and though perhaps he came to scoff, he may remain to pray.” William D. S., MD – Pg. xxx
“God is everything or he is nothing. God either is or he isn’t. What was our choice to be?” Pg. 53
Pg. 59 We asked His protection and care with complete abandon.

Third Step

Pg. 63 – God, I offer myself to Thee – to build with me and do with me as Thou wilt. Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Thy will. Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of Thy Power, Thy Love and Thy Way of Life. May I do Thy will always!

Fourth Step

Pg. 67 RESENTMENT – We asked God to help us show them the same tolerance, pity, and patience that we would cheerfully grant a sick friend. When a person offended, we said to ourselves, “This is a sick man. How can I be helpful to him? God save me from being angry. Thy will be done”.
Pg. 68 FEAR – We ask Him to remove our fear and direct our attention to what He would have us be.

Pg. 69 SEX – We asked God to mold our ideals and help us live up to them.

Pg. 69 SEX – In meditation, we ask God what we do about each specific matter.

Pg. 70 SEX – To sum up about sex: We pray for the right ideal, for guidance in each questionable situation, for sanity and for strength to do the right thing.

Fifth Step

Pg. 75 We thank God from the bottom of our heart that we know Him better.

Pg. 75 we ask if we have omitted anything.

Sixth Step

Pg. 76 If we still cling to something we will not let go, we ask God to help us be willing.

Seventh Step

Pg. 76 My Creator, I am now willing that You should have all of me, good and bad. I pray that You now remove from me every single defect of character which stands in the way of my usefulness to you and my fellows. Grant me strength, as I go out from here, to do Your bidding. Amen

Eighth Step

Pg. 76 If we have not the will to do this, we ask until it comes.

Eighth Step

Pg. 76 If we have not the will to do this, we ask until it comes.

Nineth Step

Pg. 79 LEGAL MATTERS – We ask that we be given strength and direction to do the right thing, no matter what the personal consequences might be.

Pg. 80 OTHERS EFFECTED – If we have obtained permission, have consulted with others, asked God to help.

Pg. 82 INFIDELITY – Each might pray about it, having the other one’s happiness uppermost in mind.

Pg. 83 FAMILY – So we clean house with the family, asking each morning in meditation that our Creator show us the way of patience, tolerance, kindness and love.

Tenth Step

Pg. 84 Continue to watch for selfishness, dishonesty, resentment, and fear. When these crop up, we ask God at once to remove them.

Pg. 85 Everyday is a day when we must carry the vision of God’s will into all our activities. “How can I best serve Thee—Thy will (not mine) be done”.

Eleventh Step

Pg. 86 NIGHT After mediation on the day just completed, “We ask God’s forgiveness and inquire what corrective measures should be taken”.

Pg. 86 MORNING Before we begin our day, “we ask god to direct our thinking, especially asking that it be divorced from self-pity, dishonest or self-seeking motives”.

Pg. 86 MORNING In thinking about our day, “We ask God for inspiration, an intuitive thought or decision”.

Pg. 87 MORNING We usually conclude the period of mediation with a prayer that we be shown all through the day what our next step is to be, that we be given whatever we need to take care of such problems. We especially ask for freedom from self-will and are careful to make no requests for ourselves only We may ask for ourselves, however, if others will be helped. We are careful never to pray for our own selfish ends.

Pg. 87 – 88 ALL DAY As we go through the day we pause, when agitated or doubtful, and ask for the right thought or action.

Twelfth Step

Pg. 164 Ask Him in your morning meditation what you can do each day for the man who is still sick. The answers will come IF your own house is in order. Your job now is to be at the place where you may be of maximum helpfulness to others, so never hesitate to go anywhere if you can be helpful. You should not hesitate to visit the most sordid spot on earth on such an errand. Keep on the firing line of life with these motives and God will keep you unharmed. Pg. 102

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.

NASSAU INTERGROUP EMAIL ADDRESSES

OFFICERS

Chairperson chair@nassauny-aa.org
1st Vice Chair 1stvice@nassauny-aa.org
2nd Vice Chair 2ndvice@nassauny-aa.org
Secretary secretary@nassauny-aa.org
Treasurer treasurer@nassauny-aa.org

STANDING COMMITTEES

Archives archives@nassauny-aa.org
Coop. Pro. Comm. (CPC) cpc@nassauny-aa.org
Corrections corrections@nassauny-aa.org
Financial Review finance@nassauny-aa.org
Institutions (H&I) institutions@nassauny-aa.org
Literature literature@nassauny-aa.org
Meeting List meetinglist@nassauny-aa.org
Newsletter news@nassauny-aa.org
Night Book nightbook@nassauny-aa.org
Office Coordinator(Mgr)
officemanager@nassauny-aa.org
Public Information(PI) publicinfo@nassauny-aa.org
Share-a-Day (SAD) shareaday@nassauny-aa.org
Speakers Exchange
speakersexchange@nassauny-aa.org
Special Needs specneeds@nassauny-aa.org
12th Step List 12thstep@nassauny-aa.org
Webmaster webmaster@nassauny-aa.org

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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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.

God GRANT ME THE
serenity
TO ACCEPT THE
THINGS I CANNOT CHANGE
THE *courage* TO CHANGE
THE THINGS I CAN,
AND THE *wisdom*
TO KNOW THE DIFFERENCE.