

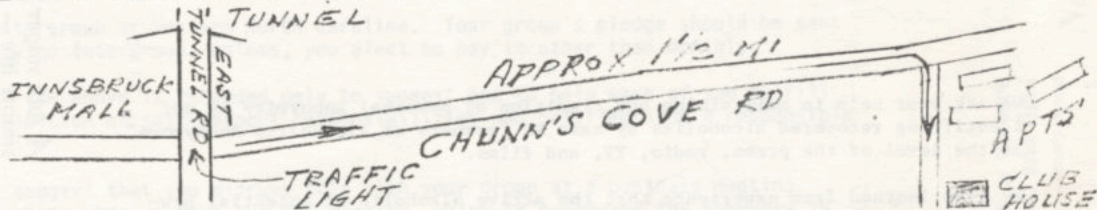


FEBRUARY
1981

NEWSLETTER OF INTERGROUP OF WESTERN NORTH
CAROLINA, 107 PARKWAY OFFICE BUILDING,
ASHEVILLE, N.C. 28801*** PHONE 704-254-8539

UPCOMING EVENTS

FEB. 14, 1981 VALENTINE DAY DANCE beginning 9-P.M. to?
Music, coffee, soft drinks provided. Bring your own
snacks. This event is sponsored by the Acceptance Group.
THE PLACE: Ridge Townhouse Apartments Club House. See
location sketch below. Cost \$1.00 per person.



SPECIAL NOTE: A new A.A. group has been established in
Hot Springs, N. C. known as Smokey Mountain AA Group.
Meetings are held Tuesdays at 8:00 P. M. at the First
Baptist Church downtown Hot Springs.

MADISON COUNTY GROUP now meets on Fridays at 8:00 P. M.
First Presbyterian Church in downtown Marshall, N. C.

AA
February 15, 1981: G.S.R. and P. L. meeting at 2:00 P.M.
Allen Center. (see more inside) Following this meeting
there will be an Intergroup meeting.

AA
Brevard Group will not host the district meeting as
was planned.

A farmer visited his son's college. Watching students in a
chemistry class; he was told they were looking for a universal
solvent.

"What's that?" asked the farmer.

"A liquid that will dissolve anything," he was told.

"That's a great idea," agreed the farmer, "but when you find it,
what are you going to keep it in?"

FROM GENERAL SERVICE BOARD OF A. A.

January 1, 1981

MEMO TO: EDITORS, NEWS AND PHOTO EDITORS, NEWSPAPERS,
RADIO AND TELEVISION NEWS DIRECTORS

FROM: PUBLIC INFORMATION COMMITTEE
ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

SUBJECT: TRADITION OF ANONYMITY

We ask your help in maintaining our tradition of personal anonymity by not identifying recovered alcoholics by name as "members of Alcoholics Anonymous" at the level of the press, radio, TV, and films.

We have learned from experience that the active alcoholic or potential newcomer to A.A. may avoid any help that might reveal his or her identity.

A.A. welcomes articles about our Fellowship, but not in terms of A.A. personalities. Cooperation by the press, over the years, has been tremendous. The publicity given to the A.A. program in all phases of the media has played a major role in encouraging many thousands of suffering alcoholics to seek help.

Thank you for your continuing understanding and support.

WE WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR SHARING THIS LETTER WITH YOUR ASSOCIATES AND STAFF



Since Time is not a person we can overtake when he is gone, let us honor him with mirth and cheerfulness of heart while he is passing.

— Johann Wolfgang von Goethe



Man, unlike the animals, has never learned that the sole purpose of life is to enjoy it.

— Samuel Butler

To appreciate wealth is to have known poverty.

— Liz Jolliffe



A folk singer is someone who sings about the joys of the simple life — using a \$5,000 sound system.

— Montana Oil Journal



It is the preoccupation with possession, more than anything else, that prevents men from living freely and nobly.

— Bertrand Russell

Gratitude is a duty which ought to be paid, but which none have a right to expect.

— Jean Jacques Rousseau



One of the indictments of civilization is that happiness and intelligence are so rarely found in the same person.

— William Feather

TRAVEL THE A.A. WAY.

Some suggestions on seeing the world through sober eyes.

I've just returned from the first transatlantic trip I ever took where the plane wasn't kept aloft by my firm grip on a double vodka on the rocks.

For the past several years, I've made an annual trip to Europe, part business, mostly pleasure. Recently, five months sober (well, all right --dry), I was planning to take off for a four-week stay in Scotland and England. But since I'd thrown away my copy of Europe on Five Pints a Day, I had to have a new style for traveling? I set out to see.

My planning began with questions to A.A. friends and at meetings. How had others traveled sober? What had they learned and what advice could they give me?(Invariably they pointed out that not everyone that flew drank. Another aerodynamic theory was shot.) I also asked questions to test my reasons for going. Were they valid and sensible? I talked to my sponsor about my feelings about the trip, figuring he was con-proof, even if I wasn't.

Their plentiful advice resolved into a simple, safe Alcoholic's Baedeker. Here is the checklist that grew from the advice.

Get from the A.A. World Directory the addresses of A.A. intergroups or central offices in cities to be visited, and write in advance to ask for a meeting list and up-to-date information. Plan a meeting as soon after arrival as possible. Stay in hotels, not with friends. In that way, one is spared explanations for evenings one may not wish to explain. Also, one can control one's own time -- time to be alone, time for meetings -- without no host to answer to, accommodate, or please. (I had invitations to stay with friends, but friends often feel obliged to entertain guests, and I feared being entertained into oblivion.)

Set a departure date, but be ready to cancel up to the latest moment ... or upon first sight of the airline's cocktail menu.

Once arrived, stay ready to return if any day dawns with a hint of vodka in the air. Get lots of addresses of friends in one's A.A. homegroup, and plan a few cards or letters a day to those loving people, who are truly concerned with the success of the trip.

Pick out and pack A.A. literature that has proven supportive, and keep it at hand during the flight.

While away, phone friends at home if needed, and damn the expense. (I'd heard one woman speak of such a long distance call to her sponsor that cost about \$100 -- and dirt cheap at that.)

Enjoy the trip -- one day at a time.

The planning resulted in one of the happiest trips I've ever made anywhere. Travel became different -- better, happier, and safer. The A.A. people I met abroad were warm and welcoming; the meetings, startling in their similarity to those I was used to. (Our British fellows' qualifications included mentions of "pink gin," "Shandya," and "brown and mile," but that was the main difference.) I had the most happy human experience -- discovering, not how different people are, but how alike.

Perhaps the experience was best put by a speaker I once heard who said: "I still haven't met some of my best friends in the world, and they're all in A.A."

Anonymous
Reprinted from Grapevine Oct. 1974
via The Paper

Every time you turn green with envy, you are ripe for trouble.

Of all the things you wear, your expression is the most important.

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If you tend to your work and let your enemy alone, someone will come along some day and do him up for you.

- Edgar Howe

A learned man is an idler who kills time by study. - George Bernard Shaw

LOOSE TALK

I take my pen in hand to lodge a strenuous protest with some of my brethern who sound off without considering what they are saying or its impact on others, particularly the new man.

I refer to the old timer who, at the drop of a hat, spouts that shopworn shibboleth, "I am just as near a drink as the newest member in the group."

Naturally, being alkies, as we grow older in A.A. we wish to make like elder statesmen and come up with the wisecrack that is supposed to contain a germ of great truth, but--incidentally--seldom does.

But if any man who has been in A.A. long enough to earn the appellation, "Old Timer" is just as near a drink as a new man, all I have to say is he'd better go out and come back in again. He has been just going through the motions.

In the first place, this saying is probably a misquote to begin with. Someone probably said, "I am just as near a drunk as the new man-one drink away," That I'll buy. One drink and I'm a dead duck! But with our propensity to make wise and give off with the big important talk, we perverted it to --"I'm as near a drink as the new man," simply because we didn't listen to hear what was actually said.

If I'm as near a drink as I was 12-1/2 years ago then God is a sham and A.A. is a hoax. The third step is so much double talk and I just wasted my time in taking inventory and making amends. If I am as near a drink as I was when I came into this fellowship then you can tear up the eleventh step, or better still, use the paper on which it is written for a more practical and utilitarian purpose and as for twelfth step work - better I should have stood in bed.

When I pay my insurance premium I not only buy current protection but build up a reserve by way of extended insurance and dividends. I f my attempts at honesty, truthfulness, love, the elimination of resentments, the removal of defects and helping others--feeble though they may have been--have not built up any reserves over the years then I am engaged in a losing battle.

Furthermore, the experience of these years has taught me that I have a problem and that it is permanent. I know how it attacks. By arresting the problem I know what it is to get up without a hangover, to hear the phone without running to hide; to forget about foreclosures, the gas or lights being shut off and creditors at every door.

Above all, I have begun to get acquainted with me. I have regained my self respect. I have rediscovered my conscience and I have experienced the bounty of God.

You tell me these things are no protection against that first drink and I will tell you that you are not only ungrateful, you are absolutely stupid.

* * * * *

A young Old Timer.
Central Bulletin

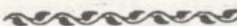
No Godno peace, Know Godknow peace.

To let God is belief. To let go is surrender.

Learn from yesterday. Live for today. Hope for tomorrow.

Where I go hereafter depends upon what I go after here.

I'd rather have no tombstone on my grave when I am dead and have folks wonder why-- than have the largest monument and have folks question why.



When you make a mountain out of a molehill, don't expect anyone to climb up to admire the view.
- Friendly Chat

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KEEP COMING BACK

A simple three word phrase...but it sure has effected my life in many ways.

It was the favorite expression heard over the years in hundreds of bars, while literally thousands of drinks were consumed and bar owners got rich at the expense of loved ones. So called "Friendly Inns" gave the impression of deep concern and friendliness. How sweet it was! And how complying I was! It sure was a good feeling knowing that I was wanted, that I was one of the boys. It inflated my ego tremendously.

However, little did I know that the seed of alcohol abuse being planted in my system would, in later years, become a devastating disease. Life was a painful ordeal of continual, erratic behavior, not at all conducive to a normal way of living. "Keep Coming Back"... seductive, enticing beautiful words to the ears of an irresponsible, inadequate individual.

Resentments piled up. There were cruel periods of maladjustment. An employment record that took on the aspects of an Industrial Directory. It was sickening, but alcohol dependency eased the situation. Then criminal activity entered the picture and, in no time, incarceration, Institutional regimentation took control. I was no longer alone, and it was an easy way of life. Education...yes! Rehabilitation...no! The entire field of crime was there for me to learn. The implication of "Keep Coming Back" was felt by all.

Rehabilitative forces entered the picture. Psychological clinics were formed. While in the midst of all this Alcoholics Anonymous came to be. A brief encounter with the program, minus total spirituality of course, led to release into society. Sporadic attendance at AA meetings, closed mindedness, lack of Higher Power, first drinks, negative thinking all contributed to twenty years of groping in a life of uncertainty. Then the grand finale. Progressive drinking, more pronounced periods of blackouts, the fatal concoction of booze, broads and bullets resulted in returning to confinement. Grateful? Yes! For death or insanity was inevitable. Thank God! The "Seed of AA," implanted years before, was revitalized. It prompted immediate surrender to my Higher Power. I took hold of God as I understood Him, gathered together the "tools of AA," forming a "survival kit," with which I intently pursued the principles of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Untiring participation and devotion to the program resulted in an early release, much to my surprise. I took the geographical and environmental escape from old haunts and buddies, took the "New Bill" with me, and chose Cincinnati for my new lease on life. Immediate participation in AA meetings, and constant communion with my Higher Power has given me the greatest enjoyment I have ever known. Awareness and assertiveness are instrumental guidelines in my daily quest for sobriety.

At the end of each AA meeting, following the Lord's Prayer, there rings in my ears those enticing and suggestive three words.....KEEP COMING BACK!

In all honesty...to love AA...is to LIVE IT! And KEEP COMING BACK!

Bill C.
Norwood Thursday Group

Editors comment.

It has been a most enlightening and pleasurable experience for me to correspond with Bill, both in and out of confinement and there is no doubt in my mind that Bill is not only a good example to the many yet in prison but also an inspiration to those that will yet get to know him.

It is proof again that A.A. can work anywhere, anytime for anyone that wants it badly enough and no man should ever be counted out, regardless of the circumstances.

You are right Bill, it surely pays to KEEP COMING BACK.

We the willing, led by the unknowing, are doing the impossible for the ungrateful. We have done so much for so long with so little, we are now qualified to do anything with nothing.

Mike E.

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OBLIGATION TO LET IT BE KNOWN

When the Traditions were adopted, not much consideration was given to the possibility that their wording might prohibit breaking personal anonymity privately. The main consideration was the need for anonymity at the public level.

In many areas, members are identified in meetings, open and closed, by first name only - a matter of personal choice. Nothing in any Conference-approved literature indicates this is desirable, nor is there any prohibition against using full names within AA.

It is important to keep in mind the distinction between breaking anonymity and breaking the anonymity Tradition, and the difference between saying, "I am a recovered alcoholic" and saying, "I am a member of Alcoholics Anonymous."

The Traditions require that I do not allow my full name to be used together with my membership in AA at the media level. Allowing that to happen breaks the anonymity Tradition.

The Traditions allow me to break my anonymity at any other level if I desire. The only restraint is the necessity to stay within the spirit of the Traditions. Is my motive in line with our policy of attraction and the purpose of carrying the message or is it tainted with personal gain or designed to bolster an already monumental ego? It is also necessary to examine our motive for maintaining personal anonymity at the private level. Is it avoidance of the stigma of alcoholism, or maybe a slight reservation as to whether we will, in fact, maintain sobriety?

Can we carry the AA message when we maintain strict personal anonymity? Where personal harm is unlikely to result, I feel AA members who have maintained sobriety for substantial lengths of time have an obligation to let the fact be known on a one-to-one basis, to show that it is possible for an alcoholic to maintain sobriety and fill a responsible position in society. I believe this is a necessary part of carrying our message. This is particularly true in individual relationships with the medical and legal professions, the court systems, social agencies, and others who come in contact with still-suffering alcoholics and may refer such individuals to AA. All too often, these people have knowledge only of the "slippers" and sliders who are never quite able to make the program. Their enthusiasm for AA can be enhanced if they have personal knowledge of recovered alcoholics.

(A presentation from Final Report of
The 28th General Service Conference)

You will find it less easy to uproot faults than to choke them by gaining virtues. Do not think of your faults, still less of other's faults. In every person who comes near you, look for what is good and strong; honor that; try to imitate it, and your faults will drop off like dead leaves when their time comes.

John Ruskin

When you can do the common things in life in an uncommon way, you will command the attention of the world. Carver.

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*Make someone happy:
mind your own business.*
— Catholic Quote

Happiness is taking a bath
without the phone ringing
— Tony Maille,
North Pekin, Ill.

MEMO
Group Service Representative
From: Ed Duncan
District 7DCM

7

— Garth Heinrichs

At our December 21st District meeting, you directed that I prepare for you a list of the several suggested annual group contributions. The following are the funds that we should contribute each year and a suggested minimum amount per group is indicated.

1. District Committee Members' expense fund - \$20.00 per group per year. Your check should be made payable to District 7 Committeemen Fund and mailed to Intergroup of Western North Carolina, 107 Parkway Office Building, Asheville, North Carolina, 28801. Mary at Intergroup has agreed to continue to administer this fund under the direction of the District Committee Member.
2. North Carolina General Service - \$20.00 minimum from each group. This check should be payable to North Carolina General Service Committee and mailed to P.O. Box 3146, Wilson, N.C. 27893.
3. General Service Office - Suggested minimum \$3.65 per member per year. This, of course, can be done quarterly, semi-annually, or one payment each year, depending on your group's wishes. This check, of course, goes directly to General Service, Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, New York 10163
4. Intergroup of Western North Carolina. Your group's pledge should be sent monthly to Intergroup, unless, you elect to pay it other than monthly.

All of the above is intended only to suggest and to help each of you fulfill our tradition of self-support responsibilities and privileges on a responsible basis.

May I suggest that you discuss this with your group at a business meeting and perhaps when we have our GSR meeting, which is scheduled for February 15, 2:00. you might be able to report your group conscience in these matters.

Allen Carter

Sincerely,

Ed Duncan
DCM

Unwritable Wrong

A successful author confessed to Mark Twain that he was losing confidence in his ability to write.

"Did you ever get that feeling?" he asked.

"Yes," admitted the humorist.

"Once, after I had been writing for 15 years, it suddenly dawned on me that I did not possess the slightest talent for writing."

"What did you do?"

"What could I do?" shrugged Twain. "By then, I was already famous."

— Ben Turnbull

One day when we were having biscuits and honey for lunch, our three-year-old son, John, asked what honey was made from. His uncle said, "The bees make it."

John looked puzzled and then said, "Where did they get the jar?"

Sunshine Magazine



The Whole Truth

Mother: "Do you know what happens to little boys who tell lies?"

Johnny: "Yes, mother: they travel for half fare."

— Ohio Mason

No gift is a substitute for yourself.

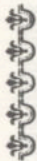
Legal larceny: Mickey Rooney says that a divorce lawyer is a man who gets two people to strip and fight and then runs off with their clothes. — Comedy World



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

NAME	GROUP	YEARS
Mary C.	Traditional	10
Danny B.	W. Asheville	17
Ralph M.	W. Asheville	4
Buck B.	W. Asheville (Jan.)	16
Ed D.	Hendersonville	9
Helen D.	Hendersonville	9
Jonnie M.	Tryon	4
Joe G.	Cherokee	4
Eloise McC	Brevard	4
Jim D.	Sylva	3
Woodfin P.	Sylva	3
Sam S.	Sylva	5
Ada S.	Sylva	5
Ron H.	Sylva	2
Gene M.	Sylva	2
Dick W.	Canton	3
Ike O.	Blue Ridge	11

Hats off to the Sylva Group



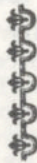
Close call: A grade school teacher was trying to get across the idea of distance. She asked her pupils whether they lived close to the school or far from the school. She got many answers, but the one she remembered was this: "I think I live pretty close . . . every time I come home, my mother says, 'Good grief, are you home already?'"

— Tulsa Herald



"I have this compulsion to pull PUSH doors and push PULL doors . . ."

NATIONAL ENQUIRER



Room for improvement? Sign on the door of a room in Washington, D.C.: "General Services Administration, Region 3, Public Building Management Division, Utility Room, Custodial." It is a broom closet.

— Baptist New Mexican