



MOUNTAIN DOIN'S

FEBRUARY
1983

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

INTERGROUP MEETING: Sunday Feb. 20 at 3:00 PM at the Allen Center, this meeting will have many items to discuss that will NEED your group's conscience to take part. Results of the suggestions over the last couple of months have had some results, but there is still the need to come to decisions on some of them, and for us to do this we need to hear from you. For example, what are your feelings on holding a meeting within the next couple of months in some place other than the Allen Center, would it help attendance?

AA AA AA AA AAAA AA AA

While it is small, here is a map showing the new location of the Hendersonville group Meeting room
Date of the first meeting was Feb 5, all are welcome.

*Map moved
TO Center Sheet* →

Ⓔ Ⓔ Ⓔ Ⓔ Ⓔ

P.I. COMMITTEE:

No report this month, the Workshop is "still on" but to the publication date of this newsletter, there has been no final decision regarding the time, or date thereof.

EDITORS CORNER

The time has come when I begin to look at the very real fact that my time as your editor of these Mountain Doin's will soon be coming to a close, even tho' the timing of my accession to the post was not in any way established prior to the fact, the fact still remains that one of our most cherished principles in the Fellowship has been the principle of rotation of service duties. The facts are really quite simple, anyone in the fellowship who does not atleast try to pass on the mantle of duties assumed is generally much more covered by the mantle of self-importance, i.e. EGO. I would like to make this my first, but not my last, statement of the deep and abiding gratitude i hold for all who have been so helpful in the (now nearly) two years that it has been my priveledge to serve you in the fellowship in this capacity. In all truth, I have recently begun to feel some of that creeping sense of "my own importance" and this is the first sign for me that I must let go of these reins. Indeed, I have no next one in line in mind at this time, and for this I will need the help of all of you in finding someone who will be willing to take on the job, lets all watch and pray that this comes quickly: for my sake.

ED

Incoming Calls Jan.17-28 Intergroup Office

General Information	8	AA Help	4
Family Help (Al-Anon)	3	Meeting Info.	5
Medical Help	0	Intergroup Business	15
P.I.	4	Others	3
Calls from Answering	6	Total Calls	48

DEPRESSION ■ A WAY OUT?

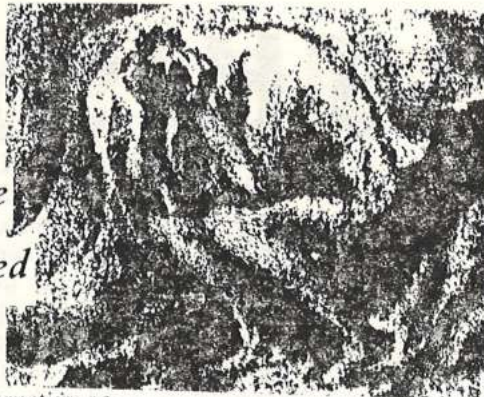
I questioned them after the meetings and read Bill W.'s descriptions of his own recurrent periods of despondency. When I was hit by depression, I feel it was far more than coincidence that several of these same people called me to share their experience and understanding. Through such rallying around of fellow alcoholics, I was able to work my way out of it.

While preparing this piece, I came across a remedy for depression suggested many decades ago by Dr. Alfred Adler, one of the world's most eminent psychiatrists. This remedy is almost identical to the one Bill W. described as effective in his own case. I'm tempted to reveal it in the next sentence, but if I did, it probably wouldn't work. It would be rejected as too simple and at the same time too difficult.

Like a one-cylinder engine stalled at dead center, the depressed person has to be jiggled and rocked into action so that he can move again under his own power. Both infuriating and challenging is the suggestion of another psychiatrist, Frederic F. Flach, MD, in *The Secret Strength of Depression*. He holds that depression is necessary to jolt insecure, rigid individuals from the bondage of limiting habits of thought and to free "the vital elements of creativity."

To a depressed alcoholic, it's dirty pool to imply that his or her wretched state of mind may be preparation for a new high plateau of serenity and progress in the AA program. It's akin to the exasperating advice of friends and family members: "Cheer up!" "Snap out of it!" and "Stop feeling sorry for yourself." Such optimism is so blatant, so smugly obnoxious, that the sufferer is plunged even deeper into melancholy. If a depression did not usually render its

"the depressed person has to be jiggled and rocked into action..."



victims incapable of constructive action, the advice to cheer up would result in hordes of cheerers-up getting a punch in the mouth.

I can look back and see that when I finally climbed out of that state of apathy eight years ago, I was indeed in a better frame of mind than before the slump. But I had assumed that the subjective sense of improvement was mere contrast — just as a pan of tepid water feels hot to a hand recently immersed in ice water. Further, in recalling the AA friends who came so quickly and so mysteriously unbidden to my aid, I can now recognize that they emerged from their periods of lowered self-worth with vastly increased ability to share with others.

The NAMH news item on the prevalence of depression sent me to the library to see whether recent books and magazines reflected the situation. They do. In the card catalog, I found the titles of twelve books dealing with depression, all published within the last two or three years. The titles all suggest various treatments and even "cures." Luckily, I wasn't depressed at the time, because *not one of those books was on the shelves.*

What about magazines? I consulted the *Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature*, which cross-indexes articles on virtually every subject from more than a hundred magazines. Starting with the earliest volume on

CON'T PG. 4

L
I
V
E

A
N
D

L
E
T

L
I
V
E

THIS AND THAT

the shelf, 1919, I looked up "Depression." No listing. The heading didn't appear until 1932, when it referred only to the financial slump. Not until World War II, when millions of men and women were in the armed services and families were scattered by defense work, did the guide begin using the word in its current sense. Even then, it directed the reader to see "Mental Hygiene," and such titles as "Lonesome and Lonely," "Gloomy Moods," and "Christmas Neurosis" were the rule.

I first found the word "depression" in the title of an article in the March 1957 issue of *Science Digest*: "Depression: Time Is the Cure." In 1960, another popular magazine on science announced an "Antidepressive Cure." Five years later, the same publication, forgetting it had already proclaimed a chemical cure, was "foreseeing cures for depression in pills and injections." (No magazine seems to have a memory for anything. It's as though a new staff got out each issue, and the departing staff took the back files with them.)

In more recent years, magazine articles assure readers that depression can be cured, offering remedies such as self-help techniques or professional therapy, with or without medication. As in the case of alcoholism, cures are constantly being announced over the years, yet the number of sufferers continues to increase. Still, it cannot be denied that *some* depressed persons appear to respond to each of the various remedies: chemotherapy, professional counseling, improved (or changed) nutrition, travel — in fact, everything from high karate to high colonics. Also, some do not respond to any of these treatments.

My reading makes me realize how fortunate I was when depression hit me in 1967. I did not think of drinking again, nor of taking my life, even though day after day I sank deeper into my moody lethargy. External circumstances may have triggered this loss of self-esteem. A promising relationship with an attractive, intelligent, buoyant-natured AA friend had ended suddenly. A period of erratic employment justified some concern, but not panic. I canceled an invitation to speak at an AA convention in a Midwestern state. Why should those good people pay air fare and hotel expenses for an AA speaker who could not bring a convincing example of the joy of living a spiritual life in the Fellowship?

After nearly two weeks of this increasing depression, I began to get phone calls from AA members who had themselves suffered such moods. They told me they knew how I felt. They told me it would pass. They said, "I've been there, you know. Want to talk about it?" And nobody, bless them, said, "Cheer up." The uplifting effect of this concern was tremendous. It didn't yank me out of the doldrums, but it gave me a source of borrowed energy and incentive to force myself into action, to jolt myself off that "dead center."

One call was from a man who had told me, years before, of placing the muzzle of his .357 magnum pistol in his mouth. Hearing his calm recital of his own despondency and a warm chuckle as he assured me that "this, too, will pass" gave me hope and confidence. If this man could look back and laugh over his own periods of hopelessness, so could I! He and others shed new light on the part of Tradition Five that speaks of the AA group's "primary purpose — to

F
I
R
S
T

T
H
I
N
G
S

F
I
R
S
T

NEXT PAGE →

FROM HERE TO YON!

carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers." Not just the alcoholic who is still *drinking*, but the one who still *suffers*.

After four or five calls from fellow AAs, I began taking inventory. On my list of omissions and commissions were these: (1) I had let up on my daily exercise, a program of jogging a physician had put me on long before the activity became a fad; (2) I had drifted back into the habit of eating large amounts of pie and ice cream and had piled on weight — both blubber and hidden guilt; (3) instead of productive activity, I had lapsed into my earliest compulsion, acquired at the age of six — reading (an ideal rationalization for a writer, "enlarging my fund of general knowledge" — the same excuse I once gave myself for spending so much time in bars); (4) I attended only speaker meetings in AA, as a listener, avoiding discussion meetings where I would have to open up.

Along with calls from AA members came an invitation to speak at a meeting in a Los Angeles suburb, where I then lived. Stifling the phony-humility excuse that "I have nothing to offer right now," I accepted. So I got up in front of about fifty people, gave my name as an alcoholic, and said, "After ten years of AA sobriety, I am now in the middle of a depression, and I don't really have any reason for it." Then I poured out an account of my procrastination, my avoidance of productive activity, my compulsive eating and gluttonous reading. At each admitted defect, from the crowd came a burst of laughter — wonderful AA laughter that washes away shame, fear, guilt, and false pride — laughter that says, "Welcome back to the human race!"

Then I got to work. I resumed jogging. I cut out sweets. I forced myself to clear up accumulated details and became active again in Twelfth Step calls. In a matter of days after I started this effort, the depression lifted. It has not returned. The following year, the good AAs in the Midwestern state invited me back to speak at their convention, an expression of confidence and magnanimity I still cherish deeply.

A two-week depression may not rank as a true one to persons who drag through these bouts for months at a time, but it was real enough and miserable enough for me.

For purposes of comparison, I asked some Denver AAs what they do when a depression hits. A woman about sixty, sober twelve years, who now has bone cancer and who in addition has been a semi-invalid most of her life, gave this reply: "Depression? I'm so busy," she smiled, "I just don't have *time* to be depressed."

Well, *she* wasn't much help. I asked a member who has been sober for thirty-five years. He's a diabetic, and he admitted to frequent depressions, which in his case include a profound feeling of guilt from an unknown cause. "The only thing that works," he told me, "is to get busy at something. Go downtown. Look around. Be with people. I've got to force myself into it. It's rough."

Another friend, sober eighteen years, is convinced that vitamins and proper nutrition are the answer. A look at paperbacks at your newsstand or health-food store will show you literally dozens of expert opinions, all varied and some contradictory, as to what constitutes "proper nutrition." My friend has evidently

by HUGH C.

Progressive Logic

The 4-year-old was absolutely fascinated with his grandfather's false teeth. After staring transfixed while they were removed for brushing and replaced, he asked to have the process repeated. The obliging grandfather did it several times for the youngster, then asked, "Now what?"

The child's eyes shifted momentarily and he said, "Take off your nose."

—Quote

Get The Rope

One winter morning, the man heard his neighbor trying unsuccessfully to start her car. He went outside and asked: "Did you try choking it?"

"No," she replied, gritting her teeth, "but I sure felt like it."

—Good Reading, Quote

Revised Edition?

They just deciphered another Dead Sea Scroll and this one could mean trouble. It says the world was created in six days — and 18 minutes.

—Bob Orben, Quote

Saving Grace

Six-year-old Patrick asks Sammy, "Do you say a prayer before you eat?" "I don't have to, my mother's a good cook."

—Quote

Could Be

Behind every successful man is a family that didn't keep him waiting to get into the bathroom.

—Franklin P. Jones, Quote

NEXT PG.

discovered what is proper for her, however, for she radiates health and a cheerful, outgoing nature.

Of his own painful moods, our co-founder Bill W. wrote, "Sometimes, we become depressed. I ought to know; I have been a champion dry-bender case myself. While the surface causes were a part of the picture . . . the underlying causes, I am satisfied, ran much deeper.

"Intellectually, I could accept my situation. Emotionally, I could not.

"To these problems, there are certainly no pat answers. But part of the answer surely lies in the constant effort to practice all of AA's Twelve Steps." (*As Bill Sees It*, page 30)

Chemotherapy, diet, exercise, psychiatry, keeping busy, working the Twelve Steps—a baffling conglomeration of treatments and alleged cures. Perhaps now we're prepared to give serious attention to the remedy I mentioned earlier, prescribed many years ago by Dr. Alfred Adler to a depressed patient. The patient told the psychiatrist he would do anything to get rid of his suffering. Dr. Adler said he knew a method that would quickly banish the depression, but the cure was difficult, and so drastic that there was probably no point in mentioning it. Naturally, the patient begged for the secret. With sales psychology worthy of Dale Carnegie, Adler kept the patient waiting till the end of the session. Here is Adler's prescription, as related in *Masks of Loneliness*, by Manès Sperber:

"You can be healed if every day you begin the first thing in the morning to consider how you can bring a real joy to someone else. If you can stick to this for two weeks you will no longer need therapy."

Not much different from Bill's suggestion about a more intensive working of the AA Steps, is it? We make depression worse by regarding it as merely a penalty for slipping back into our old ideas of self-centeredness. If used properly, depression can goad us to achieve more emotional maturity and improve our understanding of God's will for us.

L. H., Denver, Colo.

REPRINT FROM APRIL 1976 GRAPEVINE.

We Need Each Other



“Quotes”

CERTAIN THOUGHTS are prayers. There are moments when, whatever be the attitude of the body, the soul is on its knees. —Victor Hugo

THE RUNG OF A LADDER was never meant to rest upon, but only to hold a man's foot long enough to put the other somewhat higher. —Thomas Huxley



"Well, I haven't got a license anymore, but that cop doesn't have an unmarked car anymore, either."

NATIONAL ENQUIRER

ADVICE is what we ask for when we already know the answer but wish we didn't.

—Erica Mann Jong, *How to Save Your Own Life* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston)

GROUP NEWS AND NOTES:

Hope Group, has moved from the Allen Center to a new location, the Women's Flynn Home, and a new time, 8:00 PM on the same day as usual, Wednesdays.

Acceptance Group has retimed their meeting on Wednesdays to 12:30PM to conform to their other meetings, they invite everyone to their meetings. Bring your Lunch bags (those kinds of brown bags are permitted), and they will provide the food for thought. They are open at 11:30, Meeting at 12:30 to 1:30.

A QUESTION FOR YOUR GROUP:

How long has it been since your group took a group inventory? There are excellent guidelines in the pamphlet "The AA Group" that will guide you in the process if it has "really been too long".

One factor in the group's inventory that is strongly emphasized is the group's responsibility, to the still suffering alkie, to the group itself, and to the further carrying of the message by means of service, through the intergroup function, public information, institutions, your GSR assemblies, both local and at a state level, etc. To quote from a letter from a past Chairman of GSO as taken from the Salt Lake City Newsletter. "Is your group being subsidized? If it's not contributing to GSO, the Intergroup Office, or the Area Service Committee then, yes, your group is being subsidized. Because it is accepting services, but letting other groups foot the bill." *

See our Seventh Tradition.

BIRTHDAYS/ ANNIVERSARIES

NOVEMBER (BELATED)

"Corky" M	Haw Creek	8
Bill W	Haw Creek	5
Oliver A	Sylva	1
George W	Tryon	10

DECEMBER (BELATED)

Lewis C	Haw Creek	1
Cordie C	Haw Creek	1
Scotty C	Sylva	6
Gerald P	Sylva	5
Bill F	Sylva	4
James B	Victoria	1
Mary B	Victoria	10

JANUARY

Martha S	Acceptance	2
Sheila W	Acceptance	1
Boyce R	Acceptance	1
Milton B	Acceptance	2
Brent C	Acceptance	3
Ed G	Hendersonville	5
Marie G	Hendersonville	5
Dorothy P	Hendersonville	1
Frank R	Blue Ridge	7
Sally J	Blue Ridge	5
Joe V	W.Asheville	4
H.B.(Buck) B	W.Asheville	18
Norman C	Victoria	3
Carrie A	Victoria	1
Ted F	Victoria	6
Lou L	Traditional	11
Herb W	Traditional	2
Gary M	Murphy	2
June C	Murphy	2
Bob G	Murphy	5
Irene G	Black Mtn BBG	16
Margie C	Black Mtn BBG	7
Anne S	Black Mtn BBG	9
Stan N	Black Mtn BBG	4

John H	Tryon	1
Howard R	Tryon	1
Polly	Tryon	2
Allen E	Tryon	10

JANUARY

FEBRUARY

Rufus D	Sylva	2
Lorraine C	Black Mtn BBG	17
Pam P	Black Mtn BBG	2
Mary C	Traditional	12
Ed D	Hendersonville	11
Helen D	Hendersonville	11
Bill	Hendersonville	1
Pete S	Hendersonville	1
Ron P	Hendersonville	1
Michael P	Haw Creek	2
Maxine Y	Blue Ridge	17
Ike O	Blue Ridge	14
Karl A	Blue Ridge	3
Walter W	Blue Ridge	1
"A.R." L	Blue Ridge	1
Farrell D	Blue Ridge	1
Gene M	Madison	10
Norm C	Madison	7
John P	Acceptance	4

TOTAL 306 Years

OF SOBER HAPPY LIVING!!! MAN THAT'S LIVING!



One ADDITION TO THE BIRTHDAY CLUB THIS MONTH
 FRED (SARGE) H \$18 and MANY HAPPY RETURNS!!!

Intergroup Minutes
January 16, 1983

The regular monthly meeting of WNC Intergroup opened Sunday, January 16, 1983 at 3:05 p.m. with the Serenity Prayer. Ted F., chairman, presided.

Minutes of the last meeting were read and approved as amended.

The treasurer reported a balance on hand December 27, 1982 of \$348.59. The report was approved as read.

Old Business

Itemized group contributions will be listed and individual contributions totaled with only names listed for future financial reports.

Where and When cards are in process.

Discussion of ways to increase contributions to Intergroup.

New Business

It was suggested that we have group conscience meetings at our home groups as to our responsibilities to AA as a whole.

A list of number of incoming calls made to the Intergroup Office will be place in "Mountain Doin's".

The meeting was adjourned at 4:05 p.m. with the Lord's Prayer. Next meeting will be held Sunday, Feb. 20, 1983 at 3:00 p.m. at the Allan Center.

Respectfully submitted,

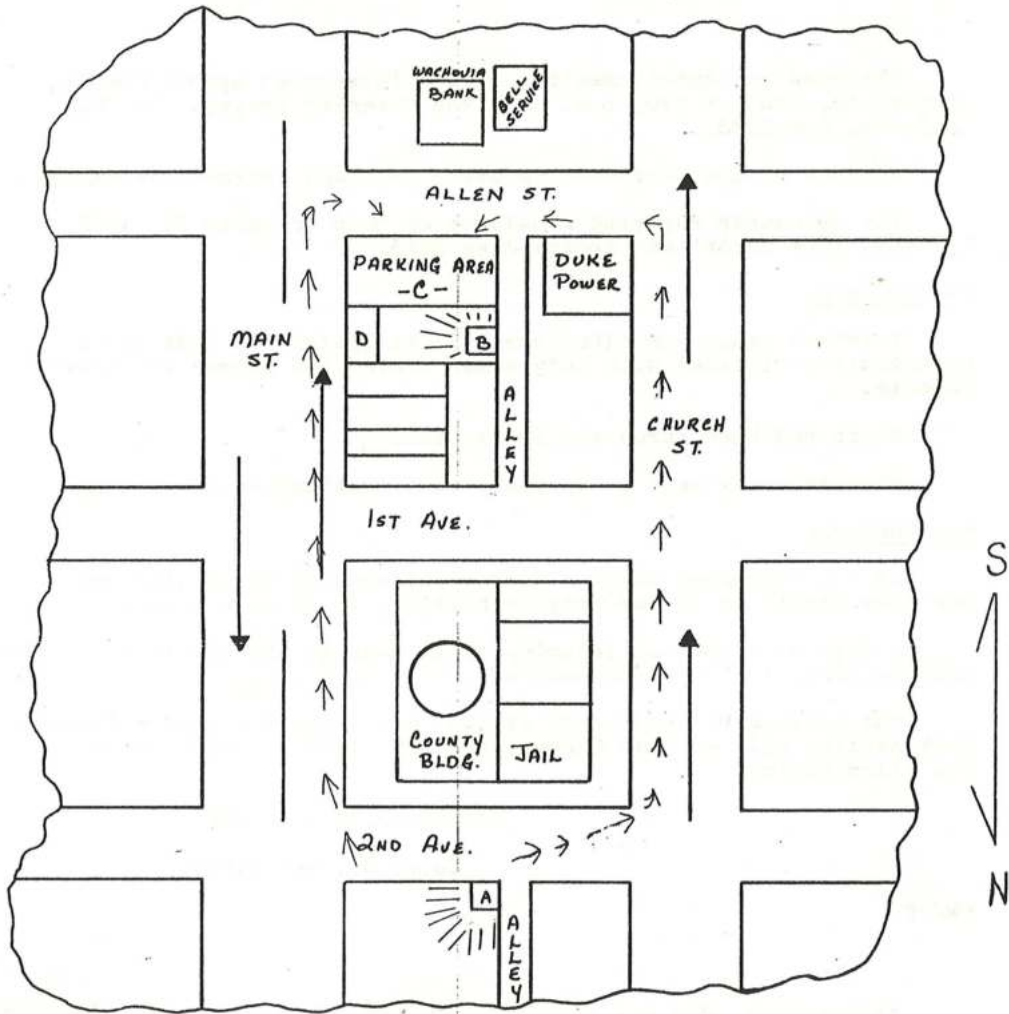
Curry W., secretary.

CW/cf

Attendance: Jim L., co-ord.; Roy H., tress.; Joe R., Trinity; Jack M., Acceptance; Lewis P., Cumberland; John R., Victoria; Shiela W., West Asheville; Gerry D., Editor "Mt. Doin's," 12 Step Study; Fred H., Haw Creek; Bill J., Black Mountain; Charlotte F., co-ord.; Ted F., chairman; Curry W., sec.

H'VILLE GROUP IS MOVING!

EFFECTIVE
MEETING Feb 5



NEW LOCATION FOR MEETINGS IS IN THE ALLEY OFF ALLEN ST.

FORMER MEETING ROOM ACROSS FROM COUNTY BLDG.

NEW PARKING AREA ENTRANCE OFF MAIN ST. OR ALLEN ST.

HENDERSONVILLE TRAVEL AGENCY, INC.

B

A

C

D