



MOUNTAIN DOIN'S

North Carolina Districts 70 & 80
Alcoholics Anonymous April 1988

Intergroup of WNC - 107 Park Place Offices - 70 Woodfin Place - Asheville, NC 28801 - Phone 704/254-8539

A.A. Calendar

Quarterly District 80 Eating Meeting Sun. April 10, 1:30 PM, at the Community Building, Hwy 441 South, Franklin N.C. We will eat at 1:30, and the speaker will start at 2:30. Please bring a covered dish. The New Hope Group, your host, will furnish the meat and beverage.

District 70 GSR's Meeting Sun. April 17, 1:30 PM, St Joan of Arc Church, 919 Haywood Rd., Asheville.

Dist. 70 Public Information Sun. April 17, 1:30 PM, St. Joan of Arc Church, 919 Haywood Rd., Asheville. The P.I. committee needs your help. Groups: PLEASE choose a P.I. Representative to attend this meeting. Any other interested AAs are urged to attend.

District 70 & 80 Intergroup Sunday April 17 3 PM, St. Joan of Arc Church, 919 Haywood Road, Asheville. Intergroup also needs your help. Groups: PLEASE send the name, address, and phone number your Intergroup Representative to: Intergroup of WNC, 107 Park Place Offices, 70 Woodfin Place, Asheville, NC 28801

N.C.-Bermuda Spring Assembly May 7 & 8. Regency Hyatt House, Winston Salem, NC. Hotel Reservations: (Special rate \$46 for two double beds/night.) Toll free phone: 1 800 228 9000 or phone direct: 1 919 725 1234 ext 622 Reservations.

Southeastern Convention & North Carolina State Convention Aug. 17 - 20, Regency Hyatt House, Winston-Salem. For Advance Registration and Advance Hotel application write: Chairman, P.O. Box 18412, Raleigh, NC 27619. We strongly suggest that reservations be made well in advance, as they are expecting an overflow crowd.

Group News

The Back to Basics Group of Weaverville has moved to the suburbs. Their regular Monday 8 PM meeting is now held at a new location. Directions from Asheville: Take highway 19 & 23 North, pass up the New Stock exit, to the Weaverville - Marshall to exit. Then turn West until you are past Montecello (at blinker light), take the next right. At sign "New home of Christ United Methodist Church" bear left to brick parsonage. The meeting is held upstairs in the parsonage

The Bat Cave Group has disbanded.

The March Mountain Doin's sent to the **Round Table Group**, at Moore's Grove Methodist Church, Highway 64 East, Hendersonville was returned by the Post Office. If anyone knows why, please send information to us at Intergroup.

GSO announced a new (lower!) price schedule for A.A. literature. Intergroup has received a large shipment of literature, and has adopted the new price schedule.

The Third Tradition

Our Third Tradition: The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.

Isn't every organization to have rules for membership? Why did A.A. decide to forgo this privilege, to be "inclusive . . . never exclusive"? That's easy. Early members tried it the other way, and it just didn't work. As the Fellowship was nearing its ten-year mark, the office that served as headquarters "asked the groups to list their membership rules and send them in," Bill W. recalled. "If all these edicts had been in force everywhere at once, it would have been practically impossible for any alcoholic to have ever joined A.A. About nine-tenths of our oldest and best members could never have got by!" So the rule books went out the window and were replaced by one uncomplicated sentence: Tradition Three.

But, somebody may ask, isn't this Tradition itself a rule? It does state one requirement for membership. Let's read it again, and ask another question: Who determines whether or not newcomers qualify, whether they do want to stop drinking? Obviously, nobody except the newcomers themselves; everybody else simply has to take their word for it. In fact, they don't even have to say it aloud. And that's fortunate for many of us who arrived at A.A. with only a halfhearted desire to stay sober. We are alive because the A.A. road stayed open to us.

The problem faced by this Tradition isn't just past A.A. history. It keeps coming up--for instance, when a group debates whether to exclude alcoholics who are also hooked on other drugs. The Tradition mentions no such negative requirements, no demand that the prospective member must not be a "pill" addict, a homosexual, an ex-convict, a person with a record of mental illness. All alcoholics are welcome.

What about the group that seems to impose extra positive requirements, beyond "a desire to stop drinking"? This might be a "special interest" group or collection of groups in which, for example, each member must be a physician--or a young person, a man, a woman, a priest, or a law-enforcement officer. By their own account, those who belong to International Doctors in A.A. or Young People in A.A. consider themselves A.A. members first, and they attend general-membership meetings as well as those that fill their other individual needs, while remaining devoted to A.A.'s primary purpose.

These "special interest" groups offer only one instance of the wide variety within the Fellowship. Our Traditions allow unparalleled freedom, not only to every A.A. member, but to every A.A. group.

(The above is reprinted from the pamphlet "The Twelve Traditions Illustrated" with permission of A.A. World Services Inc.)

DCM's Corner - District 80

In my experience in A.A. I have found this short Tradition to be the most controversial and misunderstood one of the twelve. What I have seen is people have a tendency to read too much into it.

Nothing in it says anything about exclusion, dual addiction or the many other things I have heard. In the long form it is clear: 'Our membership ought to include all who suffer from alcoholism. Hence we may refuse none who wish to recover. Nor ought A.A. membership ever depend upon money or conformity. Any two or three alcoholics gathered together for sobriety may call themselves an A.A. group, provided that as a group, they have no other affiliation.'

Put simply:- Whatever your other problems may be, (drugs, obesity, emotions, etc.), to be a member you ought to suffer from alcoholism.

To be a member of a group in Alcoholics Anonymous is stated in the six points that define an A.A. group: 1. All members of a group are alcoholics, and all alcoholics are eligible for membership." (A.A. Group pamphlet, p. 32)

If your group has any problems in this area perhaps they should discuss the traditions and the A.A. group pamphlet. The traditions are the to help the groups, not to hurt them.

Bob R. DCM - N.C. District 80

General Service News - District 80

The Quarterly District Workshop/Business Meeting was held on March 13 in Sylva, chaired by Alternate DCM Bob H. Eight of our 20 groups were represented: New Hope (Cherokee), Bryson City, Canton, New Hope (Franklin), Sylva Serenity, Not Today, Grace, and Clyde. Those attending were given a report of the Area Committee Meeting of March 5-6. Those not attending the meeting will be sent copies of this Report and it is suggested that they be read to the groups. There are several matters your GSRs will be voting on at the Spring Assembly, May 7-8.

It will be your group conscience they will bring with them to the assembly. Please encourage your GSRs and Alternates to attend the Spring Assembly. The theme will be "The Groups Responsibility in Service" with workshops on "The GSR", "Informed Group Conscience", and "Our Primary Purpose".

Our Treasurer reports we have funds over expenses and that only a small amount of groups contribute to our treasury. In spite of this it is progress to be in the black.

Host groups for quarterly eating meetings are needed. The GSR of Bryson City Group volunteered his group for July, subject to the approval of the group conscience. If your group would like to host any future Eating Meetings please have your GSR inform the DCM. Bob R. DCM

In 1946 there were only 300 groups in A.A. One of these was the Hendersonville Group, now the oldest continuously operating group in North Carolina. In a small town of less than 5000 people this very active group in 1946 published a 22 page pamphlet "The Story of a Way Out", the first part of which is on the next page.

"THE STORY OF THE WAY OUT"
By: The Hendersonville Group
Dateline: 1946

I. WHAT IS ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS?

"AA's" as they are called, are a group of alcoholics, who, by a method which they themselves devised and perfected, have found a way out of their squirrel cage. Most of them, even after trying medicine, psychiatric science and even formal religion, had been pronounced hopeless.

If you think this group is out to take the glass from the hand of drinkers to whom the diagnosis "alcoholic" does not apply, you are wholly mistaken. As one of their number has said: "If anyone, who showing inability to control his drinking can do the right thing, about face, and drink like a gentleman, our hats are off to him. Heaven knows we have tried long and hard enough to drink like other people and have failed."

Thus the problem, as AA sees it, is limited strictly to those who have become, or are on the road to becoming, drinkers headed straight for destruction, unless help beyond the usual is brought within their reach. It is then the province of AA to lend a hand to the man or woman who is in need of this remedy.

WHAT IS AN ALCOHOLIC AND HOW DOES HE DIFFER FROM OTHER DRINKERS?

Experience has told us that everybody cannot "handle everything." The alcoholic cannot control his drinking. Sometime the dividing line over which he has slid is hard to place.

Some people are alcoholics with their first drink. Most of them become such by degrees. How can a drinker define his position on the scale? How can the condition known medically as alcoholism be recognized before the desperate stage?

To get drunk once in a while does not necessarily prove one is an alcoholic in the sense in which the word is used here. A man may drink steadily all his life with an occasional roaring bender, and not be thus classifiable. Various arguments we have had on the subject usually wind up with someone saying: "I never heard of Alcoholics Anonymous, but I know it isn't the tenth drink that will get me down, but the first one. but I'm not an Alcoholic!"

That is what they all say! No one likes to admit that he is bodily and mentally different from his fellows, especially if he imagines (though wrongly), that so doing pegs him as somehow inferior in good taste, self-control gentlemanliness, or what have you.

One of our members has a formula all his own to determine the true alcoholic, which he tries on his skeptical friend who wants the truth: "O.K. then," he says, "you're not an alcoholic."

"But here's a test I'll bet you're afraid to make. Come to my room this evening and we'll sit around and talk, while you try some controlled drinking. You can diagnose yourself. Take several shots and see what happens! See if you can stop abruptly and forget about it. Try it several times. It will not take you long to decide, if you are honest with yourself, and it may be worth a bad case of the jitters to learn the truth!"

With true alcoholics, it is never a question of control or moderation. Their only out is absolute abstinence. Alcoholics Anonymous might well make the last two words of the preceding sentence a second meaning of AA.

Why is this total abstinence necessary for these drinkers and not for others? Omar Khayyam said of the juice of his well beloved grape: ". . . 'Tis a blessing; we should use it, should we not? And if a curse, why then, who put it there?"

The alcoholic can indulge in no such philosophical fancies any more than a diabetic can gorge himself on sweets. His mind and his body become sick with alcohol. It is as though he is allergic to drink.

The allergy theory is admitted by physicians who advance it to be "only a theory." Nevertheless, it explains many things that otherwise do not make sense.

Three things especially characterize the alcoholic as a different breed of cattle.

The first is the phenomenon of craving! Not merely the thought of a drink would be agreeable, but a definite, undeniable craving.

The second is the appearance of the curious mental phenomenon that, parallel to the victim's sound reasoning which warns him of folly and danger, there inevitably runs some insanely trivial excuse for taking the first drink. Insanely trivial, because, measured against the hell which experience he knows he's in for, no one in the state of mind called normal and sane would act on it for a minute. Sound reasoning fails to hold him in check. The insane idea wins out.

The third distinguishing characteristic is the fact that the alcoholic, actual or potential, is absolutely unable to stop drinking on the basis of self knowledge. This point has been smashed home on many members of Alcoholics Anonymous out of bitter, devastating experience. How many are the dodges that have tried in vain!

Here is a partial list: Drinking whiskey only with milk, drinking beer only, limiting the number of drinks, never drinking alone, never drinking in the morning, drinking only at home, never having it in the house, never drinking during business hours, drinking only at parties, switching from Scotch to brandy or rum, drinking only natural wines, agreeing to resign if ever drunk on the job, taking a trip, swearing off forever (with or without solemn oath), taking more physical exercise, reading inspirational books, going to health farms and sanitariums, accepting voluntary commitment to asylums--the list could be increased ad infinitum.

Alcoholism is an illness and it is in a class by itself.

People feel sorry for the victim of cancer. No one gets angry about it. But look at the alcoholics trail of misunderstanding, fierce resentment, financial insecurity, disgusted friends and employers, warped lives of blameless and trusted children, sad wives and parents and more.

That is why Alcoholics Anonymous wants this message spread broadcast. If you see no need for it now, who knows how soon you will have occasion to remember it? It may not be a bad idea to preserve this pamphlet, and save it against that day.

A.A. Birthdays

Intergroup Treasurer's Report - February 22 - March 31, 1988

Acceptance Group

Dennis L.	4/13/80	8
Steve B.	4/11/87	1
Lidia H.	4/21/83	5
Gayle W.	4/26/84	4
Gladys K.	4/26/81	7

Black Mountain Group

Sally M.	3/5/84	4
Elisabeth F.	3/10/87	1
Jerry N.	4/5/79	9

Blue Ridge Group

Charlie P.	Mar. 83	5
Ruth G.	Mar. 74	14
William L.	4/4/82	6
Elizabeth E.	4/1/87	1

Murphy Group

Boyce S.	April 82	6
Fred B.	April 80	8
Mimmie M.	April 79	9

New Hope Group - Franklin

Eric S.	4/9/85	3
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Open Door Group

Midge H.	3/26/82	6
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Traditional Group

Chuck W.	4/13/86	2
Mal M.	4/22/75	13
Jim D.	4/26/77	11
Anne W.	4/29/86	2

Group Contributions:

Acceptance	30.00
Back to Basics	10.00
Biltmore Hope	50.00
Black Mountain	30.00
Blue Ridge	123.24
Brevard	32.68
Fletcher	25.00
Haywood Road	15.00
Hendersonville	134.01
Hope	10.00
Intergroup Meeting	14.00
Leicester	25.00
Midday	84.00
Murphy	20.00
Open Door	10.00
Ridge Runners	10.00
Sapphire-Lake Toxaway	70.00
Serenity Service	20.00
Sylvan Valley	180.00
Thursday Ladies	25.00
Traditional	30.00
Turning Point	10.00
West Asheville	35.00
Total	992.93

Individual Contributions -0-	
Literature sold	260.31

Expenses:

A.A.W.S. (Literature)	194.46
Answerphone	59.00
Asheville Citizen Times	60.53
Chips	34.00
CompCare (Literature)	26.75
Coordinators	432.00
Haywood Road (coffee)	5.00
Hazelden (Literature)	76.77
Mountain Doin's	108.65
Rent	85.00
St. Joan of Arc (room)	9.00
Service Charge	1.50
Southern Bell	75.06
Total Expenditures	1167.72

Summary:

Balance 2/22/88	4.68
Group Contributions	992.93
Literature	260.31
Total Income	1257.92
Expenditures	<1167.72>
To Prudent Reserve	<30.00>
Balance 3/31/88	60.20

Prudent Res. Bal.	222.97
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Intergroup Telephone Log Summary 2/22 - 3/25/88 (5 weeks) Answering Service Calls 109, General Information 14, A.A. Help 10, Family Help (Alanon) 22, Meeting Information 45, Intergroup Business 18, Public Information 2, Others 9. Total 229, Visitors to Office 58

Alcoholism as an Illness - The Symptoms:

Despite most reports to the contrary, there is a growing recognition of certain common qualities which are regularly present in the alcoholics excepting those who have a frank underlying mental condition. Characteristics of the so-called typical alcoholic is a narcissistic egocentric core, dominated by feelings of omnipotence, intent on maintaining at all costs its inner integrity. While these characteristics are found in other maladjustments, they appear in relatively pure culture in alcoholic after alcoholic. In a careful study of a series of cases, Sillman recently reported that he felt he could discern the outlines of a common character structure among problem drinkers and that the best terms he could find for the group of qualities noted was "defiant individuality" and "grandiosity." In my opinion, those words were accurately chosen. Inwardly the alcoholic brooks no control from man or God. He, the alcoholic, is and must be master of his destiny. He will fight to the end to preserve that position. (By friend of A.A. Harry M. Tiebout, M.D. 1943 reprinted from page 311, Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age with permission of A.A. World Service Inc.)

Alcoholism as an Illness - The Recovery:

The first requirement is to become convinced that any life run on self will can hardly be a success. On that basis we are almost always in collision with something or somebody, even though our motives are good. (p. 60)

This is the how and why of it. First of all, we had to quit playing God. It didn't work. (p. 62)

Abandon yourself to God as you understand God. Admit your faults to Him and your fellows. Clear away the wreckage of your past. Give freely of what you find and join us. We shall be with you in the Fellowship of the Spirit, and you will surely meet some of us as you trudge the Road of Happy Destiny. (p. 164)

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