



The Beacon

The Christmas and New Year Issue

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This Month: In keeping with the season, we offer a Santa's bag of Twelfth-Step and 12th Tradition articles from The Grapevine, expanded to 12 pages this month; a page devoted to Bill W; Two new and one Updated "bookie" listings totaling 27 (on Page 9); and the **Alcathon** schedule and location on **Pages 4-5!** Coming in January 2008 — a greatly expanded Bookie list!

Although the **Worcester Area Intergroup** has *not physically moved* from its current location, *a different suite number has been assigned*, and now is listed at 100 Grove Street in Worcester **Suite 314**. Please update your records accordingly. Elections were held and appointments made on November 8, 2007 for Intergroup positions—the results will be posted in the January issue.

The previous green meeting list, 2007-C, has been replaced by number **2007-D / 2008-A**, which is **lilac**. If you do not have one, they are free at any AA meeting or at the Intergroup office.

New "Bookie" listings are always welcome. If your bookie has recently changed from what we have listed, please let us know. Articles and notices (anniversaries preferably at least two months ahead) are welcome as long as they are brief (who, what, when, where) meet *Traditions'* guidelines, **MUST** be in MS Word format, and emailed to webmaster@aaworcester.org and/or beacon@aaworcester.org *no later than* the 14th of the prior month to guarantee inclusion. They may be delayed or shortened to fit.

Our warm best wishes to each and every one of you this Yuletide Season for a safe, sober and satisfying holiday, and for a happy and healthy 2008.

Sincerely,
Richard C, editor.

AA Wisdom

If you want to quit drinking,
You are going to have to quit drinking.

The good news is that you get your emotions back.

The bad news is that you get your emotions back.

It is a part of the cure to wish to be cured. --Seneca

Resentments are like stray cats.

If you don't feed them, they'll go away.

My slip was a sobering experience. --Anon.

I have discovered that AA is a simple program,
but it is not easy. Marg E. Alberta

Step Twelve

Tradition Twelve

Concept Twelve

"Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs. "

"Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities. "

"The Conference shall observe the spirit of A.A. tradition, taking care that it never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds and reserve be its prudent financial principle; that it place none of its members in a position of unqualified authority over others; that it reach all important decisions by discussion, vote, and, whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; that its actions never be personally punitive nor an incitement to public controversy; that it never perform acts of government, and that, like the Society it serves, it will always remain democratic in thought and action.



Traditions Checklist

These questions were originally published in the AA Grapevine in conjunction with a series on the Twelve Traditions that began in November 1969 and ran through October 1971. While they were originally intended primarily for individual use, many AA groups have since used them as a basis for wider discussion. Each Month the corresponding Tradition checklist will be published.

On-Line 12 Steps & 12 Traditions, Articles, and Tradition Checklist's

www.aagrapevine.org/stepsTrads/stepsTrads_index.html

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1. Why is it good idea for me to place the common welfare of all AA members before individual welfare? What would happen to me if AA as a whole disappeared?
2. When I do not trust AA's current servants, who do I wish had the authority to straighten them out?
3. In my opinions of and remarks about other AAs, am I implying membership requirements other than a desire to stay sober?
4. Do I ever try to get a certain AA group to conform to my standards, not its own?
5. Have I a personal responsibility in helping an AA group fulfill its primary purpose? What is my part?
6. Does my personal behavior reflect the Sixth Tradition-or belie it?
7. Do I do all I can do to support AA financially? When is the last time I anonymously gave away a Grapevine subscription?
8. Do I complain about certain AAs' behavior-especially if they are paid to work for AA? Who made me so smart?
9. Do I fulfill all AA responsibilities in such a way as to please privately even my own conscience? Really?
10. Do my utterances always reflect the Tenth Tradition, or do I give AA critics real ammunition?
11. Should I keep my AA membership a secret, or reveal it in private conversation when that may help another alcoholic (and therefore me)? Is my brand of AA so attractive that other drunks want it?
12. What is the real importance of me among more than a million AAs?





BILL W'S NEIGHBORHOOD



Recovery Through Giving

For a new prospect, outline the program of action, explaining how you made a self-appraisal, how you straightened out your past, and why you are now endeavoring to be helpful to him. It is important for him to realize that your attempt to pass this on to him is a vital part of your own recovery. Actually he may be helping you more than you are helping him. Make it plain that he is under no obligation to you. Acoholica Anonymous, p. 94

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In the first six months of my own sobriety, I worked hard with many alcoholics. Not a one responded. Yet this work kept me sober. It wasn't a question of those alcoholics giving me anything. My stability came out of trying to give, not out of demanding that I receive. The Grapevine, January 1958, op.cit. As Bill Sees It, p.275

Alcoholics Anonymous is not a religious organization; there is no dogma. The one theological proposition is a "Power greater than one's self." Even this concept is forced on no one. The new corner merely immerses himself in our society and tries the program as best he can. Left alone, he will surely report the onset of a transforming experience, call it what he may. Observers once thought A.A. could only appeal to the religiously susceptible. Yet our membership includes a former member of the American Atheist Society and about 20,000 others almost as tough. The dying can become remarkably open-minded. Of course we speak little of conversion nowadays because so many people really dread being God-bitten. But conversion, as broadly described by James, does seem to be our basic process; all other devices are but the foundation. When one alcoholic works with another, he but consolidates and sustains that essential experience.

— Bill W in Amer. J. Psych®, Vol. 106, 1949

A Christmas Message from Bill W (As true now as when it was first written -Ed.)

ALL MEMBERS

Greetings On Our 10th Christmas, 1944

Yes, it's in the air! The spirit of Christmas once more warms this poor distraught world.

Over the whole globe millions are looking forward to that one day when strife can be forgotten, when it will be remembered that all human beings, even the least are loved by God, when men will hope for the coming of the Prince of Peace as they never hoped before.

But there is another world which is not poor. Neither is it distraught.

It is the world of Alcoholics Anonymous, where thousands dwell happily and secure.

Secure because each of us, in his own way, knows a greater power who is love, who is just, and who can be trusted.

Nor can men and women of AA ever forget that only through suffering did they find enough humility to enter the portals of that New World. How privileged we are to understand so well the divine paradox that strength rises from weakness, that humiliation goes before resurrection; that pain is not only the price but the very touchstone of spiritual rebirth.

Knowing it's full worth and purpose, we can no longer fear adversity, we have found prosperity where there was poverty, peace and joy have sprung out of the very midst of chaos.

A Great indeed, our blessings! And so, Merry Christmas to you all-- from the Trustees, from Bobbie and from Lois and me.

Bill Wilson

Sponsorship--A Dying Art


Chicago Group Suggests A Revival Is Overdue

From The Grapevine February 1953
Volume 9 Number 9


IN the early days of the Chicago Group, sponsorship was done most thoroughly. Indeed, groups elsewhere in the country spoke of the "Chicago system" of sponsorship. The picture has changed. Perhaps it is a natural result of growing big. At any rate, the old style of sponsoring, with the sponsor utterly devoted to his prospect, is seen infrequently. There is no way of checking the probable large number who have failed because of the lack of proper effort by their sponsors.

CHICAGO'S SUGGESTED PROGRAM

1. Responsibility is the first principle of good sponsorship; the sponsor is the one who assumes responsibility for the person seeking help. If one is unable to devote the time and attention essential to good sponsorship, one should not undertake, at least without a strong co-sponsor, such an assignment.
2. Sponsorship must be approached with the most serious attitude. AA is a life or death matter to the alcoholic seeking help; if we fail, the new man or woman has been denied the good chance he could have had with another sponsor. Prepare yourself for the first call on a prospect by re-reading the chapter in the book, "Working With Others."
3. Visit the new prospect as soon as possible after he calls for help; presenting the recovery program to him at the psychological moments he reaches for it may be the factor that saves his life.
4. On your first visit, tell the prospective AA, frankly and simply, some of your own story--with enough Pauses that he may chime in with some of his own experiences and reactions. Let him ask questions. Explain how AA works, but keep your presentation brief and simple. Do not wear out your welcome. . .when he becomes restless take your leave, making an appointment to see him again as soon as practicable.
5. In presenting the program to a prospect, don't thrust your personal views upon him. Tell him about the AA program as it is presented in the book, and let him do his own interpreting, especially in regard to the spiritual aspects. He will get the views of many other AA's, in addition to yours, at meetings and in conversations. Out of all that, with what guidance you can give him, he will find a way to apply AA principles to his own life and problems.
6. Be prepared to sacrifice much of your time for a considerable period to give the prospect the greatest possible chance. Make yourself available to him daily for counsel and companionship.
7. See that the prospect becomes acquainted with many other AA's, so that he may get a broad picture of the AA program and find his own interpretation and application of its principles. Make the prospect truly your friend. Give of yourself without stint in trying to help him. Invite him to your home, preferably for a meal.
8. See that your prospect immediately gets a copy of the book, Alcoholics Anonymous; it is best that he buy a copy. Ownership of the book once was a virtual symbol of AA membership; regular reading and rereading of the book is recommended practice for every AA as a tool of recovery.
9. Do not take on, in your enthusiasm, more prospects than you can properly handle. AA is strong medicine. It affords the recovered alcoholic a unique opportunity to serve his fellow man. The temptation to run up a big score of saved souls is strong. But one new member a year well-sponsored is a better result than 50 given the once-over lightly.
10. Emphasize the importance of regular attendance at meetings by precept and example. Even if you have grown careless about going to meetings, it is your responsibility to accompany the prospect to several such (and this may save you from a relapse). -30-




!!! CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR ALCATHONS !!!




The Christmas Alcathon will run **Round the clock for 36 hours**
Starting at 12:00PM Noontime on Wednesday, December 24, 2007
 Continuing **ALL DAY December 25, Christmas Day, Ending at Midnight**

The NewYear's Alcathon will run **Round the clock for 36 hours**
Starting at 12:00PM Noontime on Wednesday, December 31, 2007
 Continuing **ALL DAY January 1, 2008, New Year's Day, Ending at Midnight**



St. John's Catholic Church 44 Temple Street, Worcester, Mass. 01604



SLOT#	DATE	TIME	GROUP
1	Mon. 12/31	12:00 pm - 1:00 pm	Worcester 7 AM
2	Mon. 12/31	1:00 pm - 2:00 pm	Way of Sobriety
3	Mon. 12/31	2:00 pm - 3:00 pm	Sturbridge Lighthouse 12 & 12
4	Mon. 12/31	3:00 pm - 4:00 pm	Auburn Way Out
5	Mon. 12/31	4:00 pm - 5:00 pm	Webster Triton
6	Mon. 12/31	5:00 pm - 6:00 pm	Westboro Sunday Morning
7	Mon. 12/31	6:00 pm - 7:00 pm	Thursday Step - Charlton
8	Mon. 12/31	7:00 pm - 8:00 pm	Westboro Forge
9	Mon. 12/31	8:00 pm - 9:00 pm	We Mean Business
10	Mon. 12/31	9:00 pm - 10:00 pm	Worcester Mid-Day
11	Mon. 12/31	10:00 pm - 11:00 pm	Charlton - Courage to Change
12	Mon. 12/31	11:00 pm - 12:00 am	Auburn Beginners
13	Tues. 1/1/08	12:00 am - 1:00 am	Worcester Saturday Step Study
14	Tues. 1/1/08	1:00 am - 2:00 am	Worcester Young People
15	Tues. 1/1/08	2:00 am - 3:00 am	Webster Early Risers
16	Tues. 1/1/08	3:00 am - 4:00 am	Charlton Daybreakers
17	Tues. 1/1/08	4:00 am - 5:00 am	Brookfield Sunday Morning
18	Tues. 1/1/08	5:00 am - 6:00 am	Douglas Maintenance & Repair
19	Tues. 1/1/08	6:00 am - 7:00 am	Worcester Wednesday Big Book Step Study
20	Tues. 1/1/08	7:00 am - 8:00 am	People Helping People
21	Tues. 1/1/08	8:00 am - 9:00 am	Holden Thursday Night
22	Tues. 1/1/08	9:00 am - 10:00 am	Northboro Saturday Morning
23	Tues. 1/1/08	10:00 am - 11:00 am	Worcester Quinsigamond
24	Tues. 1/1/08	11:00 am - 12:00 pm	Turning Point Big Book
25	Tues. 1/1/08	12:00 pm - 1:00 pm	Crozier
26	Tues. 1/1/08	1:00 pm - 2:00 pm	Sutton Center Step
27	Tues. 1/1/08	2:00 pm - 3:00 pm	Worcester Gratitude
28	Tues. 1/1/08	3:00 pm - 4:00 pm	Serenity Group - Thursday
29	Tues. 1/1/08	4:00 pm - 5:00 pm	Dudley Day At A Time
30	Tues. 1/1/08	5:00 pm - 6:00 pm	Auburn Big Book
31	Tues. 1/1/08	6:00 pm - 7:00 pm	Worcester Rebound
32	Tues. 1/1/08	7:00 pm - 8:00 pm	Northboro How It Works
33	Tues. 1/1/08	8:00 pm - 9:00 pm	There Is Hope
34	Tues. 1/1/08	9:00 pm - 10:00 pm	Shrewsbury Gratitude
35	Tues. 1/1/08	10:00 pm - 11:00 pm	Greendale
36	Tues. 1/1/08	11:00 pm - 12:00 am	Baylston As Bill Sees It

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THE HOME GROUP:**The Three Wise Men***the human story*From The Grapevine December 1949
Volume 6 Number 7

THE Sales Manager leaned back in his chair and gazed out the window at the snow--topped buildings. It was two weeks till Christmas. A wry smile creased his face as his thoughts drifted back to other yuletide seasons when he had drunk deep of the foaming bowl and had obliterated any intentions he may have had to make other people happy. Of course the alcohol had increased his desires, but always decreased his performance.

He reached for his telephone and dialed a number. The answering voice came from Twelfth Step House in lower Manhattan. . . Sure they could send three men uptown right away. . . "And," the voice added, "they'll be good men."

The office force was accustomed to seeing strange characters slink into the boss's office. The three "good" men who appeared shortly after the phone call really had the Bowery blush. The Sales Manager greeted them with a hearty handshake and invited them into an inner office.

"How about a cup of coffee while I explain the job?"

Piles of advertising folders were stacked around a long table.

"Here's the procedure," the Sales Manager said. "There's about 10 days work here. It's monotonous, but not hard work. You'll get a buck an hour. I'll give you enough each night for board and room, and pay you off at the end of the job." He turned as he left the room. "Go to it, my Three Wise Men!"

THE three men settled into their chairs and went silently to work, doing as good a job as shaky hands would permit. Practice soon developed an automatic action, and as the three relaxed, they discovered they could talk and work.

"Wise men, eh," said Joey, who had been a well-known orchestra leader until John Barleycorn had pushed him off the bandstand into the gutter. "For eight years I've been kicking this AA Program around. Here I am dry a week, starting all over again. Never have been able to get past the seventh month."

"WELL, I managed 19 months," said Charlie, who had found AA in Iceland while on a construction job. "But I got back to the States a few months ago and ran into a guy I'd had a grudge against for 20 years. Whambo! It tipped me right into a doozy. Took me three months to get off it. Been dry about five weeks now, but I still got resentments. Guess I'll always have 'em."

The third Wise Man, Bennie, paused to light a cigarette. "I spent most of my drinking days in Wall Street. I crawled back to AA two weeks ago and gave up. I was just thinking what a miracle it is that I'm here this morning, sober." He sighed. "I used to love Christmas, but along toward the end of my drinking, I dreaded it. Always was drunk somewhere except home. This year it may be different. Oh! Oh!" He stopped short. "That's nearly two weeks off!" He laughed. "I've been to 13 meetings in two weeks. And I think this 24--hour a day deal makes a lot of sense."

"I HAD your enthusiasm once," said Joey. "But somewhere along the road, I got fouled up. In fact, I never thought I needed as much AA as my sponsor said I did. He told me to surrender. That I never could get."

"That won't cure my resentments," Charlie put in. "Guess I'll always have 'em."

And so the conversation went day after day. The "Three Good Men" finished the job ahead of schedule, the day before Christmas. Joey was going to get his guitar out of hock that evening. Charlie was going to make himself presentable for an interview with his former boss the day after Christmas. Bennie had no plans, but suddenly he burst out: "Sure I'm grateful for the money we've made on this job. But honestly, I've got something now I haven't had for years. I doubt I ever really had it. I'm at peace with the world right this minute. If I could only keep this feeling."

"YOU can, Bennie, or at least you can have an average amount of it." The Sales Manager had entered the room during Bennie's outburst.

"Your willingness to work the Program is a definite sign of surrender. In your willingness to accept sincerely and practice the 12 Steps, you have found a sense of serenity. Not because you have attained any degree of perfection, but simply because of your honest effort.

"Joey, here's your guitar!" the Sales Manager said as he counted out the crisp new bills. "And Charlie, I had a talk with your old boss this morning. Look your best when you see him. I think he understands. . ."

He looked quizzically at Bennie. "I've got a little job I'd like to have you tackle after the first of the year. How about it, Bennie?"

The youngest AA in the room gulped, blushed and stammered, "Do you think I could handle it?"

"We'll talk about that later. Right now I'd like to get a couple things off my chest. . . I realize that there are many helpful single elements of success--as such--in AA. For my dough, they're all good. Some men believe gratitude is the strongest. Others remain sober through desperation. Don't get me wrong, boys. I'm making no decisions for you.

"My desperation to maintain a daily sobriety was supported by a state of utter willingness. There is no bargain rate for sobriety. That I know. But a willing, unconditional surrender to God's will brings a contented sobriety."

He stood up, shook hands with each of the "Three Good Men." "Thanks for helping me out," he said.

Back in his office the Sales Manager leaned back in his chair and gazed out the window at the snow--topped buildings. He mused: Christ had gone out into the highways and byways. . .his miracles were acts of kindness, performed in the spirit of true helpfulness. . .

He reached for the telephone and dialed a number. The answering voice was his sponsor. "Just wanted to thank you, old man, for what you've done for me. Merry Christmas."

The Costume and the Mask

Twelfth Tradition - Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

From The Grapevine December 1949
Volume 47 Number 7

I am a celebrity--by no means a big one and far from being a household word. But I'm lucky enough to see that welcome little light which now and then brightens a stranger's face when he recognizes my name.

I was in AA a long time before it dawned on me that the notion of celebrity is exactly and precisely opposite from that of anonymity, and though the conflict is by no means only trouble for celebrities, it does seem to cluster around them in strange and peculiar ways, and it sure meant trouble for me.

We've all sewn together a mask and costume in order to have something respectable to introduce to others, but celebrities' public disguises are not only their livelihood, they are a large part of their beloved craft. It's understandable that celebrities can become more obsessed with these public presentations than most other folk.

I had occasion to work with a famous model during one project. She was, at the time, on the covers of three major magazines and featured in at least that many television commercials. Women would rush up to her on the street and it was touching to see the way their eyes searched her face and figure for the secret of her magic.

The model possessed in a spectacular degree a trait which I have noticed off and on in various celebrities, myself by no means excluded: a tendency to regard oneself from an observer's point of views. When she entered a room you could almost see the imaginary surrounding cameras with which she skillfully watched herself, knowing exactly how each movement looked from all directions, every getting up and sitting down, each smile and head toss. Occasionally you could see her quickly correct herself because she'd caught herself in some faulty pose from a bad angle.

I was fairly new to sobriety and to AA when I met this woman, and I have been very grateful to her ever since for what I learned from the sight of her in action.

The first thing I realized was how much I'd used her same trick of viewing myself from a distance when I'd been an active drunk. It had been a great help in conning observers into thinking my sleazy super drinks were ordinary highballs, for instance, and an enormous aid in covering up sly signals to waiters for more bottles of wine.

Much more important, I realized that I'd been living outside myself so long I had almost succeeded in becoming a walking vacancy. In my prized AA sobriety, I was still running a kind of circus which had numerous, highly believable posters plastered all over its outside--See the Spectacular Non-Drinking Person! Watch How Movingly He Can Recite the Twelve Steps!--but which had nothing much going on inside the tent. I've been working hard to shut that circus down ever since with varying degrees of success.

Obviously you don't have to be a celebrity to waste AA by reducing it to just another clever act; it's only that the scam's more spectacular and blatant when you turn all of it into a novel or a sitcom. And, sadly, the fraudulence is more generally observed and likely to be more destructive.

And of course only celebrities are brought on stage to work that dubious show-biz routine of topping one another publicly about how sober they've become. It's not just the obvious fact that they have feet of clay the same as everybody else and may end up by not setting such a grand example after all which makes the exercise so dangerous. It's that the whole thing has the effect of reducing their revelations (which may indeed be sincere) into nothing more than talk show gabble, easily brushed aside.

Perhaps the scariest part of turning recovery into just another celebrity act is that, even though it may well have the best intentions, it tends to glamorize drunkenness almost exactly as an ad does and make it seem that being a poor sot is somehow an especially interesting and possibly even superior condition. I can't speak for you, friend, but I can state without reservation that as far as this particular drunk is concerned, that foolish notion got me into a whole lot of trouble. Over and over.

Anonymous New York, New York

Ground Zero

From The Grapevine February 1993
Volume 49 Issue 9

When I woke up from the haze of alcoholism, life was a mystery. I had been drinking since I was ten years old; the product of a childhood of violence. My father was an abusive alcoholic who beat my mother every night. I remember cowering in my bedroom, listening to the screams of my mother and listening to my father's tirade of abuse. Often, I felt I should kill him and everything would be better.

When I was ten, my father introduced me to alcohol. Until that time, I swore I would never drink alcohol. But, wanting to gain my father's respect, I accepted two shots of brandy. Wow! Instant relief! I thought I had found the answer to all life's problems. I felt free; I couldn't care less about what was happening to me. And from that day on, I used alcohol at every opportunity.

During my fourteenth year, I became friends with another user in school. My friend, whom I will call John, came from a rich family. John and I would steal liquor from his parents' bar. We would take a couple of shots from each bottle, mix it all together, and proceed to "get stupid." During one of our drunken episodes, we broke into a camp in search of alcohol. We found a large cache, and then we proceeded to destroy the camp. We were caught and severely punished. This, however, did not cause me to see the real problem--alcohol. I just deduced that I had been foolish enough to be caught.

My remaining teenage years were spent in an alcoholic haze. My friends and I had a saying we used every day. It went like this, "Well, we're gonna get drunk today, one way or the other, and it'll probably be the other." This meant we would get alcohol any way we could. We committed almost every conceivable crime for money or alcohol. We were lucky because we didn't get caught for most of our crimes. When I was eighteen, however, I spent six months in the county jail for breaking and entering and unlawfully driving away an automobile. This cured me of using crime to get alcohol, but I still couldn't see that alcohol was causing all my problems.

(Continued on next page)

Ground Zero (continued from page 7)

When I got out of jail, I found a job cleaning cars at a car dealership. I married my childhood sweetheart, Chris, when I was nineteen. We were so much in love, I thought I had my life together now. But now I could buy my booze legally. Drinking soon got in the way of our relationship. Every weekend we went to a lot of parties, and invariably I would get sloppy drunk. An argument would end the nights and begin the mornings. My guilt was tremendous at causing Chris such pain; however, I wouldn't admit that alcohol had anything to do with our problems. This pattern continued until I was twenty-nine, with four drunk-driving arrests in between.

My last drunk-driving arrest finally forced me to accept alcohol as being the sole cause of my problems. Chris was about to leave me. I knew I had to quit drinking, and I did.

It took a year for my court case to be settled, and throughout that year I was still in a state of deep denial. I knew AA was the answer, but I refused to accept any form of help; I could do it by myself. When I went to court to be sentenced, I was sentenced, in part, to treatment. This opened my eyes completely. I lost all of my hate for the "system that put me here." I realized my self-esteem was zero and that I was spiritually bankrupt.

The treatment center was patterned after the twelve-step program of AA, and required me to attend at least one AA meeting a week. Treatment got me started, but AA is what keeps me sober. In AA I got a sponsor, and I established a rapport with my Higher Power whom I like to call God. I recently celebrated my fourth birthday with tremendous feelings of gratitude to AA and a Higher Power. When I was drinking, I couldn't imagine a life without alcohol. Now that I am sober, I can't imagine going back to alcohol. But I realize I'm still only one drink away from calamity.

Peter C. Michigan

A Night of Infamy

From The Grapevine January 1991
Volume 47 Number 8

Certain events are destined to leave indelible impressions. At the age of fourteen, I experienced my first brush with sobriety. My dear Uncle Ed, one of the two esteemed Jesuit priests in our family, arrived for his Christmas visit. My father and I hopped into our yellow and white Studebaker and headed south to Pittsburgh International Airport. We spotted him right away as he graced the entrance of a waiting area. He had a gorgeous stewardess draped over one arm and a moderately priced domestic cigar in his hand. Father Ed was in top form. I carried his battered black bag (everything he owned was black) across the parking lot as he broke into a rousing chorus of "There's no place like home for the holidays." I knew something was up.

Ed sat himself down at his honorary seat at the head of the table. After clearing the wine glasses, bourbon decanters, beer steins, and mugs brimming with eggnog, my mother served up her best spread. Uncle Ed gave me the ceremonial nod to lead the family in prayer before we commenced to eat.

After dinner, the table was being cleared as Ed tapped a Pall Mall from his pack and stroked the wheel of his lighter. He inhaled slowly as he took an inventory of the faces at the table. As he exhaled, he pointed toward his briefcase and gestured for me to hand it to him. This was the same bag I had snooped through on earlier visits and always found pints of whiskey neatly wrapped in a black sock. Ed gave the cigarette one last tap on the edge of the crystal bowl, gave a deliberate tug on each sleeve of his coat, reached into the briefcase and, with an air of satisfaction, drew forth a large blue book. To everyone present, but to no one in particular, he announced: "I've made two new friends: their names are Al Coholics and Ann Onymous." Silence.

For the career drinkers that were present, this would be looked back on as a night of infamy. Uncle Stan cleared his throat and shoved back his chair. He pulled two coats from the pile that lay on the camelbacked couch, and escorted his wife down the hallway and out the front door, never to return.

Ed waited a few days for the message to sink in before packing his black gloves, white collar, and that big blue book. The revelations at the family's "last supper" had a number of repercussions. My father, silently and without fanfare, set aside his maintenance drinking habit until the day he died. Uncle Walter, after a short bout with AA, sought medical treatment for his alcoholism. The well-meaning doctors weaned him off the booze and onto prescription drugs. Two years later, in the midst of a deep depression, he overdosed on their solution.

Uncle Stan suffered a massive heart attack three days short of his fortieth birthday. Coming out of a coma, he heard the doctor say, "The poor guy isn't going to make it." This remark gave Stan's contrary nature enough fuel to completely recuperate from the heart attack. And he never took another drink. Stan's idea of sobriety was total isolation. He pulled the shades and unplugged the phone. He kept the front door bolted and left the back door open for ventilation. Not until his wife died seventeen years later was he forced to reach out for help.

That Christmas Day, in the privacy of my own room, I carefully read over "The Twenty Questions" which Uncle Ed had brought. I recall getting only three or four of them correct. Years later when I came across them again, I was impressed by how far I had progressed.

And Uncle Ed? He's doing quite well. He recently celebrated 10,585 days (twenty-nine years) of continuous sobriety. He was last seen giving a little squeeze to an attractive newcomer. "If you bend your knees in the AM, you won't have to bend your elbow in the PM." Sounds like my uncle.

Edward O. Sebastopol, California



Responsibility Declaration

I am responsible. When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help,
I want the hand of AA always to be there.
And for that: I am responsible.

20 QuestionsFrom The Grapevine May 1997 Vol. 53 No. 12

1. Do you occasionally feel grateful that you are alive and not drinking?
2. Have you awakened in the morning recently and looked forward to getting up and going to work?
3. Have you gone a complete day without drinking or thinking about it?
4. Have you paused in the middle of a busy day and thanked your Higher Power for removing the compulsion to drink?
5. Are you experiencing periods of unexplained serenity?
6. Have you had warm feelings toward another person and wondered if this emotion could be love?
7. Do you sometimes feel good about yourself and wonder if life would be as good if you were not an alcoholic?
8. Do you sometimes feel happy for no specific reason?
9. Have you quit feeling sorry for yourself and decided that recovery in AA has made you a better person?
10. Are you able to admit that you may have been wrong, and to apologize when appropriate?
11. Can you play golf, poker, bridge, or pool, bowl, or do a paint job around home without remembering or wanting a beer?
12. Have you recently--with no ulterior motive--told your spouse and kids that you love them?
13. When you have a problem, have you asked your Higher Power for help and been able to turn it over and go to sleep?
14. Do you have more good days than bad days?
15. Are you able to talk about your feelings at AA meetings, and not just relate events?
16. Do you like yourself?
17. Do you socialize with other AA people?
18. Do you look forward to and enjoy AA meetings?
19. Have you had a dream in which you turned down a drink or did not drink because an AA friend helped you?
20. Do you thank your Higher Power at the end of each day for helping you stay sober?

If you have answered yes to five or more of these questions, chances are good that you're a grateful recovering alcoholic. You should continue going to AA meetings and trying to practice these principles in all your affairs.

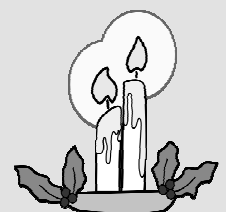
If you answered with ten yeses, you are showing definite symptoms of sobriety.

Giving fifteen or more yes answers suggests you may be getting complacent, and should try some beginners meetings and redo Step One.

—W.J. Wilmington, Delaware

Bookie List

- Kevin S.** "Maintenance & Repair" Douglas Thursday 7:00-8:00 PM
Andy S. "Fitchburg Sunday Morning" Fitchburg Sunday 10:15-11:30AM
Dennis F. "Holden Thursday Night" Holden Thursday 8-9:00PM
George K. "Barbershop Group" Hopkinton Tuesday 8-9:15PM
Ed H. "Hudson Second Chance Group" Hudson Monday 8:00-9:30 PM
Frank G. "Clean Air Group" Leominster Friday 7:45 - 9:00PM
James S. "Leominster Original Group" Leominster Monday 7:45-9:00PM
Tom M. "Marlboro Helping Hand" Marlboro Saturday 12:00-1:00 PM
Ed O. "Millbury Tradition" Millbury Saturday 7:30 - 8:30 PM
Walt B. "Northboro Saturday Morning" Northboro 10:00-11:00AM Saturday
Tom S. "Stow Sunday Morning" Stow 11:00AM - 12:00PM Sunday
Melissa "Upton Capertown" Upton Saturday afternoon 1:30-2:30 PM
Mark P. "Westboro Forge" Westboro Wednesday 8:00 - 9:00 PM
Lynn S. "Westboro Sunday Morning AA" Westboro Sunday 11:00AM - 12:00
Dave A. "Shrewsbury Gratitude" Worcester Sunday 7:00 - 8:30 PM
Christine "Greendale" Worcester Friday 8:30-10:00PM
Paul C. "How it Works" Worcester Saturday 6:45-8:00 PM
Paul C. "Stay Active" Worcester Thursday 6:45 PM
John Z. "Quinsig Group" Worcester Tuesday 8:00-9:00 PM
Glen S. "Serenity" Worcester Thursday 7:30-9:00 PM
Bobby W. "Worcester New Beginnings" Friday 6:45-8:00 PM
James S. "There is Hope" Worcester Sunday 10:00-11:00 AM
Jaye J. "Way of Sobriety" Worcester Sunday 10:00-11:00 AM
Fran D. "We Mean Business" Worcester Outgoing Only
Mitch M. "Worcester 7 AM" Adcare Daily 7:00AM
Kira "Crozier Group" Worcester Monday 8:00-9:00PM
Josh "Young Peoples' Group" Worcester Tuesday 7:30-9PM





Steering Committee & Committee Chairpersons 2007

<u>Position</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>email address</u>
Chairperson	Harry H.	chair@aaworcester.org
Alternate Chair	Bob D.	None
Secretary	Dot B.	secretary@aaworcester.org
Treasurer	Joe N.	treasurer@aaworcester.org
Alternate Treasurer	Ellen McQ	
Trustees	Bob McC, Bob L. Brandy H Liz C.	
Office Manager	John H.	steps@aaworcester.org
Treatment Facilities	Jill Mc D	treatment@aaworcester.org
Correctional Facilities	Eric R	Corrections@aaworcester.org
Halt Line	Dan M.	haltline@aaworcester.org
Social Committee	Vacant	Social@aaworcester.org
Public Information	Vacant	PiChair@aaworcester.org
Webmaster	Brandy H.	webmaster@aaworcester.org
Liaison to District 25	Eric R.	None
Liaison to Area 30	Ellen Mc Q.	None
Alcathon Committee	Joe N.	
Co—Chairs Intergroup & District 25	intergroup D-25 Tina P.	
The Beacon	Richard C.	Beacon@aaworcester.org
District 25 Grapevine Chair	John N.	gvd25chr@yahoo.com

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www.aaworcester.org

Office Hours:

Monday 10am-2pm

Tuesday 10am-8pm

Wednesday 10am-8pm

Thursday 10am-8pm

Friday 10am-2pm

Saturday 9am-2pm

Sunday CLOSED

Do I do my part?

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The Beacon—100 Grove Street Suite 314 Worcester, MA 01605 email: beacon@aaworcester.org

The Beacon Staff: April 2007 through December 2007

Editor: Richard C. — Serenity, Worcester, MA. Volunteers include Lisa, Anna, Mike, Glen, Jim Linda & Tom, all at Serenity; Joe at Intergroup.; Chet at Quinsig; Tom at Sacred Heart Noontime.

Rule 62 “ Don’t take yourself too damn seriously.”

12 Tips for Sober Holidays

1. Line up extra AA activities (help on the phones, speak, empty the ashtrays).
2. Be host to friends, especially newcomers, at home or at a coffee shop.
3. Keep your AA telephone list with you at all times.
4. Find out about holiday meetings or celebrations in your local groups.
5. Skip any drinking occasions you're nervous about.
6. If there's one you can't skip, take an AA friend--or keep candy handy.
7. Don't think you have to stay late (plan an "important date" in advance).
8. Go to church. Any church. And don't forget about extra meetings.
9. Don't sit around brooding; catch up on reading, museums, walks, letters.
10. Don't project about holiday temptations: remember "One day at a time."
11. Even if you cannot give material gifts, enjoy the beauty of holiday love.
12. Carry the message. Give the joy away, and it will be yours to keep.



J. S. OF MELBOURNE BEACH, FLORIDA knows the problem many of us face when we must appear at a cocktail party during the holiday season. He suggests that when offered a drink we tell the truth and say: "No thanks, I've already had enough."

It has come to the attention of management that more and more martinis are being consumed at lunchtime. It has also come to the attention of management that vodka is being ordered because of less alcoholic odor. From this date forward, it will be a firm rule of this company that gin, not vodka, must be used in martinis. We would rather have our afternoon customers know that our employees are drunk than to have them think they are just stupid.

Service Meetings Monthly Schedule

InterGroup/District 25 & 26			
Public Information	Intergroup Office 100 Grove St. # 314 Worcester	4th Monday	TBD
District 25 (GSR's)	St. Joan of Arc Church 570 Lincoln St. Worcester	1st Tuesday	7:30 pm
Joint Corrections	Intergroup Office 100 Grove St. # 314 Worcester	2nd Tuesday	TBD
District 25 - CPC* Committee	Intergroup Office 100 Grove St. # 314 Worcester	3rd Tuesday.	6:00 pm
District 26 (GSR's)	Local 60 Union Hall Mechanic St. Leominster	1st Thursday	7:00 pm
Steering Committee	St. Joan of Arc Church 570 Lincoln St. Worcester	2nd Thursday	6:00 pm
Intergroup Delegates	St. Joan of Arc Church 570 Lincoln St. Worcester	2nd Thursday	7:00 pm
Joint Treatment	Intergroup Office 100 Grove St. # 314 Worcester	4th Saturday	10:00 am
Area 30			
Grapevine Committee	Conference call (Number TBA)	3rd Wednesday	8:00pm
Literature Committee	Carter Methodist Church 800 Highland Ave. Needham	1st Monday	7:30pm
Eastern Mass. GSC	St. John's 80 Mt. Auburn Watertown	4th Wed.	8:00pm
Joint Public Information	Boston Central Service 368 Congress St. Lower Level Boston	1st Thursday	7:00pm
CPC Committee	Boston Central Service 368 Congress St. Lower Level Boston	2nd Thursday	7:00pm
Archives Committee	St. John's 80 Mt. Auburn Watertown	3rd Thursday	7:30pm
Corrections Committee	Boston Central Service 368 Congress St. Lower Level Boston	4th Thursday	7:30 pm
Joint Treatment Facilities	St. Paul's 59 Court Street Dedham	3rd Friday	8:00pm

Is your Group Represented at the Intergroup Delegates Meeting?

If you don't attend you can't vote...

If you don't vote you don't have a voice..

Come find out what's going on in our area

2nd Thursday of the month St. Joan of Arc Church Lincoln Street Worcester 7:00 -8:30 PM

We counted 150 Groups in Worcester area only about 20 are represented, and only 8 show up at the Delegates meeting on a regular basis. Want to find out more? Call the Intergroup office 1-508-752-9000 — or email the beacon beacon@aaworcester.org

We'd be happy to answer your questions.

Format Change
Made A Decision (C12)
Thursday 7:30 - 9:00 PM
Blessed Sacrament Church
551 Pleasant St. Worcester

NEW MEETING
Webster
Mondays 12:00 - 1:00 PM
Hubbard Hospital
ODNSh

NEW MEETING
Northboro
Beginners' Discussion
Monday 12:00 - 1:00 PM
Trinity Church
cnr Hudson & Main. **Northboro**

January 2008
35th Anniversary
Fitchburg Sunday Morning
Sunday, January 27, 2008
Notre Dame High School
151 South Street Fitchburg, Mass.
(South St. is Exit 30 off Route 2)
Buffet starts at 9:15AM
Meeting runs 10:15 thru 11:30AM

W.A. I. Needs your help!
There are service positions that remain unfilled. Join us the 2nd Thursday of each month 7:00pm St. Joan of Arc Church Lincoln Street....come see where you can help! Please Join us !!

I now have over three years of sobriety. At times, the desire for a drink is still strong, and once in a while I think a drink sure would be nice. It is these thoughts which have shown me time and time again why we take AA one day at a time. Just because we are sober doesn't mean we are exempt from life.
-Gretchen E. Botswana

MEETING CLOSED
Any Lengths
Saturday 9:30—10:30AM
First Methodist Church
161 Main St. **Spencer**

The Halt-Line now has 12 hours of unmanned phone time....can you spare an hour? Available hours:
Mon 2-3, 3-4, 6-7 AM, 8-9, 9-10PM
Wed 2-3 AM 3-4 AM
Fri 2-3, 3-4, 4-5, 5-6, 6-7 PM

Check the bulletin board for meeting changes and new meetings in our area on Intergroup's very own web page:
www.aaworcester.org

To find out about social events in **District 26** (North & west of Worcester) check out their unofficial web site: www.26ac.org



Format & Name Change
Living Sober (CDNS)
Thursdays 7:30-8:30PM
United Methodist Church
61 Linwood Ave, **Whitinsville, Ma.**

OPPORTUNITY
Any person who is a group grapevine representative or who is interested in being one, please contact the Grapevine chair of Area 30 at **Grapevine**
P.O. Box 51411-
Boston MA 02205
or
grapevine@aaemass.org

HELP WANTED
RECOVERING ALCOHOLICS ARE NEEDED
NO BUSINESS EXPERIENCE NECESSARY
The Joint Treatment Facilities Committee needs help to carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous into treatment facilities. If you are a recovering alcoholic with a suggested minimum of six months sobriety and are working the steps with a sponsor you can perform this rewarding work.
Current Needs Include: Planning Annual Seminar, Outreach to Nursing Homes, Bookie for Treatment Facilities, Keeping Literature Racks Stocked, Bringing the 'Bridging the Gap' Program Information to Facilities and Groups. Help keep your sobriety by carrying AA's message to the alcoholic who still suffers.
For more information, e-mail: treatment@aaworcester.org