

ANONYMOUS SOUTHJERSEY

SOUTH JERSEY INTERGROUP

October 2017

Painful Ego-puncturing

New in town, she dove into service and wanted a position. What she got was an opportunity to grow

STEP TEN: Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

From the first moment I entered the doors of AA, I was told that doing service would get me to meetings, get me out of my self-obsession and help me stay sober. Coffee commitments, secretary commitments, greeter, group chair, GSR, group treasurer, Grapevine rep, A.A. Service Manual study leader, I've done all these. In fact, over the 15 years I've been in AA, the longest period I've been without a service commitment has been these last 10 months.

I was ill for several months, and I also made a major out-of-state move. My work took me back and forth from the new place to my former home. However, once I settled in the new place, I wanted to get to know other alcoholics. I still know how to be a newcomer and began to introduce myself at meetings, ask for phone numbers

and call people. But after six months of coming and going, I was still feeling disconnected.

My sponsor suggested I continue to make calls. One day someone called me; she was new to town too. Her call made my day. Some time later, a member who had the district

treasurer commitment asked me to be her service sponsor. I thought I was making progress: someone had recognized my experience and wanted my help. My ego, ever so subtly, took a foothold.

I went to a district information packet meeting with my sponsee. This group was formed by the local alternate district committee member. I got to know the folks at the meeting, and had a short conversation with my home group's GSR

about being his alternate. I wanted to offer

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Responding To Disasters: "How Can We Help?"

Editors note: In light of the recent hurricanes affecting Texas and Florida, several AAs have asked how to help. Here are GSOs guidelines on the topic of disasters.

After disasters, the General Service Office (G.S.O.) is often inundated with questions about how to help our A.A. family in distressed areas. We hope the following frequently asked questions and answers prove useful.

Q. How does G.S.O. help A.A. groups in distressed areas?

A. The General Service Office is ready to support the efforts of local A.A. members in all types of disasters; hurricanes, fires, floods, earthquakes, mud slides, etc. Since it is rare for A.A. entities to

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Inside This Issue: ♦ Opportunities for Service ♦
Announcements and Things to Do

Editorial Policy

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Contributions from readers are encouraged—you can write about your experience, strength and hope in general, or you can focus on one of the steps or traditions. You can also write about something that touched you at a meeting, something that bothered you at a meeting, or some service commitment you especially enjoy. Submissions are edited for space and clarity. Contact information is required and anonymity is respected.

Due to space limitations, we are unable to publish flyers for events in this newsletter. However, we are happy to include your gathering in the general list of fellowship announcements.

Please send your submissions to newsletter@asj.org.

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SJIG holds its monthly meetings on the third Wednesday of the month at 8 pm at St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church
1989 Route 70 East, Cherry Hill, NJ

Disasters

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own property (most local A.A. offices and groups rent their spaces), replenishing literature tends to be the main concern after a disaster. G.S.O.'s experience is that we are often called upon to replace some lost literature, and we are happy to fulfill these requests. Thanks to continuous and generous contributions from A.A. groups in the United States and Canada year round, G.S.O. is ready to respond upon request. It can be difficult to imagine what is needed immediately following a disaster. In many cases, the immediate needs are for survival items – food, water, shelter and medicine – which A.A. does not provide. It may take time – days, weeks, in some cases, months – for the local A.A. community to determine precisely what is needed to get the affected A.A. groups back on their feet. So as not to interfere with emergency relief efforts, G.S.O. usually waits until the local conditions are stabilized and local A.A. members have an opportunity to let us know exactly what is needed. Our experience suggests that local A.A. groups and offices view the situation as a Twelfth Step opportunity and try to meet the needs of the local A.A. community before asking for help from G.S.O. or other A.A. entities.

Q. So what exactly does the General Service Office do in these cases?

A. G.S.O. contacts and offers support to intergroups, central offices, General Service Conference delegates and trustees in the affected communities. We wait to hear back from these offices and trusted servants, and gladly respond to their requests for help.

Q. Do you suggest that we send literature and money directly to the affected local A.A. offices?

A. In the instance where an A.A. entity asks for assistance, such as through an announcement placed on a local A.A. website, it is up to each A.A. member or group to determine whether or how it wishes to respond. If your group decides

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Ego

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my experience to help, but I recognized my ego was sneaking up on me again.

Next, I went to the group conscience meeting for my home group. One of my out-of-town sponsees had come to visit. I was feeling very happy: I was going to have a proper commitment and a way of being a part of the group. And I'd make some friends.

Well, it didn't turn out quite that way. I volunteered to be the alternate GSR. After all, I've had five years of General Service experience and needed a commitment. I travel a lot and wanted to be helpful if I could. The chairperson asked me to wait until we discussed service commitments later in the meeting. I had no problem with that.

After we discussed the agenda, I was asked if I was interested in the treasurer commitment and whether I would like to take it. I said I was not available because I couldn't be at the meeting every week, but I asked about the opening for alternate GSR. I was informed that the alternate GSR was responsible for the monthly group conscience meeting (actually this didn't turn out to be true), so I wouldn't qualify. I began to get hurt and resentful.

Later, during the regular AA meeting, my resentment began to fester. I resented what looked like coziness between the GSR and the alternate district committee member. I was afraid I wouldn't have a

commitment. I was feeling envious, resentful and wounded in my self-esteem.

I opened my Big Book and read the Tenth Step: "We have entered the world of the Spirit. Our next function is to grow in understanding and effectiveness. This is not

"When there's a disappointment, I don't know if it's the end of the story. It may just be the beginning of a great adventure."

an overnight matter. It should continue for our lifetime. Continue to watch for selfishness, dishonesty, resentment and fear. When these crop up, we ask God at once to remove them. We discuss them with someone immediately and make amends quickly if we have harmed anyone. Then we resolutely run our thoughts to someone we can help. Love and tolerance of others is our code."

Well, I certainly felt resentful and afraid. Didn't they realize how much I could help? I was being selfish, and far from being loving or tolerant. I asked God to remove my resentments, fears and selfishness and show me what to do, and to help me turn my attention to someone I could help.

I began to pray for the people I resented. I asked for guidance and listened to the people who were called on to share. I heard about a program of action, Appendix II and the personality change required for continuous sobriety. At the end of the meeting, the chairperson shared about a new commitment opening at the county jail. It

was one I would qualify for, and timing-wise, one for which I'd be available. At the meeting after the meeting, the other "new from out-of-town" person came up to me and said she felt badly for what had happened earlier, and asked if there was something she could have done. "No," I said, "it just wasn't meant to be."

Later that evening, I called her and thanked her for her kindness. I also called the woman in charge of the new commitment at the jail, and she was thrilled that I was interested. She is from out-of-town too, and travels a lot and started this commitment to stay connected and carry the message.

I thought of one of my favorite quotes: "When there's a disappointment, I don't know if it's the end of the story. It may just be the beginning of a great adventure." It's by a woman of great understanding, spiritual courage and above all, humility.

And humility is what I'm learning, the hard way. Somewhere in our literature we're told that painful ego-puncturing is the way toward this great asset. The personality change required for this alcoholic to stay sober certainly has to have a bit of ego-puncturing to it. I'm looking forward to meeting those new friends at the county jail and seeing what humility in service looks like.

—Anonymous

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October Service Opportunities

Answering Service:

Currently we have shifts open on Friday 8 am until 10 am; Wednesday, 10 am to 12 pm; Tuesday 8 am to 10 am and 2 pm to 4 pm; Sunday 2 pm to 4 pm; and Friday 6 pm to 8 pm. We also take names for our waiting list, and are still taking AA members to sign up for 12-step calls, so please have interested people contact us via answeringservice@aasj.org.

Committee Service:

The following committees are looking for new people to get involved with possibilities for stepping into the committee chairperson position: Answering Service, Bookers, Budget and Finance, Meeting List, Newsletter and Unity. Please reach out to the current chairperson or e-mail info@aasj.org for more information.

Intergroup Officers:

New Intergroup Officers will be elected in December to serve for 2018-2019. If you are interested in for running for an officer position please e-mail trusteas@aasj.org or call 856-486-4446 by October 7th.

Treasurer:

We will be needing an Assistant Treasurer for the 2018/2019 Panel. You need to be 3 Years Sober, good with numbers, and while Quickbooks experience is helpful, it's not required. We can teach you all you need to know in about 2 hours. Then you'll learn the rest for the next 2 years. Give back to the folks who probably saved your life. It's rewarding...

Speaking Commitments

Hospitals and Institutions (H&I) is looking for speakers to visit the following facilities:

Tuesday

Hope Hall VOA: Oct. 10, 24, 31, 7:30 - 8:30, 676 Fairview St Camden

Solstice Counseling: Oct. 31, 7 - 8 pm, Rte 38, Lumberton

Delaware House: Oct. 10 and 24 2 - 3 pm, Ikea Drive, Westampton

Wednesday

Unity Place I Oct. 4, 18 12:40-1:30 pm, 1 Keystyone Drive Cherry Hill

Addiction Treatment VOA Oct. 4, 18 7-8pm, 510 Liberty Street Camden

Solstice Counseling Oct. 4, 18, 25 12-1 pm, 1561 Rte 38 Lumberton

Thursday

Ancora State Hospital Sept. 28 7-8pm, 202 Spring Garden Street Hammonton

Unity II Sept. 21, October 5, 19 2-3 pm, 121 S White Horse Pike Hammonton

Daybreak Mica Sept. 21,28, October 12, 19, 26 10:30a-12 noon, 368 White Horse Pike Atco

Friday

Vineland Academy Sept. 22, October 13, 27 7-8 pm, 2000 Maple Ave Vineland - Call ahead

Saturday

Cooper Hospital Sept. 30 10:30-11:30, 1 Cooper Plaza Camden

Please contact Patti or Frank at handi@aasj.org if you are able to take one of these commitments.

Get Out and Get Involved

Fellowship Announcements & Things to Do

The Tuesday Noon meeting in Woodbury on Delaware St. will begin meeting at the Presbyterian Church located at [67 S Broad St](#) (entrance on Center St.) also in Woodbury as of Sept. 19 for approx. 3 months.

Friday, Sept. 22 - Columbus "How It Works Group" will celebrate their 8th Anniversary. BBQ starts @ 6:00PM – meeting starts @ 8:00 PM. Columbus Baptist Church, [24260 West Main St., Columbus](#).

Saturday, Sept. 23 - Founders Day Picnic. Celebrating 82 years. Sponsored by SJ Intergroup. 10 AM – 3 PM at Cooper River Park - Subaru Pavilion, [941 Park Blvd., Cherry Hill](#). Meeting at 2:00 PM.

Sunday, Sept. 24 - Cape Atlantic Intergroup will sponsor their 13th Annual Unity Breakfast at the Grand Hotel, [1045 Beach Ave. Cape May, NJ](#). 300 people limit. Call Jenna to register: [609-947-1273](#). No tix at the door.

Mon. Oct. 9 - Ashland Mens 32nd Anniversary mtg. 7:00pm Ashland Evangelistic Presbyterian Ch, Evesham & Ridge Rd., Cherry Hill, NJ FFF & 2 spk.

Monday, October 16 - Delran Monday Night 35th Anniversary. Holy Name RC Church, Resurrection Parish Hall, [260 Conrow Rd. Delran](#). 8:00 PM.

Disaster

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to 2 offer help to an affected A.A. office, you may wish to contact them directly to determine the current need. A.A.'s shared experience suggests that after a disaster, local A.A. offices and groups require very few contributions of money or complimentary literature. In many cases, local A.A. members are happy to work together to replace lost literature or office supplies before asking for help outside their local A.A. community.

Local groups often make whatever repairs are necessary to their meeting places. Regardless of your personal or group response, it is important to keep in mind that many of the affected areas may not have mail delivery, electricity,

or available storage space after a disaster.

Q. Can I send money to G.S.O. and specify that it be used for disaster relief activities, such as replacement of literature?

A. Every A.A. dollar received at G.S.O. is used on a priority basis to carry A.A.'s message when a need is expressed. This includes responding to literature needs after disasters. G.S.O. does not accept A.A. funds that are earmarked for disaster relief or any other specific project, since G.S.O. needs to be able to respond whenever and wherever there is an expressed need. Q. So what can I do to help? A. Many A.A. members choose to support non-A.A. relief organizations in the wake of a disaster as private citizens and individuals. Members may feel compelled to reach out and assist with efforts to

bring food, water, shelter and medicine into affected areas. Our experience suggests that many A.A. members in the past have helped as private citizens through relief organizations in just this way. In keeping with A.A.'s Traditions, these members do not give donations under the A.A. name or credit A.A. in any way. Due to the challenges mentioned above, in most cases this office would not be able to list specific ways to help an A.A. community affected by a disaster. G.S.O. handles direct requests for literature from those affected. If a situation arose where the expressed need could not be met by G.S.O.'s resources alone, we would contact local A.A. groups and ask for additional help. This has not occurred to date.