

ANONYMOUS SOUTH JERSEY

SOUTH JERSEY INTERGROUP

June 2018

September 2011: A Back Porch Prayer

With his wife still missing, a young African-American vows to make things right

On this beautiful spring morning, after almost three months without alcohol or drugs, I am beginning to feel alive again. I am noticing signs of life all around me. The birds are frolicking and building nests. Yellow flowers seem to have emerged overnight through soil, still cold from a long winter. As I'm savoring the hot coffee, allowing my eyes to focus on the

beauty around me, I begin to reflect on the past 25 years of my life, a life filled with such promise yet wasted because of alcohol and drugs.



At 14, I was an outstanding football player and popular with my peers. My grades were above average and everyone assumed I would enroll in college. After my father left, my strong African-American mother worked hard to provide me with the things I needed to be successful. Her unconditional love gave me support and encouragement to fulfil my dreams. It wasn't a big deal when I began drinking and smoking weed with my friends, I thought. No one could have predicted that in a couple of years I would quit football, drop out of school and become a juvenile offender.

Now, at 39, I'm sitting on my mother's back porch, thinking about those wasted years. The only positive step I took was to join the Job Corps and learn a trade (before being expelled from

(Continued on page 4)

Dilemma

I wanted to write an article for the newsletter. So I sat down, and all that happened was my mind went swirling – again! I know that's typical for a person like me, so I try not to get too upset about it. What should I write? It's June, the sixth step, the sixth tradition, the 6th concept (not even going there!)

I heard some good stuff in meetings this past month, I guess I should have written them down, because I can't remember any of them! I could write about an experience I've had, but will it mean anything to others? I can write a song, a poem, a haiku, about alcohol? Would anyone be interested?

I can write about my experience, strength and hope, but

(Continued on page 2)

From the Editor:

We have some additions to the newsletter we thought you would enjoy - awesome comics, a cryptogram (both from people you know and love!), along with our regular articles and help wanted.

Enjoy!

Inside This Issue: ♦ SJL Trivia ♦ Step 6 Poem ♦ Opportunities for Service ♦ Comics ♦ Cryptogram

Editorial Policy

Anonymous South Jersey is a monthly newsletter published by and for members of South Jersey. Opinions expressed herein are NOT to be attributed to AA as a whole, nor does publication of information imply any endorsement by either AA or South Jersey Intergroup. Quotations and artwork from AA literature are printed with permission from AA World Services, Inc., and/or the AA Grapevine, Inc.

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@aasj.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



Step 6: Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character

How must we ready ourselves for God
to take defects which hold us back
from becoming better persons
who can differently react?

What is meant by entirely? Must we become an
empty shell?
Or did we find Some good in us; Some places
we could dwell?

As we begin to be removed of traits that pulled
us down,
We find ourselves more willing to let God turn
us around.

Editor

From page 1

that might take a couple pages, and you could read it if you want to fall asleep!

Then I remembered, this is not about me. It's about sharing, caring, and giving back. I can write about any of the "aforementioned" (that's how I talk!) topics, and it would be fine. The message here is that we want to hear from you. It can be one or two paragraphs, anything you feel you would like to share. We are all in the same room here, and we like to enjoy life. At times, we even laugh at ourselves. So, share away!

In service, Judy

South Jersey Intergroup Fun Page

Trivia Question

June 2018: How do you become an Intergroup Rep?

Answer to last month's question, How can Intergroup help your group promote an AA event?

There are a few ways.

1. You can post your group event on the website calendar
at <http://aasj.org/events/submit-event/>
2. You can bring flyers to the Intergroup meeting or e-mail them to sjintergroup@verizon.net to be printed
3. You can e-mail your event to newsletter@aasj.org for publication.
4. And don't forget to come to the monthly Intergroup meeting and announce your event.
HINT: submitting events 2 months ahead will give our committees and reps plenty of time to get the news out.

NOTE: we are unable to use Intergroup resources to promote non AA events.



Cryptogram (Hint: It's a prayer)

CG OUHDLSU, R DC XST TRQQRXY LBDL GSM FBSMQE BDAH DQQ SN CH, YSSE
DXE KDE. R WUDG LBDL GSM XST UHCSAH NUSC CH HAHUG FRXYQH EHNHOL
SN OBDUDOLHU TBROB FLDXEF RX LBH TDG SN CG MFHNMQXHFF LS GSM DXE
CG NHQQSTF. YUDXL CH FLUHXYLB, DF R YS SML NUSC BHUH, LS ES GSMU
KREERXY. DCHX.

Cryptograms are cypher substitution puzzles in which each letter represents another letter in the alphabet. You solve it by noticing patterns in the words to decipher the actual letters.

Porch

From page 1

school for selling drugs).

Five years ago, the courts sent me into treatment. When I graduated from the program, I went to Alcoholics Anonymous, found a sponsor and began working the Steps. Living in a large city gave me the opportunity to attend various meetings where I could find other young people and enjoy an active social life. I met a young woman, also new in recovery, and we married. We continued attending meetings and working with our sponsors, but material things slowly became more important. The trade I had learned gave me a good job and we bought a house and a car.

My wife began to use drugs and alcohol again. Before long, I joined her. It took only a few months to lose everything, including my beautiful wife, who is still out there, somewhere on the streets. Our disease took us to the gates of hell and I experienced the presence of evil. Somehow, once again, God delivered me to my mother's house in Kentucky. He led me back to the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous and the care of a loving sponsor.

So, on this beautiful spring morning, I'm thinking about my life and

all that has happened to me in an effort to move forward. Have I considered all the implications of this deadly disease? Why have so many young brothers, like me, walked into our groups and stayed

"I want to work for a new life and a psychic change that leaves the old Vernon and his destructive thoughts behind. Now, I'm getting on my knees, right here on my mother's back porch, and asking God for the willingness to take Step One."

for a short time, returning to the alcohol and drugs only to join gangs, go to prison or die? So few dark faces amid the many white ... could it be because of race that they don't stay sober? I was welcomed with open arms into this AA family and my sponsor is an African-American man with strong sobriety and a deep love for the people in this group. No, I believe it's all about the power of this disease and the subtle ways it sneaks into our thinking and captures our soul. Just a few weeks ago, I became angry and resentful at an old-timer who asked me to stop laughing and playing around while she was sharing. How dare she say this to me! I was only having a little fun. I was also irritated when another old biddy told her new sponsee that she shouldn't go out

with me for coffee after the meeting. How dare she insult me! Only last week, I helped her move furniture. Besides, I don't understand this deal about not getting involved in relationships during the

first year of sobriety.

My sponsor gets on my nerves when he insists that I walk up front and take a red chip, offered at three months of sobriety, when I don't think I should do this.

My life is already much better now that I've gotten a job and car back. I just don't like people telling me

what I should do. Perhaps I need to check this stinking thinking and the implications of Step One with my sponsor.

On this morning, though, I want to work for a new life and a psychic change that leaves the old Vernon and his destructive thoughts behind. Now, I'm getting on my knees, right here on my mother's back porch, and asking God for the willingness to take Step One.

-- Vernon J.
Frankfort, Kentucky

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June Service Opportunities

Answering Service:

We will begin updating the 12 step list this month and are looking for volunteers to help make phone calls and verify information from the existing list. This is a very rewarding service opportunity; if you or anyone you know has questions, or is interested in being added as a contact on our current 12 step list, please contact us via answeringservice@ajas.org.

Archives:

If anyone has any memorabilia such as coins, meeting lists, grapevines, anything at all related to SJ AA they want to share please feel free to pass those items along by contacting archives@ajas.org. They will be cataloged and kept at the SJ Intergroup office.

Newsletter: We would love any and all contributions - articles, poetry, things of interest heard in the rooms, anything that has helped you in recovery. Please submit by Wednesday, June 13th for the July newsletter.

Speaking Commitments

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

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

Monday

Jefferson MICA Unit, June 11 11am-12pm 2201 Chapel Ave W Cherry Hill (NEW BUILDING)

Tuesday

Cooper Psych Unit – Camden, June 26 8-9pm 1 Cooper Plaza, Camden

Wednesday

Unity Place I – Cherry Hill, June 6, 20, 27 12:40-1:30pm, 1 Keystone Ave, Cherry Hill

Camden VOA – Camden, June 6, 20 7-8pm 510 Liberty Street, Camden

Solstice Counseling – Lumberton NJ June 20 12-1pm 1561 Rt. 38 W., Lumberton

Northbrook Behavioral Health – Blackwood, June 13 8-9pm 425 Woodbury-Turnersville Rd, Blackwood

Thursday

Ancora – Hammonton, June 28 7-8pm, 202 Spring Garden Rd, Hammonton, Unity Place II – Hammonton, June 7, 21 2-3 pm, 121 S. White Horse Pike, Hammonton

Lourdes Psych Unit – Willingboro, June 21, 28 8-9pm, 218 Sunset Road, Willingboro

Daybreak - Atco - June 14, 21, 28 10:30-12:00 noon,
368 White Horse Pike, Atco

Friday

Seabrook Women – Bridgeton, June 15 7:30-8:30pm, 133 Polk Ln, Bridgeton

Saturday

Cooper Psych Unit – Camden, June 2, 16, 23, 30 8-9pm, 1 Cooper Plaza, Camden

ANNOUNCING
The 11th Anniversary
of the
Florence Friday Night Big Book Meeting

*Florence United Methodist Church
209 Broad Street Florence, New Jersey 08518*



June 8th, 2018

Food and Refreshments at 6:30

Speaker at 7:30

This year's speaker is Jean W. of the *Thursday Night Bordentown Grapevine*
Meeting with 35 years of continuous sobriety

FOOD * FUN * FELLOWSHIP



Announcements and Things to Do

Founders' Day Celebration



Saturday, June 9th

1:00 -5:00 pm

Calvary Church

317 Conrow Road
Delran, NJ, 08075



Food! Fun! Fellowship!



"Ask it Basket "

Meeting From 3-4pm

This is a FREE event

Dessert & Salad donations are welcome & appreciated

For more info please text or call:

Dylan B. 609-922-5390

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