

ANONYMOUS SOUTH JERSEY

SOUTH JERSEY INTERGROUP

January, 2020

Nothing Changes If Nothing Changes

Today, I am grateful for the gift of desperation. The hot coals beneath my feet that forced me to start moving and take action. The will to live. I am grateful for surrender.

Early on in recovery, I heard the catch phrase, "Nothing changes if nothing changes." To me, it always went hand-in-hand with, "Half measures availed us nothing," from "How It Works." Half measures at a new life, convenient changes requiring little adjustment and keeping me within my comfort zone, simply weren't enough. Needless to say, I did not stay sober. Still, the two phrases stuck with me.

Coming back scorched from a horrifying relapse, I knew what half-measures I had been taking in my recovery. I also knew what actions I had neglected to take. I knew what needed to change, and that what needed to change was everything. I embarked on a quest that was birthed out of complete surrender. I gave up and listened (for once) to what fellow AAs, rehab counselors, therapists, and spiritual advisors suggested, and I stopped fighting and began taking real action. This willingness to listen to suggestions was the first of many changes for me, and was definitely the most important. My entire outlook upon life began to change then, and I was willing to approach things in a different way, and to begin to build a new life for myself that was not only sober, but worth staying sober for.

And has it ever been worth staying sober for! Here are some of the changes I have made, in a nutshell: a new sponsor (who has taken me through all 12 steps of Alcoholics Anonymous in order), a new spirituality and prayer life, a new outlook on what I can contribute to the stream of

life, healthy, new boundaries with other people, a new willingness to get and stay honest, new responsibilities, a new sense of patience and striving for long-term gain rather than instant gratification, a new job and healthy saving and spending habits, a new sense of peace as a result of the amends I have made, a new willingness to show up, a new sense of forgiveness for those against whom I had held resentments, and most importantly, a new perspective that centers primarily around gratitude. Today, I don't **have to** do things, I get to do things. And I can look other people in the eye.

I said yes that day when I finally gave up the fight, for a change, and took the steps I needed to forge my recovery. And I still say yes today. The gift of desperation led me from the darkest depths of my alcoholic life to the highest peaks of my new sober one, and everything has changed. And all because of my willingness to begin to make those changes.

Everything changed because I was willing to let those changes happen, and whole measures have availed me everything.

Nick S. , Haddon Township

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The Countdown is On!!!

July 2 - 5, 2020

Celebrate A.A.'s 85th Anniversary !

The 2020 International Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous will be held July 2nd to July 5th, 2020 in Detroit, Michigan with the theme "Love and Tolerance is our Code."

A.A. members and guests from around the world will celebrate A.A.'s 85th year at this event with big meetings held Friday night, Saturday night and Sunday morning in the Ford Field Stadium. Other meetings, scheduled or informal, will take place throughout the weekend in the COBO Center in downtown Detroit. We know many are excited about the International Convention and eager for detailed information. As the time gets closer, additional information about the Convention and Detroit, our host city, will be provided.

Watch for Convention articles in A.A.'s quarterly news bulletin, Box 4-5-9, which is mailed to the general service representative of every group in the U.S. and Canada listed with G.S.O.

Registration forms will be mailed in August 2019 to all G.S.R.s, Intergroups and Area Service Committees.

Online registration is now available.



Advance registration for the convention between Sept. 9, 2019 and April 14, 2020 will be \$115.00 (USD) per attendee. Registration after April 15, 2020 will be \$140.00 (USD) per attendee.

Everyone attending must register. Attendance at this special celebration is voluntary, and, as responsible A.A. members, "we pay our own way." The International Convention is paid for by the A.A.s who participate in it.

We hope to see you in Detroit to celebrate the 85th birthday of Alcoholics Anonymous.



A UNITED MESSAGE OF RECOVERY

Tradition One

The long form of Tradition One states, in part, that each member of Alcoholics Anonymous is but a small part of a great whole. A.A. must continue to live or most of us will surely die. Hence our common welfare must come first. We are then given eleven other Traditions that show us what we must do in order to accomplish the goal of unity allowing recovery. We are shown that our membership is open to all who suffer from alcoholism--the only requirement is a desire to stop drinking.

Another Tradition tells us that we have but one purpose--to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers. Other Traditions relate the things we need to watch for so we don't get diverted from that primary purpose--problems of money, property, prestige, authority, controversy, sensational advertising, and personalities. All these guidelines come to us from our founders and past members who experienced firsthand the consequences of what happens when these principles are not respected--the chaos, heartbreak, and confusion that results when the suggestions are not followed.

When Bill wrote "Problems Other Than Alcohol" in 1958, he made clear our singleness of purpose: Sobriety--freedom from alcohol--through the teaching and practice of the Twelve Steps is the sole purpose of an A.A. group.

Groups have repeatedly tried other activities and they have always failed. It has also been learned that there is no possible way to make non-alcoholics into A.A. members. We have to confine our membership to alcoholics and we have to confine our A.A. groups to a single purpose. If we don't stick to these principles, we shall almost surely collapse. And if we collapse, we cannot help anyone.

Our singleness of purpose has really been put to the test with the growth of treatment facilities which lump all addictive disorders together, with the subsequent visits of large numbers of treatment graduates to our groups, and with the mandatory sentencing of drunk driving offenders to A.A. meetings.

Meanwhile, our own A.A. members aren't always aware of our Traditions. Many areas have designed plans to meet these situations. Information meetings have become a good workable solution. Information meetings are informal discussions and sharing about what A.A. is: what it does and does not do. These information meetings have helped keep our regular A.A. meetings tied to A.A.'s singleness of purpose and to the principles of our other Traditions.

A group conscience will get exactly what it demands, no more or no less. Our experience today still bears out the experience of our founders. Some groups, where the alcoholics became outnumbered and the primary purpose was lost in problems other than alcohol, have had to close their doors.

Frank Z... Audubon Monday Night.

Step One

"We admitted we were powerless over alcohol--that our lives had become unmanageable."

Before I was relieved of the obsession to stop feeling, I had no idea that alcohol had anything to do with the chaos my life had become, and never would I have the courage to state I was powerless over anything. That would be too much like surrendering. Little did I know, that was exactly what I needed to begin what would become the most beautiful journey of my life.

I stepped into the doors of a clubhouse with my eyes swollen from crying, scared and confused. I don't think I saw the steps on the wall until maybe my fifth or sixth day sober. When I read the first step, I recoiled from the idea of change and considered how I could learn to drink without consequences. There had to be someone here who found the loophole that I could yet figure out. Instead, I heard things like, "Nothing changes if nothing changes", "Surrender to win", and, "The first step is the only one I must do perfectly everyday."

I listened to how you had the same problems I had, but they were no longer problems for you. How your lives were now beyond your wildest dreams, even when you had less material possessions than you did when you arrived here. I was astonished, and there grew inside of me the hope that I could also have what you have. But if I were powerless, how would I ever manage a life that was already unmanageable?

The Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous told me that Lack of Power was my dilemma, and I needed to find a Power greater than myself in order to live. O.K., now there's an answer! I am not being asked to admit I am powerless, so that I can be sent out into the world with no solution. Actually, the A.A. program of recovery offers me the exact opposite. I am provided with spiritual principals by which to live, a God of my own understanding who is always here with me, and a fellowship of people who have felt the same despair.

Today, the only step I practice perfectly everyday is step one. When I need power, I no longer have to muster it up myself, I just reach into the spiritual toolkit and ask that my eyes and heart be open to receive the strength to do His bidding. If you are interested in having a spiritual toolkit of your own, find a sponsor who has had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps and who is willing to guide you through the 12 steps as outlined in the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous. You will be well on your way!

Anonymous in South Jersey

Hospitals & Institutions
Open Speaking Commitments
Contact Frank or Debbie at handi@asaj.org
To book a speaking commitment.

The Next Meeting is January 27, 2020 at 7PM at the Intergroup Office.

JANUARY 2020

Tuesday

Recovery Centers of America - Voorhees
12-1pm – January 28
526 S Burnt Mill Rd, Voorhees, NJ

Wednesday

Jefferson MICA Unit – Cherry Hill
12-1 pm – January 29
2201 Chapel Avenue W, Cherry Hill, NJ

Unity Place I – Cherry Hill –
12:40-1:30pm – January 22, 29
1 Keystone Avenue, Cherry Hill, NJ

Solstice - Pemberton
12-1pm – January 8, 15, 22, 29
300 Birmingham Road, Pemberton, NJ

Thursday

Lourdes Medical Center-Rancocas
8-9pm – January 16
218 Sunset Rd., Rancocas, NJ

Unity Place II – Hammonton
10-11am – January 9, 16, 23, 30
121 S. White Horse Pike, Hammonton, NJ

Daybreak – MICA – Atco
10:30am-12pm – January 9, 16, 23, 30
368 White Horse Pike, Atco, NJ

Friday

Pinelands (Old Building) – Medford
7-8pm – January 17, 24
287 Old Marlton Pike, Medford, NJ

Saturday

Inspira Psych Unit – Woodbury
4-5pm – January 18
509 N Broad St, Woodbury, NJ

Maryville Men's – Williamstown
7-8pm – January 18, 25
1903 Grant Ave, Williamstown, NJ

Cooper Psych
10:30-11:30am – January 25
1 Cooper Plaza, Camden, NJ

FEBRUARY 2020

Wednesday

Unity Place MICA – Cherry Hill
12:40-1:30 pm – February 19, 26
1 Keystone Avenue, Cherry Hill, NJ

Solstice Counseling Services – Pemberton
12-1 pm – February 6, 12
Birmingham Road, Pemberton, NJ

My Friend's House – Woodbury Heights
7-8pm – February 5
371 Glassboro Road, Woodbury Heights, NJ

Thursday

Ancora – Hammonton
7-8 pm – February 27
202 Spring Garden Road, Hammonton, NJ

Unity Place II – Hammonton
10-11 am – February 6, 13, 20, 27
121 S. Whitehorse Pike, Hammonton, NJ

Daybreak – MICA – Atco
10:30am-12pm – February 13, 20
368 White Horse Pike, Atco, NJ

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

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@asj.org.

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR SOUTH JERSEY INTERGROUP

South Jersey Intergroup Association, Inc.
PO Box 2514
Cherry Hill, NJ 08035

Office/Literature Sales: 1-856-486-4446

Email: Info@asj.org
Website: www.asj.org

24-HOUR HOTLINE 1-856-486-4444

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, New Jersey

AA is a spirit it can not be touched, nor can it be completely understood.
It is as wide as the world yet small enough to fit into the hearts and minds of men.
It's brought light where only darkness dwelt.
It's given hope to the hopeless and help to those who yearned in despair.
It's nourished forgiveness in those who knew no pity.
It's given strength to the weak and humility to the strong.
It's has furthered to higher goals those who strove for nothing.
It's taught patience to the hurried and action to the lazy.
To youth it's given vision and to the aged promise.
To the lonely companions and to the restless rest.
To the sick it's been a doctor and to the dying it has revived the desire to live.
It has no judgment against the unteachable nor has it praise for those who learn.
To the outcast it has been a family and to the childless it has given children.
To the ignorant it has given wisdom and to the wise tolerance.
It has given to men that which is most precious.
It's given the love of truth and the love of life with enough left over to share with each other.

Branched from the Grapevine 1957



January 24, 1971

William Griffith Wilson died late Sunday night and, with the announcement of his death, was revealed to have been the Bill W. who was a co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous in 1935. His age was 75.

The retired Wall Street securities analyst had expected to die or go insane as a hopeless drunk 36 years ago but — after what he called a dramatic spiritual experience — had sobered up and stayed sober. He leaves a program of recovery as a legacy to 475,000 acknowledged alcoholics in 15, 000 A.A. groups throughout the United States and in 88 other countries.

Mr. Wilson, whose twangy voice and economy of words reflected his New England origin, died of pneumonia and cardiac complications a few hours after he had been flown by private plane to the Miami Heart Institute in Miami Beach from his home in Bedford Hills, N. Y. At his bedside was his wife, Lois, who had remained loyal during his years as a “falling down” drunk and who later had worked at his side to aid other alcoholics. She is a founder of the Al-Anon and Alateen groups, which deal with the fears and insecurity suffered by spouses and children of problem drinkers.

Mr. Wilson last spoke publicly on July 5 of last year in a three-minute talk he delivered after struggling from a wheelchair to the lectern at the closing session of A.A.'s 35th anniversary international convention in Miami, attended by 11,000 people. He had been admitted three days earlier to the Miami Heart Institute, his emphysema complicated by pneumonia.

Last October 10, he was under hospital care for acute emphysema and was unable for the first time to attend the A.A. banquet at which his “last-drink anniversary” has been celebrated annually. His greetings were delivered by his wife to the 2,200 A.A. members and guests at the New York Hilton.

Mr. Wilson gave permission to break his A.A. anonymity upon his death in a signed statement in 1966. The role of Dr. Robert Holbrook Smith as the other founder of the worldwide fellowship was disclosed publicly when the Akron, Ohio, surgeon died of cancer in 1950 after 15 years of uninterrupted sobriety.

Purpose of Anonymity

In fathering the doctrine that members should not

reveal their A.A. affiliation at the public level, Bill W. had explained that “anonymity isn't just something to save us from alcoholic shame and stigma; its deeper purpose is to keep those fool egos of ours from running hog wild after money and fame at A.A.'s expense.” He cited the example of a nationally known radio personality who wrote an autobiography disclosing his A.A. membership and “then spent the royalties crawling the pubs on West 52d Street.” (NY Times Article)

1952 The arrival of Al-Anon.

In loosely organized Family Groups, loved ones of A.A. members had gathered together and shared their experiences since the Fellowship's earliest days. At Bill W.'s urging, his wife Lois moves to create a separate fellowship that will formalize these meetings. With Anne B., who had initiated a Family Group in Westchester County, New York, Lois sends a letter to 87 such groups suggesting that they unite under the name of Al-Anon. The response is positive, and Al-Anon Family Groups is born. In January 1952 Lois and Anne shift the growing organization's office from Stepping Stones to the 24th Street Clubhouse in Manhattan.

1996A Japanese General Service Board

In Tokyo, a General Service Board composed of eight trustees, including two non-alcoholics, starts operating in January 1996. At the time, an estimated 3,500 to 4,000 members are meeting in 290 groups. Japanese A.A. members visit and support Korean groups and vice versa. The handmade card at right, presented by the Kansai district office to a G.S.O. New York staff member visiting Japan, reads “Willingness, honesty, and open-mindedness are the essentials of recovery.”

2016 A.A. in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

The first Amharic-speaking group in the African nation of Ethiopia was formed in January 2016. Addis Group evolved out of a hospital program, the only one in the country addressing alcoholism. One group member was able to translate to Amharic the pamphlet “Frequently Asked Questions About A.A.,” which they use as a subject for group discussions and for giving to newcomers.

AA Archives

A Panel Discussion

(Intergroup archive committees invited to join Area 45 Archive Committee)
immediate plans leading to:

~DETROIT 2020~

Saturday Morning January 18, 2020 9 am - Noon

Winslow Township Senior Center

33 Cooper Folly Road,

Atco, New Jersey

- Coffee and light breakfast served all morning
- Current Archive display (what will go to Detroit)
- Group and member histories gathered

All Area 45 invited to participate in a unifying forum.



Announcements and Things To Do

Sunday, January 18th
Women in Recovery 5th Anniversary
Food and Fellowship at 1:15
KISS Club
Woodbury, New Jersey
ALL ARE WELCOME

Friday January 17th at 5:30
Mullica Hill Group
21st anniversary
fun, food, & fellowship
Trinity Methodist Church
Cedar Road
Mullica Hill, New Jersey

Saturday January 18 at 6:00 pm
Woodstown Group
65th anniversary
Woodstown Presbyterian Church
46 Auburn Road
Woodstown, New Jersey
Speaker at 8:00 p.m.

Sunday February 16 at 7:00 p.m.
Moorestown Sunday Spiritual Growth Group
40th anniversary
Trinity Church
Main & Church Street
Moorestown
Pizza, Beer (Birch & Root) Salads
BYOD (Desserts).
Two A-A speakers at 8:10 PM.

Sunday February 16 at 2:00 pm
Linwood Group
50th anniversary
Seaview Baptist

Mar 27-29, 2020
Southern New Jersey Area 45, 55th Annual General
Service Convention, The Hotel ML, 915 NJ-73, Mt
Laurel, On-line Registration is now open! [https://
area45convention.org](https://area45convention.org)

July 2-5, 2020 Detroit Michigan International Conv.
[https://www.aa.org/pages/en_US/international-
convention-2020](https://www.aa.org/pages/en_US/international-convention-2020)

ANSWERING SERVICE NEEDS YOU.... IF NOT YOU, THEN WHO?????

We had (14) shifts report in calls for the month
for a total of (40) calls answered by our
volunteers for the month of October.
Answercomm took a total of (31) calls.
Currently there are six open shifts that need to
be covered. Please announce these at your home
groups:

Tuesday 6 am -8 am & overnight, Thursday 6
am-8am, 8 am-10 am & overnight, Friday
overnight.

TWELFTH STEP VOLUNTEERS NEEDED.....

Volunteers are need for the 12-step list. Areas
we need most help: Audubon, Haddon Heights,
Haddonfield, Berlin, Camden, Gibbsboro,
Hammonton, Mount Laurel and Salem. There
are signup sheets available for anyone wishing
to take a copy to their home groups. If you
know anyone who would like to be of service,
please have them contact us at
answeringservice@aasj.org or invite us to speak
at your home group.

The **Social Events Committee** is looking for a
Chairperson and co-chair. Please consider this
opportunity to do service. This Committee
plans social activities such as dances, dinners &
family outings. Fun camaraderie for the
Fellowship of AA! If you have any questions or
ideas for social events, or would like to
volunteer to work on the committee, please call
or send email.

A Message from AA Public Information

First of all I would like to welcome Kristin P. as a Co-Chair for Public Information. Kristin has already been a big part of Public Information with her tireless service to the high school speaking commitment. Kristin has helped countless times to obtain speakers and is always available to do service. This is a perfect match and we look forward to her being a part of the team. We have formed several committees within Public Information; including literature distribution, high school speakers and school events, IDRC, and we are looking for other ideas to get the AA message out to the Public. If anyone would like to help please email Public Information.

In December we had speakers at 4 high schools and we have scheduled 6 more schools for January, including Middle schools, which is approximately 900 students hearing the AA message, most for the very first time. Thank you to all who help with this very important commitment.

A Message from AA Archives

Under the direction of Tradition Nine and in the spirit of service, you are humbly invited to help the archive committee of Area 45. We need your assistance in preparing to host a hospitality suite (with Northern New Jersey Area 44) at the International AA convention in Detroit this summer.

Come on out and have a cup of coffee, talk and share with the current Archive Committee. Stay as long as you can and "Just keep it simple". If you can, e-mail or call to help determine how many may be coming.

Yours in service,

archives@snjaa.org

