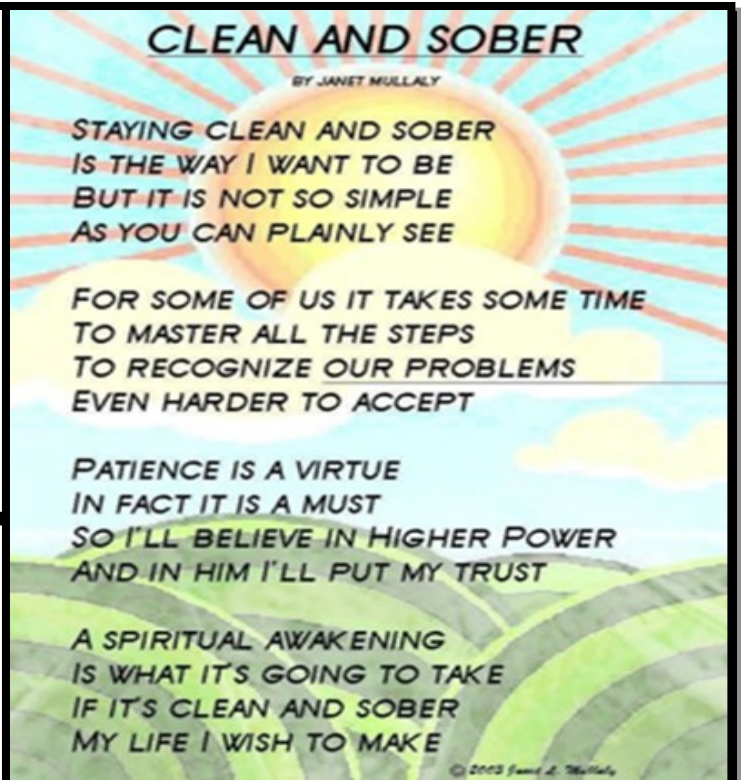


ANONYMOUS



SJ Intergroup has 3 open positions as of this writing:

Secretary - Takes Minutes at the Intergroup meetings and sees that Minutes are distributed to Intergroup Representatives.

Archives Chair - Collects, files, preserves the history of SJ Intergroup. If we forget our past, we may lose our gratitude to those who helped give us what we have today.

Technology Co-Chair - Develops and maintains

SJIG IS NOW SELLING COINS! We have 24 hrs. to 60 years for purchase. Aluminum coins sell for \$1.50 each and bronze sell for \$2.50 each. Just stop in anytime during office hours to purchase.

South Jersey Intergroup Announcements

If you have anything you would like to share - send it to NEWSLETTER@AASJ.ORG

Sat - March 22 - Step 3 Workshop - 400 Club, 42 Berlin Rd. Clemeneton. 1-5PM. Speakers, Literature, Fellowship and Food.

Wed - March 26 - Women of Grace 34th Anniversary - 6:00 - 8:00 pm. Atco United Presbyterian Church, 2259 Atco Ave, Atco, NJ. Appetizers, desserts & beverages will be served). Special Guest Speaker. (Open to WOMEN ONLY)

Sun - May 18 - Many Paths to Spirituality Workshop - 10am-12pm. Trinity Ep. Church, 207 W. Main Street, Moorestown, NJ. 3 speakers from 10-11am. 11am-12pm, fellowship and a light lunch.

Choosing a Meeting

Anonymity is an important part of our meetings; our meetings are ALL confidential.

A.A. has "OPEN" meetings....they are open to anyone interested in learning more about our program of recovery. If you are a student or a professional looking to learn more about A.A., this meeting is for you.

A.A. also has "CLOSED" meetings, which are formatted to specifically focus on helping anyone who has a desire to stop drinking.

***My addiction affected everyone
around me.***

***I'm going to make sure my
recovery does the same.***


Clean & Sober
Motivation



INSIDE OUR MARCH/APRIL 2025 ISSUE

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11	Sober Humor & Stories Like Mine
12.....	Keeping Our Word Wordsearch
13 & 14.....	Fellowship Events

PRINTABLE MEETING LIST ARE NOW AVAILABLE

South Jersey Intergroup Association of **Alcoholics Anonymous**

**24 Hour Telephone Hotline
(856) 486-4444**

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2514 Cherry Hill, NJ 08034
Office Location: 1000 White Horse Rd. Suite 702 Voorhees, NJ 08043
Office & Literature Phone: (856) 486-4446
For Literature Sales Hours, call or visit aasj.org/literature

Our Meeting List is constantly updating.
Use the QR CODE below to see the most up-to-date
Meetings or Find a ZOOM Link.

SCAN QR HERE



SJ INTERGROUP **ANSWERING SERVICE** **HOTLINE TRAINING:**

WHEN: SAT. June 14th

TIME: 10:00 am-11:00 am

**WHERE: SJ INTERGROUP
OFFICE**

**1000 WHITEHORSE RD,
SUITE 702**

VOORHEES, NJ 08043

Refreshments will be served

Answering Service 12-step list: More volunteers are needed for the 12-step list. Signup sheets available for anyone wishing to take a copy to their home groups. Contact the Answering service.

answering@aasj.org



Addiction Isn't Really About Alcohol and Drugs

It's about the absence of self.

And this absence is seen as a hole in your soul.

You can't love others when you're empty inside.

Recovery peels back the painful layers & heals that hole through connection, honesty & hard work.

*To love oneself is the beginning
of a lifetime recovery.*

SJ Intergroup is looking for your personal recovery stories to be published in our by-monthly newsletter. If you are interested in sharing your story, we would love to hear from you. Your story needs to be a maximum of 500 words and can be published anonymously if you prefer. If you have any questions, or would like to submit your story, please send to newsletter@aasj.org.

What Is Step 3 of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)?

White knuckles, clear eyes

He took his Third Step in a trailer the night he learned the hard way to let go.....

STEP THREE: Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.

To celebrate my 15th birthday, my dad bought a couple of cases of beer and we had a party in our basement. It was a lot of fun. My friends and I drank and played pool all night. All of my insecurities and feelings of not fitting in disappeared with the first beer. Sometime in the early morning I remember staring at the can of beer in my hand and telling my friends that this was the life. One of my friends grew really angry and argued with me because his father was an alcoholic.

It was a moment of clarity, perhaps a warning from my Higher Power, but I just ignored it. That was October 9, 1965. The next 15 years were laid out for me: I became a daily drinker. From the beginning, I suffered horrendous hangovers and remorse, yet I kept telling myself it was always going to be different the next time. For many years, I tried to find that first glow again, but never did.

Flash forward to December 24, 1980. I was sitting with my first beer of the day and telling myself that I deserved to get drunk one more time. It didn't matter that I would get horribly ill. I deserved the pleasure. A case of beer had been in the fridge for three weeks while I was detoxing from all the pills I had taken for seizures due to a recent stint of controlled drinking. I had been found out when I finally told a shrink the truth about my drinking. The doc didn't want to deal with me then, and had set up an intake appointment with the rehab folks the first week in January. But that day I felt I deserved one more drunk. After two drinks out of that bottle in my hand, I had a realization that this would never work again. So I sat there in the darkness of my mind and soul—lost. I believe I then experienced my second moment of clarity: I poured the rest of the bottle down the drain. Then I became very angry.

The doctor had told me that unless I changed my attitude I would not be accepted into their program, as it would be a total waste of time. She stated that I either had to quit drinking or die. Her nurse gave me a Big Book, which led me to an AA meeting on January 11.

Continued from page 4

A little more than a year later, I found myself at the U.S. navy's drug and alcohol counselor school. The sign over the door read, "The Best of the Best"—that certainly was not me. I had been having continuous drunk dreams since putting down the booze, really unpleasant dreams from which I would wake up covered in sweat and having to ask my wife if I had really drunk again. It was a hard year and a half of just not drinking, and all because I would not take Step Three. My sponsor had even backed me up against a Quonset hut and threatened to kick my butt if I did not begin to pray. He often would come to my house with his sponsor to pray with me, but I did not surrender. The only God known to me was a punishing God. I felt he had taken my and my wife's first child in 1977 as punishment for my actions.

About three weeks into school I had to go see the director. The drunk dreams had intensified as had the anger and fear, and I was not doing well in the program. When I reported to his office he told me to go hang on his door and not to let go until he told me I could. I would show him— I hung there, telling myself I could do this. A few minutes later, knuckles white and hurting, I fell off. It was then that I had my third moment of clarity. He did not have to say a word; the message hit me like a brick. I could not do this alone. And if I continued to attempt this I was going to drink again.

That very night in a trailer in San Diego, I took the Third Step with an AA buddy. Later that same night I had another drunk dream. I was in my usual bar, however someone came in before I took a drink and we left the bar together—sober. The next day, I packed my bags and went over to the treatment side of the house to work on some of those guilt and anger issues.

As a result of my third moment of clarity, I now have a loving God who's always with me. He lets me make mistakes, but he's always there when I reach out to him for help. Perhaps equally as important is that I know I've got to stay sober or lose everything. After I took the Third Step, the compulsion to drink lifted and I was able to redo Steps Four and Five and gain freedom from the past. Then I was able to move on and complete the rest of the Steps in order, instead of just Steps One and Twelve.

Today is my 30th anniversary of sobriety in AA. My life is filled with wonderful blessings. My Higher Power and the Fellowship taught me how to grow up, think of others and be of service. When I got here I just wanted to get out of trouble and not drink again, which has happened. The rest is just gravy on top of the roast beef.

Step Three

By: W. K. | Palo Alto, California

STEP THREE says, "Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him.*"

Drunk or sober, we all have our own lives to live, each one different from all the others. And while we are drinking, each of us has a different will, leading toward destruction in its own way.

But when we make the decision in Step Three, we surrender to God by merging with the powerful, supportive will of every member in the Fellowship of AA. Our own wills become blended with the total goodwill of a million alcoholics. We retain individual wills in our routine affairs; but in the critical spiritual qualities that insure our sobriety, such as honesty, open-mindedness, and willingness, we become part of the spiritual potency of the Fellowship. We become intuitively aware of the enormous network of loving support woven around us by AAs all around the world. And we become contributors to this network as we merge with the one will.

We reinforce our contact with this will whenever we attend an AA meeting, work at the Steps, extend a helping hand, "practice these principles in all our affairs."

The total will of AA embraces the miracle of recovery in all kinds of distorted lives. It helps us to be worthwhile human beings--today, one day at a time. It wills us to become better than we now are, no matter what we have been.

Step 3

Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.

Tradition 3 (short form)

The only requirement for AA Membership is a desire to stop drinking.

Concept 3 (short form)

"To insure effective leadership, we should endow each element of A.A.—the Conference, the General Service Board and its service corporations, staffs, committees, and executives—with a traditional "Right of Decision."

What Is Step 4 of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)?

HER OWN PART

By: BETH P. | Santa Barbara, Calif.

STEP FOUR: Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

It was years before I could do an honest Fourth Step. But I guess since I kept trying to get it right, that counted as a desire to be honest. My sponsor would say to me, "This is the same stuff you brought in last year--when are you going to let this go?" The problem wasn't letting it go; the problem was that I couldn't be honest about it. I kept trying to be honest and to find my part in my failed relationships, but I was compelled to blame others and to stay the victim. This went on for years, and it was painful. I had an ego that wanted to be right all the time, and I was miserable.

The main resentment I had was toward my ex-husband. I believed I had wasted my youth on a drunk who had battered me physically and emotionally throughout our marriage. I tortured myself with this resentment for the first 10 years of my sobriety. I was exhausted and ashamed for not having let it go like I heard other people do in meetings.

For a while I blamed my parents for not empowering me, but I knew they'd done the best they could. I had to stop blaming others. When the pain of holding onto the resentment got greater than the fear of looking at my part in it, I had to get rigorously honest and put the blame where it belonged--on myself--for allowing the abuse to go on and for not leaving my husband the first time he laid a hand on me. My resentment wasn't about my ex. It was about how I betrayed and abandoned myself by staying in the abuse and by numbing out on alcohol. I was told in AA that once I owned my part, I could forgive myself because I had been impotent to protect myself at the time.

I kept hearing it was an "inside job," so I got busy learning how to take care of myself, empower myself, and protect and love myself. The women in AA were my teachers, and some wonderful books on codependency helped.

Every morning I go to the mirror, look myself straight in the eyes and say, "I love you, and I promise I'll never abandon you." With this empowerment and without the weight of resentments, I am truly happy, joyous and free. God willing, I am finally able to be of service to others.

Fear and the Fourth Step

By: Ted D. | Teaneck, New Jersey

Step 4 - Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

How often have you heard, "I know I should start on my Fourth Step, but I'm terrified!"? I know guys in the Fellowship who, when active, were flat-out reckless. But take these very same go-for-broke guys, and suggest it's time to do a Fourth Step and you've never seen such cagey deliberation, such wariness, such humorless, frozen-faced fear.

Where does this terror come from? Have we somehow unknowingly fostered this fear? Have we turned the Fourth Step into something that bears almost no resemblance to the original process?

At other times, we seem to let our disease come up with palliatives to put off doing a Fourth. For instance, when a newer member tells her sponsor she's afraid of tackling the Fourth Step, this well-meaning sponsor tells her with the best of intentions not to worry, or to hold off for a couple of years. Why? To stay irritable, restless, and discontented for two more years?

Sometimes, we make the Fourth Step just about impossible to do. Where did the suggestion "Write your life story" come from, for example? Very few of us have time to write an autobiography. And even if we did, how much of it would actually contain an inventory of the resentments, fears, and guilt that we have to get rid of? Then there are those recovery publications that peddle twenty-page inventories or guides. Are we writing federal legislation or doing an inventory?

Here's another new twist: "Don't forget to put down your assets, too." Why? Has anyone you know ever gotten drunk over an asset? Has anyone ever wanted to get rid of his or her assets?

Does Step Five say to share the exact nature of our assets? Is it possible that our disease has come up with yet another way to water down this Step?

Shouldn't we stick to the original analogy Bill W. used? He chose the word "inventory." He did not choose "balance sheet." Assets go on balance sheets. On one tape recording, Bill W. said that part of the reason for publishing the Big Book was to "nail it down in black and white so the drunks couldn't wiggle out of it." Nowhere in the Fourth Step section of the Big Book does it even once mention the word "asset." Could it be that we drunks are trying our best to "wiggle out" of this simple process?

Remember the classic scene from old gangster movies? The setting is an interrogation room at the police station. The veteran detective wants information from the nervous suspect, and in a tired, I've-been-here-before voice, says: "Okay, Louie. We can do this one of two ways: the hard way or the easy way." It's the same with the Fourth Step. We can do it one of two ways. The easy way is between pages 63 and 71 of the Big Book.

Step 4

Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

Tradition 4 (short form)

“Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole.”

Concept 4 (short form)

At all responsible levels, we ought to maintain a traditional “Right of Participation,” allowing a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge.



GIVE IT AWAY TO KEEP IT

My First St. Patrick's Day

BY: STEVE C. FORMER STATEN IRELANDER | DEPOSIT, NEW YORK



Growing up Irish American in New York City meant St. Patrick's was a high holy day, not just a green extravaganza. Parades, special meals and baked goods prevailed along with the drink. As I matured, so did the drink in my life. So from 18 onward I can recall some March 17ths—but only a few. God protects the fools and the drunks, and I was both. On my first St. Patrick's day in sobriety, God was there too.

I was six months in the Fellowship and banging out meetings. My favorite aunt was marching in the Manhattan parade with some sober friends she's had in AA for years. She invited me to march, and boy, I was excited. I took the ferry from Staten Island that morning, fueled with coffee and brimming with sobriety. I arrived at the meeting place but found out that Aunt Kate was unable to make it. I declined to march without her.

But now the city was filled with St. Patrick's faithful, and I needed to use the restroom! I looked everywhere and ended up in the only place I knew—a bar. I paid the \$5 cover and ordered the one drink minimum: a soda. After using the bathroom I practically ran out of the bar. One problem now—I wanted to drink.

I found a phone booth (it was 1996) and called my sponsor. No answer. I called AA intergroup and they said there was a meeting starting in 30 minutes, 15 blocks away. I could make it. My St. Patrick's march began!

Public drinking was not frowned upon that day then, so many beers were in my way as I ran. I finally made it to the meeting. Thankfully, I had escaped the crowd for an hour. But now I had to get home! I ran to the subway and caught a packed train downtown full of pretty Irish girls, bagpipers and the sweet aroma of hops and barley. That's when I decided to drink.

When I got off the train, I started walking to the Staten Island ferry. I immediately thought of a bar I knew. Here I come! No one will know. As I walked past the car line up at the ferry, all of a sudden I heard, "Steve! Steve!"

Francis, a man I had met at the Saturday Night Alive Men's group, was calling my name. I barely knew him. "Hop in, we can ride together," he said. "I just missed the last boat. You can wait with me." I got in the car. Francis and I crossed the harbor together talking about our lives and living without the drink. Amazingly, the obsession to drink lifted.

I truly believe God put Francis in my life that day. We became close friends and shared a friendship for many years until he joined the hereafter group.

Thanks to the grace of God, these days, for me, St. Patrick's Day is for baking soda bread and drinking tea.

SOBER HUMOR

I went fishing this morning, but after a short while, I ran out of worms. Then, out of the corner of my eye, I saw a cottonmouth with a frog in his mouth. "Frogs are good bass bait," I thought to myself. Knowing the snake couldn't bite me with the frog in his mouth, I grabbed him right behind the head, took the frog, and put it in my bait bucket.

Just then, I realized I had a problem, how was I going to release the snake without getting bit? So I grabbed my bottle of Jack Daniel's and poured a little whiskey in its mouth. The snake's eyes rolled back and he went limp. I released him into the lake without incident and carried on fishing using the frog. A little later, I felt a nudge at my foot. There was that same snake with two more frogs in his mouth!

At my home group one day, a woman who had often snubbed me went out of her way to give me a big hug before the meeting. I was surprised by her gesture and wondered what had initiated her change of heart.

I got my answer at the end of the meeting. The chairperson got up with some final words. "Group, your suggestion for next week" he instructed "is the same as last week. I want you to go out there and hug somebody you just can't stand."



Stories Like Mine

Today...1 year sober. Struggling a bit with a psychological aspect. The conditions in my life when I quit drinking on groundhog day (not on purpose, but curiously symbolic) last year. I've spent a lot of today feeling pretty somber. Putting myself like nobody cares for getting in touch with me and congratulating me. This feels way more important than my birthday. Let's call it my re-birth day. Getting past the self-pity, I realized that people don't sit down with a book or google calendar and put my quit date on it. Really, it means more to me than anyone else. The hard part I find is how this day triggers how absolute horrible my life was this time last year. I don't think I'm the first person that has felt this way.

I have been almost 2 years sober now. I am an alcoholic and it finally took me to go the distance, and now with end stage liver disease I need a new liver at 44 years old. For those that are skeptical, one day at a time, quitting is possible.

Everybody has a sobriety date, but some are carved into a tombstone. That's as real as it gets. There is no retirement plan with addiction. God only sends us so many life preservers before he comes and gets us himself.

14 days ago I started not to feel well. I had chest pains and a headache. Slowly, I got worse and couldn't hardly move. 14 days ago I also quit drinking.

Sunday, I nearly collapsed. I was able to drive myself to a hospital one mile away from my work. There, I went into hemorrhagic shock due to my hemoglobin level being a 3.9. I didn't know I was a GI bleed due to drinking. I was rushed to a trauma hospital and admitted into the ICU. I had many blood transfusions to get my levels to a non transfusion level of 8.9, still low but no longer fatal.

Thankfully, I survived and will never sip alcohol again. To anyone who is struggling you are not alone. I was one of those that thought nothing would ever happen to me.

Alcohol is deadly, and I am glad to be alive. I am here to share my story each day.

KEEPING OUR WORD

A Y M I W Y N D E U P O N N I S Y Z K D I O E I
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| AUTHENTICITY | EMOTIONS | INTUITION | RELIABILITY |
| AUTHORITY | FACILITIES | MEANINGFUL | SELF SUFFICIENT |
| AUTONOMY | FRIENDSHIP | MESSAGES | STEADFAST |
| AWARENESS | HELPFUL | ORGANIZATION | SUPPORT |
| CODEPENDENCE | HONESTY | PERSEVERANCE | TRADITIONS |
| CONTRIBUTION | HUMILITY | PERSONALITIES | |
| DECISIONS | INSTINCTS | PRINCIPLES | |

Keeping promises to yourself and others aids our path to recovery.

REACHOUTRECOVERY.COM

***BE THE REASON SOMEONE BELIEVES
SOBRIETY IS POSSIBLE***

Bridging the Gap

Area 45



BTG is looking for volunteers!

Bridging the Gap is a 12 Step commitment designed to help the individual make the transition from the treatment or correction facility to Alcoholics Anonymous. The temporary contact would be responsible to meet/take the new member to 6 meetings to help them learn about our fellowship.

What Bridging the Gap suggests of the temporary contact:

- AAs who participate should have 1 year of continuous sobriety.
- AAs are asked to meet/take the individual to a minimum of 6 meetings.
- AAs should share their experience with sponsorship, a home group, and the 12 steps.
- An AA's commitment to the BTG program is a minimum of 1-year.
- Bridging the Gap volunteers are encouraged to attend workshops for questions, training and ongoing support.



If you would like to help. . .

Grab a pamphlet and fill out the back form. Take a pic and send it via email. Please include your home group. Or scan the QR Code below fill out and submit. It's that easy. Contact Scott P.- Area 45 Bridging the Gap Coordinator

Email - Bridgingthegap@snjaa.org



Speakers Needed for AA Meetings SOUTH WOODS STATE PRISON



Area 45 Corrections has opportunities to share your experience, strength and hope at South Woods State Prison.

Monday & Tuesday Evenings -Location: Bridgeton, NJ

All interested aa volunteers are encouraged to fill out the NJ State Application- Please email the below to get started!

For more information please contact:

Kelly G- kellystu3178@gmail.com
Matt C-matthew.cassano@gmail.com



Corrections Committee
Kelly G, Area 45 Corrections Chair
856-834-3498
corrections@snjaa.org

March 22nd, 1-5PM

@400 Club 42 Berlin RD, Clementon, NJ

Step 3 Workshop

Speakers

Literature

Fellowship & Food

Sponsor:
11th Step
Meeting

"Women of Grace"



34th Anniversary Celebration

Wed., March 26th

6:00-8:00 p.m.

Atco United Presbyterian Church

2259 Atco Ave, Atco, NJ 08004

(Downstairs in the Church Fellowship Hall, please enter through the kitchen door behind the church)

Appetizers, Desserts & Beverages
will be served

Special Guest Speaker

Open to Women ONLY

90 YEARS
Language of the Heart
 JULY 3RD - 6TH, 2025



2025 A.A. International Convention
 July 3rd - 6th 2025

Areas 44 & 45 Ad-Hoc Committee for 2025 International Convention Hospitality Suite are looking for Service Volunteers!!

MEETING INFO
 7 PM Every Last Thursday Of Odd Months
 ID: 833 5908 4488
 PW: 0540445

Donations are needed to make our Areas 44 & 45 Hospitality Suite a great event. We need donations to help cover the expenses of Archives Transportation, Refreshments & Souvenirs.

SCAN QR CODE Donation Options



All Donations Are Separate from 7th Tradition Contributions

Please Display Donation Cans @ Your Home Group & District Events
 Any questions? Contact: Mike R. at 2025-ICHS-Chair@njarea44.org
 Roy C. at archives@snjaa.org

SOUTH JERSEY INTERGROUP YOUNG PEOPLES OF AA

JOIN US FOR THE MONTHLY BUSINESS MEETING

SJIYPAA
 COMMITTEE MEETING

EVERY FIRST THURSDAY @7PM
SJ INTERGROUP OFFICE
 1000 WHITEHORSE RD
 VOORHEES, NJ 08043 SUITE 702

ENCOURAGING YOUNG PEOPLE OFAA TO GET INVOLVED, HAVE FUN, FELLOWSHIP & BE OF SERVICE

CONTACT BEN C FOR MORE INFO
 973-224-6726

All endings are also beginnings, sometimes we just don't realize it.

Accessibilities Committee Meeting



A planning & brainstorming meeting about the Accessibilities needs in Area 45.

4th Thursday, monthly at 7pm
All are welcome!

email Accessibilities@snjaa.org
 Phone: 609 498 5458

Join Zoom Meeting ID 853 5251 2630
 Passcode 626374

Take our quick survey



I didn't get into trouble every time I drank, but every time I got in trouble I was drunk.