

October 2009

Harvest Edition



SOUTH JERSEY INTERGROUP

ANONYMOUS SJ

IG ELECTIONS-DECEMBER

INTERGROUP ACTION

Answering Service. There are currently open shifts. Training is available. The 12th Step list is still accepting names for phone volunteers to connect callers with groups.

Bookers Exchange will meet on Thursday 5 November, for more information on Bookers and why your group should be involved, see inside

Budget & Finance. Next Years budget is available for your input/approval and we are looking for someone to take on the committee for the next term.

November **Hospitals & Institutions** meeting took place on September 28 and most of October is now filled. There are a number of commitments left for November. Open Commitments will be posted on the SJ IG Website; if your group can fill one or more of these, please contact the H&I Chair at handi@asj.org

Literature will hold training for new volunteers on Monday October 26th from 11 am to 7 pm. All Nine Shifts will be open, Eleven Openings available. Twelfth Step work is Togetherness.!

Social Events had the Camping Trip, no one attended. The Halloween dance is set for October 24th from 7:30-11:30pm at Holy Trinity Episc Ch. Haddon & Fern, Collingswood \$10. The Gratitude Dinner Dance is on November 14th at Nicolosis Caterer, Woodbury. Tickets are available Now.

Unity Holiday Alcahons WILL NOT BE AT THE INTERGROUP OFFICE! They will be held at the Christ Episcopal Ch, 62 Delaware St, Woodbury, next to Old Gloucester Co Courthouse. The hours for the Thanksgiving Alkathon have changed: The first meeting will start at Midnight, Thanksgiving Day and run through until 6 PM Thanksgiving Day. The Christmas Alkathon starts **Midnight, Fri., Christmas Day** and *ends 6pm* (last meeting starts at 5.) **Christmas Day.** . Please CALL to be "back-up" volunteer and donate your favorite holiday "covered dish." 221 people attended the Labor Day Alkathon . (1.5 days to 40yrs). Be sure and come out.

You are not alone. 24 hours = **1-866-920-1212**

Newsletter_SJIG

P.O.Box 2514

STEP TEN

Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it."

This step is really an extension of the 4th Step. It is the "follow through" on that long list of things that we put down on paper after reading the 4th Step. The new twist is the part about "*when we were wrong promptly admitted it.*" The going may get a little tough when we try to put this Step into practice.

It's easy to write down our good qualities and our bad qualities honestly if it's done privately and we are sure nobody else sees it. If we are honest, the list of bad qualities will be very much longer than the list of good qualities. If we are trying honestly to live the A.A. program, we try to do something about that longer list. We make resolutions. We plan to "turn over a new leaf." Then, unfortunately for most of us, we tear the list into tiny pieces, burn it and carefully bury the ashes.

Admission of an unkind remark to someone or of a persistent feeling of resentment is an overt act which means a growing maturity. And it *is* a matter of a person's emotional maturity. Perhaps a better word would be childishness. How often have we acted like a child when we should have acted like a man?

A man admits his mistakes and tries to make amends; a child pouts. As problem drinkers, we were problem children. As problem drinkers, we sought to escape the consequences of voluntarily childish acts through alcohol. As arrested alcoholic cases, we must learn to face reality and responsibility for our acts if we are to "stay on the beam."

The 10th Step is simply a device we use in attaining maturity. None knows better than we how hard it is to admit to our wife, or our boss, or our friends that we have been wrong about so many things. And yet, if we follow this device and make our admissions *promptly* we go a long way towards attaining the maturity necessary to a happy sobriety.

In a way, this Step is tied to those old standbys in A.A., tolerance and humility. To admit that we were wrong is truly to show humility; to revalue our own importance is truly to be humble. If we are trying to be tolerant, we are trying to understand the other fellow's point of view. And if we understand his point of view, we are much less likely to treat him unkindly.

To "*continue to take personal inventory*" means to know ourselves. It's so easy--and so human, too--to feel a little proud of our sobriety at times. How often have we said to ourselves: Poor old Willie! He was so drunk at the office party. What an ass he made of himself! What makes him so stupid? Why doesn't he get smart and come into A.A.? We, of course, didn't do anything wrong at the party. We were sober. We are quite a wonderful fellow! Oh, brother, are we the big A.A.!

This type of thinking is very dangerous. As a matter of fact, lots of persons at the office party probably thought that we were becoming a very stuffy individual. If we were smart, we would thank God that we were able to live through the office party without drinking. If we were honest, we would get down on our knees and thank God that we found A.A. And, as for criticizing Willie! We should try to secure our own sobriety by helping Willie instead of kicking him around.

The 10th Step is really a reminder. It reminds us to be alert about ourselves. It reminds us that we are only an arm's length from a drink and a slip. It is a very important step. We would do well to learn its implications.

reprinted from the October 2009 Grapevine J.T New York.

GRATITUDE DANCE

From the earliest days of South Jersey Intergroup, a dinner dance of some type has been held in November in gratitude for the Fellowship which has established and flourished here. Have you attended a Gratitude Dance yet? Whether you come with your spouse, with your group, with friends or just by yourself, it is a wonderful way to spend the evening, have a great meal, enjoy our guest speaker and stay for the DJ and dancing. Will you be there this year? Get your tickets early.



LETTERS

Hi. In our meeting, this morning, we talked about the circle triangle from the Daily Reflections book, (Sept 30th). I have a question about the logo and it's history. Why do you see it in the old timers books but not in the 3rd and 4th edition of the (Alcoholics Anonymous) books? I was hoping that we could find out the history of this symbol, why we don't use it and what it means. Thanks
Pamela K

Dear Pamela & Group

As is so often the case in AA, the answer to a part of your question is *in the book*, in this case, A.A. Comes of Age, (p 139) Bill W's delivered talks on the AA legacies , Unity Service and Recovery at the Twentieth Anniversary Convention in 1955. In the Service portion, he describes the Circle Triangle symbol

"Above us floats a banner on which is inscribed the new symbol for A.A., a circle enclosing a triangle. The circle stands for the whole world of A.A. and the triangle stands for A.A.'s Three Legacies of Recovery, Unity and Service. Within our wonderful new world, we have found freedom from our fatal obsession. That we have chosen this particular symbol is perhaps no accident. The priests and seers of antiquity regarded the circle enclosing the triangle as a means of warding off spirits of evil, and A.A.'s circle and triangle of Recovery, Unity and Service has certainly meant all of that to us and much more."

As to why we no longer use that symbol, during the late 1980's many groups were using the symbol on anniversary coins and outside agencies had begun to use it in merchandise . GSO had filed several suits to prevent this use and finally the question went to an ad hoc committee at the 1992 General Service Conference. The full report can be viewed in the Grapevine Archives, but basically it rejected the idea that AA produce coins and that also the symbol should be discontinued as an AA 'logo' a sit had become too widely produced and controlling it would present an outside controversy which was simply not worth it. The symbol was deleted from literature as new printings were made and replaced with the phrase "General Service Approved" Information on anything involving AA can be found through the Grapevine Digital Archives

Thanks for your letter.
Joe T-Newsletter

Big Book Challenge

Match the Title, Chapter and Reference

A Vision for You	Chapter One	Describes Twelfth Step Work
More About Alcoholism.	Chapter Two	Not Written by Bill W.
To Employers	Chapter Three	A Co Founders Story
Bill's Story	Chapter Four	Talks about Jim and Fred
The Family Afterwards	Chapter Five	First and only listing of the 12 Steps
There is a Solution	Chapter Six	Describes steps five through eleven
To Wives	Chapter Seven	Describes the main object of the big book
We Agnostics	Chapter Eight	Quotes Dr Carl Jung
Working With Others	Chapter Nine	Describes Bill's meeting with Dr Bob
Into Action	Chapter Ten	Advises the use of sweets
How It Works	Chapter Eleven	Ends "Good Luck and God Bless You."



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

This month, we did get feedback, thanks to the Medford Women's Wednesday night Group. Barbara W handed out the newsletters to everyone there. The difference between making it available and literally 'carrying' the message had obvious results. For some reason, AA's tend to avoid the literature tables. Maybe they don't want to look like a 'new person' (heaven forbid!), but you miss a lot by not reading AA. The 10th Step reminds us that we are to grow in effectiveness. Thanks to the Medford Women for the kind words as well as the constructive advice. Pamela H also wrote asking for information about the Circle Triangle 'logo' of AA and why it disappeared from later publications. See that info elsewhere in this issue.

Several Newsletter survey forms (available on website) have mentioned personal stories. The monthly newsletter doesn't print stories per se, but We are soliciting your personal story (short form) for our special Al-cathon issue. Send them along by email or by real mail by November 15th! Somewhat longer than a postcard and shorter than a novel. If we get too many, then some will be in the Thanksgiving and the rest in the Holiday issue.



Joe K. writes about rotation and one problem that many Intergroup servants have is that there is often no one waiting to rotate into the position as we rotate out! Every job I have had in Intergroup has been based on the same principle, No One else would do it! That is really a sad commentary on AA in South Jersey and one I think about when Gratitude is discussed in meetings. The 10th Step also reminds us that it is easy to let up on our spiritual program of action. What action do you suppose they mean? Going to meetings? Listening to the announcements asking for help in service and hoping that someone will do that service? When will you step up? Every little bit helps. You don't have to take the whole load, but you can lend a hand. Thanks for reading. Newsletter 2010 needs AA's! What about you? Time to get involved in something? Contact Joe T. at newsletter@aasj.org or leave a message at 856 486 4446.

Tenth Tradition—The Long Form

No A.A. Group or member should ever, in such a way as to implicate A.A.; express any opinion on outside controversial issues—particularly those of politics, alcohol reform, or sectarian religion. The Alcoholics Anonymous groups oppose no one. Concerning such matters they can express no views whatever.

Tenth Step—from Into Action

“We have entered the world of the Spirit. Our next function is to grow in understanding and effectiveness. This is not an overnight matter. It should continue for our lifetime. Continue to watch for selfishness, dishonesty, resentment and fear.”

“It is easy to let up on the spiritual program of action and rest on our laurels. We are headed for trouble if we do, for alcohol is a subtle foe.”

“If we have carefully followed directions, we have begun to sense the flow of His Spirit into us. To some extent we have become God-Conscious.”

To paraphrase Step Six, Don't say "*I will never get involved!*" but rather "*I haven't gotten involved yet.*"

This months Featured Intergroup Service are::

BOOKERS EXCHANGE

The Bookers Exchange Committee allows Groups to exchange speakers on a regular basis. .Let's face it, if you have been attending the same meetings for several years, you have heard the same sharing many times. While there is absolutely nothing wrong with honest sharing, Booking other Groups to your meeting and taking commitments from other Groups for Your Home Group members, allows for new perspectives on recovery for both your group and the group that your members go to share with.

Bookers provides your group with a means for service outside your own group; an opportunity for growth in sobriety.

How does it work? Your Group decides that it wants to bring in speakers for some or all of your meetings and you may also decide to obtain speaking commitments to other groups and if so, how many. Armed with this information, your representative attends the meeting held in Audubon on the first Thursday in February, May, August and November at 8 PM. He/She signs in, picks up a planning calendar and the meeting begins. The chair will announce a day of the week and those groups holding meetings on that day speak up. By speaking up, we mean that they shout out their group name in a loud and vigorous manner. This is where the fun starts. Bookers, in many ways resembles a tobacco auction or maybe the floor of the stock market, but everyone who attends enjoys the action. When the chair acknowledges the first, the Group Rep then gives the particulars, when, where, contact info and part two of the auction begins. The chair calls out the first date and if you want to 'book' that date for your group, you put in your bid by speaking up (shouting) with your group name, along with a half dozen other reps in the room. The Chair picks out the quickest or loudest and that date is filled and on to the next. Once that group has all the dates filled, then another group is picked from the shout out process. All of the inbound and outbound dates somehow get filled and everyone enjoys the experience. Your group might enjoy and benefit from it as well. Come out and see in November, no charge for watching!

HOSPITALS & INSTITUTIONS

Prisons, Jails, Rehabilitation Centers, Hospitals, Mental Institutions. None of these sound like places that you want to go to voluntarily, but every month AA's do just that. They bring in an AA meeting to alcoholics who can't get out to one: Of course, you can't just walk in to such places, so the H&I committee makes the arrangements for you. H&I has three important parts. 1)The Group representatives meeting every month. 2)The AA's who host he inside meetings and 3) the Group volunteers, such as you, who go, share and make it an AA meeting. The committee meets on the last Monday of each month at the Intergroup office at 7 PM and the various commitments are taken. One problem in this type of service if clearing AA's to go into some institutions. Obviously security is an issue, so often AA's have to have a clearance to attend some inside meetings. The host of the meeting will have everything prepared and if no speaker shows up, he will still hold the meeting. There is a listing of all H&I groups available at the monthly meeting. If your group would like more information, please send a member to attend and ask questions; no obligation for information!

Principles and Personalities

Lately I have been to a few meetings where people were talking about “principles before personalities” yet I am curious to know whether they really think very hard about where that phrase comes from. If you recall in the back of the step book our founders hid the traditions, mostly to bore us once a month at our step meeting. The phrase usually cited out of context in business meetings comes from our twelfth tradition which states: “Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.” Okay, great I can copy stuff from a book but what does that have to do with anything?

What the tradition tells us is that we need to keep our personalities in check in this fellowship, we can not try to become famous in an anonymous program. Anonymity does not protect me from society or the public it protects me and AA from me. It is my ego, my personality that needs to remain secondary to the principles of Alcoholics Anonymous in order to keep my ego from becoming over-inflated. After all, what we are supposed to strive for here is *ego deflation* not *ego inflation*. So when I keep my personality in check and put principles first by serving in that spirit of anonymity, without the need or ideally even the hope for recognition, I serve in the spirit of the Twelfth Tradition.

This brings me to my final point just in case you read this far, that is rotation of service. In the fifth chapter of the Big Book it says, “if you have decided you want what we have and are willing to go to any lengths to get it...” I have often heard people say that if you want what we have we suggest you do what we did. Thus if we are doing service, whatever form that may take, we ought to move on, move over and permit others to benefit from those same service positions. We should not hang around like we are working our way up the corporate ladder. The spirit of anonymity includes the spirit of rotation of service. This helps us with our goal of ego deflation and remaining “right sized.” This is not like the rest of the world where we try strive to achieve some higher office or greater job; in AA we don’t do service to build a resume. People should not hang around Intergroup for 10, 15, or 20 years; should not be the chair of a meeting for long periods; even the coffee maker (I don’t care what anyone else says that is the most important job in AA) should go after the commitment is up. Change is good when it comes to service and there is always something new to do. We perform service to help ourselves and to pass on this great gift that was freely given to us.

Each of the Committee chairs will be changing at the end of the year and we need volunteers to carry on the service work. How about some new blood? It is your Intergroup, you complain about “what goes on up at Intergroup” you know you do, I have heard you. So instead of just complaining how about taking the next step and actually **DOING SOMETHING!** Get involved, if you think people are entrenched get up here and volunteer; people usually stay in a position because no one steps up to volunteer. If you think things should be done differently get up here and do them differently. It is one thing to sit around and whine about how it should be it is another to actually get involved and work to make things better.

Finally, to the committee chairs officers and other trusted servants: your time is up move on, thank you very much for your hard work the next group will carry on. You took on these commitments in the spirit of anonymity and service in order to help Intergroup function and pass on to others what was freely given to you. If you are serious about carrying the AA message and are truly interested in supporting and protecting the AA fellowship you will go now and serve elsewhere. Don’t hang on trying to get some recognition out of being “in service for X number of years.” It is time to go quietly and serve somewhere else. We all know there is plenty to do, we need only remain humble and do new and different types of service where our experience can benefit.

Joe K. H&I Chair



More From Grapevine

A new feature of The Grapevine is Alcoholism At Large-General information on Alcoholism from Non AA sources. The following is from the September Issue. If you have not started reading the Grapevine, why not start. Subscriptions are less than \$20 a year and includes online Grapevine as well.

Alcoholic and a.....

Alcoholism in Relation to Drug Use Examined.

According to the National Epidemiologic Survey on Alcohol and Related Conditions (NESARC), one of the largest surveys of its kind ever produced, 8.5 percent of adults in the United States met the criteria for alcoholism whereas 2 percent met the criteria for drug addiction and 1.1 percent met the criteria for both.

Researchers for the National Institutes of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism which conducted the survey, indicated that people who are dependent on drugs are more likely to have alcoholism than people with alcoholism are to be drug dependent. The survey results were published in the November 2008 issue of *Alcohol, Research and Health*.

Some of the risk for addiction to both drugs and alcohol is inherited, with children of alcoholics 50 to 60 percent more likely to develop alcoholism than the general population, Similarly, children of parents who abuse illicit drugs may be 45 to 79 percent more likely to do so themselves than the general public.

Researchers believe some of the same genes increasing alcoholism risk also increase the risk for drug dependence.

Source: National Institutes of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism

Tradition Ten Checklist

Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the AA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.

1. Do I ever give the impression that there really is an "AA opinion" on Antabuse? Tranquilizers? Doctors? Psychiatrists? Churches? Hospitals? Jails? Alcohol? The federal or state government? Legalizing marijuana? Vitamins? Al-Anon? Alateen?
2. Can I honestly share my own personal experience concerning any of those without giving the impression I am stating the "AA opinion"?
3. What in AA history gave rise to our Tenth Tradition?
4. Have I had a similar experience in my own AA life?
5. What would AA be without this Tradition? Where would I be?
6. Do I breach this or any of its supporting Traditions in subtle, perhaps unconscious, ways?

Announcement

THIS MONTH!!!!!!

Sat., Oct 24 - A Day of Sharing (A Singleness Of Purpose) hosted by Cape Atlantic Intergroup. Absecon Presbyterian Church, 208 New Jersey Ave., Absecon, NJ., 08201. Registration: 9:00 AM. Program starts: 9:30. Lunch will be provided.

Sat, Oct 24 - Halloween Party sponsored by SJIG Social Committee. Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, Collingswood, Haddon Ave & Fern Ave. 730 PM - 1130 PM. \$10/pp.

Sat, Oct 24 Halloween Dance 449 Club Pemberton 7 pm

Mon, Oct 26 Audubon Last Mile S&T Group 15th Annv UMC Wyoming & Graisbury Ave 7:30PM

OTHER EVENTS

Sat, Oct 24 Sea Isle 27th Annv St Josephs Ch 4308 Landis Ave SIC 7:30pm Food & Speakers

Wed Nov 4 Hemmingway Group Anniversary 7—9 PM Gibson Hse Food & Speakers

Tue Nov 10 Maple Shade 47th Anniversary 8 PM

Wed Nov 11 Westville Happy Hour 27th Anniversary 4 PM Food & speakers

Nov 14th GRATITUDE DINNER DANCE

Nov 20-22 3rd Annual Cape Atlantic IG Waves of Sobriety Round Up The Grand Hotel Cape May NJ

Nov 26, THANKSGIVING ALCATHON— Woodbury, same location as Tuesday Noon Group Starts Midnight thru 6 PM

Founders Day in Akron June 10th

AA INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION, San Antonio TX July 1-4 2010 Registration started September 1st. Make your plans to attend and celebrate 75 years of Alcoholics Anonymous with a few thousand friends. International Conventions are only held every five years!

.....
Non-AA events

.....
.Sobriety at Sea 17th Annual Eastern Caribbean Adventure. Seven Night cruise sails from Port Everglades FL on January 10th
Prices from \$399.00pp St Thomas, San Juan, Grand Turks— www.SobrietyAtSea.com