

NNIG MONTHLY MEETING SPEAKER



April 9, 2022
Larry T., Seal Beach, CA
Pyramid Way Group
Speaker at 7:00
Silver Legacy Silver Baron Rm 1-6

April, 2022

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Concept IV	2
Events	3
Book of the Month	3
Showcase Meetings and more	4
Service Opportunities	5
Group Contributions	6
Interview with an Alcoholic	7
Step 4	7

GENERAL WARRANTIES OF THE NORTHERN NEVADA INTERGROUP ASSOCIATION OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

In all its proceedings, the Intergroup Association observes the spirit of AA Traditions, taking great care that the Intergroup Association never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds, plus a reserve be its prudent financial principal; that none of the Intergroup Association members shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority over any of the others; that all important decision be reached by discussion, vote and whenever possible, substantial unanimity; that no Intergroup Association action ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy; that though the Intergroup Association may act for the service of AA Groups in the Northern Nevada area and parts of Northern California, it shall never perform any acts of government; and that, like the Society of Alcoholics Anonymous, the Intergroup Association itself will always remain democratic in thought and action.

(The above is adapted and modified from "The AA Service Manual", and AA Co-Founder Bill W's. Twelve Concepts for World Service; Concept XII, as adopted by the General Service Conference on April 26, 1962. This adaptation of copyrighted AA material has been approved by the General Service Board)

CENTRAL OFFICE

436 S. Rock Blvd.,
Sparks, NV 89431
Monday thru Friday
9:00 AM to 5:00 PM

Saturday 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM

24 Hour Answering Service:

(775) 355-1151 Fax: (775) 355-1560

EMAIL: officemanager@nning.org

Web Site/Meeting Schedule: nning.org

The Bracer: nningbracer@gmail.com

THE BRACER



NORTHERN NEVADA INTERGROUP

The Spice of Life

Maybe I attend two or three AA meetings a week, maybe not. I've often wondered if meetings can be defined in different ways, if what we say of God in Steps Three and Eleven also applies to a meeting: it's "as we understand" it.

One I attend is known locally as the "Anonymous Meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous." It is very anonymous: no GSR; not listed in any local, district, state, or national directories; known only by word of mouth and personal invitation. Its extreme anonymity makes it an extra safe place: the group has a good sampling of doctors, lawyers, and educators. I qualified as a professional drunk. I've also heard it said that one need not be apprehensive about utilizing a polysyllabic vocabulary in this meeting. Some lapsed or ex-members consider us a bit snobbish, cliquish, and self-centered, since (so far as I know) we do not contribute to the larger AA organization; rather, our one dollar contributions go to treat ourselves to an annual banquet. On the other hand, we have longevity--our banquet this past January celebrated twenty years. We also have a lot of sobriety--often 100 to 200 years' worth on a given evening. And we have stability: recently, six of the seven people present were there at this anonymous meeting--it was my own first AA meeting--seventeen years ago. I have some qualms about the group myself, but in addition to stability and longevity, we have a number of good, solid recovering friends who help each other stay sober.

Another one--well, it's a very open meeting, started in 1984 as a smoke-free group by an old-timer with severe emphysema and myself, a newcomer allergic to smoke. At that time all the other local meetings were smoke-filled. "Smoke didn't keep you out of bars," they said; actually, I had backed out of many a smoke-filled bar without a drink to go home and get drunk alone. We meet in a mental health center, and some of the people "upstairs" have no desire to stop drinking, though alcohol contributes to their problems. Escorted by a therapist, they sometimes sit in. Addicts can easily shift from one addiction to another, so we welcome overeaters, codependents (aren't we usually eligible for that ourselves?), sex and other addicts. Even narcotic addicts can attend, so long as they don't use at the meeting. We do not always confine our talk to "problems as they relate to alcoholism," but we do contribute to local, state, and national AA, and we have a good record of getting and keeping ourselves sober.

My other "meeting" differs somewhat--it's a small group that has lunch once a week in a public place. For that reason, we do not read the Preamble, the Steps, or Traditions; we do not say the Serenity or Lord's Prayer; we do not always confine our discussions to alcohol. Some regular diners wondered who we were and somehow decided we had something to do with flying. Well, some of us have flown pretty high; we believe in a Higher Power; and we have some connections with a spiritual world--so we let them believe what they wish. This group, too, has met for about twenty years; we're good, sober friends.

And that's about it. I'm aware that I seldom attend any conventional old-time, coffee-and-doughnut AA meetings in smoke-filled rooms. I recall the Fourth Tradition: "Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole." I don't believe any of these groups has a negative effect on the rest of AA, and they have helped many an alcoholic get and remain sober. They have been the basis of my sobriety for over seventeen years.

BY: C.B. | SPRINGFIELD, OHIO

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A A's

Recovery Step Four:

"Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves."

Three

Unity Tradition Four:

"Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole."

Legacies

Service Concept Four:

"Throughout our Conference structure, we ought to maintain at all responsible levels, a traditional "Right of Participation," taking care that each classification or group of our world servants shall be allowed a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge" To better understand of this Concept, please read the full Concept IV in the A.A. Service Manual, page 17, and/or in AA Pamphlet P-8, "The Twelve Concepts for World Service illustrated." P-8, "The Twelve Concepts for World Service illustrated."

Concept IV – Right of Participation Assures a Voting Representation throughout All of the A.A. Service Structure

Have you ever felt that your ideas of how to go about doing your job as an employee or as a volunteer were not appreciated; or, that other ideas you had about your work situation were ignored? These are exact opposites of the meaning of "right of participation." Concept IV tells us that throughout our A.A. service structure we ought to maintain at all responsible levels a traditional "right of participation," taking care that each classification or group of our trusted servants be allowed a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must carry out.

Bill W. says the lessons learned about this right of participation, as in most A.A. lessons, came the hard way. In the early days A.A. headquarters was run on authoritarian and institutional lines. At that time, the A.A. Trustees saw no reason to delegate their managerial powers or to work with voting participation with anyone outside their own body. The result was often grievous trouble and misunderstanding. It was years before we saw that we could never put all authority in one group and virtually all responsibility in another and then expect efficiency of operation, let alone real harmony. Participation can usually stop this sort of demoralizing nonsense before it starts. We are not order-takers nor rubber-stamps. We are participants and trusted servants.

Paraphrasing Bill further, he says that we are not against the idea of an ultimate authority. We are only against its misapplication and misuse. The "right of participation" is correction of a misuse or harshness in the application of authority.

Bill also discusses how the right of participation is important spiritually to us individually and to A.A. as a whole. This applies to our relationships with each other throughout our fellowship. All of us have a deep desire to belong and to be included. Because of this we prefer an A.A. relationship of "brotherly partnership." Among A.A. members, in our groups, and among our local and world service workers there should never be any who are considered "second class". "Right of participation" includes the attitude that all participants in A.A. make valid and important contributions to our work together.

By implication, this relationship of "brotherly partnership" would extend to how we treat each other as persons and how we respect and honor the job each person is doing. A past A.A. Trustee expands on this idea when she says that as we work together in A.A., it is not so much what we do or accomplish, but how well we treat each other while we do it that really matters.

"Right of participation" includes having all our ideas both heard and respected.

This is a 12 part series written by members of the 12 Concepts Study Group in Reno, Nevada. Efforts were made to use simple, everyday language. Each concept is written by an individual member of the group and is not necessarily the opinion of AA as a whole or NNIG. We hope this series will help our community to understand the Concepts and bring interest to those wanting to know more about them. Revised May, 2017.

NNIG & AREA EVENTS

EVENTS HOSTED BY NORTHERN NEVADA
INTERGROUP TO SUPPORT CENTRAL OFFICE

NNIG Monthly Speaker Meetings

Silver Legacy – 407 North Virginia Street, Reno 89501



Monthly Speaker Meeting
Doors open at 6:30 PM
Speaker at 7:00 PM



All meetings located in Silver Barron Room 1-6
Unless otherwise noted

April 9, 2022

Host Group – Pyramid Way Group
Speaker- Larry T. – Seal Beach CA

May 14, 2022

Host Group – Carson City Happy Hour Group
Speaker – June G. – Oxnard CA

June 11, 2022

Host Group – Alamo Jaywalkers
Speaker - Barbara M. Sparks NV

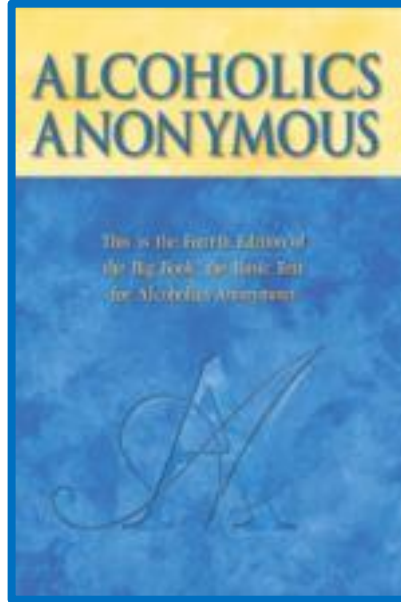
July 9, 2022

Host Group- Fernley Kiss
Speaker Don L. – Billingham WA.

Speaker Chair – Kevin B. (775) 470-4614
Need more info call: Central Office – (775) 355-1151
Join us for dinner at Cafe Central inside the Silver legacy @ 5pm

BOOK OF THE MONTH

\$2 OFF



PAMPHLET OF THE MONTH

\$0.40



OTHER AREA EVENTS

FOUNDERS DAY 2022



Dr. Bob
Bill W.

SATURDAY JUNE 18, 2022, 11-3PM

BOWERS MANSION – WASHOE VALLEY

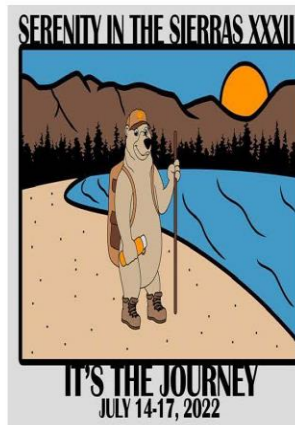
BURGERS & HOT DOGS WITH
SIDE DISHES WILL BE SERVED

POTLUCK - CHIPS &
DESSERTS ONLY

\$5 SUGGESTED
CONTRIBUTION

RAFFLE!! GAMES!!
FELLOWSHIP!!

Save the Date!!!



IT'S THE JOURNEY
JULY 14-17, 2022

The campout committee would like to welcome everyone to Camp Richardson for another sober weekend of camping, meetings and fun for the family. Bring your tent and join us for a great weekend. RV camping available...contact Camp Richardson.

Hope to see you there!
Campout Committee

26th ANNIVERSARY OF LA VIÑA
IN THE PACIFIC REGION - HOSTED BY AREA 42
LAS VEGAS, NV- JULY 22, 23, & 24, 2022



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Treasurer: Marisol M. (702) 472-0037

Reservations:
(888) 786-7389
Clave: PCI26LV
Hotel discount
deadline 6/22/2022

Central office report from Ronda H. April 5, 2022

Volunteer hours- 150 hours

Calls into Central Office:

- Calls for AA help - 13
- Calls for Alanon/Alateen - 8
- Meeting information- 47
- Retail / merchandise- 20
- Other 12 step programs- 4
- Events - 6
- Business/Central office- 90
- Total calls - 188
- Visitors – 284

1. Book of the month is *The Big Book*, this is \$2 OFF, \$10 each pamphlet is the Same - *Experience Has Taught Us: Our Twelve Steps Illustrated* \$0.40 this is a new pamphlet
2. Meetings online and printed schedule will be updated.
3. The website had 20372 pageviews. Two minutes is the avg. 44% is new 56% is returning
4. We have been having old timer interviews printed in the Bracer if you would like to be interviewed, please call me at the office to set up a time. Please let your Home Group know of the Bracer.

Ronda
Central Office Manager



Previous Birthdays



March

Paul 31 Years
Kent L. 40 Years
Kim D. 45 Years

February

Skip 22 Years

December

Sean S. - 32 Years
Mystery Person!!
- 34 Years

November 2021

Rich A. - 35 Years
Shawn - 30 Years

October 2021

Sharon F. - 37 Years
Nancy A. - 36 Years

September 2021

Phil S. 45 Years
Mike 26 Years

August 2021

Linda G. 29 Years
Danny S. 19 Years

JULY 2021

Barbara M. 46 Years
Joanne P. 9 Years

JUNE BIRTHDAYS

Donn T - 31 Years!!!

MAY BIRTHDAYS

Joni S. 26 Years
Ron T. 10 Years
Ann G. 11 LOT
Donn T. 31 Years



Yes I am
the
Easter
Bunny....

Did you know you can share your sobriety and gratitude in a practical way by joining the A.A. Birthday Club? Sign Up today and be featured in the Bracer Birthday Club section of the Bracer. Show your Support for your NNIG & Central Office, Join the Birthday Club. A donation of only one dollar for every year of your sobriety. Envelopes available at Central Office, NNIG Business Meeting or Intergroup Representatives

**Please respect
all meeting
place mandates
about face
coverings.**

Southside
Monday-Friday
Noon
780 Del Monte Ln
Reno

Whole in the Soul
Tuesday 7pm
510 Greenbrae Dr.
Sparks

**AA ANSWERING
SERVICE NUMBERS**

Reno, Sparks, Carson City and all of Northern Nevada: (775) 355-1151
Las Vegas and all of Southern Nevada: (702) 598-1888
Mammoth Lake: (760) 934-3434
North Lake Tahoe: (530) 546-1126
South Lake Tahoe: (530) 541-1243
Susanville, CA: (775) 355-1151
White Pine County/Ely: (775) 296-0656 Jim C.

Early Birds
Sunday-Saturday
6:45am
**412 W Masser
Street**
Garson City

Discussion Meeting
Monday-Friday Noon
45 S Weatherlow St
Susanville CA

N.N.I.G. STEERING COMMITTEE
 Last Tuesday of each month, 5:30 PM
 Central Office, 436 S. Rock Blvd., Sparks

N.N.I.G. BUSINESS MEETING
 First Tuesday of each month, 6:30 PM
 Alano Club, 1640 Prater Way, Sparks

N.N.I.G. MONTHLY SPEAKER MEETING
 7:00 PM Silver Legacy - Silver Baron A
 2nd Saturday of the month

N.N.I.G. H&I
 First Monday of each month, 5:30 PM
 Central Office 436 S. Rock Blvd., Sparks



District Meetings

DISTRICT-2 2nd Tuesday of each month, 6:30 Central Office
 Zoom # 91904741396 Password D2

DISTRICT 4 First Thursday of each month, 7:00 PM-
 Zoom ID: 876 7717 4234 PW: District4

DISTRICT 6 2nd Sunday of even numbered months-
 For information email district6@nevadaarea42.org

DISTRICT 8 First Sunday, 3:30 p.m. on odd months
 Call (760) 937-8407

DISTRICT 10A Third Sunday of every other month, 1:30 PM
 680 River St. Elko, NV

DISTRICT 10B Dark since 2017

DISTRICT 11 Only holds meetings 4 time a year, call DCM

DISTRICT 12 2nd Saturday of each Month at 5:00 PM- 457
 Esmeralda Street Wolf Center, Fallon NV

DISTRICT 14 3rd Wed of each "Odd" month at 6:00 PM -265
 Bear Street in Kings Beach CA

DISTRICT 16 Meeting is held 3rd Tuesday of the month
 Sparks Family Christian Church 510 Greenbrae
 Blvd 6:00PM-7:00PM

DISTRICT 18 DARK DISTRICT

DISTRICT 20 Third Saturday of Jan, Mar, May, Aug & Oct
 10:30 AM- Contact DCM @ district20@nevadaarea42.org for location

DISTRICT 22 1st and 3rd Thursday of every month 6:30 PM @
 Central Office

AREA CLUBS

Reno / Sparks Clubs
 Alano Club Sparks, 1640 Prater Way (775) 359-2727
 Driars Club Reno 345 S. Wells Avenue (775) 324-9210
 Triangle Club Reno 635 S Wells Avenue (775) 324-7977

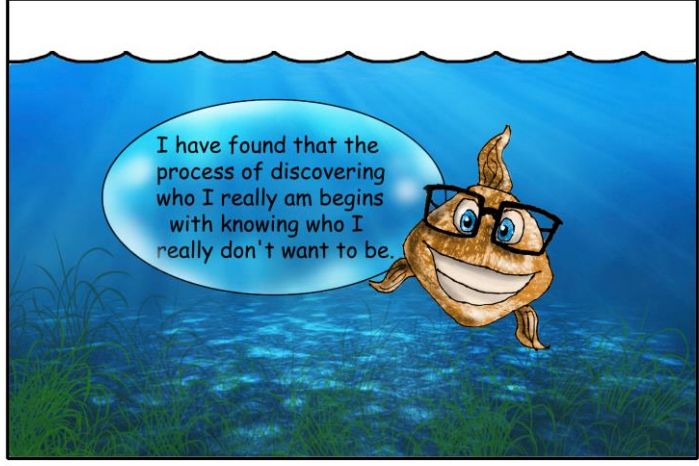
Clubs outside Reno/Sparks Area
 Alano Club Carson City, 1800 HWY 50 East (775) 882-0443
 Bishop Alano Club (760) 873-6700
 Elko Alano Club (775) 738-4747
 Las Vegas Triangle Club (702) 435-0597
 South Lake Tahoe (530) 541-1243



4TH STEP PRAYER

God mold my ideals in this particular area of my life and help me to live up to them. What should I do in each specific matter? Guide me God and give me strength to do right. AMEN (p. 69 88)

Drink Like A Fish by Rick M.



Drink Like A Fish by Rick M.



NNIG/Central Office Group Contributions 2022

<u>Group</u>	<u>March</u>	<u>YTD</u>	<u>Group</u>	<u>March</u>	<u>YTD</u>
3rd Tradition Secular Group			Happy Hour Reno	300.00	600.00
A Way Home	99.50	99.50	Knuckleheads	30.00	30.00
Alano Dawn Patrol			Ladies of the Evening		
Alano Jaywalkers			Ladies of the Lake		53.04
Alano Open Heart Open Mind		133.00	Minden Language of the Heart		40.00
Alano Brown Baggers	50.00	50.00	Minden Saturday Night Fever		
Amen Maintenance Meeting			Minden Stephanie Way Group		118.61
Back Room Group		215.22	Minden Wednesday Night Live		48.60
Back to Basics Saturday Night		115.00	Minden/Gardnerville Group		
Battle Mountain Fellowship	20.00	20.00	NNIG Business Meeting	16.00	48.00
Beginners are Winners On-Line Gro	482.40	482.40	Mt Rose Recovery Room	815.75	1579.75
Buena Vista Group		100.00	Our Group Big Book		
Caring & Sharing in Stead		254.83	Out and Sober		
Carson After Shifters			Positive Acceptance Group		252.00
Carson Valley Gratitude	501.00	501.00	Pyramid Way Discussion Group		
Carson Big Book Experience		60.00	RTC Monday Night Mens		
Carson Brown Baggers			RTC Afternoon Delight		
Carson Dr. Bob Nightngales			RTC Almost Heaven	100.00	300.00
Carson Early Birds		1341.67	RTC Aloha Group		916.23
Carson Happy Hour			RTC Big Book Study		50.00
Carson Happy, Joyous and Free		45.53	RTC Beginners are Winners		
Carson Jay-Walkers Men's		100.00	RTC Coffee with Bill		
Carson Men's NO BS Stag			RTC Don't Trip Music Meeting		
Carson Sandbaggers		200.00	RTC Grapevine/Big Book		
Carson Fallen Women			RTC How We Stay Stopped		
Carson Sunday Morning Fire Station		460.00	RTC Just for Today Women		
Carson Sisters in Sobriety	100.00	100.00	RTC Mid-Day Group		
Carson Women's Night Out	130.00	330.00	RTC Champions of Sobriety		
Chester Fellowship			RTC Mid-Day Group ON-LINE	20.00	129.08
Chester Saturday Night Group			RTC Recien Llegados		
Choices		100.00	RTC New Awakenings Group		337.38
Cornerstone Group	150.00	150.00	RTC Little Rascals		100.00
Crystal Bay Nooners	50.00	150.00	RTC Sober N Sane		100.00
Dayton Friday Night Rule 62		300.00	RTC Men's Trudgers		
Dayton Red Rooster		150.00	RTC Seniors in Sobriety		75.00
Decompression Chamber/online	82.83	322.33	Recien ilegados		50.00
Deer Park Rebels			Serenity on Sundays		200.00
District 14		600.00	Sisters in Sobriety		
District 2	13.00	33.00	Sisters of Sobriety SOS		183.53
District 22	50.00	1180.00	South Shore Group		60.00
District 6			South Reno on Sunday		
4th Dimension- ON-LINE	20.00	93.36	Step 1		
Driar's Serenity Night Owls	50.00	50.00	Southside Group	140.70	337.71
Driar's Oldtimer, Newcomers			Sunnyside Group		
Eye Operner		987.00	Spring Festival	10.00	47.46
Fallon Grapevine Group			The Shop		
Fallon Grapevine Group-Online		20.00	Susanville Wed Womens		
Fallon The Real Lunch Bunch			Tahoe City Fellowship		
Fernley Groups			The Rock Group		107.50
Fireside Group			The Twilight Zone		
Galena Friday Night			Truckee Dawn Patrol		
Ground Zero		94.00	Truckee Fellowship		
Grupo Accion	30.00	30.00	Truckee River Men's Stag		528.00
Grupo Fe Y Esoeranza			The Next Chapter		
Grupo La Nueva Luz		20.00	Virginia City Plug in the Jug		
Grupo Latino			Verdi Greener Pastures	50.00	50.00
Grupo Nueva Vida			Westwood AA		
Jamesville God Grant Me			Wednesday Night Beginners Meeting		
Jamesville Women's Monday Night			Whole in the Ground Sunnyside	300.00	300.00
			Willing to go to any Lengths		
			Weekend Warriors		
			Whole in the Soul		80.00
			Women's New Beginnings		128.70
			Women's New Harmony		175.00
Total				3,611.18	15,913.43

Hi my name is Nancy and I am an alcoholic

What's your sobriety date? 10/26/1985.

What is your home group? Sunnyside Monday.

Where did you get sober? Huntington Beach, CA.,

My home group was the As Bill Sees

It/Huggers, we met at the Huntington Beach Inn every day at 7:00am.

Briefly describe your drinking.

I drank beer on weekends, a weekend warrior and was not much for the hard liquor or the mixed drinks I did enjoy tequila occasionally, but it made my clothes fall off! Being born and raised in Texas that's what you do for fun you drink beer. So, I drank beer. After 3 or 4 beers I would be under the table. It didn't take that much for me. What I learned in A.A. is not what you drink but how the drink affects you. And when I drink, I want to commit suicide. So, it's been a good day or two since I've considered suicide.

What brought you to Alcoholic Anonymous?

A suicide attempt. An ambulance ride from Fountain Valley Trauma Center to Brea Neuro Psychiatric Center. I was there for 5 days and I was diagnosed there as alcoholic, manic/depressive, anorexic. I didn't think there were any alcoholics in my family until I was asked by my therapist, my husband at the time was in the room and asked me what I thought my mother was? And that's when the bells and whistles went off.

What were your first impressions of Alcoholics Anonymous?

My first A.A. meeting I was at the Laguna Canyon Club. And I wasn't really quite sure what to think. I went there to meet my family attorney who had 12 stepped me two weeks before my hospital visit. He'd been sober for just over a year. I called him when I got home from the hospital and told him I would go to that "monthly" AA meeting he told me about. He laughed and told me about the newcomer meeting at the Canyon Club, I met him there the following week. Around the third meeting I was looking on the wall at the steps with him, when I got to the 9th step I told him "I'm out! I'm not a copping to the crap that I've done in my past" and he explained the step to me, he laughed and said "honey you ain't even halfway through the first step." **I also want to mention that I did not fit in AA when I first got here and sometimes I still don't feel like I fit here.** All the folks identifying as addicts, drug addicts and addict alcoholics confused me because I had no experience with drug addiction and wasn't this Alcoholics Anonymous? I'm just a garden variety alcoholic and if you are one too, I can help. I cannot transmit something I haven't got, but I learned to network with those who have experiences I don't have and can refer you to one of them that CAN help you.

What were some of the things that the old timers told you that you didn't want to listen to, and they turned out to be right?

I have always been blessed with many wise oldtimers and sponsors! My first sponsor taught me, that when my mind was running, to open the big book and where it opened to start reading and I would find my solution and peace. I told my Dad Sponsor that I was wondering "why me God?" and he asked me if I ever considered that God was thinking "why not you?" My Step Mom, the woman who took me through the steps and traditions taught me not to pray for patience! My favorite one is from my sponsor in Tennessee told me "once you know you don't know, then you know!" And, you can't be hateful if you're grateful! These and many other things passed on to me still stand true!

When did you come to Reno?

My husband Rich came here in March of 2010 and I arrived in April. The A.A. people here were everything that we were looking for in a fellowship. We met a guy in Verdi that told us about the Sunnyside group and it was the perfect group for us. We went there and they were saying to get in the middle of the herd. Most of the people in the middle of the herd had the same amount of sobriety as we did. That made all the difference in my recovery. I learned to grow where you're planted and it's not necessary to change the meetings I go to with what I was familiar with in other areas I had lived in.

What do you like to tell the newcomers today?

My favorite one is "hang on to your *** you're in for the ride of your life!"

What positive changes you've seen in A.A. during your recovery years?

During my 14 years in Tennessee a book was put together named "Experience, Strength and Hope" using all the stories taken from the 1st, 2nd and 3rd editions, what a great book. What I'd like to see is more people with respect for what the first 100 people put together in our Big Book. I pray that I've conveyed the message of Alcoholics Anonymous with those I've worked with and taught them how to respect and carry the message to those like me who needed this program.



Step Four

MY SECOND sponsor was the first person to show me how to draw up a proper inventory of resentments precisely as it is outlined in the Big Book. I confessed to him that my first-year pink-cloud flight had ended, as I had been told it would, and that sobriety was drab and frightening at times, though I kept a lengthy inventory, checking off my one-to-ten ratings of pride, covetousness, lust, anger, gluttony, envy, and many other such words on a beautifully printed sheet.

My sponsor laughed. "No wonder you have the early-morning blues. You're rating yourself on abstractions, instincts that even the holiest men are equipped with at birth. In AA, we don't deal in words--we deal in meanings." He glanced at a vivacious actress from London's West End and said, "If a good look at her doesn't blow all the ratings you've given yourself right off the chart, then I would say you haven't yet taken Step One--or you're stone dead."

He continued, "You've been so busy fighting off so-called sin that you haven't had time to learn to love. To learn to love, you have to identify all your resentments precisely the way it is described in the Big Book. From those resentments, you extract a list of defects of character. Then, by processing these through each of the succeeding Steps, you turn your weaknesses into a spiritual strength that will soon blow all those nameless fears and early-morning terrors out of your mind."

My reply was the same as that I later heard from the hundreds of newcomers I have taken through the Steps. I said, "But I don't have any resentments!"

To that, he said simply, "Nobody has--until they have been properly educated in the Big Book, and had a good sponsor identify the resentments, with a little help from the newcomers about the main events of their lives. The average alcoholic has ongoing daily contacts with a lot of people. Surely, you don't mean to tell me there has been absolutely no conflict in any of those contacts? And remember, self-pity is ungrateful resentment against God."

"Why is it that the Big Book deals only in a list of people that I have grievances against, and an analysis of only those resentments?" I wanted to know. "Isn't it *my* defects, not the other man's, that should be listed?"

"There are many good reasons," he said, "and they're based on biblical truths and psychological insights, from the Sermon on the Mount--'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself and thy God with all thy heart'--to the statement by Dr. Carl G. Jung that the only way an alcoholic would recover was to know himself and find faith, hope, and love.

"The whole key to our recovery is to find a power greater than ourselves to depend upon by simply repeating the 'surrender prayer' on page 63 of the Big Book, and to learn to love our neighbor by simply listing our resentments against him and then eliminating them. We get rid of the grievances through prayer in Steps Six and Seven, and take care of the amends in Steps Eight and Nine."

At subsequent discussions, my sponsor taught me the techniques and strategies (simple set of tools) in the Steps described in chapters five, six, and seven of the Big Book.

"The whole success of your recovery stands or falls upon taking the inventory correctly. If you don't, there is nothing to process through the succeeding Steps. Listen to these words on the inventory: 'people really dominated us'; 'the wrongdoing of others, fancied or real, had power to actually kill'; 'we saw that these resentments must be mastered'; 'resentment is the "number one" offender. It destroys more alcoholics than anything else. From it stem all forms of spiritual disease.' The Big Book tells us categorically that every neurosis stems from resentment, from not following the Golden Rule of love."

As we concluded these studies into resentments, with the Big Book, I came to see that no way would I accept responsibility for my own life until I had listed all my grievances against God and man, and eliminated them one by one.

Only by coming to love my neighbor as myself and my Higher Power with all my heart could I develop a strong enough self-image to love myself and eliminate the excesses of my so-called inventory of deadly sins.

I thought our co-founder Dr. Bob oversimplified things when he said the AA program consists simply of love and service. But happiness and sobriety do come to us in direct proportion to the amount of love and service we can give to our fellowman. Anonymous.

BY: I. R. | PORT ELIZABETH



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