

NNIG MONTHLY MEETING SPEAKER



September 9, 2023
Karl M.
Covina, CA
Positive Acceptance Group
Speaker at 7:00

Silver Legacy - 407 North Virginia St., Reno - Doors open at 6:30

September 2023

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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@nnig.org

Web Site/Meeting Schedule: nnig.org

The Bracer: nnigbracer@gmail.com



THE BRACER

NORTHERN NEVADA INTERGROUP

A Mom's Return

BY: CLAUDIA N. | SANTA ROSA, CALIF.

Through living amends, a grateful sober mother comes full circle with the children she once abandoned for booze.

STEP NINE: Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.."

I never expected the desire to quit drinking to enter into my mind in any way, let alone find forgiveness for myself. But that's exactly what AA gave me with an incredible spiritual experience at 23 years sober.

I was a married woman with four young children. I was drinking on a daily basis and had gotten to the point of running away from my family, myself and my responsibilities. I was just living to drink.

Since I couldn't drink like others did—go have a few and come home at a decent hour—I would run away from home and justify my behavior by telling myself I was "misunderstood" and a "victim" of circumstances.

I didn't start out drinking daily but that's exactly where I ended up. I always found reasons to leave the house so I could drink. As my drinking progressed, I wouldn't come home for days at a time. It really boggles my mind how I could justify leaving my children home, with no mother and no way their father could go to work without someone home to take care of the children.

My denial was deep and my pockets were full of excuses to keep drinking and leaving. I would always come home with my tail between my legs, begging for forgiveness and swearing I wouldn't do it again. Yet I would continue to break these promises for a very long time.

One night I came home to find my husband standing at the door with our 2-year-old son in his arms. He held our son out for me to hold. "You take him," my husband said, with a look of disgust on his face. "Be a mom. Do something!"

Continued on page 7

A A's

Recovery Step Nine:

“Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others..”

Three

Unity Tradition Nine:

“A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve..”

Legacies

Service Concept Nine:

IX. Good service leaders, together with sound and appropriate methods of choosing them, are at all levels indispensable for our future functioning and safety. The primary world service leadership once exercised by the founders of A.A. must necessarily be assumed by the Trustees of the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Concept IX

“No matter how carefully we design our service structure of principles and relationships, no matter how well we apportion authority and responsibility, the operating results of our structure can be no better than the personal performance of those who must man it and make it work. Good leadership cannot function well in a poorly designed structure Weak leadership can hardly function at all, even in the best of structures.” Due to A.A.’s principle of rotation, furnishing our service structure with able and willing workers has to be a continuous effort. The base of the service structure — and the source of our leadership — is the General Service Representative. The G.S.R. is the service leader for his or her group, the indispensable link between the group and A.A. as-a-whole. Together the G.S.R.s are A.A.’s group conscience — and together, in their areas, they elect the area committee members and ultimately the delegates and the area’s candidates for trustee. Groups who have not named G.S.R.s should be encouraged to do so. And as the G.S.R.s meet in area assemblies, care and dedication are required. Personal ambitions should be cast aside; feuds and controversies forgotten. “Who are the best qualified people?” should be the thought of all. “No society can function well without able leadership in all its levels, and A.A. can be no exception. Fortunately, our Society is blessed with any amount of real leadership — the active people of today and the potential leaders of tomorrow as each new generation of able members swarms in. We have an abundance of men and women whose dedication, stability, vision, and special skills make them capable of dealing with every possible service assignment. We have only to seek these folks out and trust them to serve us. “A leader in A.A. service is therefore a man (or woman) who can personally put principles, plans and policies into such dedicated and effective action that the rest of us want to back him and help him with his job. “Good leadership will also remember that a fine plan or idea can come from anybody, anywhere. Consequently, good leadership will often discard its own cherished plans for others that are better, and it will give credit to the source. “Good leadership never passes the buck. Once assured that it has, or can, obtain sufficient general backing, it freely takes decisions and puts them into action forthwith, provided of course that such actions be within the framework of its defined authority and responsibility. “Another qualification for leadership is ‘give and take,’ the ability to compromise cheerfully whenever a proper compromise

can cause a situation to progress in what appears to be the right direction

We cannot, however, compromise always. Now and then, it is truly necessary to stick flat-footed to one’s convictions about an issue until it is settled.

“Our leaders do not drive by mandate, they lead by example. We say to them, ‘Act for us, but do not boss us.’ ”



Reprinted from The Twelve Concepts for World Service illustrated, with permission of A.A. World Services, Inc. You may see the whole pamphlet at AA.org or get one from NNIG Central Office.

The Bracer is a monthly publication intended for members of Alcoholics Anonymous and their families only. It is about, by and for members of the fellowship. Opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of A.A. as a whole or NNIG. For article submissions or comments,

email the Editor at nnigbracer@gmail.com

Deadline for submission is the last Friday of the month.

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
Location-Silver Barron Room 1-6



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



September 9, 2023
Speaker- **Karl M. Covina, CA**
Host Group-Positive Acceptance Group

October 14, 2023
Speaker- **Sheldon F. Las Vegas, NV**
Host Group- A Vision for You

November 4, 2023
Speaker – **Penny P. Livermore CA**
Host Group – For the Effect

December 9, 2023
Speaker – **Ron H. Portland OR**
Host Group- District 2

NNIG Speaker Chair: Kevin B. 775-470-4614
Need more info call: Central Office – (775) 355-1151
Join us for dinner at Café Central @ ~5pm with the speaker

NOVEMBER 11, 2023 GRATITUDE DINNER

Atlantis Hotel & Casino
Doors open 5pm
Dinner 6pm
Speaker:
Jennifer H. Dallas, TX
Tickets on sale \$65

@ Central Office
436 S. Rock Blvd
Sparks Nv 89431
775-355-1151

PAMPHLET OF THE MONTH
\$.35

Questions & Answers on Sponsorship



This is A.A. General Service Conference-approved literature.

OTHER AREA EVENTS

BOOK OF THE MONTH
\$2 Off

District 2 Presents

WHAT

"THE IMPORTANCE OF A HOMEGROUP"
WORKSHOP, COMMITTEE CHAIRS WITH ARCHIVIST TABLE

WHEN

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 13, 2023 @ 11:30 AM - 2:00 PM

WHERE

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
617 SUNNYSIDE DRIVE, RENO, NV 89503
DRINKS AND PIZZA PROVIDED



2023 Lake Tahoe Fall Festival
October 6th - October 8th 2023
Harvey's Hotel and Casino,
18 Hwy 50, Stateline, NV 89449,
USA

Golf Tournament
Oct 06, 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM PDT
Lake Tahoe Golf Course,
2500 Emerald Bay Rd, S. Lake Tahoe

www.laketahoe-aa-fallfestival.com

Daily reflections

This is a book of reflections by A.A. members for A.A. members



Central office report from Ronda H. July 2023

The book of the month is "Daily Reflections" \$2 off. Pamphlet is "Questions and Answers on Sponsorship." \$0.35. Check the website for all service commitments. Please check website for office closures. Sign up for The Blast, email of what's happening in our local AA. Fellowship. Email officemanager@nnig.org to be added to this once a month email.

Volunteer Hours: 125 Hours

Calls into Central Office: 134

- Calls for AA help - 4
- Calls for Alanon/Alateen - 0
- Meeting information - 38
- Retail / merchandise - 15
- Other 12-step programs - 5
- Events - 7
- New to AA/ Talked with - 2
- Business/Central office- 63
- Visitors - 340 -Dogs- 3

Ronda H.
Central Office Manager





August 2023

Linda G. 30 Years
Joann P. 11 Years

Previous Birthdays

JUNE
Ann G. 19 Years
Paul E. 32 years
Kyle 41 Years
MAY
Tom H. 21 Years
Donn T. 33 Years
Anonymous 38 Years

March 2023
Kent L. 41 Years
Kim D. 46 Years
December 2022
Sean S. - 32 Years

November 2022
Sharon S. 38 Years
Rich H. 36 Years

October 2022
Nancy H. 37 Years
Dave S. 39 Years

September 2022
Kathy S. 14 Years
Mike H. 27 years
Phil S. 46 Years

Enjoy the journey!



AA
RECOVERY

Suggested \$5 contribution

AA HALLOWEEN PARTY

- Games
- Face Painting
- Fortune Teller

Speaker

Costume Contest
Children, Adult
& Group
Categories
Beef Tacos
2 for \$5

Raffle

Kerak Shrine Temple
4935 Energy Way
Reno NV 89502

Central Office 775-335-1151




Bring cupcakes, cakes, cookies, brownies for cakewalk

Sat
Oct
28
4-8PM

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

Dawn Patrol

(TV Room)

7:30 am Sun-Sat

1640 Prater Way

Sparks NV

Brown Bagger's Discussion

Mon-Sat

Noon

204 W 12th St. #5

Alturus CA

The Nickel

Mon- Fri

5:30 pm

345 S. Wells Ave

Driers Club

Reno NV

Westwood Back to Basics Group

Monday

6:30pm

500 Birch St.

Westwood CA

AA HALLOWEEN PARTY

- Games
- Face Painting
- Fortune Teller

Speaker

Costume Contest
Children, Adult
& Group
Categories
Beef Tacos
2 for \$5

Raffle

Kerak Shrine Temple
4935 Energy Way
Reno NV 89502

Central Office 775-335-1151

Bring cupcakes, cakes, cookies, brownies for cakewalk

Sat
Oct
28
4-8PM

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

Call Central Office
775-355-1511

CENTRAL OFFICE

IS OPEN ON SATURDAY
FROM 9:00 AM TO 1:00 PM!
STOP IN FOR A CUP OF COFFEE
AND FELLOWSHIP!

District Meetings

- DISTRICT-2** 2nd Tuesday of each month, 6:30 Central Office
Zoom # 91904741396 Password D2
- DISTRICT 4** First Thursday of each month, 6:00 pm
Triangle Club OR Zoom ID: 916 3107 1014
PW: bestdamnd4
- 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

The central Office will be closed the following
holidays for 2023

February 20 - Presidents Day
May 29 - Memorial Day
July 4 - Independence Day
September 4 - Labor Day
October 27 - Nevada Day
November 11 - Veterans Day
November 23, 24 - Thanksgiving
December 24, 25 - Christmas
December 29, 30 - Inventory

9th STEP Prayer

I pray for the right attitude
to make my amends, Being
ever mindful not to harm
others in the process. I ask
for Your guidance in making
indirect amends. Growing in
spiritual progress.

AA Area 42
Translation &
Interpretation
Committee



BILINGUAL SPANISH VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

To help translate Area42 minutes, emails, guidelines,
etc.
Any proficiency level or none! Northern or Southern
Area

We meet online every 3rd Thursday at 5:30 pm PST

We welcome all interested or just curious!

Questions?
Call the Las Vegas Central Office:
(702) 598-1888
and ask that someone from the translation
committee contact you

Zoom ID:474 938 3601
Passcode: Rule62

El servicio nos mantiene
unidos
El servicio keeps us
together

We Are The
Sunshine Committee



Can You Help?

There are cases where sober AAs are unable to
make it to meetings. They are in the hospital or
physical rehabilitation hospital or are home-
bound while they recuperate.

When you cannot attend meetings do you get
'squirrelly' or on edge? Be a part of carrying the
message to those shut-ins by joining us as we
trudge the road of happy destiny on the

Sunshine Committee!!

Sobriety requirement—1 year
We will work with your schedule
Call: Ann .—650-290-4335
Email: aschwenderlauf@gmail.com

CORRECTIONS SERVICE
COMMITMENT

Lake's Crossing Center

INFORMATION:

Two meetings (with two chairs for each meeting)
on Monday nights at 6:00 pm

REQUIRED:

Background check for current cases
- Two step TB test
Orientation

CONTACT:

Natalie M.
775-342-8045
potter_n@rocketmail.com

Thank you for your service!

NNIG/Central Office Group Contributions 2023

Group	August	YTD	Group	August	YTD
3rd Tradition Secular Group			Happy Hour Reno		1618.33
4th Dimension- ON-LINE	38.08	247.10	International Cartel Men's Stag		390.76
A Way Home		1475.11	Kings Beach AA Golden Group		137.66
Alano Brown Baggers		68.11	Ladies of The Evening		263.05
Alano Big Book Study		145.00	Ladies of the Lake		131.81
Alano Living Sober		120.00	McGill NV Freedom Group		85.00
Alano Jaywalkers	225.26	534.30	Mid-Day Group ON-LINE	25.00	142.46
Alano Open Heart Open Mind	220.00	375.00			
Alano Women in Recovery		32.75	Minden Language of the Heart		40.00
Alano Sunshine Group	100.00	100.00			
Amen Maintenance Meeting		300.00	Minden Saturday Night Fever		210.00
Back Room Group		474.13	Minden Stephanie Way Group		117.00
Back to Basics Saturday Night	300.00	500.00	Minden Wednesday Night Live		97.36
Battle Mountain Fellowship			Minden/Gardnerville Group		201.02
Alano Afternoon Serenity			Mt Rose Candle Light		200.00
Beginners are Winners On-Line Gro	-624.00	818.80	Mt Rose Recovery Room	257.40	1406.27
Buena Vista Group			NNIG Business Meeting	29.00	305.00
Caring & Sharing in Stead		971.52	Old Time A.A. Group		
Carson Airport AA			Out and Sober		
Carson Big Book Experience		70.00	Portola Group		
Carson Brown Baggers		60.00	Positive Acceptance Group	444.87	1255.72
Carson Early Birds		1805.67	Professionals Meeting		
Carson Happy Hour			Pyramid Way Discussion Group	60.00	160.00
Carson Happy, Joyous and Free		150.00	Recien ilegados		
Carson Jay-Walkers Men's			Resentments And A Coffee Pot		
Carson Men's NO BS Stag	100.00	160.00	RTC Almost Heaven	50.00	700.00
Carson Sandbaggers	100.00	1350.00	RTC Aloha Group		1046.42
Carson Sisters in Sobriety			RTC Beginners are Winners		100.00
Carson Sunday Morning Fire Station			RTC Big Book Study		
Carson Valley Gratitude		500.00	RTC Don't Trip Music Meeting		
Carson Women's Night Out			RTC Good Morning Sobriety		
Chester Saturday Night Group		125.00	RTC How We Stay Stopped		100.00
Choices			RTC Little Rascals		100.00
Cornerstone Group		350.00	RTC Men's Trudgers		390.06
Dayton Fellowship Hall		250.00	RTC Monday Night Mens		375.00
Dayton Friday Night Rule 62		300.00	RTC New Awakenings Group		806.22
Dayton Red Rooster		500.00	RTC Recien Llegados		
Dayton Sunday Morning		200.00	RTC Women's Just for Today		95.55
Decompression Chamber/online	239.17	1352.96	Serenity on Sundays		250.00
District 14	10.00	270.00	Silver Springs Groups		300.00
District 2	12.00	51.00	Sisters of Sobriety SOS		168.02
District 22	38.00	307.00	Slide Mountain Candle light Group		150.00
Double R at Noon		687.88	South Y Shore Lake Group		500.00
District 12		1.00	Southside Group	110.46	1081.32
Driar's Serenity Night Owls			Susanville Fellowship		98.00
Eye Operner		973.50	Step 1		85.00
Elko	6.80	6.80			
Fallon Fallen Women's AA Meeting			Sunnyside Group		1657.50
Fallon Grapevine Online		120.00	Tahoe City Fellowship		100.00
Fallon The Real Lunch Bunch			The Next Chapter		100.00
Fireside Group		400.00			
Galena Friday Night			The Rock Group	157.20	400.20
Ground Zero	214.32	657.42	The Shop		300.00
Grupo Accion		60.00	Truckee Dawn Patrol		1640.00
Grupo La Nueva Luz	10.00	90.00	Truckee Fellowship		151.25
Grupo Nueva Vida					
Grupo Latino Reno		50.00	Truckee River Men's Stag		1196.00
Incline Village Fellowship		97.43	Verdi Greener Pastures		
Jamesville God Grant Me		30.00	Virgina City Plug in the Jug		
Jamesville Women's Monday Night		89.20	Wednesday Night Beginners Meeting		
End of the Road Group		140.00	Weekend Warriors		
Fernley Groups		120.00	Westwood Monday Night		60.00
			Whole in the Ground Sunnyside		
			Whole in the Soul		550.00
			Willing to go to any Lengths		
			Winnemucca Serenity Seekers		225.00
			Women's New Beginnings		417.00
			Women's New Harmony	319.50	494.50
			Young at Heart		100.00
			Total	2,443.06	37,985.16

AA is no success story in the ordinary sense of the word. It is a story of suffering transmuted, under grace, into spiritual progress.

Bill W.

A MOM'S RETURN CONTINUED

In that moment, I knew couldn't step over that threshold and not drink. So I set my son down in the doorway and walked away. As I was doing so, I had a moment of clarity or grace or whatever you would call that crack in the universe where truth comes tumbling down. My moment of clarity was clear: You put alcohol ahead of your children—what are you doing?

I couldn't drink enough that night to shut down my head or the thoughts that were coming at a rapid pace. This was not the first time I had put alcohol ahead of my children, but it was the first time the truth broke through to me. All my denial stopped working. I got willing and returned home. This time I surrendered. I didn't know what else to do.

I joined AA, got a sponsor, found a God of my own understanding and worked the Steps. Ever since my first day in AA I've stayed involved in service and helped other women. Yet I still lived with gnawing guilt over how I had left my children.

When I got sober, the children didn't live with me right away. Over time I slowly worked on our relationships. When I got to the point in my recovery where I needed to frankly analyze my past and make amends, I got to show my children how I had changed by making living amends, by being present in their lives to show that I wouldn't abandon them again. This took a very long time.

Then one night, everything changed. I had just finished making amends to my son Harry and he informed me he and his girlfriend were having a baby. Due to the progress we had made through the amends, I was invited into the delivery room to witness the birth of Harry's son. As I was standing by my son in the delivery room and his son was finally coming into the world, we were all very emotional. My son's knees were going out from under him and, as he started to fall, I held him up to greet his son.

We hugged and cried for joy that night. I left the hospital and went to an AA meeting at a nearby treatment center. The topic was forgiveness. The moment in the delivery room came to me. I thought about how 23 years earlier I had put that same son

down in the doorway and walked away because I had to drink. Now, I had held him up so he could greet his son's arrival in the world.

I had truly come full circle as a result of AA. I thank God. It's never too late for forgiveness.

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SEPTEMBER 1998

A Sense of Service

Generally, when we hear the word organization, we think of a situation where there are a lot of rules, and someone with a certain amount of power governs or is in control.

Out of curiosity, I decided to look in the dictionary for a definition of the word "organize," and I found that to organize means to systematically prepare or arrange for effective operation. Isn't this what has been done in AA? We have service boards and committees of varying natures that we elect or appoint and who assume responsibility without trying to take on authority, people who, because of a true sense of spiritual simplicity and service to others, effectively carry out the duties of whatever job they are asked to perform.

But this sense of service doesn't only apply at the level of boards or committees. Look at the group and the people who regularly get there early and set up the meeting area, the people who make the coffee, clean up the ashtrays, sweep the floor and carry out the other tasks just because they know they have to be done. These are only a few examples, but the same principles apply in all of AA, be it at the level of group, intergroup or general service.

As long as we have members who continue to have the best interests of AA at heart and enjoy doing the things that need to be done without any notion of power or prestige, Tradition Nine won't be any problem.

In The AA Service Manual, Bill W. wrote that "while the Conference can issue orders to the General Service Office, it can never mandate or govern the Society of Alcoholics Anonymous which it serves. The

Conference represents us, but cannot rule us."

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Interview with an alcoholic

Please introduce yourself.

Hi my name is Mick O. My AA birthday is January 5th, 1972, sober 51 years as of 1/5/1972, living in Reno, NV since 2007. My sobriety started Southern California. Sylvia and I celebrated 54 of marriage this year. We have two children, a son and a daughter who each blessed us with 2 granddaughters.

Do you have a Home group?

My Home group is the Wednesday Triangle Club ALOHA.

Briefly describe your drinking.

My whole drinking period lasted about eight years. I quit when I was 24 years old going on 100. I started in my teens and it got worse quickly. I earned a DUI, went to jail. No long term incarceration, just the drunk tank. I lost jobs. In Vietnam during my off-duty time I got drunk and the enemy coming after me was alcohol. Back home I'd wreck cars, I should have been dead. I totaled a VW Bug on an LA freeway ... nobody should have walked (staggered) away from that. But I did because God has my back; he's had other things in store for me. It was a miserable existence as a drunk. Lying to myself and others, hating myself, and denying what I was. My wife left me a number of times, and by the time I finally quit drinking, we were separated on our way to divorce court. I went to Alcoholics Anonymous and this time I was 100% serious. This time I jumped in with both feet and made sobriety my number one priority. I stayed sober. Sylvia saw I was serious and we got back together. I didn't have a silver key to Alcoholics Anonymous because my dad was a sober member. I knew Alcoholics Anonymous was the real deal. I knew some of the folks around Alcoholics

Anonymous even as a youngster. But that didn't give me a fast track to sobriety. Alcohol almost beat me to death before I could become teachable and I could stop drinking and accept the solution. It's a radical solution because I have a radical disease; it tells me I ain't got it and wants to kill me. I was a 24-year-old guy who thought he had all the answers none of them working. It was a miserable existence. My dad took me to my first meeting and I took him to his last meeting he passed with 51 years of sobriety. It's the real deal. A drunken life for real Alcoholics is a real, insidious deal, and sobriety is a real deal. I jumped in with both feet, got a sponsor, got into the big book, got into the solution, and have a relationship with my Lord Jesus since 1972. I'm thankful for that and for Him. He helps me to give it back, AA is where it happens most, and I try to live to the best of my ability to live up to the AA Responsibility Declaration. I'm not perfect at it, but that's a guide.

You have been sober a really long time, 51 years. Have you been in A.A. the whole time?

Yes, continually involved one way or another. I never walked away from it. Although there are times when self-will run riot visits me, I'm a work in progress like all of us. I'm still broken, in the state of repair. I am recovered and also recovering. I have "recovered from a seemingly hopeless state of mind and body". It is no longer "hopeless". I am recovering from me. One thing that will never be recovered or recovering is the ability to drink successfully. I try to grow one day at a time maybe bring someone along with me too.

What are some of the things that you've seen that have changed in 51 years?

"Alcoholics Anonymous is a spiritual kindergarten" —Bill Wilson (stated on many occasions)

"Keep it simple" —Dr. Bob

A member once shared with me that he was going to rewrite the Big Book but he said the Big Book ended up rewriting him. The Big Book points to the whole program, the stated "basic text" of Alcoholics Anonymous. There is no A.A. lite. I thank God for AA. I attend church and go to AA, that's the way I believe God wants it for me and the Big Book encourages it too. A.A. may have changed for some people, for me AA hasn't changed I am changing because of God and AA; The Big Book, my relationship with the Lord. The Big Book tells me it's all about getting a Higher Power, and that's what I did in the beginning and then give it away. Get Mick out of the way and give it away and follow The Way. Alcoholics Anonymous wouldn't be around today if the core foundation wasn't adhered to by a core of sober folks. "Get in the middle of the herd". I choose to get into the herd where God and the Steps are at the center and the Traditions encompass the outer perimeter and we all embrace both positions. If anybody wants to get into the real herd I'm more than happy to share that with them. That's what I go back to, it's what is in the Big Book, and that's part of my foundation. Alcoholics Anonymous (Big Book), Doctor Bob and the Good Old Timers, the 12 and 12, and for me the Bible. As long as Alcoholics Anonymous adheres to its core foundation in the Big Book, things are going to move in the right direction. We reap the rewards accordingly. I'm sober today and reaping the rewards, because I willing and have the design for living that really works and I adhere to that. Change is inevitable growth is optional. If I want to get smart and try to redesign and reinvent the wheel, I'm going to end up with a flat tire. The wheel has already been invented. If I pull out any spokes in there, I'm in trouble. Doctor Bob talked about the spokes attached to the hub of the wheel and the hub and the spokes are all important and they're attached to the hub in the outer perimeter. If you pulled out one spoke that was not going to work. If I take anything out of the program of Alcoholics Anonymous and try to change it for whatever

reason, the question will arise "how's that workin' for ya?".

Elder statesman or bleeding Deacon?

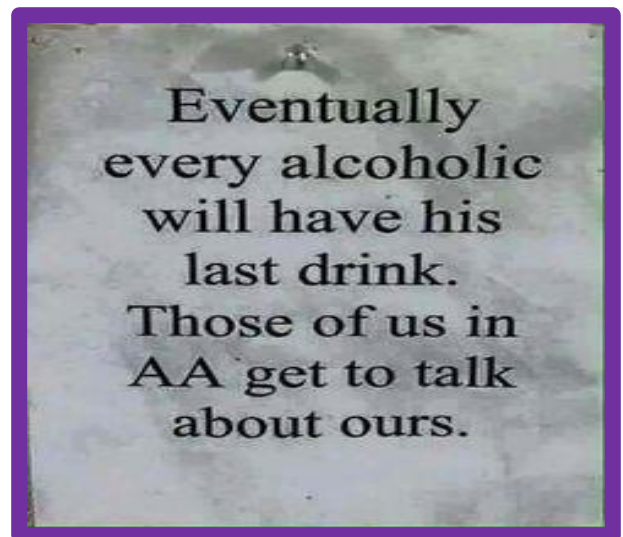
Just one amongst many! Our lifeblood is giving it away. The highest rank in Alcoholics Anonymous is a sober servant. On any given day, somebody with one month can say something that's going to help Mick with 51 years that day. And if I'm an elder statesman, I may not be approachable, or my ears may be over-waxed. We're all together in this lifeboat, God still steers, we row. The person in front of me may have one month and he's rowing just as I am with 51 years. I try to share my experience, strength, and hope, but I try to do it in a sober servant manner, not elder statesman.

One thing that you learned in Alcoholics Anonymous that has been very important to you?

I know the design for living really works. I know God is there for me, I know others are there for me and I for them. I would like to close with Bill D, AA Number Three, quoting Bill Wilson's words, the "golden text of AA":

"The Lord has been so wonderful to me, curing me of this terrible disease that I just want to keep talking about it and telling people." – Bill W., Third story in the Big Book

Interviewed July 2023





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