



Conscious Contact

Prescott Area Intergroup: Serving Central Yavapai County

July 2017

240 S. Montezuma St. # 108 Prescott, AZ 86303 Phone: (928) 445-8691 Open Weekdays 10:00 am - 4:00 pm
Website: www.prescottaa.org Email: prescottaa@prescottaa.org

Character Building vs. Comfort Seeking

When I was in active addiction, I sought the relief that substances provided for me. They were effective for a time, but when they no longer worked it became apparent that my life was crashing down around me. Every day, every moment, revolved around seeking comfort. Looking for a way out was the only thing I knew. My disease tells me that I need to escape how I am feeling and the best way to escape, it tells me, is by intoxication until obliteration. So that was what I did.

When I stopped drinking, even though the substance was removed, my alcoholism still found other ways to manifest in my feelings, my obsessions, and my actions. I found myself trying to seek out ease and comfort by running away from my problems. Paths that seemed like easier, softer ways usually turned rough and brought me right back to the beginning. This delusionary pattern of seeking comfort above all else, while entirely avoiding working the 12 steps, resulted in ten dry months, the beginnings of suicidal contemplation, and most terrifyingly, intense cravings to drink. I was restless, irritable, and discontent in spades!

Being post-relapse and dry for almost a year, I was at a meeting, vibrating in my chair, desperately wanting to drink. Hopeless that I could ever feel better, I had been living in a self-made hurricane of thoughts and emotions. My untreated alcoholism was tearing me apart from the inside out. Only one thing mattered to me right then: escaping the experience I was having.

That evening, I was introduced to a temporary sponsor and started really getting involved in A.A. for the first time. Eventually, I got a different sponsor whom I started taking seriously. He began to take me through the 12 steps. For months, I couldn't believe that I would feel better after writing inventory, praying and meditating, or becoming part of our fellowship. When I started taking the actions that the people in the rooms suggested, however, things started to change. None of my growth was immediate. I am the alcoholic who had a spiritual experience of the educational variety.

Working with my sponsor, I started taking actions in A.A. that were uncomfortable for me -- scary even. Everything was entirely opposite of what I had been

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Corrections Corner: Why Do It?

Being in Corrections for 11 years, it's easy for me, at times, to experience that "Can't see the forest for the trees" syndrome. I take doing corrections as second nature, and for reasons far beyond my mere mortal understanding, "assume" everyone is as interested and motivated by the possibility of corrections service work as I am. Hence, I may at times write as though you, the reader, will automatically relate or understand.

Attempting to do a column that is both interesting and that stays on point sometimes results in repetition. I've mentioned in past columns the various conversations that go on at a jail or prison meeting, or for that matter, at an Arizona State Corrections Conference. I just assume that sharing my experience will certainly motivate others to jump into corrections service.

I must admit that I didn't just leap gleefully into my first experience in doing corrections work. To say I was reluctant would be misleading; to say I was arrogant would be more accurate. A friend had suggested I bring A.A. meetings to the jail. I declined for what I thought were obvious reasons. The last portion of Herbert Spencer's quote, found in Appendix II of the Big Book, pretty much sums it up: "...contempt, prior to investigation." I worked in a jail for 10 years, as the Maintenance Supervisor, and would get called in at night for various emergencies. I would see the inmates being led to an AA meeting and because of my "vast" experience and education, I knew, without hesitation, that there were only 3 reasons "those" men were going to an A.A. meeting: (1) to get out of their cell, (2) to make points with the deputies (guards), or (3) in hopes of earning a "Get out of jail early" card for attending.

When I explained to the man who was trying to lure me into this service my well thought out and formulated reasons for not wanting to bring A.A. behind the walls, he simply let me know that whether there were two or ten men at a meeting, if my sharing attracted just one to the program, I may have just saved a life. I thought the man was a great philosopher, until I found out he had stolen that line from the late Clinton Duffy, the former warden of

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doing before. I thought you were all crazy. After all, I just wanted to feel comfortable again. But working the steps was uncomfortable. For me, it was a serious conundrum and I was unable to solve it.

Eventually, however, I began to experience the paradox of taking inconvenient action. Shaking hands at meetings, sharing my story honestly, writing inventory, calling fellow A.A.'s on the phone, asking for help, were actions that help me build character. All of a sudden I was losing my fear of people, places, and things. I was comfortable in my own skin. I was on an even keel emotionally. I felt a part of.

Even though I did not feel comfortable in the rooms for a long time, I do now. I feel that way today as a direct result of taking inconvenient actions and growing in them. Never in my life could I conceive that I needed this way of being. A.A. has taught me that the best way for me to begin to find serenity and happiness is to build character rather than to seek comfort; that instead of escaping from my problems, I can put in the work for a better alternative - relief and freedom from them.

Jackson S.

The Importance of a Home Group

Early on I was told by my sponsor that I needed to have a designated, official "home group" as a cornerstone for lasting sobriety. The requirements were that I attend every week (unless sick in bed or way out of town), that I maintain a service commitment to that group, and that I participate in "home group business meetings" even when I didn't feel like staying after or coming before the regular meeting. I have changed home groups a few times, mostly due to moving, but I continue to follow this direction given to me in 1973.

A very common theme to relapse is how the alcoholic first stopped going to meetings and drifted away from recovery. Having a home group gives me a little more insurance against doing just that. I made a commitment to myself, my sponsor and the group. I want to be in integrity. This commitment also helps me quickly sort through any excuses not to make the meeting.

I enjoy going to meetings. I like to talk, listen, laugh or cry. And of great importance...I am reminded of my condition, the truth, and the very real consequences should I ever think that taking a drink is a good idea or an answer to my problems.

Hugh H.

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California's San Quentin State Prison. Many of those reading this knew the man who is responsible for my Corrections service work -- Bob Campbell.

Deciding to do corrections work changed not only my attitude, but my life. Whether it's a County Jail or a State or Federal prison, one thought goes through my mind every time I pass through the secure, "sally port" gates guarding the place: There but for the grace of God go I. Even better, as a good friend of mine, NY Jimmy, says; "I ain't thirsty when I leave." When I say it changed my life, it takes only one inmate sharing to act as a wakeup call. I remember one example from the Arizona State Prison Complex in Tucson. The man sobered up in prison, got out, attended meetings but then figured he no longer needed them. Sponsors were beneath his lifestyle. Reading the Big Book took too much time, and he had already done the steps in prison (his words). He went back out for just ONE NIGHT and is now doing 25 years. Maybe it's because I'm older and more mature (cough, cough), or maybe it's realizing that an inmate's experience could be me. In either case, bringing A.A. behind the walls reinforces my sobriety.

Volunteers offer those suffering with this disease, the opportunity to attend a meeting. Several prospects for corrections work I've spoken with have voiced concerns about their safety with "those" inmates. I've never experienced one moment where my safety was an issue. I have been at meetings where there was one man trying to cause a little rift, and he was "escorted" out of the meeting by the other inmates. If, as a volunteer, you still have reservations, there is a very valuable tool where you can still do corrections service, without going to a facility, or for that matter without leaving the comfort of your home: Corrections Correspondence. Pamphlets are easily available at "aa.org" pamphlet F26 (they are free).

If you have questions on Corrections Service, please do not hesitate to contact me at corrections@area03.org or (928) 925 1887

In Service and Keep on Trudge'n.

Mel F.

Heard at a meeting:

Humpty D. sat on a wall.

Humpty D. had a great fall.

**All the king's horses and all the king's men
couldn't put Humpty together again.**

But, God could and would if He were sought.



**July AA Birthdays
CONGRATULATIONS!**



Home Group ?

Barbara A. 7/14/87

Serenity @ Sunrise

Cindy C. 7/06/06

Step Stories

Judy V. 7/04/89

Friday BB Solutions

Jim T. 7/14/82

The Slice of Life

Cortland M. 7/06/10

No Name Group

Ryan D. 7/06/08

Welcome Valley Group

Mike D. 7/13/93

Keep it Simple

Rita S. 7/22/12

Jim D. 7/18/12

PV Friday Night Speakers

Larry W. 7/13/14

Beth S. 7/26/82

Sun. AM Men's Stag

Adam C. 7/27/07

Joe M. 7/29/07

Tues. Night Step Study

Cindy N. 7/28/08

Angel W. 7/07/71

Park Ave

Deb S. 7/17/02

Pat R. 7/28/91

Alternatives

Bobby B. 7/01/09

George J. 7/13/91

Mike S. 7/16/88

PV Noon Group

Heather R. 7/15/14

Danny A. 7/19/83

Claudette P. 7/16/73

PV Wed Night Step Study

Sarah E. 7/27/08

Eugene V. 7/07/07

Candy 7/16/06

Prescott Group

Kelsey H. 7/12/09

Jennifer K. 7/25/06

Alex P. 7/01/06

Matt C. 7/20/03

Girlie Birds

Michele D. 7/16/16

Patti T. 7/16/10

Judy S. 7/12/07

Stephanie V. 7/13/98

Humboldt Men's Stag

Ron W. 7/16/15

Mickey C. 7/07/08

Lynn H. 7/05/00

Jack McP. 7/07/87

Tom M. 7/15/79

Lushes T'Ladies

Emma L. 7/26/10

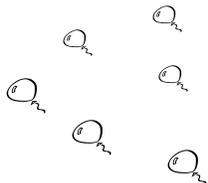
Susan L. 7/12/07

Milissa C. 7/04/05

Patti K. 7/30/03

Jamie G. 7/13/95

Carol C. 7/01/81



CELEBRATE SOBRIETY!

Please help update our AA birthday list!

Email, mail, or bring in a copy of your group's updated birthday list to the Intergroup Office.

Sign up to receive a monthly birthday update email.

Thank You to everyone who helps!

Heard at a meeting:

The second you realize that you are not in control is the beginning of real freedom.

Service Corner

Look back and be grateful.

Look ahead and be hopeful.

Look around and be helpful.

Next Intergroup Meeting:

6:30 pm, Wednesday, July 12, 2017
(the second Wednesday of every month)
at the First Christian Church, 1230 Willow Creek Rd.

Next District 14-140 GSR Meeting

Wednesday, July 5, 2017
(the first Wednesday of the month)
at the First Christian Church, 1230 Willow Creek Rd.

Next District 14-142 GSR Meeting

6:30 pm, Tuesday, July 4, 2017
(the first Tuesday of every month)
Emmanuel Lutheran Church, 7763 E. Long Look, PV

Prescott Shoestring Roundup Committee
At the Roundup! July 14, 15 & 16. See you there!

PI / CPC Committee Meetings

Meetings scheduled as needed.
The Public Information/
Cooperation with the Professional Community
Committee has many opportunities to be of service.
For information about this committee call the
Prescott Area Intergroup Office (928) 445-8691.

The Prescott Area Intergroup's
Treatment Facilities Committee
For information on how you can be of service on this
committee please call the Intergroup Office.

The Prescott Area Intergroup's
Correctional Facilities Committee
For Yavapai County Juvenile Justice Center AA meeting
information call Jerry D. 928 636-9343

Don't Forget the Early Days

We've probably all heard some version of the AA warning – "If you don't remember your last drink, you may not have had it yet." I certainly remember mine, and also my first AA meeting which came about two hours after I walked out of the saloon where I had spent most of the day. But I was reminded at a recent meeting that it's also important to remember what early sobriety was like.

Another member was sharing at the meeting about a new sponsee who just didn't seem to be gaining any traction in the program. The new man hadn't had a drink in several weeks by now, but life was still pretty grim and he had a hard time believing that any of these steps his sponsor kept talking about were going to improve it. Our fellow trudger shared that this was his first new sponsee in a while, and that working with him had proved a good reminder of how mentally and psychologically challenging those first weeks and months in AA can be. (For a first person account of the challenge read the article by Jackson S., also in this issue of Conscious Contact.)

The sponsor's share really hit home with me. I sponsored several men in my previous home town, but they mostly already had a number of years under their belt. The last brand new man I had worked with turned nine last month. These sponsees, like me, had experienced recovery in their own lives. They generally didn't have to be convinced that AA works. Our conversations were more in the nature of ongoing tenth steps about the twisted thinking that we still experience on occasion, and discussions about which program principles most apply to whatever troubles we face.

Then, two years ago, I moved to Prescott and all that changed. Given the nature of so many AA meetings here, with the heavy attendance of men and women in recovery programs, I soon found myself sponsoring several very raw newcomers. Frequently I've been getting frustrated when these new men fail to jump into our program with both feet. "What's wrong with them, anyway? Don't they want to change? Don't they listen? Can't they understand how incredibly better my life and the lives of so many other AA veterans have become thanks to trying to live this way of life? And can't they accept that with a little effort on their parts they, too, can be 'happy, joyous and free' in sobriety?"

It's all so clear to me now. But wasn't I a lot like them at first? My "bottom" was lower than some, but higher than many others. I still had a home, a family and a job. But early sobriety still left me with many doubts. How were these steps going to take care of the payments on that last "bill consolidation loan" I had

gotten just weeks before I got to the program? How would they change the atmosphere around work, where, because of my old habits of simply disappearing, I still felt like I was under house arrest? What about my home life, where everybody remained on edge and either frightened or suspicious of me? I always considered myself to be pretty easy-going, so why was I now experiencing occasional flashes of anger that bordered on real rage? How could these steps make sober life less boring than it had always seemed to be? Where was there any fun in all this?

I am very grateful that I stuck around long enough to find answers in our program to all those and many other questions. And I try to share what I've discovered with these new sponsees. The results have been mixed. One sponsee died of an overdose just two weeks after returning home from 10 months of recovery in Prescott. I know of at least three others who also relapsed. Two now have more than a year of sobriety and I've lost track of one other. I can't help but feel good about those still sober, and bad about the others. But I take no credit for the ones who are sober, nor blame for the ones who are not. I wasn't able to get myself sober, much less anyone else, and my sobriety continues to depend on our fellowship and a power greater than myself that I can't explain. It's no different for these men in early recovery.

Still, our Big Book tells me in Chapter 7, on "Working with Others," that I have a special place in this struggle against alcoholism. "You can help when no one else can," it says. "You can secure their confidence when others fail." It advises that I show the new person "from (my) own experience, how the queer mental condition surrounding that first drink prevents normal functioning of the will power."

I just reread this chapter and found that, while written some 80 years ago and seeming almost quaint at times given the recovery landscape we have today, there are several pieces of advice that help me deal with any frustration I may feel in dealing with newcomers. It reminds me that "they are very ill" and to "never talk down to an alcoholic from any moral or spiritual hilltop;" to "offer him friendship and fellowship;" to "make it plain he is under no obligation to you;" to keep in mind "that his defects of character are not going to disappear overnight;" that "to be helpful is our only aim;" and ultimately that "he may be helping you more than you are helping him."

Dan F.

Heard at a meeting:

**Don't let the life that AA gave you
take you away from AA.**

Meeting of the Month: 'Carry This Message'

On Saturdays at 7:00pm the Light and Life Church at 2797 Willow Creek Rd. is the location for an hour long, open AA speaker meeting.

"Carry This Message" is three years old. Some of the founding members are Doug and Julia F., Jim D. Jon H., Adam M. and Larry W. The group wanted to create an "old school" (suit up, show up, dress up) meeting. Last year, Adam M, was the group's "speaker-seeker," bringing in men with 10 plus years of sobriety from outside Prescott or outside the regular meeting attendees. Michelle H. brought in the women speakers, so each month would present equal male/female messages of experience, strength, and hope. Currently Stephanie V. and Larry W. are in charge of the speaker roster. At this meeting, you'll consistently hear a good variety of speakers, delivering the message of solutions as it is outlined in the Big Book and the program of AA.

Attendees each Saturday range in age from 18 to 80 due to the regular blend of young people from area treatment centers and long-time senior members. About 75% are male. There is always coffee and tea in the kitchen, and there's something to eat on birthday night when everyone shares their anniversary celebrations. Count on greeters at the door to welcome you in. The room holds round tables for seating, plus chairs around the periphery. Attendance is capped at 110 (fire marshal rule), so get there early if you want a seat! There is a very good relationship between the church and the fellowship. Last month Prescott's Founders' Day celebration was housed in the Light and Life hall.

Cathy N.

Meeting in a Minute

Sunny Days Group: Fridays, noon, closed AA meeting at the Prescott Community Adult Center, 1280 E. Rosser St., Prescott. (Monday meetings are open)

Attendance in the room was close to 40, median age was close to 60, and male-to-female ratio was close to 50%. Lots of sobriety in the room; 5 folk were celebrating anniversaries the day I attended, and added up it was 100 plus years of sobriety! The atmosphere was warm, welcoming, and inclusive. Discussions were lively and solution based. A darn fine meeting to attend, I'd say :)

Cathy N.

**AA is a plain language solution to a
life and death problem.**

PRESCOTT AREA INTERGROUP'S

2017 SUMMER PICNICS!

POTLUCK, AA SPEAKER MEETING & RAFFLES

July 28th: Hosted by: *The Afterwards Group*

August 25th: Co- Hosted by:

Diamonds in the Rough & Keep it Simple

Granite Creek Park Ramada, 554 W. 6th St.

6:00 PM — Potluck/Picnic

7:00 PM — AA Speaker Meeting

Raffles to follow speaker meeting

Step of the Month – Step Seven

Members share how they came to grips with our seventh step: "Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings."

"The first word in Step Seven is humbly, to act with humility. We alcoholics after years of living in bondage of self, find this a difficult concept to grasp. Did we not try to make our drinking acceptable? Failure was the result of my efforts. I was brought to AA humiliated by my drinking and actions. I faced the reality of years not being able to control or stop drinking on my own will power. The humiliation of having no place to go, except AA let me realize I cannot run my own show very well."

Dan S.

"Humility, which is the basis of the 7th Step, is something I came to understand you can FEEL when you're in it. It's a feeling of closeness to your Higher Power, of doing the right thing; also the feeling that everything is all right or going to be all right. You also can definitely feel when you're NOT in humility! Not being in humility means being in defects – meaning any toxic feeling of insecurity, resentment, self-centered fear, anger, jealousy, etc. The list is LONG!

Disconnected from my Higher Power. Not good. Sunshine of the Spirit is gone."

Stephanie V.

And an oldie but goodie from the Step 7 archive: "Like many AAs I've met, I really didn't understand what humility meant when I walked through the doors. But what I've learned about the subject in the years since is best summed up in this passage from a meditation guide that I use: "When I gain humility, I have myself in perspective. I like myself and I see how much I have in common with all my fellow human beings. This is truly a gift that I receive as part of living a spiritual life. It means I have acceptance and peace of mind. I don't have to constantly compete. I can make mistakes and still have the possibility of repairing them. I can be okay even when no one is paying attention to me."

Anonymous, July, 2016

The Bodyguard and Censor

“There was always that mysterious barrier we could neither surmount nor understand. It was as if we were actors on a stage, suddenly realizing that we did not know a single line of our parts. That’s one reason we loved alcohol too well. It did let us act extemporaneously.” *Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions*, p. 57.

When I came into the rooms of A.A. I quickly heard and understood when others spoke of being a chameleon.

I recalled my great concern when a combined social gathering included folks from disparate fields of my life. For example, I knew if there were work colleagues, neighbors and relatives I could be at risk of them exchanging information that would reveal inconsistencies in the roles I played in different areas of my life. In addition to my outward behavior, I knew that internally I had long hosted many “sub-roles.” Indeed some seemed essential for my physical and social survival.

So I quickly wrote a list of these sub-roles (some might call them ‘selves’). Based on my history, I titled it “The Conference Table.” When the list of seats grew to over 10, it was clearly a major undertaking so I shelved it (“What an order! I can’t go through with it.”). Then at a meeting a member expressed gratitude the ‘voices in my head had stopped;’ when it was my turn to speak I expressed gratitude the pictures had stopped.

Next I tried some extreme thinking to eliminate at least one member of my committee. That plan resulted in very disturbing nightmares about killing him with a cyanide aerosol, so I backed-off the idea that just trying to think my way out of the problem could succeed. But shortly thereafter, I quickly saw my recovery and essential spiritual growth could not progress because of the debilitating effects of two of those sub-roles: The Censor and the Bodyguard. Immediate action was required.

All actions required I advise the Bodyguard in advance so that he would be present to give me a feeling of safety. In parallel, all utterances must be pre-screened by the Censor to avoid any possibility of my worst fears -- ridicule and humiliation. Of course, this meant nothing sober could be spontaneous. To cloak this clumsiness, I would occasionally feign carefully planned spontaneity!

Being of a scientific nature, I conducted experiments! I asked the Bodyguard to be present but not involved. Then I took a risk! If it went badly, the Bodyguard would say: “I told you so;” if it went well, he’d say: “Well you got away with it this time, but that doesn’t prove anything.”

In a sense I could see my thinking was like an addiction, I knew it was injurious but I couldn’t stop “cold turkey.” I prayed for the self-defeating, learned behavior to be removed. One evening shortly after my prayer, I told the Bodyguard he could take the evening off. After asking if I was sure, he did so. I didn’t do anything dramatic; really it was quite an ordinary evening. But I was present without stabilizer-wheels. After a few more trials, I explained to the Bodyguard he had passed retirement age; but I would still call him in if needed. He seemed reassured by this and took retirement. Then as an example, I made two high-risk trips into the active volcanic crater at Mt. St. Helen’s, Oregon.

The Censor was a similar process; but being even more closely bound into my thinking, much harder to delineate and bypass. One of my semantic games through the Censor was to use ambiguity; the only rule was: “All two (or more) meanings must be concurrently true.” A legacy of this: even today at meetings, readers and listeners ask one another: “What did he just say?”

Breakthrough came in a therapy session when I was asked what would happen if my wife got to know who I really was. Without hesitation, I replied “THAT is UNTHINKABLE!” I then realized the Censor was even blocking certain ideas, and to that end had erased certain words from my memory bank; now those certain ideas could not actually be thought. I left the session feeling I held a hand-grenade but another had the pin. If I relaxed for an instant I would be destroyed. More prayer at bed-time and I awoke without the grenade...

“...I awoke to a new world. Nothing had changed and yet everything had changed.” From *Alcoholics Anonymous*, 2nd Edition, p. 280 -- “The Man Who Mastered Fear.”

I also gained much benefit from working the 12 Traditions focused on the Group (aka ‘Committee’) in my head. None could be expelled from Roger. Some are more cooperative than others and there remains one who will go along with the Group “One day At a Time” but asks ‘Then we get to drink – right?’

Today, almost all the time when I am speaking (and mostly when writing) I now have a clear channel. As so often for me, the turning point for my recovery hinges on my choice to trust. I trust my HP will always correct and augment in every case where I fail to be of maximum service. It may not be elegant. Losses may occur. But I live. “Fear is the penalty we pay for lack of trust”.

Roger N.

Paradoxes of Sobriety

September 17, 1997 marked my thirty-second year in this great Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. In all those years, if I've had any bad days, I can't remember them. AA has taught me that I'm the architect of my own success or happiness. The quality of my sobriety is up to me--it will be what I want it to be. The truth is that my alcoholism is the best thing that ever happened to me, because it brought me to AA and this wonderful new way of life.

Over the years, I've made some observations about the AA program which can be summed up by the phrase "the paradoxes of sobriety." The dictionary defines paradox as a statement that's true but appears to be false or self-contradictory. What follows are a few examples.

You have to surrender to win. The keys are giving up the futile struggle, admitting we're powerless over alcohol and turning our lives and will over to the care of God as we understand him. The only way we can beat a Heavyweight Champion of the World is not to get into the ring with him. But we need help to stay out of the ring. We can't do it alone.

It's not the end, it's the beginning. Newcomers to AA are preoccupied with the thought of never drinking again. They are guilty of "forever" thinking, and coming into AA seems like the end. In reality, it's the beginning of a new life. The "weller than well" theory tells us that we can enjoy a better life for having--and solving--our drinking problem.

It's not forever, it's just for today. The great secret of AA is living a day at a time. That's all we have anyway. Living a day at a time doesn't mean we can't set some goals or plan our vacation or retirement, only that we can't live emotionally beyond the twenty-fours allotted to us.

AA is a spiritual program, not a religious one. Getting outside of ourselves--getting rid of the hate, hostility, and resentment--is the spiritual purpose of AA. We are asked to find our own Higher Power, as we understand him, to bring focus to our lives. While we are told to "leave religion at the door" of AA, some of us find a way back to our religion, but as an adjunct to, not to the exclusion of, the spirituality of AA.

The more dependent we are on the AA program, the more independent we become. The more we commit to AA, the more freedom we enjoy. Happiness and peace of mind are the by-products of working the Steps, attending meetings regularly, reading the Big Book, and getting involved in the Fellowship. AA gives us a life that sets us free.

You have to give it away to keep it. We can't hoard

the sobriety we enjoy. We need to share our experience, strength, and hope with each other to stay sober. In fact, we are never "even"; we always get more than we give.

What are the rewards of AA? Let's start with life itself and freedom, and go on to self-respect, self-esteem, and straight thinking, new friends, and pride in ourselves and our families. We have a Higher Power we might never have found otherwise. AA gives us a Ph.D. in life and a black belt in common sense. Thanks to AA we've become "converts to life."

At an open meeting some years ago, the speaker said he was proud to be at the meeting. Proud? I'd never heard that before. He went on to say, "I'm proud to be with the people who saved my life." So am I.

Joe H.
Keego Harbor, Michigan

Reprinted by permission from The Grapevine, June, 1998

District 14-140 Report

At the 14-140 sub-district meeting this month there was very little that needed to be discussed. The news from the General Service Office in New York is that the Navajo language Big Book is now available. As Navajo has no written language it is an audio version. For those who speak the language, or just want to listen to something beautiful, the recording is available at www.aa.org.

Locally, 14-140 decided to help meetings that are struggling with funding the travel costs associated with sending a GSR to area assemblies. We decided to provide \$30 for one day assemblies and \$60 for 3 day assemblies on a first come first serve basis for upcoming assemblies until the \$300 set aside is depleted. 14-140 also discussed the idea of helping out ASCYPAA with a donation, but it was determined that, as your trusted servants, we could not donate outside the AA service structure without asking how our members felt. The motion did not pass and no further action will be taken.

And that is all the news that is fit for print. Founders' Day went well, but I will not be able to provide a report on its success until next month.

Yours in Service,
Colyn GN

Concept Seven: (Short form)

"The Charter and Bylaws of the General Service Board are legal instruments, empowering the trustees to manage and conduct world service affairs. The Conference Charter is not a legal document; it relies upon tradition and the A.A. purpose for final effectiveness.

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Singleness of Purpose

In recent years I have become more and more concerned about hearing from people in Alcoholics Anonymous that AA's concept of "Singleness-of-Purpose" is no longer important, or even valid, because changes in our culture have rendered it outmoded. I fear that the fundamental wisdom of that concept will be diminished or even someday disappear entirely.

I hear that addiction to drugs is the scourge of society, that almost everyone who comes into AA today has drug problems anyway, that there is really no difference between alcoholism and drug addiction ("it's really all just one thing, you know") and that the Twelve Steps of our AA program work just as well on drug addiction as they do on alcoholism. So, why should we keep on insisting on "Singleness-of-Purpose" in AA meetings?

Not long ago, I was at a meeting where the ten-minute leader talked almost entirely about his experiences with drugs. He made very little mention of his drinking, alcoholism as an illness or his recovery by using the AA program. At the coffee break, I struck up a conversation with a fellow in the back of the room who had raised his hand as a newcomer. I asked him what he thought of AA so far. "I'm not sure I belong in AA," he replied. "All I ever do is drink!" On a different occasion, I had a newcomer say to me, "I might have some problems with my drinking but I don't use drugs. I really don't think I fit in here."

I could only speculate on how many newcomers don't even get as far as either of those two fellows – on how many just turn and walk out, or don't come back, because they don't identify with "Drugs'n'Alcohol" problems. They may lose the chance of EVER coming back.

A newcomer to AA needs to be able to identify himself or herself as an alcoholic, separate and apart from any other problems he or she might have. Sure people come into AA with problems in addition to their drinking -- drug problems, gambling problems, compulsive spending problems, and who knows what else. But, as alcoholics, the one problem we have IN COMMON is our drinking problem. If the newcomer can't identify with the alcohol part of our disease, then I don't see that much progress can be made. Even that part of Chapter 3 in the Big Book that we read at many AA meetings says: "We learned that we had to admit to our innermost selves that we were alcoholics. This is the first step in recovery."

But what about the addict/alcoholic who comes into AA? What chance do they have?

If actually an alcoholic along with being an addict, he or she still needs to make that identification as an ALCOHOLIC. I have heard occasionally in AA meetings from people who say they were addicted to drugs; that they cleaned up from them but didn't really believe they were alcoholics. They eventually started drinking again, with alcoholic consequences. And that is only from those who make it back; I wonder how many don't. Too much talk of drugs and not enough about alcohol/alcoholism helps the "addict/alcoholic" from making the needed admission about alcoholism.

That isn't to say that what happens in an AA meeting isn't going to help someone who is purely or primarily an addict. Of course it will help! At the very least, it isn't going to hurt them. There are many programs that use the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous, or kindred variations, which are dedicated to recovery from problems other than alcohol. Those afflicted with those problems may find more help there and, just as important, MAY BE of more help there. But the focus on alcohol and alcoholism in an AA meeting is critical for the alcoholic.

The AA volume, "The Twelve Steps and The Twelve Traditions" covers Singleness-of-Purpose in more detail in Tradition Three and in Tradition Four. Nothing in those Traditions excludes people with multiple problems from AA but they do suggest focus on alcoholism is paramount and that AA cannot be all things to all people.

There is also other AA literature that recognizes the plight of addicts and others. There is an AA pamphlet called "Problems Other Than Alcohol" based on an article Bill W. wrote in the late 1950's. While much of what Bill has to say seems quaint today, he does comment on the kindred nature of alcoholism and drug addiction and the problem of "dual addiction." He describes the alcoholic and the addict as "first cousins of a sort."

The 1987 General Service Conference of AA suggested statements groups could use in both open and closed meetings to address singleness of purpose in ways that don't simply slam the door on addicts. Attendees at open meetings are reminded that the only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking, and requested to confine their participation to discussion of their alcohol problems. Those at closed meetings are assured that while attendance is limited to those with a desire to stop drinking, "if you think you have a problem with alcohol, you are welcome to attend this meeting."

This elegantly formulated program of Alcoholics Anonymous works well, really well, and it also works on lots of different problems. But I believe that in AA the emphasis should be on the alcoholic. As George E. Vaillant M.D., a nonalcoholic trustee of AA's General Service Board, said in a 2002 "Newsletter for Professionals:"

"....'Singleness of purpose' is essential to the effective treatment of alcoholism. The reason for such exaggerated focus is to overcome denial. The denial associated with alcoholism is cunning, baffling, and powerful and affects the patient, helper, and the community. Unless alcoholism is kept relentlessly in the foreground, other issues will usurp everybody's attention."

Pat K.
Yucaipa, CA

Heard at a meeting:

If life were fair, you'd be dead!

**Prescott Area Intergroup's May 2017
Treasurer's Report**

GROUP DONATIONS	YTD
4 Directions Grp	\$300.00
Afterwards Group	\$600.00
Bradshaw Seniors Meeting	\$205.60
Carry This Message	\$307.04
Crazy Birds	\$360.00
Free Thinkers BBS	\$100.00
Friday Big Book Solutions	\$50.00
Girlie Birds	\$163.45
God Sticks Group	\$50.00
Healing the Hole in the Soul	\$286.50
Intergroup Meeting	\$148.75
Mayer Higher Power Hour	\$159.00
Noon BB Discussion	\$483.50
Old Shoe (Skull Valley)	\$170.00
Open AA Meeting	\$320.00
Park Avenue Group	\$469.72
PV As Bill Sees It	\$316.50
PV Diamonds in the Rough	\$200.00
PV Friday Night Speaker Mtg.	\$75.00
PV Gut Rap Group	\$180.06
PV Keep It Simple	\$225.00
PV Lushes t' Ladies	\$188.00
PV No Name Group	\$112.50
PV Noon Group	\$280.00
PV Reflections	\$200.00
PV Roadmap To Recovery	\$60.00
PV Sunday Nooners	\$250.00
PV There Is a Solution	\$33.70
PV Wed Step Study	\$150.00
PV Welcome Valley	\$140.00
Round Table Meeting	\$177.00
Saturday Night Live Prescott	\$263.50
Serenity At Sunrise	\$1,171.70
Step Stories	\$335.08
Sun. AM Men's Stag	\$204.09
Sunday Morning AA Solutions	\$60.00
Sunny Days	\$558.31
The Slice Of Life	\$250.00
Thurs Men's Stag	\$120.00
Toolbox Group	\$483.20
Tues Night Book Study	\$239.52
Women's Gratitude Luncheon	\$180.00
Working Girls	\$29.00
Young Peoples Meeting	\$200.00
TOTAL GROUP DONATIONS	\$10,855.72
OTHER INCOME	YTD
AA Birthday Gratitude	\$40.00
Anonymous IG Donation	\$39.50
Literature Sales	\$6,707.60
Chips Etc.	\$1,394.45
Meeting Directory Sales	\$149.00
Newsletter Sales	\$130.00
TOTAL OTHER INCOME	\$8,460.55
TOTAL INCOME	\$19,316.27
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$22,032.63
OVERALL TOTAL	-\$2,716.36
Total Monies 5/31/17	\$26,724.41
Literature & Chips 5/15/17	\$8,833.00

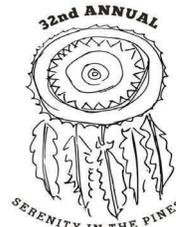
4th of July & Anniversary Celebration!
Join us for food, fun and fellowship on Tuesday,
July 4th at our Meeting Hall (20 years!)
318 Perkinsville Rd., Chino Valley
4:00pm - Potluck (please bring food to share)
5:30 - Speakers Meeting 7:00 AA Open Meeting

**32nd Annual
Prescott Shoestring Roundup**

Serenity in the Pines

July 14, 15 & 16, 2017

Emmanuel Pines Camp
3000 Spence Springs Rd., Prescott, AZ



Register online at:
www.prescottshoestringroundup.org

Flyers are available at the office

**Second Annual
Arizona AA Women's Conference**

About Women, By Women, For Women

July 7 - 9, 2017

Prescott Resort and Conference Center
1500 Highway 69, Prescott, Arizona

Details at **AZAAWC.org**

Flyers available at the office.

District 10-102 Presents the 26th Annual

"PROMISES IN THE PINES"

Lewis Canyon Campout

July 28 - 30, 2017

Flyers are available at our office or online at
www.whitemountainsaa.org

28th Annual SRI Summer Roundup

August 11, 12, 14, 2017

The Scottsdale Resort at McCormick Ranch
7700 E. McCormick Pkwy, Scottsdale
www.sriroundup.org

24th Annual Payson Roundup

August 25, 26, 27, 2017

www.aapayson.com



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