

The DIALOG



A PUBLICATION OF THE DALLAS INTERGROUP ASSOCIATION (est. 1947)

Dallas Central Office | 6162 E Mockingbird Ln, Ste 213, Dallas TX 75214 | 214.887.6699 | www.aadallas.org | aa-help@aadallas.org

From the Director:

After three great conferences/conventions in the past few weeks, we still have more to come. The North Texas Roundup will begin August 17th and end on August 19th, 2012. Then, we will celebrate the 65th Anniversary of the Dallas Central Office on September 8th. Our main speaker will be Donna E. from Montana. More details to come about the anniversary.

We have had several different committees make use of our new meeting space and the Seniors in Sobriety Group will move their meetings to their new home at the Central Office on June 12th at 2pm. If your group has need of a meeting space for committees or other small gathering, please contact us and we will set you up with a time. We would like to begin a regular AA meeting in the new space and will make plans as time permits. Summer is a busy time for us but as soon as a decision is made we will let everyone know.

If you did not have an opportunity to see the new documentary on Bill W. at Gathering of the Eagles, the film will be shown at the Texas Theater from June 22-June 28. See details in newsletter. It would make an excellent sponsor/sponsee outing!

Have a safe and sober summer. Please keep sending in your group and local events for the website event calendar.

Janis R.

Visit Us Online!

At www.aadallas.org you'll find group announcements, an events calendar, a searchable group directory, online bookstore & more.

Alcoholism

And the Beat Goes On

by Jim W., *The Gift of Sobriety*

Like many of us, alcoholism was rampant on both sides of my family. My dad was an alcoholic, somewhat functioning, he had two cousins who were in various stages of alcoholism. This was in the 1950s, and we did not know alcoholism was a disease.

My mother had five brothers, four of whom were also affected by this disease. One of my uncles lived with us and he was dying of alcoholism right before my eyes. Sometimes I illegally drove him to the liquor store to buy a bottle to get him through the night. The path to alcoholism was wide open to me from the beginning.

In high school I hung around with

six other guys and we would drink whenever we could. We drank beer and really didn't get into too much trouble, other than what followed later in our lives.

We had a 35th class reunion in 1994 (I had quit drinking in 1993). Out of the seven guys in our high school group, one died of alcoholism, one was missing, three were in AA and two were still drinking and in pretty bad shape.

My drinking pattern was that of a periodic drinker. I like to say that in my 20s I drank a lot, had a lot of fun and got in a little trouble. In my 30s, I drank a lot, had some fun and got in more trouble. In my 40s, I drank

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Bill W. Playing at Texas Theatre 6/22-28

Bill W., the documentary, took eight years of full-time work to complete. The filmmakers conducted research in dozens of archives and private collections, and interviewed A.A. members and historians in the United States, Canada, and Europe.

Making a film about the founder of an anonymous society, especially one who died in 1971, presented many obstacles, of course. Very few people who knew Bill W. were still alive at the time this production began. At first, it seemed as if there would be very little visual

material available for use in a film.

But research and a healthy dose of good fortune allowed the producers to unearth film footage and photographs — including some that had never been seen before — and some new material that had not been included in previous written biographies of Bill Wilson. As a result, *Bill W.* presents a new look at the co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Bill W. is playing June 22-28 at the Texas Theatre in Oak Cliff, 231 W. Jefferson, 75208, 214-948-1546, thetexastheatre.com.



Experience, Strength and Hope

1939 Cleveland Plain Dealer Articles, Part 6 of 7

The DIA Log has printed the Elrick B. Davis articles from the Cleveland Plain Dealer (October-November 1939). These articles were the first extensive publicity AA received; appearing in the main Cleveland newspaper, the Plain Dealer, just five months after the first AA group was formed in Cleveland.

The Book

When 100 members of Alcoholics Anonymous, the extraordinary fellowship of men and women who have cured themselves of “incurable” alcoholism by curing each other and adopting a “spiritual way of life,” had established their cures to the satisfaction of their physicians, families, employers and psychotherapists, they published a book.

It is a 400-page volume of which half is a history of the movement and a description of its methods, and the other half a collection of 30 case histories designed to show what a wide variety of persons the fellowship has cured.

Celebrating 65 Years of Service **Dallas AA Central Office**

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It is called “Alcoholics Anonymous,” and may be bought for \$3.50 from the Works Publishing Co., Box 657, Church Street Annex Post Office, New York.

The name of the publisher is that adopted by Alcoholics Anonymous for its only publishing venture. The address is “blind” because the name “Alcoholics Anonymous” means exactly what it says. The price of the book is “cost,” 50 cents a volume less than one of the country’s soundest old-line book publishers would have charged if the fellowship had accepted that house’s offer to publish the book and pay the society 40 cents a copy royalty on sales.

Among the first reviews of the book to see print was that written by the Rev. Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick for the Religious Digest. That review so attracted at least one well-known Cleveland minister that he obtained a copy of the book, got in touch with the Cleveland chapter of the society, and plans to preach a sermon about the movement.

Dr. Fosdick is himself the author of 17 books. His review of “Alcoholics Anonymous” follows:

This extraordinary book deserves the careful attention of anyone interested in the problem of alcoholism. Whether as victims, friends of victims, physicians, clergymen, psychiatrists or social workers there are many such, and this book will give them, as no other treatise known to this reviewer will, an inside view of the problem which the alcoholic faces.

Truth

This book represents the pooled experience of 100 men and women who have been victims of alcoholism—



and who have won their freedom and recovered their sanity and self-control. Their stories are detailed and circumstantial, packed with human interest.

In America today the disease of alcoholism is increasing. Liquor has been an easy escape from depression. As an English officer in India, reproved for his excessive drinking, lifted his glass and said, “This is the swiftest road out of India.”

The core of their whole procedure is religious. They are convinced that for the helpless alcoholic there is only one way out—the expulsion of his obsession by a Power Greater than Himself. Let it be said at once that there is nothing partisan or sectarian about this religious experience.

Agnostics and atheists, along with Catholics, Jews and Protestants, tell their story of discovering the Power Greater than themselves. “Who are you to say that there is no God,” one atheist in the group heard a voice say when, hospitalized for alcoholism, he faced the utter hopelessness of his condition.

By religion they mean an experience which they personally know and which has saved them from their slavery, when psychiatry and medicine had failed. They agree that each man must have his own way of conceiving God, but of God Himself they are utterly sure, and their stories of victory in consequence are a notable addition to William James’ “Varieties of Religious Experience.”

I Hated My Job, My Co-Workers Until My Sponsor Introduced Me to Tradition One

by Stephanie T., Kessler Park

I have been a sober member of Alcoholics Anonymous since July 29, 2007. In the nearly five years that I have been sober, I have managed to be just as dizzily self-destructive as I ever was drunk.

I find this to be true in all areas of my life but nowhere is it more apparent than in my career life and relationships.

I have burned bridges, made enemies, and black listed myself at every turn. Recently, after yet another bad day at work, I hit my bottom. If I didn't want to get fired, I knew that something had to change, that I had to change. I found a new sponsor and instead of working the Steps she suggested that we work the Traditions. It wasn't the solution I expected.

We started with Tradition One: "Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity. Each member of Alcoholics Anonymous is but a small part of a great whole. A.A. must continue to live or most of us will surely die. Hence our common welfare comes first. But individual welfare follows close afterward."

We discussed what this meant in regards to the group and the organization as a whole, and then she asked me to apply this to the office.

I quickly answered that it meant

without sales there is no customer, without a customer there is no need for a product, without a product there is no need for a production staff and so on. Without any one of these components, the business would fail.

Grudgingly, I admitted that for this to be true it meant that the coworkers I had spent so much time talking down to and rolling my eyes at were just as necessary

to the daily running of the office as I was.

If I was going to keep my job, I had let go of my arrogance and ego and realize that I was not nearly as important as I thought I was. It is difficult to reverse a lifetime of selfish thinking to focus on something or someone else.

My sponsor pointed out that it's not a reversal of thinking that was required but a change in perspective. Instead of thinking of myself less and the company more I could tie the fate of both together.

If the company does well then so will I. It's in my best interest to ensure that my employer does not fail — what a revelation.

One Tradition down and 11 to go, I am already well on my way to bringing my best to the workplace. There will continue to be sticky situations but with the help of my sponsor and the Traditions I know I will be able to handle them gracefully.



Seniors in Sobriety (SIS) Meeting Is Moving

Seniors in Sobriety (SIS) is moving its Tuesday afternoon meeting to the Dallas Intergroup office June 12 at 2 p.m.

This local meeting is one of several SIS meetings across the United States. Seniors in Sobriety, formerly called Sober Over Sixty, began in 1990 in Southeastern New York.

Alcoholism among older people has reached epidemic proportions, according to SIS website, www.seniorsinsobriety.org. Many elders no longer have mobility and, for many reasons, cannot get to a meeting. The first "Carrying the Message to the Older Alcoholic" meeting took place during the 11th International AA Convention in Minneapolis in July, 2000.

A Nightwatch Log



5:05 p.m.

Sabrina: Needs location of Plano group.

5:10 p.m.

Angie: Needs meeting in Red Oak for "Mother."

5:30 p.m.

Sabrina again: Wanted to know how much we cost. I said sometimes everything.

5:50 p.m.

Dave: Needs meeting on Gaston Avenue. Gave 24 Hour club on Ross, close enough.

6:50 p.m.

June: Homeless needs meeting Downtown. Gave Nooners at church.

7:47 p.m.

Sere: Referred to Principles group.

8:08 p.m.

Myrtle: Wants to talk to the man that came to Green Oaks. (Myrtle was only slightly drunk.)

8:30 p.m.

Myrtle again: Getting pretty well organized now. Wants group in Carrollton. Sent to New Freedom. (Evidently Green Oaks didn't take.)

10:21 p.m.

Diane: Wants new sponsor (again). Suggested she go to women's meeting at McKinney Fellowship with an open mind and heart.

7:45 a.m.

Donnie: Wants meeting in "North Dallas." Sent to Aquarius.

8:00 a.m.

Donnie again: Getting all info. Hope I quieted some fears.

Moon not full yet but close. Thanks for letting me serve.

- Anonymous

Are you a Nightwatcher? Calls to Dallas Intergroup that come in before 8 a.m. or after 5 p.m. M-F and on holidays are forwarded to AA members who have volunteered to participate in Nightwatch. This allows DIA phones to be answered live 24/7. Call 214-887-6699 or sign up online at aaddallas.org. (Click on volunteer, fill out the form and check Nightwatch.)

The Evening Review

by Bill M., Clean Air

Step 10

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

“In all these situations we need self-restraint, honest analysis of what is involved, a willingness to admit when the fault is ours, and an equal willingness to forgive when the fault is elsewhere. We need not be discouraged when we fall into the error of our old ways, for these disciplines are not easy. We shall look for progress, not for perfection.” page 91, *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*

Step 10 tells us our next function is to grow in understanding and effectiveness by continuing to watch for selfishness, dishonesty, resentment and fear. In order to monitor our behavior and observe ourselves as Step 10 encourages us to do, we commit to an evening review.

I do this by using an abbreviated format. Instead of thinking of the entire word, I use the first character of the word. For example, “r” stands for resentments, “s” for selfishness and so on. These abbreviations allow me to quickly monitor my behavior and thoughts for the day, and linger only on the ones that apply.

In the beginning I wrote the list out, and made notes next to each character. Today, I simply mentally recall each character or word. Here’s my abbreviated evening-review list. The information in the parenthesis is simply for your understanding of the review.

R = (Resentment)

S = (Selfishness)

D = (Dishonest)

A = (Afraid)

Ap = (Do I owe an apology?)

**Dis = (Should I discuss with someone something that
has happened today?)**

K & L = (Have I been kind and loving today?)

Could do better = (Improvement or change)

F = (Forgiveness anything I have done amiss)

My sponsor Mark H., who has since gone to the Big Meeting in the Sky, got me doing Step 10 nightly in 1996 and suggested doing it in this abbreviated format. And I’ve been doing it ever since.

Of course, I suggest to anyone I sponsor and others to also do it in this manner. I’ve learned, however, that not everyone will do it. Some look upon Step 10 as a whip to beat up on themselves rather a tool for personal growth.

AAers who use this procedure come back and tell me it’s the best thing they’ve ever done. The evening review, regardless of what format you use, simply helps us become better people. And I thank God for that.

How I Finally Got My 90 Days

by Taylor J., Georgetown

I always felt awkward, different, or inferior. I never felt like I measured up, until I found the magic elixir — alcohol.



Alcohol removed my inhibitions and insecurities. It made me feel like I fit in, and provided relief from those feelings of awkwardness.

I never drank like most people. I knew this at a younger age and I knew enough about that difference, that I became an award-winning lone drinker.

I systematically shut everyone and everything out from me who was good and caring. I moved to Texas where I knew no one. Here I could actively pursue this twisted love of alcohol I had — all alone. I was living the dream.

I have been trying this AA thing since 2006. I was able to gather some “dry time” but I always wanted to do things my way — that is until Feb. 11, 2012.

When I first heard someone talk about the 12 steps of AA, I thought to myself, “If everyone followed these steps, the world would be a wonderful place.”

That thought began to open my mind just a bit, which in my case was no easy task. That, in turn, enabled me to listen — really listen — for the first time in my life.

I found myself embracing rather than fighting. Up to that point, my life had been one long struggle. This is not to say that on occasion I do not still struggle. I do. But today, I know there is a better way, and most days I choose to follow that way.

What’s more, listening to the people from all walks of life in AA meetings helped me realize that I do not know everything. In fact, I now realize I know next to nothing. I have been told that what really counts is what you learn after you realize that you

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And The Beat Goes On *(continued from page 1)*

a lot, didn't have fun and was in a lot of trouble.

I flunked out my junior year in college. I enlisted in the army in 1962 and discharged in 1965 just before the war in Vietnam began. While stationed in South Carolina, I received my first DWI. My attitude was, "So what, didn't everyone else in the army get one?"

In 1967 I got married. It wasn't long before my wife "was on me" to get sober. I tried. It didn't work. She divorced me eight years later.

So determined was I to get my family back that my ex-wife and I dated for five years following our divorce. I didn't drink once during this time. I even attended AA meetings.

I became involved with the Alpha Group. This group had AA, Alanon, and Alateen meetings and really tried to serve the entire family of alcoholics. The Alpha Group was strong in the steps, traditions and concepts of Alcoholics Anonymous.

As time passed, though, the meetings began to loosen up and accepted outside ideas coming out of alcoholism rehabilitation centers. In my opinion, Alpha Group lost its primary purpose by mixing up AA and rehab center ideas. The group floundered and eventually folded. My experience has taught me that this "mixing up" of ideas is a formula for disaster.

While I was attending meetings at Alpha and not drinking, I began smoking those "funny cigarettes." It eventually led me back to my old friend, alcohol. Of course, this ended any attempt at reconciliation with my ex-wife.

I was now free to drink and I did. I took a "balls to the walls" approach to my drinking for the next 13 years.

Funny, if you tell people to "leave you alone" often enough and long enough, they will. And I had done just that. I had pushed everyone away. I found myself sitting alone in my living room, TV remote in one hand and a beer in the other. I realized with fear and dread,

that I had no quality of life. Alcohol had affected my business, my family and my personal life.

Finally, I had hit my own personal bottom, and became willing to do anything.

I went back to AA, but this time with a much better attitude. I was going for me and not for any other reason. I got a sponsor and began to learn about the steps, traditions and the concepts. Numerous changes began to happen in my life.

I began to make sales in my business. Due to my sobriety, my family came together in a feeling of harmony and unity. One of my daughters is in AA and doing very well. Others are at least aware of where to get help when and/or if they are ready.

In my early sobriety, I had to learn how to deal with fear, anger, and resentments. My sponsor actually had me use Step 11 to pray about changing my attitude (road rage) on the freeway — AND IT WORKED.

I still use it today when I feel the road rage rise up in me. My sponsor also had me make amends (Step 10) to a young man working at a gas station. I yelled at him because he didn't turn the gas pump on fast enough. When I told my sponsor, he made me go back to that gas station to make amends. Today, when that not-so-young man and I see each other around town, I can say hello and not try to hide on the other side of the street.

In Step 12 where service is of ultimate importance, some of the ways in which I was honored to be of service was participating in various conferences, serving as Intergroup Rep and on the board. I also held many service positions in my home group (The Gift of Sobriety).

My participation in these groups taught me so much about dealing with my character defects or, as the promises say, I can now handle situations that used to baffle me.

There is one more amazing highlight

in my sobriety that happened recently. Melissa W. and I were married on April 2, 2012, in a small private ceremony with family in Roswell, NM. This surely is one of the gifts that we received from God.

I'll end my story with my favorite passage from the Big Book page 164, last paragraph. It is a powerful summary of the program of Alcoholics Anonymous.

"Abandon yourself to God as you understand God. Admit your faults to Him and to your fellows. Clear away the wreckage of your past. Give freely of what you find and join us. We shall be with you in the Fellowship of the Spirit, and you will surely meet some of us as you trudge the Road of Happy Destiny.

May God bless you and keep you—until then."

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I Finally Got My 90 Days

do not know it all. While I may be very intelligent and a quick learner, I am now able to realize that there are some things I had never thought about, let alone learned.

The best thing I have done is attend meetings, work with my sponsor through the steps, get involved with service work (I recently volunteered at the Gathering of the Eagles), reach out to other alcoholics, and to work to maintain contact with God.

Without the rooms and the program of Alcoholics Anonymous I firmly believe I would not be sober today, and I thank God that it's progress, not perfection.

I owe a great deal of my sobriety to my sometimes "power greater than myself" — the awesome members of Georgetown and my supportive family. I am appreciative to that warm, welcoming and supportive group.

SEND US YOUR STORIES!

Send us your articles and letters sharing your experience, strength and hope. We need your help to reduce our reliance on borrowed material from the AA Grapevine and other newsletters. Please help us make your newsletter a true reflection of AA in Dallas. (Thank you to everyone who contributed to this edition.)

Send your articles and letters of 250 words or less to: Newsletter Editor, 6162 E Mockingbird Ln, Dallas TX 75214 or email janis@aadallas.org. Include the name of your home group. *We reserve the right to edit submissions for clarity, content and length.*

Serenity Prayer... **a brief history**

American Protestant theologian Reinhold Niebuhr, 1892 to 1971, is credited with writing the Serenity Prayer in a longer version for a 1934 sermon.

Bill W. was introduced to the prayer by an early member in 1941. In *Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age*, Bill W. wrote this, "Never had we seen so much AA in so few words." Bill W. and staff had it printed out in modified form and handed it around. It has been part of AA ever since.

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change.

*Courage to change the things I can
And the wisdom to know the difference.*



***Experience: What you get when you
get what you don't want.***

News, Updates & Events... **more on aadallas.org**

June

TEXAS STATE AA CONVENTION: SPONSORSHIP: THE KEY TO THE FUTURE June 8-10 at the Westin Hotel, 4545 W. John Carpenter Fwy, Hwy 114, Irving. Registration is \$20 per person. Room rates for the convention are \$81 per night. Hotel info: 972-929-4500. Great speakers, sponsorship workshop, discussion and young peoples' meetings, Saturday night dance. For more information and to register, go to www.txaaconvention.org. Speakers include: Peggy M, Omaha, NE; Kelly C, Shawnee, OK; Doug R, New York, NY; Billy N, Newark, NJ; Steve L, Brentwood, TN; Steve M, Raleigh, NC.

GRAPEVINE COMMITTEE SUMMER ASSEMBLY, CELEBRATING FOUNDERS DAY: June 15 at 8p.m. in Glen Rose at the Cowboy Church, 6195 Hwy 56 North, 76043. If you can't go to Akron to celebrate Founder's Day, why not drive to Glen Rose to hear a little history, see *The Man in the Bed* play, and listen to an AA member tell how AA changed his life. Sponsored by the NETA Grapevine Committee and the Glen Rose Group. For more information on the Summer Assembly contact James V, Convention Chair, 972-741 4445 or ConventionChair61@verizon.net

July

38TH ANNUAL LUBBOCK CAPROCK: LIVING IN THE NOW July 12-15. Speakers include: Stuart R, Irving, TX; Norma A, Austin, TX; Sue D, Yorba Linda, CA (Al-Anon); Keith D, Yorba Linda, CA; Joe L, Edmond, OK. Banquet, golf tournament, dance, and more. Pre-register by July 3 at <http://nwta66.org/>. Registration is \$35 at the door, \$30 pre-registered. Hotel information: 806-797-3241.

EURYPAA 2012, 3RD ANNUAL, COPENHAGEN, DENMARK: July 27-29, All Europe Young People in AA convention. Meetings, workshops, countdowns, Alanon and Alateen meetings, meditation, party, live music and more. www.eurypaa.org.

August

NORTH TEXAS ROUNDUP: OUR HERITAGE AND MY RESPONSIBILITY August 17-19. Voice of Roundup: Jerry J, Lake Whitney Group. Speakers include: Jack C, Hagerston, MD; Peggy H, High Point, NC; Roy H, High Point, NC; Deb G, Carlsbad, CA; Dick A, Atlanta, GA. Go to <http://www.northtexasroundup.org> for more information and to register (\$20 registration. Buffet/coffee tickets available.)