



COFFEE POT TALK



NDIAA NEWSLETTER



21B TROLLEY SQUARE
WILMINGTON, DE 19806
302-655-5113
NDINEWSLETTER@GMAIL.COM



Feature Article

Teresa G.

One of the best gifts I have received from sobriety is a relationship with my Higher Power whom I chose to call God. Along with that is the ability to see how He works in my life and others, most of the time. One particular time comes to mind. I had been working with someone who was struggling a little. I had read a story in the Big Book a few weeks before and thought this one passage would be perfect for her to read. It was about willingness and action. Boy was I excited to give her this wonderful insight into recovery. So we spoke and I suggested she read this passage and we would talk about it the next time we talked.

So about two days later she called me and said that the passage was so perfect for her! Oh did my heart leap! I asked what she got from what she read and she started talking about how she related to the writer her being young, how she had drank and most importantly how she felt at the end of her drinking. I was a bit confused, but let her continue. She shared that the image of AA not pulling her out of her bottom, but giving her tools to build a ladder with 12 steps made all the sense in the world to her.

Our principals

Step 10: "Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it."

Tradition 10: "Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy."

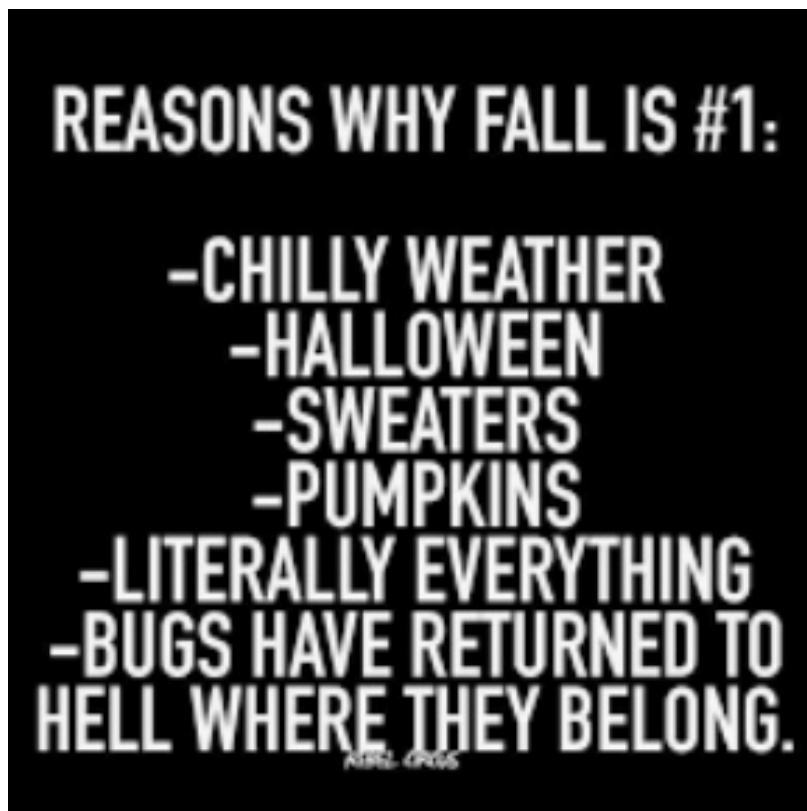
Concept 10: "Every service responsibility should be matched by an equal service authority, with the scope of such authority well defined."

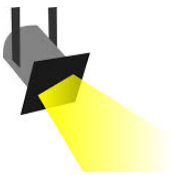
After talking a bit more about the reading and how it applied to her life and how she was going to use her new insight I finally had to ask "What page did you read?" as I reached for my Big Book. She had read the page before the one I had suggested! And the one she read was perfect for her.

It was a small thing, reading the page before the one I suggested, but the result was huge. We laughed and were in agreement that this was a God-incidence. As it says in Acceptance "Nothing, absolutely nothing, happens in God's world by mistake.

This incident occurred fairly early in my sobriety. But I have never forgotten it. It has helped me to look and see where God's hand has worked in my life and in the lives of the many people I know in recovery.

Every now and then when I struggle I do try to slow down, take a deep breath, say a little prayer, reach out to another person in AA and look for the positive in any situation I may be in. As I said in the beginning I was blessed with a gift of a higher power and the ability to see how He works in my life and others most of the time. That is why I am also grateful for the people who have been put in my life through this program that can help me find my way because sometimes I do get stuck in the weeds still. But because of the tools I have been given through this program as well as the people I know that I will find my way.





Literature Spotlight



Questions and Answers on Sponsorship P-15

Don't drink, go to meetings, read the Big Book and get a sponsor! These timely words of wisdom directed at the newcomer to the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous are fairly straight forward with the exception of 'get a sponsor'. What is that, a person or an item, where do I get one, and why do I need one might be the reply. Whether you have recently walked through the doors of A.A. or have been around for a few 24 hours, the answer to these queries, and more are found in the pamphlet, **Questions & Answers On Sponsorship**, P-15, this month's selection in Spotlight on Literature.

What is a Sponsor? The pamphlet opens with a few words from co-founder of Alcoholic Anonymous Bill W. who, when newly sober and tempted to drink, thought "You need another alcoholic to talk to. You need another alcoholic just as much as he needs you." His search and the subsequent founding of Alcoholics Anonymous commenced when he met Dr. Bob and the rest is history!

A concise definition of the process of sponsorship is provided as follows: "An alcoholic who has made some progress in the recovery program shares that experience on a continuous, individual basis with another alcoholic who is attempting to attain or maintain sobriety through A.A." Ideally, we find a person who has worked through the steps of the program, with whom we are at ease and are willing to follow their directions.

For the person seeking a sponsor, the pamphlet poses the following questions whose answers I will condense:

- *How does sponsorship differ from Twelfth Step calls?* A twelfth step call is defined as visiting an alcoholic who has asked for help and talking about the A.A. Program. Sponsorship is a one to one ongoing relationship.
- *How does sponsorship help the newcomer?* Sponsorship provides a person who understands and cares while providing direction.
- *How should a sponsor be chosen?* "Stick with the winners". A good sponsor has a year or more of *joyful*, continuous sobriety.
- *Should sponsor and newcomer be as much alike as possible?* To stay focused on the program, it is suggested that men sponsor men and women sponsor women. "Some gay men and lesbians feel an opposite-sex sponsor is more appropriate for similar reasons."
- *Must the newcomer agree with everything the sponsor says?* Quite simply, NO

- *May a newcomer have more than one sponsor?* With the exception of a service sponsor (which is covered toward the end of the pamphlet) it is best to have only one sponsor.
- *May a newcomer change sponsors?* YES
- *If a newcomer has received a thorough course of treatment and indoctrination in an alcoholism program outside A.A., will a sponsor still be needed in A.A.?* YES *Is a special approach needed?* NO “Learning about alcoholism in an institutional setting is one thing, and functioning as a sober alcoholic in a drinking world is quite another, we find.”
- *Is it ever too late to get a sponsor?* In short, NO!

The next section, **For the person wanting to be a sponsor**, poses 16 questions, a few of which I will mention without answers in the hopes that you will obtain and read the pamphlet. BTW, all pamphlets are available in an online format at A.A.’s website: aa.org

- *When is a member ready for sponsorship responsibility?*
- *What does a sponsor do and not do?*
- *How can a sponsor explain the A.A. program?*
- *Should a sponsor lend money, recommend hospitalization, or intercede with an employer?*
- *Can a sponsor be too firm, overprotective, too casual?*
- *How can a sponsor handle an overdependent newcomer or one who rejects help?*
- *When newcomers resist “the spiritual side” of the program, what can sponsors do?*

I found the next section titled, **For groups planning sponsorship activity**, most intriguing. Keeping in mind the primary purpose of an A.A. group, i.e. to carry the message of recovery to the alcoholic, some suggestions for the group to consider are given. You may be familiar with format questions that ask group members who are willing to be a temporary sponsor to raise their hand, or provide a list of their phone numbers to the newcomer. And your group may have a designated ‘greeter’ who meets newcomers at the meeting entrance.

But some groups have a regular *committee on sponsorship* or a *Twelfth Step committee* which may contact an Intergroup office to see if enough homegroup members are signed up for their programs. Groups may maintain a list of members who wish to be sponsors and have the secretary assign a newcomer a temporary sponsor from that list. Also, some groups may hold closed-meeting discussion, for members only, to discuss sponsorship problems and opportunities.

Now about **Service Sponsorship**.

... A.A. service is anything whatever that helps us to reach a fellow sufferer – ranging all the way from the Twelfth Step itself to a ten-cent phone call and a cup of coffee, and to A.A.’s General Service Office for national and international action. The sum total of all these services is our Third Legacy of Service.

-The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service, page S1



Ideally, your A.A. program sponsor introduced you to service at your homegroup by getting you involved in meeting set-up, coffee making and clean up, becoming a greeter, outside institution commitments, literature and or coin procurement , among other things. You might be encouraged, if so inclined, to take on Intergroup or General Service responsibilities. Remember that all types of service “spring from the spiritual aspects of the program”.

But what exactly is a service sponsor? Many years ago, my loosely organized homegroup said that they needed a General Service Representative, (GSR). What do they do, I asked. Well, you just go to the monthly District meeting and come back and tell us what they said. Had I a service sponsor, I would have been given a bit more direction. A few months later, after I had attended a number of Area events and learned about service sponsorship, I asked a woman who I saw at all these events to be my service sponsor and, happily, she agreed to take me on. Nancy K. lovingly guided me through 18 years of various General Service positions until she passed away in 2018, but I digress.

A service sponsor, as defined in this pamphlet, “...is usually someone who is knowledgeable in A.A. history and has a strong background in the service structure.” A.A. service introduces the member to an alphabet soup of terms, such as IGR (Intergroup Representative) AIGR (Alternate Intergroup Rep.) GVR (Grapevine Rep.) GSR and AGSR, DCM (District Committee Member) and ADCM. One is advised at any level of service to become familiar with the Twelve Traditions, the Twelve Concepts for World Service as well as the A.A. Service Manual. In addition, the books, A.A. Comes of Age and the Language of the Heart provide a wealth of useful information about our fellowship. Now of course, one does not need to hold a service position to read these items. It has been my personal experience that the more I know about the origins and workings of our program, the richer and more gratifying is my sobriety.

Questions & Answers On Sponsorship concludes with the following: “Most present members of Alcoholics Anonymous owe their sobriety to the fact that someone else took a special interest in them and was willing to share a great gift with them.”

Carry on!

Love and support in service,
Sheila D.





....Into Service

Bob L – sobriety date 7/27/1985, Practice These Principles (online)

Service Position: Chair for the Delaware Area General Service Assembly

Length of service commitment: 2 years

Sobriety requirement: minimum 3 to 5 years continuous sobriety

Service Position Responsibilities: Per the AA Service Manual “The chairperson is responsible for the smooth running of area assemblies, consulting with the committee before setting the date and time, making sure that all groups are notified, consulting with officers and committee members on the program, and chairing the assembly meetings. The chairperson, more than any other officer, keeps the delegate informed about what is going on in the area, and makes sure that committee members are aware of what goes on in world services.”

How has this service commitment changed/enhanced your personal sobriety?

This position has helped me understand the importance of every single alcoholic in AA and the role they play in creating and sustaining a cohesive, thriving, service-oriented AA community in Delaware. The position has helped me keep an open mind, listen to others, and really embrace the fact that good ideas can come from anywhere. This position has also brought home to me the importance of the traditions to AA group stability, and the natural consequences of not adhering to them strictly.

Truth be told, I am not a people person, and that makes it tough to build a solid foundation in AA. In order to do the position of chairperson justice, you **MUST** reach out to others – often and repeatedly. You cannot be a chairperson and isolate. That said, the most significant way this service position has enhanced my personal sobriety is that it has forced me to work with others in ways I never would have in other service positions.

How has AA Service changed/enhanced your personal sobriety?

It's amazing to me how many times I hear the same things in the rooms from the Big Book, 12 and 12, etc... over and over, and yet every once in a while, I hear something a bit differently, and it causes me to see it in a different light. For years, in most meetings, I'd hear in the preamble “Our primary purpose is to stay sober and to help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety” and I'd subconsciously hear “primary purpose – stay sober”. Yeah, of course, why else would I be here? The part about ‘helping other alcoholics to achieve sobriety’ was just kind of tagged on. But after a LONG time (I'm embarrassed to say HOW long) it dawned on me “Wait! They're

talking about service when they mention helping other alcoholics.” Finally I understood! We stay sober BY helping other alcoholics to achieve sobriety. They are one and the same! If not for AA service, I’d have gone out again. I have no doubt. The great thing about AA service is there are so many opportunities – from the home group commitments and sponsorship, to Intergroup, General Service, treatment and corrections commitments, I bounced around in service commitments for decades, and mostly had home group commitments, and I was almost 30 years sober before I found that General Service was a good fit for me, and where I felt I could help make sure the hand of AA was there for the still suffering. I wouldn’t trade my experiences in sobriety with anyone else, but it would have been nice to find where I ‘fit’ in service sooner than I did. I encourage everyone who hasn’t found their niche – the place in AA service where they are comfortable and feel like they are making a contribution – to stretch themselves and try out new service positions and commitments.

Current & Past Service Positions Held: Home group – ashtray emptier, coffee maker, greeter, chair, secretary, and General Services Rep (GSR). District Committee Member (DCM). Area chair.

INTERGROUP SAVED MY LIFE

When I found myself at the jumping off point, I didn’t know where to go. I decided to call my therapist. She told me to wait by the phone and someone would call me. A few minutes later, the phone rang. When I answered the phone, the kindest, sweetest voice said to me “Don’t worry, you are not alone. Everything is going to be O.K.” She proceeded to tell me who she was and a little about A.A. and how they can help people like me. After calming me down, she told me she would have someone else call me. A few minutes later, another kind, sweet voice came across the line. She told me I never had to drink again and that she could help me with that. She took me to my very first meeting, became my sponsor, and I haven’t felt the need to take a drink since that day.

There were times in my early sobriety that I wanted to drink so bad and there wasn’t a meeting to go to so, I would go down to the Intergroup office and hang out until I felt better. There have been times where I pick up a new sponsee and take them there to get their first Big Book. There have been times where I was lacking something in my program, signed up for the 12 step call list, answered the phone to help someone looking for a solution and ended up hearing what I needed to hear.

I tell you this because I am just one of many lives that Intergroup touches everyday. Well, it’s time to give back family - YOUR Intergroup needs your help! Since this pandemic, Intergroup has done all they can to minimize cost but unfortunately, book sales and 7th tradition contributions are down. Thankfully they had a nice reserve fund but the longer the pandemic lingers on, the harder it becomes to stay afloat. It would be such a shame if our office had to close and there was nowhere for the alcoholic to turn to in a time of crisis. Please reach out to your Homegroups and ask them if they are including Intergroup in their 7th tradition donations. And if they are not, please reconsider.

Emmy K

2 Drunks and a Cup of Coffee

Bonnie K

6/3/78



I met Bonnie 8 years ago when I first came into the rooms. Bonnie is one of the few women in my life where every time I see her, I just have to smile. Her loving energy is contagious and her kind smile is too! It was nice catching up with her since I haven't spoken to her one on one since the pandemic hit. Bonnie - I love ya sis and I thank you for your service ma'am!!!

How did you find A.A.? I would drink alone on the weekends and I would see this commercial where they fry an egg and they would say If you have a problem, call A.A. I had gotten in a car accident with my 5 year old son in the car when I was 24. We were both ok but it freaked me out. So, I said I was going to stop drinking and that was when I saw this commercial where they were frying an egg and said "If you have a problem, call A.A. I spoke to my sister and she said if I don't get help, I would be just like my dad. I spoke to my mother who said I should call A.A. I had one more drunk and then I called A.A. and haven't felt the need to take a drink since.

What is your favorite chapter in the Big Book? I like Into Action because it really tells you what to do and how the program works. In the paragraph that talks about the 10th step it touches on how we are in the spiritual world, and it just hit me, we are apart of the spiritual world.! I am with all of the good spirits now! That is just amazing to me.

What is the most important part of your program? Being in a spiritual world with others. Loving and helping others especially by doing 12th step work. Sponsorship is my very favorite kind of 12 step work. If just fulfills me.

What is the first piece of advice you received in A.A.? Someone asked me "Are you willing to go to any length?" My answer was a very simple "Yes". So any time I struggled, I would ask myself "Are you willing to go to any length to stay sober Bonnie?"

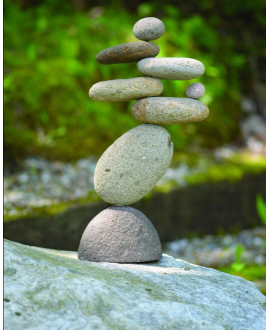
What is your favorite slogan? Just for today because all I have to handle is today. If I am struggling I just need to go to any length to handle life today - SOBER.

What do you think has changed in A.A.? The amount of people! The increase in women and young people in A.A. is amazing to me.

What advice would you give a newcomer? Go to any lengths to stay sober. We pass it on, this is not unique. We don't make these things up, they are God given.

What do you think about Zoom meetings? I'm glad we have them especially for the new comers but, I want my in person meetings back!

Any last thoughts? Stay sober until the miracle happens!



Stone Cold Sober

Occasionally, someone will say at a meeting, “I don’t know how AA works, but it does.” The interesting thing is that we’ve often just read “How it Works” which explains just that very thing. I suspect that we read “How It Works” so often that it can become rote and we stop listening to the actual words and its many messages.

It has become very popular in the meetings that I attend for everyone to chime in on the last line “God could and would if he were sought.” I’m unsure how or where this started, but it gives everyone a chance to participate. Through the powers of Zoom, I’ve had the privilege of attending meetings around the world and found a delightful thing at a few Scotland meetings. There the person reading says, “Many of us exclaimed,” the entire group shouts out “What an order! I can’t go through with it.” I think this is great, and so very true, as how many of us have felt that way at one time or another!

One of the first things “How It Works” tells me is that I must be capable of being honest with myself. Personally, I can’t be reminded of this too often. I have found over the years that it is not the lies I tell other people that get me in the most trouble, but the ones I tell myself that are the most damaging. The words “rigorous honesty” always feel like a challenge to me, a bar I need to meet, and an ever-evolving goal. Being rigorously honest, like many things in our program, is difficult but worth it.

One of my favorite lines in the Big Book is “We thought we could find an easier, softer way. But we could not.” I often tell newcomers, who keep going out, “believe me, if there was an easier, softer way not only would I have found it, but I would have patented it!” They say this is a simple program for complicated people, but simple does not mean easy. We don’t think the steps or feel the steps, we work the steps. We do service.

“How It Works” asks us to be fearless, we, a people who are often consumed with fear of losing what we have or not getting what we want. Being fearless is perhaps, next to not drinking, the biggest thing the program asks of me, and very often feels unattainable, but gratefully, this is a program of progress not perfection. Honestly, I don’t think I’ve ever been fearless for even an entire day, but by working on it, one day, one hour, one minute at a time I have been able to stay sober in spite of my fears.

This chapter reminds us that “we deal with alcohol- cunning, baffling, powerful.” For many of us it is also very patient and very charming. I used to often hear the expression “my disease is doing push ups in the parking lot” meaning this is a progressive disease and we’ll be off to the races if we pick up again. I use the word “charming” because of the euphoric recall we sometimes have – remembering the good times we had when we were drinking and romanticizing the experience – glossing over the reasons we found ourselves in AA in the first place.

It is strongly suggested here that we find a Higher Power. “May you find him now.” AA history has it that this was originally written as “you must find him now” but



then edited. How wise were the founders of this incredible program to turn this important point into an invitation rather than a demand – especially considering how well many of us take to authority and being told what to do! “May you find him now” sounds like a wish to me, a hope for me from the other members of the program.

The most important line for me in “How It Works” is “Do not be discouraged.” I often feel like I should be further along in my program than I am, that my length of sobriety is not reflected in my quality of sobriety, and that I am just not a good enough AA. I will never achieve spiritual perfection, but I do continue to make spiritual progress, even if it is one small baby step at a time. Like they say, there is no AA graduation.

Lastly, “We are not saints.” What a relief! How boring does that fellowship sound! LOL!

This is just one alcoholics experience, strength, and hope. Take what you like and leave the rest. As always, I wish you faith and patience, the faith that it works and the patience to let it.

In fellowship, Maria

Emmy's Two Cents....

What Maria described is exactly what happened to me! I said to my friend, “How does this thing work anyway?” My friend said “The next meeting you go to, how bout you listen to How it Works - It really is how it works Emmy!” LOL

My favorite part of “How it Works” is the paragraph *“Half measures availed us nothing. We stood at the turning point. We asked His protection and care with complete abandon.”* For me, I always emphasize 3 words in this paragraph - Nothing, Stood and Complete. The way I interpret it is like this - Half measures availed us NOTHING. It doesn't avail us half, not a little but NOTHING. Then it says We STOOD at the turning point. Which means to me that I am standing still, I have a choice here I haven't gone past it yet, I can still live a happy and serene life. Then it says We asked His protection and care with COMPLETE abandon. Notice it doesn't say “We asked His protection and care with abandon.” It says COMPLETE. Which to me means with all of my heart and soul. For me, the first time I did the steps, I didn't get relief. I went to a meeting and really listened to “How it Works” and paid attention to the wording of it and I realized - I did not COMPLETELY abandon myself - people, places, things, thoughts, actions, heart and soul. Once I did that, POOF, the miracle happened and I had a spiritual awakening.





Through the Eyes of Newcomer

Hello Everyone and Happy Fall. This month I have been reflecting on how much living a sober life has affected every aspect of my life and all of my relationships. I used to believe that because of my choices and decisions I had no chance or hope of repairing, which is a desolate place to be. I allowed fear and insecurities to become my driving factors. When entering the rooms and meeting people I wasn't sure about creating new relationships because the fear that I would let them down was forefront. Then, I came to believe that a Power higher than myself could restore me to sanity. When reading that line I thought,

does it mean "Ok I've thought it, now what's next?" I had to step back and actually ask myself if I believed what that was saying to. I wasn't sure at first. But I did know that everything I had tried to get sober and stay sober had not yet worked. So I had nothing to lose. While at a meeting one night a young woman said she had been at a 7/11 one night and people were walking by and in her head she was wondering "Can't anyone see I'm dying inside?" I felt that deep inside of me. But then I realized that for so long it was I who hadn't realized I was dying. That was the night I came to believe that a Power higher than myself could restore me to sanity. A joy that I hadn't felt in along time woke up inside me. The only way for me to hold onto hope is to feed it with positivity, honesty and most importantly love. Now there are days where I have to fight to remember that. And days were I have to start the day over half way thru. But I now have 8 months clean and sober. This week I began my amends. And fear not only wasn't a driving factor but it didn't stop me either. When reading the Big Book, on page 68, there is a prayer "We ask him to remove our fear and direct our attention to what He would have us be." My sponsor suggested I read this every morning and now that I do it helps me to realize that although I may have a moment of fear or worry or concern, I should not allow that to be what motivates me. Because I know if I do than I may drink, and for me to drink or use is to die. This I know for certain. And from the heart of this newcomer, for the first time in my adult life, I want to live and share my experience so that maybe another who is sick and suffering can find their own path to being happy, joyous and free.

In love and service,
Danielle



New Meetings

During this difficult time, please see the Intergroup Website (www.ndiaa.org) for current Zoom meetings.

Newsletter Stuff Needed

If you would like to contribute to the Newsletter, please email Emmy K at NDINewsletter@gmail.com Here are a few examples of how you can contribute:

- ~ Feature articles
- ~ Sneak Peak into Service articles
- ~ New Column Ideas
- ~ Cartoons or Rule 62 submissions
- ~ Fellowship opportunities
- ~ Groups needing support
- ~ New Meetings
- ~ Topics you would like to see covered in the Stone Cold Sober or Literature Spotlight columns
- ~ Longtimer volunteers for interviews



Anniversary Club: We do it One day at a Time....

Bob A. 7/9/90
Bob M. 1/17/83
Brendan D. 5/3/09
Brenda A. 2/23/85
Carel B. 4/26/04
Carolyn W. 7/15/82 Christopher K. 1/03
David C. 2/1/94
David G. 7/6/99
David F. 11/23/07
David K. 12/03/72 45 yrs.
Debbie H. 03/16/91
Doris S. 04/80
Doug W. 2/28/91
Ed H. 01/28/96
Franny C. 05/07/96
Fred M. 5/5/90
Gail R. 06/04/92
Jaime B. 08/08/04
Jaffrey H. 11/24/96
Janice S. 12/25/2010
Jason B. 4/20/09
Jim S. 04/10/88
Kara G. 11/8/12
Kathy O. 6/11/97
Ken H. 11/4/97
Ken P. 09/20/83

Kerry O. 04/20/08
Laura R. 6/21/95
Leslie D. 2/20/1990
Liza F. 1/20/05
Marilyn M. 6/26/99
Marie R. 9/6/83
Mary Ellen S. 1/24/10
Melissa S. 06/23/08
Mike M. 4/20/91
Nancy V. 2/21/05(Deceased)
Patricia K. 12/17/87
Patsy M. 1/6/88
Phyllis M. 03/09/88
Sally C. 10/15/95
Shirley U. 3/19/76 41 yrs.
Stanley B. 03/05/79
Suzanne M. 04/04
Tenney W. 5/15/82
Tom H. 07/02/04
Tom McD. 01/16/96
Tracy D. 2/28/2013
Valerie S. 2/3/89
Walt A. 01/94
Wes J. 4/21/75 42 yrs.
Wes M. 2/1/94

ATTENTION FAMILY!!!!!!

Would you like to celebrate your anniversary, show your fellows how the program works (one day at a time) and contribute to your Northern Delaware Intergroup at the same time? The Anniversary Club is easy to join. Here's how it works....you can email the information below to Jamie at mainoffice@ndiaa.org or fill out the form and mail it to 21B Trolley Square, Wilmington DE 19806.. A small donation of \$1 per year sober is all it costs to have your name and anniversary date printed in the Newsletter every month for a whole year:

Anniversary Club Contribution Card	
Sobriety Date	_____
Home Group	_____
Name	_____
Contribution	_____

Rule 62

Newcomers trying to
pronounce "anonymity".


Me:



BE POSITIVE

"October, baptize me with
leaves! Swaddle me in corduroy
and nurse me with split pea soup.
October, tuck tiny candy bars
in my pockets and carve my smile
into a thousand pumpkins.
O autumn! O teakettle! O grace!"

—Fairbank Rowell, Afflictions



Bonfires.
Halloween.
Football.
Hoodies.
Leaves.
Cuddling.
Fall.