



Coffee Pot Talk



NDIAA Newsletter

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Fifth Step Perspectives...

What I remember most about completing Step Five with a sponsor is the overwhelming sense of relief that came over me in the hours and days that followed. I had so much anxiety about admitting this directory of attitudes and behaviors of which I was ashamed. Some admissions were big and painful. In other cases, I felt that some aspects of my inventory were embarrassingly minor. Even some of my defects didn't seem to measure up. Instead of getting judgement and criticism, my sponsor calmly reassured me. He told me that he identified with them, and with me. He also told me that it was especially those seemingly smaller things were in fact exactly what I needed to get off my chest. He helped me realize that this was my inventory, and that the size or scope of some of them to someone else didn't matter. It was my battery of harms, defects and fears – and they were going to drive me right back to a drink if I didn't allow them to die in the light. The earliest sense of community that began to materialize for me that day, the day that I admitted to another human being and a Higher Power the exact nature of my defects, is something I will always be grateful for. It was another step toward “a part of” and one step further away from “apart from.” In that quiet hour of meditation that followed, I began to find the healing and self-forgiveness that I didn't even realize I so desperately needed. Step Five was a necessary part of being “into action,” as I prepared to take the remaining seven steps in this new manner of living.

Jeff R.

There was something in the wreckage of my past that no living soul was going to know ever happened and I would die with the anchor tied to me. As I spent more time in AA, I became accepting of the idea of Step 5 and the value it could play in my recovery. But could I just cheat

a little and tell this most dreadful thing to a monk in Manitoba? Did the receiving person need to be fluent in English? I finally concluded there was no way around it and I laid this horrible nugget on the poor, unsuspecting AA'er doing the 5th step with me. After I laid down this act that for decades had separated me from everybody else, the AA'er just grinned and said "Yea, I did the same thing!" I had been carrying around this boulder for decades and at that point I realized I could drop it, leave it and let it go. We can be as free as we want to be through Step 5 work.

Joe T.

Grapevine Daily Quote from May 19th, 2022

“Through Step Five, God has removed my shame about being an alcoholic”

“Lifting the Burden” – Syracuse, New York, May 2001, Step by Step

Our Principals

Step 5	Tradition 5	Concept 5
“Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.”	“Each group has but one primary purpose- it carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.”	“Throughout our world services structure, a traditional “Right of Appeal” ought to prevail, thus assuring us that minority opinion will be heard and that petitions for the redress of personal grievances will be carefully considered.”



Founders Day Picnic
Sunday, June 12, 2022
Bellevue State Park,
Noon to 5 PM
Tim B. - Speaker at 1 PM
800 Carr Road, Pavilion 1
Wilmington, DE 19809

Hamburgers, Hot Dogs, Rolls, Condiments, Ice and Drinks will be supplied.
Please bring your favorite Side dish or dessert.

Games: Horse Shoe Pit, Beach Volleyball, and Corn Hole will be available

\$4.00 park entrance per car/\$8 out of state cars





With gratitude, please welcome our newest monthly column below!

This is What I Remember...

I knew alcohol was the problem. I grew up with an alcoholic mother and swore I'd never be like her. I didn't drink until my mid 20's, but once I started, from the very beginning I drank different than my husband, different than my friends. When consequences started to show up, I called the local Free Library. When the lady answered I asked if they had any books about alcohol. She asked me a couple more questions and then said, "you should call AA". It was about 1980. I looked it up in the phone book and called the Intergroup Office in Wilmington. I told the lady who answered that I was having some problems with drinking...sometimes I drink more than I plan, can't not-drink when I say I will. She asked me where I lived. I was living in a townhouse in Christiana. She said "well, you should go down to Newark. There's a place called Westminster that has meetings every day, 25 meetings a week. She would arrange for another woman to meet me outside the building that night to show me where to go.

I went in and out of Westminster for a couple of years. Sometimes I was abstinent for a week or two, but I couldn't seem to keep at it. As soon as I felt good again, or the trouble passed, I would think, "see it's not that bad" then drink again. Early on after a short period of not drinking I would feel great, and even cut down on how much I drank when I did drink again. But as the time passed the consequences became more serious and my returns to meetings got closer together. There were a couple hospital admissions- psych ward-drinking made me suicidal at times. Eventually I lost my job, again. This time was the first time the boss said, "you know what the problem is and I know what the problem is, Get Out!!" When I got home, I called my husband at work and told him I guess I have to do something about my drinking. He worked at Amtrack. He went to his union rep, and the next phone call was from his Employee Assistance Counselor, telling me that he would arrange for me to go to a "Treatment facility". I had no idea there was special places for treatment of this problem. He said to think about it like going away to college for a couple of weeks, you learn all about why we drink and how to stop.

I went to Rehab for 28 days coming home on December 24. It was 1981. I stayed sober until December 26th. This time when I started again it was much worse than ever before. I didn't go back to work because I couldn't stay sober long enough to find a job. Once I was shaking so bad, I walked out in the middle of an interview. I drank every day from wake up to pass out. In July of 1982, one more trip to detox and back to Westminster. This time I was desperate so I tried to follow directions. Somebody said "do 90 in 90" – so that became my first goal. I went to Westminster every day and twice on the weekend.

I don't know about you but if I find myself in an unfamiliar environment, the last thing I will do is ask questions. So every day I went into that big room, took a seat along the wall (not at the table) and watched. After all, I had been in and out so often some people even remembered me. They must expect that I know....so I won't ask any questions, I'll just watch and listen, and then I'll know. Maybe when I get 90 days I'll know? Know what? Who gets to sit at the table? How long before I can talk? How do they decide who is the Chair of the meeting? Will a sponsor tell me what to do? What if I do it wrong? When can I go to lunch with the group after the meeting? Eventually it was almost 6 months since I had my last drink. One day at lunch time I got there early. There were only a few people outside and a woman I recognized and liked was sitting at the table alone. Her name was Mitzi. She greeted me and I sat next to her "just for a minute". We started to chat and Mitzi asks me, "did you ever go to that Tuesday night meeting over in Newport?" My brain said, "What's that?." Of course, I had a meeting list in my pocketbook, but it never occurred to me that I could go to other places! I looked at her and said, "Can I?" You see I had assumed that when the lady sent me to Westminster it was my **assigned home group!** And that was where you go every day. Since she asked me where I lived, it must be like a parish...you go to the designated one. Mitzi laughed and said, "Carolyn you can go to any meeting you want, unless it's a men's meeting." When I confessed my confusion, Mitzi offered to meet me and we would go to some other meetings. Mitzi took me out of Newark. Monday night was Stanton, Tuesday Newport, Thursday Glasglow Pines, Friday Lamplighters, Saturday and Sunday mornings Trinity. Saturday night the Womens Meeting at St Thomas. The next thing I knew, I was on an AA Canoe trip; a few months later she told me to sign up for a "Retreat". I got invited to join a weekly bowling team. Don't get the wrong idea, Westminster was my first home group and continued to be my point of anchor for many years. But it was such an adventure when I started to travel to other groups and events. I got into service. My world grew. I have told this story in AA meetings many times over the years because I just can't believe I'm the only one who didn't know enough to realize I didn't know and it never occurred to me to ask. So When I see someone new, or returning "again", either on Zoom or in person, I make it a point to ask for their phone number because I understand how hard it is to call. I include them in my regular Zoom reminders. I have a Home Group that is supportive and welcoming to "Newbees" and make sure they get phone numbers. When you see someone new, please don't assume they know how this thing works. Take a minute and offer them what we have been so freely given.

Carolyn W.

Experience, Strength and Hope...

Church Basements

By Amber C.

As my alcoholism progressed, my world became very small and my interests outside of drinking, even smaller. When I would attempt to socialize with “normal” people, my lack of hobbies and pleasant topics were painfully obvious. The shame I felt led to furthering my isolation and consoling myself with more drinking, a vicious cycle.

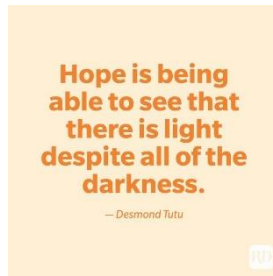
I was a pretty beat down woman by the time I first walked into the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous. One of my realizations in my first few days of sobriety was just how many hours a day I had ate up with drinking, and that were now painfully empty. I remember thinking to myself, So THIS is how people find the time to get so much done!” Yet I still couldn’t get motivated like normal people. My life was a wreck, both externally and internally.

Finally able to listen to suggestions, I filled almost all of my free time with meetings, stepwork, and fellowship with other AA’ers in those early days, not only because my sponsor told me to but because I was still in too much pain to be alone with my thoughts.

Around my second year of sobriety, I had a close dry friend say to me “I didn’t get sober to live my life in church basements.” in response to my inviting her to an AA meeting. Ouch. I felt judged and that the time and effort I had been putting into the place I had found refuge and a new life was somehow a negative thing.

While I was able to stand firm in knowing I was where I needed to be, both physically in the rooms, as well as in the process that is early sobriety, I also knew there was a kernel of truth to what she said. I DID need to rediscover old hobbies, find new ones and to expand my interests to things other than just the program. I made a pact with myself to do just that and started hiking, political activism, reading fiction, embroidery and other crafts, to name a few. My attention span and ability level were short in the beginning but I stuck with things because I had learned I can do new and hard things and that discomfort passes.

One of the many gifts of my sobriety today is the freedom to live my life fully. I don’t cringe if I’m asked that previously dreaded question, “Tell us a little about yourself?”. And while I’m very active in my home group, 12th step and district service work, I’m a much happier and well-rounded participant in every area of my life. All thanks to continuing to participate in what’s happening in those church basements.



My name is Liz, and I am an alcoholic. I got sober in Delaware in 1979, attending meetings at Triad and the Wilmington Group. For 41 years, I regularly attended the Canby Park meeting. However, I have always liked a variety of meetings, so at various times in my sobriety, I found AA homes in Newark, Newport, Claymont, Middletown, and Elkton, MD.

In March 2020, when meetings began to shut down because of the pandemic, a friend from the Canby Park Meeting sent me an email telling me about a meeting in Woodland, California. He told me that I could attend this meeting using Zoom, a video conferencing platform. What an experience: the same preamble, the same steps, the same traditions, the same AA spirit and energy that had filled brick and mortar meetings.

It didn't take long for folks to begin to offer Zoom AA meetings all over the world. I found a group in Massachusetts that met every morning. That Spring of the 2020 pandemic, I taught my last face to face class after more than forty years of teaching in school buildings, and we moved to live with two daughters and their families while our home in Ohio was being built. Because we are in our 70s, the doctor advised my husband and me to practice social distancing and masking (The vaccine was not available yet.) That Zoom AA meeting in Massachusetts saved my sanity.

I live in Ohio now – a little town midway between Akron and Cleveland -- where I sometimes go to an in-person meeting, But my homegroup is 'The Lighthouse,' which meets every morning at 8:00 AM on Zoom. We have regular attendees from Las Vegas, Alabama, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Delaware, North Carolina, England, and more. We use the Zoom platform to sponsor people, helping them with the steps. We have a business meeting each month, and we practice the spirit of rotation: each month members volunteer to host one of the seven weekly meetings. We have 'parking lot' sharing after each meeting to encourage fellowship; we make sure everyone has an opportunity to share anything that they may not have wanted to share at the meeting. The Lighthouse online AA meeting lives the second tradition: **For our group purpose, there is but one ultimate authority – a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants.**

The pandemic has ushered in a pioneering era in Alcoholics Anonymous. Online and hybrid meetings provide recovery opportunities for parents with childcare issues, for the elderly, for folks working shift work, for those who are ill, for those who practice social distancing, and for those who just need 'another meeting.' We find ourselves living the promise that we read in "A Vision for You": "We realize that we know only a little. God will constantly disclose more to you and to us." And so, like the Founders, we embrace change and wait for more to be revealed.

Liz Slater

Anniversary Club

Bill C 5/2/78	Ken P 9/20/83
Bob A 7/9/90	Kerry O 4/20/08
Bob M 1/17/83	Laura R 6/21/95
Brendan D 5/3/09	Leslie D 2/20/90
Brenda A 2/23/85	Liza F 1/20/05
Carel B 4/26/04	Marilyn M 6/26/99
Carolyn W 7/15/82	Marie R 9/6/83
Christopher K 1/03	Mary Ellen S 1/24/10
David C 2/1/94	Melissa S 6/23/08
David G 7/6/99	Mike M 4/20/91
David F 11/23/07	Nancy V 2/21/05 (deceased)
David K 12/3/72	Patricia K 12/17/87
Debbie H 3/16/91	Patsy M 1/6/88
Doris S 4/80	Phyllis M 3/9/88
Doug W 2/28/91	Sally C 10/15/95
Ed H 1/28/96	Shirley U 3/19/76
Franny C 5/7/96	Stanley B 3/5/79
Fred M 5/5/90	Suzanne M 4/4
Gail R 6/4/92	Tenney W 5/15/82
Jaime B 8/8/04	Tom H 7/2/04
Jaffrey H 11/24/96	Tom McD 1/16/96
Janice S 12/25/10	Tracy D 2/28/13
Jason B 4/20/09	Valerie S 2/3/89
Jim S 4/10/88	Walt A 1/94
Kara G 11/8/12	Wes J 4/21/75
Kathy O 6/11/97	Wes M 2/1/94
Ken H 11/4/97	

*** Would you like to celebrate your anniversary, show your fellows how the program works 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 intergroup at mainoffice@ndiaa.org. 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. ***

If you ever want to contribute to the newsletter please email Monica at mon92890@gmail.com