

# Downeast Intergroup Newsletter

## November 2021

*The Downeast Intergroup Committee is a group of AA members coming together in the spirit of fellowship to help carry the AA message through publishing a newsletter, sponsoring AA events, and distributing AA literature. We support communications and participation between AA members, groups, and districts.*

### DEIG FINANCES- SEPTEMBER 2021

**Operating Account**

- beginning balance.....\$2,103.19
- total debit..... <\$582.74>
- total credit..... \$505.00\*
- ending balance..... ..\$2,025.45

\*Donations were received from the following:

- District 16.....\$55.00
- District 18.....\$300.00
- Safe Harbor Group.....\$150.00
- total.....\$505.00

**Past Anniversaries**

moe-6; Drew-29; Lucy-5; Ginny-10; Moe-3;  
Squinge-42; Juniper-3; Josh-8; Lucille-32; Barry-36

**Upcoming Anniversaries**

Kevin and Carol (Blue Hill)- November 14  
Allen S. (Bucksport)- November 20; 9 yrs.  
Donna K. (Bucksport)- November 20; 14 yrs.  
Jimmy B. (Deer Isle)- November; 11 yrs.  
Bruce M. (Deer Isle)- November

**District 16 News**

- Things in District are slowly getting back to some what normal. Searsport Sunday and Saturday night are still closed.
- We had our district meeting in the Belfast City park on the water's edge. There were 14 folks who came to the meeting. It was cool and windy, but the food that folks brought was great
- It was an election of officers, and just about each position was filled. Thank you folks for your service during the hard times. Big thank you for to our outgoing DCM.
- District has been doing ZOOM meetings for the Parc Unit in Rockport.

WORDS FROM A SAVANT (Joe M.):

- > Learn from the mistakes of others. You won't live long long enough to make them all yourself.
- > If you don't think you are an alcoholic, try this test. Fill 32 one ounce glasses with whiskey. Drink one each day for 32 days.

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**DEIG THANKSGIVING ALCATHON, 7 PM 11/24-7 PM 11/25. YOUR PLACE COMMUNITY CENTER; 8 MILL ROAD IN ELLSWORTH. ALSO ON ZOOM. SEE MORE DETAILS ON WEBSITE: [downeastintergroup.org](http://downeastintergroup.org)**

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Step 11 (Matt H.)

***Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood him, praying only for knowledge of his will for us and the power to carry that out. (Step Eleven, Alcoholics Anonymous)***

Wow! What a mouthful! I wanted to simplify this step for myself so I broke it down into two parts. The first part, "sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood him." I Googled what I saw as the key words and came up with prayer being defined as, "a solemn request for help or expression of thanks addressed to an object of worship." Meditation is defined as, "the practice of focusing the mind on a particular object, thought, or activity to train attention and awareness to achieve a mentally clear and an emotionally calm and stable state" and conscious meaning, "awareness and responding to one's surroundings."

So, in my limited understanding, I'm slowing my mind down so that I'm clear and calm while earnestly asking my Higher Power for help while trying to be aware of the connection. Being an alcoholic, I am self-centered to the extreme and have a big ego so the second half of Step Eleven gives me a road map to follow.

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By praying only for knowledge of His will and the power to carry that out, I'm staying out of myself and staying humble. This road map gives me a concrete direction to focus on prayers and meditation keeping myself out of the equation.

Not being very good at prayer and meditation, my favorite part of this step is that I'm seeking to improve my conscious contact. I don't have to have it perfect today. I just need to practice, one day at a time to get better at it. By practicing daily, I will achieve more emotional balance and awareness of my Higher Power giving me the ability to selflessly ask for help to do the next right thing when those problems and emotional storms come.

## Why Study Tradition 11 (Bill L.)

*"Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films."*

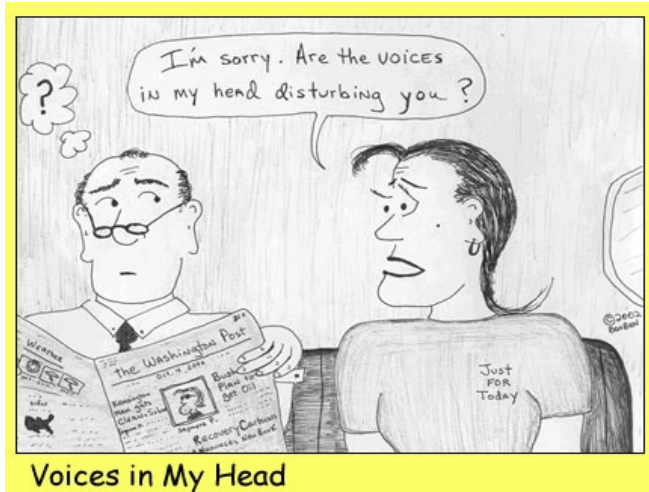
A major principle identified during the course of my study of Tradition Eleven was that of **"Public Relations"**. So what does that mean, and how does that benefit others and in the process my own program? (Common welfare comes before personal sobriety- Tradition One).

There appear to be two key components within this principle: personal anonymity and attraction rather than promotion. And although they work in harmony with each other, there are some differences.

Personal anonymity protects both my own sobriety and the fellowship as a whole. It opens the door for humility, where instead of

recognizing my own achievements, it allow me to work as part of a group where the real power lies. It also protects the fellowship from an unbridled ego.

Attraction rather than promotion is critical when carrying a message of recovery to an alcoholic. A demonstration of spiritual principles is often more effective than striving to convince another of a pathway to a better life.



Voices in My Head

## Tradition Eight: (Peter B.)

*Alcoholics Anonymous should forever remain nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.*

When I was asked to talk at a workshop about one of the Traditions, I thought, "I'd better pick one fast, one I know something about." Instead, I procrastinated and got assigned Tradition Eight. . . . Around here we have a lot of meetings with rotating formats, and one week we discuss the Tradition of the month. In August, it's Tradition Eight, and no one has much to say. What is a "special worker"? What are "service centers"?

Luckily for me, I attended a Zoom meeting of

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Northeast Delegates and Alternates, not long ago, and Bob W spoke. He said, "I'm a Tradition Eight worker." Bob is the General Manager of the General Service Office, what we refer to as "New York." It's a small executive organization that runs AA in the US and Canada. Maybe "shepherds" is a better word than "runs," or "serves" is.

The Conference makes policy decisions, and the General Service Office implements them. You've all heard of the upside-down triangle of AA service. The groups are at the broad top, the Districts below them, then our Area. The Area Committee is composed predominantly of District Chairs, plus Officers and Standing Committee Chairs. At least, that's the way it's supposed to be. In practice, too few District Chairs show up, exaggerating the weight of the Area Officers and Committee Chairs. This weakens the voice of the Groups, which should flow down the triangle from base to tip.

Likewise, the Conference is made up primarily of representatives from the Areas—that is Delegates—plus a smattering of Trustees and Tradition Eight workers, like Bob. The Trustees are not Tradition Eight workers; they are volunteers. They don't get paid, but their expenses are reimbursed. They help set up the Conference, and then help the Tradition Eight staff of GSO fulfill the wishes of the fellowship, as interpreted by the Conference. The Trustees and non-Trustee Directors do an enormous amount of work, through a network of committees.

Our Northeast Regional Trustee has a board "weekend"—really about four days—the end of this month. In preparation, he polled the Northeast Delegates on their concerns. At the board weekend, he will toil late night after night, working on multiple committees, then write a preliminary report for the Delegates—the last one was fourteen pages—to tide them over for the weeks until the official report comes out.

Maybe we could see the Trustees as a layer below the

Conference on our upside down triangle. Then, at the point of the triangle is the GSO staff, the special workers who are Tradition Eight workers. And the tippy-tippy point is approachable, good-natured Bob.

Why do we need these special workers? They produce AA literature, the Grapevine and the International Convention. They register Groups and send out GSR packets. This last hasn't worked out so well lately, but there is real hope that that will soon change.

Looking back into AA history, Bill W found a significant moment in February, 1938, when John D Rockefeller Jr gave AA \$5,000, but refused to give more. This, in Bill's view, saved AA from professionalism. Three months later, the writing of the Big Book began.

Tradition Eight helps AA provide the most robust organization with the smallest number of professional, that is paid, workers.

In Area 28, possibly the only paid worker is at the Central Service Office in Portland. Of course, that is an Intergroup, not part of the AA structure. And yet, we depend on Intergroups to follow AA principles, like not selling non-AA recovery literature. What makes Intergroups behave?

I put this question to Francis, our Northeast Regional Trustee. His "Trustee response" he said, was "We rely on the application of the spiritual principles found within our Steps, Traditions and Concepts." But, he said, his "Francis response" was "I believe the entire system of everything is based on trust." And he quoted Bill W, who wrote ". . . AA is more than a set of principles, it is a society of alcoholics in action. We must carry the message, else we ourselves can wither and those who haven't been given the truth may die."

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The Power of Healthy Goals (Heath W.)

From day one of sobriety, I made goals. At the very

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beginning it was to get through the day without drinking, and then the next. But soon after I was able to do that, I would add more goals. It is that drive and hunger to do more and see what is even possible that has been monumental in my sobriety and has helped me stay sober to this day. I didn't do very much without alcohol before I became sober, which made a lot of things I did after getting sober "first times". I was 33 years old and doing things sober for the first time in my life. In my drinking career there wasn't a lot of firsts or anything new happening in my life; I was like a bald tire on a car, wearing thinner and thinner waiting to burst. These healthy goals keep my sobriety engine lubed up and oiled to work to its best ability, firing on all cylinders. I've learned so much about myself, who I am, and what I'm capable of doing through setting goals, achieving, and failing. I've learned when I can take on more, and also when my plate is too full. But that's all part of it. The "one day at a time" reference really helped me get through it too.

Freshly sober and just out of rehab, it was suggested to do 90 meetings in 90 days. I knew that was more of a tough one in my mind, but I really wanted to accomplish it. God put the right people in my life that led me to a wonderful group that did a meeting six days a week. That was huge, and I attended that meeting "one day at a time" and accomplished my goal. That goal led to another goal – that meeting occasionally needed someone to lead from time to time, and for a couple of months I led that meeting once a week.

I started writing in rehab. I set a goal of writing a little bit three times a week. That grew and grew and still grows now in new ways. Before I knew it, I was setting all sorts of goals for my renewed life: I was determined to find a sponsor and eventually be someone's sponsor. To check on people that started

sobriety around my time and the people I've met here. To share my story and to listen to others more. Be available. To try new meetings and meet new people. All these goals and more have made my A.A. Life what it is today, and has led to learning how to make goals and promises I can keep in all areas of my life, leading me to be a better person, son, husband, father, leader, and (I can't believe I'm going to say this) role model. A desire to stop drinking got me in the door, but setting healthy A.A. goals has helped change my life.

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### *Contact Information:*

*Please send articles, events, corrections, anniversaries, and other group or district news to Newsletter Editor Bill L., PO 1056 Pleasant Street, Blue Hill, Maine 01616*

*[editor@downeastintergroup.org](mailto:editor@downeastintergroup.org).*

*You can also write to Downeast Intergroup, PO Box 1633, Ellsworth, ME 04605-1633. Please mail contributions to support this intergroup to this address or to Downeast Intergroup Treasurer.*