

Downeast Intergroup Newsletter

August 2022

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 communication and participation between AA members, groups, and districts.

DEIG FINANCES- JUNE 2022

Operating Account

- beginning balance.....\$2326.37
- total debit.....<\$1,226.49>
- total credit..... \$655.00*
- ending balance.....\$1,754.88

*Donations were received from the following:

Down n Back Group.....	\$50.00
Union River Group.....	\$150.00
Great Fact Meeting.....	\$100.00
7 th Tradition/ Founders Day picnic.....	\$115.00
District 18.....	<u>\$240.00</u>
total.....	\$655.00

Check out the new Downeast Intergroup website <https://downeastintergroup.org> for meeting updates, events, and the current Downeast Intergroup newsletter.

Akron Manual for AA 1940

Written at Dr. Bob's request by one of his "pigeons" (his term for sponsees) because Dr. Bob thought the Big Book was too difficult to read for newcomers.

Chapter 4

To The Newcomer: Now you are in the hospital. Or perhaps you are learning to be an Alcoholic Anonymous the "hard way" by continuing at your job while undertaking sobriety. You will have many callers. They will come singly and in pairs. They may arrive at all hours, from early morning

to late night. Some you will like; some you will resent, some will seem stupid; others will strike you as silly, fanatic or slightly insane; some will tell you a story that will be "right down your alley." But remember this - never for one minute forget it: Every single one of them is a former drunk and every single one is trying to help you!

Your visitor has had the very problems that you are facing now. In comparison with some, your problems are trifles. You have one thing in common with every visitor - an alcoholic problem. Your caller may have been sober for a week or for half a decade. He still has an alcoholic problem, and if he for one moment forgets to follow any single rule for sober living, he may be occupying your hospital bed tomorrow. Alcoholics Anonymous is one hundred percent effective for those who faithfully follow the rules.

It is those who try to cut corners who find themselves back in their old drunken state.

Your visitor is going out of his way, taking up his time, perhaps missing a pleasant evening at home or at the theater by calling on you. His motives are twofold: He is selfish in that by calling on you he is taking out a little more "sobriety insurance" for himself; and secondly, he is genuinely anxious to pass along the peace and happiness a new way of life has brought him. He is also paying off a debt - paying the people who led him to the path of sobriety by helping someone else. In a very short time you too will find yourself paying off your debt, by carrying the word to another. Always bear in mind that your caller not so many days or months ago occupied the same bed you are in today.

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And here we might, despite our promise earlier in the booklet, give you a hint on the spiritual phase of Alcoholics Anonymous. You will be told to



have faith in a Higher Power. First have faith in your visitor. He is sincere. He is not lying to you. He is not attempting to sell you a bill of goods. A.A. is given away, not sold. Believe him when he tells you what you must do to attain sobriety. His very presence and appearance should be

proof to you that the A.A. program really works. He is extending a helping hand and for himself asks nothing in return. Regardless of who he is or what he has to say, listen to him carefully and courteously. Your alcohol-befuddled mind may not absorb all he says in an hour's conversation, but you will find that when he leaves certain things he has said will come back to you. Ponder these things carefully. They may bring you salvation. It has been the history of A.A. that one never knows where lightning will strike. You may pick up the germ of an idea from the most unexpected source. That single idea may shape the course of your entire life, may be the start of an entirely new philosophy. So no matter who your caller is, or what he says, listen attentively.

Your problem has always seemed to be shared by no one else in this world. You cannot conceive of anyone else in your predicament. Forget it! Your problem dates back to the very beginning of history. Some long-forgotten hero discovered that the juice of the grape made a pleasant drink that brought pleasant results. That same hero probably

drank copiously until he suddenly discovered that he could not control his appetite for the juice of the grape. And then he found himself in the same predicament you are in now - sick, worried, crazed with fear, and extremely thirsty. Your caller once felt that he alone in the world had a drinking problem, and was amazed into sobriety when he discovered that countless thousands were sharing his troubles. He also found out that when he brought his troubles out of their dark and secret hiding place and exposed them to the cleansing light of day, they were half conquered. And so it will be for you. Bring your problems out in the open and you will be amazed how they disappear. It cannot be repeated too often: Listen carefully and think over at great length.

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The Trip Part 1

By Heath W.

I am excited to write this article from the road. I have driven from Missouri to Maine once before by myself. In 2020, a newly sober me was fresh from two months with family and 30 days of Rehab before making that journey. This time is different. This time I am headed back for a short visit with my family, and I am not alone - my wife and newly one-year-old son are by my side.

Since becoming sober, almost everything in my life has changed. The biggest difference in my life is that I am now an Alcoholic in recovery, and that means my mind and my spirit must be maintained constantly. My mind is stronger than the super fragile state it used to live in,

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and I am spiritually fit now more than ever because I make sure that every morning I start the day by giving up my will and accepting God's will instead. But, just because I have found new strength, does not mean I am cured of my Alcoholic thinking and don't make mistakes. In fact, it could happen anytime if I am not treating my disease and giving it the attention it deserves. Going back to a place that used to be a warzone in my mind and brought nothing but terrible memories of grief, destruction, chaos, and bitterness to my life and others around me, I must be prepared. I do not feel the way I used to about the town I grew up in now that I am sober, but I know through my experience that at any time I could be tested and my boat could hit rough waters.

So how does one Alcoholic prepare for such a thing? For me, I must get my spiritual tool belt ready. These are a few things, not in any special order, but things that must be on my belt at all times. I should know where some meetings are, in and around my area and go to some. My sponsor's number should be on speed dial! Just kidding, but I should have my sponsor's number and at least five other AA member's numbers that I know would answer a call at any time of the day. Having the ability to contact people that support me in all positive ways is helpful too. For me I have family members and a couple non AA friends that would be in that category. I like to keep AA literature close. Continuing the routine that makes my life successful back in Maine should be applied here as well. If I read the "Daily Reflections" each morning to get it going, then I

should do the same thing in Missouri. If I pray in the morning and at night, I will continue that here. If I get in a situation that could get toxic, I should be prepared to remove myself from that situation or know when I have hit my limit and when it is right for me to leave. For example, if I am at a pool party and my uncle is having a "cold one", for me in my sobriety it probably wouldn't bother me. But if that's what he and others plan on doing for the rest of the afternoon, I'm not going to stay all afternoon. I have to know my limits in my surroundings. If I knew some places did nothing but put me in a bad place or around negatively influential person(s), then I would avoid them at all costs. And if I'm feeling this way, it's probably a good idea to call my sponsor. These trips and times are always good examples to lean on my sponsor, that's what they are there for. I also will be making sure I am staying in a healthy, safe environment. Luckily, this trip we will be staying with my supportive family that's more than excited to see us and root on our progress as people and as a family. This is what some of my tools on my belt look like. They could be different for some but this Alcoholic needs plans in place.

So we have been in Missouri now for four days, and God's plan for me has led to some unforgettable moments. Right before our trip I was asked if I could tell my story to a young adults class at my family's church during our stay. On Sunday, not only was the room full of young adults, my wife and son, but my entire family was there, even with some of their kids. They know my story, and they are all a part of it, but they

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have never heard me share it like that before or in that type of setting. There was something incredibly special about that moment. What would usually make me really nervous actually did the opposite. I was calm. I had never felt so supported in my life. I asked God to do the speaking for me so I wouldn't get in the way and He kindly obliged. Since then, my heart has been overflowing. As our time together grew, our relationships were forged like the mighty sword. My willingness to be open and vulnerable encouraged others to share their heart too, and my family has become stronger than ever. Celebration from destruction. The time since has included smiles and laughter, tears of joy, willingness to listen with open hearts, true forgiveness, hurting people heard, walls broken down, and new foundations built on solid ground. My thinking couldn't make any of this possible, but by God's will not mine. This trip has only begun.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Please send articles, events, corrections, anniversaries, and other group or district news to Newsletter Editor Bill L., 1056 Pleasant Street, Blue Hill, Maine 04616 or email to: editor@downeastintergroup.org.

Please mail contributions to support the Intergroup to:

Downeast Intergroup Treasurer, PO Box 1633, Ellsworth, ME 04602-1633.

*We ask for your name and AA job title from all who contribute items printed in this newsletter. **Events listed are for your information, and are not necessarily sponsored or endorsed by AA or this Intergroup.***