

Downeast Intergroup Newsletter

December 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- OCTOBER 2022

Operating Account

- beginning balance.....\$1,320.01
- total debit.....< \$329.78>
- total credit.....\$1,031.06*
- ending balance.....\$2,021.29

*Donations were received from the following:

District 25.....	\$50.00
Safe Harbor Group.....	\$100.00
Bar Harbor Group.....	\$45.00
Brooklin Bridge to Recovery.....	\$31.00
Winter Harbor Group.....	\$195.06
#000424861 (MayJbe Step-Sisters?).....	\$175.00
Came to Believe Group.....	\$50.00
District 16.....	\$55.00
Morning After Group.....	\$50.00
Any Lengths Big Book.....	\$280.00
Total.....	\$1,031.06

Check out the Downeast Intergroup website <https://downeastintergroup.org> for meeting updates, events, AA Blog, and all Downeast Intergroup Newsletters.

Important Anniversaries

- Jason (1 year), January 6, 2023 in Belfast
- Debbie (11 years), January 13, 2023 in Linconville
- Mark (11 years), January 13, 2023 in Belfast
- Crystal (2 years), January 12, 2023 in Brooks
- Dan B. (30 years), Decembef 9, 2023 in Millinocket
- Philip H. (40 years) The Barn, in Brewer
- Sandy H. (19 years) The Barn, in Brewer

Principles Before Personalities

by Eileen D.

The concept of principles over personalities is a vital part of our AA program. It might also be a good holiday topic. For me, the principles of this program are arrived at over time. Probably all my time on earth if I'm to be honest with myself. And being honest with myself is a great beginning. I'm an alcoholic. So therefore I have all the defects suggested in the Big Book. Anger and self righteousness are right up there at the top. Regular attendance to AA meetings helps Big time to keep that in check.

There's a story I've heard in the rooms that is one of my favorites. At a committee meeting of non alcoholics in the workplace things were getting elevated and shouting matches had begun when this friend of Bills suggested to the group "How about principles over personalities here." He silenced them with that statement. How cool is that when we take what we learn here into the larger world?

If there's one thing AA is fraught with it is personalities. I am most certainly fraught with my own. So what I take from this bit of wisdom as I age in the rooms is just more and more 'Sit Down and Shut Up' for myself. When I came in old timers suggested taking the 'cotton out of yr ears...'. I took that one to heart... eventually. In my work and family life I have a take charge and bossy personality. This kind of attitude puts my inner life in turmoil. When the 'cotton is outta my ears' my inner life calms down. That's simply about listening. When I listen enough in the rooms I can start listening to the inner turmoil with a kind knowledge passed on to me by some pretty amazing elders.

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With the holidays upon us something I am observing as I go to lots of different meetings I'm finding some of what I call "Classic AA". This means folks are traveling miles and miles to attend a new meeting in order to meet new people. I went to my usual women's meeting the other day and there was a group of ladies that traveled all the way from Fort Kent. To attend a meeting. Imagine! Post pandemic! One of the ladies spoke of our humble, run down little meeting place with such fresh eyes. She appreciated how much "Light" there was in that room. Her inspired comment gave me fresh eyes.

I wish ALL my fellows Happy Holidays.

Robin's Story

I met AA in a funny farm in Oxfordshire which contained about 20% of those with an alcohol problem and 80% of ordinary lunatics. Two days after I appeared I was more or less pushed into a meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous which took place in a hut in the garden. Members of AA had organised a weekly meeting in the place to be there if there were any inmates desperate enough to do something about their problem and then only if they had faced the truth that they had a problem.

I sat and listened to what was said and took in very little. I hadn't had a drink for 72 hours so was not in the best of condition. Someone got hold of me after the meeting and asked if I'd like to go, the following Wednesday, to another AA meeting at Burford. I agreed, of course, because it meant getting out for a while. The same person continued to pick me up in his car and take me to various other AA meetings. I found it difficult to sit still for an hour and a half which was how long they seemed to last.

In retrospect I had no particular honest desire to stay sober but so enjoyed the fact that there were people who seemed to care. In truth I had reached the end of

the road. As far as I knew there was nobody who gave a damn whether I lived or died. I had completely messed up my life from every angle. So, because these people in AA seemed to care a bit and because I thought the price of them continuing to be nice to me was that I didn't have a drink, I didn't have one.



I stayed in that place for some months, partly because I thought the insurance company was going to pick up the bill (I was wrong) and partly because my wife, who still vaguely existed, wasn't keen for me to come home. Nor was I, come to that. Anyway I went home eventually and it wasn't going to work. Too much muck had gone under the bridge. I stayed VERY close to AA, I suppose because I felt happier there than at home.

Eventually I left the Isle of Wight and the marriage and went to London. Life has not always been easy but I have stayed sober by which I mean I have handled life without an anesthetic of any sort. It's got much easier as time has gone by. As I'm sure you know Alcoholism is a 3 fold illness; mental, physical and spiritual. An alcoholic, or at any rate this one, did a great deal of damage to each of the three aspects of the illness. The physical aspect made a quick recovery. The brain damage (for that is what it is) took longer and the spiritual side longer still.

It's a long time since I had my last drink. I've stayed very close to AA, partly out of a sense of insurance and partly to tell others, if they are desperate enough, that it's possible to have a life without alcohol or, as in my case, any mind altering substances. Sadly amazingly few alcoholics like me ever get well. It's so simple. Don't have the first drink.

Written by Robin, Mirande Group.
AA France South West Intergroup 2014

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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.

Random Thoughts

Now that you are sober, you naturally feel that you want to make restitution in every possible way for the trouble you have caused your family, your friends, others. You want to get back on the job - if you still have a job - earn money, pay your immediate debts and obligations of long standing and almost forgotten. Money - you must have money, you think. And you also want to make restitution in action in many ways not financial. If you could wave a magic wand and do all these things you would do it, wouldn't you?

Well, don't be in a hurry. You can't do all these things overnight. But you can do them - gradually, step by step. You may safely leave these matters to a Higher Power as you perhaps ponder them in your morning period of contemplation. If you are sincerely resolved to do your part, they will all be adjusted.

"Be still and know that I am God."

Sobriety is the most important thing in your life, without exception. You may believe your job, or your home life, or one of many other things comes first. But consider, if you do not get sober and stay sober, chances are you won't have a job, a family, or even sanity or life. If you are convinced that everything in life depends on your sobriety, you have just so much more chance of getting sober and staying sober. If you put other things first you are only hurting your chances.

You aren't very important in this world. If you lose your job someone better will replace you. If you die your wife will mourn briefly, and then remarry. Your children will grow up and you will be but a memory. In the last analysis, you are the only one who benefits by your sobriety. Seek to cultivate humility. Remember that cockiness leads to a speedy fall.

If you think you can cheat - sneak a drink or two without anyone else knowing - remember, you are only cheating yourself. You are the one who will be hurt by conscience. You are the one who will suffer a hangover. And you are the one who will return to a hospital bed.

Bear constantly in mind that you are only one drink away from trouble. Whether you have been sober a day, a month, a year or a decade, one single drink is a certain way to go off on a binge or a series of binges. It is the first drink - not the second, fifth or twentieth - that causes the trouble.

And remember, the more A.A. work you do, the harder you train, the less likely it is that you will take that first drink.

It is something like two boxers. If they are of the same weight, the same strength and the same ability, and only one trains faithfully while the other spends his time in night clubs and bars, it is pretty sure that the man who trains will be the winner. So let attendance at meetings be your road work; helping newcomers your sparring and shadow boxing; your reading, meditation and clear thinking your gymnasium work; and you won't have to fear a knockout at the hands of John Barleycorn.

"Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for

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the morrow shall take thought for the things itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.” - Matthew VI, 34.

These words are taken from the Sermon on the Mount. Simply, they mean live in today only. Forget yesterday. Do not anticipate tomorrow. You can only live one day at a time, and if you do a good job of that, you will have little trouble. One of the easiest, most practical ways of keeping sober ever devised is the day by day plan, the 24-hour plan.

You know that it is possible to stay sober for 24 hours. You have done it many times. All right. Stay sober for one day at a time. When you get up in the morning make up your mind that you will not take a drink for the entire day. Ask the Greater Power for a little help in this. If anyone asks you to have a drink, take a rain check. Say you will have it tomorrow. Then when you go to bed at night, finding yourself sober, say a little word of thanks to the Greater Power for having helped you.

Repeat the performance the next day. And the next. Before you realize it you will have been sober a week, a month, a year. And yet you will have only been sober a day at a time.

If you set a time limit on your sobriety you will be looking forward to that day, and each day will be a burden to you. You will burn with impatience. But with no goal the whole thing clears itself, almost miraculously. *Try the day by day plan.*

Medical men will tell you that alcoholics are all alike in at least one respect: they are emotionally immature. In other words, alcoholics have not

learned to think like adults. The child, lying in bed at night, becomes frightened by a shadow on the wall, and hides his head under the covers. The adult, seeing the same shadow, knows there is a logical reason for it. He sees the streetlight, then the bedpost, and he knows what causes the shadow. He has simply done what the child is incapable of doing - Thought. And through thinking he has avoided fear. Learn to think things out. Take a thought and follow it through to its conclusion. If you are tempted to take a drink, reason out for yourself what will happen. Because if you give serious consideration to the consequences you will have the battle won.

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.***