

Downeast Intergroup Newsletter

January 2023

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- NOVEMBER 2022

Operating Account

- beginning balance.....\$2,021.29
- total debit.....< \$758.96>
- total credit.....\$330.00*
- ending balance.....\$1,592.33

*Donations were received from the following:

Pass it On Group.....	\$35.00
District 16.....	\$55.00
District 18.....	\$240.00
Total.....	\$330.00

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

District 16

Joe M.

Had a good district meeting. Thanks for each one for your service.

December 21st Off the Wall group had a Tree Lighting meeting, with a yummy Pot Luck. About 44 $\frac{3}{4}$ folks came and shared. People would turn on one bulb on the tree, and say a word or two. When everyone finished sharing, all lights on the tree were shut off, except the top one. That was for the alcoholic still out there.

- Some missed anniversaries: Jason (1 year), Debra (11 years), Mark (11 years), Crystal (2 years), Sam (37 years), John T. (40 years), and five anniversaries at the Women's' meeting

which were unavailable at this printing.

- Upcoming in January: Mary (1 year), Nan (14 years), Ken S. (34 years), Genie (40 years).

Did you know the *Grapevine* has been continuously published every month since the first issue in June 1944? Bill W. had more than 150 articles in the *Grapevine* between 1945 and 1970. The A.A. Preamble was created by one of the *Grapevine's* early editors.

Thoughts from The Great Savant:

- Don't condone a Slip. Don't condemn a Slip. Don't give up on the Slipper.
- I'm not what I want to be. I'm not what I'm going to be, But THANK GOD, I'm not what I used to be.

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 (continued)

So You're Different!

So you think you are not an alcoholic!

As many Alcoholics Anonymous have gone off the deep end for that kind of thinking as almost all the other reasons combined. If you have all the symptoms your sponsor will tell you about and that you hear about at meetings, rest assured you are an alcoholic and no different from the rest of the breed. But don't make the mistake of finding it out the hard way - by experimenting with liquor. You will find it a painful experience and

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will only learn that you are not different.

At meetings don't criticize the leader. He has his own problems and is doing his best to solve them. Help him along by standing up and saying a few words. He will appreciate your kindness and thoughtfulness.

Don't criticize the methods of others. Strangely enough, you may change your own ideas as you become older in sobriety. Remember there are a dozen roads from New York to Chicago, but they all land in Chicago.

What's your hurry? Perhaps you don't feel you are getting the hang of this program as rapidly as you should. Forget it. It probably took you years to get in this condition. You certainly cannot expect a complete cure overnight. You are not expected to grasp the entire program in one day. No one else has ever done that, so it certainly is not expected of you. Even the earliest members are learning something new about sober living nearly every day. There is an old saying, "Easy does it." It is a motto that any alcoholic could well ponder. A child learns to add and subtract in the lower grades. He is not expected to do problems in algebra until he is in high school. Sobriety is a thing that must be learned step by step. If anything puzzles you, ask your new friends about it, or forget it for the time being. The time is not so far away when you will have a good understanding of the entire program. Meantime, **Easy Does It!**

The A.A. Program is not a "cure," in the accepted sense of the word. There is no known "cure" for alcoholism except complete abstinence. It has been definitely proved that an alcoholic can

never again be a normal drinker. The disease, however, can be arrested. How soon you will be cured of a desire to drink is another matter. That depends entirely upon how quickly you can succeed in changing your fundamental outlook on life. For as your outlook changes for the better, desire will become less pronounced, until it disappears almost entirely. It may be weeks or it may be months. Your sincerity and your capacity for working with others on the A.A. program will determine the length of time.

Earlier in this pamphlet it was advised to keep relatives away from the hospital. The reason was explained. But after the patient leaves the hospital, it would be [useful] to bring the wife, husband, or other close relative to [an A.A.] meeting. It will give them a clearer understanding of the program and enable them to cooperate more intelligently and more closely in the period of readjustment.

Jules' Story (reprinted from the Recovery Centers of America)

"I wish I had some story to tell you about my horrible, abusive, and neglected childhood. But I don't. I came from a normal family. We literally had a white picket fence.

"Growing up, I had a lot of insecurity. I fought with eating disorders. I couldn't cope with looking in the mirror. When I was about 15, I started drinking. As soon as I drank, I became a different person. That, to me, was freedom – but it later became prison.

"It was my idea to bring drinking to my friends.

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We went to a competitive high school and most kids saw drinking as a social faux pas. When we started doing it, everyone else could pick it up and leave it alone until the next time. I couldn't do that, which baffled me. Why could everyone else stop after the weekend and I was left



obsessing about drinking all day every day?"

"I just kept lowering and lowering my standards. When I went to college, it really took off. I joined a sorority, made friends with drug dealers. I was

free to drink and use the way I wanted to. It made me feel powerful, like I was unstoppable. And then it stopped working. My alcoholism had progressed to the point in which I couldn't get drunk anymore. The solution I had found to deal with life had failed me. I had a miscarriage, I was so out of touch I didn't even know that I was pregnant. I felt alone, confused, and broken. My University asked me to leave and everything came to a halt. It was the catalyst that led me to surrender.

"I came home and I decided to find a therapist for treatment. I told her all of my problems and she_ said I was an alcoholic. No.' I said. 'I have highlights and a French manicure, there's no way I'm an alcoholic. Aren't I schizophrenic or something?' I didn't know I had this body that worked against me. Once I started drinking, I couldn't stop. If I did manage to stop, my mind told me that I could drink like normal people.

"My therapist introduced me to my first sponsor who sent me to my first 12 step meeting. I had every excuse not to go. But once I got there, I stayed. I reluctantly kept going. There was something about the people there that I couldn't put my finger on that kept me going. I know now that it was the light inside of them – the sunlight of the spirit – that spoke to me.

"Getting sober at 21 wasn't easy. All of my peers were still at college partying while I was embarking on a spiritual journey. It was the most difficult and most brave thing I have ever done.

"The twelve steps are about spirituality. They're not about sobriety. They're about growing along spiritual lines, and sobriety is a by-product of that. Living by spiritual principles is not something that other 21-year olds were doing. The recovery community was different then, too. There weren't as many young people in recovery as there are today. I had to start my life from scratch. Everything that I believed in, everything that I was about, and my perception on life had to change.

"My recovery has been a journey. As a woman, part of my journey is about finding my voice and figuring out who I am. After nearly a decade of living in recovery, I can tell you that long-term sobriety is not for the faint of heart. A lot has happened in these nine and a half years. At three years of sobriety, I buried my best friend in the world. It broke my heart and healed me in innumerable ways at the same time. I sought spirituality and a connection with my higher power with a desperation that I never had

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before.

“The challenge for me now is not to fight urges to drink, but to stay passionate about recovery and excited about spirituality. Long-term sobriety is about constantly seeking – seeking to grow, seeking to help others, and seeking what my truth is and living it. It’s about self-reflection, remaining teachable, staying humble, and not compromising my morals regardless of the worldly consequences.”

“My sponsor told me a story once. She was getting her hair cut and this little girl next to her looked at herself in the mirror and said, ‘Oh my God! Look how cute I am!’ And I just thought to myself, that’s how I feel every single day. I’m finally comfortable in my own skin. I know and accept exactly who I am – flaws and all.”

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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.***