

Downeast Intergroup Newsletter

November 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- SEPTEMBER 2022

Operating Account

- beginning balance.....\$1,509.85
- total debit.....< \$509.84>
- total credit..... \$320.00*
- ending balance.....\$1,320.01

*Donations were received from the following:

Lamoine State Park picnic.....	\$295.00
Thursday Night Lights Group.....	\$25.00
Total	\$320.00

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

Districts Struggle and Are Reborn

The pandemic changed AA in many ways. When the crisis hit, the fellowship was kicked out of its meeting spaces—churches, schools and town halls—and had to find a way to meet virtually, or in parks and parking lots, or tiny in-person meetings. I thought that people would die without AA meetings but, at least in my neighborhood, everyone survived and new people came in.

At the Area level, we had to find a new way to hold assemblies. Our first COVID assembly was a conference call. We had to hold together to organize these meetings, and we met on Zoom—which we’d eventually discovered—and in tiny

subgroups.

Districts, the link between groups and Area, were hard hit. Some went into a coma. Now, as the world comes to life again, post-COVID or with-COVID or whatever, districts struggle the most; maybe because they function as an intermediary between two—also struggling—entities. In September, two DEIG districts imploded in a single week: 21/Blue Hill-Bucksport and 8/Ellsworth. Both are coming back, in different ways. District 21 has a Love and Service event November 5 (Methodist Church, Penobscot). District 8 went back to in-person meetings, because unity had been hard to achieve virtually. They have a new interim chair who will conduct meetings in November and December.

District 10, long inactive, will have a meeting November in Lincoln. If enough GSRs attend, they will elect a district chair. District 25, once flat lining, now holds regular meetings in Machias. They are working to serve long-dormant District 11 (Calais) by including them as much as possible.

AA in Maine is emerging from crisis stronger and better able to serve. A spiritual, decentralized movement, AA is always evolving.

Peter B

Delegate

Some thoughts on Step 11

I was raised as a Roman Catholic, but after some very scary experiences with nuns, my teachers in grammar school, I turned away from God. I’ll

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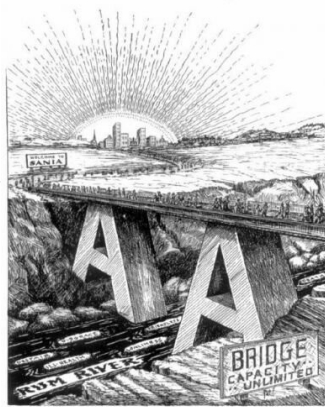
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never forget the moment that, as a 10-year-old I emphatically told my mother, a devout Catholic, that I would never go to church again. Headstrong was an adjective she often used to describe me. There were worse adjectives.

When I first came into the rooms of AA in 1999, I was immediately turned off by all the mention of God, Lord, etc. It sounded like you were all members of a cult. I stuck around the rooms for nine long years. In and out, in and out trying to figure out how to grasp onto what you all had. It was finally when I surrendered in 2008 that I realized that I could not do this sobriety thing by myself. At first the rooms of AA were my higher power since I still could not accept the God thing. That worked for me. I put one day of sobriety after another gaining self-worth and feeling useful. I can't remember when it actually happened, but I started praying to a god-like higher power. At first it was Mother Nature, but eventually I began to refer to my higher power as God. I guess it doesn't matter what my higher power is called, as long as I realize that I am not the higher power as I used to think when I was drinking.

I eventually found the 11th step prayer. It spoke volumes to me and still does. I don't shy away from mentions of God in that prayer any more. In my sobriety my self-will has mostly subsided and I can now allow my Higher Power, God, to guide



me. The prayer describes the way of living that we all come to realize in AA is the only way we need to live. In the 12 and 12 it says "...one of the greatest rewards of meditation and prayer is the sense of belonging that comes to us...we are no longer lost and frightened and purposeless... we begin to see truth, justice and love as the real and eternal things in life". Who among us does not want to have purpose, to serve others, to sow love and not hatred.

"...Where there is hatred, I may bring love, where there is discord, I may bring harmony, where there is doubt, I may bring faith, where there is despair, I may bring hope..."

I gave the 11th step prayer a second chance and it has allowed me to be the kind of person I see all around me in the rooms of AA. Sometimes I say a simple prayer to help be through uncertainty: "Let go, and let God."

Mary A.

As I Sit...

As I sit feeling gratitude for my sobriety I ponder why I am a happy alcoholic. I have not always been a happy alcoholic, nor have I or do I always feel grateful. For that reason, I work daily on keeping a positive outlook.

"Don't worry, be happy", is not as easy as the singer makes it sound. It's easy to feel good when life is working just the way I like. I have many days when I seem to "get my way" and those days happen much more often since I stopped

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constantly working on my next drunk. However, just not drinking does not guarantee that everything works out the way I think it should.

So what does it mean to live a life of gratitude when faced with adversity, betrayal, and bad attitude? First, very few days, if any, are "all bad." So I start by setting aside the parts I don't like and give myself a minute to hold on to the parts that were at least, oK. Next, I look at the hard parts of any given day and try to work out why it went bad. If I can change it, I make the commitment to change what I can. If there is a part that I just can't change then I need to accept that I did my best. So my job is to do the best I can! I think that is acceptance through action. By now I hope you are recognizing that I am just paraphrasing the Serenity Prayer...

So now I am concentrating on doing my best which certainly requires ACTION! (Sorry if that was a bit loud...) So I focus on what I'm doing, not on what is happening to me. If what I'm doing is a problem, I may be able to change that. (I say may because I am very stubborn...) We know I can't change you, believe me, I've tried.

Now I have a day of things I need to do and things I am doing. There are always more things I need to do and if I'm doing my best, it's oK to not get everything done today. I don't drink today. I talk to others in the fellowship, today. I live by my principles, today. At this point, my day is already going along much better.

Now, I am ready to say, "I'm a happy alcoholic". This is not always a statement of my emotions at the moment. It is a statement of what I am

willing to work for, right now. I don't work tomorrow, I work today and I work it with the willingness to accept that, at my core, I am happy.

If I am suffering now, I trust that I will be better soon. If I am lonely now, I trust that I will love others and find love, soon. When I feel well, I accept that as appropriate and right for me. When I struggle I accept that I will feel well, soon.

I heard at a meeting that the Buddha said, "Life is suffering". I can accept and appreciate that now because I know that suffering is the way to enlightenment and I will be well, soon...

Now is a good time to go have fun and do good work!

Willy K.

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.

Yardstick for Alcoholics

The Prospective member of A.A. may have some doubts if he is actually an alcoholic. A.A. in Akron has found a yardstick prepared by psychiatrists of Johns Hopkins University to be very valuable in helping the alcoholic decide for himself.

Have your prospect answer the following questions, being as honest as possible with

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himself in deciding the answers. If he answers Yes to one of the questions, there is a definite warning that he may be an alcoholic. If he answers Yes to any two, the chances are that he IS an alcoholic. If he answers Yes to any three or more, he is definitely an alcoholic and in need of help. The questions:

1. Do you lose time from work due to drinking?
2. Is drinking making your home life
3. Do you drink because you are shy with other people?
4. Is drinking affecting your reputation?
5. Have you gotten into financial difficulties as a result of drinking?
6. Have you ever stolen, pawned property, or "borrowed" to get money for alcoholic beverages?
7. Do you turn to lower companions and an inferior environment when drinking?
8. Does your drinking make you careless of your family's welfare?
9. Has your ambition decreased since drinking?
10. Do you crave a drink at a definite time daily?
11. Do you want a drink the next morning?
12. Does drinking cause you to have difficulty in sleeping?
13. Has your efficiency decreased since drinking?
14. Is drinking jeopardizing your job or

business?

15. Do you drink to escape from worries or troubles?
16. Do you drink alone?
17. Have you ever had a complete loss of memory as a result of drinking?
18. Has your physician ever treated you for drinking?
19. Do you drink to build up your self-confidence?
20. Have you ever been to a hospital or institution on account of drinking?

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.***