

Downeast Intergroup Newsletter

May 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- APRIL 2022

Operating Account

- beginning balance.....\$1,060.96
- total debit.....\$515.76>
- total credit..... \$860.21*
- ending balance.....\$1,405.41

*Donations were received from the following:

Monday Night Circle Group.....\$15.81
 New Freedom/New Happiness Group...\$50.00
 District 16.....\$165.00

Anonymous Deposit.....\$100.00
 Turning Point Group.....\$44.00
 Out to Lunch Bunch.....\$190.00
 Step Sisters.....\$50.00
 Noon Timers.....\$75.00
 Primary Purpose Group.....\$30.00
 Islander Serenity Group.....\$140.40
 total.....\$860.21

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

May Anniversaries

Quincy 3 years May 17th 6PM Bucksport , (*I am Responsible Group*),

Debbie M 6 years and Norman 1 year May 23 6PM Belfast, (*Happy Hour Group*)

Elaine O 52 years ,Joe M 41 years and Linda B 35 years May 31st 7:30 Belfast, (*Off the Wall Group*)

Take aways from the Post Conference Forum

What Happened at the General Service Conference
 in New York 2022

“An Advisory Action of any conference is NOT binding on any other conference, hence the action in 1995, which was reaffirmed in 2021 does not bind any future conferences from making any changes they decide on. We must be EVER VIGILANT and engaged in what matters are addressed at each and every conference or we could wake up to find the AA program we got sober with no longer exists.”

Mary Lou Q.T.

Reprinted from the June 2022 DEIG Newsletter
 (underline added for emphasis)

Dreading my 5th Step

I absolutely dreaded doing my 5th step! I didn't want to disclose my dirty secrets to anybody. At the time, I did not feel totally comfortable with my second sponsor. Therefore, I had a dilemma as to how I could complete my 5th street. I pondered/procrastinated on this for weeks. (GEEZ, it wasn't my fault that my sponsor wasn't warm or fuzzy)

I had a great penchant for blaming others. I had improved but still had a long road to go. I finally decided

to reveal my “sins” to a priest. A great idea- complete my 5th and receive absolution at the



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same time. I had to make numerous calls to different Catholic parishes before I finally found a priest that would hear my 5th step. Many priests were not familiar with our 12 step program. Finally, a date was made and my long dreaded confession was going to happen.

Surprisingly, the priest was friendly, receptive, and had a kind smile. He began by saying "we're not here to beat Debby up for her past mistakes!" I felt comfortable to proceed with baring my soul to this stranger. A priest is bound by duty to keep a confession just between the confessor and himself. Fortunately, I did not have any felonies to confess but my secrets were wearing me down. (You're only was sick as your secrets)

Little did I know, how liberating doing the 5th step would be for me!! I had procrastinated and suffered in vain. I felt wonderful. A huge burden had been lifted and my soul felt cleansed. Although I am a non-practicing Catholic, 18 years of weekly Mass and and 8 years of catechism leaves one with lasting impressions/beliefs.

What a wonderful gift sobriety and AA were giving me. As long as I work the program, I intend to stay sober. I do this by attending meetings regularly, working with my sponsor, doing service work and believing in my higher power. It's so nice letting go and having someone/something else run the show. As long as I keep doing the next right thing I should remain happy, joyous and free! I want to thank everyone in AA for helping me stay sober.

A grateful recovering alcoholic,

Debby M.

Trust in the AA Process- A Power Greater Than Myself

Rick R./AA Cleveland District Office

Why the program of Alcoholics Anonymous works so well, on the disease of alcoholism, is hard to fathom when we first come into AA. Most of us are conflicted when confronted with the idea that our perception of life had been all wrong from the very start. Issues like, faith, higher power, insanity, surrender, denial, guilt, shame, etc. had to be revisited to see where our past thinking had let us down. We realize that we have painted ourselves into the corner of life. And, if we are lucky, we become open to the idea that we may have to seek outside help if we want to have any chance of a normal life.

When we go through this process, in the spirit that it is presented, in the [Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous](#) and the [Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions](#) (12&12), wonderful things happen for us. I find it much easier to look back at the way the AA program has worked for me, than it was when I first entered the program and tried to look forward and perceive how it was going to influence every facet of my life in a wondrous way. I wish there was a way to package it and give it away. But, as I look back on my own experience in AA and realize how each of us are conditioned differently.

I know that, not all of us can envision what the result will be. For if they did, they would cut right to the chase and never look back. In the beginning, we usually spend most of our time coming to terms with the most obvious symptom of alcoholism; the drink and I were no exception.

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Unfortunately, many of us never get deeper into the program, where most of the healing takes place. For those of us that do come to realize that happiness, and more importantly, peace of mind, are the things that are lacking in our lives and to acquire them, we may need to get serious and dig deeper into the process that led to these qualities.

This does not mean that we will not experience joy and peace until we complete the process. Not at all, for every time we uncover another piece of the puzzle that barred us from being at peace with ourselves, it allows us to free up that part of our mind that has been wrestling with that issue and we can finally put it to rest. The day-to-day improvement in our own self esteem will be reward enough to inspire (inspirit) us to address the next issue that needs our attention, and one by one we resolve these matters as we Trudge the Road of Happy Destiny.

Another thing that seems to be a natural result as we navigate this approach is that, with this new awareness, we refrain from making the regretful mistakes of the past that caused our discontent in the first place. Replacing the wrongs with the rights, you might say, doubles the pace of our growth. We only get to live once and it would be a shame to spend it with that awful mental grinding that goes on between our ears, when the solution is right before our eyes. And, if we continue to spend all our mental energy [obsessing](#) on the “not drinking one day at a time” we can do this for years, and then one day, just pick up that drink

A drink has no appeal to alcoholics who are at peace with themselves and with others. Why waste the only life we have when the answers are laid

there at our feet?

Do not get stuck in the rut of complacency. Trust this process and ask yourself if you have been thorough with all twelve of the steps. And if not, I recommend that you revisit those loose ends and deal with them. Give this a try, and I guarantee that, you will not regret it.

Personal stories – She started at ten

When I was ten years of age, I was given a glass of whisky and drank it straight down. It burnt and took my breath. Throughout my drinking years I did not touch whisky again. At sixteen, I had my first experience of getting drunk. I used to work for a bottling company where my job was to put labels on bottles. I knocked off work one lunch time and proceeded to join next door’s bottle department for drinks. To this day, I cannot remember getting home.

From the age of seventeen, when I met the man of my dreams (or so I thought), until I was twenty five, a night life of social drinking and the birth of my daughter in kept me out of danger of alcoholic drinking. At the age of twenty five, we moved and I got a job as a barmaid full time. Work was hard and drinks were free behind the bar providing you didn’t get caught. I then started to show the consequences of my heavy drinking, the work, my housework, being a mother, my social life.

I was admitted to the Melbourne Clinic with the DTs (delirium tremens) and hallucinations. I spent two weeks there and was discharged on medication. Back at my doctor’s I was told to go to AA, I said, “No, I’m not an alcoholic”. I then spent from the next seven years being a top-up drunk, bender drinker, social drinker, drying-out on the wagon, then back to alcohol. I introduced myself to the morning drink.

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Beautiful food was bought for the fridge and my daughter and I ended up eating baked beans. Housework was neglected, I decided all my friends were “full of bullshit”. I was stealing money from the hotel when working part-time to support my drinking habit. My great aunt had died and an inheritance from her of \$20,000, was blown in six months on so-called friends, alcohol and good times.

Blackouts were now coming, thick and fast. and my girlfriend, suggested I do something so I said, “I will try AA”. Eventually, I walked alone into an AA meeting. “Keep an open mind” said one member to me. I saw the word “God” up on the Serenity Prayer and freaked. I had been brought up with a God of fear. I read the First Step and I couldn’t accept it. I paraded around the floor when it was my turn to speak, hammed up my story, lied, and all that time I was hurting inside. I still had one foot in AA and one in the pub. So I chose the pub.

I only lasted three months. I ended up in a psychiatric home again with the DTs and hallucinations. My hair looked like straw, my teeth became yellow, my eyes were bloodshot and yellow, there was weight gain, no changing clothes for days, neglecting my daughter. I was always the last to arrive at the school with my daughter, always the last to collect her after school.

Then I discovered the yellow wallet that AA had given me with their telephone number in it, I rang the office. I gave the woman who answered a cock and bull story then broke down over a wine and soda beside me. She said those magic words “Come on Friday to the meeting”. I sweated, shook for two days and then walked through the AA doors. My hand was shaken, there were no fingers pointed at me. I “shared my experiences” with a twisted mouth and bent arms which have all now gone.

After nine months of sobriety I found spirituality and my Higher Power whom I choose to call God. I have been three years sober now. I read the Big Book and the 24 Hour a Day book, pray every night for the sick alcoholic friends in the fellowship and family. I love the Steps and Traditions. I thank the founders of AA, Dr Bob and Bill W., for my life and the most important of all: meetings, meetings, meetings. My primary purpose is to help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety. I thank God for my life today. I am marrying a ten-year sober, beautiful man whom I love dearly. Thank you AA. Without you none of this would have been possible.

*Anonymous
Melbourne, Australia*

CONTACT INFORMATION

Please send articles, events, corrections, anniversaries, and other group or district news to editor@downeastintergroup.org, or mail to Newsletter Editor Bill L., 1056 Pleasant Street, Blue Hill, Maine 04614.

Group contributions to support the Intergroup can be sent 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.***