



NEPAIG MESSENGER

October 2024

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18640

Office Hours:

Saturdays 10 AM—2 PM

2nd Tues./month 5—6:30 PM

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Monthly IGR Meeting:

Meeting held at 7PM the 2nd
Tuesday of the month at

Queen of the Apostles School
Building

715 Hawthorne St, Avoca, PA
18641

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Our Elections and Our Future

Our elections are on! We need multiple candidates to stand at all of the positions. Historically that hasn't been the case. We enter our Elections with a few un-filled chairs. We owe our Intergroup 100%, nothing less. We've seen a resurgence of IGR participation and voting on motions from the floor which is always a good thing. The last meeting I believe we saw a vote driven by emotion rather than facts. An old sponsor use to tell me to always keep I/E or "intellect over emotion".

While we all have the "right to be wrong". I sat at the table and heard a discussion, a motion and a vote take place and wanted to stop it. I couldn't, but more importantly, I shouldn't. The pitch for a Halloween party "seeded" by NEPAIG was not good, not by our Traditions or service practices. The prior week our Board decided not to move forward with a Halloween party. There isn't an Activities committee. There wasn't one for Soberstock. If other committee chairs focus on activities, it takes away from their 12th Step work. Before the meeting someone showed me a flyer promoting this Halloween party, with NEPA Intergroup on it. I thought "didn't we just vote the opposite?" I'm not against an activity or event, but more about the way it came to be. This set a precedent here, one we might want to reconsider in the future.

If a District or member wants to conduct a Halloween party, they're autonomous, go for it. In the spirit of self support, from the AA© member to the G.S.O, each component of our service structure is supported by the member contributions to each specific component in our service structure, AA groups donate their collected funds to District, Area and GSO and if one is in their area an Intergroup. Each entity by Tradition is "self supporting" through the contributions of their members. Seeking a donation or seed money from another part of the structure is not self supporting. In our society we avoid that, just as we do for donations from non-AA's or institutions. Our IGR's voted to "seed" the event. Now that the precedent has been set, what determines a qualified event? Who do we refuse or fund in the future? What about the 6 other Districts in the NEPAIG area? Did we leave them out?

Problems of money, property and prestige enter the picture. Does the NEPAIG have "extra funds"? If NEPAIG generates "extra" funds, as is believed from activities, then we should rethink our costs and lower the activity fees to make things more prudent. That would allow more to attend.

Respond with your input: NEPAIGMESSENGER@GMAIL.COM

SOBERSTOCK 2024—A Memorable 1st Experience



With just over one year of sobriety, I was approached by a fellow AA member and asked “Will you speak at Soberstock?” Before even considering what that entailed my Higher Power spoke to me with a resounding “Yes”! I was taught to never say no to AA. The day of the event finally came and I arrived to hundreds of sober people laughing, playing games, and spending quality time with one another. There were meetings throughout the day, food and baked goods, wonderful live music, a softball tournament, and so much more. The event was one to remember. The day drew to a close with a sobriety countdown and the guest speaker; me. Sitting through the sobriety countdown brought great fear over me. I began to feel inadequate as the years of sobriety piled on.

“Why in the world did I agree to this?” I thought I was gravely underqualified.” I repeated the serenity prayer and asked God to direct my thoughts toward the people around me. If I could help just one person, my job would be done. I forgot it was my own story to be told, so how could I be underqualified for that? The words flowed as God worked through me to share the message of AA. Following my share, the woman from the sobriety countdown with the longest sobriety, (40+ years) approached me to thank me for sharing and how she related to my story. There was my one person! AA has given me a life I don’t deserve and the ability to be a productive member of the fellowship and society. God willing, I will continue to say yes to AA.

Ashley C.

Log onto our website for upcoming events, NEPAIG info and more at:

<https://aaintergrouppnepsa.org/nepaigaaevents>

These events and information change as needed, so visit often.



DISTRICT 40 “Area Day” - This weekend!

***Where: Misericordia University 310 Lake St.,
Dallas, PA. 18612***

When: OCTOBER 12, 2024 — 10 AM to 2 PM

Where: Rooms: Insalaco 216-219



Sobriety on the Lehigh.....

Sarah S. Olyphant Women's Group

This summer I had a sort of Sober Adventure. 15 of us decided to go rafting down a stretch of 12 miles of the Lehigh River. The day turned into a beautiful Sunday afternoon in August. A lot of us on this trip are AA members. Also included in our group were some spouses, siblings and even children. Our group made up 3 of the 23 total rafts of our journey.



Each team worked together to battle the rapids when the waters got rough. It took a group focused on a common effort, much like in our home group! When it wasn't so rough, we engaged in "water wars" especially when the water was smooth. The entire journey was much like what we do for each other in life. We spent 4 hours on the river that day. We stopped for lunch about half way through the trek to compare our notes.

The next few days my whole body was hurting. It was however hurting in the best way possible. You see, back in the day, my whole body would hurt for a very different reason. My soul felt light and happy. It's a truly wonderful thing to have friends that look out for you. To be honest, being capable of reciprocating the same feelings was also wonderful. I was never capable of doing either of those for a very, very long time.

With the help that I was willing to accept through AA and a Higher Power of my understanding, days like this are no longer a fantasy. The Promises we read at meetings really do come true .. That is of course if I work the program to the best of my ability one day at a time.! This was our second year of enjoying sobriety on the Lehigh river. Its a new born tradition that I hope will continue for many years to come.

Bridging the Gap



Bridging the Gap is a program creating a temporary partnership between a treatment program and A.A. members. Bridging the Gap is designed to help an alcoholic in a treatment program make that transition.

One of the more "slippery" places in the journey to sobriety is between the door of the facility and the nearest A.A. group. A.A. members have volunteered to be temporary contacts and introduce newcomers to Alcoholics Anonymous



Request Services: <https://aaintergroupnepa.org/bridging-the-gap-member-signup>

Become A Volunteer: <https://aaintergroupnepa.org/bridging-the-gap-volunteer-sign-up>

Comments or Questions: NepaBTG@gmail.com

A & A



ASHLEY & ALLIE

Welcome to our column. We're 2 young, sober women sharing our experience, strength and hope.

We hope you'll join us and share yours!

Join in at: nepaigmessenger@gmail.com

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Ashley: I got lucky because from the beginning I was pushed towards people who worked the program. I never experienced A.A. where I was just fellowshipping without the steps, where I just came and talked to people. I was in A.A. four days and someone introduced me to this woman who immediately asked, "do you have a Big Book let's start meeting". I immediately started doing the steps and I am so lucky for that. Based on my experience, the fellowship is helpful. We need the fellowship and a support group within that fellowship. If I started feeling better just on the fellowship in the beginning, I don't know if I would have had the motivation to do the work. Once I start feeling better, had friends, and things came back in my life I'd think things are okay and wouldn't see the reason to put in the effort to do more. However, I was desperate. I was fortunate and blessed by God that I was placed with women who worked a program and brought that to my attention immediately, without hesitation.

Allie: I was just discussing our triangle with someone. At the base of our triangle is recovery, then there's unity and service. The base, the bottom of the triangle is the foundation that is recovery. If I don't have the steps 1-12 I can't survive very well just off the other two sides of that triangle. I embraced unity which is the fellowship, coming to meetings, drinking coffee, and service. If I'm an IGR, GSR, or a part of the District or Intergroup Board, character defects will run rampant through those areas without recovery. If I'm in these service areas of A.A. and neglecting to ask God to show me where I'm being selfish, dishonest, and fearful then I am doing these areas a disservice. God wants me to be useful today. I do more harm than good when I'm not taking my own inventory and start thinking that I know better than anyone.

Ashley: I can't be useful to someone without a program. That was brought to my attention the first time I did step five. I am so inherently selfish that even when I'm helping other people, I'm fellowshipping, I'm picking someone up for a meeting but waiting for a thank you. When there is no gratitude or reward for these actions I'm carrying out, I am now in a state of dissatisfaction without the program. There is no actual selflessness in my "helpful" actions there are many newly formed resentments.

Allie: It's as simple as, how many times have you held the door open for someone? When they walk through that door without saying, "thank you" or acknowledging you how quickly are you irritated? That's me without a program of recovery. The reality which is a hard pill for a lot of us to swallow is we are not genuinely being selfless and useful. I have now tarnished that interaction with a resentment, with my justifiable anger.

Ashley: And it creeps up on me. I don't realize I am seeking the response from others to my actions until I pause or without a program I immediately react in retaliation. I begin berating this individual for their response or lack therefore to my actions.

Allie: These individuals, no matter how small a role they play in our lives, become our higher powers. We are seeking validation, self-esteem from others that we should be seeking from the God of our understanding. That's why in the program so many people will say, "Don't get into a relationship in the first year" even though that is not in our first 164 pages as a suggestion. However, it is suggested due to experiences that others in the fellowship have had. We are so quick to make human beings, knowingly or not, especially significant others, our higher power and we are slow to believe in some type of all-encompassing being that has no human limitations or flaws. Suddenly, I won't be okay without this other individual or I won't be okay if this individual doesn't act the way that I need them to. That was asked early on to me, "do you believe you will be okay despite any circumstance that presents itself?" This basic way of thinking was created, asking myself, will I be okay if I lose my job, car, house, all the material. It's only with God that I am, without God no, I will only see what I am losing. I trust God that much, but I wouldn't have that trust for God if I didn't do the program of recovery set forth to find the God of my understanding. If I don't do steps 1-12 which is to help me

find a Higher Power, then how am I going to be a part of a fellowship and contribute any sort of solution. How am I going to be in a service position and not have my character defects running rampant while I am in the position? I must have the foundation of a recovery program. Going to meetings, drinking coffee, and just not picking up is not recovery. That brings about no solution for me.

Ashley: It's like learning through osmosis. I think by just sitting there I have the recovery program of someone with years of experiences. I can't just sit in a meeting and call myself recovered. I hit a point in my sobriety that I wasn't doing enough action. I felt good in the meeting and sharing the solution but when I was outside of those rooms my actions were not continuing to change. I was reading the book, praying, and meditating and I still had things that weren't changing or getting better, it was because my actions weren't changing. This is a program of action so I can continue to live my life without picking up and with spiritual freedom. I can't have the same exact recovery that I had when I started the steps. Things need to change for me to change and grow. I must seek more, for my perspective will continue to be altered by God or I will drink again without seeing it coming.

Allie: Yes, a life event, good or bad, will take place and I will pick up again without constant action and seeking of my Higher Power at work. My entire experience before and with A.A. will have been blacked out and I will face that demise at the hand of the substance. Commitments come to mind and sharing my story. When I go to a commitment, and I am only sharing what I used to be like then I am not fulfilling my purpose of carrying the message of A.A. The message of A.A. is my experience with the steps, not only in the past but my current experience with them. If the last time I am saying I did inventory was when I first got sober then I am no longer working the program. I worked a program once upon a time. The same goes for amends and every other step.

Ashley: Everyone knows how to drink, my experiences while intoxicated are not the solution. If that is the only thing, I can share then in reality I only ever made it to step one and step one encompasses so much more than my powerlessness over alcohol as an alcoholic of my type.

Allie: When I review my day during my eleventh step, I ask, when did I seek God throughout my day? Some days I realize the bulk of my day God was absent. I sought in the morning and the evening but throughout the course of day-to-day actions where was my prayer or meditation?

Ashley: When I hear about "old" A.A. in this area and how until people like Big Book Bruce came people weren't being taken through the book I'm flabbergasted. I wonder, how they could live without that? Knowing what I know now, if I didn't have the program early, I don't know if I would still be here. I was crazy! When people come in here if we aren't immediately telling them that the solution is in the book, not sitting in meetings or asking people for advice, which are all good things, but they aren't the program, we are doing them a disservice.

Allie: The program is what keeps me sane. I wouldn't have gone to that fourth dimension, received the change in perspective, found that higher power, deciding that God is everything or He is nothing, without the twelve steps. I remember the first moment of reading in the book with my sponsor those lines on page 53, "When we became alcoholics, crushed by a self-imposed crisis we could not postpone or evade, we had to fearlessly face the proposition that either God is everything or else He is nothing. God either is, or He isn't. What was our choice to be?" There was an eeriness that followed the first moment those lines were read aloud to me. I thought it was a rhetorical question, I didn't know I had to answer until my sponsor repeated, "What is your choice to be?" I paused myself and it was in that moment the decision was made, faced with those two choices I chose all.

Ashley: That's a harsh reality to face early on, those are your only two options. Honestly, when I read that, I kind of dismissed it, like, "yea, He's everything," but He wasn't. I didn't know what I was about to find out, that I would want God to be everything. God needs to be a part of every single area of my life.

Allie: The purpose of the steps, the program, is to find a Higher Power. If I did these steps once upon a time and I don't have God constantly in my life, then I missed the whole point. If we in A.A. aren't constantly talking about a Higher Power in service or the fellowship then we are ignoring the entire point.

Ashley: *That deserves a separate article.*

CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE - JOIN US!



Tradition Nine

“A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.”©



Historically Tradition 9 says we should operate at the least possible level of organization. Time and experience have shown us that operating at that level is not in our best interest. As stated in the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions©, we can say *today “Alcoholics Anonymous—A.A. as a whole—should never be organized at all.”*

BUT we do create special service boards and committees, which certainly are organized. So how can we be unorganized and yet still create these organized service groups? Like everything else in A.A., we seem to defy logic in a way, or do we?

When we organize our special boards or committees just how do we do it? We can't give them authority over another member. They can't punish or reprimand any member. Our members have rights, even if it's the right to be wrong! We try to use the experience of a majority to sell our points, but each member has a right to pursue their own solution. Our groups work the same way. We only really have two authorities, one being a loving God through our group conscience and the other being ethyl alcohol. We conform to our Traditions for our survival, For us it's life over death. We give up a degree of personal freedom to live, it's as simple as that.

Our third legacy of Service defines the difference between authority and a spirit of cooperation. We organize, but many of our principles of rotation, cooperation, and responsibility to ourselves and others keep us out of the traps a society pose. We avoid the power, wealth and control of other organizations this way. Thorough Anonymity we invoke our “Spirit of Service”. We make our lives this way to offer the same chance to others like us.

1. Am I trying to be the “Boss” of AA, Intergroup, district, my home group?
2. If I am doing a service job, do I try to be humble, understanding, patient?
3. Do I understand our tradition of rotation? Do I practice it?
4. In service do I understand who I am responsible to?
5. Do I try to learn all I can about our program, its lessons, history, experience?
6. Do I resist or rebel against the organized parts of our program?



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67th Annual Eastern Pennsylvania General Service Convention & Assembly

November 8th thru 10th 2024

Wyndham Lancaster

Resort & Convention Center

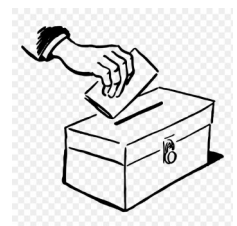
Lancaster, PA 17602

Election of Delegate and Area Officers

All GSR's should attend

Gather to vote and speak

Meet Past Delegates & Officers



For information go to: <https://area59aa.org/>

TRADITION 10

“Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.” ©

Bill Wilson elaborates on tradition ten in a recording from a talk which you can find anywhere online. He states that we are in a position of absolute neutrality as far as world problems are concerned. As individuals we are more than welcome to have our opinions regarding politics or social matters but as a society, the society of Alcoholics Anonymous, we express no opinions on these issues and therefore we don't get into arguments. Bill goes on to explain how a tremendous source of “potent trouble” for our society of alcoholics would be to get involved in arguments regarding worldly matters. Immediately what came to mind for me is the ongoing rumblings regarding our A.A. literature. Words being changed to be more “inclusive.” I've had many a conversation with individuals regarding the preamble that states “people” instead of “men & women”. I see exactly what Bill was describing so many years ago the “potent trouble” arising. I've watched the worldly matters which can be as cunning, baffling, & powerful as “King Alcohol” seeping into Alcoholics Anonymous.

I've read our book of Alcoholics Anonymous with many individuals over the years, newcomers, in meetings and with individuals who have had years of sobriety. There is a common occurrence that I have experienced when doing so. Many individuals will skip the 4 Forewords. The first experience I had, when someone skipped the four Forewords, I recall how baffled I was. It was as though an atrocity had been committed! I was taken through the book of Alcoholics Anonymous page by page, regardless of my opinion as to it's relevance. Well, the more experiences you come to have, not time, experiences, but the more you realize how each page and word of our basic text is necessary and pertinent. If you've ever skipped the “Foreword to First Edition” *grab your book quickly and take a gander at it. It's no more than a page and a half but boy does it say a lot. “The only requirement for membership is an honest desire to stop drinking. We are not allied with any particular faith, sect or denomination, nor do we oppose anyone. We simply wish to be helpful to those who are afflicted.”*©

1. Do I ever give the impression that there is an “AA opinion” on Antabuse, Tranquilizers, Doctors, Psychiatrists, Churches, Hospitals, Jails, Alcohol, Government, Legalizing marijuana? Vitamins, Al-Anon, or Ala-teen?
2. Can I honestly share my own personal experience concerning any of those without giving the impression I am stating the “AA opinion?”
3. What in AA history gave rise to our Tenth Tradition?
4. Have I had a similar experience in my own A.A. life?
5. What would A.A. be without this Tradition? Where would I be

Tradition 10 reprinted with permission of A.A.W.S.

Contribute to the A.A. Birthday Plan

The birthday plan is for groups or members who wish to contribute to the General Service Office on their A.A. birthday. \$1 per year is suggested, but many members may contribute as much as they wish up to \$7,500. Envelopes for use are available at our Central Office.



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<https://www.aa.org/aa-contributions-self-support>



DRY DOCK—Slogans & Humor

In the spirit of
"Ham on Wry" ©



How can we tell if a couple of newcomers are on their second date?
All their belongings are in a moving van!

An optimist sees a partially filled glass half full
A pessimist see the same glass half empty
An alkie sees the glass and says, "hey are you going to finish that!"



If God seems so far away, who moved?



At a funeral for her alcoholic husband a woman's best friend asked what killed him? She responded alcoholism.
Her friend said, did he go to AA? She answered, no he wasn't that bad!

Asking for advice in AA is like trying to take a sip of water from a fire hose

When all else fails follow directions



There's a new 12th step group for people hooked on 12th step groups, it's called, On & On & On & On Anon!

A doctor developed a pill that cures alcoholism. He approached a group of alcoholics and promised it would cure their alcoholism.

One of the alcoholics asked, "what happens if I take 2!"



Victor E. & "Ham on Wry" © reprinted with permission of the AA Grapevine Inc.