

AA District 18 Newsletter

Volume 4, Issue 11

November 2023

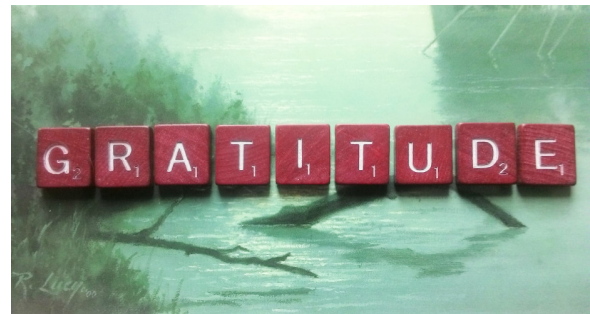


We have some late breaking news for District 18.

- **We need your help!** Area 21 and the GSO are wanting to make sure they have the correct information for each group's GSR in District 18. **You can make sure your group's GSR is current by filling out the Area 21 Group Change Form (link under Important Announcements at District 18 website) or <https://area21aa.org/group-change-form/>.** All GSRs will receive a digital GSR kit and can sign up for a GSR kit to be mailed.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

1	D18 News, Gratitude
2	Gratitude (cont'd) / Spirituality
3	Spirituality (cont'd) / Interesting Dates
4	Events / Birthdays / Grapevine Announcement
5	Holiday Tips / Top 10 List
6	Fliers and such



AA Grapevine Discussion: Gratitude

This month, we continue with AA Grapevine discussion questions. We highly encourage our readers to read the AA grapevine article relevant to the discussion, but it is not necessary to have read it or to be familiar with it. We are answering the questions based on our own experience with the hope that our answers will be helpful to our readers.

This month's discussion questions are from Novembers' AA Grapevine issue, and are related to Gratitude.

'What are sometimes you've felt like giving up? What did you do? How do you find gratitude when you're overwhelmed and feel like nothing's going your way? Do you ever make gratitude lists? What are some things you can be grateful for right now?'

I have often admired those among us who came into the program because they just had enough. They were sick of drinking and didn't know how to stop. Maybe they were in the process of losing everything or had lost everything. They didn't like themselves, probably even disgusted with themselves that they could not stop drinking. Out of desperation, they came to the rooms of A.A. for help. That wasn't me. I wasn't looking for A.A. and I wasn't looking to stop. I made one

continued on page 2

Gratitude (cont'd from pg. 1)

last decision that almost turned into a fatal one. After all the failed attempts at trying to stop drinking on my own, I gave up trying to stop and accepted this is the way it was going to be, then my drinking got even worse. Not too long after that, that decision landed me in the I.C.U at a hospital with a 50/50 chance of survival. The doctors simply didn't know.

I look back today at the road I had taken to get to A.A. and I am grateful to have made it here. I used to regret that last decision and what it had done to my family and friends, seeing me lying in that hospital bed. While I was in rehab, I really was grateful for visitors day, when my wife, mom, sister and brother's, even my best friend would visit for a couple of hours. Even though I really didn't want to be there, I eventually became grateful for my stay there. For it was in rehab that I learned about my disease. It was there where I learned that almost dying is not much of a deterrent to the first drink for an alcoholic trying to stay sober. That explained why I could never stay sober in the past, where no amount of fear I had experienced would keep me sober for very long.

When I was leaving rehab, my counselor suggested I attend at least 3 A.A. meetings a week. My wife was sitting right there next to me when he made the suggestion. I'm grateful he suggested A.A. On the way home that Friday, my wife told me that there was an A.A. meeting Saturday morning at 8:00 am at the church a few blocks from our house. It was the same church where she was attending Al-Anon meetings at, same time. I'm grateful she told me about that meeting, because it eventually became my home group.

I could look back at my road to A.A. with regret, but with the tools A.A. has given me I'm able to use that road to my advantage. I can now see all the trips, stubbed toes, and stumbles I've had along that road. I can see that alcohol was not just a speed bump on that road, but a road that went into valley and grew into a canyon. I'm grateful I was able to get out of that canyon and find the life I was missing out on. I'm grateful to all those who came

before me and were still here to share what it was like, what happened and what it is like now. I needed to hear their stories to hear that it is possible to remain sober and be happy. That it was possible to live life on life's terms without drinking and give back in service to others. Looking back at my journey, I am reminded of a slogan I've heard a few times in meetings that describes my adventure in A.A. It goes like this, 'I Came, I Came To, I Came to Believe.'

John G



Step 11

"Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of his will for us and the power to carry that out."

The vital principle of the 11th step is "Spirituality." Intuitiveness and Insightful Planning are the rewards. Practice the proper use of "Will" with Quiet Meditation.

One of the many things that I didn't have when I came into A.A. was spirituality. Over the years of drinking and observing the world around me, I developed many resentments towards religion and God. The resentments were so numerous that I just gave up on God. So when I came into A.A., I stumbled on Step 2, as I didn't want anything to do with God. I'm grateful my sponsor understood where I was coming from and told me to not worry about naming God, just to believe a power greater than myself could restore me to sanity.

As I continued working the steps, I

continued on page 3

Spirituality (cont'd from pg. 2)

began to pray little prayers to this higher power and began to believe that something, that higher power, was helping keep me sober. I certainly wasn't doing it. Continuing through the steps, my attitude began changing as I incorporated more prayers into my daily ritual, and I eventually came to the conclusion that my higher power had been with me all along. It was God as I understand Him.

Prayer had become something I did everyday and at some time, I began including prayers for people other than myself. This is something I rarely did while I was still attending church. I was seeing and feeling the benefits of prayer in my life. I began seeing the benefit of having God in my life.

I still struggle with meditation. Sometimes I am not exactly sure what to do, but I continue to try. I ask what God's will is for me that day. I quietly reflect on my daily readings and how the message in the readings could have a positive influence on my day. Sometimes I've found something in a reading has a lasting effect on me.

As I prepare for writing articles for the newsletter, I take the topics and reflect on both my past and present, evaluating how I've progressed. I look at the positive and the negative, where I might need improvement and where I am doing things that benefit myself and those around me. That is what Step 10 has taught me to do. For me, Step 11 is for me to get to know God and what he has in store for me. The step allows me to not think of myself so much, but think about others and pray for them. It allows me to do the next right thing, because both A.A. and God have taught me that is the best way to live.

JJG

Enjoy the little things, for one day you may look back and realize they were THE BIG THINGS.

Robert Brault

INTERESTING DATES IN NOVEMBER AA HISTORY

Nov 26 1895: Bill W was born in East Dorset, VT, in his parents' home and business, the Mount Aeolus Inn and Tavern.

Nov 1934: Ebby phoned Bill, asked to stop by haven't seen each other 1 year, Ebby sober, 2 nights later Ebby & Bill sat together Bill's Kitchen 182 Clinton Street, Ebby told about himself & Oxford Group, got Bill meeting Old Calvary Church group New York; Bill went 1st time Sam Shoemaker Calvary Church Mission

Nov 11 1934: Armistice Day; Bill started drinking after dry spell, beginning Bill's last drunk

Nov 1939: NY AA's urge Bill W. to stay on as fellowship leader & not to hunt for a job, despite his money problems.

Nov 1939: Cleveland (OH.) Plain Dealer runs 1st of a series of articles on AA by Eldrick B. Davis which inaugurates "mass production" sobriety there, soon Cleveland has many more members than anywhere in the country

Nov 1939: Hank P. writes Bill W. advocating autonomy for all AA groups.

Nov 1940: Alcoholic Foundation (which later became GSO) publishes the 1st "AA Bulletin"

Nov 1941: Oklahoma City OK news reported "1st mass meeting here of seven guys at Ramsey Tower Friday. An eighth man was roaring drunk."

Nov 1949: Bill W. suggests AA groups everywhere to devote Thanksgiving week to discussions of the Twelve Traditions.

Nov 1950: Dr. Bob Smith AA co-founder, dies.

Nov 1975: General Service Board officially opens the GSO AA Archives with ribbon cutting ceremony.

Upcoming Events for November

SPEAKER JAM/TRIVIA NIGHT

- DATE: SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4TH, 2023
- TIME: 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM
- OPEN MEETING
- PLACE: CSO
409 BROADWAY UNIT C-1, SOUTH ROXANA, IL
- SPEAKER AT 6:30 PM, MICHAEL W.
- PLEASE BRING YOUR FAVORITE DESSERT TO SHARE.
- TRIVIA SUBJECTS WILL VARY, WITH EVERY BODIES FAVORITE, "THE RESENTMENT BONUS ROUND!"

2023 MEN'S AA UNITY BREAKFAST

- DATE: SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 5TH, 2023
- TIME: 8:00 AM – 11:00 AM
- PLACE: REGENCY CONFERENCE CENTER
400 REGENCY PARK, O'FALLON, IL
- PLEASE SEE ATTACHED FLYER FOR DETAILS.

GSR MEETING-HYBRID

- DATE: SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 19TH, 2023
- TIME: 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM
- PLACE: AT CSO AND ON ZOOM
- MEETING ID: 860 0054 3107
PASSCODE: 093088

Mark Your Calendars

BULLDOGS HOLIDAY POTLUCK

- DATE: THURSDAY, DECEMBER 7TH, 2023
- TIME: DOORS OPEN AT 5:45PM
EAT AT 6:00 PM
SPEAKER AT 7:00 PM, BOB S.
- OPEN AA MEETING
- PLACE: FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH
310 S. MAIN ST., EDWARDSVILLE, IL
- PLEASE BRING A COVER DISH/DESSERT
- FAMILIES WELCOME!

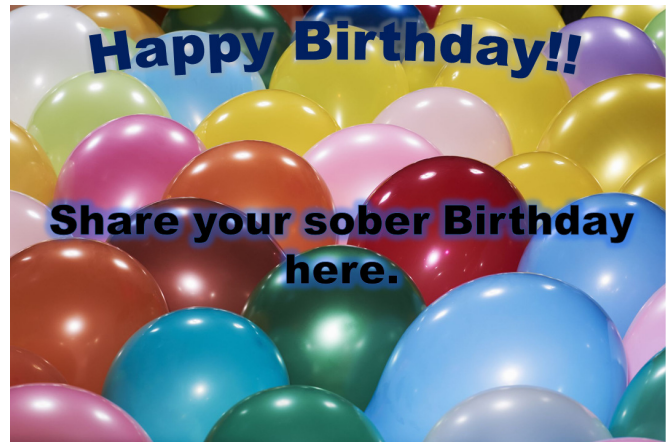
AA is no success story in the ordinary sense of the word. It is a story of suffering transmuted, under grace, into spiritual progress.

Bill W.

GSR MEETING AND AREA DELEGATE PRESENTATION-HYBRID

- DATE: SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17TH, 2023
- TIME: 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM
- PLACE: AT CSO AND ON ZOOM
- MEETING ID: 860 0054 3107
PASSCODE: 093088
- OUR DELEGATE FOR AREA 21, TOM H WILL BE JOINING US.

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS



GRAPEVINE SUBSCRIPTIONS

Special note from D-18 GVR: If your home group has extra funds, please discuss during your group conscience whether your group could donate a Grapevine subscription to the Corrections Committee. Members take meetings and literature into correction facilities. It is a small way we can help change lives for the better. Grapevines destined for corrections can be dropped off at the CSO.

If you've thought of subscribing the Grapevine and have been putting it off, please consider subscribing and adding it to your sobriety tool kit. It's basically a meeting in a pocket, easy to carry with you and can provide inspiration when you need it. I've attached subscription forms at the end of this newsletter, and you can even gift a subscription to a friend.

Thank you,
John G. (D-18 GVR)

The **Holiday Season** is upon us. The following are some tips published in the AA newsletter, BOX 459, 2016, that might be helpful in enjoying the holiday.

1. Line up extra A.A. activities for the holiday season.

Arrange to take newcomers to meetings, answer the phones at a clubhouse or central office, speak, help with dishes, or visit the alcoholic ward at a hospital.

2. Be host to A.A. friends, especially newcomers.

If you don't have a place where you can throw a formal party, take one person to a diner and spring for the coffee.

3. Keep your A.A. telephone list with you all the time.

If a drinking urge or panic comes—postpone everything else until you've called an A.A.

4. Find out about the special holiday parties, meetings, or other celebrations given by groups in your area, and go.

If you're timid, take someone newer than you are.

5. Skip any drinking occasion you are nervous about.

Remember how clever you were at excuses when drinking? Now put the talent to good use. No office party is as important as saving your life.

6. If you have to go to a drinking party and can't take an A.A. with you, keep some candy handy.

7. Don't think you have to stay late.

Plan in advance an "important date" you have to keep.

8. Worship in your own way.

9. Don't sit around brooding.

Catch up on those books, museums, walks, and letters.

10. Don't start now getting worked up about all those holiday temptations.

Remember—"one day at a time."

11. Enjoy the true beauty of holiday love and joy.

Maybe you cannot give material gifts—but this year, you can give love.

12. "Having had a . . ."

No need to spell out the Twelfth Step here, since you already know it.

Source: AA, Box 4-5-9, Winter 2016

I thought it would be fun to share my first contribution to this newsletter, which was in the Nov. 2020 issue.

John's Top 10 List: Reasons I'm thankful I'm sober this Thanksgiving:

10. I can remember people's names, what I did and what I said.

9. I can remember how I got home and when.

8. Loosing while playing games is not traumatic anymore.

7. I can remember the score of the football game and who won.

6. I don't have to get loaded before I go to the celebration/dinner.

5. I don't have to sneak shots between my drinks in the party.

4. I don't have to watch how much everyone else is drinking and panic because someone didn't finish their drink.

3. I actually bring a side dish (filled) or desert to share and I actually eat the food and taste it.

2. I will be able to wake up early Friday morning for Black Friday sales.

1. My family now enjoys my company and I want to be there.

I wish everyone in my A.A. family a Happy Thanksgiving!!!

John G.

The Spiritual Journey is the unlearning of fear and the acceptance of Love.

Marianne Williamson

DO YOU HAVE AN UPCOMING EVENT OR A BIRTHDAY IN DECEMBER, or are you interested in contributing to the newsletter? Please send any of the above to info@aa.district18.org by 11/30/23, being mindful of our steps and traditions. Any suggestions or comments are always appreciated and can be sent to info@aa-district18.org.

THANK YOU for subscribing to our newsletter!

continued on page 2

Alcoholics Anonymous Makes Its Stand Here

by ELRICK B. DAVIS

October 21, 1939 Cleveland Plain Dealer

Much has been written about Alcoholics Anonymous, an organization doing major work in reclaiming the habitual drinker. This is the first of a series describing the work the group is doing in Cleveland.

Success

By now it is a rare Clevelander who does not know, or know of, at least one man or woman of high talent whose drinking had become a public scandal, and who suddenly has straightened out "over night," as the saying goes—the liquor habit licked. Men who have lost \$15,000 a year jobs have them back again. Drunks who have taken every "cure" available to the most lavish purse, only to take them over again with equally spectacular lack of success, suddenly have become total abstainers, apparently without anything to account for their reform. Yet something must account for the seeming miracle. Something does.

Alcoholics Anonymous has reached the town.

Fellowship

Every Thursday evening at the home of some ex-drunk in Cleveland, 40 or 50 former hopeless rummies meet for a social evening during which they buck each other up. Nearly every Saturday evening they and their families have a party — just as gay as any other party held that evening despite the fact that there is nothing alcoholic to drink. From time to time they have a picnic, where everyone has a roaring good time without the aid of even one bottle of beer. Yet these are men and women who, until recently, had scarcely been sober a day for years, and members of their families who all that time had been emotionally distraught, social and economic victims of another's addiction.

These ex-rummies, as they call themselves, suddenly salvaged from the most socially noisome of fates, are the members of the Cleveland Fellowship of an informal society called "Alcoholics Anonymous." Who they are cannot be told, because the name means exactly what it says. But any incurable alcoholic who really wants to be cured will find the members of the Cleveland chapter eager to help.

The society maintains a "blind" address: The Alcoholic Foundation, Box 657, Church Street Annex Post office, New York City. Inquiries made there are forwarded to a Cleveland banker, who is head of the local Fellowship, or to a former big league ball player who is recruiting officer of the Akron Fellowship, which meets Wednesday evenings in a mansion loaned for the purpose by a non-alcoholic supporter of the movement.

Cured

The basic point about Alcoholics Anonymous is that it is a fellowship of “cured” alcoholics. And that both old-line medicine and modern psychiatry had agreed on the one point that no alcoholic could be cured. Repeat the astounding fact:

These are cured.

They have cured each other.

They have done it by adopting, with each other’s aid, what they call “a spiritual way of life.”

“Incurable” alcoholism is not a moral vice. It is a disease. No dipsomaniac drinks because he wants to. He drinks because he can’t help drinking.

He will drink when he had rather die than take a drink. That is why so many alcoholics die as suicides. He will get drunk on the way home from the hospital or sanitarium that has just discharged him as “cured.” He will get drunk at the wake of a friend who died of drink. He will swear off for a year, and suddenly find himself half-seas over, well into another “bust.” He will get drunk at the gates of an insane asylum where he has just visited an old friend, hopeless victim of “wet brain.”

Prayer

These are the alcoholics that “Alcoholics Anonymous” cures. Cure is impossible until the victim is convinced that nothing that he or a “cure” hospital can do, can help. He must know that his disease is fatal. He must be convinced that he is hopelessly sick of body, and of mind — and of soul. He must be eager to accept help from any source — even God.

Alcoholics Anonymous has a simple explanation for an alcoholic’s physical disease. It was provided them by the head of one of New York City’s oldest and most famous “cure” sanitariums. The alcoholic is allergic to alcohol. One drink sets up a poisonous craving that only more of the poison can assuage. That is why after the first drink the alcoholic cannot stop.

They have a psychiatric theory equally simple and convincing. Only an alcoholic can understand another alcoholic’s mental processes and state. And they have an equally simple, if unorthodox, conception of God.

Reference:

<https://silkworth.net/alcoholics-anonymous/the-elrick-b-davis-articles/>

Originally published in ‘The Cleveland Plain Dealer’, circ. 1939



District 18 AA Activity Committee Presents

November Speaker Jam

Dessert Pot-luck
Trivia Following Speaker

Central Service Office (CSO)

409 Broadway Unit C-1, South Roxana, IL 62084

Saturday, November 4th
6:00~9:00pm

Speaker starts @ 6:30:
Michael W. from Granite City

- Open Meeting. Bring your favorite dessert to share!
- Trivia subjects will vary, with every bodies favorite –
“The Resentment Bonus Round”!





BULLDOGS

HOLIDAY

POTLUCK



OPEN AA Meeting TO EVERYONE !

WHEN: December 7 @ 6pm
(Doors open at 5:45pm)

WHERE: First Christian Church
310 S. Main St.
Edwardsville, IL

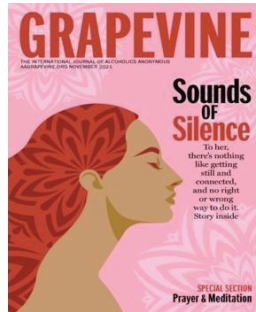
Speaker: Bob S @ 7pm

Bring a covered dish/dessert

Families welcome !

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