



SARA-MANA INTERGROUP NEWSLETTER

April 2018

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aasrq.org

Central Office: Under New Management

Longtime Office Manager Tony F. announced in February that he was stepping down from the role. The Central Office Board of Directors (comprised of 4 representatives elected from Sara-Mana Intergroup and four from General Service District 4, South Florida) completed its candidate search process and welcomed Chris L. as our new Office Manager in March. Please join us in welcoming him to the position.

Next month, this newsletter will include a tribute to Tony, so if you have memories or thoughts to share, pass them along to

newsletter@aasrq.org

It Takes Courage To Come to AA, It Takes Guts to Stay!

-- Susan W.

"How will AA take away my pain?" I boldly asked while pounding the table to emphasize my point. I was in my 2nd year of sobriety and had encountered my first pothole on this Road of Happy Destiny. The leader took a breath, exhaled and said, "AA will not take away your pain, but we will hold your hand and walk you through it."

That response helped me. You were not trying to sugar-coat my situation or talk me into thinking it's not that bad. You agreed that my situation was painful, and you added that drinking would not remove or improve the situation but only add another problem to it. You told me to talk to a newcomer after the meeting and to come back early tomorrow to help set up the room.

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My Winning 3 R's of Sobriety

-- Maribeth D.

Because I have managed to stay sober through multiple family tragedies people have asked me, "How do you do it?" While I always give my higher power, God, the credit, I stay connected to Him with my 3 R's of Sobriety.

Reaching Out

This is when we open up and tell on ourselves, "Yes, I want to kill my boss," or "I'm scared about these changes." This is when we go to coffee for the meeting after the meeting – especially when we don't feel like it. This is when we make those phone calls we've been putting off, ask someone to sponsor us, or reach out to the newcomer even though we're tired and our dog is at home waiting for us. This first "R" not only keeps us sober, it produces great byproducts – new and wonderful relationships.

Reaching out works both ways. Sometimes we are the "reacher," and other times we are the "reachee." It doesn't matter how much time we have. We have to spend time playing both roles.

Routine

We must establish and maintain our sobriety routine. This is why we hear "Meeting makers make it" and statements like "He relapsed because he quit going to meetings." When we were caught up in our addictions, we had routines and rituals. The same happens when we get "caught up" in our sobriety.

Our routines form the backbone of our commitment. It isn't just going to meetings. My routines also include saying the seventh step prayer and the third step prayer every day, along with talking to my sponsor and my circle of sobriety on a regular basis. Fulfilling service commitments is probably the single most fulfilling routine there is.

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Best of
Dear Alkie,

"Alkie" is a long-time member of A.A. His comments are based on his own strength, hope, and experience and are not reflections of any official A.A. position or practice.

Q. Dear Alkie: I'm scared I'll get drunk again if I don't do this AA thing right. How can I tell if my program is going OK?

Alkie: If you're coasting, you're going downhill; if you're not moving forward, you're moving backwards.

Q. Dear Alkie: I really want you AA people to like me. Should I dress up for meetings?

Alkie: Meetings are a "come as you are" party, not a "come as you'd like to be seen" party.

Q. Dear Alkie: My sponsor says I should work the Steps *and* go to meetings. Do I really have to do both meetings and Steps?

Alkie: The meetings are like a hospital where we go to get well, but the Steps are the surgery necessary for recovery.

Q. Dear Alkie: I think I need to go to your AA meetings, but I'm scared. Are they places where I'll feel comfortable?

Alkie: Every time I go to a meeting, it's like crawling into the safety of God's lap.

Q. Dear Alkie: You've been sober a long time. Why do you still go to meetings?

Alkie: I go to meetings for the reason most people go to church - to get closer to God.

Q. Dear Alkie: I've got lots of problems, so I drink. Does being in AA solve your problems?

The way to become an Old-Timer --
Don't drink and don't die!

Definition of an alcoholic: when things
get worse faster than you can lower your
standards.

Definition of forgiveness: giving up hope
for a better past.

It Takes Courage continued from page 1

I am grateful you encouraged me to **Face Everything And Recover** rather than **Forget Everything And Run!** I assumed that once I cleaned up the wreckage of my past I'd be skipping along the road. I learned that sobriety includes painful times – some of which I brought upon myself through self-will-run-riot; some just naturally happened as part of life on life's terms.

You always told me to work the steps, do service, and seek the God of my understanding. I've had many years and many potholes worth of practice. Those potholes and that advice have prepared me for my current pain because in dealing with it recently, I automatically decided to stop by Central Office. After getting a few hugs I was asked, "Do you want to help with...?" I smiled and knew that AA had just grabbed my hand again. I will forever be grateful.

Alkie: Being in AA doesn't solve my problems, but it keeps me sober so I can work on them.

Q. Dear Alkie: I've gone to a few of your meetings - one or two a month - but I still keep drinking. AA doesn't seem to work for me; I'm still horribly unhappy.

Alkie: We can't be happy living in the world and just visiting AA. We must live AA and visit the world.

From My Journal

by Nancy B.



As an active alcoholic I was a whirling dervish of self-centeredness, always trying to do the right thing but unable to get out of my own -isms to maintain a level of responsibility for my family and even, to some extent, my clients.

Sobriety and AA unity opened my eyes and my heart to a whole new way of being—well, of course, the steps have been vital too. But the idea of being part of a whole and functioning fellowship which is not led but is maintained by commitment and unity, not self, was new to me.

And while I can't clearly define what unity in AA is, like I can't define my higher power's will, what is clear to me is that unity is not my will, not my self-centered way, not my ego. It is US.

This approach has helped me function in my family and other non-AA groups I'm in. I can more easily see what the right thing to do is, and do it, when I focus on unity and singleness of purpose.

Dear Lord, so far today I've done all right. I haven't gossiped, lost my temper, and been greedy, grumpy, nasty, selfish, or overindulgent. But in a few minutes, God, I'm going to get out of bed, and then I'm probably going to need a lot more help.

3 R's of Sobriety

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Relying on God

Relying on God anchors my 3 R's. I never forget that the goal of my program is to find a Power greater than myself that can relieve me of my alcoholism. But *finding* Him isn't enough. I have to find ways to connect with that Power and to use it. What good is an electrical outlet if nothing is plugged in?

This is accomplished through surrender and faith. Those are two concepts that have been very challenging for me. I have attached myself to people who are better at it than I am, and I observe what they do.

It isn't always easy, and on any given day some R's work better than others, but if I find myself out of sorts, usually one of the R's needs more attention.

Back of the Book

At Peace With . . .

--Edgar C.

Bill Wilson often said that the testimonial stories in the back of the Big Book might prove to be more valuable in achieving sobriety than the main text of that book.

One example of a powerful statement from a sample story follows, taken from "To Handle Sobriety" (pp 553-559, 4th edition):

"(In A.A.) we are taught to differentiate between our wants (which are never satisfied) and our needs (which are always provided for). . . we reject fantasizing and accept reality . . . I was at peace with myself. And with others. And with God."

Upcoming event? New meeting, new time, new format? Care to write about your experience, strength and hope?

LET YOUR FELLOW AAers KNOW. Send it to newsletter@AAsrq!

STEPPING UP TO SERVE

At March's Intergroup meeting, two members of our fellowship volunteered to give back by filling a couple of important positions:

Where & When Committee Chair
Susan W.

Intergroup Liaison
Diane

THANK YOU!



Everything that Is Going to Happen Is Going to Happen

--Anonymous

Whether I worry about it, become angry about possible outcomes, entertain my fears, stay up nights or drink over it, it's still going to happen. So, I can get all wrapped up in what the future might bring, or I can let it play it out.

I have to remember that I've come this far in life, and I'm still here. I've been blessed with enough food to eat and a roof over my head; my family is healthy; I'm alive, happy and sober. I've yet to die from embarrassment. I'm still here, even if I didn't get that promotion. All that stuff that I spent years worrying about and drinking over seldom came to pass.

Today I truly believe that God's will will be done, and that He's looking out for me. It may not always make sense to me at the time, but it will eventually. So I try to spend my mental and physical energy on *today* and trust God because life is going to play out whether I get tied up in knots or not.

APRIL AA MILESTONES

- 1939** The Big Book publishes.
- 1940** Sober Rollie H. catches only opening day no-hitter since 1909. Causes controversy when he breaks anonymity in May 1940 press conference.
- 1951** 1st General Service Conf. held
- 1958** The word "honest" dropped from "an honest desire to stop drinking," in Preamble.
- 1989** "My Name is Bill W." movie airs on ABC in primetime.

SAVE THE DATE!

SATURDAY, AUGUST 25

10:00AM-2:00PM

"CARRY THE MESSAGE"

Location:

**Beautiful Savior
Lutheran Church**

**7461 Prospect Rd
Sarasota, FL 34243**

**WILLING TO VOLUNTEER?
CONTACT MICK**

paisley06@gmail.com

POT LUCK LUNCH!!

ANNIVERSARIES

Groups: Please email birthdays to newsletter@AAsrq.org and put **ANNIVERSARIES** in the subject line. Cutoff for the newsletter is the last day of the month. Anniversaries will appear the month after they occur (ie., April anniversaries will appear in May). In this issue, unless otherwise noted, anniversaries are for March.

63rd Avenue Group		ROSE Group	
Deborah C.	43 years	<i>January</i>	
Jo B.	32 years	Betty W.	32 years
Frankie W.	24 years	Deb L.	22 years
Michelle B.	6 years	Liz S.	17 years
Gulf Gate Noon		MaryAnn S.	4 years
Bill M.	29 years	Shirley O.	31 years
Edgar C.	33 years	Stephanie R.	14 years
Leslie	31 years	<i>February</i>	
Happy Cookie Hour		Ann S.	34 years
Arlene	2 years	Dana H.	3 years
Bill S.	5 years	Helen Y.	10 years
Marylin M.	4 years	Judy D.	30 years
(February)		Suzi L.	6 years
Barbara	36 years	<i>March</i>	
Palmetto Group of AA		Audrey R.	29 years
<i>January</i>		Bonnie Mc.	15 years
Bryan V.	1 year	Linda L.	17 years
Garry B.	16 years	Maureen C.	
<i>February</i>		Sat. Night Speakers Group	
Berk A.	4 years	Bill P.	31 years
Bobby M.	33 years	John (JT) E.	4 years
Dick C.	36 years	Serenity Room	
Joyce F.	38 years	Cathy	42 years
Lillie B.	16 years	Don	40 years
<i>March</i>		Singleness of Purpose	
Daniel	6 years	B.B.	46 years
Jim W.	27 years	Debbie H.	2 years
Lee	8 years	Jack C.	43 years
Marco O.	9 years	Mike T.	4 years
Robyn F.	25 years	Ray C.	43 years
Chris C.	5 years	Sunrise Group	
Primary Porpoise		Bill S.	5 years
Kimberly D.	1 year	Fred H.	8 years
Steven Z.	1 year	John M.	31 years
Tracy W.	12 years	Joy	4 years
Monday Night North River		Lou C.	25 years
Hedy N.	40 years	Mandy S.	17 years
Joe D.	20 years	Tim L.	25 years
Lori R.	6 years		
Rick M.	16 years		

Please join Districts 1, 4 & 15 for

The Delegate's Report

Saturday May 12th

Fellowship: 11:00 am

Pot Luck Lunch: 12:00 am

Delegate Report: 1:00 pm

Location: Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church

7461 Prospect Rd. Sarasota, FL 34243

Annie C., Delegate for Southwest Florida Area 15 Panel 68, will bring back information about the General Service Conference.

This will be a Pot Luck Lunch so please bring a dish

All are welcome and encouraged to attend!

This is a great opportunity to learn about

AA and the service structure... you know, that upside down triangle!



Volunteers needed for set up & break down.

Contact:

Tom M. 941-773-1938

Mick G. 941-587-0881



District 4 Sarasota / Manatee Celebrates

Founders Day 2018

Foot "Steps" in the Sand

Saturday June 9th

Sarasota Community Church

4041 Bahia Vista Street

Sarasota, FL 34232

NO SMOKING ON GROUNDS

5:30 PM - Doors Open

6:30 PM - Dinner

8:00 PM - Speaker

Janice P. - St

Pete, FL

Chicken Piccata lemon, capers, garlic Beurre Blanc
Center Cut Pork Loin, mushroom gravy
Pasta primavera, roasted garlic
Rice Pilaf, Salad, Bread
Dessert

Tickets - \$18.00 per person

Available at Central Office

1748 Independence Blvd. Sarasota, FL

For more information or to Volunteer

Contact Holly S - events@asrq.org

Accessibility needs - specialneeds@asrq.org

www.asrq.org