



Sara-Mana InterGroup

The January 2017 Issue
District 4, Area 15

AASRQ.org



Editor's Note: The 12th Step in Action

Dear Fellowship,

As we start 2017, I want to share my gratitude to Edgar C, longtime editor of the Sara-Mana InterGroup newsletter. For years, we have been enjoying Edgar's exceptional talent. Edgar has recently given me the opportunity to take ownership of this service work. Pretty big shoes to fill.

To me, Edgar has shown, by example, the incredible 12th step. This project has been vital to my sobriety. Note to Edgar C.: it is a privilege, and I thank you for showing me the core of this program. Christine R.

Please Help!! 2017 Central Office Annual Fund Drive Has Begun

District 4's Central Office, serving Sarasota and Manatee Counties, is a vital part of our strong AA community. Please help us reach our goal of \$30000.00 by April 16th.

What does Central Office do for us?

- Answers inquiries regarding AA.
- Provides and maintains a place for our

Service Organizations and Committees to meet regularly: *General Services, InterGroup, PI/CPC, Current Practices, H&I, Literature, Grapevine, Special Needs, Archives, Events, Helpline, Newsletter, Where and When.*

-Supplies AA-related literature and materials to individuals, groups and institutions.

-Assists our service committees in their efforts.

- Maintains an informational website

- Provides the services necessary for you to accomplish 12th step work.

It is your Individual Contributions that keep our doors open and they are greatly appreciated.

Envelopes are at your meetings through your GSR and InterGroup Reps. Thank you!!!!

From:
The Central Office Board Of Directors

“Seasoned Beginner” Wows the Fellowship at Sara Mana's Gratitude Dinner

Mary T., a New England native, with 43 years of sobriety, kicked off the Gratitude Dinner this past November 12th. Mary was an outstanding speaker, referring to herself as a “seasoned beginner.”

Mary discussed the disease of alcoholism as a “Sickness of the Soul.” She discussed how the meaning of the “black lines” on a

page can evolve when re-reading literature. She also talked about how we alcoholics tend to put a “cap” on what God gives to us – which is, in fact, really limitless.

The evening also included a superb dinner, created by Chef Paul, a raffle, and the infamous sobriety countdown. The count-down was particularly touching as a member with over 50 years ceremoniously gave a special big-book to a newcomer, which was signed by a group of old-timers, which Mary T. specified as “long-timers.”



Evaluating Resentment By Carol K.

I spent a lot of my drinking life trying to control my drinking. I was a good quitter but I was an even better starter, so I could stop but not stay stopped. Coming into AA I was resentful that my doctor had strongly suggested that I call AA. Because I was afraid of her and, maybe because I had just recently said, “I cannot go on this way another day,” I went.

As the book says, resentment is our number one offender. My home group had a three week rotation of step,

Evaluating Resentment (cont'd)

tradition, topic, which was almost always on a character defect. When others spoke of their resentments I realized immediately that resentment and self pity were two of the tools I used to justify my drinking. "If only he would come home when he said he would;" "If only she did what I asked her to do;" "If only I got that new position at work." About that time someone in the group said that resentment and self pity were two sides of the same coin, that we couldn't have one without the other.

Then I heard that the word "resentment" comes from the French word, "ressentir", which means to feel. I had the funniest thought: carrying a resentment and thinking about it over and over is exactly the same thing as continually sticking my tongue in my tooth that had a cavity. Does it still hurt? Of course it does if I keep rethinking it or keep sticking my tongue in the cavity.

I heard a solution for resentment was to pray for who or what I resented. I went to a meeting with a woman who had a gigantic resentment against her ex-husband. We saw our fellow member Father Ed at the meeting every week and every week she would complain to him about her ex. He would always tell her to pray for him. Finally one week she came in and said to Father Ed: "OK, I did it! I said God bless the S.O.B!" He smiled and said to her, "That's a good start."

I don't want anyone owning me or my thoughts, especially when I'm wide-eyed and angry all night and they're sleeping peacefully unaware of my resentment. In reading Step 10 in the 12 & 12, it is a spiritual axiom that every time we are disturbed, no matter what the cause, there is something wrong with us.



"I have the coffee pot. Now all I need is a resentment and I can start my own meeting!"

Newcomer's Nook

This section is dedicated to the newcomer - contributions are encouraged!

RULES FOR WINNING THE SOBRIETY CONTEST

1. You will receive one body. You may like it or hate it, but it will be yours for the entire period.
2. You are enrolled in the school of life. You will learn lessons which you may like or think stupid.
3. There are no mistakes, only lessons. Unsuccessful experiences are learning opportunities.
4. Lessons come in various forms. A lesson will be repeated until you learn it.
5. Learning never stops. As long as you are alive, there are more lessons to learn.
6. Others are reflections of you. What you love or hate about another, is what you feel about yourself.
7. What you make of your life is up to you. You have all the tools; decide how you'll use them.
8. Learn to trust yourself. A.A.'s teachings have given you the right answers provided you share them.

Where it all began

**Bill W.: The Creative Force Behind Alcoholics Anonymous:
A PBS Show**

Bill W.: The Creative Force Behind Alcoholics Anonymous tells the story of how William G. Wilson, a hopeless drunk near death from his alcoholism, found a way out of his own addiction and then forged a path for countless others to follow.

Watch the full show on PBS at:

<http://www.pbs.org/show/bill-w-creative-force-behind-alcoholics-anonymous/previews/>

One Day At A Time By Joe

My name is Joe and I am an alcoholic. I am an inmate in the Recovery Pod of the Manatee County Jail. I have been sober for approximately 6 months but that doesn't mean much as I have been incarcerated for that entire time. What does mean something is that I've taken the first couple steps in changing my life for the better.

Life hasn't been easy and I haven't done myself many favors along the way. There is no rational explanation nor excuse for a lot of the things I have done. I have burned bridges, committed crimes, and hurt good people. I wrecked my family, destroyed my marriage, and then destroyed other family members' lives and marriages. I have been in and out of prison and jails more times than I care to admit.

I realize now that I was caught in the insanity of drugs and alcohol. I am done with that insanity, starting now, just for today, using the brains that my Higher Power has given me.

We attend multiple AA classes and religious programs on a daily basis.

One Day at a Time (cont'd)

It's a great program and I have a lot of respect and gratitude for the countless volunteers who give their time to help lost people like myself.

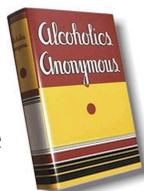
The men from AA help me understand alcohol, the insanity of the disease, and show me how to overcome it one day at a time. The people from church have helped me to understand my "Higher Power" Jesus Christ and the importance of forgiving others if I expect to be forgiven.

It truly is amazing the spiritual awakening that I have had. I realized I am powerless over alcohol and being honest with myself is so vital to my success. I can't drink alcohol like normal people; it's that simple.

To overcome my disease is also simple: don't drink and go to meetings. The rest of life depends on two simple rules: loving God and then loving my neighbor. I wholeheartedly believe that if I do these simple things my life will get remarkably better.

It is weird, I came to jail, and I lost hope and everything else I truly loved, but I found God, AA, a new way of life and maybe even my mind! I don't miss my old lifestyle and the urge to drink alcohol. I have years of amends to make, but with the help of God and the good people of Church and AA, I will make them, sober - one day at a time.

Back of the Book A Successful Life



Bill Wilson felt that the personal stories in the back of the book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, would in the

long run prove to be more useful than the main text of the tome. In the story, *Empty on the Inside*, (pages 512-521, Fourth Edition), the author explains in only a few words how to learn to live successfully:

"I learned how to be a good A.A. member by watching good A.A. members and doing what they do. I learned how to have a good marriage by watching people with good marriages and doing what they do. I learned how to be a good parent by watching good parents and doing what they do. And I finally have the freedom of believing it is all right not to know." --Edgar C



NANCY'S JOURNAL JOURNAL ENTRIES by Nancy B. Based on readings from *Daily Reflections*

My first experience abstaining from alcohol for 3 years without the help of our AA program continues to remind me that I am not cured and that I need to keep my spiritual condition healthy. Not only did I go back to drinking on an impulse, for another 17 years, but I had not changed any of my self-centered alcoholic thinking. *In* AA it has been radically different. I stay vigilant to keep my sobriety safe, knowing that alcohol is a cunning enemy just waiting to get me back. And I have been able to stay vigilant by knowing that I had to change how I think, taking the "me" out of my MO and putting more "we" and "you" in and by attending meetings, regular contact with my sponsor and sponsees and doing service. I can't single out any one factor, it is the whole AA program that helps me with my spiritual condition.

Dear Alkie,

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

Q. I had my first sober holiday season visiting my out of town family. I told them I was in recovery and got encouragement. But the persistent question was "you're smart and successful, so why can't you control your drinking". My unspoken reaction was "good question". Help!

A. In early sobriety, I faced the 'why' question. My sponsor asked my shoe size – I answered 'size 9c' – he responded 'do you ever ask why'. The point is you have a disease (an allergy said Dr. Silkworth), so just accept you are powerless over alcohol. Stay close to the fellowship where we know 'why' isn't the right question, it's 'how' to stay sober.

Q. I got a DUI and was in jail overnight, even though I was careful to monitor my drinking both before and while I was out 'clubbing'. My lawyer says I should try AA, but I don't have a serious problem. How do I get everyone off my back?

A. If you're 'monitoring' your drinking or are thinking about alcohol more than broccoli, you may have a problem. Some of our most enthusiastic members joined with a judge's encouragement. There are no locks on AA's doors – you can come and go as you choose – so why not give AA a try?

Q. I've made some real progress over the past year and know I need to learn more. What's the key to step 12?

A. My experience with a 'spiritual awakening' is vital but can be fragile. Being human, we want to take control – to be the masters of our fate – I thought I could do this by myself, thank you. Personally, I need to focus on my spiritual fitness every day. When I do, everything else falls into place.

ANNIVERSARIES

Bay	Jimmy J.	32	Jerry W.	29
December	Joel S.	26	Kathy B.	28
Kerry S.	Susan	14	Heather C.	9
John S.	Laurie	10	Nani M.	5
Rip C.	Elizabeth G.	6	December	
Peg D.	Tony P.	6	Joop V.	26
Karla K.	Robin O.	5	Yolande W.	14
			Pat P.	10
Bee Ridge East			Lisa M.	9
December	Early Big Book		Bob M.	8
Ursula K.	December		Don S.	5
	Nancy L.	38		
Beneva Discussion	Gretchen J.	25	Sunrise	
December	Kunnell	21	December	
Paul G.	KC C.	21	Dan B.	34
KC C.			Gretchen	25
	Pass-it-On		Jason S.	2
Donut Hour	December		Joop	26
November	Kathy N.	15	Morey B	31
Michael R.	David W.	2	Susie T.	18
John S.	Corey	1		
Betty T.			Wednesday A.M. Women's	
Al P.	Serenity Room		December	
Wendy	November		Betty M.	35
December	Brian H.	3	Wendy E.	35
Patricia V.	December		Paula W.	30
Charlie R.	Pete F.	30	Kathy N.	16
Joe L.	Dane S.	9	Patricia B.	12
Joanna H.	Tracy P.	6	Wendy G.	2
Michelle	Stacey B.	1		
	Sober Living		Women in the Solution	
Friends of the Pelican	October		December	
December	Brian	20	Maribeth D.	13
Kathy B.	Bill F.	15	Anne C.	12
Skip P.	Kathy J.	8	Shannon M.	12
November	November		Roberta D.	4
Walter P.	Vick	7		
Tom McG	December		*GROUPS:	
Peggy M	Rich H.	1	<i>Email anniversaries to newsletter@AAsrq.org and put ANNIVERSARIES in the subject line. Cutoff for the newsletter is the last day of the month. December anniversaries appear in January issue.</i>	
Gulf Gate Noon				
	St. Armand's Noon			
Happy Cookie Hour	October			
October	Lucia B.	36		
Francis	Ken J.	27		
Ron	Clark W.	10		
Jerry C.	Julie	8		
Trudy McL.				
Vicky	November			
Billy B.	George M.	42		
Michelle G.	Mary Jane L.	41		
November				

You Are Cordially Invited!



Friends of the Pelican celebrates its 37th Anniversary on Thursday, February 23, 2017. Fellowship starts at 5:30, Dinner at 6:30 and speaker Tony F. at 7:30. Bring a potluck dish!

A Woman in Recovery

My soul was dark and asleep
Oh God I have so much need!
Help me stop the cry and weep
And with that he planted the seed.

My mind and body so sick, insane
I started to let down the shield.
Would I yield to either sun or rain?
Certainly not until I healed.

Emotion, emotion, emotion
Can I feel you now?
Yes, with every step and motion
I no longer have to plod and plow.

I live. I love. I laugh.
You say trite?
I say may be right.
But to my own self I am true.
Are you?

Yvonne J.

The purpose of this newsletter is to inform, connect and entertain. **TO SUBMIT ITEMS TO THE NEWSLETTER:** All content should be sent to newsletter@AAsrq.org. Submit material as attachments or directly in an email. Include your first name, group and type of item being sent. Deadline is the last day of the month. Submissions may be edited for length or content. Opinions expressed herein are those of the writers and not necessarily those of A.A., Sara-Mana Intergroup, or the Central Office, is located at #B-2, 1748 Independence Blvd., Sarasota, FL 34234. Phone 941- 351-4818.