

Vancouver Area Intergroup of
Alcoholics Anonymous

December/January 2019/2020
Volume 24

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Primary Purpose

VANCOUVER AREA INTERGROUP

A Letter From Bill W. on Depression

The following excerpts from a letter of Bill W.'s was quoted in the memoirs of Tom P., an early California AA member. Tom did not use the name of the person addressed—perhaps because he was still living.

Tom said:

Here in part is what Bill W. wrote in 1958 to a close friend who shared his problem with depression, describing how Bill himself used St. Francis's prayer as a steppingstone toward recovery:

Dear,

I think that many oldsters who have put our AA "booze cure" to severe but successful tests still find they often lack emotional sobriety. Perhaps they will be the spearhead for the next major development in AA ... the development of much more real maturity and balance (which is to say, humility) in our relations with ourselves, with our fellows, and with God.

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Monthly Business Mtgs.

- ◆ Steering Comm. Mtg. – 1/13@6:00 PM
- ◆ Intergroup Rep Mtg. – 1/20@6:30 PM
- ◆ District 37 GSR Mtg. –1/28 @7:00 PM
- ◆ District 7 GSR Mtg. - 1/23 @7:00 PM

(All monthly business mtgs. are held at the Intergroup Office).

Keep reading this article...turn the page!

A Letter from Bill W. on Depression Continued...

How to translate a right mental conviction into a right emotional result and so into easy, happy, and good living ... well, that's not only the neurotic's problem, it's the problem of life itself for all of us who have got to the point of real willingness to hew to right principles in all our affairs.

Even then, as we hew away, peace and joy may still elude us. That's the place so many of us AA oldsters have come to. And it's a hell of a spot, literally.

Last autumn, depression, having no really rational cause at all, almost took me to the cleaners. I began to be scared that I was in for another long chronic spell. Considering the grief I've had with depressions, it wasn't a bright prospect.

I kept asking myself, "Why can't the Twelve Steps work to release depression?" By the hour, I stared at the St. Francis prayer ... "It is better to comfort than to be comforted." Here was the formula, all right, but why didn't it work?

Suddenly I realized what the matter was ... My basic flaw had always been dependence, almost absolute dependence on people or circumstances to supply me with prestige, security, and the like. Failing to get these things according to my perfectionist dreams and specifications, I had fought for them. And when defeat came so did my depression.

There wasn't a chance of making the outgoing love of St. Francis a workable and joyous way of life until these fatal and almost absolute dependencies were cut away.

Reinforced by what grace I could secure in prayer, I found I had to exert every ounce of will and action to cut off these faulty emotional dependencies upon people, upon AA, indeed upon any set of circumstances whatsoever.

Then only could I be free to love as Francis had. Emotional and institutional satisfactions, I saw, were really the extra dividends of having love, offering love, and expressing a love appropriate to each relation of life.

Plainly, I could not avail myself of God's love until I was able to offer it back to Him by loving others as He would have me. And I couldn't possibly do that as long as I was victimized by false dependencies.

For my dependency meant demand ... a demand for the possession and control of the people and the conditions surrounding me.

This seems to be the primary healing circuit, an outgoing love of God's creation and His people, by means of which we avail ourselves of His love for us. It is most clear that the real current can't flow until our paralyzing dependencies are broken, and broken at depth. Only then can we possibly have a glimmer of what adult love really is.

Keep reading this article...turn the page!

A Letter from Bill W. on Depression Continued...

If we examine every disturbance we have, great or small, we will find at the root of it some unhealthy dependency and its consequent demand. Let us, with God's help, continually surrender these hobbling demands. Then we can be set free to live and love; we may then be able to gain emotional sobriety.

Of course, I haven't offered you a really new idea ... only a gimmick that has started to unhook several of my own "hexes" at depth. Nowadays my brain no longer races compulsively in either elation, grandiosity or depression. I have been given a quiet place in bright sunshine.

Tom said:

"Bill's word's of wisdom helped and inspired me and many others. To those who have never been there, it is hard to describe the gratitude that overflows in men and women who are delivered from the black depths of depression into the light. As with delivery from the bondage to alcohol, it is a hosanna of the heart that never ends."



A PRAYER OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

Peace

"Lord, make me an instrument of your peace; where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is discord, union; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; and where there is sadness, joy.

"O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled, as to console; to be understood, as to understand; to be loved, as to love; for it is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life." Amen.

Pamphlet of the Month

Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix



The A.A. groups themselves ought to be fully supported by the voluntary contributions of their own members. We think that each group should soon achieve this ideal; that any public solicitation of funds using the name of Alcoholics Anonymous is highly dangerous, whether by groups, clubs, hospitals, or other outside agencies; that acceptance of large gifts from any source, or of contributions carrying any obligation whatever, is unwise. Then, too, we view with much concern those A.A. treasuries which continue, beyond prudent reserves, to accumulate funds for no

stated A.A. purpose. Experience has often warned us that nothing can so surely destroy our spiritual heritage as futile disputes over property, money, and authority. — Tradition Seven (long form)

Bookstore News

Vancouver Area Inter-group is expanding hours of operation to include Saturdays from 10am-2pm beginning January 18th! Stop in and meet your Saturday volunteers!

Congratulations!

***On your continuous length of sobriety...
You did it one day at a time!***

BETH B. — 20 YRS.

JERRY J.— 10 YRS.

If you would like to acknowledge someone celebrating a monthly or annual birthday, please call, email, or let us know when you come in to purchase their coin so we can add them to the next newsletter!

May 1962

Where Will Power Comes In

by Bill

The following is Bill's answer to a letter asking about the role of the will power in staying sober. — ED.

THERE has always been a lot of confusion about this matter of exerting the will. When the Twelve Steps say "We admitted we were powerless over alcohol, . . ." we assert what has always been a fact about that malady—namely, that a frontal attack by the will on the desire to drink almost never works.

This hard fact is the premise upon which we must start—the recognition that actual lunacy cannot be subdued by straight will power. God knows drunks have tried hard enough to do just this and have generally failed. Nobody would expect much result were every kleptomaniac to take the pledge not to steal. Respecting stealing, the kleptomaniac is as compulsively nutty as he can be. Though this compulsive condition is not so generally recognized in the alcoholic, because drinking is socially acceptable, it is nevertheless true that he is just about as crazy. Therefore our First Step is realistic

when it declares that we are powerless to deal with the alcohol hex on our own resources or will.

But even AA's First Step asks for willingness—the willingness to admit that our will power is not going to work head on. But that's only a starter. All of the rest of AA's Twelve Steps require both willingness and will power. They certainly deal in religious and moral values.

For example, we must acquire the willingness to take a moral inventory. This much accomplished, we then must needs muster the gumption to actually do that. We can become willing to believe in the efficacy of AA's Twelfth Step—carrying the message to others. But if we are aroused from sleep at twelve o'clock at night to make a Twelfth Step call—well, the actual making of that visit may call for a considerable amount of will power.

Another example: It is especially required of the atheist and agnostic

Where Will Power Comes In Continued...

that he become open-minded on the subject of God. This seems to require a considerable exertion indeed. If then we suggest that he address himself to whatever God there may be, in meditation and prayer, he usually finds this takes a lot of discipline to do, even as an experiment.

The net result of willingness and will, as applied to the life problem in general, does eventuate in a release from the desire to drink, thereby getting around any heavy exertion of will power on the alcohol problem itself. Precisely why this release comes to most of us, is totally unexplained. We *are* restored to sanity, provided we condition ourselves for the gift of restoration—or, to put it in religious terms, to the inflow of God's grace which results in the expulsion of the obsession.

Nor does it seem to matter how we define God's grace. We can still claim if we like that we have tapped a hidden or unused inner resource. We don't need to actually define just where that came from. Or we can believe, as most of us finally do, that we have tapped the resources of God as He exists in us and in the cosmos generally. None of us can presume to know exactly how this is.

Of course I do not mean to say that no will power respecting the alcohol problem is ever to be used. During my first couple of years, I had two or three severe temptations to drink. But having practiced the AA program pretty faithfully, I was fully able to see the consequences of

so doing at the time I was tempted. The usual blinding rationalizations were not present. I had been restored to sanity, respecting alcohol. I nevertheless had to make a choice. But under these conditions it was not hard. And the choice did require a certain modicum of will power. Or of willingness to choose rightly.

I think this exercise of the will is appropriate and necessary during the interval in which one is developing a general release from the problem. But a general and complete release is quite possible, after considerable practice of AA's program. I know because I have been under enormous emotional strain since AA started. I had a neurotic depression that lasted from 1943 until 1955, one from which I never fully surfaced. About three years of this was suicidal. But the release from alcohol had been so thorough that I was never tempted during this long siege to resort to drink.

So this is the substance of the AA party line as I happen to see it. But please be assured you don't necessarily have to see it the same way. Plenty of people differ with me, and yet remain sober. Nevertheless the experience of most of us seems to back up what I have just said. Those who try to work the program in other ways, and who succeed by so doing, are in my belief staying dry the hard way. AA's orthodoxy, if it can be called that, is merely what the majority experience suggests. You can still take your pick!

Lets Ask Bill W.

Thanks to Jim B. of Canada who put together this presentation of text and articles on the Washingtonian Temperance Society. Jim originally had these articles on the web site of historyofaa.com which is no longer online and placed here for historical & research purposes.

<http://silkworth.net/>

If an alcoholic comes to an A.A. meeting under the influence of alcohol, how do you treat him or handle him during the meeting?

Answer

Groups will usually run amuck on that sort of question. At first we are likely to say that we are going to be supermen and save every drunk in town. The fact is that a great many of them just don't want to stop. They come, but they interfere very greatly with the meeting. Then, being still rather intolerant, the group will swing way over in the other direction and say, "No drunks around these meetings." We get forcible and put them out of the meeting, saying, "You're welcome here if your sober." But the general rule in most places is that if a person comes for the first or second time and can sit quietly in the meeting, without creating an uproar, nobody bothers him. On the other hand, if he's a chronic "slipper" and interferes with the meetings, we lead him out gently, or maybe not so gently, on the theory that one man cannot be permitted to hold up the recovery of others. The theory is "the greatest good for the greatest number." (Yale Summer School of Alcohol Studies, June 1945)



Thanks to Kevin S. for the photo!

You can view this and more at the Akron Intergroup Office, online.

Group Contributions and Financial Statements

—October 2019

Contributions for October	Group Name	Contributions Year to Date
	12X12	146.00
	159th Street Women's Group	250.00
	AA Rainbow Miracles	8.00
295.69	A New Morning	3,079.33
	Amboy Renegades	35.00
	As Bill Sees It	640.25
	As We Recovered	150.00
	Battleground AA	500.00
	Birds of a Feather	100.00
	B & P	246.42
	Cascade Group	100.00
	Cascade Locks Spiritual Brkfst.	75.00
	Chapter Nine	238.12
	Camas Group	156.06
15.00	Cornerstone Group	60.00
	District 7	10.00
	Doing Right on Thursday Night	25.00
	Early Birds	292.20
	Early Light	52.00
	East County Women's Group	50.00
	Eastside Brown Baggers	680.00
	Easier Softer Way	55.00
	Fireside	605.00
82.67	First Shot	604.63
100.65	Fresh Start	754.80
	From the Book	146.75
	Gorge Gals-North Bonneville	50.00
	Hokinson	192.01
	La Center Group	31.58
	Ladies Big Book Study	60.00
	Lewis River AA	125.96
	Lighthouse	380.00
	McGuilivray Study Group	866.72
	Men's Eastside	300.00
	Men's Fireside	400.00
100.00	Minnihaha	350.00
350.00	Miracles at Noon	3,359.70
25.14	Ready and Willing	67.86
	Reconciled	281.71
	Renegades	35.00
	Ridgefield AA	148.98
	Rock Bottom Recovery	115.00
	Round Table Group	334.40
	Saturday Night Big Book Study	654.00
	She Who Remembers	220.00
	Sober Uppers	25.00
99.40	Step Sisters	392.71
	Stevenson AA	700.00
	Sunday Night Alternative	40.00
	Sunday Solutions	1,636.35
	There is a Solution	173.15
51.44	Wayfarer's	140.14
26.64	Wednesday Night Recovery	570.40
	Welcome Home	98.17
	West Vancouver Group	62.36
	Wine to Water	40.60
100.00	Women's Fireside	300.00
	Women in Sobriety	240.00
1,246.63	SUBTOTAL	21,682.45
221.16	Miscellaneous/Individual	2,478.41
1,467.79	TOTAL	24,160.86

Financial Statements

	October (\$)
Revenue	
Sales	4,844
Group Contributions	1,247
Fundraising/Picnic	150
Misc. Income	81
Individual Contributions	221
Total Revenue	6,543
Expenses	
Cost of goods sold	2,803
Fundraising Expenses	316
Merchant Services	80
Office supplies	219
Equipment rent	208
Building rent	733
Utilities	479
Net Wages	4,109
Payroll taxes	904
Insurance	182
Licenses	0
Travel and Meetings	0
Remodel Project	496
Total Expenses	10,528
Net Income /(Loss)	(3,985)

November Bottom Line

Current at a \$4,258 loss for the year and we need your help

- Total Revenue – Total Expenses = \$3,910
- For the month of November, we did (\$446) worse than forecasted
- Year-to-date doing \$4,513 worse than forecast
- Our cost was higher than forecast in a few categories These include: Rent, Utilities, Remodel/Move and Payroll
- Gratitude dinner and group contributions are down for the year.

Group Contributions and Financial Statements —

November 2019

Contributions for November	Group Name	Contributions Year to Date
	12X12	146.00
75.00	159th Street Women's Group	325.00
12.00	AA Rainbow Miracles	20.00
398.65	A New Morning	3,477.98
	Amboy Renegades	35.00
260.00	As Bill Sees It	900.25
	As We Recovered	150.00
	Battleground AA	500.00
	Birds of a Feather	100.00
	B & P	246.42
	Cascade Group	100.00
	Cascade Locks Spiritual Brkfst.	75.00
	Chapter Nine	238.12
70.85	Camas Group	226.91
10.00	Coffee Break Washougal Group	10.00
	Cornerstone Group	60.00
	District 7	10.00
28.00	Doing Right on Thursday Night	53.00
500.00	Early Birds	792.20
	Early Light	52.00
100.00	East County Women's Group	150.00
330.00	Eastside Brown Baggers	1,010.00
	Easier Softer Way	55.00
	Fireside	605.00
78.82	First Shot	683.45
94.19	Fresh Start	848.99
	From the Book	146.75
	Gorge Gals-North Bonneville	50.00
	Hokinson	192.01
	La Center Group	31.58
	Ladies Big Book Study	60.00
200.00	Ladies by the Lavender	200.00
	Lewis River AA	125.96
	Lighthouse	380.00
403.09	McGuilivray Study Group	1,269.81
	Men's Eastside	300.00
	Men's Fireside	400.00
	Minnihaha	350.00
350.00	Miracles at Noon	3,709.70
276.79	OB's Speaker Meeting	276.79
50.00	Real Alcoholic Men	50.00
	Ready and Willing	67.86
	Reconciled	281.71
	Renegades	35.00
	Ridgefield AA	148.98
	Rock Bottom Recovery	115.00
	Round Table Group	334.40
	Saturday Night Big Book Study	654.00
	She Who Remembers	220.00
45.00	Sober Uppers	70.00
	Step Sisters	392.71
	Stevenson AA	700.00
	Sunday Night Alternative	40.00
368.50	Sunday Solutions	2,004.85
110.00	There is a Solution	283.15
12.00	Truth and Purpose	12.00
18.14	Wayfarer's	158.28
62.54	Wednesday Night Recovery	632.94
20.16	Welcome Home	118.33
	West Vancouver Group	62.36
	Wine to Water	40.60
	Women's Fireside	300.00
	Women in Sobriety	240.00
3873.73	SUBTOTAL	25,325.09
159.80	Miscellaneous/Individual	2,638.21
4,033.53	TOTAL	27,963.30

Financial Statements

	November (\$)	YTD (\$)
Revenue		
Sales	2,869	45,739
Group Contributions	3,874	25,325
Fundraising/Picnic	4,590	4,740
Misc. Income	80	1,296
Individual Contributions	160	2,638
Total Revenue	11,572	79,738
Expenses		
Cost of goods sold	1,537	25,912
Fundraising Expenses	1,130	1,512
Merchant Services	101	926
Office supplies	421	2,632
Equipment rent	154	2,116
Building rent	719	9,932
Utilities	437	4,552
Net Wages	2,739	26,309
Payroll taxes	805	7,262
Insurance	167	660
Licenses	0	323
Travel and Meetings	0	79
Remodel Project	0	1,781
Total Expenses	8,208	83,996
Net Income /(Loss)	3,364	(4,258)

November 2019 Cash Balances

Main Checking	\$	4,240
Event Account	\$	5,135
Prudent Reserve	\$	9,050
Petty Cash	\$	100
Total Cash Balance	\$	18,525

Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

Vancouver Area Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous Steering Committee meeting of November 11, 2019

Attendance: Marc, Dusty, Cassia, Phil, Warren, Anna, Laurie, Darcy

Opening: The meeting was opened at 6:30pm with the Serenity Prayer. Minutes from the October Steering Committee meeting were approved. Minutes from the October Intergroup Representatives meeting were reviewed.

Hotline: Since the October IG meeting there were 137 calls and 25 missed calls. Friday 9:00pm-Saturday 6:00am position will soon become available. There is a need for Spanish speaking 12-Step volunteers. Please see attached report for more information.

Treasury: The Treasurer has been out of town, no report available, however the report will be completed in time to be published in the newsletter.

Office: No new business.

Old Business/Saturday Office Hours: The project to open the office a half day on Saturdays has run into a minor setback. One of the volunteers will be undergoing a medical procedure. We are still targeting the New Year for opening on Saturdays.

Old Business/Gratitude Dinner: Darcy, who has chaired the event several times, briefed us on the progress in making the event happen. There will be a planning meeting on November 16th, 11:00am.

New Business/Steering Committee: Several Steering Committee positions will be coming up for election with the New Year. Cassia will research which positions need to be voted on. Nominations will be taken at the November and December Intergroup Representatives meeting and voting in December.

Closing: The meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer at 6:40pm.

Yours in Service,
Phil B.

Intergroup Rep Meeting Minutes

Vancouver Area Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous Intergroup Representatives meeting of November 18, 2019

Attendance:

Dusty G., Cornerstone	Mark, Reconciled	Kasmir Z., East Side BB
Phil B., Central Group*	Dee, Welcome Home	Cassia, Office Manager*
Chris H., MSG*	Kevin P., Hockinson	Warren R., New Morning
Mike T., B&P	Chris C., Rock Bottom	David C., 1 st Shot
Tom S., Men's Fireside	Laurie H., Sober Uppers	Robin M., Fireside
Michelle, Women In Action & Dry Tribe	Darcy S., Truth & Purpose	Sarah, Ladies Lavender

Opening: The meeting was opened at 6:30pm with reading of the purpose of the Intergroup and the Serenity Prayer. Chris did a presentation of the 11th Tradition. Minutes from the October Steering Committee meeting were received. Minutes from the October Intergroup meeting were accepted.

Hotline: On December 6th there will be a need for a Friday 9:00pm-Saturday 6:00am volunteer. There is also a need for Spanish speaking 12-Step volunteers. To sign up contact Patrick at 415.297.8028 or the office. See attached hotline report for more information.

Treasury: No report available due to illness.

Office: No new information.

Outreach: Dusty reported that he has contacted the majority of groups/meetings on his list but there are a few he has not been able to contact due to his work schedule. Kasmir stated he has a flexible work schedule and will coordinate with Dusty to reach out to those groups/meetings.

Old Business/Gratitude Dinner: Darcy discussed the progress in making the event happen, reminded everyone potluck dishes are appreciated, and talked about the door prize and grand prize. Those available to assist in setting up should go to the venue Friday evening at 6:00pm and Saturday at 4:00pm.

Old Business/Saturday Hours: Cassia reported that Anna's training is going good. There is a need for more volunteers. Interested persons should contact Cassia at the office.

Intergroup Rep Meeting Minutes

Continued...

New Business/Steering Committee: Several positions for the Steering Committee are coming to the end of their term. Nominations were taken at this meeting and additional nominations and voting will taking place at the December meeting.

Treasurer: Currently held by Laurie. She was nominated to continue with the position and accepted.

Position 2: Currently held by Phil, not eligible for reelection. Dee was nominated for this position and accepted.

Position 3: Currently held by Dee who accepted the nomination for position 2. No nominations that were accepted were made for position 3.

Recording Secretary: Position has been vacant approximately 10 months. Phil (who has been filing in) was nominated and accepted.

Activities: Darcy was nominated and accepted. Kevin expressed interest in this position, Darcy rescinded her acceptance, Kevin was nominated and accepted.

New Business/Finance Committee Meeting: Phil is not an IG Rep and cannot make motions but pointed out that the finance committee has had no groups/meetings attend in over a year. A motion was made and passed that there will no longer be finance committee meetings. It should be noted that the office has an open book policy and inquiries into the finances will be addressed.

Group News: Friday Reconciled meeting is in need of financial support. Early Birds has potluck on the last Sunday at 7:30am. Cornerstone, Rock Bottom and 360 Recovery are teaming up to host a New Year's event (still in planning phase, more information to come). An open invite was made to come to 1st Shot's Saturday meeting (bring your own coffee). Jeff H will be celebrating his birthday by chairing Rock Bottom on November 19th.

Closing: The meeting was closed with the Serenity Prayer at 7:03pm.

Yours in Service,
Phil B.

The logo features the words "Easy Does It" in a stylized, red, cursive font. The word "Easy" is in a larger, more ornate script, while "Does It" is in a slightly smaller, simpler script. The entire logo is set against a light gray rectangular background.

Upcoming Events

January 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1.	2.	3. Friday Night Happy Hour Speaker Mtg.: 7:30 pm	4. OB's Speaker Mtg.: 7:30 PM
5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11. Wayfarer's Speaker Mtg.: 7pm
12.	13. S.C. Mtg.: 6pm	14.	15.	16.	17.	18. ♦ IG is now open on Saturday from 10 am-2 pm! ♦ Rule 62 Speaker Mtg.: 7 :00 pm
19.	20. IG Rep Mtg.: 6:30pm	21.	22.	23. District 7 GSR Mtg.: 7 pm	24.	25.
26. ♦ Sideways Sunday Potluck: 7:30am ♦ Carson Potluck: 6:30 pm. Speaker: 7:00 pm ♦ Hokinson Pot- luck: 6:00 pm ♦ Sober Sick-	27.	28. District 37 GSR Mtg.: 7:00 pm	29.	30.	31. Central Group's Birthday Meeting: 8:00 pm	

*For a full description of each of these
upcoming events including locations, visit the
events page on our website at:
www.vancouveraa.org*

The Vancouver Area Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous exists to serve local groups of Alcoholics Anonymous within the vicinity of Vancouver, Washington. The Organization serves as a clearing house to distribute literature to local Alcoholics Anonymous groups, to provide contact among these groups, and to maintain an answering service.

A special "thank you" to all of the groups who donated time, resources and raffle prizes for our Gratitude Dinner! You all are very appreciated!

Thank you District 7 for donating a ticket for a newcomer!

Thank you to Sober Uppers, How it Works, Friday Night Happy Hour, and Early Birds for donating \$ and tickets for newcomers! Thank you to all the wonderful volunteers that made this possible!

The Vancouver Area
Intergroup

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