

SOBER NEWS

NEW YORK INTER-GROUP – MARCH 2008

307 Seventh Avenue (28th Street), Room 201, New York, NY 10001-6007
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Website: www.nyintergroup.org (includes Meeting List), E-mail: sobernews@nyintergroup.org

*I am responsible...
When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help,
I want the hand of A.A. always to be there.
And for that: I am responsible.*

How I Became A Link In The Chain

As I stood in front of that door with its frosted-glass window, clutching its cold brass doorknob, my heart raced. It was August, 1982. I'd been directed there, to the A.A. Intergroup Office in the Flatiron Building, by an alcoholism counselor. I'd had no previous contact with A.A. and was just coming to believe that I might have a problem with alcohol.

I was scared to death.

I soon found myself sitting beside a kind-looking bearded fellow, who proceeded to tell me his drinking story. I had no clue why he was doing this and didn't identify with his story at all.

He suggested I go to 90 meetings in 90 days. I bristled. I told him I had better things to do. Well, he replied, would I like someone from A.A. to call me tomorrow? I agreed and then went home to 'finish the job'—to drink until I passed out, that is.

A gravelly-voiced guy, John H., called the next morning, inviting sick, hung-over me to a midtown lunchtime meeting. It'd been a long time since anyone invited me anywhere, and I said, Yes.

Once there, John quickly escorted me to a room in the back, to what he called a "beginner's meeting" (how I hated that term), where I listened to a journalist tell his globetrotting drinking story.

Once again, I had no clue what all this had to do with me.

After the meeting a group of women surrounded me like a swarm of bees, waving pieces of paper with their phone numbers in my face. Totally annoying!

Anyway, John H. and the journalist took me to an outdoor café, bought me soup and ice tea, and kept me company the entire afternoon. I thought they were doing this because I was so charming.

They were just keeping company with a drunk who was shaking it out.

John H. walked me to my apartment and watched me pour all my booze down the drain. A rather extreme measure, I thought. Before leaving, he wrote down an A.A. clubhouse's address, suggesting I ask for someone named "Kathy" when I got there for the six o'clock meeting that evening.

And so, my A.A. journey began.

It was only years later that I realized that the bearded man at Intergroup, the speaker at my first meeting, and John H., my 12th-Step contact, all were unpaid volunteers with "better things to do," who sacrificed their time to show me the A.A. kind of love, a love that has no price-tag. It not only saved my life, it gave me a life beyond my ability to imagine.

Years later, at an A.A. meeting in Tralee, Ireland, I heard a tweed-jacketed farmer say, "I'm just glad to be a link in the chain of love."

Me, too.

Dee K.

Editor's Note: Dee K. was fortunate. New York Inter-Group knew John H. was available for 12th-Step work. His home group's 12th-Step List was up-to-date. Is yours?

In This Issue ...

Update Your Group Information

- Imagine if you really needed a meeting, and couldn't find one!

Answer Phones at New York Inter-Group

- You can even do it at home

Opportunities for Growth

- Calendars of Upcoming Events

Most of us feel we need look no further for Utopia. We have it with us right here and now – Bill W.



Opportunities For Growth

A calendar of upcoming Inter-Group Events

Office Telephone and
Call-Forwarding
Volunteer Orientation at
the New York Inter-
Group Office, 307 7th
Avenue, (Between 27th &

28th Streets), Room 201, New York, N.Y. 10001. (Orientations are held any Monday morning between 9am and 1:30pm, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday between 6pm and 9pm and any Saturday afternoon between 1:30pm and 6pm. No appointment is necessary. Or call a New York Inter-Group staff member to arrange a convenient orientation time.) One year of continuous sobriety is required to answer phones.

Area Forums

Saturday, March 15th

- **Brooklyn Area Forum**, 2:00pm, Queen of All Saints Church, 300 Vanderbilt Avenue (between Lafayette and Dekalb Avenues (the Army Plaza group's meeting place), 11205. Leader: Christine L., Sober Living Group, Brooklyn's Area Representative on New York Inter-Group's Steering Committee.

- **Bronx Area Forum**, 11:00am, Bedford Park Congregational Church, 3008 Bainbridge Avenue (East 201st Street), 10458 (Gunhill group meeting place). Leader: Diane B., A New Person Group, The Bronx's Area Representative on New York Inter-Group's Steering Committee.

- **Queens Area Forum**, 4:00pm, Our Savior Lutheran School, 64-33 Woodhaven Blvd (at 64th Dr.). 11374 (Location of the Queens Share-A-Thons), Leader: Mike M., Gardens Group, Queens' Area Representative on New York Inter-Group's Steering Committee.

- **Westchester Area Forum**, 9:30am First Baptist Church, in the Wilson House, Bryant Avenue and North Street (enter parking lot on Bryant Avenue). White Plains, NY 10605. Leader: David S., How It Works Group, White Plains, Westchester's Area Representative of New York Inter-Groups's Steering Committee.

Thursday, April 17th

- **Staten Island Area Forum**. 7:30pm Immanuel Lutheran Church, 2018 Richmond Avenue (Between Rockland Avenue & Signs Road), Staten Island, NY 10314. Leader: Joe R., Sunlight of the Spirit Group, Staten Island's Area Representative on New York Inter-Group's Steering Committee.

Thursday, April 24th

- **Manhattan Area Forum**, 7:00pm, New York Inter-Group, 307 7th Avenue (Between 27th & 28th Streets, Room 201, New York, NY 10001-6007. Leader: Chassie P., Nu-Garden, Manhattan's Area Representative on New York Inter Group's Steering Committee

A phone call we here at Sober News hope will never happen again!

A.A. Member: A.A. ... how can I help you?

Caller: I'm at the corner of 291st Street and Bay Avenue ... the church here is closed! I just went to an A.A. meeting here last month. What's up?

A.A. Member: Hmmm ... I'm looking at the meeting book and that meeting is still listed. Would you like me to look for another meeting in that area for you?

Caller: I'm on my lunch break, see? I don't have the time now to go to another spot.

A.A. Member: Well, I don't know how I can help you.

Caller: Yeah ... great. Thanks anyhow ...



Editor's Note: New York Inter-Group maintains information on A.A. groups in the area—Check with your group's Secretary to make sure that your group information is up-to-date; or call (212) 647-1680 for more information.



Interface with New York Inter-Group *Online**

meetingbookinfo@nyintergroup.org: For information about the "Greater New York City Area Meeting Book."

bigmeetinginfo@nyintergroup.org: For questions about "The Big Meeting", a Celebration of A.A.'s Birthday.

billwdinnerinfo@nyintergroup.org: For questions about the Bill W. Dinner, a benefit for New York Inter-Group.

sobernews@nyintergroup.org: Share your story (500 words or less), ask questions, or send your suggestions and comments by contacting the editorial staff of "Sober News," New York Inter-Group's newsletter.

generalinformation@nyintergroup.org: Do you have a question or a comment about the services provided by New York Inter-Group? Want to volunteer your services? Let us know.

steeringcommchair@nyintergroup.org: Your comments, questions, and concerns about any aspect of New York Inter-Group's services, volunteers, events, or staff will be answered by the current chairperson of New York Inter-Group's Steering Committee.

**All E-mails will be held in strictest confidence; as are all phone calls and letters. No information will be shared unless you give New York Inter-Group your permission. You can reach us Monday through Friday, 9:00am-to-5:00pm, at (212) 647-1680.*

Answer Phones at New York Inter-Group



Keep It by Giving It Away

If you have at least one year of continuous sobriety you can answer calls to New York Inter-Group from alcoholics looking for help, callers looking for meeting locations or calls from the general public. Volunteer today to answer phones on weekdays or weekends; in the morning (9:00am to 1:30pm), afternoon (1:30pm to 6:00pm) or evening (6:00pm to 10:00pm) shifts. The New York Inter-Group office is located at 307 7th Ave., New York, N.Y. 10001 (between 27th & 28th Streets), Room 201. Call 212-647-1680 for information about phone volunteer orientation sessions.

Las Medidas Parciales No Nos Ayudaron*

If you are a Bi-Lingual Spanish/English-speaking member with at least one year of continuous sobriety, New York Inter-Group needs you to volunteer to answer phone calls from Spanish-speaking alcoholics, callers looking for meeting locations or from the general public. Volunteer today to answer phones on weekdays or weekends at the NY Inter-Group office; in the morning (9:00am to 1:30pm), afternoon (1:30pm to 6:00pm) or evening (6:00pm to 10:00pm) shifts. Call 212-647-1680 for information about phone volunteer orientation sessions.

***Half measures availed us nothing**

Homeland Sobriety

You can also volunteer to answer calls to New York Inter-Group from your home! New York Inter-Group needs at-home hot-line volunteers. If you have at least one year of continuous sobriety, you can answer calls to New York Inter-Group from your home from 10:00pm to 2:00am. Call 212-647-1680 for information about our call-forwarding service and phone volunteer orientation sessions.

NEW YORK INTER-GROUP CALENDAR OF EVENTS JUNE – NOVEMBER 2008

June 5th

• **The Bill W. Dinner Table Lottery:** 7:00pm at the New York Hilton Hotel, 1335 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10019 (between 53rd & 54th streets), 2nd Floor, Gramercy Suite. Call (212) 586-7000 for directions to the hotel. For further information, contact New York Inter-Group at (212) 647-1680 or (914) 949-1200

June 15th

• **The Big Meeting:** 1:00pm – 3:00pm at the New York Hilton Hotel, 1335 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10019 (between 53rd & 54th streets, in the 3rd-floor Grand Ballroom. An open three-speaker meeting, celebrating the 73rd anniversary of Alcoholics Anonymous' founding on June 10th, 1935; the date of A.A.'s co-founder Dr. Bob's last drink. Doors open at 12:15pm. Free Admission. A Seventh Tradition collection will be taken. Call (212) 586-7000 for

directions to the hotel. For further information, contact New York Inter-Group at (212) 647-1680 or (914) 949-1200.

August 2nd

• **The Corrections and Treatment Facilities Committee's Literature Fund Dinner & Dance:** 8:00pm – 1:00am at Antun's Restaurant, 96-43 Springfield Blvd., Queens Village, NY. The net proceeds from the committee's only annual fund-raising event are used to purchase A.A. Conference-approved literature; for distribution to the institutions and correctional facilities it services. For directions, contact Antun's Restaurant at (718) 468-6400). Tickets cost \$65.00 and are available now at the New York Inter-Group office, Monday through Friday, from 9:00am to 5:00pm. For further information, please call the New York Inter-Group office at (212) 647-1680, or (914) 949-1200).

November 8th

• **The Bill W. Dinner:** New York Hilton Hotel, 1335 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10019 (between 53rd & 54th streets), 3rd floor Grand Ballroom. This event celebrates the 74th anniversary of A.A.'s co-founder Bill W.'s sobriety date—December 11th, 1934. The net proceeds from the Bill W. dinner help keep the doors of New York Inter-Group open and the phones answered. The Afternoon Program begins at 1:00pm and ends at 4:00pm. The Bill W. Dinner begins promptly at 7:00pm. Doors open for seating at 6:45pm. Tickets for the 2008 Bill W. Dinner cost \$100.00. No tickets are needed for the afternoon program. For further information, please contact the New York Inter-Group office at (212) 647-1680 or (914) 949-1200.

Share Your **SOBER NEWS**

If you would like to share with all of us: what it was like, what happened and what it's like now; or what the Steps and Traditions mean to you, what you cherish most about your first meeting, what surprises you most about living sober or any Sober News, mail or fax your submission to:

SOBER NEWS

c/o New York Inter-Group
307 7th Avenue, Room #201
New York, NY 10001-6007
Phone: 1 212 647 1680, or 1 914 949 1200
Fax: 1 212 647 1648

For Deaf Only: 1 212 647 1649

Web: www.nyintergroup.org

If you prefer, you can E-mail your story to:

sobernews@nyintergroup.org

You can also use this contact information to find A.A. meeting information in all five boroughs of New York City; and in Westchester County. For immediate help with an alcohol problem, A.A. members are available in the New York Inter-Group office from 9:00am to 10:00pm seven days a week (including all holidays).

VISITORS ARE WELCOME!

Phone calls to New York Inter-Group from 10:00pm to 2:00am are answered by A.A. volunteers in their homes. From 2:00am until 9:00am, messages can be left on New York Inter-Group's answering machine—calls are returned the next day.

New York Inter-Group's Literature Room is open weekdays from 9:00am to 6:30pm; and Saturdays from 10:00am to 4:00pm. No literature sales are conducted on Sundays or legal holidays. Only General Service Conference-approved literature (English & Spanish) is available for sale. In addition, meeting lists are available for sale (@ \$1.50) from 9:00am until 10:00pm seven days a week.