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SOBER NEWS

The official newsletter of New York Inter-Group



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Welcome to Sober News

by Mario L.- Group Relations Chair

Welcome to the NYIG edition of what we will call for now "Sober News", a newsletter for a "unique" group. Our purpose is to connect, inform and share a morsel of experience, strength and hope, through personal stories, sober humor and ongoing event updates in and around our beloved NYC metropolitan area.

In this short publication you will also find ample possibilities for 12 step service with NYIG. At Intergroup we have committees that need your sober input and energy during these unprecedented times.

Feel free to reach out to us if you have a story, idea or event. and just between all of you and us, we are looking for a cool sober name for this publication. Any ideas?



24 Hours: A Day in the Life

by Dan L. Home Group: Into Action Group

NYSober Date: September 19th, 2015

My ideal sober day begins with ten minutes of no phone time. I like to wake up around 8 am, but I give myself some flexibility here. This window of time could be spent breathing deeply or looking through a book of paintings while I wait for strong coffee to brew. Over coffee, I like to read the A.A. Daily Reflection from the actual book. I cook hashbrowns and eggs-over-medium in a lot of good olive oil over medium heat. I clip parsley from my window planter and sprinkle it all over, with Maldon salt and pepper to finish.

I'm still relatively new to life in Upstate, NY. and exploring new towns with my partner is something I love. We like to leave the house by 10am and drive for about an hour. Lately we've enjoyed the town of Rosendale in Ulster County. In sobriety, I've had a chance to explore Italy in a car and these day trips in New York State remind me of our time there. Each time I get behind the wheel without fear of being pulled over makes me grateful to be sober in A.A. There is an old train trestle that has been turned into a walkable nature trail that crosses over the Esopus Creek and connects Kingston to Rosendale called the Wallkill Valley Rail Trail. By 1 or 2, we'll get lunch somewhere outside. For Japanese homestyle cooking with cafe tables on the serene Esopus Creek we go to "Soy" in Rosendale. I've likely seen something cool along the way, so I'll send a text to my network of sober friends.

By 3 or so, we make our way to Kingston to check out the bookstore and the vintage shops. We get another good cup of coffee and stroll around. There are a ton of historical sites with grounds and gardens to explore in the Stockade District, including where the New York Senate once convened. Then we'll duck into vintage stores until about 5 when it begins to get dark. My home group meets at 7:30pm in Cold Spring and I make time to get home for this each week. I have a service position even though the meetings have been moved to Zoom, which keeps me accountable to my group. After my meeting, I'll hang out with my partner and have a late dinner while watching old Columbo episodes. Before bed, I thank my higher power for consciousness to experience life as it comes, with the knowledge that I don't always have the answers immediately but they will come if I stay sober.

One Laugh at a Time



by Al K.

I was given an opportunity for service by being asked to attend the committee meeting for Intergroup General Services. With 2,829 days of continuous sobriety and covert reluctance, I agreed. I should be fine. I just won't volunteer for anything. You know, the principles. I arrived on the zoom meeting irritated, per yoozh, since I was being pulled from my audiobook isolation time. However, I remembered to smile to show everyone I was a good sober. Amazingly, my trusty "other people's inventory meter" was not spiraling out of control. My peers were all cool and interested in just doing service. I was worried because I wasn't gonna be able to rigorously, honestly tell my sponsor that people aren't doing things the right way on this project. They were. Uh-oh. Panic. Wait a sec. These people are all right. This is the place to be. I'm having a spiritual experience. More accurately, my sniffer for opportunities for external validation has been enticed. Maybe there will be a group picture with the headline, "People in Recovery that Rock!" This is when the chair asked if anyone would like to volunteer to be of service...by doing service. So, I did what I like to do when my personal experience becomes a spiritual experience; hide from next right action. With well-practiced faux-earnestness, I looked away from my laptop towards my phone activating the cloak of invisibility. The meeting was over, and I escaped without a commitment. Oh well. One day at a time.

This brings me to the next day. My sober amigo who asked me to attend the meeting called with a proposal. He said, "Hey would you like to contribute a humor section to the newsletter?" He then very accurately stated, "You know, because you moved to NYC to be a comedian and you had been sharing that, due to pandemic, all you do is zoom mics and wait tables with a mask on. And how you thought it sucked. This could be a great opportunity to be of service, as well as follow your dream." Gulp. Checkmate. Activate failsafe! I said, "Thank you for this great opportunity, let me think about it and get back to you." This codeword for, "I'm gonna call my sponsor." Although, what he didn't know was that I was not gonna call my sponsor. My sponsor would just say, "Why not? This is perfect for you." Uh, I'll tell you why not. Because if I submit something, all of AA will view me as "not funny" and I will be forced to move out of NYC with my tail between my legs and back into my mom's house where she will leave me a yellow legal pad of different chores to take care of around the house, which will make me unappealing to women, and I will never find a partner. Better to call my more counter culture AA friend whom I am convinced will tell me the newsletter was lame and that what I should do is get a broom and start sweeping. Especially after I describe the whole situation in my practiced manipulative way where he will give me the answer I need. I'll call and lead with, "Listen to this ridiculous idea...." So I called. He picked up. He said, "Why not? You have been sitting around complaining about zoom mics and waiting tables in a pandemic. And how it sucks. And, there are no opportunities for you to do comedy. If there were, of course, you said you'd be all over them" So here we are. I'm in. Phone call to another alcoholic=growth. I hope you chuckled. If you didn't, you'll be on my fourth step because it's all about me anyway..

Bill W's CHRISTMAS PRESENT



by Bob S.

On a bleak November day of 1934, Bill W. was in the process of receiving albeit unknowingly a Christmas present beyond his belief. A visit from an old schoolmate, Ebby T. explained how he had found sobriety via religious ideas of the Oxford Group. Bill was amazed, yet unimpressed. He thought: "My gin will outlast his preaching." (p. 9) But it did not! Bill's curiosity of his friend's success eventually led Bill to the doors of the alcoholic ward of Towns Hospital a few weeks later. He was released with a full week of sobriety on December 18, just one week before Christmas. He never drank again!

But that was only a beginning! While in the Hospital he had a personality change that altered his modus operandi! He previously had never wanted anything more than to be a rich member of the Wall street crowd, as he was before drinking ruined that high point of his life. However, before leaving the hospital the thought came to him: "There were thousands of hopeless alcoholics who might be glad to have what had been so freely given to me. Perhaps I could help some of them. They in turn might work with others." (P. 14)

Bill's real Christmas present was a complete personality change as described by Dr. Carl Jung: "Old ideas, emotions and attitudes are suddenly cast aside and replaced by a new set of conceptions and motives." (p. 27) Well, did Bill go back to Wall street? No, he did not! He went down to Calvary mission and brought home a disheveled, perhaps not so well smelling, wino to his fancy Brooklyn Hts. home and fed him and prayed with him. But the drunk got drunk. So, he went back and the same happened. Did he give up and go back to Wall Street? No, he did not! He went back to that mission again and again through January, February and March of 1935 and guess what? They all got drunk!

What a personality change! What a wonderful Christmas present! Not just getting sober, but a strong desire to help others. We call this Step Twelve today, but this personality change was not only Bill's exciting Christmas Present it was certainly ours, as well! On a bleak November day of 1934, Bill W. was in the process of receiving albeit unknowingly—a Christmas present beyond his belief. A visit from an old schoolmate, Ebby T. explained how he had found sobriety via religious ideas of the Oxford

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