



The Alternative

Intergroup newsletter for the Reading-Berks County Area

DECEMBER 2014

ReadingBerksIntergroup.org

The Alternative is published monthly by the Reading-Berks Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous.
Serving Districts 33, 66, and 67 of Delegate Area 59—Eastern Pennsylvania. Reach us by mail at P.O.
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ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Next Intergroup Meeting: DECEMBER 23RD 2014

Reading Intergroup has no outside affiliations. We exist as a central office to serve Alcoholics Anonymous groups in the Reading area**ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND INTERGROUP MEETINGS.** Meetings are held on the 4th Tuesday of each month, at 7:30pm, at Calvary Baptist Church 510 Park Ave. (intersection of Grace & Park). See your group's representative for Intergroup meeting minutes. See you at the NEXT MEETING!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

ALCOTHON IS COMING

STARTING FROM 3PM DEC. 31ST TO 3AM JAN 1ST

LOCATED AT ATONEMENT PARISH HALL

PENN. AVE. AND STATE HILL RD. WYOMISSING PA.

(DON'T BE LEFT BEHIND. DON'T WISH YOU WERE THERE)

**GET READY FOR THE YEAR END ALCOTHON EVENT. THERE WILL BE LOTS OF FOOD
FUN AND FELLOWSHIP FOR ALL THE GOOD LITTLE GIRLS AND BOYS. YOU'RE
WELCOME TO BRING A DISH OR JUST BRING YOUR HOLIDAY CHEER AND SHARE IT
WITH OTHERS THAT MIGHT BE HAVING A HARD TIME GETTING
THROUGH THE NEW YEARS
AAAAAAALLLLLLLOOOOOOONNNNNNEEEE.....**

ROBESONIA IS CELEBRATING ITS 40TH ANNIVERSARY!

JOIN THEM AT 7pm FRIDAY DECEMBER 5TH

**AT ST. PAULS U.C.C. CHURCH. 301 W. PENN. AVE AND NO. PEARL ST. ROBESONIA, PA.
THERE WILL BE A.A. AND AL-ANON SPEAKERS.**

Nolde Forest Celebration

Join them for their holiday celebration

December 17th @6:30PM and meetings @7:30M

United Church of Christ 1730 New Holland Rd Kenhorst, PA.

**Nolde Forest Group will Not be holding their meeting on Dec. 31st at
their usual location but will be celebrating it at the Alcothon.**

STEP TWELVE. "Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs."

The joy of living is the theme of AA's Twelfth Step, and action is its key word. Hi, my name is Bill and I am an alcoholic. That was not always the case, it took many years both good and bad for that simple message to get through my liquefied brain. I will be eternally grateful to those who thru step twelve kept the doors of AA open for my grand entrance. Upon meeting my rehab assigned sponsor, Gary, I got my first hint at the importance of step twelve. Gary was "in the business" and took me on as a favor. My rehab counselor somehow knew I probably would not ask anyone to be my sponsor, so I was assigned to pick up the 12 ton phone and make that call. Gary hinted at the fact that I would be good for him as his program was getting a little lax since going pro. Even though I was keen to complete the 12 steps Gary put on the brakes and gave me three simple suggestions:

- 1) do something every day for my sobriety
- 2) go to meetings early and stay late
- 3) take a service commitment as soon as one became available

Having had a spiritual experience I somehow felt compelled to follow Gary's requests. Please note, I said experience, not awaking, it took me many years to uncover the fact that they are not one in the same, ya know I probably should have read the appendices a little sooner. Meetings gave me a life after booze, you made me welcome, and you opened the doors to your homes and asked me in. You took me to campfires, dances, music meetings, why even though I was employed you gave me a job working alongside sober construction workers, the support was amazing. As instructed, I cleaned ashtrays, straightened up chairs, made coffee and when my favorite meeting lost its secretary, even though I didn't have the necessary 90 days, you gave me the commitment. Eight months sober and with the consent of my sponsor, I began the move to a small town with only one meeting a week, he was confident I would meet others in recovery and, provided I continued doing what I had been taught I would be "fine". After the required "do I really need AA" period, it was suggested I get to that weekly meeting before I let another week pass. That Wednesday evening I was greeted by two albies in the parking lot having a smoke, I was back home at last. Soon a woman named Mary drove up and almost seemed shocked to see us. The four of us soon settled in for a meeting. Strange as it was all the readings were done from Mary's Big Book, not handouts, quite different, but okay. After the meeting I did as I was taught, I stayed late. Come to find out Mary had been sitting in the parking lot alone for a month of Wednesdays, which explains the shock of seeing three other members all in one go. Mary left town after her six month assignment was over and I was sad to see her go, especially since I would now be alone. In our six months together Mary took me on my first 12 step call, she taught me the discipline to suit up and show up. Her parting words to me were, "if you want this thing, you are going to have to work for it" There were many meetings "where the two or more" that gathered were me and my higher power. The pamphlets I read taught me how to run and grow a meeting, how to reach out to the community. The book gave me the confidence and guidance to start and man a hotline. The need and desire to stay sober led me to build an unshakable foundation built on the same service that was there for me when I first walked in, then subsequently when I slithered in unknowingly broken and defeated. My higher power has enabled me to realize the joy of sponsorship, providing rides, setting up, cleaning up, making coffee, and taking meetings into institutions. I have had the pleasure of seeing many of those who have come to scoff stay to pray. The action of carrying the message has given me a life beyond my wildest dreams and I thank you for allowing me to share.

Bill C.

TRADITION TWELVE. "Anonymity is the spiritual foundation in all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities."

I often hear people share, at meetings, that they are not concerned about their anonymity. "Everyone knew I was a drunk and I am not ashamed to admit to being in recovery." Sometimes they will refer to Tradition 11, citing that they are not breaking anonymity on the level of press, radio, or film. (Today I might add internet). Tradition 12 looks at anonymity in a different light.

The 12 & 12 talks about some problems A.A. had in its early years concerning anonymity. It states that "We are neither a secret society nor a vaudeville circuit." Early in recovery, I wanted to go out and beat the drums advertising what a great program A.A. was. Luckily more experienced members guided me in a different path. Left to my own devices I would have done more harm than good, even though it was well intended. Today, I am just a person who doesn't drink. If my neighbors or coworkers want to know why and/or how I do it, and they ask, I will tell them. I do not speak for A.A. This is a program of "attraction rather than promotion."

In reading the essay on Tradition 12 I was struck by reading that "Anonymity is real humility at work." In other words, I am living the life I should be living and I don't deserve any special credit for it. It also says "Humility, expressed by anonymity is the greatest safe guard that A.A. can ever have." Maybe the message is that it is not as important who I choose to break my anonymity, as it is to why did I feel it necessary to do so in the first place. Am I being humble or am I letting my ego run away with me?

Robert

"CONCEPT TWELVE"

"General Warranties of the Conference: in all its proceedings, the General Service Conference shall observe the spirit of the A.A. Tradition, taking great care that the conference never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds, plus an ample reserve, be it's prudent financial principle; that none of the Conference Members shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority over any of the others; that all important decisions be reached by discussion vote and whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; that no conference action ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy; that though the conference may act for the service of Alcoholics Anonymous, it shall never perform any acts of government; and that, like the Society of Alcoholics Anonymous which it serves, the conference itself will always remain democratic in thought and action.

<u>Officer</u>	<u>Service Position</u>	<u>E-Mail Address</u>
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WORD SEARCH

Y	S	I	S	O	O	E	O	H	I	G	H	E	R	P	O	W	E	R	L	E
S	P	I	R	I	T	U	A	L	A	W	A	K	E	N	I	N	G	R	F	T
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Acceptance, Addict, Admittance, Adversity, Alcoholic, Amends, Anonymous, Characterdefects, Counselor, Courage, Fellowship, Gratitude, Higherpower, Humble, Intervention, Letgoletgod, Meetings, Moralinventory, Oneday, Openmindedness, Pathway, Patience, Personalinventory, Prayer, Repentance, Sanity, Sober, Spiritualawakening, Sponsor, Strength, Twelvestep, Unmanageable