

The Turtle

Carrying the message...



Volume 11

Servicing districts 70, 71, 72 & 73

Issue 1

From the Editor

There is a story about a man who falls into a deep dark hole. He can see the people walking by up on the street level, but they cannot see him. He calls out in desperation, but few stop to help.

The first is a priest, and he scribbles a prayer on some paper and tosses the prayer to the man before continuing on. This is something, but not enough to physically help the man out of such a dark and helpless place. The second is a doctor, who immediately writes him a prescription and tosses it down to him. This too is kindness of sorts, but nothing in the direction of helping the man scale the steep walls surrounding him.

The man is losing hope at this point, as it seems there is no one that truly understands his predicament and what will be needed to save him. And then as he calls out in desperation one last time, an old friend answers from up in the street. There is a sense of relief that he knows this man, but still the fear of what to do. His friend jumps into the hole with him and gives him a hug to say hello. The man in the hole is exasperated and in disbelief at his friend's stupidity, for now they are both stuck in this place together. He says to his friend 'what on EARTH are you THINKING?! NOW WE ARE BOTH STUCK!'. His friend grabs his hand and says, 'Yes, we are down here together. But I jumped down here so that I can show you the way out, for I have been here before.'

Someone showed me the way out, and I will continue to do that for others as we journey through Sobriety together.

-Alison G.

-What Unity Means To Me-

Page 152 in the Big Book says, "Some day he will be unable to imagine life either with alcohol or without it." More profoundly than anything I have learned, I know what that means. I have experienced just how miserable I can be without the drink and without participating in the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. In those dry days I would go to meetings, but without a willingness to accept that I needed a design for living. I couldn't stand the discomfort of being in my own skin. Ultimately, that led me to the only 'solution' I knew – the bottle. But then I was taken through the 12 steps, had a spiritual awakening and haven't felt that immense and desperate confusion since.

So after the steps what keeps me in A.A.? Well one of my most recent spiritual experiences happened around this topic of Unity. It is clear to me today that my litmus test for my connection with God is my connection with you. I drank for that connectedness and I still need it. As a result of the 12 steps (Recovery) and sponsorship (Service) I've experienced the Unity A.A. has to offer. The same Unity I sought out in sordid places, I have now found here. I may have been born an only child but today I have *BROTHERS!* I may have been lost, but today I have *PURPOSE!*

I have a daughter, whom I lost the rights to as a result of my drinking. But if she were to ever find herself in a similar position, I want the hand of AA to be there for her. For that, I am responsible. That means I have to do my part to keep our fellowship united. That involves living in all three sides of the triangle each day and being a servant in A.A., which I happily do with gratitude.

I always thought the worst thing that could happen to me was being one of "you people" and it turns out I was wrong about that (just like everything else). Through the 12 Steps, The Traditions, and the Concepts of AA, I have learned that being connected to this fellowship and you wonderful people is the best gift a guy like me could have ever received!

Brian W. – Charleston, SC



Know of a new meeting, or a special A.A. event? Tell the Turtle! E-mail any announcements, stories, poems or recovery related material to:

TheTurtleEditor@gmail.com



64th Annual SC State Convention

“Language of the Heart”

March 24th-27th, 2011

Sheraton Hotel

At I-26 & Montague Dr. in North Charleston

Golf Tournament at Patriot’s Point!!

Flger available at:

www.area02.org

Guest Speakers:

Paul A., Cheltenham, MD

George E., Murrells Inlet, SC

Stephanie B. (AFG), Granite Shoals, TX

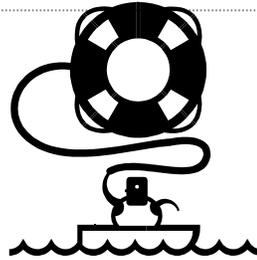
Sandy B., Tampa, FL

Polly P., Birchbay, WA

T.C.I.O. meetings are held every 3rd Sunday at 4:00pm, at 4800 Park Circle Drive, North Charleston. All are welcome to attend!



Treatment Center Schedules



PLACE	TIME	March 2011	April 2011
Dorchester IOP	Alt. Mon 7:00 PM	Crowfield	Crowfield
Vet Villa	Sunday 7:30 PM	Seabreeze	Survivors
Charleston Vet.	Monday 8:00 PM	Carolina	Carolina
Charleston Center	Saturday Speaker 7:00 PM	Heritage	Daily Reprieve
Charleston Center	Sunday 7:00 PM	Walterboro	Walterboro
Charleston Center	Tuesday 7:00 PM	Eusta-bafflus	Eusta-bafflus
Charleston Center	Friday 7:00 PM	Daily Reprieve	Acceptance
MUSC	Thursday 7:30 PM	Cool, Hip and Sober	Old Central
MUSC	Friday 7:30 PM	Folly Beach	Folly Beach
MUSC	Saturday 7:30 PM	St. Joseph	Trident
MUSC	Sunday 7:30 PM	Old Central	Second Chance
Palmetto Center	Sunday 8:00 PM	Big Book Thumpers	Big Book Thumpers
Palmetto Center	Monday 8:00 PM	NAG	3 Legacies
Palmetto Center	Tuesday 8:00 PM	Oakbrook	Heritage
Palmetto Center	Friday 8:00 PM	SOS	SOS

Heard it in ‘the Rooms’:

“Isolation is the darkroom where I go to develop my negatives”

Tri- County Intergroup (TCIO) Activities

Committee is looking for help from you to plan parties!

Please come and join the fun Every 3rd Sunday @ park circle @ 3:30pm we meet to plan the next event!

UPCOMING EVENTS INCLUDE:
FOUNDERS DAY JUNE 2011
GRATITUDE DINNER @ PARK CIRCLE
11/13/11 6:30 PM TO 9:00pm

NEW YEARS EVE CELEBRATION @ PARK CIRCLE
12/31/11 7:00 PM TO 2012

Times and dates may change

WE ARE NOT A GLUM LOT!



Area 62 SC General Service Assembly

March 5&6, 2011

Radisson Hotel

2100 Bush River Road

Columbia, SC 29210

(803) 731-0300

“...to place our common welfare first...”

‘Acting upon the persistent urge of old AA friends, and upon the conviction that general agreement and consent between our members, I shall venture to place in words these suggestions for an Alcoholics Anonymous Tradition of Relations -- Twelve Points to Assure Our Future.’- Bill W. (Grapevine, April 1946).

In this issue we address Tradition One through Tradition Three, which cover the Principles of Unity, Spiritual Growth, and Tolerance. This to the end that the ‘hand of A.A.’ reach out to anyone who has a desire to stop drinking and keep the fellowship alive for the next man.

Tradition One: Our common welfare should come first, personal recovery depends upon AA unity.

Principle: Unity

‘The unity of Alcoholics Anonymous is the most cherished quality our society has. Our lives, the lives to come, depend squarely upon it. We stay whole or A.A. dies.’ – Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, pg.129

Although it may seem to the newcomer that each member of AA has ‘liberty verging on license’ – which in society may spell ‘anarchy’- we know that the ‘AA member must conform to spiritual principles’. We see that those that deviate from the principles get sick and die. So, just like the rest of the Program we adhere to the three parts of the triangle at once: Unity, Service, and Recovery. If one side of the triangle is missing, the triangle does not exist – and therefore neither do we (individually or as a whole).

‘On anvils of experience, the structure of our society was hammered out.’ – Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, pg.129

Tradition One Long Form:

Our A.A. experience has taught us that:

1-Each Member of Alcoholics Anonymous is but a small part of a grater whole. A.A. must continue to live or most of us will surely die. Hence our common welfare comes first. But individual welfare follows close afterward.

Tradition Two: For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority-a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.

Principle: Spiritual Growth

‘Though AA groups are basically the same, each group does have its own special atmosphere, its own peculiar state of development. We believe that every AA group has a conscience. It is the collective conscience of its own membership. Daily experience informs and instructs his conscience. The group begins to recognize its own defects of character and, one by one, these are removed or lessened.’ – Bill W. (Grapevine, January 1948)

If each group grows along the same spiritual lines that the individual does, in practicing the principles of A.A., than the conscience of the group will prove over time to be a far more infallible guide than the decisions of any one member. In establishing a tradition of making decisions for the group-as a group, we protect the long-term stability of the group – which in turn, protects the long-term stability of the program of A.A.

Tradition Two Long Form:

Our A.A. experience has taught us that:

2-For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority- a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience.

Tradition Three: The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.

Principle: Tolerance

‘At last experience taught us that to take away any alcoholic’s full chance was sometimes to pronounce his death sentence, and often to condemn him to endless misery. Who dared to be judge, jury, and executioner of his own sick brother?’ – Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, pg. 141

After much haggling between the General Service Board (then known as Alcoholics Anonymous, Inc.) and the groups and members that submitted lists of ‘requirements’ for who could/could not be members of A.A., it was simplicity that won out. The simple answer to the question ‘Who can be a member of A.A.?’ today is answered: anyone with the desire to stop drinking. Why? Because if there were restrictions more specific than that many of us would still be out there working on a slow and painful death through the bottle.

Tradition Three Long Form:

Our A.A. experience has taught us that:

3- Our membership ought to include all who suffer from alcoholism. Hence we may refuse none who wish to recover. Nor ought A.A. membership over depend upon money or conformity. Any two or three alcoholics gathered together for sobriety may call themselves an A.A. group, provided that, as a group, they have no other affiliation.

A Declaration of Unity

This we owe to A.A.'s future:
 To place our common welfare first;
 To keep our Fellowship united.
 For on A.A. unity depend our lives,
 And the lives of those to come.



SERVICE

Combined InterDistrict Committee Meetings

Public Information/Cooperation with Professional Community

(1st Thursday of odd months 7PM@TCIO)

Corrections Facilities

3rd Thursday @ 7:00 pm (even months only)

Grapevine Representatives

(as announced)

Treatment Facilities

4th Thursday @ 7:00 pm (odd months only)

Tri-County Intergroup Office Committee Meetings

Intergroup Reps meet at the N. Charleston Community Center at Park Circle

4800 Park Circle, N. Charleston, SC. The building is inside the circle.

HOTLINE: You can reach a recovering alcoholic any minute of any day

by calling (843) 723-9633

The Intergroup Office serves the groups in its area. We perform the needed functions common to all groups. We are supported by these groups and are here to aid you in your common primary purpose of carrying the message to the suffering alcoholic. The office is located at 3005 W. Montague Ave., Suite D, North Charleston, SC 29418. It is open 9-5 Monday through Friday and 9-1 Saturday. Phone numbers are Office- 843.554.2998 and Hotline- 843.723.9633. Visit our website at www.TCIO.org.

The views in this publication are strictly those of the editor and those submitting articles and not necessarily the views of the T.C.I.O., or A.A. as a whole.