

The

San Luis Obispo, CA



Nameless Newsletter

The Alcoholics Anonymous Central Coast Central Office Newsletter

VOL 24, NO. 11 Nov. / Dec. 2016

28 YEARS

FORTY-FOUR years old and sober for 28 years. So I would not become too egotistical about this accomplishment, God revealed another person about the same age with the same sobriety date early in my journey.

Although I am different, I am not unique. Years ago I found sobriety at the age of 16 in a treatment center in Minneapolis, Minn. I realized at that age if I did not straighten up, I would die a drunk and drug addict.

Since the life I was living was full of pain and suffering, I decided I needed to change. I accepted the AA way of life and began working the Steps. I went to meetings and got involved. I shook hands, cleaned up afterward, made coffee, chaired and became secretary of some meetings. I even started a few meetings when we needed new ones or I was frustrated with the old ones.

I got sober to escape the pain of drinking and using. I found out I still had painful experiences, but at least I could deal with them effectively. The people in AA were my first trusted teachers in sobriety and the list of mentors I have turned to since then has grown to a large number. I have enlisted the help of coaches, counselors, professors, financial planners, attorneys, plumbers, my parents and many more.

The fact that "pain is inevitable, but suffering is a choice" is more clear today. I have learned to trust myself and if the solution does not feel right, I ask for help and listen. I still go to meetings, sponsor others and pitch in when I can. I stopped starting new meetings and now just support and help the ones that need it.

As I celebrate 28 years I am happy to share it with a fellow member. Although we live about two hours apart, Tim and I talk occasionally and still try to see each other at Founder's Day and the International Conventions we can make.

Today I am an emergency physician, husband, father, author, friend, coach, son, brother, soccer player, AA member and so much more.

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Thanks, AA!

JIM N.

Take A Step Back

I've been thinking a lot about something a friend in my home group told me a couple of weeks ago. I hadn't seen or chatted with Finn in a while, so we were catching up briefly outside after the meeting. I commented that he looked like he was doing well, looked happy and all that.

He replied, "My sponsor told me once that how I feel doesn't necessarily have anything to do with reality."

Then Finn just stood there and smiled at me. I had to really think about that one, and I even asked him to repeat it, because it flew right over my head the first time.

He explained that whether he's feeling down or crappy or even on top of the world, it doesn't necessarily reflect how he's really doing; thus, it's not necessarily connected to reality.

I went home thinking about that one for quite a bit, and had a pretty big realization about feelings and emotions and how they don't have to control me.

It's something my sponsor and I have been working on for a couple of years now. Like many things in Alcoholics Anonymous, growth comes at the expense of pain and suffering or even just weathering "uncomfortable" things.

Sometimes emotions and feelings can be uncomfortable, and affect us so much we think we have to act out because of them. This isn't the case, if I comprehend what Finn was trying to convey to me.

When I first came to my home group a few years ago, I was taken by the meeting the very first night. I tried for weeks to figure out why I liked that meeting so much more than many of the other ones I attended.

Then one night, a couple of my sponsees and I went for coffee after the meeting. It had been a night where all three of us were called on to share. While talking, we discovered that one of the reasons we liked the meeting so much was because it was very uncomfortable for us to get up in front of the group to share our experience, strength and hope. Our meeting is a large men's group that meets in a pretty small room, and we always stand up in front of the room when we share.

The chance of not coming up with anything of substance to say, or saying something that might elicit heckling or laughter is kind of uncomfortable, but after I share I always feel like I "did" something good for my recovery, if you will.

Now, going back to what my friend Finn said to me that night: If I'm having a day where I feel really crappy, or lonely or ticked off, it doesn't necessarily mean I'm not doing well.

I've been sober for a while now. I'm sponsoring guys, and some of them are doing the Steps, calling me, staying sober and getting their lives back. I'm making amends to the people I've hurt and to myself.

All of these examples tell me that in reality, I'm actually doing pretty well, even though I don't always feel the greatest. I should focus on the reality when the emotions rear up and make me take notice.

What's worked for me these last couple of weeks since that chat with my friend is to step back and take a look at my emotions and see if they really reflect the reality of my life. Usually, they don't.

I sure appreciated the two-minute chat my friend and I had outside that meeting a couple Friday nights ago. I wasn't feeling too hot that night, but reality tells me I was still doing well and doing the right things to help me continue to grow in this program.

BERNARDO

Drama Queen

I AM one of those people who have lived under the assumption that only "big" and unusual events define one's life. One might say that I have a flair for the dramatic. Others have simply called me a "drama queen." And, truth be told, I have had a number of those unusual or profound life-changing experiences, such as growing up adjacent to one of the largest slums in the Philippines, witnessing as friends of my parents were arrested for questioning the justice of a dictatorship, hitchhiking through war-torn Guatemala the summer I graduated from college, getting married after a whirlwind romance, giving birth, getting divorced, being present at the death of my beloved grandmother, descending into the hell of addiction, and miraculously living through it to enter recovery.

These events, and others like them, did indeed help define who I am today, and I love telling stories about my adventures and the "earthmoving" realizations I came to during or immediately following them. However, the importance I have placed on having huge, unique, breathtaking encounters with life has caused me a great deal of pain. After all, life is simply not made up of one dramatic event after another, and my inability to see beyond that led to chronic depression.

In November 2002, my pain had become so great that suicide became a real option. I felt that I was, at most, a worthless shell of a human being and at the very least, rapidly going crazy. On Nov. 8, 2002, I left work to have some drinks with friends. I told my husband that I would be home soon, certainly in time to put my two young children to bed. Happy hour came and went, as did my friends, but I knew the bartender, so I decided to stay just a little longer. At 3 A.M., after closing down the first bar, giving a wary crowd a solo dance performance at the second bar, unsuccessfully flirting with one of the band members who was young enough to be my kid, trying to convince the waitress at a late-night restaurant to break the law and serve me a beer, I found my way home. This was not unusual. Nor were the hangover and the mortification of fuzzy recall the next morning. What was different was that I really "caved in" that day. I clearly remember sitting on the side of my bed, ashamed, tired and scared, and finally saying out loud, "I think I have a problem, and I don't know what to do." To me, that was a moment of grace. That evening, I went to my first AA meeting. I have been sober ever since.

For the last two weeks, I have been racking my brain to come up with "the" profound, unusual, "wow" experience to write about for a project I am doing in school. Nowhere in the assignment does it say that it has to be a mind-blowing event. But being the drama queen, I automatically think momentous! (drum roll, bright lights, fireworks).

My mind had been spinning obsessively about the assignment, and I was becoming thoroughly frustrated. I live on the west side of town and was driving across town to get home from school last week. As I crossed the street, I noticed a particular pedestrian. She appeared to be in her 60s but she could very well have been younger. In some aspects, she blended in with the street itself, as she was dressed head to toe in worn-out, washed-out, formless grey clothing. At that

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SLO AA MEETING UPDATES

<u>City</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Meeting</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Change</u>
Morro Bay	Monday	6pm	Nurses in Recovery	No address	Moved from SLO to Morro Bay
SLO	Friday	7:30pm	Gifts of Grace Women's	1344 Nipomo	New
Atascadero	Sat.	Noon	Back to AA Group	8600 Atascadero	Cancelled

Note concerning SLO AA Meetings: we have made a concerted effort to synchronize meeting information found in the printed Directory of Meetings and the online directory at sloaa.org. As you would expect, it is progress, not perfection.

But we strive for perfection. And we need your help. Please check the printed and the online directories for your meetings and let us know if you find any issues. If you do, please do one of the following:

- 1- Drop by Central Office and enter the change(s) on a meeting change report form, or*
- 2- Call Central Office (541-3211) and relay the change info to the phone volunteer, or*
- 3- Email the change info to: nnleditor@gmail.com*

BIRTHDAYS

None this month



*If you are celebrating a birthday, send the details to us:
nnleditor@gmail.com*

Deadline for birthday submittal is the 18th of the month

Central Coast Central Office Intergroup Officers & Staff

Chairman	Mike M. ccoichair@gmail.com
Vice Chair	Terry R. ccoovice@gmail.com
Secretary	Judy G. ccoisecretary@gmail.com
Treasurer	Gina S. ccoitreasurer@gmail.com
Literature Chair	Jim L. ccoilit@gmail.com
Web Chair	R.J. C. ccowebchair@gmail.com
Communications Chair	Bob R. ccoinnlchair@gmail.com
Office Manager	Bonnie N. ccoimanager@gmail.com
Volunteer Coordinator	Dave S. sheldonservices@charter.net
Call Forwarding Coord.	Sharon H. shay79@charter.net
Website Design	Hunter K. centraloffice22gmail.com
Nameless Newsletter	Bob R. nnleditor@gmail.com

AREA SPEAKER MEETINGS

Five Cities Speaker Meeting

2nd Friday, 7:00pm Potluck, 8:00pm meeting
564 Mesa View Dr., Arroyo Grande

Fellowship Speaker Meeting

Every Friday, 7:00pm, United Methodist Church
1515 Fredricks St., San Luis Obispo

Middle House Speaker Meeting

Every Sunday, 10:00am
(Pastries/coffee at 9:30am)
2939 Augusta St., San Luis Obispo

Sunday Night Speaker

Every Sunday, 6:00pm, Lutheran Church
4500 El Camino Real, Atascadero

Week **SATURDAY SPEAKER MEETINGS**

1st South County Speaker Meeting
8:00pm, St. John's Lutheran Church
959 Valley Rd., Arroyo Grande

2nd Morro Bay Speaker Meeting
7:30pm, St. Timothy's Parish Hall
962 Piney Way, Morro Bay

3rd Saturday Night Live
7:30pm, Calvary Church
4029 S. Higuera St, San Luis Obispo

4th Cambria Speaker Meeting
8:00pm, Santa Rosa Catholic Church
1174 Main St., Cambria

Last Easy Does It Speaker Meeting
7:00pm, St. James Church,
14th & Oak St., Paso Robles

UPCOMING EVENTS

November 3 - 6, 2016

Seniors in Sobriety

Bahia Hotel
San Diego, CA
seniorsinsobriety.org/

November 18 - 20, 2016

10th Waves of Sobriety Roundup

Grand Hotel
Cape May, NJ
wavesroundup.net

December 9 - 11, 2016

Magic City Roundup

Ramada Inn Airport
Birmingham, AL
magiccityroundup.com

December 30, 2016 - January 1, 2017

SCANCYPAA

Scandinavian Convention of Young People in AA

AFUK
Copenhagen, Denmark
scancypaa.org

January 27 - 29, 2017

42nd Annual San Fernando Valley Convention

Woodland Hills Marriott
Woodland Hills, CA
sfvaaconvention.org

July 2-5, 2020

2020 International AA Convention

Detroit, MI



To find out what else is going on, you can:
Visit Central Office at 1137 #B Pacific St, SLO, or
Call us at: 805-541-3211, or
Visit our website at sloaa.org

SERVICE COMMITTEE SCHEDULE

Central Office Board of Directors Meeting

1st Wednesday, 5:30pm, Central Office
1137 Pacific Ave., #B, S.L.O.

Intergroup Central Office Rep. Meeting

2nd Sunday, 8:45am, ALANO Club
3075 Broad St., S.L.O.

22nd District General Service Rep. & Comm. Mtg

2nd Sunday, 10:15am, Alano Club
3075 Broad St., S.L.O.

Hospitals and Institutions Mtg + Bridging The Gap

3rd Tuesday, 6:40pm, Alano Club
3075 Broad St., S.L.O.

District 22 Convention Committee

2nd Sunday, 12:00pm
560 Higuera St., Suite E, S.L.O.

7th Tradition Mailing List

General Service Office	22nd District
P.O. Box 459	P.O. Box 1891
New York, NY. 10163-0459	S.L.O., CA. 93406

Central Coast Central Office Intergroup (CCCOI)

P.O. Box 12737
San Luis Obispo, CA. 93406

Central California Area Assembly Area 93

606 Alamo Pintado, #140
Solvang, CA. 93463

Hospitals and Institutions (H&I)

P.O. Box 12737
San Luis Obispo, CA. 93406

Service Opportunities at the Central Office

Our Central Office provides AA-Approved Literature and general information to alcoholics, the public and the groups of San Luis Obispo County. We are entirely staffed by volunteers ... **Would you like to be of service?**

We maintain regular business hours Monday through Saturday with our **Office Volunteers** who work a 3-hour shift every week or every other week. We also have an answering service who contact our **Call Forwarding Volunteers** who are available by phone when the office is closed.

Our goal is for anyone who is looking for help for themselves or someone else to be able to talk to an alcoholic 24 hours a day 7 days a week.

If you'd like more information or would like to volunteer **please call 805-541-3211**. Six months continuous sobriety is required and training is provided.

To volunteer to be on the Central Coast Central Office 12th step list please call the office at 541-3211 and leave a message for the Office Manager with first name, last initial, phone # and email address (optional).

Or send an email to: CCCOIManager@gmail.com with the same information and a return email will be sent to you with details. Thank you for your service!

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Drama Queen (cont'd)

moment, however, I was able to see her clearly. She was hunched over, pushing a grocery cart of junk: folded up cardboard boxes, some cloth material, plastic bags that were certainly not full of freshly purchased groceries. She was talking to no one in particular. She seemed insane.

Two seconds is not a lot of time. The two seconds it took me to cross that street had an effect on my life because I was present to see it. I don't know what the woman with the cart really is all about. I do know that many alcoholics and addicts end up on the street. That could have been me. It may even be, at some point, the fate of my own beautiful, addicted child. At that moment I was reminded to be humble, to be gracious and to feel compassion, and every recollection of that experience brings me back to that place.

I am now 47 years old. I live in a house that I own in the suburbs of a small college town. I have gone back to school with the hope of some day becoming a nurse. I regularly attend AA meetings. I have a loving and supportive partner who makes me want to be a better person. I have two teenagers who give me a run for my money but who tell me they love me every day. I still struggle with what I might think of as having a "mundane" life. But I know now that life really is anything but inconsequential.

For many, many years I lived solely for a time in the future--the next big event--or off of the tragedies or amazing accomplishments of the past. I was unaware that all of life is lived moment by moment. Being in recovery allows me to be aware and present in those moments, and every moment provides me with an opportunity for growth.

Mary P.



Co-founder Quotes

Troublemakers Can Be Teachers

Few of us are any longer afraid of what any newcomer can do to our A.A. reputation or effectiveness. Those who slip, those who panhandle, those who scandalize, those with mental twists, those who rebel at the program, those who trade on the A.A. reputation— all such persons seldom harm an A.A. group for long. Some of these have become our most respected and best loved. Some have remained to try our patience, sober nevertheless. Others have drifted away. We have begun to regard the troublesome ones not as menaces, but rather as our teachers. They oblige us to cultivate patience, tolerance, and humility. We finally see that they are only people sicker than the rest of us, that we who condemn them are the Pharisees whose false righteousness does our group the deeper spiritual damage.

Domination and Demand

The primary fact that we fail to recognize is our total inability to form a true partnership with another human being. Our egomania digs two disastrous pitfalls. Either we insist upon dominating the people we know, or we depend upon them far too much. If we lean too heavily on people, they will sooner or later fail us, for they are human, too, and cannot possibly meet our incessant demands. In this way our insecurity grows and festers. When we habitually try to manipulate others to our own willful desires, they revolt, and resist us heavily. Then we develop hurt feelings, a sense of persecution, and a desire to retaliate.

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My dependency meant demand— a demand for the possession and control of the people and the conditions surrounding me.

I Need Answers!

A newcomer reads the Big Book in rehab, but a sponsor helps her understand it

Receiving the Big Book at a twelve-step treatment center was supposed to be a moment to remember. It was June 2008, and all the girls who were 'graduating' posted their Big Books in the community room to be commemorated. My book just had my name in pencil because at the time I thought I would never forget the girls or the experience we went through, and that was enough for me. Being a reader, marring a book in pen strokes was just not done because I like to give my books away to others and I want their experience of the book to be free and clear of my musings.

At first, reading the book was a lesson in confusion. I was in treatment to receive the answers. Answers were in books. This was the book, so where were the answers? Who was this man Dr. Silkworth? What was he to this guy Bill? And then there was this guy, Dr. Bob. All these men, too many men, war and men. What was all that supposed to mean to me? I was a modern woman with modern problems. I tried to concentrate really hard on each and every word to find the answers, but it was a losing battle. The words were all so ambiguous. (Ha!) There was a chapter entitled, "How It Works," but it was like reading an alien language. How were these words going to work for me? I needed concrete answers and pretty darn soon. My heart was willing. I was heavily invested and so was my pocketbook. Having only 28 days, I put aside the Big Book and tried to read the endless handouts, homework assignments and books like *Came to Believe*. It was all a big blur to me. All I knew was that if this didn't work, I would die. The truth: I was, as an Irish playwright wrote, "too young to die, but too drunk to live."

Having completed Step Five with the chaplain at treatment, my relief was immediate and I thought, complete. I knew there were Twelve Steps, but I seriously believed I was fixed after just Five, Six and Seven. After I was released out into the real world, my AA sponsor disagreed. So I started the Steps over with her and, after reading Steps Six and Seven with her out of the Big Book, the experience lit a fire in me; the words shouted miracles into my mind. What were the causes and conditions of my drinking? The cause was how I reacted to life: the sun came up every day and the sun went down every night, so I drank. The conditions were: winter, spring, summer and fall. The causes and conditions were that I had done nothing to treat my disease.

After a year of sobriety, I wrote a thank you letter to my parents. I turned to the Big Book for words. Words like finding my way out of loneliness and despair. Words like hope, joy, peace, serenity, faith and helping others. Bill W. and Dr. Bob devote an entire chapter to Step Twelve, telling me to keep on the firing line of life and to carry this message to other alcoholics. My story is the transformation of a woman who has benefited from those who have gone before her. I still have a fatal flaw, yet I work with other alcoholics every day because that is what I am told to do in the Big Book so I don't drink. I work with others who still suffer because then I feel strong enough to carry on.

All I know of Bill W. and Dr. Bob, the founding fathers of AA, I learned from reading the Big Book. They are the anonymous voices of alcoholics who worked to put my feelings into words. They were able to articulate my feeling of incomprehensible demoralization. They told their story of what it was like and what it is like in recovery.

The Big Book relates some humorous and tragic excuses of alcoholics and the harsh realities of alcoholism, but from beginning to end, it does battle with my insane desire to drink. My story is in the Big Book; it's the universal story of alcoholics.

Lisa E.

MEETING CHANGE REPORT FORM

Today's Date: _____ Effective Date of Change: _____

CITY: _____ DAY OF WEEK: _____

MEETING TIME: _____ MEETING DURATION: 1 hour 90 minutes Other _____

MEETING NAME: _____

MEETING ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ ZIP CODE: _____

TYPE OF MEETING CHANGE:

_____ DISCONTINUED

_____ DAY/TIME CHANGE (enter new info below)

New Day _____

New Time _____

_____ NEW ADDRESS (enter new info below)

NEW ADDRESS _____

CITY: _____ ZIP CODE: _____

_____ NEW MEETING (enter info at top, additional info below)

Meeting Type: OPEN CLOSED

Gender: MEN WOMEN MIXED

Format: DISCUSSION BOOK STUDY

OTHER _____

Location: CHURCH HOME SCHOOL

OTHER _____

YOUR INFO

(ALL of the info in this box MUST be filled out for this meeting change to take effect)

Name: _____ Contact Phone No: _____

Email (if available) _____

Address: _____ City: _____

Zip Code: _____

You can submit this form as follows:

1. Fill out, scan and email to: NNLEditor@GMAIL.COM, or
2. Drop off at Central Office: 1137 Pacific St, #B, SLO, CA 93401, or
3. Mail to Central Office: CCCOI, PO Box 12737, SLO, CA 93406, or
4. Bring to the Intergroup Meeting (2nd Sunday, 8:45am, Alano Club, 3075 Broad St., SLO)