

NHAA PIPELINE

A Publication of the NH Area 43 Assembly of Alcoholics Anonymous

April 2015

Handling the Challenge of Problems Other Than Alcohol at Our Meetings

The real challenge of handling problems in our meetings begins by considering principles and attitudes A.A. has learned through experience, rather than our personal opinions on the matter. Before I begin a quick review on the subject might be helpful. We know that our 3rd Tradition was born as the result of a challenge presented to our early members in, as Bill called it, "year two." It was thought that the admission of a particular newcomer would damage our fellowship. Yet, our history has proven that we have thrived from the realization that we could not deny membership to anyone seeking recovery from alcoholism. It was not in deciding who we should keep out of our membership that led to the 3rd tradition, but rather the reasons why we must allow them to join A.A. Had our history been to restrict membership we would not be the remarkable fellowship that we are today.

To study our history on such issues one can only come away with the warm fearless manner in which Bill and Bob handled nearly every situation; with patience, tolerance, and understanding. If we, as a fellowship, choose sides on issues and handle them with rigidity, intolerance, and misunderstanding for the suffering of others, we could fragment our membership. And if that were to happen, then we too might suffer the same fate of the Washingtonian Movement. Tradition Ten was written because of what Bill learned about the Washingtonians and how a couple of very public and very controversial issues divided them and led to their demise. I don't know of any public issues Handling the Challenge of Problems Other Than Alcohol in Our Meetings that have ever threatened us however, this issue of problems other than alcohol certainly could, as certain; it is commonly talked about in the therapeutic community as well as within our fellowship.

Bill and Bob wrote many times about intolerance among our members. Always in reflection, they stated their fears to be foolish. There are many pieces of archival material that I have referenced in other talks on this subject. However, with the time allotted today, I will reference only three. Starting with the most often referenced piece of literature on this subject is the pamphlet 'Problems Other than Alcohol.' A thorough reading of the entire 1958 Grapevine article reveals warmth and understanding that is often missed in today's A.A. 'Problems Other than Alcohol' is widely known and can be utilized, in its entirety, as wise reminders.

Secondarily, I would like to reference one of the Groups mentioned in the Grapevine article, Addicts Anonymous. Bill W. had three personal secretaries and one of them was Bobbie Berger. In 1949 Bobbie corresponded with an Addicts Anonymous Group in Texas. Bobbie wrote; "We, too, know that some of you who have recovered from drug addiction can be greatly helped by joining Alcoholics Anonymous groups. I, personally, know several who have made the grade and are some of our finest members. On the whole, I think our AA members are extremely tolerant and kind to all who come to them. And, why shouldn't we be? We have been through some pretty harrowing times with our alcohol addiction and who are we to criticize others who may have used something else? May I send a little suggestion: give yourselves every break you can in obtaining recovery. Use any help no matter from where it comes. That's what we alcoholics had to do so why not you people? Underneath it all, are we really so different? Doesn't it add to the belief that underneath the few surface differences, we are much the

Upcoming Events for Area 43 in 2015 ...

- Don't forget about our own **2015 N.H. Area 43 Convention** to be held on the weekend of April 10-12, 2015 at the North Conway Grand Hotel. Details at nhaa.net.
- **Northeast Regional Forum (NERF)** - Albany, NY, **May 29-31**. The great thing about these regional forums is 1) There is no registration fee; 2) You get to meet with and share experience with representatives of the General Service Board, A.A.W.S. and A.A. Grapevine, and the General Service Office.
- **A.A.'s 14th International Convention and 80th birthday, July 2-5, 2015** in Atlanta, GA. Go to the GSO website aa.org for all of the information.

Area 43 State Conventions – Speaker Spotlight (continued from page 1)

same?.....Just keep in mind that Bill and the very early members of AA went through the same problems of this misunderstanding that you people now face. And, most misunderstandings are based on ignorance.”

In that same year Bobbie sent the Addicts Anonymous Group some literature and suggested that they could substitute the word drugs for alcohol when reading the material and went on to say: “While I make no doubt that underlying causes of alcohol and drug addiction are quite identical, it is a fact that the alcoholic feels himself a quite different, even a superior creature. To make the score a tie, it is probably true that the average addict looks down on the alcoholic. In fact I have seen that myself. Alcoholics and addicts are mutually exclusive and snobbish.”

The last example comes from a 1959 Conference approved pamphlet titled, ‘Sedatives, Tranquilizers, and The Alcoholic.’ The pamphlet contains six case histories and closes with the following statement: “Most members agree that newcomers will find their path in A.A. smoother if they know the facts about tranquilizers, sedatives, and alcohol from the beginning. There are perhaps four main ways in which groups can help old-timers as well as newcomers in this connection: 1. They can encourage frank and objective discussion of tranquilizers and sedatives within the group. 2. Members who have used drugs, and who have abandoned them because they were threats to continued sobriety, can be encouraged to make their experience available to others in the group. 3. Occasional closed meetings can be devoted exclusively to the subject of drugs and alcohol. 4. Members can be encouraged to read AA literature (the monthly Grapevine and this pamphlet, for example) in which the problem of drugs is discussed in terms of A.A. experience.

Alcoholics Anonymous is a program for alcoholics who seek freedom from alcohol. It is not a program against drugs.....For, as alcoholics, our experience suggests that if we are to remain free of one of the oldest drugs, alcohol, we should avoid the use of any drug that poses a threat to hard-earned sobriety.” In closing, may I again emphasize the warmth and understanding that was reflected in the responses given by Bill and other early members on all matters placed before the General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous. It is only with this kind of patience, tolerance, and understanding that we can educate our newest members who are broken and suffering. Let us view the attitude of intolerance as an unwelcoming message that is unreflective of Bill W’s A.A. Thank you.

- Presented by Tom H. @ The SE Regional Forum on November 10, 2012 in Boca Raton, FL.

Help Wanted at the NHAA Service Office

The Service Office is looking for part-time help. This person must have great people skills, have an understanding of how the AA program works, and possess decent computer skills. Call or email the Service Office for more information. To apply, pick up an application at the Service Office or send in your resume by email. We look forward to hearing from you.

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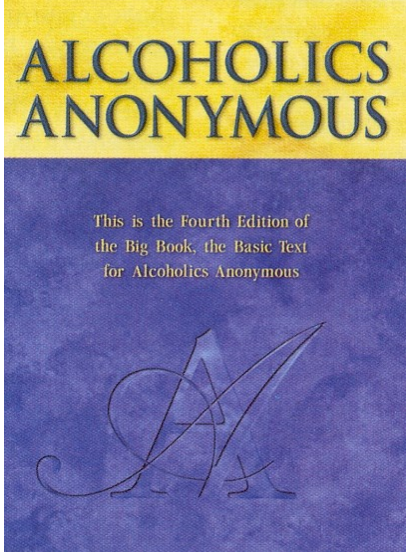
HEY! Yes, you, reading The Pipeline!

To make sure everyone knows what’s going on in your district, please go to the link below to submit your district or group’s event:

<http://www.nhaa.net/districts/submit-a-district-or-group-event/>

Your group or district’s event will then appear on the NHAA website at

<http://www.nhaa.net>, and everyone will be able to see it. Thank you.



Email the Pipeline at
pipeline@nhaa.net

Statement of Purpose

The New Hampshire Area Pipeline will be the voice of Alcoholics Anonymous within Area 43. Its editors and staff will be primarily accountable to New Hampshire AA Area 43 as a whole. Within the bounds of friendliness and good taste, the Pipeline will enjoy perfect freedom of speech on all matters directly pertaining to Alcoholics Anonymous within Area 43. Like the AA movement it mirrors, the primary purpose of the New Hampshire Pipeline will be to try to carry the AA message to alcoholics and practice the AA principles in all its affairs.

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Office Hours:

Mon-Fri: 10am—4pm

Sat: 10am—2pm

Group Changes, Updates and Disbandings

Salem's "Hopeful-Helpful-Grateful" Group, which meets on Saturdays from 7-8:15 p.m., changed its end time from 8:30. It meets at the NE Rehab Hospital, 70-78 Butler Street.

Manchester's "Over Easy Group" meets at the Airport Diner on Brown Ave. on Saturdays from 8-9 a.m. The format has changed from a closed to an open meeting.

New Group! Keene's Back To Basics Brunch Bunch meets at Monasnock Peer Support, 64 Beaver Street, on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

New Group! Keene's One Day At A Time group meets at St. James Church, 44 West Street, on Sundays from 5-6 p.m.

New Group! Franklin's BYOBB Group meets at First Baptist Church, 21 Church Street, on Thursdays from 7-8:30 p.m. Bring Your Own Big Book!

Concord's Down by the Tracks Group, which met at the Friendly Kitchen on Commercial Street on Wednesdays at 3 p.m., has disbanded.

Keene's Back To Basics Group, which took place at the Keene Senior Center, 70 Court Street, on Sundays at 11:15 a.m., has disbanded.

