

Gratitude Meeting

An AA member's reflections

Why do so many members hate gratitude meetings? The topic was brought up for discussion because it was the focus of the *Daily Reflections* reading: "One exercise that I practice is to try for a full inventory of my blessings" (*As Bill Sees It*, page 37).

An old-timer, respected for his 12th Step work, expressed disdain for gratitude lists. I was surprised by the negative attitude. As others shared, only a few of the members present had anything good to say about gratitude. My impression was that their experience with gratitude is that it is all phony talk to look good, as in "fake it till you make it." For a newcomer, I can agree with this strategy. But if you have a few years of sobriety and an active AA membership and you are still faking it, then you might want to reexamine your spiritual program.

Gratitude is the antidote to self-pity.

Gratitude is not something you fake. It is something that takes us out of our negative, selfish thinking. It allows us the wise vision whereby we can actually see the forest through the trees. Just being sober is good enough for many members. Some grind their axes (negative attitudes) at meetings and practice chopping down trees (fighting the world), careless of softy issues like gratitude and humility. It isn't that these Type A personalities are incapable of living spiritual lives. They most certainly can. Gratitude is recognizing a power greater than tough self-reliance.

My observations are mostly my opinion and they are not set in stone. Right now, my opinion on gratitude is that gratitude and humility go hand in hand. No humility, no gratitude. No gratitude, no humility. These two attitudes are to spirituality as a soft rain is to a summer garden. This isn't my opinion alone. Bill W. said that all the Steps are to lead us to a greater humility. He wrote, "For without some degree of humility, no alcoholic can stay sober at all" (*Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, page 70). What can be more humble than making a gratitude list from time to time, especially when you are caught up in emotional turmoil and you don't want to be grateful for anything?

Gratitude is the antidote to self-pity. It is an attitude that is heartfelt and genuine. It should not be confused with muttering a few words to the judge that just let you off

Continued on page 2

Happy Thanksgiving!

Join in the New Year's Eve celebration at Masonic Temple in downtown Fort Wayne – food, fellowship & dance – hosted by Fort Wayne Area Intergroup.



Anniversaries

November

Tim K. 11/1/06
Brad M. 11/3/96
Matthew E. 11/3/03
Shon L. 11/3/09
Frank F. 11/9/68
Ray M. 11/11/06
Bernadette G. 11/15/06
Fred R. 11/15/16
Wendy C. 11/16/03
Jan E. 11/19/08
Louis R. 11/21/05
John M. 11/22/16
Gary S. 11/24/09
Mike D. 11/26/08
Dick B. 11/30/93

December

Dave T. 12/10/12
Cathy C. 12/11/98
Don B. 12/13/77
Dave J. 12/19/01
Rae M. 12/31/81
Chris H. 12/31/09

The Amethyst Statement of Purpose: The Amethyst is published every two months for members of the A.A. community in the Fort Wayne area. The Amethyst is financially supported by contributions to Fort Wayne Area Intergroup. The purpose of The Amethyst is to share information and experience in recovery, unity and service in the Fort Wayne area. The articles published in The Amethyst are not intended to be statements of A.A. policy nor does publication of any article imply endorsement by either Fort Wayne Area Intergroup, Inc. or A.A. as a whole.

with probation and AA (yuck) attendance. It is gratitude when, sober a year, you happen upon that judge and hold back tears to thank him from the bottom of your heart for sending you to those AA meetings that you now love. That's the gratitude we all need. Not just towards AA, but towards those we tend to take for granted. We know we are truly grateful when we stoically endure the bad things that come our way and not play the victim. How many friends in AA have inspired me this way? How many have suffered loss and hardship and never thought of taking a drink? That is gratitude in action. That's the example of gratitude that keeps me coming back: that I'd better be grateful for this day, for—who knows—it could be my last.

J.D.C.

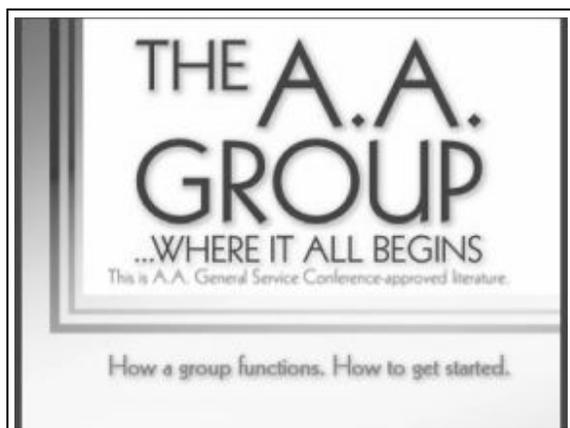
Self-Support: A Unique Approach

From Box 459

In recent months, G.S.O. has noticed a groundswell of Seventh Tradition contributions, each for \$7.27 — the dollar amount noted by the General Service Board treasurer as the average cost per member for G.S.O. to provide A.A. services to the Fellowship. Each year the treasurer comes up with an average number based on that year's financial position. Recently, members of the Fellowship have latched on to this number, sending contributions to G.S.O. in that exact amount. The practice got started in the Pacific Northwest and has swept across the eight regions and 93 areas of the U.S. and Canada, reflecting the commitment of individual members to supporting the services that G.S.O. provides. For this, G.S.O. would like to say, "Thanks!" And to acknowledge the unique surge of contributions for \$7.27 that were sent to G.S.O. — on July 27 (7/27)!

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"The AA Group" workshop was a great success!



The workshop was held in the downtown branch of the Allen County Public Library on Saturday, September 23rd from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. This workshop was sponsored by local AA Districts 61, 63, 65, 67, and 69.

More than 47 people attended, and the feedback was 100% positive. Several attendees remarked that they learned much about how a group functions. We all came away with a better understanding of how the AA group best serves its members, as well as how each group fits into AA as a whole. Plus we all enjoyed ourselves! Added bonus: lunch was dee-lish!

A HUGE THANK YOU to all who served on the committee!

Gary S.

Timeline of AA History marks the passing of Dr. Bob

1948

In the summer of 1948, Dr. Bob learns he has terminal cancer, leading him to shut down his office and retire from medical practice. In December 1948 Dr. Bob will give his last major talk before a crowd of A.A.s in Detroit, Michigan.

1950

Dr. Bob dies of cancer on November 16, 1950. During the Akron physician's 15 years of sobriety, the Fellowship he started with Bill W. had transformed the lives of close to 100,000 men and women and their loved ones.

From the Timeline of AA History: www.aa.org

Events & Notes

November 11

Defiance Annual Gratitude Round Up, UAW Hall Local 211, 2120 Baltimore St., Defiance, OH 43512.
Registration 9 a.m., events 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. \$15 sessions-only tickets. See Intergroup Events Calendar for more information: www.aaftwayne.org

November 12

Area 22 Assembly, St. Mary Hildebrandt Hall, 525 N. Lafayette St., Griffith, IN 46319. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. CST. district13@area22indiana.org

November 22

13th Annual Gratitude-Fest-Athon, St. Jude Catholic Church, State Blvd. & Pemberton Ave., 7:30 p.m. Open meeting, all are welcome.

December 3

District Meeting: General Service Districts, CAP Bldg., second floor, 1417 N. Anthony Blvd., Fort Wayne 46805, 1:00 p.m. All members welcome.

December 31

Fort Wayne Area Intergroup Annual New Year's Eve Dance, Masonic Temple, 216 E. Washington Blvd., Fort Wayne 46802. For more information, flier will be posted at Intergroup website; www.aaftwayne.org

2018 Indiana State Convention

February 23-25

See events calendar at www.indyaa.org

The Amethyst – SUBMISSIONS: The Amethyst welcomes feature articles, supporting articles, group histories, anniversaries, jokes, cartoons and upcoming events as long as they relate to A.A. experience and reflect an awareness of A.A.'s singleness of purpose. Submissions are reviewed by newsletter committee and recommended to the editor for publication.

LENGTH: The Amethyst will publish work of different lengths, from feature articles to one-liners.

Send submissions to: editor.amethyst@gmail.com or mail to:

The Amethyst
Fort Wayne Area Intergroup
2118 Inwood Drive Suite 112
Fort Wayne, IN 46815

New meeting

Alcoholics Anonymous Newcomers Orientation

Meeting Saturdays at 8:30 a.m. at Parkview Hospital, 2231 Carew St. 46808, Door 4, Down 1 Level, follow the signs.

This is an orientation meeting to overview the purpose of AA, the types of meetings in this area, and how those meetings are conducted.

All individuals are welcome including parents, relatives, and friends of those who may have a problem with alcohol.

We will describe AA philosophies, the 12 Steps, the 12 Traditions, which govern our operations, and how to get started in recovery from alcoholism. Questions will be answered.

BTGFortWayne@gmail.com

Bridging the Gap

An Alcoholics Anonymous 12th Step Program in the Fort Wayne area, "Bridging the Gap" is designed to help the alcoholic in a treatment program to make the transition between those programs and Alcoholics Anonymous.

Making the journey from treatment to continuing participation in AA meetings can be a big step for many people. The Bridging the Gap program offers the opportunity for active AA members to assist the newcomer in this step.

The Speakers program is for seasoned AA members to speak at treatment centers, describing their own experience, AA meetings and answering questions about Alcoholics Anonymous. Generally, these discussions entail roughly one hour and are a great opportunity for people to see AA at a more personal level.

The "Temporary Contact" program involves the AA member meeting one on one with a person from a treatment group, discussing AA and accompanying them to a few meetings. At these meetings they would be introduced to other members and begin to learn how AA works. Unlike sponsorship, volunteers can do this 12 Step work by spending a short period of time getting the newcomer acclimated and then move on to help another if they choose.

If you are interested in volunteering for either program, please email Greg S. at:

BTGFortWayne@gmail.com

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



**I live by these steps and get better.
I try to help other alcoholics.**

Design for Living

I was sober in AA for about two years when I stopped going to meetings. My ears kept hearing that, in order for one to hit bottom and become willing, you had to lose marriages, families, careers, businesses, houses, boats, cars, retirement and college funds, health, and financial credit. My ears also picked up that drinking *had* to be daily and at least half a gallon of liquor a day. This is what MY ears heard.

The time I spent away from the Fellowship, around five months or so, I analyzed the Big Book and referenced the Bible and other spiritual text. I was going to harness this “design for living” on my own. The isolation and self-imposed segregation that I had known before returned and I sank deeper into self than ever before. Even though I continued with inventory, prayer and meditation, those actions that require no contact with others, I was feeling more and more restless, irritable, and certainly more discontented.

The symptoms of this type of living took over my life. One day while at work I noticed that I was shaking bad. It should have been apparent from the overwhelming fear and intense feeling of doom I carried around. A thought came to me that if I don’t get back to AA I will drink. I was terrified!

Fortunately, I still had a list of phone numbers in my wallet and I did not pick up that drink. The next day I went to a Step meeting. They were reading Step Five out of the *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* book. The paragraph that I read, on page 60, contains one of the most important sentences in all of AA’s literature for me. It says, “Going it alone in spiritual matters is dangerous.” That sentence hit me like a ton of bricks.

I once again began a journey inside the rooms of AA. I stuck close to my sponsor and home group and got involved. I surrounded myself with people inside AA. I now know that trying to live my life apart from AA, specifically one alcoholic talking to another alcoholic, will lead back to drinking.

On page 73 in the Big Book it says, “We must be entirely honest with somebody if we expect to live long or happily in this world.” I find that communicating with another alcoholic what’s going on inside my guts relieves me of that desire to check out. It is in this connection that I have with other alkie that God emanates.

Kevin D.

**Drinking problem?
There is a solution.
(260)471-6262
Alcoholics Anonymous**