

District 19 Newsletter

February 2020

Newsletter@dist19aa.org

Meeting Info: CALL (425) 252-2525

<http://www.dist19aa.org>



Short and Sweet...

Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.

The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for A.A. membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. A.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy; neither endorses nor opposes any causes. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.



Step Two

Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

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.

Step 2-

Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

All of the words of the 12 steps are very specifically chosen, which is another thing I really love about working with them. The second step doesn't say "We came to believe in a power greater than ourselves" it says "We came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity." That's the beauty—we are invited to begin to think about what our higher power can be.

The emphasis is not on who or what the power is, but on what the power can do for us. The group of AA itself certainly qualifies as a power greater than ourselves (our fellowship is in the millions and always growing) as do the spiritual principles contained in the 12 steps.

The awareness and understanding that we can't recover alone and that we need some kind of help is really the lesson at this point in recovery. The spiritual principles that are the foundation of this step are open mindedness, willingness, faith, trust and humility. It really doesn't matter whether we have any idea of how this power greater than ourselves is going to help, just that we come to believe it is possible.

Tradition 2— Long Form—

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



*The 12 Steps tell us **how** the program of AA works and the 12 Traditions tell us **why** it works-*

“Our traditions are a guide to better ways of working and living. And they are to group survival as AA’s 12 Steps are to each member’s sobriety and peace of mind. Most individuals cannot recover unless there is a group. The group must survive or the individual will not.” - Bill W.

Historical AA Events for February-

February 2- 1942 – Bill W. paid tribute to Ruth Hock, AA’s first paid secretary, who resigned to get married. She had written approximately 15,000 letters to people asking for help.

February 8- 1940 – Bill W., Dr. Bob, and six other A.A.s asked 60 rich friends of John D. Rockefeller, Jr. for money at the Union Club, N Y. They got \$2,000.

February 12- 1945 – World War II paper shortage forced reduction in size of the Big Book.

February 16- 1941 – Baltimore Sunday Sun reported city’s first AA group begun in 1940 had grown from 3 to 40 members, with five being women.

February 21- 1939 – 400 copies of the Big Book manuscript were sent to doctors, judges, psychiatrists, and others for comment. This was the “multilith” Big Book.

<https://www.aa-oregon.org>

Self-reliance: a Skeptic's Story

An alcoholic tries to "AA her way" through depression

I was a happy-go-lucky child. I had a loving family and I always tried to live up to the values I was taught by my parents. But, by the time I was in my teens and early twenties, I had acquired a very pessimistic view toward life. I didn't realize that I was pessimistic--I just thought that the reality was that life sucked. My alcoholism became clearly evident in my late twenties. Since alcohol is a depressant, it undoubtedly added to my dark view of life. As I look back, I can see that mild depression was bothering me by the time I was in my thirties (I'm seventy-one now), but I brushed it off.

I became a sober member of Alcoholics Anonymous at the age of forty-eight; I was on such a pink cloud, and sobriety was so wonderful that at ten months I decided to quit smoking. That seemed to be the final straw for my psyche and I dropped into a fairly severe depression. With great reluctance, I went to see a psychiatrist. I didn't give him a fair chance because I was scornful of what is sometimes called "psychobabble." After six months, that bout of depression left, possibly because my spiritual life was growing so rapidly as a result of being active in AA and so new in sobriety.

I don't remember any episodes of depression from then until the past five years. I had known a lot of AA members who'd experienced problems with depression, but I had no empathy for them. I had no real idea of what they were experiencing and I judged them with a fair amount of contempt. Their talk about their therapists and their issues really bugged me. My parents had raised me to rely heavily on willpower and self-will.

When, about five years ago, I noticed myself experiencing mild bouts of depression, I once again brushed them off. I believed that if I concentrated hard on practicing the principles of AA, I could shake it off. For a while, that worked, but as time went on, the depression worsened. I kept thinking I could "AA my way" through this. I knew that the Big Book talked about going for outside help, but I believed my strong will would save me. I also knew that Bill W. had suffered severe depression for many years. I believed that I was more self-sufficient than he was.

I started experiencing deeper and longer periods of depression. It seemed as if I were sinking into a deep, dark hole. I finally broke down and mentioned the problem to my primary care physician. He gave me a multiple-choice test in which there was a question about suicide. I checked yes to the entry "I would like to commit suicide." He responded by telling me he would have to admit me to the psych ward at the local hospital. I had heard people in meetings talk about being put in seventy-two-hour lockdown and had always thought it was the same as being put in jail. It never occurred to me that it was an attempt to save their lives. So, I felt threatened by my doctor and vowed to myself that I would never again mention suicide to anyone--especially my doctor. This started a long period of secrecy. I truly wanted to commit suicide, but my years in AA kept me from doing it. I had learned that I didn't want to hurt the people dear to me.

I now felt extremely alone and lonely. Once again, I had a secret and this one I couldn't share with my roommate or my best friends in AA. Since previously I had been so contemptuous of people who mentioned their depression, I thought I couldn't now discuss how I really felt for fear I'd be judged in like manner. So I responded to the question "How are you?" with "I'm fine"; while inside I was feeling desperate.

Depression became like a living thing, and, just like alcoholism, it gradually took over my life. And, just like alcoholism, no one (with the possible exception of some medical professionals) who has not experienced the disease can understand the torment that the victim experiences.

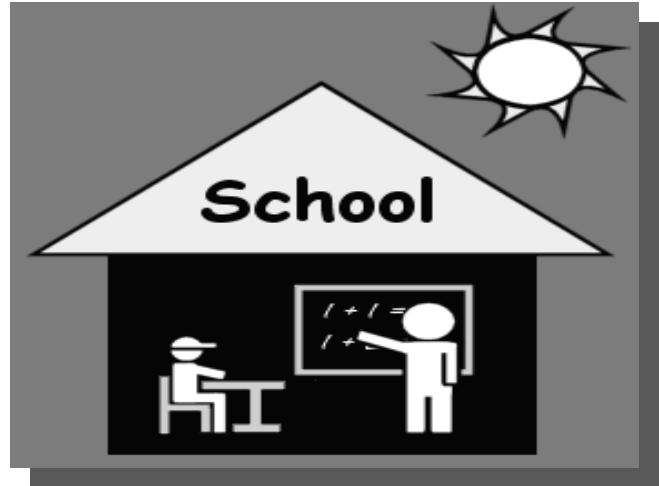
Finally, the lonesome despair got to be more than I could stand and once again I asked for help from my doctor (by this time I had changed doctors). He suggested I try a program at our local hospital which was designed to help older adults who suffered from depression. I took his advice with great reluctance. I had the same attitude I had when I first went to AA: What can these people know that I don't already know? I was told I needed to go on antidepressant medication and participate in group therapy as well as private therapy. I learned that depression is brought about by a disturbance in the neurological pathways in the brain; antidepressant medications help repair these pathways. Therapy also helps to repair them by retraining the brain. It's been found that the two together are more effective than either working alone.

When I heard about the medication, I thought, Great, give me a pill and fix me. I was more reluctant in attending the group and the private therapy sessions; I still had my attitude of, I don't need you; I've got willpower. The relief started for me soon after my first session in group therapy. I related immediately to the other people talking about their depression. It reminded me of my first meeting of AA--one alcoholic talking to another alcoholic, one depressed person talking to another depressed person. I was able to openly express what was going on with me, and the others understood. I still didn't mention the thoughts of suicide (hanging on to my worst secret) because our meeting room was just one locked door away from the psych ward. Eventually I realized that the therapists could distinguish between those who were in immediate danger and those who were just having troublesome thoughts, so I did start talking openly about my suicidal thoughts.

Even though I had started participating in the groups, I still held on to my close-mined attitude about mental health professionals. I was getting enough relief from the meds and the group and didn't see why I needed

2020 Snohomish County AA GSR School

Saturday February 22nd- 11:00 AM
Zion Lutheran Church
4634 Alger Avenue
Everett, 98203



Join us for a fun day of service related fellowship/education, the opportunity to meet your Area 72 Alternate Delegate, and a Finger Food Potluck. All are welcome and encouraged to attend. The first 25 to arrive receive a free GSR handbook! So do the rest who arrive,

Hosted By Districts 2, 3, 12, and 19. All are welcome to attend. 7th tradition

Join us for the 2020 District 19 Group Inventory

Saturday March 21st at 11:00
Zion Lutheran Church
4634 Alger Avenue Everett 98203
This is a great opportunity to get to know your
District 19 Committee members.



Please come and take our inventory!

This will be a finger food potluck. 7th tradition observed



Items of Note for District 19

www.dist19aa.org

Here is the link to the No Reservations website:

<http://www.noreservationsspeakermeeting.org/>

This way you can find out the dates of the meetings and who is speaking along with costs and so on. **17311 Reservation Rd, La Conner**

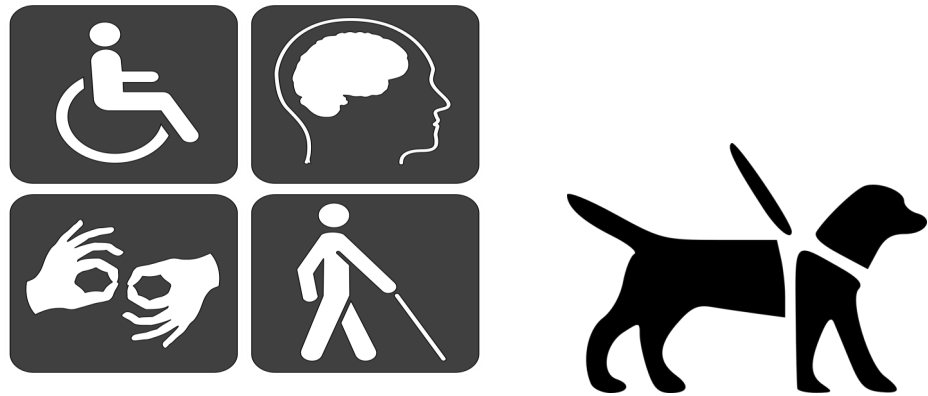
General Meeting Questions:

Joe W. - 360.853.5639 / John L. - 360.661.0780 -



Want a service position outside your Home Group? **Try the Central Office.** Located at 1625 E. Marine View Dr. in Everett the CO can always use people to help with the phones. Shifts during the week are just two hours. At night you staff the phone from 7pm to 7am, once a month. It's service work that puts recovery into action. To get involved call 425-252-2525 during normal business hours (7am to 7pm) and tell them you want to answer phones. Someone will get back to you.

From the District 19 Accessibility Chair; aka “Sooz Says....”

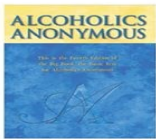


Service Animals and A.A. Meetings – Box 459

For many A.A.s, a dog-eared Big Book is a welcome sight on meeting night. But if those dog ears belong to anything other than our basic text, unrest and “diversity of opinion” within the group sometimes follow. In recent years, the General Service Office has received many calls from members asking for sharing about service animals at meetings. Unlike guide dogs for those who are blind, service dogs that are trained to assist with (or perform) other tasks are not as well understood or as easily identified. Though service dogs do assist people who are blind, they are also trained to perform tasks for people with other accessibility issues — such as pulling a wheelchair; alerting and protecting a person who is having a seizure; or alleviating anxiety for someone with PTSD. Without service animals, many A.A.s could not safely attend meetings. However, some members report being blocked from meetings because they are accompanied by service animals. Some insist that such groups are in violation of laws such as the Americans with Disabilities Act. Of course, A.A.’s Twelve Traditions do not transcend the law, and G.S.O. neither offers compliance advice nor interprets law for members. In these cases, G.S.O. may suggest asking the group to have an informed group conscience discussion on how to extend the hand of A.A. across any barriers. Therefore, in the interest of being informed, some groups have decided to look into local and federal laws related to service animals. This way, they can ensure that they are not only complying with the law but are also remaining helpful to their fellow members and sharing A.A.’s message of hope and recovery. Although shared group experience about service animals is not as plentiful as concerns and questions, a group member in California shared her experience: “In our meeting, I had the ‘pet patrol’ commitment. We average four dogs per meeting, from chihuahuas to wolfhounds. Our meeting is open to the public, and we welcome trained service dogs. [According to our research] we may ask if the dog is a service animal required because of a disability, as well as what type of work or task the dog has been trained to perform. We may not ask for documentation. ‘Comfort’ animals may be asked to leave. “I volunteered because I wanted to serve as a buffer between the members who bring the animals and the members who are disturbed by it. My approach was to introduce myself, ask the names of the person and animal, explain my role, and ask if the animal has been trained to perform a task that supports a disability. If ‘yes,’ I respond: ‘Thank you. It’s nice to meet you.’ If ‘no,’ I welcome them to

stay for the meeting, but ask them to please leave the pet at home when they return. Although some members are indignant that I have not effectively prevented an overrun of animals and some owners are hostile, it has worked. I have made new friends and I ask about the pets at home.” This member also related personal experience about “surprising” dogs being service animals: “A sponsee of mine was in a car accident. As a result of her injuries, she experienced seizures. She had a tiny little dog, like a teacup dog, that she trained to detect when she had a seizure coming. If I hadn’t seen it, I wouldn’t have believed it — but it was true.” The pamphlet “The A.A. Group” reassures us that group problems are by no means uncommon, and that they “are often evidence of a healthy, desirable diversity of opinion among the group members. They give us a chance ... to ‘practice these principles in all our affairs.’” As with other group issues, A.A.s have often found that “a good sense of humor, cooling-off periods, patience, courtesy, willingness to listen and to wait — plus a sense of fairness and trust in a ‘Power greater than ourselves’ — have been found far more effective than legalistic arguments or personal accusations.” And, although a specific issue may not be printed in black and white, alcoholics are a resourceful crowd, and an informed group conscience can yield abundant solutions.

From Box 459/Fall 2019- “Service Animals and A.A. Meetings– Reprinted with the permission of A.A. World Services, Inc.



CONWAY OLDTIMERS SPEAKERS MEETING at
Fir Island Lutheran Church
18101 Fir Island,
Conway, WA.

December 21, 2019	Art C 44 years	Teri 37 years
January 18, 2020	Doug R 45 years	Wendy R 32 years
February 15, 2020	Tom B 31 years	Mari B 30 years

Potluck at 5 Speakers @ 6:00 pm
(Please bring food items only, desert is provided)
Directions: I-5 Exit 221, Conway-Lake McMurray
Head West 1/4 Mile. Take Angled Right Turn Continue
Across RR Tracks and River, Church on Right
Contact: Kelly N (425) 238-7391 or Rose N (425) 760-3323



Self-reliance: a Skeptic's Story (continued)

anything else. Who wants to do any more work than necessary? (Who needs to bother with the Steps?) Well, I couldn't sustain my stable mood--I started to slip back into the dark hole. Then I started listening as hard as I could because I felt as if my life depended on it. I opened my mind completely to learning about techniques such as behavioral and cognitive therapy.

After I had participated for a while, I started to feel more stable. I realized how much of a parallel there was between the new principles I was learning and the principles I've learned over many years in AA. Cognitive therapy, for example, relates to "altered attitudes." My old problem of pessimism was thwarting my recovery ("It's hopeless for me to pull out of this"). My first sponsor had told me how negative I was and I'd felt hurt when she said it. I have worked hard to change this and other attitudes, but I haven't met with perfect success. I continue to need more help.

I've participated in a lot of hours of group and private therapy. I listen as hard as I can. I keep my mind as open as I can. I participate in AA as much or more than I used to. I rely on the Steps to keep me on a steady course. I pray to my Higher Power that I don't close my mind or my heart to any of his messages. I've felt fairly stable emotionally for several months, but just like my alcoholism, I know my depression will never be cured. I'm off all antidepressant medication right now, but I'm willing to return to it if necessary. I'm extremely grateful for all of the people who are here to help me in my life.

My years in AA enhanced the professional help I've received--I don't believe I would have succeeded if either of these had been missing.

-- C.M.- Los Altos, California

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‘Our Third Legacy is Service....’

3rd Legacy Meeting for District 19

5:30– Zion Lutheran Church– 47th and Alger–

Calendar of Events- February 2020

February 2020

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1 No Reservations Mtg First Saturday of every month– Open Meeting
2	3	4 7:00pm- Central Office Meeting- 1652 E. Marine View Drive	5	6 7:00pm– District 12 Business Meeting, 1401 Poplar	7	8
9	10	11 Service Manual Study 6-7:30– 34 Oakes (18th and Baker) Second Tuesday	12	13	14	15 -Conway Old Timers Meeting-Potluck at 5/Speakers at 6
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26 5:30– 3rd Legacy Meeting 7:00pm– District 19 Business Meeting 47th and Alger, Zion Lutheran Church	27	28	29

If you have any AA related announcements to share, email me and I'll include it here.

Newsletter@dist19aa.org