

The Gateway

July 2011

District 14

HMB Area 48

New York

District 14: Altamont, Duaneburg, Guelderland, Niskayuna, Schenectady, Scotia

“Some day we hope that every alcoholic who journeys will find the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous at his destination.” Big Book - page 162

Step 7

Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

Tradition 7

Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

Concept 7

The Charter and Bylaws of the General Service Board are legal instruments, empowering the trustees to manage and conduct world service affairs. The Conference Charter is not a legal document; it relies upon tradition and the A.A. purpose for final effectiveness.

THE WASHINGTONIAN MOVEMENT By Milton A. Maxwell, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Sociology, State College of Washington, Pullman, Washington



COMPARISON WITH A.A. ... this is just a snippet of the entire article which is quite interesting... for more information: http://silkworth.net/washingtonians/washingtonian_movement_comparison_aa.html

It is apparent that the Washingtonian societies, when they were most effective in the rehabilitation of alcoholics, had a great many similarities to Alcoholics Anonymous. These similarities might be listed as follows:

1. Alcoholics helping each other.
2. The needs and interests of alcoholics kept central, despite mixed membership, by predominance of numbers, control, or the enthusiasm of the movement.
3. Weekly meetings.
4. The sharing of experiences.
5. The fellowship of the group or its members constantly available.
6. A reliance upon the power of God.
7. Total abstinence from alcohol.

Most Washingtonian groups probably failed to meet this ideal program, or to maintain it for long. Even in itemizing the ideal program, some of the differences between the Washingtonian groups and Alcoholics Anonymous stand out. The admission of nonalcoholics as members and the incorporation of the "temperance" purpose - the inducement of total abstinence in nonalcoholics - are the most striking differences. Furthermore, at their best, the Washingtonian groups possessed no understanding of alcoholism other than the possibility of recovery through love and sympathy. Their approach to the problem of alcoholism and alcohol was moralistic rather than psychological or therapeutic. They possessed no program for personality change. The group had no resource of ideas to help them rise above the ideational content locally possessed. Except for their program of mutual aid they had no pattern of organization or

Pass it on...

Share your stories of experience, strength and hope; group anniversaries; jokes; and other AA related news!



“TOWARD PEACE AND SERENITY”

...when we have taken a square look at some of these defects, have discussed them with another, and have become willing to have them removed, our thinking about humility commences to have a wider meaning.

TWELVE STEPS AND TWELVE TRADITIONS, p.74

When situations arise which destroy my serenity, pain often motivates me to ask God for clarity in seeing my part in the situation. Admitting my powerlessness, I hum-

bly pray for acceptance. I try to see how my character defects contributed to the situation. Could I have been more patient? Was I intolerant? Did I insist on having my own way? Was I afraid? As my defects are revealed, I put self-reliance aside and humbly ask God to remove my shortcomings. The situation may not change, but as I practice exercising humility, I enjoy the peace and serenity which are the natural benefits of placing my reliance in a power greater than myself.

P. 200

As Bill Sees It

From the Taproot

The principle that we shall find no enduring strength until we first admit complete defeat is the main taproot from which our whole Society has sprung and flowered.

<<<<<<>>>>>>

Every newcomer is told, and soon realized for himself, that his humble admission of powerlessness over alcohol is his first step toward liberation from its paralyzing grip.

So, it is that we first see humility as a necessity. But this is the barest beginning. To get completely away from our aversion to the idea of being humble, to gain a vision of humility as the avenue to true freedom of the human spirit, to be willing to work for humility as something to be desired for itself, takes most of us a long, long time. A whole lifetime geared to self-centeredness cannot be set in reverse all at once.



TWELVE AND TWELVE, 1) P. 21-22, 2)

We are NOT a glum lot...

Two ferocious lions are roaming the African Savannah. When they chance upon a loud, obnoxious drunk, they immediately devour the startled fellow.

One lion complains to the other: “You know alcoholics give me heartburn.”

The other lion agrees, “Alcoholics give everybody heartburn.”

Current District 14 Trusted Servants

D.C.M...(District Committee Member).....**Kathy H.**

Alternate DCM/Records.....**Tammy D.**

Treasurer**George D.**

Bridging the Gap**Gerry W.**

Cooperation with the Professional Community ..**Brian J.**

Corrections-Men's**Wilbur S.**

Corrections-Women's**Chris G .**

Functions **Fred C**

Newsletter Editor**Patti G.**

Public Information**John C.**

Special Needs**Debby W.**

Secretary.....**Alice M.**

Treatment**Mike H.**



HELP US MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

COME TO THE MEETING! OPEN TO ALL A.A. MEMBERS...

August 15, 2011 ... 7:35 PM—9 PM... Scotia United Methodist Church

Notes....

Schenectady County Jail * Meetings** need volunteers...

Women's Jail Meeting - Chris G.
Men's Jail Meeting - Wilber S.

New Meeting in District 14: "Young and in AA." Monday nights, 7:45-8:45 p.m. St. Joseph's Church, 600 State St., corner of State and Lafayette, use Lafayette entrance.

Contact any District 14 Committee member or your group GSR for more information.

Washingtonians (cont)...

activity different from existing patterns. There was far too great a reliance upon the pledge, and not enough appreciation of other elements in their program. Work with other alcoholics was not required, nor was the therapeutic value of this work explicitly recognized. There was no anonymity to keep the public from becoming aware of broken pledges, or to keep individuals from exploiting the movement for prestige and fame. Finally, there was not enough understanding of their own therapeutic program to formulate it and thus help the new groups to establish themselves on a sound and somewhat uniform basis.

The differences can be brought out more clearly by a more detailed, comparative analysis of the Alcoholics Anonymous program - its principles, practices and content.

1. Exclusively alcoholic membership.- There are many therapeutic values in the cohesiveness and solidarity which a group with a common problem can achieve. But in the light of the Washingtonian experience, the greatest long-run value of an exclusively alcoholic membership is that it permits and reinforces exclusive attention to the rehabilitation of alcoholics.
2. Singleness of purpose. - As stated in the masthead of an organizational publication (23), Alcoholics Anonymous "is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not



HMB 2011 Convention November 4-6, 2011

"We are Responsible for A.A.'s Future
- Let it Begin With Us"

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Hosted by the Hudson Valley Cluster
(Districts 3, 7, 13, 15, 16, 17)

Pre-Registrants
will Receive an Extra
Free Shuttle Ticket for
an Airfare Hotel!

For More Information: Lori W. (518)387-1923 / Deb D. (845)331-0213

Upcoming Events

- 7/29-31/2011 NY State Convention SENY
(Tarrytown)
- 8/19-21/2011 NYS Informational HMB (Latham)
- 9/10/2011 Election Assembly Eastern Cluster
- 10/15/2011 Area Assembly Central Cluster
- 11/4-6/2011 HMB Convention—Hudson Valley
Cluster—(Fishkill)
- 11/20/2011 Fellowship Day Western (TBA)
- 2/2012 NERAASA-Crowne Plaza, Albany
(we host)

Washingtonians (cont)... 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." Nothing can divide groups more quickly - and certainly destroy the therapeutic atmosphere effectively - than religious and political controversy. Strong efforts were made in the Washingtonian movement to minimize sectarian, theological and political differences, but the movement did not avoid attracting to itself the hostile emotions generated by these conflicts. Even if it had been more successful in this regard, it was still caught in all the controversy to which the temperance cause had become liable. Not only that, but within the temperance movement itself it eventually became stranded on the issue of moral suasion versus legal action.

In the light of this experience, the position of Alcoholics Anonymous stands in decided and hopeful contrast. In refusing to endorse or oppose causes, and particularly the temperance cause, A.A. is avoiding the greatest handicap which the Washingtonian movement had. Some temperance leaders may deplore that A.A. does not give them support, but they have no grounds for complaining that they are being opposed or hampered by A.A.

The A.A. program also contains a happy formula for avoiding the religious or theological controversies which could easily develop even within the groups as presently constituted. This is the use of the term "Power" (greater or higher), and particularly the phrase "as we understood Him," in referring to this Power, or God. The tolerance which this phrase has supported is an invaluable asset.

A further value of this single-minded concentration on the rehabilitation of alcoholics is made obvious by the Washingtonian experience. Whenever, and as long as, the Washingtonians were working hard at the reclamation of drunkards, they had notable success and the movement thrived and grew. This would support the idea that active outreach to other alcoholics is a factor in therapeutic success and, at the same time, a necessary condition for growth - and even for survival. Entirely aside from the matter of controversy, then, this singleness of A.A. purpose is a condition of continued therapeutic success and survival.

3. An adequate, clear-cut program of recovery. - Another great asset of Alcoholics Anonymous is the ideology which forms the content and context of its program of recovery, and which has received clear and attractive expression in the book Alcoholics Anonymous (24) and in other A.A. literature. This ideology incorporates the much sounder understanding of alcoholism which has been developed in recent years. It is a pragmatic blend of that which scientific research, dynamic psychology and mature religion have to offer; and through the literature of the movement, the members are kept sympathetically oriented to the developments in these fields.

Accordingly, instead of viewing alcoholism with a moralistic eye on alcohol - as an evil which ought to be abandoned - A.A. sees alcoholism as an illness, symptomatic of a personality disorder. Its program is designed to get at the basic problem, that is, to bring

Contributions to A.A. as a Whole

Tradition Seven:

"Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions."

No A.A. Tradition had the labor pains this one did. Collective poverty initially a matter of necessity. Fear of exploitation. Necessity of separating the spiritual from the material. Decision to subsist on A.A. voluntary contributions only. Placing the responsibility of supporting A.A. headquarters directly upon A.A. members. Bare running expenses plus a prudent reserve is headquarters policy.

Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions

Please remember to use your group # when sending contributions.



District 14

PO Box 494
Schenectady, NY 12301

HMB Area Association

RTE. 30, #114
118 Polar Plaza
Amsterdam, NY 12010

General Service Office

PO Box 459
Grand Central Station
New York, NY 10163

Capital District Central Office

575 Broadway, Room 128-130
Menands, NY 12204
Phone: 518-463-0906

about a change in personality.

This program is simply and clearly stated in the Twelve Steps - augmented by the "24 hour program" of abstaining from alcohol, and the supporting slogans and emphases such as "First things first," "Live and let live," "Easy does it," "Keep an open mind," honesty, humility, and so forth. Great stress is also put upon regular attendance at the group meetings, which are characterized by the informal exchange of experiences and ideas and by a genuinely satisfying fellowship.

Compared to the Washingtonian brand, the A.A. sharing of experiences is notably enriched by the psychological insights which have been brought into the group by A.A. literature and outside speakers. A thorough analysis and catharsis is specifically asked for in the Twelve Steps - as well as an improvement in relations to other persons. Work with other alcoholics is required, and the therapeutic value accruing to the sponsor of new members is distinctly recognized. The spiritual part of the program is more clearly and inclusively defined; more soundly based, and more frankly made an indispensable condition of recovery.

It appears, furthermore, that the A.A. group activity is more satisfactory to the alcoholic than was the case in many Washingtonian societies. A.A. members seem to find all the satisfaction and values in their groups that the founders of the various orders thought were lacking in the Washingtonian groups.

A decided Washingtonian weakness was its general lack of follow-through. In contrast, A.A. is particularly strong on this point, providing a potent follow-through in a group setting where self-analysis and catharsis are stimulated; where new attitudes toward alcohol, self and others are learned; where the feeling tones are modified through a new quality of relationships; where, in short, a new way of life is acquired - one which not only enables the person to interact with his environment (particularly with other persons) without the use of alcohol, but enables him to do so on a more mature, satisfying basis.

No doubt a similar change occurred in many (though probably not in most) of the alcoholic Washingtonians, but it was more by a coincidence, within and without the societies, of circumstances that were rarely understood and never formulated into a definite, repeatable program. A.A. is infinitely better equipped in this respect.

4. Anonymity. - A comparison with the Washingtonian experience underscores the sheer survival value of the principle of anonymity in Alcoholics Anonymous. At the height of his popularity, John B. Gough either "slipped" or was tricked by his enemies into a drunken relapse. At any rate, the opponents of the Washingtonian movement seized upon this lapse with glee and made the most of it to hurt Gough and the movement. This must have happened frequently to less widely known but nevertheless publicly known Washingtonians. Public confidence in the movement was impaired. Anonymity protects the reputation of A.A. from public criticism not only of "slips" but also of failures, internal tensions, and all deviant behaviour.

Equally important, anonymity keeps the groups from exploiting prominent names for the sake of group prestige; and it keeps individual members from exploiting their A.A. connection for personal prestige or fame. This encourages humility and the placing of principles above personalities. Such behaviour not only generates outside admiration of A.A. but has therapeutic value for the individual members. There are further therapeutic values in anonymity: it makes it easier for alcoholics to approach A.A., and it relaxes the new member. It encourages honest catharsis and utter frankness. It protects the new member from the critical eyes of certain acquaintances while he experiments with this new way of life, for fumbling and failure will be hidden.

5. Hazard-avoiding traditions. - Another decisive contrast to the Washingtonian movement is the development in Alcoholics Anonymous not only of a relatively uniform program of recovery but also of relatively uniform traditions for avoiding the usual hazards to which organizations are subject.