



A Member asked.....

Medallions/Coins/Chips or no?

Some History of Chips & Medallions in AA

The traditions of chips, medallions and birthdays vary in different parts of the country and I thought it would be interesting to present some of their history. There is evidence that early on many people in AA carried personal mementos to remind themselves of the importance of their sobriety. Clarence H. Snyder - "*The Home Brewmeister* had his last drink on February 11, 1938 and he carried this medallion made from a silver dollar and a watchful up until just before his death on March 22, 1984. It has been dated back into the mid-1940's, if not before, and the holes represent 46 years of sobriety. Clarence started AA group #3 in Cleveland in 1939.

Sister Ignatia, the nun who helped Dr. Bob get the hospitalization program started at St. Thomas Hospital in Akron was the first person to use medallions in Alcoholics Anonymous. She gave the drunks who were leaving St. Thomas after a five day dry out a Sacred Heart Medallion and instructed them that the acceptance of the medallion signified a commitment to God, to A.A. and to recovery and that if they were going to drink, they had a responsibility to return the medallion to her before drinking. Sacred Heart Medallion-The sacred heart medallions had been used prior to A.A. by the Father Matthew Temperance Movement of the 1840's and the Pioneers, an Irish Temperance Movement of the 1890's.

The practice of giving sobriety chips in A.A. is attributed to a Group in Elmira, N.Y. in 1947. The celebration of birthdays came from the Oxford Group where they celebrated the anniversary of their spiritual rebirth. People in early A.A. chose the anniversary of the date of their last drink.

July, 1948 - Group To Give Oscar for Anniversaries. The Larchmont Group of Larchmont, N.Y. gives a cast bronze camel mounted on a mahogany base to celebrate 1st., 5th and 10th anniversaries. "*The camel is wholly emblematic of the purposes of most sincere A.A.s, i.e., to live for 24 hours without a drink.*"

August 1948 - The Artesia, N.Mex. Group awards marbles to all members. If you are caught without your marbles, you are fined 25 cents. This money goes into the Foundation Fund.

June 1953 - We operate a poker chip club in the Portland Group (Maine). We have poker chips of nine colors of which the white represents the probation period of one month. If he keeps his white chip for one month he is presented with a red chip for one month's sobriety. The chips continue with blue for two months, black for three, green for four, transparent blue for five, amber for six, transparent purple for nine months and a transparent clear chip for one year. We have our chips stamped with gold A.A. letters. Also at the end of the year and each year thereafter, we present them with a group birthday card signed by all members present at the meeting.

January 1955 - Charlotte, N.C. "When a man takes "The Long Walk" at the end of a meeting, to pick up a white chip, he is admitting to his fellow men that he has finally accepted the precepts of A.A. and is beginning his sobriety. At the end of three months he exchanges his white chip for a red one. Later, a handsome, translucent chip of amber indicates that this new member has enjoyed six months of a new way of life. The nine month chip is a clear seagreen and a blue chip is given for the first year of sobriety. In some groups a sponsor will present his friend with an engraved silver chip, at the end of five years clear thinking and clean living.

March 1956 - The One Ton Poker Chip. Alton, Illinois. Author gave friend a chip on his first day eight years ago (1948) and told him to accept it in the spirit of group membership and that if he wanted to drink to throw the chip away before starting drinking.

October 1956 - Bangor Washington. Article about a woman who sits in a bar to drink, the bartender sees her white chips and asks what it is. She tells him. He throws her out as he does not want an alcoholic in his bar. She calls friend.

Continue page 3; **A Member Asked...**

- ABSECON
- AVALON
- ATLANTIC CITY
- BARNEGAT
- BARNEGAT LIGHT
- BEACH HAVEN
- BRANT BEACH
- BRIGHTINE
- CAPE MAY
- CAPE MAY C. H.
- CAPE MAY POINT
- DENNISVILLE
- EGG HARBOR CITY
- EGG HARBOR TWP.
- GALLOWAY
- LINWOOD
- MANAHAWKIN
- MARGATE
- MARMORA
- MAYS LANDING
- NEW GREINA
- NORTH WILDWOOD
- NORTHFIELD
- OCEAN CITY
- PALERMO
- PLEASANTVILLE
- POMONA
- RIO GRANDE
- SEA ISLE CITY
- SHIP BOTTOM
- SOMERS POINT
- STONE HARBOR
- SURF CITY
- TOWNBANK
- TUCKERTON
- VENTNOR
- VILLAS
- WARETOWN
- WEST CAPE MAY
- WEST CREEK
- WILDWOOD
- WOODBINE

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We have seen the truth demonstrated again and again: "*Once an alcoholic, always an alcoholic.*" Commencing to drink after a period of sobriety, we are in a short time as bad as ever. If we are planning to stop drinking, there must be no reservation of any kind, nor any lurking notion that someday we will be immune to alcohol.

The founders of many groups ultimately divide into two classes known in A.A. slang as “elder statesmen” and “bleeding deacons.”

The elder statesman sees the wisdom of the group’s decision to run itself and holds no resentment over his reduced status. His judgment, fortified by considerable experience, is sound; he is willing to sit quietly on the sidelines patiently awaiting developments.

The bleeding deacon is just as surely convinced that the group cannot get along without him. He constantly connives for re-election to office and continues to be consumed with self-pity. *Nearly every oldtimer in our Society has gone through this process in some degree. Happily, most of them survive and live to become elder statesmen. They become the real and permanent leadership of A.A.*

- “Twelve and Twelve” pg. 135

Not Alone Anymore

A lot of times in early recovery I felt that I was all alone in a room full of recovering alcoholics. That feeling has driven me to help others as suggested by my sponsor back in 2007. The emptiness temporarily goes away. From being involved in AA since 1991 and finally getting Sobriety in 2007, the feeling of loneliness has mostly gone away. I have found it is a total function of my willingness to help others.

In the years I have been involved or just taking up space in AA, I have distanced myself from the fellowship time and time again over resentments however I am always left in the same spot, all alone. Not just all alone in the physical sense but emotionally and spiritually as well.

For me, being all alone spiritually is the middle of a relapse, not drinking but angry with everyone and I turn into a victim. The victim mentality has not done me well throughout my life. I become an introvert and withdrawn from everything positive in my life, and I seem to go there purposely. It could very well be the way I’m wired, with the diagnosis of Bipolar 1 and PTSD on top of Alcoholism.

During my attempts to get and stay sober, I have played the victim well, as we all as alcoholics do. I am such the “Ego-Centric with an inferiority complex” to the capital T. For me, being selfish and self centered has always led me down the trail to resentment, anger, self pity, depression and the like. In the Big Book we call it the four horsemen or the bedevilments. I have a lot of opinions like everyone but in the rooms and within the fellowship I try hard to only talk of my experience with recovery. I can drift in my sharing but I always try to reel it into a topic from the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous.

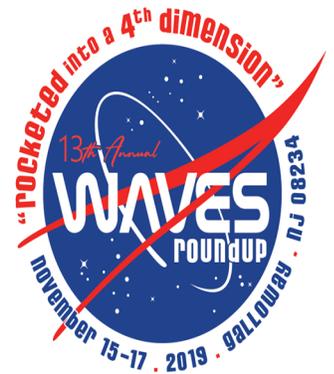
In conclusion, I don’t ever have to feel alone again as long as I stay connected to the fellowship and my higher power and continue to try and help others. This is something I realize when I’m mentally and emotionally well. Doctors have helped me a lot and some doctors have hurt me a lot however I can tell you that I have not had a drink since 6/11/2007. Once I started working and trying to live the program of Alcoholics Anonymous my life has had purpose which is unlike any other time in my life. Stay connected, pray like it’s the end of your days because it is. Every morning when I wake I start my life over. I have a new chance to be kind, considerate and compassionate with people in need. This is completely opposite from the way I thought before I became disabled and sober in 2007. We all have to “*Trudge the road of happy destiny*” and in the end, my last days I want to think that all of you helped save my life time and time again and never turned your backs on me when it came to recovery. We are all sick, whether or not we are alcoholic. There is nothing normal about anyone’s life. We are walking through together but separately. We all need help and I have found the act of kindness has filled my spirit.

In fellowship, your friend Glenn B.



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! “...clear-cut directions are given showing how we recovered.”

"We have recovered and have been given the power to help others."

The Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous, quite pointedly tells its practicing readers to never ask God for anything unless it bears on a very special kind of usefulness to others. Not merely things that are useful to others, like, "good health," or relief from stress—but specifically to the reader's usefulness to others. This "4th step prayer" is one example of this.

The newcomer is being guided toward not actually praying for himself, but for his usefulness...to others.

Please remember what Ebby said to Bill on page 13 regarding all prayer, "Never was I to pray for myself, except as my requests bore on my usefulness to others."

Never.

All Big Book prayers fall within this parameter. It eliminates *MANY* of the prayers so many AAs have become used to—but the price of awakening and sobriety is high. It includes an opened mind that drops the vestiges of old prejudices, and that means how we pray too.

Patrick C.



Alcohol as a Remover

Alcohol will remove stains from clothes. But stains from clothes are not the only things alcohol will remove.

Alcohol will remove the clothes as well.

Strange as it may seem, alcohol will do this not only for the man who drinks it, but also for his wife and children.

Alcohol will remove smiles from the faces of wives and mothers.

Or husbands and fathers. It will remove laughter from the lips of innocent children. It will remove even the joy of playtime.

Alcohol will remove heat from the home, furniture from its rooms, and food from its table.

Alcohol is a great remover. As a remover of things alcohol has no peer.

It removes fine homes and leaves hovels.

It removes plenty and leaves poverty.

It removes fame and leaves shame.

It removes honor and leaves humiliation.

It removes self-esteem and leaves disgust.

But removing things is not all that alcohol will do. It not only removes stains, but also creates them.

Alcohol can quickly stain a reputation. Worse, it can gradually stain and deform a character. It can mar the potential of any man or woman who indulges. And it can ultimately ruin the person caught in its deceptive snare.

Alcohol can mark a man for life with its cursed stain. And it can remove from one's experience everything, great or small, that makes life worthwhile.

But that is not the worst that can happen to man. The real tragedy is that alcohol will bar or remove a man's name from the Book of Life. It will remove from his heart all hope of heaven. It will remove from the realm of possibility fellowship with God Himself, both now and in the eternal future.

Submitted by Samantha J.

Continue from page 1 **A Member Asked...**

April 1957 - Cape Cod, Mass. Group recognizes 1st, 5th and 15th anniversaries. Person celebrating leads meeting. Person is presented with a set of wooden carved plaques with the slogans.

July 1957 - New Brunswick, Canada. Birthday Board. Member contributes one dollar for each year of sobriety

July 1957 - Oregon. Person is asked to speak and is introduced by his or her sponsor. The wife, mother, sister or other relative brings up a cake. The Group sings Happy Birthday. The wife gives a two or three minute talk.

April 1959 - Patterson, N.J. People are asked to give "three month pin talks."

And that's a little bit of info on chips, cakes and medallions.



Panel Emails

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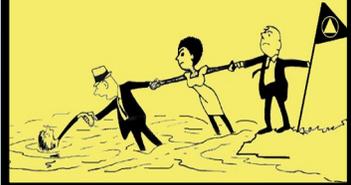
VISIT OUR WEBSITE:

www.capeatlanticaa.org

Special Note:

The material in this newsletter does not necessarily represent Cape-Atlantic Intergroup. Much of it has been contributed by individual members with the intention of passing the message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

I AM RESPONSIBLE



Meeting Guide – Phone App



- A free mobile app for iOS and Android.
- Find nearby meetings and get directions instantly.
- Use is invited by AA World Services.

Cape Atlantic started participating in December, 2018. Check it out!



Learn more at <https://meetingguide.aa.org>
Or contact Shirli R at webchair@capeatlanticaa.org



WE BRING MEETINGS TO YOU

The Accessibilities Committee of Cape Atlantic Intergroup brings meetings to those members who are hospitalized, home bound, or in a nursing home. If you or anyone in your group is in need of this service, contact us.

Join our committee in being of service to those members who cannot get out to meetings.

Contact the Accessibilities Committee of Cape Atlantic Intergroup
Bonnie W 313-685-9823

Committee meeting postings and updates are found on our website CapeAtlanticAA.org



Cape Atlantic Intergroup sincerely thanks each and every one for helping to support AA in our area!



Get on the HOTLINE



Looking to be of service?

Answer the hotline for Cape Atlantic Intergroup
Commitments are once a week for two hours
Calls can be received at the intergroup office or forwarded to your phone.

Six months of sobriety required

If interested contact the Phone Chair at
capeatlanticaa.org or

Call the hotline at 609-641-8855