

STATE OF THE INTERGROUP UNION

AUGUST 2020

Five months ago, the AA Fellowship was shut down in quick order. Never in the 85-year history of our beloved fellowship had we experienced anything like this.

How would the groups respond?

Amid the confusion, they responded by calling their members and trying to figure out a safe way to meet. Some groups even set up phone chains and a semi-new form of meetings online began to appear in small numbers.

How would GSO respond?

To be honest, at first? Not so great. They were in the middle of planning the annual Delegate Conference and the World Convention, set for Detroit in July. The GSO was hard to get ahold of, or get a reply from. It had an incredible weight on its shoulders. Locally, we saw assemblies and other events canceled. But as the AA ship righted itself, the GSO conference was rescheduled online for the first time, and preparations were underway to host the World Convention virtually. Finances took a hit initially as most of its income is derived from literature sales. The GSO reached out to the fellowship, and boy did the fellowship respond. Today, both Group and individual contributions have out-paced book sales and the GSO is now in a much better position financially.

How would Intergroup respond?

After we held our last in-person business meeting at the Intergroup office on March 18th, things were looking quite grim. Our WebChair Penni N. and Meeting List Coordinator Debbie L. were bombarded by cancelations of meetings daily. All events and H&I Commitments were suspended. There was considerable concern about how we would provide the vital services our Groups counted on us for, and how we would pay for them with potentially little to no contributions coming in. How dark it is before the dawn!! Like a Phoenix rising from the ashes, Cape Atlantic Intergroup got up, dusted itself off and got to work! The first task was to help our groups find a way to meet. With research and cooperation from other Intergroups, we decided to open an online account on a platform where our groups could meet. Since many Groups are not able to maintain any type of prudent reserve, we decided to offer to pay for these accounts, and took a leap of faith that contributions would soon follow. As physical meetings closed, virtual ones opened. Today, our prudent reserve is

healthy as group and individual contributions continue to flow in. Over 70% of our local meetings still meet online while others have been able to meet safely outdoors; we take commitments into institutions via computer, Robbie and his Workshop Committee have had two successful events online and are having their 3rd this Sunday. We are adhering to our Traditions and Bylaws, having audits to preserve our transparency and responsibilities. We have added a new committee to help groups with access to meetings along with our Steering and Business meetings still held virtually. Dawn and Jim have their Unity and Round up Committees in full gear preparing for events in September and November respectively. Every single member of your panel has pitched in and contributed to the current health of Cape Atlantic Intergroup.

Would AA's Survive?

Surviving - maintaining just enough sustenance to not die of hunger or thirst? The bare minimum. No ladies and gentlemen, AA members are not just surviving, they are THRIVING. Sponsorship continues to work on a worldwide scale. Newcomers are embraced and loved and helped up and shown the path to recovery each of us travel. That incredible spirit of altruism is astounding to witness. So if you are feeling left out, thinking AA isn't the same with the majority of in person meetings still closed, please lay any misgivings aside and join us on the Broad Highway and let's discover what New Frontiers our High Power has in store for us. Remember, virtual meetings and carrying the message to newcomers is not new...it's been happening for 81 years, since the first Big Book was sent out by mail. Remember, Alcoholics are still suffering, but each day they are also appearing at the AA doorstep (albeit virtually). There is still much work to be done. Let's meet these opportunities together.

May God Bless and keep all of you safe!

In Love and Service,

Ben N., Cape Atlantic Intergroup Chairperson