



Two World-Changing Days in May

On the second Saturday in May, in 1934, Bill W. stood in the lobby of

Akron's Mayflower Hotel, far away from home and almost out of options. He had taken his last drink a few months before, surrendered to a Power greater than himself during a spiritual experience, tried to save other alcoholics by spreading the word of what happened to him, then headed here from New York City to start back down the track to success in business, like he'd tried to do before alcohol nearly killed him.



But it hadn't worked out that way. The Akron-based company he was fighting for had gotten taken over by others, and the men who'd been there working with him had all given up, leaving town, leaving him. The bar caught his eye, and he got ready to go in. Then it came back to him: he needed to help other alcoholics, not out of nobility, but because it kept him sober. The phone on the wall didn't look bright or inviting—it was a black box, with dark wood paneling around it, and a plain list, in black and white, of helpful numbers hung beside it. But he fished out nickels and made calls until he got Henrietta Seiberling on the phone. That might mean death to his career—the Seiberlings were big in business.

She answered like she'd been waiting for his call. Could he come over? When he did, he didn't cross that enormous lawn to the main mansion, but came into the gate house, where she lived. Her husband, Seiberling son and heir, had split up with her, but his parents liked her too much to let her go completely, so they'd given her that building to live in. Bill had to leave and then come back the next day—this doctor was too drunk to make it on Saturday.

When Bob finally did show up at that gate house, late that Sunday afternoon, he didn't enter like someone ready to be saved. He brought his wife, Anne, their son Bob, and the announcement, right up front, that he had very little time. But he found, like Bill had the week before, that he could no longer hide his alcoholism behind his career. Not only had the first wrecked the second, but this man he'd never met before was telling him, a doctor, about the illness, alcoholism, that he could not save himself from. But this man didn't lecture him, or preach at him. He didn't share like an expert; he shared experience. They had been to the same kind of hell, and now they both had a way out. They talked for several hours. When they left, they had a new hope, based on the same power that Alcoholics Anonymous, which they would go on to co-found, still rests on:

**one drunk talking to another drunk.**



Chad P.

- Absecon
- Avalon
- Atlantic City
- Barnegat
- Barnegat Light
- Beach Haven
- Brant Beach
- Brigantine
- Cape May
- Cape May C. H.
- Cape May Point
- Dennisville
- Egg Harbor City
- Egg Harbor Twp.
- Galloway
- Linwood
- Manahawkin
- Margate
- Marmora
- Mays Landing
- New Gretna
- 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

In 1947, because of the growing interest in AA, the Grapevine editors decided to write a brief definition of the Fellowship. Thus, the AA Preamble was first published in the June 1947 issue. They used portions of the Foreword to the first edition of the Big Book. The Grapevine had just begun to circulate among non-alcoholics, and the Preamble was intended primarily to describe for them what AA is and is not. It is still often used for public information purposes.

As time passed, it began appearing in all Conference-approved publications, and many groups now use it to open meetings.

The original version was slightly different from what we know today. For example:

- 1) It stated that the only requirement for membership is an HONEST desire to stop drinking.
- 2) it contained only the very brief statement "AA has no dues or fees."

At the 1958 General Service Conference, a delegate pointed out that the word "honest" does not appear in the Third Tradition, and suggested that it should be deleted from the Preamble. Many delegates felt that as AA had matured, it had become almost impossible to determine what constitutes an honest desire to stop drinking, and also that some who might be interested in the program could be confused by the phrase. The mid-summer 1958 meeting of the General Service Board ratified the deletion, and since then the Preamble has read simply "a desire to stop drinking."

The phrase "AA has no dues or fees" also was clarified to read as it presently does: "There are no dues or fees for AA membership, we are self-supporting through our own contributions." The current version of the Preamble appears on the first page of every issue of the Grapevine.

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# Do You Want To Get Sober?

Don't Drink • Go to Meetings • Get a Sponsor • Take the Steps

Alcoholics Anonymous is not the only way to get sober, but we do have a way that worked for us.

## What A.A. Does

1. A.A. members share their experience with anyone seeking help with a drinking problem; they give person-to-person service or "sponsorship" to the alcoholic coming to A.A. from any source.
2. The A.A. program, set forth in our Twelve Steps, offers the alcoholic a way to develop a satisfying life without alcohol.
3. This program is discussed at A.A. group meetings.
  - a. Open speaker meetings — open to alcoholics and nonalcoholics. (Attendance at an open A.A. meeting is the best way to learn what A.A. is, what it does, and what it does not do.) At speaker meetings, A.A. members "tell their stories." They describe their experiences with alcohol, how they came to A.A., and how their lives have changed as a result of Alcoholics Anonymous.
  - b. Open discussion meetings — one member speaks briefly about his or her drinking experience, and then leads a discussion on A.A. recovery or any drinking-related problem anyone brings up. (Closed meetings are for A.A.s or anyone who may have a drinking problem.)
  - c. Closed discussion meetings — conducted just as open discussions are, but for alcoholics or prospective A.A.s only.
  - d. Step meetings (usually closed) — discussion of one of the Twelve Steps.
  - e. A.A. members also take meetings into correctional facilities and treatment settings.
  - f. A.A. members may be asked to conduct the informational meetings about A.A. as a part of A.S.A.P. (Alcohol Safety Action Project) and D.W.I. (Driving While Intoxicated) programs. These meetings about A.A. are not regular A.A. group meetings.

## What A.A. Doesn't Do

### A.A. does not:

1. Furnish initial motivation for alcoholics to recover.
2. Solicit members.
3. Engage in or sponsor research.
4. Keep attendance records or case histories.
5. Join "councils" of social agencies (although A.A. members, groups and service offices frequently cooperate with them).
6. Follow up or try to control its members.
7. Make medical or psychological diagnoses or prognoses.
8. Provide detox or nursing services, hospitalization, drugs, or any medical or psychiatric treatment.
9. Offer religious services or host/sponsor retreats.
10. Engage in education about alcohol.
11. Provide housing, food, clothing, jobs, money, or any other welfare or social services.
12. Provide domestic or vocational counseling.
13. Accept any money for its services, or any contributions from non-A.A. sources.
14. Provide letters of reference to parole boards, lawyers, court officials, social agencies, employers, etc.

## ISM = Incredibly Short Memory

HEARD @ A MEETING:

"You cannot change what you will not acknowledge"

*Do you have a story  
you would like to share?  
Send an email to:  
newsletter@caigrp.org*



From a Member

# STEP FIVE

This Step, in retrospect, of course, is the easiest of all Twelve Steps. I mean, how difficult is it? READ IT! It is really the only one of the Steps that tells us EXACTLY what to do. It says that we tell God, ourselves, and another human being the exact nature of our wrongs. And ... it's not like we have to do any further writing or research. We already have that list of "the exact nature of our wrongs . . . it's that Fourth Step that we have just written. So, why do we make it out to be something HUGE? I'm sure that there are hundreds of excuses.

The first time I did a Fifth Step, it seemed like it would be the ultimate in confessions. Being a recovering catholic, I am well-acquainted with the old "Forgive me father, for I have sinned . . ." routine. And that's pretty much what I expected this to be. The only difference was . . . I was sitting at my sponsor's kitchen table drinking coffee with her, and feeling so comfortable in her presence. I had worked with this woman long enough and had shared enough of my life with her before actually doing a written inventory and Fifth Step that I knew she was not passing judgment on me for anything I did. I sat there, and read the whole thing to her. She LISTENED and nodded her head that whole time. Occasionally she would mumble something like "oh yes", or "uh-huh", but not once did she give me the evil eye or raise an eyebrow in shock. As I went through it, I began to realize that if she could hear all of the horrible things I had done in life and not get thoroughly disgusted with me, then maybe I didn't have to be so ashamed and full of guilt over what I had done.

When it was over, she took my hands in hers, and asked me: "Have you been as honest today as you are capable of being?" I told her that I had been. She smiled and told me that it was just another example of God's love for me that I now loved myself enough to throw off the chains of my self-hatred and alcoholism and live a life free from the bondage of self. And that has been my experience with the Fifth Step, over and over. Every time in the last 20 plus years that I have felt the need to write an inventory and then share with wonderful trustworthy women I know and respect. I have felt the freedom of being relieved of the bondage of self. The Fifth Step is what allows me to walk in the world, in my own personal brand of dignity.

Anna P

**A.A.** didn't open up the gates of heaven and let me in, but it did open up the gates of hell and let me out. No alcoholic is having fun. In fact alcoholism is one of the most physically and emotionally unpleasant disorders in the diagnostic lexicon. Its particularly the feelings: the depression, guilt, anxiety, loneliness, shame, desolation. Its hell and the alcoholic is convinced that the only friend left to help her is the drug alcohol. Then she comes to A.A. and if she can stick it out for a little while the emotional hell is gone and she can begin to develop the tools necessary to live again. A.A. certainly isn't heaven but it can get you out of your own personal hell.

Kelly L

### Don't drink even if your ass is on fire!

I hope I will never forget my first A.A. meeting which was where I heard Louise say, "Don't drink even if your ass is on fire." The meeting was a Sunday afternoon . Big old room, some actives, some street people, some patients from the mental health center and the gamut of other folks one might expect at an urban A.A. meeting.

I was so sick "rattling and rolling," shaking and sweating, coming off a five day binge, that I could only half remember. Louise looked beatific and calm (she reminded me of those wonderful women you see coming out of beauty parlors on Saturday afternoon) and she was knitting and certainly didn't look like an alcoholic. All I remember about what she said was, "Don't drink even if your ass is on fire. You don't have to drink even if your ass is on fire."

I didn't know what she was talking about. I was so sick I wondered if your ass could catch on fire. But I've never forgotten her saying that, seemingly over and over like a mantra, and now it makes sense. You don't have to drink even if your ass is on fire. You don't have to drink no matter what is happening in your life or going on around you.

Bernie G

**"Those events that once made me feel ashamed and disgraced now allow me to share with others how to become a useful member of the human race."**

SUBMITTED BY DAWN S

### As Bill Sees It

Humility Brings Hope

Now that we no longer patronize bars and bordellos, now that we bring home the pay checks, now that we are so very active in A.A., and now that people congratulate us on these signs of progress—well, we naturally proceed to congratulate ourselves. Of course, we are not yet within hailing distance of humility. We ought to be willing to try humility in seeking the removal of our other shortcomings, just as we did when we admitted that we were powerless over alcohol, and came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

If humility could enable us to find the grace by which the deadly alcohol obsession could be banished, then there must be hope of the same result respecting any other problem we can possibly have.

GRAPEVINE, JUNE 1961





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Visit Our Web Site

capeatlanticaa.org

Alcohol poisoning is an emergency  
Call 911 or your local emergency number immediately.  
Never assume the person will sleep off alcohol poisoning.



Alcohol poisoning is a serious and deadly — consequence of drinking large amounts of alcohol in a short period of time. Drinking too much too quickly can affect your breathing, heart rate, body temperature and gag reflex and potentially lead to a coma and death. Alcohol poisoning can also occur when adults or children accidentally or intentionally drink household products that contain alcohol. A person with alcohol poisoning needs immediate medical attention, **Call 911** right away.

Alcohol in the form of ethanol (ethyl alcohol) is found in alcoholic beverages, mouthwash, cooking extracts, some medications and certain household products. Ethyl alcohol poisoning generally results from drinking too many alcoholic beverages, other forms of alcohol — including isopropyl alcohol (found in rubbing alcohol, lotions and some cleaning products) and methanol or ethylene glycol (a common ingredient in antifreeze, paints and solvents) — can cause other types of toxic poisoning that require emergency treatment. **Call 911**

Symptoms of alcohol overdose include mental confusion, difficulty remaining conscious, vomiting, seizure, trouble breathing, slow heart rate, clammy skin, dulled responses such as no gag reflex (which prevents choking), and extremely low body temperature. Alcohol overdose can lead to permanent brain damage or death. **Call 911**

Want a Commitment /Take a Commitment  
MEETINGS AT RECOVERY CENTERS

Bringing a meeting to those new in recovery is the service work of many members of our Intergroup. Any of our Groups can make a monthly service commitment to bring a meeting to people new to recovery.

These meetings are called: H&I

Monthly meetings are held at recovery and detox centers that are geographically within the Cape Atlantic Intergroup service area of Cape May and Atlantic County NJ.

Groups bringing a meeting to a recovery center will be provided with a meeting packet at the monthly business meeting..

"YOUR JOB NOW IS TO BE AT THE PLACE OF MAXIMUM HELPFULNESS TO OTHERS.."

PAGE 102, BIG BOOK OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

Email the Literature Chair

One of the many services provided by Cape Atlantic Intergroup is access to AA approved literature, as well as displays and signage materials for your meeting. Orders can be placed for you or your group.

To learn more about how to purchase Literature, please contact our

**Literature Chair by this email:** [Literature@capeatlanticaa.org](mailto:Literature@capeatlanticaa.org)

Arrangements can be made for you to place and receive your order at the Intergroup Office or at the monthly business meeting

**Intergroup Business Meeting:** [Literature Merchandise List](#)



*\*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 on to the alcoholic who still suffers.*



**STEERING COMMITTEE**

THE INTERGROUP PANEL AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS MEET MONTHLY TO UPDATE ONE ANOTHER ABOUT AREA REPORTS AND ACTIVITIES. EVERY 2ND WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH, AT 7:30PM

CAIG OFFICE LOCATION, 3153 FIRE RD SUITE #1-C EGG HARBOR TOWNSHIP, NJ 08234

**ATTENDANCE AT THIS MEETING IS ALSO AVAILABLE VIRTUAL ID 542 744 809**

**BUSINESS MEETING**

INTERGROUP HAS A MONTHLY BUSINESS MEETING, WHERE THE PANEL AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS PROVIDE REPORTS, UPDATES AND INFORMATION ABOUT AA IN GENERAL AS WELL A NEWS RELATED TO OUR CAPE/ATLANTIC MEMBERSHIP AREA. INTERGROUP REPS ATTEND THIS MEETING SO THEY CAN KEEP AA GROUPS/HOMEGROUPS INFORMED.

**ATTENDANCE AT THIS MEETING IS ALSO AVAILABLE VIRTUAL ID 164 233 922**

WHEN: 3RD WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH, AT 7:30PM.

WHERE: CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH 157 SHORE ROAD, SOMERS POINT, NJ

