

Rarely have we seen a person fail who has thoroughly followed our path. ~ A.A. Big Book, p.58



EXTRA! EXTRA! READ ALL ABOUT IT!



From your Intergroup

We are excited to bring you the Appalachian Ohio Intergroup Office first newsletter in 2020! If you would like to contribute an article, or have any questions, please email us at aoio@aoio.org.

We are located 14 S. Paint Street in Suite 31. Here you will find AA literature - Big Books, 12 and 12, meditation books, coins and more. Please come visit us in beautiful downtown Chillicothe or check us out on our website at www.aoio.org.

740.774.2646

Office Hours

Check the aoio.org website for current hours.

★ **Volunteers Needed** ★

What's in this Issue?

From your Intergroup	1
2020 Q1 Group Contributions	2
The Cookie Thief.....	3
Don't be a Cookie Thief.....	3
T'was the Night Before Christmas.....	4
12-Step Visit From St. Nicholas.....	4
No Opinion on Outside Issues.....	5
Identify Don't Compare.....	5
Be Honest.....	6
Where does that money go in the basket anyway.....	6



2020 Quarter 1 AOIO Group Contributions

October

Chillicothe Weekday Noon
Circleville Grapevine
Portsmouth Nooners
Waverly One Step at a Time

November

Hope is Found in Frankfort
McArthur Groups
Portsmouth United Group

December

McArthur Groups
Chillicothe First Capital
Portsmouth United Group
Chillicothe Primary Purpose
New Beginners Group @ VA

many thanks to all the groups that contributed this quarter. Every time you make a donation to AOIO, you help extend the hand of A.A. to the alcoholic who still suffers.

AOIO follows the Seventh Tradition and is supported by contributions by A.A. groups and A.A. members.

Please include your group name when sending in group contributions. Individual and group contributions can be sent to:

AOIO, 14 S. Paint St, Suite 31, Chillicothe, OH 45601

AOIO maintains a phone line, website, meeting schedules, literature, coins and more to connect alcoholics with people and information to stay sober. In pursuit of AOIO's primary purpose, the Appalachian Ohio Intergroup Office shall maintain an office for, among other things:

- To provide a means for receiving requests for help, for information about A.A. meetings and activities in the area, and coordinate 12 Step calls.
- To provide a directory of A.A. meetings in the communities served by AOIO.
- To act as a central forum for disseminating information about Alcoholics Anonymous and A.A. meetings within the community, both inside and outside the A.A. fellowship - including treatment and correctional facilities.
- Serving as guardian of our Traditions in relation to A.A. members and the general public; recognizing the A.A. program is one of attraction and not promotion.
- Specifically excluded from the Intergroup's purpose is the operation or maintenance of a club, clubhouse, residence for the stay, care or treatment of alcoholics; or affiliation with same, whether direct or implied.
- Summing up: AOIO is the "service agency" for member A.A. groups, and for the general public.

It is suggested by the General Service Conference that "individual groups, through an informed group conscience, adopt a specific contribution plan tailored to the group's financial situation." After the group expenses are paid (rent, coffee, literature, etc.) and prudent reserve is established, the group may decide to contribute to the following entities: Local District, Area Committee, Local Intergroup or Central Office, General Service Office.

If you are interested in more information on contributions and how A.A. is self-supporting per Tradition 7, the pamphlet - "Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix" by the General Service Conference is available at the AOIO office.



by: Valarie Cox

A woman was waiting at an airport one night, with several long hours before her flight. She hunted for a book in the airport shops, bought a bag of cookies and found a place to drop.

She was engrossed in her book but happened to see, that the man sitting beside her, as bold as could be...grabbed a cookie or two from the bag in between, which she tried to ignore to avoid a scene.

So she munched the cookies and watched the clock, as the gutsy cookie thief diminished her stock. She was getting more irritated as the minutes ticked by, thinking, "If I wasn't so nice, I would blacken his eye."

With each cookie she took, he took one too, when only one was left, she wondered what he would do. With a smile on his face, and a nervous laugh, he took the last cookie and broke it in half.

He offered her half, as he ate the other, she snatched it from him and thought... oooh, brother. This guy has some nerve and he's also rude, why he didn't even show any gratitude!

She had never known when she had been so galled, and sighed with relief when her flight was called. She gathered her belongings and headed to the gate, refusing to look back at the thieving ingrate.

She boarded the plane, and sank in her seat, then she sought her book, which was almost complete. As she reached in her baggage, she gasped with surprise, there was her bag of cookies, in front of her eyes.

If mine are here, she moaned in despair, the others were his, and he tried to share. Too late to apologize, she realized with grief, that she was the rude one, the ingrate, the thief.

Don't be a Cookie Thief!

Recently, I was listening to a lead and she read the poem "The Cookie Thief". Initially, as she was reading it, I thought to myself - what does this have to do with your sobriety? It became clear during the plot twist at the very end.

How quickly we are to assume others motives and jump to conclusions on their intent, their values, essentially how different we are... Our ego tells us - we are better. We would never do such a thing.

Self-reflection is essential for growth and change. Identifying what part you played and where you may have behaved the exact way your mind was accusing others of doing.

This poem helped me have an epiphany on something I have been struggling with at work. In the business world, we all know how the blame games goes. Essentially, I need to cover my own A**. Where can I find others to blame? It is a huge pet peeve of mine and runs rampant in my everyday work meetings and interactions. So, what was my epiphany?

Since my team was usually the unfortunate ones to be blamed by virtue of their role - I too started seeking ways to identify blame. Where others had a part in the playbook. I was becoming defensive. I started doing the very thing I find so annoying without even realizing it! I thought this was me protecting my team and making people accountable. Which is all well and good but not when you come from a defensive stance. I am going to stop assuming that my fellow co-workers always have a negative intent. I am going to stop being a cookie thief! Isn't it awesome that we have this program to help us see the light?

Anonymous





On Christmas Eve morning as I was cooking for the Lighthouse Christmas dinner, I stopped and thought to myself - you could be dead right now and not enjoying any of this. I am so fortunate to be alive. Look at everything I would have missed. I get to make food for my other family. I get to spend time with them on Christmas Eve and share in the joy of being sober for my third Christmas. I get to be fully aware of every waking hour.

Prior to getting sober, drinking would have started early Christmas Eve. I would have tried to be careful not to get too drunk so I would be able to help my husband with presents. It never failed, he would be left to do them on his own... Oh, how selfish was I, because most important to me was to drink. It was never important to get drunk. I hated the horrid hangovers I would have each and every morning. But I loved the buzz. And keeping the buzz inevitably would lead me to cross that line. The line between aware and blackout hell. Hell because each morning after I would dread getting out of bed and confronting whatever stupid sh*t my evil twin did while she was feeling larger than life.

Now I get to go to bed sober and wake up sober. Be in control of every waking hour. Gone are the drinking as soon as I wake up to get up the courage to see who I called or texted and what crazy crap I may have uttered or wrote. Gone are dreading the unknowns of the hurricane aftermath of my life.

Today on Christmas Eve night, I sit here and feel tremendous gratitude for what the program of Alcoholics Anonymous has done for my life, my family's life, and the people who have become family. I am so grateful that my Higher Power decided it was not my time; that he had more in store for me. I am grateful that he wanted me to find joy and peace in my life. I am grateful that I am free from the grip of insanity.

Anonymous

12-STEP VISIT FROM ST. NICHOLAS

Author: Unknown

T'was the night before Christmas when I went on a bender,
Not a creature was stirring, not even a bartender.
The empties were stacked by the chimney just fine,
In hopes that St. Nick would fill them with wine.
With Mama in her kerchief and I with my booze,
We'd just settled down for a long winter's snooze.
When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,
I put down my drink to see what was the matter.

Away to the window I crawled and then stumbled
To open the shutters where I stood and just mumbled.
Then what to my bloodshot eyes should there appear
But a miniature sleigh and eight tiny reindeer.

I thought it was DT's and needed help quick!
I didn't know it was only St. Nick.
I poured myself another as the reindeer came
While he shouted and called them by name:

"Now Barfly! Now Wino! Now Boozer and Rummy!
On Drunkard! On Alky! On Dipso and Dummy!"
So up to the housetop St. Nicholas flew
While I pulled the pop-top on another brew.

I trembled with fear when I heard a new sound--
Down the chimney came St. Nick with a bound.
His cheeks were like roses, he grinned like a possum,
His eyes, how they twinkled, his nose had rum-blossoms!

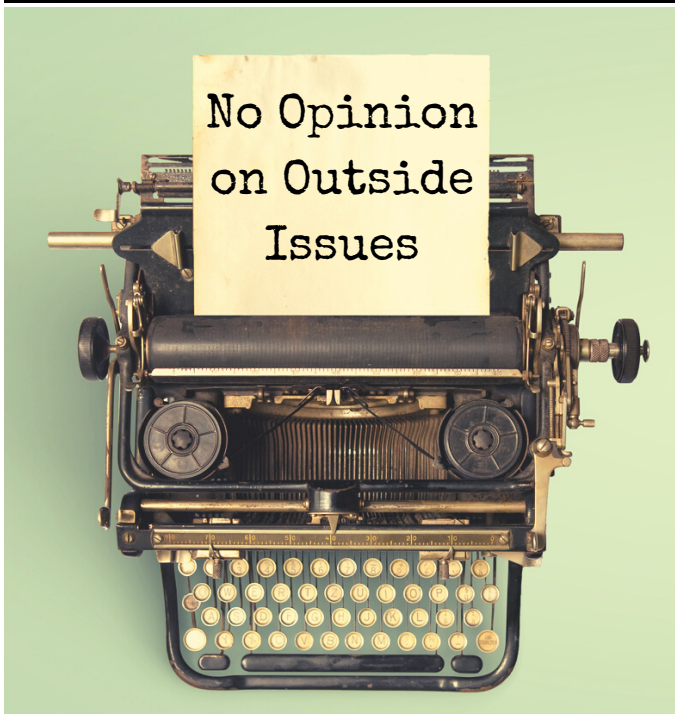
I offered him a drink, step up to the bar,
"Not today," he said, "I am now so-ber."
He had a clear face and a little beer belly,
That shook when he laughed like a bowl full of jelly.

This was too much, it increased my thirst.
"Hold it!" said St. Nick, "First things first.
You don't have to drink, easy does it,
Now that wasn't too hard, was it?"

He reached in his sack and with a great fuss
He gave me the book "Alcoholics Anonymous."
"Read this 'Big Book' for a life sublime,
Follow the principles one day at a time.

"This is the best present I can give,
Twelve steps -- a new way to live.
The AA program keeps me sober, it's true."
Then giving a nod, up the chimney he flew.

Then I heard him exclaim as he drove out of sight,
"You now have a choice, starting tonight.
So Merry Christmas to all and to all Season's Greetings,
Don't pick up that first drink, and go to AA meetings!"



Identify Don't Compare

Tradition 10 begins with, "Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues..." Guys and gals, there is a reason this program continues to work and that is because we stay true to the traditions and they have not changed. This tradition could not be more necessary than it is now. We must keep the polarizing rhetoric that society as whole is engaged in outside of the rooms. Period.

We all have our opinions, our political beliefs, morals and values. Some might be surprised at mine. But I keep them out of the rooms. If we bring them into the rooms, we will begin to see a breakdown of our fellowship.

I have had situations where political views and opinions were stated in the rooms and outside them. Frankly, I disagreed with what the individuals were saying and was annoyed that they were even discussing it. However, I chose not to engage. And for this opinionated and strong-willed alcoholic that was really hard! In the rooms of A.A., we are all there for single purpose - to get and stay sober. We are there for the fellowship. I do not want your political views or opinions to influence my view of you nor do I want mine to influence your view of me. Remember, we are two drunks and that we definitely have in common. I have a few friends in the program that I know have different views, and I choose not to engage in that type of conversation with them even outside of the rooms. I remember when I was a child; asking someone what their political beliefs were was a no-no just like asking them how much money they make. Sometimes I miss the old days...

Please stay true to the traditions when you are in the rooms. Our lives and our fellowship depend on it.

Anonymous

The program of Alcoholics Anonymous tells me that if I thoroughly follow it's path, I have a very good chance of achieving sobriety, both physically and emotionally. That I am not to hold onto my old ideas. If I do, my results will be nil.

From my experience, people approach the Program in one of two ways - High Ego (I am not as bad as you are) or Low Ego (I am worse than you).

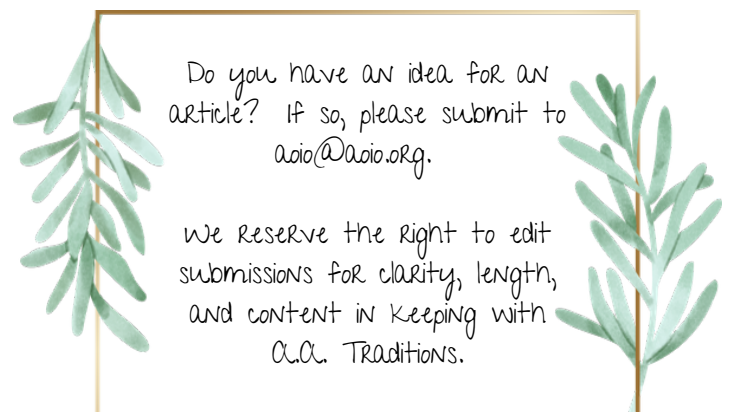
I was very fortunate to have a sponsor who could see on which end my ego lie. He sat down with me, singled a member of A.A., and told me to write down what I liked and disliked about the A.A. member. If I thought I was better or worse than our member. After making my list of likes and dislikes, my trusted friend told me to write down the ways I thought our member and I were alike or similar.

My friend took my list of likes and dislikes and told me this is how I compare myself to others and it has no place in the rooms of A.A. He tore the list up and threw it in the trash. He then took my list of similarities and said this is how you identify with someone and that was what I was to do in the rooms of A.A.

It is not always easy to identify, but I have found it beneficial in my sobriety. After all if I identify and listen, I just might hear something that will save my life. None of this is required in A.A., it's just made my sobriety journey easier.

Identify don't compare.

Anonymous





If you want to stay sober you have to be honest - with yourself and with others. When those negative thoughts start renting out space in your head, you have to talk about them or they will take out a mortgage. I still have lulls where my anxiety will crop up slowly until it is gradually consuming my mind with negative thoughts. Sometimes I am not ready to talk about them and in some sick and twisted way I revel in the anger I start to feel. Then reality sets in and I admit to myself that I must talk about it. With my sponsor, my counselor, my husband, my higher power. I know that these negative thoughts are not healthy for my spiritual well-being. I know that I must put them in check if I want to be free of their grip. I know that if I don't talk about them the tape will rewind over and over again. I know what happiness is and I know that these thoughts will destroy it no matter how silly they are.

Each time the space is filling up in my head, I know I need a meeting, I need my sponsor, I need something other than myself. Fear is a powerful feeling and each and every time it is fear that grips me until I am able to see what is causing it. I cannot see this light on my own. My higher power and all of you pull back the curtains.

Anonymous

"Rarely have we seen a person fail who has thoroughly followed our path. Those who do not recover are people who cannot or will not completely give themselves to this simple program, usually men and women who are constitutionally incapable of being honest with themselves. There are such unfortunates. They are not at fault; they seem to have been born that way. They are naturally incapable of grasping and developing a manner of living which demands rigorous honesty. Their chances are less than average. There are those, too, who suffer from grave emotional and mental disorders, but many of them do recover if they have the capacity to be honest." - Big Book, pg. 58

Where does that money go in the basket anyway?

Well, I am so glad you asked!

The money in the basket supports the meeting by allowing your meeting secretary and treasurer to buy coffee for us to drink. Buy cream and sugar for you to put in your coffee. To buy the cups in which you put your coffee in. That is not all my friend! That money goes to rent the space that the meeting is held in. It buys literature. It buys cleaning supplies so we can leave the meeting room how we found it. It helps support our local Intergroup office (AOIO) and the GSO (General Service Office) and more.

All the money is either put back into that meeting or donated to help carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers.. A.A. is self-supported and per tradition seven, "Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions".

If you are curious about where your groups money is going - ask!

Anonymous



I AM RESPONSIBLE.
WHEN ANYONE, ANYWHERE
REACHES OUT FOR HELP,
I WANT
THE HAND OF A.A.
ALWAYS TO BE THERE.
AND FOR THAT,
I AM

Responsible

