

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 2020 second quarter newsletter! If you would like to contribute an article, or have any questions, please email us at aoio@aoio.org.

We are now located inside the Lighthouse. 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** ★

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2020 Quarter 2 AOIO Group Contributions

April

Kingston Groups

May

Circleville Grapevine Group
Chillicothe First Capital Group
District 17 (Pleasant Valley, Gallipolis,
Jackson, McArthur, Pomeroy Groups)
Portsmouth Alcoholic of Sorts Group

June

District 17 (Pleasant Valley, Gallipolis,
Jackson, McArthur, Pomeroy Groups)
Pleasant Valley Group
Chillicothe Serenity on Sunday
Chillicothe Big Book Study
Chillicothe Primary Purpose



AOIO sincerely appreciates all the donations that individuals and groups have made during these difficult times. It continuously amazes us how strong and resilient our fellowship is. Your donations have and will help us to continue to carry the message, provide A.A. resources and literature, etc. to those still suffering.

~ AOIO Board

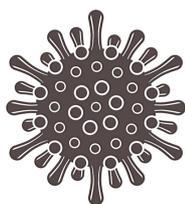
AOIO follows the Seventh Tradition and is supported by contributions by A.A. groups and A.A. members.

Please include your group name when sending in group contributions. Individual and group contributions can be made online at <https://www.aoio.org/contribute.html> or sent to:

AOIO, PO Box 772, Chillicothe, OH 45601

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.



COVID-19 CORONAVIRUS

Guidance from the Columbus Public Health Department

Key elements that each location should strongly consider following to ensure the health and safety of the community when holding a meeting:

PRIOR TO ENTERING THE BUILDING

- Establish Covid -19 maximum capacity that can accommodate half of the fire code total; i.e Maximum Capacity according to fire code is 50, then the meeting space can accommodate 25
- Each person must provide a self-report as to how they are feeling.
- If the individual has a fever, has lost taste sensation and/or has a cough, they should not enter the building and should contact their doctor.
- Each person should have a face mask covering their nose and mouth
- Each person should use hand sanitizer provided at the entrance
- Post signage on health safety guidelines in common areas marking the floor indicating six feet of space is strongly advised
- Provide several locations to sanitize and wash hands

DURING THE MEETING

- Be certain the meeting area has been properly disinfected prior to the meeting
- Seating has to allow for 6 feet of distance on either side, in front and in back.
- No buffet meals
- If providing coffee, provide hand sanitizer and individual packets of sweetener, sugar and creamer
- Utilize disposable tableware and other materials

AFTER THE MEETING

- Ask all participants to report back to the chair if they are having symptoms of the illness
- Be certain the meeting area has been properly disinfected after the meeting
- Clean and sanitize the common areas including but not limited to the restrooms, kitchen/coffee area, doorknobs

IF A PERSON FROM THE MEETING REPORTS BACK THAT THEY HAVE SIGNS/SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19

- Tell the individual to immediately isolate and seek medical care
- Contact the local health district about suspected cases or exposures
- Shutdown shop/floor for deep sanitation if possible

What's Next? A Group Conscience - important now more than ever...

Some groups remain temporarily closed, some have moved to zoom and others have opened back up. COGF offers these simple and clear suggestions on their website: "As we mentioned in this post, each group is autonomous, so it is up to each group whether to address hand-holding and other safeguards. However, as individual A.A. members, we are responsible for our own recovery — that responsibility extends to maintaining our own health, regardless of what our groups and meetings decide to do."

Have a group conscience to determine what is best for the group. What is an informed A.A. Group Conscience? Per The A.A. Group ...where it all begins pamphlet (p. 28), "The group conscience is the collective conscience of the group membership and thus represents substantial unanimity on an issue before definitive action is taken. This is achieved by the group members through the sharing of full information, individual points of view, and the practice of A.A. principles. To be fully informed requires a willingness to listen to minority opinions with an open mind. On sensitive issues, the group works slowly — discouraging formal motions until a clear sense of its collective view emerges. Placing principles before personalities, the membership is wary of dominant opinions. Its voice is heard when a well-informed group arrives at a decision. The result rests on more than a "yes" or "no" count — precisely because it is the spiritual expression of the group conscience. The term "informed group conscience" implies that pertinent information has been studied and all views have been heard before the group votes."





We need YOUR help! The AOIO office needs volunteers in our office so that we can be open and available. Currently, we are open one day a week on Tuesday's from 12 - 2 pm (2 hours). This is clearly not enough. Volunteering at our office is a great way to do service work - to help the still suffering. We would like to be open every day, ideally during times when meetings are occurring. It also gives you an awesome opportunity to get to know your fellowship more.

When I first came into the rooms, I would go purchase books from our office. At that time it was located just a couple doors down from the Lighthouse. I remember two visits vividly. Both visits not only entailed me buying a couple books but also some fellowship with who was volunteering. I needed the talks those days. They listened to me. They shared their experience, strength and hope.

Service work helps get you out of yourself. Us alcoholics have a tendency to be selfish - self-focused. If you would like to volunteer, please reach out to us.

Service Work Helps To Keep Us Sober

If nobody was doing any service work, the Alcoholics Anonymous program would simply cease to exist. Without the service work of those who came before us, none of us would be here now!

Service Work In Recovery

One of the more common sayings you will hear at an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting is that, "you have to give it away in order to keep it". What this is referring to is the idea that service in recovery can help the giver as much as the receiver. This giving should not be done in the hope of a reward or praise. Instead the individual does it because they know that it is helping to keep them connected. Numerous studies have provided evidence that helping others in recovery provides great benefit to the helper.

Service in Recovery Defined

Service in recovery refers to work carried out for no financial reward or compensation. This may involve directly helping somebody else, or indirectly helping them by providing services. Some individual do go on to make a career out of helping others, but this is no longer considered service if they receive payment.

The Importance of Service in Alcoholics Anonymous

Groups like Alcoholics Anonymous could not function without the voluntary services provided by members. All these meetings around the world are organized and maintained by volunteers. There is usually a collection at the end of each meeting, but (in the spirit of the seventh tradition) this money is used to pay for rent, coffee, donuts, literature, and other overheads. Almost every person at these meetings will provide some type of service, even if it is just sharing a bit of their story, or preparing the coffee.

Other Types of Service in Recovery

There is no need for the individual to be a member of a particular A.A. group in order for them to become involved in service. There are plenty of official and unofficial ways that those in recovery can help others. Such work is highly rewarding, and it can strengthen the commitment of the individual to their own recovery.

Types of Service in Recovery

Anything that directly or indirectly helps others in recovery could be considered service. Examples of this type of work include:

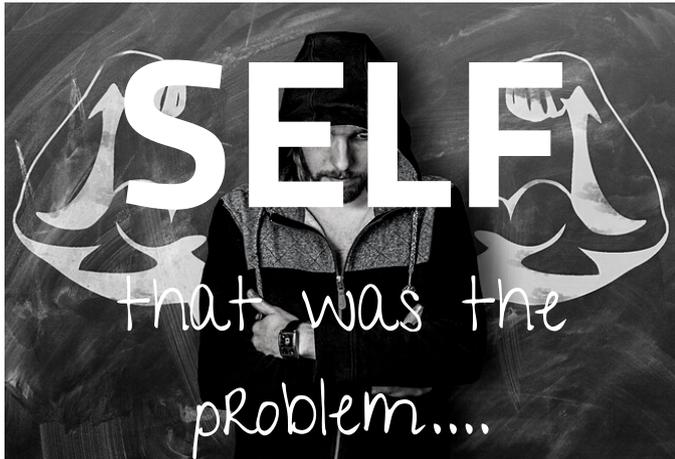
- Sponsorship
- Intergroup Representative
- General Service Representative
- Volunteering to work with homeless AAs
- Visiting AAs in prison
- Making coffee or tea at a AA meeting,
- Chairing or moderating at a A.A. meeting
- Giving out coins / tokens/ chips
- Meeting set-up or clean-up
- Welcoming newcomers to recovery meetings
- Being supportive of those who are struggling in recovery
- Taking an official service role within a recovery group, for example treasurer or secretary,
- Making time to speak to people who are obviously struggling with problems
- Those individuals who do not hide their past can prove inspirational for those who are dealing with this type of problem.

The Benefits of Service in Recovery

Service in recovery benefits both the giver and receiver. In a lot of instances it will actually be the giver who ends up benefiting the most. Such benefits include:

- Those people who devote some time to helping others are less likely to suffer with depression.
- Helping others with problems reminds the individual of where they have come from. This will keep the pain of dysfunction fresh in their minds so that they never forget it. This should keep them committed to the recovery path.
- The giver will feel that they are giving back and this will increase their confidence and self-esteem.
- Helping others takes the focus off the individual. This is important because a lot of problems in the recovering A.A.'s life will be due to self absorption.
- Providing service ensures that groups such as A.A. stay in business. If nobody volunteers their time these groups will disappear.

Entirety copied from: <https://toledoameetings.com/importance-aa-service-work/>



My ego, selfishness and self-centeredness got in the way and clouded my judgement on what was truly important. I have a disease, but it's not addiction, it's "self". Self-will, self-righteousness, ego, arrogance and pride. These are the demons I fight and they do not give up easily. It took me having to be completely broken before I could truly understand what it is that I have to fight against. Sometimes the man in the mirror isn't my best friend but rather my worst enemy. Until I completely change everything about me and learn what humility, honesty, being selfless and loving truly is I won't ever get better. I thought I knew what those words meant but I didn't have a clue. I could use them in pretty sentences better than anyone, but I was still as lost as ever. What a fool I was. I have such a long way to go to be where I want, but today I know what I must do. I have no more excuses. I cannot claim ignorance of the truth anymore. I finally can see the true path to recovery and live a life to be proud of. It is a long and narrow road that few find. But I have found it in my brokenness and today I truly know what I must do to get well.

Anonymous



Courtesy Wally P. Collection

AA-A Key

Life in Sobriety

It gets Real.

It gets Good.

Life in sobriety is real. It is raw. It is enlightening. They say that you learn to live life on life's terms through the 12 Step program of Alcoholics Anonymous. This became clear to me more than ever recently. I am probably considered a "high bottom" A.A.'er. What is that? It means I didn't lose everything prior to coming into the rooms – my husband, my kids, my home, my job, etc. I still had all of those things when I walked into the doors of the Lighthouse on Monday, August 14 for the noon meeting. "Almost" 3 years ago. Don't worry I am not celebrating prematurely.

The program and the fellowship have taught me many valuable things – but one in particular didn't shine until I lost something in sobriety. Prior to coming into the rooms, I had horrible anxiety – constantly worrying about the future. Boy would I make up some pretty monumental stories in my head on what "could" or soon my mind would tell me "would" happen. A.A. has taught me throw those worries out the window and live for today. It doesn't always happen as quickly as I would like but at least today I recognize what is going on and work on the fears that are driving it. It always comes down to my own fears...

It amazed me when I lost something pretty important just how relaxed I was about it. Not once did my mind go down that crazy path of insane worry. I had faith that everything would work out and still do. This program has taught me so much about myself and it provides me the tools to deal with life on life's terms. I am grateful every day that I am alcoholic and that I work the 12 Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Anonymous

"The first thing in the human personality that dissolves in alcohol is dignity."

-unknown

Tradition 10: *Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.*



"Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy." The long form of Tradition 10 reads – "No A.A. group or member should ever, in such a way as to implicate A.A. express any opinion on outside controversial issues – particularly those of politics, alcohol reform, or sectarian religion. The Alcoholics Anonymous groups oppose no one. Concerning such matters they can express no views whatever."

During the pandemic, I made a decision to come out of hiding on Facebook. Previously, I had an account but hid my profile and followed some groups for gardening, cooking, etc. I had a feeling that I was jumping into dangerous territory. I have an addictive mind and I don't do anything in moderation. I found myself posting on things that I know better not to post. Things that I believed and agreed with but views that are not everyone's business. I found myself judging other's

posts and also thinking differently about them. After 2 months of being on Facebook, I determined it is not a healthy medium for me and went back into private mode.

Social media provides a great platform to connect with family and friends and stay informed on your hobbies. However, as with anything, it also has its perils. For this alcoholic, I find that Facebook and other social media sites can be dangerous to my anonymity and from my two months on it, dangerous to my program. Although we are outside the rooms, we are sharing to our fellowship our views on outside issues. I asked myself if this was attention seeking behavior. Isn't posting and looking for likes and comments asking for attention? Is this my ego?

I don't want to know your views on world issues unless we are close friends and friends outside of A.A. I also don't want you to know mine. We come to the rooms of A.A. for a single purpose – to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers. There are three topics we need to focus on 1) our experience, 2) our strength and 3) our hope.

Anonymous

"We are average Americans. All sections of this country and many of its occupations are represented, as well as many political, economic, social, and religious backgrounds. We are people who normally would not mix. But there exists among us a fellowship, a friendliness, and an understanding which is indescribably wonderful. We are like the passengers of a great liner the moment after rescue from shipwreck when camaraderie, joyousness and democracy pervade the vessel from steerage to Captain's table. Unlike the feelings of the ship's passengers, however, our joy in escape from disaster does not subside as we go our individual ways. The feeling of having shared in a common peril is one element in the powerful cement which binds us. But that in itself would never have held us together as we are now joined. The tremendous fact for every one of us is that we have discovered a common solution. We have a way out on which we can absolutely agree, and upon which we can join in brotherly and harmonious action. This is the great news this book carries to those who suffer from alcoholism."



Author: © Chaise Taylor

There's only one thing I could ever say,
about the way I felt that day.

The day we sat with coloring books,
and kept laughing at our funny looks.
A memory forever imprinted in my soul,
the only one I'll ever have, since you've lost control.

There's only one thing I could ever say,
about the way I felt that day.
The day you hurt me for the first time,
and made me think breathing was a punishable crime.
A memory I'd give anything to trade;
The day my mother started to fade.

There's only one thing I could ever say,
to describe how I hated every day.
The days I waited up all night,
because I couldn't sleep until you made it home alright.
A memory of mine you never even knew,
because when you arrived, I'd hide and avoid you.

There's only one thing I could ever say,
to express how you made me cry that day.
The screaming and hate I saw in your eyes,
wasn't my mother, but an effect of her highs.
A memory that haunts and refuses to decay.
and you don't even remember it, anyway.

There's nothing I could ever say,
to tell you how I feel today.
The pain in my heart that I'll never get used to,
because it's illegal for me to speak to you.
I love you, though you've never believed it;
through your anger, your hate, and temperamental fits.

There's nothing you could ever say,
to make the pain all go away.
I'll remember you for who you were,
from early memories of jumbled blur.
I miss my mother, and all she could have been,
if she hadn't let alcohol let her life cave in.

Source: <https://www.familyfriendpoems.com/poem/mom-drug-alcohol-problem-one-thing-to-say>

Mom is NOT drunk again...

The consequences of our choices and actions can play out for years. Although we were the alcoholics and damaging our own mind and bodies – we were also impacting everyone around us. I heard someone say in a lead that he never stole anything, then he took it back and stated he stole the innocence from his children. This hit me. This hit me hard.

I was a miserable alcoholic. I was not happy. I drank to take away the pain. To drown out the negativity of my life. I was undoubtedly selfish. I wanted so bad to be a good mom and constantly felt guilt and shame for my choices and my actions. Each time I took a drink, got drunk or just existed, I was being anything but a good mom. My kids did not ask to come into this world and they certainly did not ask to live in the chaos of my life.

I can't even begin to imagine how my children felt watching me get drunk. I can't fathom the fear, sadness and anger they felt. Watching their mom fall, slur her words and who knows what else. This person that was supposed to take care and protect them. These things will never go away from their memory.

Now that I have been sober for a bit, I know I cannot change the past. I cannot take away what they saw, what they heard and what they felt. I cannot give them back their innocence. What I can do is accept that they need time. Time to heal. They are looking at my actions not my words. Words are meaningless if they are not followed by action. I can work on myself so that they are no longer living in chaos and negativity. I can lead by example. I can be a mom and make sure they never have to utter the words "mom is drunk again"...

Anonymous

Alcoholism isn't a
spectator sport.
Eventually the
whole family gets
to play.

JOYCE REBETA