



Outside the Bottle

District 16 News

April 2020

Meeting without *Meeting*

These uncertain times have left many with the dilemma of questioning the safety of making it out to meetings. In addition to regular conversations with my sponsor and sponsee, meetings play a very important part of my recovery.

My profession requires me to travel very frequently, and when not traveling, I'm a fully remote employee. While most business is preferred to be done in person, the ability to conduct meetings remotely is vital to success.

The first day where it did not seem appropriate to gather in a large group, even for an AA, the solution seemed simple; use a remote meeting for recovery.

Our first remote AA meeting was conducted via Zoom. There were about 6 members in attendance. This was a good amount of people to work through some initial kinks. We came to a few quick conclusions; having the video turned on give an important personal touch, saying prayers or other readings in unison can provide challenges, it worked better to have a person assigned to pray or read for the group, and opting for "popcorn style" shares (where the person sharing calls on the next share) is an efficient way to prevent the confusion of several people speaking up at once. Our group implemented these strategies for our next larger zoom meeting of around 20 members, and it was conducted very smoothly. Generally, we all came to a similar conclusion of longing for the interpersonal connection of a physical meeting space, but being grateful for having something more substantial than a telephone call.

If you, or your group are looking into ways to conduct remote meetings, there are a wide variety of resources to explore. Here is a quick list of platforms to look at; Zoom, Google Hangouts, Group FaceTimes, Microsoft Teams, Join.Me, GoToMeeting, Skype, WebEx, Team Viewer, ezTalks Meetings, and Apache OpenMeetings. These platforms all have different offerings, some are free, some have free and paid features, some offer free trials, etc. My employer was generous enough to allow meetings to be conducted outside of business hours on our corporate Zoom account, without a corporate account, we would be limited to 40 minute meetings on the zoom platform. You may have some members that have access to these platforms and permission to use them for the purposes of a meeting.

While nothing can replace sitting in a circle of chairs sharing face-to-face with one another, I am very grateful for modern technology and the ability to spend time with my best friends and fellow alcoholics remotely. Stay safe out there!

There by the grace of God go I,

Eric E.

Get help, browse online meetings directories, read AA literature online

(anonymous, not affiliated suggestions)

aa.org

aa-intergroup.org

www.onlinegroupaa.org

aagrapevine.org

recoveryaudio.org

oneyoufeed.net

thefix.com

www.intherooms.com/

Doing Things Differently By: Andy A

I first came to AA when I was 20 years old through the courts. I never had an open mind and didn't feel I needed to make the change into sobriety. Fast forward eleven years through misery and insanity...I decided to finally try to change my life and give sobriety a try.

When I was in treatment, they had this line "you need to change everything about your life." It never actually clicked for me until I was over one year sober. I was in a meeting and a gentleman said, "were not here to do the same things better, were here to do things different." I reflected on my sobriety and looked at the things I was still trying to do better like, "do I follow through on the things I say I will? Do I only practice the principles of this program when they are easy to do? When I have free time do I try and make myself available to help another alcoholic?" I would like to say yes, and I would also like to be perfect with my program, but I know that's an un-reasonable expectation. But when I do things differently, I get different results from what I've been doing my whole life, and that helps me grow with my higher power and in turn helps me be of service to other people.

An example of doing things differently is my current work situation. I started working in the automotive industry at the age of 16. I quickly grew to like the job and at the age of 18 was a floor manager and was on the right path. I was someone who could answer most of the questions and someone that was able to get the job done. My ego loved that and soon enough, I thought this was the field I was going to retire in. My life revolved around drugs and alcohol, therefore so did my work. It was exhausting to try and keep up with everything I had to do while still fueling my alcoholism. I was fired from my previous job of building prototype battery packs, and had another job in the industry after I got sober. But I soon found myself on the market not due to any fault of my own for once. A friend in the program mentioned to me that his job was looking for a project manager in the foodservice industry. I knew absolutely nothing about what that job would be and that was scary for me. The alcoholic in me wanted to run away. Talking with my sponsor and other alcoholics eased my mind and I decided to give it a try. I went to the interview and was honest. I didn't get that job, but landed another position within the same company. On Friday I was in the automotive industry and by Monday I was in the foodservice industry. Every aspect of my job is entirely different from all my previous jobs. Any scenario that requires me to humble myself and try something different, is scary. My sponsor and I talk often about me feeling that I'm not "getting it" and maybe this isn't something I want to do. He told me off the bat, "give it one year and see how you feel."

At one year employed I got a raise, I'm more confident in my abilities and feel better about my position. It's a constant reminder for me to keep going and keep growing. All this would not be possible if I wasn't sober. AA has given me a new outlook on life so I try and continue to trust my higher power, doing the basics and keep doing things differently.

Keep on Trudgin'

By: Phil S.



Hey, everybody, it's April, the fourth month, a good time to work on your 4th step.

So, you literally put ZERO effort in to this month's cartoon, is what you're actually saying?



THE BROAD HIGHWAY

A Monthly Update from the GSRs of District 16

What is the true value of communicating? What is it worth to you? What do you think it is worth to your fellow group members?

Many of District 16's groups are not meeting IN-PERSON due to church closings. We find ourselves oddly in our natural philosophy with the rest of the world as we all are living ONE DAY AT A TIME. Very bizarre indeed. And as a natural reaction, groups are now forming phone meetings.

How will you know when and how to call-in? We are doing our best to keep the lines of communication as open and effective as possible. The Newsletter is still pumping out editions online at the Area 33 Website. The central office is remaining open for the time being. Our District 16 officers are standing by ready to be called upon.

YOU MAY SUBMIT ANY INFORMATION YOU THINK WILL BE HELPFUL TO THE STILL-SUFFERING ALCOHOLIC TO District16News@mail.com. If you have any questions, you may contact the Ferndale Central Office at office@aaferndale.org or you may contact our District 16 Secretary at Jason@mcypaa.org.

Announcements

The 2020 International Convention
scheduled for July 2-5, 2020 in Detroit, Michigan,
has been cancelled.



Contributions needed for May-December Editions of this newsletter!
Share your experience, strength and hope OR design the cover!
Questions/Comments/Ideas: district16news@gmail.com

Happy Anniversary:
The 12 Step Group – Birmingham
Friday First Things First Group – Royal Oak
Birmingham Stag Group – Royal Oak

Outside the Bottle is the newsletter of District 16. The newsletter contains announcements, meeting changes, events, news and information around the district, short articles on sobriety and recovery, and even some humor.



Thank you to all
newsletter contributors!

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