

# *Happily and Usefully Whole*

## **AA Responsibility Statement**

*I am responsible.  
When anyone, anywhere,  
reaches out for help,  
I want the hand of AA  
always to be there. And for  
that I am responsible.*

## **Adjusting to a New Normal**

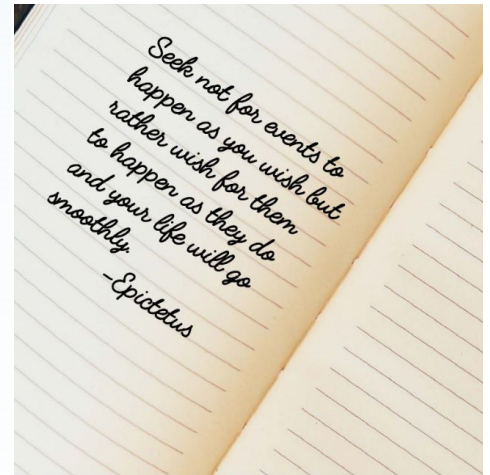
It appears that southeastern Michigan will soon have many of the state-imposed restrictions lifted that had been put in place to protect residents from the COVID-19 pandemic.

AA acquitted ourselves admirably during the lockdown, quickly migrating from face-to-face meetings to virtual meetings and actively publicizing them. Many members actually found themselves participating in more meetings during the lockdown rather than fewer.

It behooves groups to return to our traditional meetings in a considered and thoughtful way.

- Don't assume that, once the lockdown on public gatherings is lifted, groups are automatically entitled to return to our normal venues. Whether to re-open a church or other facility to AA meetings is the decision of that facility, not that of the AA group(s) that have met there in the past. Go through the channels.
- If the facility stipulates restrictions, abide by those. Masks, social distancing, bans on food or drink—all of these (even coffee) are peripheral to AA's central mission of carrying the message of recovery.
- Are AA groups obligated to pay rent for a meeting place during the time when it was inaccessible to groups? That needs to be worked out between the groups and the facility's managers.
- Many groups periodically make distributions from their treasury to other AA entities—the General Service Office in New York, the AA of Southeastern Michigan Service Office in Ferndale and/or the AA of Oakland County Service Office in Pontiac, the Area 33 of Alcoholics Anonymous office in Southfield, and the group's home district. For the most part, AA groups in Michigan haven't passed collection baskets in three months. Group treasuries are likely to be tight when the next round of distributions is being made. Accordingly, groups might want to consider taking up special retroactive collections specifically for distribution purposes.
- If your group is resuming face-to-face meetings, let the

District 20 of Area 33 represents nearly 100 AA groups that meet in Auburn Hills, Bloomfield, Bloomfield Hills, Goodison, Lake Angelus, Lake Orion, Lakeville, Orion Twp., Leonard, Oxford, part of Pontiac, Rochester, Rochester Hills, and Troy. The District normally meets at 6:45p the last TU of every month (except December) at Unity of Rochester on Harding St. in Rochester Hills, but for the moment we've turned to meeting virtually.. See p. 5 for participation information. Anyone can



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Area 33 Registrar ([area33registrar@aa-semi.org](mailto:area33registrar@aa-semi.org)) know. Also notify the AA of Greater Detroit Service Office (248.541.6565) and the AA of Oakland County Service Office (248.332.3521) so they can update their records. If there are any special stipulations (*masks required* or *attendance limited to 30 persons*), note them.

- And if your group is discontinuing its Zoom or other virtual meetings, contact Shannon Hay ([smhay24@gmail.com](mailto:smhay24@gmail.com)) to have its listing removed from the list that appears on the AA of Greater Detroit Web site ([aaferndale.org](http://aaferndale.org)).

## Will There Still Be a Place for Virtual Meetings

### After the Lockdown Lifts?

One of the few blessings of the past three months is that it has showed us that AA can be flexible. Most members I've spoken with are anxious to get back together with friends at tables. Many, however, are grateful that they've had an opportunity to engage with new groups. A couple of my friends have made it a point to visit English-speaking meetings in other countries.

We know for a fact that virtual meetings work at keeping us united in our pursuit of principled sobriety. They offer an effective alternative when face-to-face meetings are impossible or impractical.

Will they have a place as AA moves past the Lockdown phase of the COVID-19 pandemic?

I hope so. As I write this, I'm in my 42<sup>nd</sup> day of quarantine in my apartment. With any luck, I'll test negative this time within the next few weeks and be able to leave my rooms here in the senior independent living community that I live in. Eventually, the restrictions that are currently in place will be lifted and we'll be able to re-open our facility's dining room and resume the on-site and off-site activities that help keep our residents active and vibrant.

But without the availability of virtual meetings, I don't know how I would have made it through these months.

Being an alcoholic, I tend only to think of myself. I forget that, even in the absence of a public health crisis, there are homebound alcoholics trying to stay sober one day at a time.

Though I shouldn't speak on their behalf, I'm willing to bet that the faithful servants of the [Area 33 Accessibilities Committee](#) are closely looking at this issue.

--DM

## District 20 Officers

District Committee Member	Georganne G.	How It Works (Lake Orion)
Alternate District Committee Member	Dick M.	Troy Dignitaries
Secretary	Kathy M.	Surrender Group (Troy)
Treasurer	Shannon H.	Saturday Morning Live (Rochester)
Newsletter Editor	Dick M.	Troy Dignitaries

Copy deadline for our next issue is tentatively August 15th. Send your contributions (announcements of group events, group profiles, poetry, artwork, even general musings about recovery) to [3320newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:3320newsletter@gmail.com).

## Seeking a New Editor

Effective 12/1/20, I will be stepping down as editor of this publication. If you're at all interested in taking over that position, please contact District 20 District Committee Member [Georganne Gagnon](#). Better yet, attend one of our monthly meetings on the last TU of each month. We'll be meeting via Zoom (<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/508761816>) at 6:30p on TU May 26<sup>th</sup>, but with any luck we'll return to face-to-face meetings at 6:45p on TU June 30<sup>th</sup> at Unity of Rochester Church on Harding Rd. in Rochester Hills.

During the what will then be three year history of Happily and Usefully Whole, I've kind of made it up as I went along. I have tried (with limited success) to solicit contributions from other AA members. I've also run drafts of newsletters past District 20 officers to check for typos or outrageous statements. I've used *Microsoft Publisher* as my software, but that doesn't mean that future editors need to.

If you're up for a challenge, this is your opportunity.

Remember: service keeps us sober.

—DM