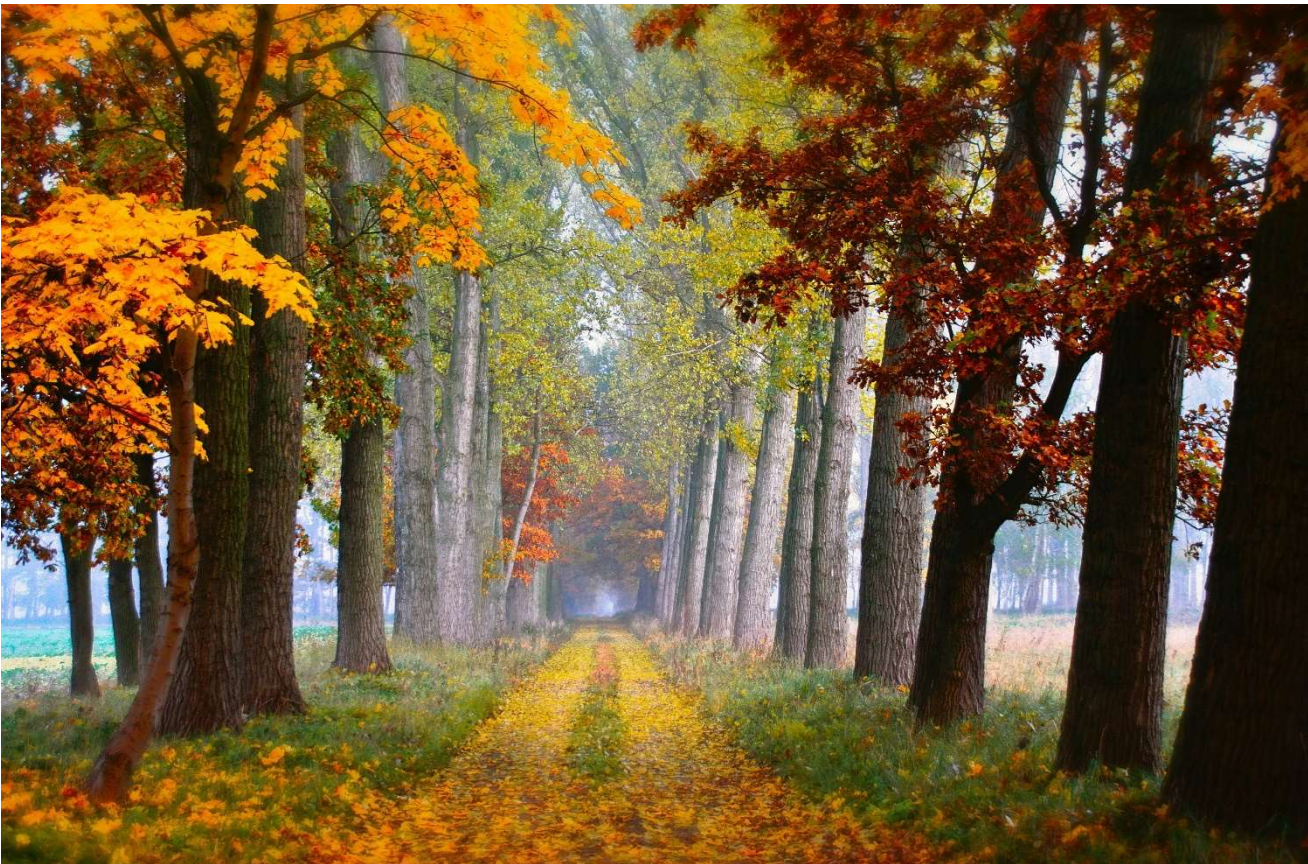


# **Outside the Bottle**

## **District 16 Newsletter**

**September, 2021**



# The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking

The year was 2008. The month was October. Leaves were falling and alcohol was calling. Shortly after just barely graduating high school, a summer filled with alcoholic drinking and a short stay in a psychiatric facility as a result, I was sober. All my friends were either living at university or visiting every weekend to party, and I was home with mom doing...nothing. Community college was a bust, due to my drinking. I knew I didn't want to drink but I couldn't imagine lasting much longer. However, one of the staff in the hospital did recommend AA. Feeling defeated and motivated by the gift of desperation, I attended an AA Halloween party.

One night changed everything. At this party I made friends, I danced SOBER, and I found a sponsor. Within a week I attended multiple meetings and quickly felt part of the fellowship. I felt like I had come home. I was grateful.

Unfortunately, like Bill W., the fateful day came that I drank again. 6 months later, having developed a reservation that I was too young to be an alcoholic and zero enlarging of my spiritual life, I used.

I won't bore you with how many times I went back out. I couldn't even begin to count the multiple sobriety dates I used to write in the cover of my big book (cross one out, add another, cross that out, add another...etc). My bottoms sunk lower and many of the "yets" came true. My consequences became hazardously dire. I experienced what we call incomprehensible demoralization, and then sunk lower and lower. I overdosed more times than I can recall. I witnessed a murder. I became homeless. The rollercoaster from hell that was my addiction felt never-ending and I just wanted to get off, but felt incapable. Sobriety felt impossible. I felt hopeless.

I am grateful I was introduced to AA at an early age and knew where the meetings were. My disease told me I wasn't welcome anymore. My disease told me I'm an embarrassment and a waste of space. But the fond memories of the fellowship, the short-lived freedom I had glimpses of in various terms of sobriety and the twelve steps themselves were waiting for me, and a small part of me knew that. I also knew I had burned out many of my 9 lives. I had been to jail; I had been to hospitals and death was right around the corner.

This time I had to do things differently. I had to be rigorously honest, and I had to learn how to pick up the phone. I can't stress that enough – Pick. Up. The. Phone. I worked the 12 steps with my sponsor and I watered a relationship with a higher power in which a connection grew little by little, and then by leaps and bounds. I learned that I was beyond human aid and only a spiritual experience can conquer my alcoholism, and that knowledge of my condition alone will not suffice.

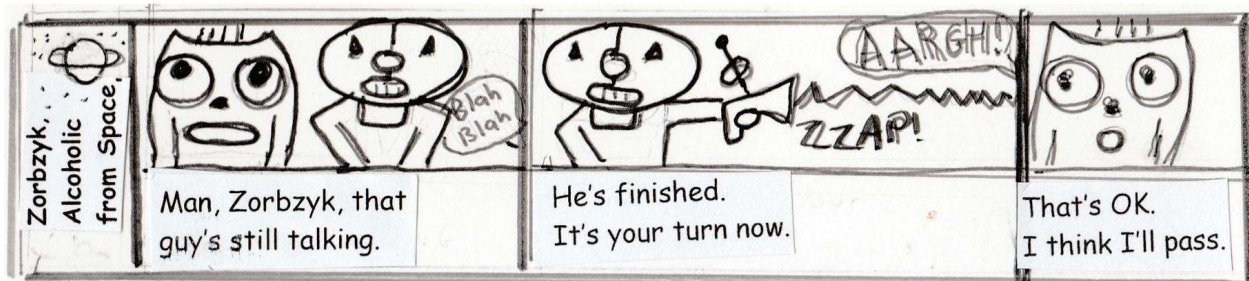
Despite the disadvantages of Covid-19, I attended zoom meetings daily and returned to in person meetings as soon as meetings started meeting again outside. I got a job; I got my license back and I got a car. I now live in my own apartment. All of these miraculous blessings are a direct result of Alcoholics Anonymous, working the program and staying sober.

This program saved my life because by the grace of God I kept coming back. I know if I can get sober, anyone can. Making some progress, I still have a long way to go but perfection is never the goal. One day at a time more is revealed and, as they say, the best is yet to come. <3

"You are an A.A. member if you say so. You can declare yourself in; nobody can keep you out. No matter who you are, no matter how low you've gone, no matter how grave your emotional complications – even your crimes – we still can't deny you A.A. We don't want to keep you out. We aren't a bit afraid you'll harm us, never mind how twisted or violent you may be. We just want to be sure that you get the same great chance for sobriety that we've had. So, you're an A.A. member the minute you declare yourself."

*-Tradition 3, Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions pg 139*

# Keep on trudgin' by Phil R.



## Announcements & Anniversaries

If your group is hosting an event, or if you or someone you know is celebrating an anniversary,

please contact the newsletter and we will announce it on this page.

### EVENTS

Area 33 meeting, September 19<sup>th</sup> @Noon

This is a virtual event

New GSR Orientation 11:00 AM

District 16 Meeting, September 23@7:00 PM

Current information regarding in person and virtual meetings can be found on the area 33 website: [Alcoholics Anonymous \(aa-semi.org\)](http://Alcoholics Anonymous (aa-semi.org))

*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.

All AA members are invited to submit material to the newsletter.

Please send correspondence or contributions to [clevebro@yahoo.com](mailto:clevebro@yahoo.com)

**Remember this is your newsletter help us make it better- all suggestions or comments are gladly welcome**



A Sincere thank you to  
all newsletter  
contributors!

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