

APRIL

OUTSIDE THE

2024

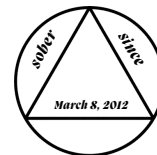
BOTTLE

When The Student Is Ready- Jennifer's Story
Just Another Alcoholic Named Mike -- Mike's Story

District 16 Newsletter

JENNIFER M.

When The Student Is Ready...



It has been said that when the teacher is ready the student appears. In the midst of a breakup and wrestling with a stubborn resentment toward my former partner that persisted, the teacher appeared in the form of a book that has been touted by many people in A.A. as a must-read: "The Ripple Effect." As I read page after page, the practical wisdom of the book felt revelatory to me although its focus on step six, step seven, and step ten I am no stranger to. I have been reciting, reading about, and earnestly working to put into practice steps 6, 7, and 10 for years and years as I trudge the road of recovery. However, I have realized that I can hear something important and relevant to recovery over and over at the tables and from my sponsor, and I can read the same passage in the Big Book time and again, but until I am ready and *needing* to hear something for my own growth, it recedes out of my consciousness just as quickly as it came in. But this time, I read the thing I *needed* to hear I found in this book...the wisdom that would give my alcoholic brain an aha moment. Drum roll, please..."what character defect is behind your resentment?". That question rang like a bell inside of me! I sighed a deep breath and said "thank you, Higher Power", because I knew that this book ended up in my hands because I had asked for help with this resentment and the God of my understanding just gave me a tool to use. So I went to work: I opened up my journal, pulled out a nearly exhaustive list of character defects and began the sometimes daunting but healing and rewarding task of the searching and fearless inventory. What I discovered is that in addition to struggling with "justifiable anger" I also struggle with "justifiable wants and needs" or in short entitlement. Ugh! That felt awful to see myself as an entitled person, because I certainly dislike entitled people and find them off

putting. But there it was glaringly: I resented my former partner for not being the person I needed them to be to fulfill the wants and needs in me that felt incredibly valid and well...justifiable. With this new tool I have an opportunity to deepen my recovery by asking myself "what character defect is behind my resentment?" each time justifiable anger and resentment crops up in me. Recovery has given me so many gifts: waking up sober, renewed relationships, true intimacy with friends in the fellowship, faith in a higher power, hope for the future even in the valleys of life, and one of the greatest gifts its given me is the ability to work at my character defects and take accountability for them and trust that I will always be provided with the what I need to have them removed as long as I humbly ask.


71st Michigan State Convention
combined with the
ECR Conference

June 7th-9th, 2024
Calvin University
3201 Burton S.E.
Grand Rapids, MI 49546




Keynote Speakers:
Friday: *Rich H.*, Hebron, IL
Saturday: *Madonna V.*, Auburn Hills, MI
Saturday Al-Anon - *TBA*
Sunday: *Barefoot Scott S.*, Hersey, MI


CONNECTING WITH



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CARRYING THE A.A. MESSAGE OF RECOVERY
What makes an A.A. convention click for its participants? It's probably not style or form that matters so much as the spirit and feeling behind it. As one member puts it, the best A.A. convention is "just a darned good A.A. meeting blown up big." Just watch enthusiastic members at any A.A. convention and you'll get what he means. The atmosphere alone is worth the trip. Here you'll find fellowship, laughter, warmth, and understanding — "heaped up, pressed down, and running over."
Mg:04 A.A. Guidelines, Conferences, Conventions, and Roundups

Please visit area34aa.org for more information as it becomes available.

Co-Chair Contacts: Linda B 269.329.3159 • linbow421@gmail.com | Brian S. 616.366.5827 • digi@wmis.net

MIKE L.

The Great Escape



Hi. I'm Mike and I'm an alcoholic. I thought I was unique. No one drank like me--no one except for every alcoholic. It took me a while to figure this out. Here is a small part of my story. Like many "unique" drinkers, my career in alcoholism started early at 16. My only bump with Johnny Law happened early in my career at age 18. I was "relaxing" in my car in a parking lot (at 1am in the morning and very drunk) when I had a knock at the window. I rolled the window down and Mr. Policeman asked me to show him my license. I asked him if I could shoot his gun. Needless to say no other drunk test was necessary that night. I still remember when my dad picked me up from the police station. The speech he gave me was touching. It was five words, "Don't puke in my car." A real bonding moment right there!

So now let's fast forward a few decades. Over the next 25 years or so I drank prodigiously but it wasn't around the clock-- you know... just days ending in "Y" and never at work or for the most part during weekdays. I considered myself a social drinker... very social nonetheless.

Then, for whatever reason, I decided to pick up the pace. For the next 10 years I rarely had a sober moment. I drank around the clock. My drink of choice was vodka (because everyone knows vodka has no smell and no one knows you are drinking, right?). Whatever alcohol "governor" I once had was completely gone. I remember staring in the bathroom mirror, almost saying Step 1 to myself verbatim, "I was powerless over alcohol and my life was unmanageable."

Now I didn't know that was Step 1 at the time. And I also was pretty much of the belief that I would die an alcoholic because there wasn't a damn thing I could do about it.

Then a miracle happened. I was caught in my alcoholic lies (apparently vodka ISN'T foolproof... who knew??). Seems like one of three things brings many of us to AA: the Law, Work, or Family. In my case it was work. My CEO confronted me about my drinking. After I confirmed everything he heard was true, he gave me a choice and a great gift. I could either resign and continue killing myself. Or I could go directly to Rehab (do not pass GO... do not collect \$200...). I chose rehab at Maplegrove. That was on my 53rd birthday. I thought it was the worst birthday gift of my life. I spent a little over a week there. It was my first introduction to AA. They strongly suggested that I do 90 meetings in 90 days. Since I was a whopping 10 days sober I thought it might be a good idea to take them up on their suggestion. One hundred twenty meetings later I had formed a new habit (alcoholics like habits). I got a sponsor whose only requirement was that I do whatever it takes to get sober and stay sober. I began to listen for the first time. I began to form a RELATIONSHIP with my Higher Power rather than just a belief in a Higher Power (big difference).

I'm now almost 8 years into my sobriety journey. I still go to AA meetings almost every day--not so much that I need to, but that I WANT to. Looking back now I can confidently say that my 53rd birthday was the best day of my life. Hindsight and a Higher Power are good to have.



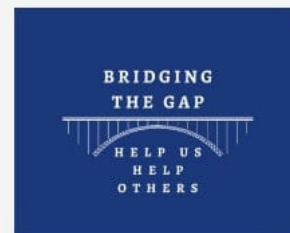
Area 33 - Treatment Committee Needs YOU On Board!



**Scan This Code
Volunteer To:**

- Help patients get to their first meeting after treatment.
- Bring an AA meeting to a treatment center.

Boarding Pass





How can you help?

- Write your story for Outside the Bottle and share your experience, strength and hope with others.
- Increase the circulation of Outside the Bottle by helping to distribute to non-participating meetings (See QR code)
- Give us ideas of what you want to see in future newsletters!



For more information email clicking on the QR code or district16news@gmail.com

Speakers
**KATHLEEN P
MIKE L.**

**SOBRIETY 1ST
21ST ANNIVERSARY**

Breakfast

12 April 2024 | Doors open at 6 am
Breakfast at 6:30 am
Speakers at 7 am

CHURCH OF CHRIST
115 S. CAMPBELL RD.
ROYAL OAK, MICHIGAN

AREA 33 ASSEMBLY

Madison High School, 915 E. Eleven Mile Rd.,
Madison Heights
New GSR Orientation @ 11:00 &
Assembly @ 12:00
Lunch Provided!

April 21! Experience service beyond the Group!

DISTRICT 16 MEETS AT 7:00 P.M. ON THE 4TH THURSDAY OF EVERY MONTH AT:

1st United Methodist Church of Madison Heights -
246 E. 11 Mile Road,
Madison Heights, MI 48071

If groups would like to contribute to District 16,
please mail a check or money order:
Payable to: District 16 of Area 33 A.A., PO Box:
725362, Berkley, MI 48072

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AA of Greater Detroit:
248-541-6565

AA of Oakland County:
248-332-3521

AA of Detroit Wayne County:
313-831-5550

Outside the Bottle is the newsletter of District 16. The newsletter contains announcements, meeting changes, events, news & information around the district, and stories about sobriety and recovery.

Any A.A. member is invited to submit material to the newsletter.

Please send questions/comments/contributions to:
district16news@gmail.com



Monday/Wednesday
6:30-7:30 pm
Monday 7:30-8:30 pm

Oakland County Jail
1201 N Telegraph Rd.
Pontiac, MI 48341

You must have security clearance to attend this meeting!

PLEASE CONTACT:
Chris N.
chrisnoellocj@yahoo.com



The Area 33 Grapevine Committee needs your old used and careworn Grapevine Magazines to be recycled to other committees in need such as Treatment and Corrections. We also use them at Workshops and Event Presentations. Please help us carry on this important work. Bring them to the monthly Area 33 meeting or email: area33grapevinechair@aasemi.org

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

OAKLAND COUNTY JAIL MEN'S AA MEETING

Oakland County Jail needs men willing to carry the AA message to the men in custody.