

DECEMBER 2021

Pass it on



From the Birmingham Intergroup Central Office of Alcoholics Anonymous

“Some of us take a long time to “come to” before we can “come to believe” that there is any hope for us.”

(Grapevine, February 2003 From Nanaimo, British Columbia)

Visit our Beautiful Website!

www.birminghamaa.org

It is linked to the *Meeting Guide App*, which has up-to-date listings of in-person and Zoom meetings.



From The Editor

By: Jeremy G.

Welcome to the last edition of Pass It On for 2021 and the first with me, Jeremy G., overseeing its publication.

For this go round, we are going to keep it simple. In the future, I hope to connect with more of you and learn how this can serve all of us in the Birmingham area who are on the path to a lifetime of sobriety.

I'll start by thanking Sarah M. for all she has done to keep this going and helping me learn what is needed to keep it up and running. And another huge thanks to Beckee T. for helping put this together in a readable format.

I read recently on the BHAM Recovery Facebook page that the Central Office sold twice as many silver chips as usual for the month of December and that there's lots of newcomers trickling in.

Perhaps one silver lining we can find amid the death and uncertainty of the pandemic is that, like me, more and more people have chosen to pursue this way of life.

I hope this newsletter can be a resource for them and others like them in 2022.

I hope it can also be a resource for the many who have celebrated a great many 24 hours of sobriety and have more than a few metal chips to recognize that accomplishment.

I hope it can link the many groups across our metro area as they serve as light-houses to those drowning in the sea of alcoholism.

I hope all of you had a wonderful holiday season and that I can be of service to you in 2022. Feel free to drop me a note at jeremywgray@gmail.com with your thoughts on ways we can improve upon Pass it On.

Step Twelve: Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry the message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

Tradition Twelve: Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

NEW MEETING: A new meeting will start up in 2022!

The Steps and Stories Group of Alcoholics Anonymous is kicking off a new meeting **Monday, January 3rd.**

The group will meet at Christ Church PCA at 114 Watterson Parkway in Trussville, right across from the Trussville Post Office.

The group will meet Mondays at 6:30 a.m. and Thursdays at 7 p.m. in the Fellowship Room.

“What a Wonderful Opportunity to Work the Program!”

(a loving tribute to John Holcomb, Serenity Now Group) by Steve P.

I rarely appreciated it, in the moment, when he used those words.

I was overly upset about something (generally inconsequential), and wanted to vent (whine and moan) in order to make it about me. But John H. was a wise and caring sponsor, who “knew how I am,” but loved me and refused to leave me that way. He would invariably share an applicable passage from AA’s Big Book, a verbal counseling tool that he always seemed to have handy, along with a verse or story from the original BIG Book to emphasize his point. Sometimes before he finished his part of the conversation, he would manage to throw in stuff about fishing and Auburn, which never struck me as being a legitimate part of my misery, but I just rolled with it. It was in him, and it was gonna come out, so ... acceptance was the answer.

We would sometimes go to have a frozen yogurt after the Board of Directors meeting in Homewood, and on the way there I would compile a mental list of all the various things that were bugging me, so I could tap in to a heapin’ helping of guidance and wisdom from this great man. By the time we placed our orders and sat down, he had begun an entirely different thread concerning golf or baseball, and I soon realized that sharing time with him, no matter the circumstance or topic of discussion, was what I craved, even more than the delicious frozen treats we enjoyed. Those who know me to any degree will know that’s a strong statement!

Whether serving as part of a panel discussion, sitting in on a choir practice, attending a Bible study group or listening to him speak or share at a meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous, I was always proud and grateful to be alongside John. He was full of life, full of grace and often times, just full of it. Never one to take himself too seriously, in an instant he could shift emotional gears and give his full and undivided attention to someone else, for any reason whatsoever. He genuinely cared, and backed up his words with action. If you were fortunate enough to receive his gentle smile or tender spirit, you felt better after the exchange, and the sincerity of his voice and soft demeanor added to the experience. (CONTINUED on Page 3)

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(CONTINUED from “What a Wonderful Opportunity...”)

John loved the Lord; he loved Rosemary, his family and the fellowship and program of AA. He was decidedly intentional about many of the personal relationships in his life, and was probably the “best friend” of a whole bunch of folks, in and out of “the rooms.” He was honest, open and diplomatic – he could captivate a room, or ease the obvious tension in one. His gifts were plain to see, but not on display to garner attention. He chose to act out of love, in order to be of maximum service to God and to his fellow travelers.

He will be long remembered by so many for the evidence of the grace of God in his life, and for the demonstration of that grace which John constantly and consistently poured into the lives of countless others. You knew that he belonged to God by the way he treated those around him, and his place in eternity as a “good and faithful servant” is well-earned. Our lives are richer and fuller for having brushed up against John, for even a brief period. Serving isn’t something he did — it’s who he was called to be, and he answered the call with a resounding “Yes, Lord!”



With the start of 2022 upon us, many of us might be thinking about resolutions for the New Year. Here are some thoughts on the subject I found from The AA Grapevine, Inc. (January 1949 vol. 5 no. 8).

A New Year's Message: It Works!

Nothing is so brittle as a New Year's resolution, unless it be a glass crutch.

Most New Year's resolutions shatter within a few days. Then their broken pieces lie around, as sharp as needles, remindful of failure until the skin, or the conscience, has again become calloused. What, in fact, is so rare as an unbroken New Year's resolution in June? Yet, we in particular, were among the most prolific New Year's resolution makers. We turned them out on a mass production scale. All through the year we stored up our awareness of personal deficiencies and faults, planning to correct them all in one vast wash of resolutions. Do it all at once, we said, with splendid optimism. Easy does it, in reverse.

Of course, it probably is better to have one day or a few days of high resolution than none at all, but how much more practical if the purpose behind the New Year's resolution is built into daily life. How much easier it is to correct the deficiencies and the faults one by one as we go along day by day, than to try to level a mountain in one stroke. (CONTINUED on next page)



HEAD'S UP:

If your group needs books and supplies for next year, you might consider getting them now. There may be a 7% price increase. We are waiting to hear from World Services.



(CONTINUED "It Works!")

The kindness and the realism of the A.A. approach to the task of self-improvement offer more hope of success than the high resolution sworn to once a year. At least they have offered more hope and yielded more success for many.

There are, to be sure, other ways, and, of course, some New Year's resolutions do endure. But the inventory that is taken more often than annually and the resolution that is formed at the beginning and the close of each 24 hours have worked convincingly for many and will continue to work for many more.

The new hope that comes from this overwhelming evidence of a new approach to an old and deadly trouble is the offer of the New Year, of each New Year. "It works!" is the electrifying promise that we can give to others.

If there has to be a resolution today, let it be that we will offer those two words fraught with the ringing message that has been proven over and over. "It works!" They offer a new year to any who are still burdened with the past. They bring a new year whenever and wherever they are accepted. Today is the day, any day and every day, to try the new way. Today, "It works!" Tomorrow, "It works!"

Through the 13 years of A.A., people have been doubting those words at first, testing them skeptically, and finally coming to believe them. Perhaps the message they speak makes the best resolution of all.

THE A.A. who knows that "it works" needs no ceremony to remind him. His day of high resolution came the moment he took the 1st Step. His New Year began then and continues as long as he follows the new way that others have blazed. His New Year's resolutions are forged and strengthened day by day. Where the glass crutch was brittle and shattered easily, he now has at hand a staff stronger than steel. He has faith built upon proof that, "It works."



The views and opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the Birmingham Intergroup Central Office Board of Directors.

We Want to Hear from You!

Please send questions, poems, drawings, articles, experience, strength, and hope to passitonbirmingham@gmail.com.

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