



PASS IT ON

Eastside Intergroup Newsletter

Issue 32

September 2019

My Story

When I'm asked to tell my story I always think of what it says in How it Works: "Our stories disclose in a general way what it was like, what happened and what it's like now." Here's mine.

I started dipping in the liquor cabinet when I was in my early teens. I remember thinking, "Oh the lovely taste of gin mixed with ginger ale!" while lying on the living room floor feeling so so happy! A year or so later, the next step was to get very drunk very fast, and very sick very fast drinking straight shots of whatever was in that liquor cabinet. Dry heaves the next day had me trying to pretend I wasn't sick – my first step in hiding what I had done. It took me a couple of weeks to be able to even smell beer again without gagging - but I powered through and soon I was on to lots of beer (which I could buy at age 16 in West Virginia, a convenient 30 miles away) and the when possible, a trip back to the liquor cabinet for what would become my drink of choice, vodka. High school drinking was weekends and most of my friends drank when I did – maybe not just the way I did: with a thirst that was near unquenchable. The most powerful effect of alcohol was that it freed the almost unbearable awkwardness I felt, and the surety that when I had some booze in me, I was OK!

College was pretty much one party after another – and it was during this time that I was introduced to drugs. I drank much more regularly than in high school, often enhancing the effects of alcohol with one drug or another. I was pretty much unable to do any meaningful course work, and although I only outright failed one class, I designed my schedule to be as easy in as many ways as possible. I'm not sure I learned much at all. I managed to complete three years before I got pregnant, got married to a guy who drank like I did, and dropped out. That wonderful effect of alcohol that I had discovered in high school was a given now, and drinking had become a way of life for me. And I thought that life was just fine – all was well.

The years after that are somewhat a blur. We moved to New York City to do music and theater, and we did do some of that, but as I look back now I'm sure any potential that we had was handicapped by our very regular abuse of alcohol. My son was diagnosed with a metabolic disorder which would eventually cause his death at age 14. Our marriage did not survive the alcohol, drugs, and many indiscretions. Not to mention the stress of a child we knew we would

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bury. By this point I was effectively incapable of looking at my life in any objective way – denial was deep and powerful. I managed to keep the surface of my life moving enough and I had isolated myself enough so that no one would know what was really going on, but inside I was dying, if not already dead. I had a low-paying dead-end job. I was living with another addict who supplied my addiction. I had essentially given my son to his father so I could party just how I wanted to. I had no friends and was terrified to take one step outside the rigid routine I had established. Now oblivion was all that was keeping me together. So although I might have said life was good if you asked me, life was in truth very very dark.

Into this lovely scene dropped an old college friend who was 10 months sober. He planted the seeds of sobriety, the seeds of promises, the seeds of hope. And the next time I drank after this visit, it was classic: I didn't intend to drink – but still got very drunk. I didn't intend to do any drugs – but found myself hiding in the bathroom doing just that. I didn't intend to make an absolute fool of myself – but...well, you get the picture. I was too drunk to have any control over what I was doing, and not drunk enough to not know what I was doing. That was the last time I drank or used.

Still unable to see my own problem with alcohol, luckily a bit of denial dropped away and I was able to see the alcoholism that had been present in relatives and friends all my life. This brought me to Alanon – a true gift! Eventually I found my way to Alcoholics Anonymous, and knew deep in my soul that this is where my recovery was waiting for me. When I completed my first run through the steps with a bunch of beautiful women, I suddenly realized I wasn't as miserable, lonely or afraid as I had been for the previous 15 years or so. AND I hadn't wanted to drink the whole time I was working the program! I could breathe, talk, laugh – all sober!

Over the years I have worked the steps many many times. I am currently going through the steps with a beautiful bunch of women using the same material I used the first time. Surrender has taught me how to trust and have faith. Inventories have taught me how to have a relationship with myself. Amends have taught me how to have successful relationships with others. Prayer and meditation have taught me how to have a relationship with my Higher Power. Working with others has taught me compassion and generosity. And the best thing of all – I'm still learning all these things.

I'm so very grateful to have been given the gift of sobriety and recovery in Alcoholics Anonymous.

- Lynn

The AA World Service meeting guide app

A free mobile app for iOS and Android. Designed to be simple, fast, and help you find AA meetings wherever you are

New features

This is a preview. To view the full article, use the link below to begin a free 7-day trial!



Upcoming Sober Events

List of Events:

Please visit www.eastsideintergroup.com and check out "Events Calendar" for dates, times, locations, and maps!

SEPTEMBER 2019

- ◆ Eastside Intergroup Business Meeting
- ◆ Movie Night: My Name is Bill W.
- ◆ How to be of Service in A.A.—District 35
Workshop
- ◆ Speaking at Non-A.A. Meetings Workshop
- ◆ Pine Lake Speaker Meeting
- ◆ Mt. Baker Round Up
- ◆ ESIG Hotline / Phone Training
- ◆ Birthdays, Speakers & a Dance
- ◆ Progressive Fusion Jam-Band Trio
- ◆ Three Rivers Big Book Weekend

Meeting Updates

MEETINGS THAT HAVE MOVED

Steppin' Up

Sundays 7:00pm
Bellevue First United Methodist Church
1934 108th Ave NE, Bellevue 98004

Bothell Big Book

Thursdays 8:00pm
Bothell United Methodist Church
18515 92nd Ave N, Bothell, WA 98011

A Way Up

Fridays 7:30pm
St. Luke's Lutheran Church
3030 Bellevue Way NE, Bellevue, WA 98004

12 & 12 Fellowship Hall

Sunday thru Saturday
has moved to: 17319 139th Ave NE
Woodinville, WA 98072

[schedule on www.eastsideintergroup.com](http://www.eastsideintergroup.com)

MOVED AND CHANGED DAYS

Bothell Women's STP

Wednesday 7:00pm
(women, steps, open)
Northshore Senior Center
10201 East Riverside Dr, Bothell, WA 98011

NEW MEETINGS

Middle of the Pack

Mondays 7:30pm
(open, young people)
Trail Youth Coffee House
226 E. North Bend Way, North Bend, WA
98045

A Vision For You

Thursdays 2:30pm—3:30pm
(open, Big Book, Twelve Traditions)
Redmond Heights Senior Living- assisted
living bldg.
7950 Willows Rd., Redmond, WA 98052

TIME CHANGED

Issaquah Breakfast Club (Saturday's)

time changed to 8:30am

Information Corner

The Stages of My Purposeful Sobriety

By, John M

purposeful *adj.* – determined; resolute; steadfast; single-minded; persistent; unflinching

sobriety *noun* – the state of not being drunk; abstinence; temperance

What is a purposeful sobriety? How is it different from a simple sobriety, one with abstinence from alcohol? Why would one seek a purposeful sobriety?

These are questions I've asked myself recently as I reflect upon my eight plus years alcohol and drug free. It took time to understand that working through stages purposefully is how I arrived at where I am today.

These stages required purposeful attention and action on my part to reap the results that led to my accomplishments and serenity. Working through these stages is a significant accomplishment in and by itself, yet for me it is the foundation of who I am today. The accomplishments I refer to center around personal growth in self-awareness, relationships, tolerance, service and much more. The gifts from following these purposeful stages of sobriety.

Simple sobriety yields the result of not being drunk; being abstinent; a state of temperance. For some, this is what they sought, what they settled on as a solution to their drinking or drugging problem. Those of us who choose a purposeful sobriety learn early on that our problem with alcohol or drugs is but a symptom of other personal maladies, which left unattended would continue to plague our lives and our development. We would continue to carry this baggage unaware of the negative impact it has on many facets of our lives.

- To date the stages of purposeful sobriety for me look like this:

Surrender – I quite fighting my addiction and accepted that I could not control my drinking and that my life was unmanageable (the latter coming a few months into my sobriety).

Honesty – I realized that I needed help and deep down inside knew that I had to get honest about who I was and what I had become.

Sobriety – I became sober and began practicing abstinence (simple sobriety).

Willingness – In acknowledging that I wanted what other people had in the meetings I attended, I became willing to put aside old ideas of self, of others, of institutions, of how to live life and take a look at other possibilities for how I could lead a better life. The foundation of this stage is the willingness to accept a power greater than myself – a Higher Power. When that happened, the doors opened to trust and to all the other stages that followed.

Sponsor – I asked a man I admired in one of my meetings to be my sponsor, an extension of my willingness, this time to begin working on myself.

Acceptance – Very broad, very important to my purposeful sobriety. I accepted what my sponsor and others shared about their lives and successes; I accepted my personal flaws; I accepted that I didn't know who I was and that I needed to roll up my sleeves and do some work to find out; I accepted that I wasn't sure what to expect, except that it would be significantly different and hopefully significantly better than what I had.

The Steps – I began to work the Steps and immediately became challenged with having to address all of the false ideas, lies, self-centered thinking that were a part of the complex rationalization network I had created to justify my dysfunctional behavior. I began to accept truths about myself that initially were painful but became the rock solid foundation of my personal growth and journey into self-awareness, serenity and spirituality. I didn't "find" the old me, because that person was not someone I really knew. Rather, I evolved into the person I am today.

Self-Awareness – The discoveries I made in the first 7 stages of my purposeful sobriety led me to a profound awareness of who I am and what I could be. I started to realize that I had spent most of my life inside my own head, thinking of me more than thinking of others. I knew that I needed to do something about that.

Serving Others – The solution to the selfishness I had discovered started with my writing articles for the Eastside Intergroup newsletter. I then was asked to sponsor someone in about my 10th month of sobriety. I asked my sponsor what he thought and he simply responded "Do you feel ready?" I did. From the first articles I wrote and the first sponsee I worked with I began to live my life in service first over self. The results have been remarkable and incredibly gratifying.

A Gratifying Lifestyle – What good would stages 1 through 9 do if it didn't become a lifestyle for me? That is the ultimate gift from the stages of my purposeful sobriety.

The Stages of Purposeful Sobriety are a process. For me to maintain my gratifying lifestyle and continue to grow I need to make the process a continual one. Though I may not go through the stages again sequentially, I can see that each stage still holds value for me if I continue to do what I have been doing these past eight plus years.

I hope The Stages of My Purposeful Sobriety will encourage those who have accepted simple sobriety to reconsider what they could have with their own Purposeful Sobriety.

ESIG Office Report for August 2019

On August 10th we held a 12th Step workshop and trained 8 new people. Thank you all for attending! This is a workshop that ESIG holds twice a year or when we have a request.

September 21st we have a Hotline / Phone workshop scheduled for 10am-11:30am at the ESIG office. Anyone is welcome to attend and we appreciate having you let us know if you'll be there so that we have enough materials for everyone. This workshop is for anyone wanting to answer phones either during the day at the Intergroup office or on the Hotline after hours. Anyone new to volunteering at the Intergroup office should definitely attend.

Our annual ESIG at the Mariners outing was a lot of fun again. This year we went on the afternoon that the Mariners were hosting "Recovery Day" for the community. The stadium was filled with people from different treatment centers, oxford houses, meetings, and Intergroup offices. The stadium was great at hosting recovery day—everyone that wanted one got a "recovery day Mariners t-shirt" and we didn't see any beer vendors at all! They really went out of their way for us. Our group had 50 signed up and about 45 of us attended. I had fun fellowshipping so didn't see much of the game, however the Mariners beat the Blue Jays. We hope even more people join us next year for this fun event.

September 26th—29th our Board Chairman Derek B. and I will be attending the ICOAA Conference in Mesa, AZ. This is a conference filled with workshops non stop for three days followed by meetings with staff from AA World Service and The AA Grapevine. In the past I've come back with information and ideas that we are able apply to ESIG. This year there will also be an "Ask it Basket" so if any of you have specific questions, feel free to get them to me before we go. I already have the question about various churches asking for groups to obtain insurance.

If you've been into ESIG lately you probably noticed that we've changed our system to POS (Point of Sale). This will help to ring up sales correctly and hopefully keep the inventory numbers correct at the same time. Hahns our new treasurer has donated hundred's of hours of his time getting us up and running. Thank you Hahns!

Our Grapevine & Literature Chair Aysen R. has stepped down due to some personal reasons and that leaves this position open. If anyone is interested, it can be a really fun committee. You have the opportunity to introduce new books at our ESIG meeting, take displays to different places and hold writing workshops if you like. This committee has held two really fabulous writing workshops in the past. Let us know if you are interested and thank you Aysen for a job well done and best wishes in your endeavors.

Lana L. is our new Pine Lake Speaker Meeting Coordinator and has had some wonderful ideas. Next time you attend the Pine Lake speaker meeting, stop by the ESIG table with the bright blue table cover and say hello. Anyone interested in service work with ESIG can find information about any of our committees as well as volunteering in the office. We have the following committees: Special Needs / Accessibility, Cooperation with the Professional Community, Public Information, Treatment & Hospitals, Newsletter, Young People in AA, Website, Special Events, Grapevine & Literature, and Corrections.

A big thanks to our office volunteers during August: Allison L, Bill B, Carrie SB, Cindy S, David B, David R, GiGi B, Jill M, Karen M, Lezli G, Lynn B, Sharon R, Sherre P, Ted W, Tim M, Tim Q, Ulf W, Wallene D, & Robin S. Also Rick F. for picking up schedules in Seattle and Steve E. for Security detail.

Nancy O.
Office Manager

nancy@eastsideintergroup.com

From the Spiral #2

The following are just a few one-liners from our fellowship to help us stay close to our program in addition to some commentary about the quote.

The "old high" is easy, but the reward is not there. The "right high" takes effort, time, willingness, and work. The reward, however, is beyond belief.

It was always easy to grab a drink or drug and just dissolve. In some cases, it tells us the cure right on the box: Pain Reliever, Sleep Aid, Clinically Proven Fast Pain Relief. What I have found is that when I was ready, truly ready, to end my old life of drinking, the right high came naturally to me because I had support and instruction. It was work, **yes, but it wasn't impossible. Along the way, rewards came, and that inspired me to press forward. Like the old high that I chased, I also chased the new high.** The harder I chase the new high, the better my life continues to get.

The fastest way out of my head is to help others.

Getting and staying in my head has always been my number one drug of choice. As long as it doesn't involve alcohol, drugs, or cause harm to anyone else, I can enjoy it whenever I want. The problem with this, however, is that being in my head is another form of escape. Escape is seeking comfort, and down the rabbit hole I go toward selfishness! It makes perfect sense that the opposite of this is the antidote: help others.

I am starting to learn that the harder I practice this Spiritual Program, the shorter my stays are at the (Self) Comfort Inn.

It's not the drink or drug that kills us; it's the secret.

The meeting after the meeting is often super powerful for me. A few weeks ago, at such a meeting, I asked one of our members to expand upon what he felt was the real trigger for us all to be mindful of, to which he said was our secrets. What are we not admitting? What is the one thing we are holding onto because of fear? Today, I am sober, but am never far enough away from a drink or drugs. This is not a bother for me because A.A. ruined drinking and drugs for me. If, however, I am harboring a resentment, being dishonest, or not letting go of some obsessive **thought that leads me away from my Higher Power's will for me, then I am in trouble. A meeting's power doesn't** feel as powerful. I start to slow down. My anger and selfishness begin to crop up everywhere. I need to pause, pray, and then call my sponsor in order to set my secret free before it kills me. Regardless of what step I am on or how much time I have, the following three words sum up the key to what seems to provide our fellowship with everlasting serenity and usefulness:

JUST BE HONEST.

I hope this helps, and I'll see you at a meeting.

-Matthew T.

Editors Note:

These are nuggets of wisdom that a member has heard in meetings and jotted down in his spiral notebook. These are personal notes and are the opinion of the author who wishes to share them.

From the Spiral will be published monthly.

How can You Support Your Intergroup in Addition to the 7th Tradition at Your Meetings?

Join the Faithful Fivers

What are Faithful Fivers?

Faithful Fivers are AA members who graciously pledge to contribute \$5.00 each month to support Eastside

Intergroup in its efforts to carry the AA message of hope

and recovery to those alcoholics who still suffer in the Eastside area.

As a Faithful Fiver, your contribution can and will make our vital services possible.

The Faithful Fiver idea came about when we remembered that we wasted much more than \$5 each month during our drinking days.

Contributions to Eastside Intergroup from AA members are limited to \$3,000 per member per year and are tax deductible under Internal Revenue Code: 501(c)3.

YES! Please enroll me as a Faithful Fiver!

Here is my contribution of \$___ FOR

\$_____ for _____ mon

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Send this form to:

Eastside Intergroup
13401 Bel Red Rd. Suite B6
Bellevue, WA 98005

July Faithful Fivers

Susan M.

Janine B.

Hahns B.

David S.

Uif W.

Thank You!

Join the Birthday Club

Eastside Intergroup Birthday Club!

Many of our members contribute to ESIG \$1, \$2 or \$5 per year during their

AA Anniversary month.

We'll print your name, sobriety date and home group in our Newsletter.

Your Birthday Club contributions directly support your Eastside Intergroup Office which provides a 24 hour phone line, literature, coins and more!

Birthday Club!

Name _____

Home Group _____

Sobriety Date _____

Contribution \$ _____

Get your name & home group in the newsletter!

August Pink Can Donations

Duvall Sunday Morning

Fresh Start

Ladies Step Study

Seven & Sober

Sharing the Legacy



Office Information

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 Bellevue, WA 98005
 Phone: 425-454-9192
 24-Hours a Day
 Email: esig@eastsideintergroup.com
 Website: www.eastsideintergroup.com
 Office Hours: Monday-Friday 10 am-6 pm

Office Manager: Nancy Osborn
 Email: Nancy@eastsideintergroup.com
 Intergroup Representative Meeting
 First Thursday of each month
 7:30 pm-8:30 pm
 Bellevue Christian Reformed Church
 1221 148th Ave NE
 Bellevue, WA 98007
 All members welcome!

Thank You Hotline Volunteers!

Anne W.	Jessica D.	Syrianah V.
Carmen A.	Leslie G.	Ted W.
Carrie W.	Mark J.	Tracy A.
Chuck M.	Mike S.	Travis S.
Cindy S.	Paul J.	
Elton B.	Randy E.	
Eric C.	Richard J	
Fred M.	Sheldon A.	
Ginny K.	Sheree P.	



425-454-9192

HOTLINE BACK-UP'S
 Travis S. Eric C.
 Sheree P. Syrianah V.
 Bill J. Nancy O.
 Hotline Coordinator: Sheree P.

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Editor.....John M.
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Info Corner Story.....John M.
From the Spiral...Matthew T.
Office Report.....Nancy O.

send your story to us:
 esig@eastsideintergroup.com

August Office Volunteers

Allison L	Lynn B
Bill B	Robin S
Carrie S.B	Sharon R.
Cindy S	Sherre P.
David B	Ted W
David R	Tim M
GiGi B.	Tim Q
Jill M	Ulf W
Karen M.	Wallene D
Leszli G	Steve E.

Eastside Intergroup, Districts, General Service Office & Area 72 Information

Eastside Intergroup

Eastside Intergroup
 13401 NE Bel Red Rd. #B6
 Bellevue, WA 98005

Western Washington Area 72

****NEW ADDRESS****
 1225 East Sunset Drive
 Suite 145-745
 Bellingham, WA 98226

General Service Office (GSO)

P.O. Box 459
 Grand Central Station
 New York, NY 10163

ESIG District Addresses:

District 34

Bellevue, Redmond, East Lake
 Sammamish,
 & Mercer Island
 PO Box 50081
 Bellevue, WA 98015

District 35

Issaquah
 P.O. Box 442
 Issaquah, WA 98027

District 36

Snoqualmie Valley, Duvall, North
 Bend
 P.O. Box 1963
 North Bend, WA 98045

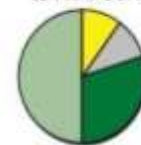
District 38

Kirkland
 P.O. Box 322
 Kirkland, WA 98083

District 39

Bothell, Kenmore, Woodinville
 P.O. Box 1695
 Bothell, WA 98041-1695

**Sample of Group Contributions
 to A.A. Service Entities**



10% to District
 10% to Area 72
 30% to G.S.O
 50% to Intergroup

August 2019 Intergroup Meeting Attendance

Aaron H. – Pocket of Enthusiasm	Lana L. – Pine Lake Coordinator / WWF
Andy G. – D35, Friday Night Fire House	Maggie S. – Sober Seniors
Brittany H. – New Hope	Matthew T – Sober Camels
Bruce C. – Breakfast 9:30 Alano	Nancy O. – ESIG Manager
Carrie S.B. – A Woman’s Way, Moss Bay	Patti B. – Eastside Beginners
Charisse B. – Eastside Women	Phil K. – ESIG CPC Chair
Chuck F. – Eastside Men’s	Rachel R. – Tons of Grace
Cindy S. – NBD Rep, Events Co-Chair	Rachel V. – ESIG Treatment Chair
Conor O. – ESIG Board	Sam H. – Any Lengths
Derek B. – ESIG Board Chair	Steph K. – Issaquah Tues. Night
Don M. – Nooners	Steve E. – Maximum Service
Hahns B. – ESIG Board Treasurer	Steve W. – Sober @ Cottage Lake
Jennifer G. – Better Odds Sober	Terry M. – Living Sober
Jon S. – Events Co-Chair, D39 Liaison	Todd A. – ESIG Chair, D35
Karen M. – Sammamish B.B./Sat. Share	Tom Z. – Iss. Sat. AM Step & Trad
Ken T. – Redmond Recovery	Virginia M. – ESIG Secretary
	Willy H. – ESIG Board/Tiger Mtn Stag

What does an Intergroup Representative do?

An Intergroup Rep is elected at his/her Home Group and attends the Eastside Intergroup Meeting on the 1st Thursday of each month from 7:30 pm to 8:30 pm. You represent your home group at the monthly meeting and hold a vote for your group. Because Eastside Intergroup covers five Districts and is a central clearinghouse for local AA activities and information, you become a vital link between the Intergroup office, the Districts, and your home group. The Intergroup Rep keeps his or her home group informed about work being done, activities going on, etc. You become a part of the networking between Eastside Intergroup and the groups.