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PASS IT ON

Eastside Intergroup Newsletter

Issue 40 May 2020

Re-Defining The Dream

I returned home from rehab and walked into my kitchen. I started at what used to be our bar: a butler's pantry with several racks for barware and glasses. I remembered all the care I'd taken to make that area so pretty: we had beautiful martini glasses, elegant long-stemmed wine glasses, old crystal highballs, etc. All the wine bottles were at one time categorized, proudly displaying their artistic labels, resting politely in the chiller fridge. I could close my eyes and this of all the memories around our house with friends walking around, wine in hand, chatting, laughing. Me chasing them around, yielding a bottle, with the constant refill at the ready. Drinking had been SO much fun, an enhancement to conviviality, a balm for frustration, a comfort for sadness or anger. I felt connection to others, like I was living the dream.

And booze worked..... until it didn't.

I ran my shaky fingers across the granite bar top and just stared at the blank space where that bar used to be. The wine fridge was gone. The pretty wine bottles were painfully absent. (I had done a good job off personally making that happen before leaving for rehab.) The lovely glasses on their structured racks, a cute collection of wine charms I had collected over the past 5 years - all gone. All that remained now was the shattered condition of my soul. I felt the cool granite under my palm and saw the slightly yellow skin on my wrist, still just barely visible from the bruising left by the handcuffs a month earlier. "My Life is Over," I whispered out loud as tears welled up in my eyes.

What I didn't realize was my life was actually just beginning.

It was hard at first. I felt like I was on watch all the time, and I was. My parents stayed with me to help take care of the kids. My mom had to drive me to and from meetings and visits with my probation officer. I found myself needing to make mock tails to get me through the first couple months as I was still totally obsessed with alcohol and I could not let go of the romance of drinking. One night on the way home from a meeting, I called my sponsor and said, "I can't stop thinking about alcohol. I want to be buzzed. I want to escape." She gently asked me if I had prayed for the obsession to be removed? Nope, I hadn't. I began to pray for that and began to BEG for it. It didn't vanish..... so I kept doing what I needed to do: meeting with my sponsor, going to meetings, talking it out. I walked into my first sober concert and almost had a panic attack. I turned to my husband and said "I don't think I can do this. I don't think I can stay sober."

But I kept showing up anyway. I kept going to meetings. I kept journaling. I got into some service positions. One day, I was out to dinner with my hus-

Re-Defining The Dream

Continued from Pg.1

band and realized that I was fully engaged in a conversation and I wasn't watching the wine bottles and martini glasses sail by our table on a tray. I noticed that I didn't notice it - and then when I did, I wasn't salivating the way I used to. That was an interesting and new experience. But really, it was the first chain on the link to break open. The power used to break that piece of the chain was not a lightning bolt from the sky..... it was just continual action over a course of time. What I didn't realize was that I was redefining the dream I wanted to live.

Not long after, I recognized another chain had broken open and fallen off: I could go on a trip and remember everything we saw - everything we did. I began to make memories with my kids that the next day would still be in my brain. I didn't have to hear my husband say the words, "We've actually had this conversation before." I was beginning to have friends who could tolerate me, who called me, who supported me and actually asked ME for support.

I was beginning to finally escape the captivity of King Alcohol. And it began to feel amazing. I realized that by turning my will and my life under to the care of God as I understood him, he had carried me to that point, almost without my noticing. Lack of power had been my dilemma, and since I had been overpowered by alcohol, I had needed something stronger than self-reliance to help break those chains. I saw at this point that it was God. It had been God all along, through it all. God didn't promise He would make it easy, but He promised His presence and that He would walk with me and hold my hand. It was clear that's what had happened to me; I had by this point completed all 12 steps and I had a spiritual experience without even realizing it. It felt serene and it felt free.

Over the next 7 years and beyond, I would come to realize my drinking was just a symptom of some greater root issues I had never dealt with... so I had to get down to causes and conditions and embark on a personal housekeeping journey through the 12 steps. I was to gain a simple kit of tools for living; a new pair of glasses with which to see my troubles are of my own making, because I have a disease of perception; and I that I'm always in control of my attitude in times of my outer circumstances spinning out of control. I now have lifelong friends, have conversations and sacred honest moments with men and women, resulting in bonds closer than I'd ever imagined possible. I was to experience the power of others loving me until I learned to love myself.

Today when I walk into a restaurant, party, or anywhere with a bar, I look at the glasses, the lights, the beautiful bottles and I no longer salivate. To me that pretty area looks like being on a long car ride down an Interstate and driving past a prison. Looks like, "OH wow, that's somewhere I don't want to go." There's no more wishing and wanting and romanticizing the old days when alcohol was conviviality and joyous laughter and connection. It's no longer attractive to me. That's a miracle. I actually *do not have any physical desire* for alcohol anymore. I do have a desire to escape or change the way I feel - but I recognize that's what it is and I can call someone and talk it out. I can write about it, I can meditate, I can simply sit in the feeling and let it pass. That's what I reach for today - not a drink, but my simple spiritual toolkit, given to me by AA. Because that toolkit actually works, it is the easier, softer way, when I choose to use it. And because the dream has been redefined, I've discovered that I'm living it.

Amy H.

Upcoming Sober Events

Meeting Updates

Publisher's Note: With the volume of changes and cancellations, Upcoming Sober Events and Meeting Updates will not be included in this month's issue. Please visit eastsideaa.org for all meeting and sober event changes and updates.

-Kyle

*Please email your meeting updates to:
esig@eastsideintergroup.com*

New Eastside Intergroup Web Presence!

<https://eastsideaa.org/>

April 10, 2020

FIND A MEETING UPCOMING EVENTS GET OUR NEWSLETTER ABOUT US ▾ MAKE A CONTRIBUTION ▾

Eastside A.A.
Alcoholics Anonymous on the East Side of Lake Washington

Do you have a desire to stop drinking?
Call us 24 hours a day at 425-454-9192

Area News Eastside News Accessibility CPC Corrections Grapevine & Literature Hotline PI Treatment Special Events Web

Upcoming Meetings

7:00 PM	Third Column Group / Temporary Closure 12 & 12 Fellowship Hall Woodinville	• 20/20 Vision San Diego Spring Round-Up 04/09/2020 - 04/12/2020 in San Diego
7:00 PM	The New Hope Group / Temporary Closure Alano Club of the Eastside Bellevue	• Archives Work Party! 04/19/2020 in Lakewood
7:00 PM	Sober Camels / Men, Temporary Closure Kirkland Woman's	• Eastside Intergroup Monthly Business Meeting 05/07/2020 in Bellevue
		• Archives Work Party! 05/17/2020 in Lakewood
		• Eastside Intergroup Monthly Business Meeting 05/24/2020 in Bellevue

Events

- 20/20 Vision San Diego Spring Round-Up
04/09/2020 - 04/12/2020 in San Diego
- Archives Work Party!
04/19/2020 in Lakewood
- Eastside Intergroup Monthly Business Meeting
05/07/2020 in Bellevue
- Archives Work Party!
05/17/2020 in Lakewood
- Eastside Intergroup Monthly Business Meeting
05/24/2020 in Bellevue

Thanks to the tireless work of many volunteers headed by John B, ESIG has a new, updated website!

Point your favorite browser to: <https://eastsideaa.org/>



you'll wan... [MORE »](#)



So you're calling it the Sunshine Club?

Published 2w ago - Sunshine Club

We'll get to that. First, some history about how it all started. In August of 2019, Eastside Intergroup received a call from a member of our fellowship asking for help. 'I know a couple who needs a meeting. They live in a re... [MORE »](#)

7:00 PM	Cyber Sisters East / Online Meeting, Women Online Only Bellevue
7:00 PM	Thursday Night AA North Bend Turning Point / Online Meeting, Temporary Closure Online Only - Soqualmie Valley Snoqualmie

Information Corner

Step 5

Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs

Step Five Information

This is perhaps difficult, especially discussing our defects with another person. We think we have done well enough in admitting these things to ourselves. There is doubt about that. In actual practice, we usually find a solitary self-appraisal insufficient. Many of us thought it necessary to go much further. We will be more reconciled to discussing ourselves with another person when we see good reasons why we should do so. The best reason first: If we skip this vital step, we may not overcome drinking. Time after time newcomers have tried to keep to themselves certain facts about their lives. Trying to avoid this humbling experience, they have turned to easier methods. Almost invariably they got drunk. Having persevered with the rest of the program, they wondered why they fell. We think the reason is that they never completed their housecleaning. They took inventory all right, but hung on to some of the worst items in stock. They only thought they had lost their egoism and fear; they only thought they had humbled themselves. But they had not learned enough of humility, fearlessness and honesty, in the sense we find it necessary, until they told someone else all their life story.

A.A. Big Book, p. 72-73

Step Five Prayer

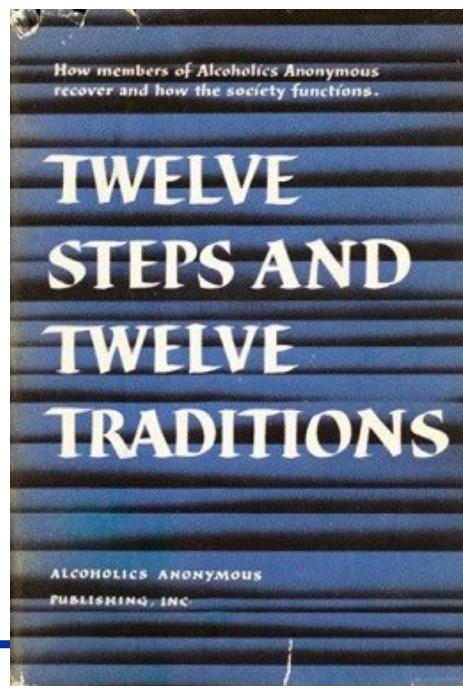
God, I ask for Your help in admitting my wrongs to another person and to You. Assure me, and be with me, in this step, for without this step I cannot progress in my recovery. With Your help, I can do this. Amen

Tradition 5

"Each group has but one primary purpose — to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers."

In the AA Grapevine from 1948, Bill W. is emphatic: "Because it has now become plain enough that only a recovered alcoholic can do much for a sick alcoholic, a tremendous responsibility has descended upon us all, an obligation so great that it amounts to a sacred trust. For to our kind, those who suffer alcoholism, recovery is a matter of life or death. So the Society of Alcoholics Anonymous cannot, it dare not, ever be diverted from its primary purpose."

Bill continues in the 12 and 12, pg. 151: "It is the great paradox of A.A. that we know we can seldom keep the precious gift of sobriety unless we give it away... For us, if we neglect those who are still sick, there is unremitting danger to our own lives and sanity. Under these compulsions of self-preservation, duty, and love, it is not strange that our Society has concluded that it has but one high mission—to carry the A.A. message to those who don't know there's a way out."



April 2020 ESIG Office Report

FIRST THINGS FIRST! I hope everyone is safe and healthy. This pandemic has definitely changed my life as I am sure it has all of yours.

- **NEW WEBSITE / EMAIL ADDRESSES:** Our new website was launched the end of March at which time we were also given new email addresses. The web address is www.eastsideaa.org. Our office email is esig@eastsideaa.org and you can reach me at nancyo@eastsideaa.org.
- **NEW MEMBERS:** In April we had quite a few calls from brand new people looking to try their first AA meeting. It is so different right now with Zoom meetings rather than our regular in person meetings. I had one person say they tried three meetings before getting into one because they needed a password. I understand the need for passwords, but I can't imagine being new and not being able to get into an online meeting either. Our 5th tradition says our primary purpose is to carry the message..... *Just something to be mindful of when someone is in the waiting room.*
- **ZOOM ADDRESSES & PASSWORDS:** We have successfully added the zoom address to the meeting listings on our new website. We are tracking passwords separately and making them available to members calling in. If your group has a password and would like to make it available to us you can send it to esig@eastsideaa.org.
- **VENMO & PAYPAL:** A lot of you have asked how Eastside Intergroup is doing and how you can help. We have set up Venmo and PayPal for online contributions and we also still accept checks in the mail. Thank you to those of you that have continued with your 7th tradition donations, we still need your support! Even though we are being mindful of our spending, we still have our normal monthly expenses. Some people are donating what they would have put in the basket but doing it via Venmo or PayPal. It all helps!
- **GROUP OR PERSONAL CONTRIBUTION:** With so many contributions being received online and coming in under the names of individual people, it's been hard to identify which donations should be applied to Groups. We really want to make sure your group gets recognized for contributing so please make a note of the group name when donating.
- **STORE HOURS:** We have been available for curbside sales the past few weeks. We are currently available at the office Monday through Thursday from 10am to 5pm with curbside purchases between 11am and 3pm. Orders need to be placed in advance by calling us at 425-454-9192 and paying with a credit card at the time. Then let us know when you arrive and we'll have your order ready for you. If you need something outside of these hours or on a Friday please don't hesitate to reach out to us. I am fairly close and happy to help!
- **MEETING UPDATES:** Please send meeting updates to both our office and to the web committee. All changes should go to webstuff@eastsideaa.org and to esig@eastsideaa.org. The changes are made on our website and from there will be updated on the Seattle schedule as well as Area 72 and the Meeting Guide.
- **NEW POSITIONS:** We've opened up two new volunteer positions that we are excited about. One is a Photographer and the other is a 12th Step Coordinator. We've had two photographers volunteer, Doug H. and Kelly P. We will begin getting our store items photographed and listed online so people can order from our website. The 12th Step Coordinator will take over the workshops and maintain the lists of 12th step volunteers. Janine B. has volunteered for this position and I'm sure will be looking for others to join her.
- **COMMITTEE VOLUNTEERS:** Tom Z. has volunteered for the Hotline Coordinator position, Keri C. has volunteered for the Young People in AA (YPAA) Representative position and Dennis M. for the PI/CPC position. Welcome to everyone.

Be safe,

Thank you for letting me be of service-

 Nancy O.
Office Manager

From the Spiral #10

by Matthew T.

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.

1. Your relapse starts when you forget the pain of your addiction.

Hearing this at a meeting last month shook me. It took a moment for me to process its message. Then I recalled another powerful statement that helped me during a difficult moment in my recovery. "Don't think, DO." It was then that I realized that if I continue to show up and listen in meetings, talk with others in the program, and keep my side of the street clean, the last thing I will do is forget the pain of my addiction, especially in the final days.

2. The problem lives within us; the solution lives without us.

I am the problem, and the problem cannot fix the problem. The Big Book talks about abandoning yourself to God as you understand him. The 3rd Step Prayer begins with offering yourself to God. Looking inward is where over-thinking, shame, guilt, and assumptions hide in waiting. For me this is where I came to know the nature of the words cunning, baffling, powerful. Looking without is to turn to God, the program, and the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. The best thing that works for me when I am off the beam is to pause, pray, and do something for someone else. If I focus on the problem, things only get worse. When I focus on the solution, I am gifted with joy, peace, and willingness to continue heading in the right direction as suggested.

3. Alcoholics Anonymous is not a self-help program; it is a self-abandonment program.

Our program is the only experience I have had that finally taught me what is involved in the process of actually letting go. Spending time around recovered alcoholics showed me the action and results of taking my fears, character defects, the past, my ego, and abandoning it to God as I understand him. I spent almost 40 years clinging to self stubbornly with harmful results not only to myself, but to people, places, and things. The true jumping off point for me was the realization that I had been doing it wrong (my way) for too long and was exhausted. At that moment, I knew I needed a path. Any way that came from me was not going to work. The more I practice the principles in all my affairs, the better my life gets. I give credit to my higher power for speaking through me and showing me the way. The more I abandon myself, the more humbled I become at the incredible direction my life has taken since beginning the program.

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

Matthew T.

Editors Note:

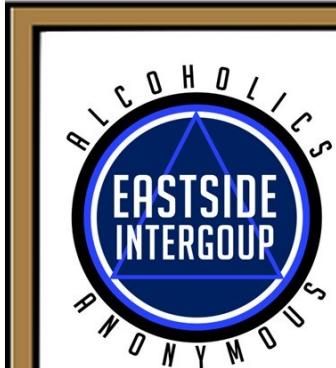
These nuggets of wisdom were heard by a member in meetings and jotted down in his spiral notebook. These are personal notes and are the opinion of the author who wishes to share them. They are not endorsed by Alcoholics Anonymous.

From the Spiral is published monthly.

Eastside Intergroup Group Contributions 2020

Group	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	TOTAL
Nameless Bunch Of Drunks	1,000	2,000		3,000	6,000
Seven & Sober	1,000	2,000		1,000	4,000
Serenity Break		2,343		75	2,418
Living Sober	247	289	299	1,008	1,843
Sober Camels		1,500			1,500
Higher Powered at Gold Creek		1,155			1,155
District 35	500			500	1,000
Eastside Beginners	313			495	807
District 34	774				774
Kenmore Big Book	700				700
Bellevue New Group				600	600
OSAT			600		600
Friday Night Firehouse	517				517
Counter Sales	500				500
Women's Saturday Steps	224			266	490
Fresh Start	439				439
Newport Daytimers		384			384
Happy Destinies				350	350
Live & Let Live		339			339
Dorothy Reed (Bellevue New Group)			300		300
Sharing the Legacy			300		300
Women's Saturday Share			300		300
Bellevue Sunrise Group	125			155	279
Sammamish By The Book			256		256
Joy Of Living		250			250
Sober At Cottage Lake	250				250
Duvall Sunday Morning		234			234
Tuesday Night Solutions		200		20	220
Wake Up				213	213
AM Reflections	200				200
The Overlake Group		200			200
Tons of Grace			200		200
Women of Worth	200				200
Women In Recovery		190			190
Gay Men In Recovery	180			9	189
SOS			150		150
Any Lengths Group	148				148
Eastside Women	67			75	142
Sunday Big Book Study		125			125
Tuesday Nite Starters		125			125
Big Book Step Study	111				111
A Vision for You	102				102
Kindred Spirits	100				100
Kirkland Sobriety Headquarters	100				100
Main Street Saturday Night		100			100
Reflections	100				100
Southside Breakfast	100				100
Ladies Step Study	91				91
Women's Big Book Study		78			78
42, District		75			75
Clyde Hill Step Study		75			75
Woodinville Wed. Fellowship	55				55
Sno Valley Online Group 7th Tradition				53	53
Issaquah Breakfast Club	25		25		50
Raging On The River	40				40
Bills Kitchen			30		30
Womens STP Meeting				26	26
7th Tradition First Things First				25	25
Bellevue Speakers Meeting				20	20
Tuesday Night Womens Meeting				5	5
Total	\$8,207	\$11,663	\$2,459	\$7,894	\$30,224

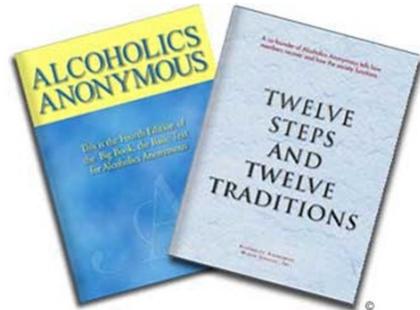
ESIG Curbside Pickup Continues!



Curbside Pick-up has been extended to:
Monday thru Thursday 11am-3pm

It's Easy

1. Call in your order 425-454-9192
2. Pay with your Credit Card
3. Call When You Arrive and We'll Have it Ready



Where You'll Find Us:

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



One
alcoholic talking to
another...



BILL W. and Dr. BOB

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
_____ (month)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Send this form to: Eastside Intergroup
13401 Bel Red Rd. Suite B6
Bellevue, WA 98005

April Faithful Fivers

David W. Janine B.

Hahns B. David S.

Ulf W. Tom Z.

Join the 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!

Send this form to: Eastside Intergroup
13401 Bel Red Rd. #B6
Bellevue, WA 98005

April Birthday Club

No information this month

Pink Can Donations

Women's Saturday Steps

Friday Night Firehouse

Lifeline

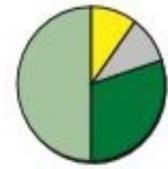
Seven & Sober

Sunrise Group



Office Information	Thank You Hotline Volunteers!
<p>13401 NE Bel-Red Rd., Suite B6 Bellevue, WA 98005</p> <p>Phone: 425-454-9192 24-Hours a Day</p> <p>Email: esig@eastsideaa.org</p> <p>Website: eastsideaa.org</p> <p>Office Hours: Suspended</p> <p>Office Manager: Nancy O. Email: NancyO@eastsideaa.org</p> <p>Office Assistant: Kim W. Email: KimmieW@eastsideaa.org</p> <p>Intergroup Representative Meeting First Thursday of each month 7:30 pm-8:30 pm via Zoom https://zoom.us/j/181768191? pwd=MG02L21hZXk1Y3N0UG1pZnlLSVF</p>	<p>Anne G. Jan W. Sheldon A. Anne W. Jessica C. Tim Q. Carmen A. Jessica D. Tracy A. Chuck M. Jim M. Travis S. Cindy S. Jody K. David B. John R. Elizabeth M. Leslie G. Elton B. Lynn B. Eric C. Mark D. Fred M. Mark J. Genny B. Paul J. Ginny K. Richard J.</p>  <p>HOTLINE Back-Ups Sheree P. Jessica C. Mark D. Travis S. Cindy S. Nancy O. Hotline Coordinator: Sheree P.</p> <p>Newsletter Contributors Publisher/Editor.....Kyle E. Story.....Amy H. From the Spiral...Matthew T. Office Report.....Nancy O.</p> <p>Send your story to us: esig@eastsideaa.org</p> <p>April Office Team Hats off to Kimmie W. and Nancy O. for managing curbside pickup!</p>

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

<p><u>Eastside Intergroup</u> 13401 NE Bel Red Rd. #B6 Bellevue, WA 98005</p>	<p><u>District 34</u> Bellevue, Redmond, East Lake Sammamish, & Mercer Island PO Box 50081 Bellevue, WA 98015</p>	<p><u>District 38</u> Kirkland P.O. Box 322 Kirkland, WA 98083</p>				
<p><u>Western Washington Area 72</u> 1225 East Sunset Drive Suite 145-745 Bellingham, WA 98226</p>	<p><u>District 35</u> Issaquah P.O. Box 442 Issaquah, WA 98027</p>	<p><u>District 39</u> Bothell, Kenmore, Woodinville P.O. Box 1695 Bothell, WA 98041-1695</p>				
<p><u>General Service Office (GSO)</u> P.O. Box 459 Grand Central Station New York, NY 10163</p>	<p><u>District 36</u> Snoqualmie Valley, Duvall, North Bend P.O. Box 1963 North Bend, WA 98045</p>	<p>Sample of Group Contributions to A.A. Service Entities</p>  <table border="1"> <tr> <td>10% to District</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10% to Area 72</td> </tr> <tr> <td>30% to G.S.O.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>50% to Intergroup</td> </tr> </table>	10% to District	10% to Area 72	30% to G.S.O.	50% to Intergroup
10% to District						
10% to Area 72						
30% to G.S.O.						
50% to Intergroup						

And Finally...

... from the Publisher

Spring is definitely upon us! Lots of rain, thunder and lightning, warm sun! Kind of like the AA program of recovery: I need the rough seas to appreciate the calm island breezes in the sun. And the online AA meetings have been my calm in the storm that my mind gets into being locked up. Now more than ever I find myself doing a lot more service work and meetings just to still the problem between my ears.

Thank you, AA, for the peaceful respite today!

Continuing my story:

Before my first year was out, I had reclaimed the job I had lost just a few months before, could pay bills, and the promises were coming true as I worked through Step 9. Things were going so well I decided to finish my undergrad degree in electronic engineering. Working nights allowed me to hit a morning meeting nearly every day before sleeping, then going to school in the evenings. Days off and holidays could find me at one AA gathering or another. One of the miracles was to be able to make green bean casserole and contribute at potlucks! Celebrating the holiday season at sober parties. Hanging around with people who got sober the same time I did. One thing I was struggling with was keeping sponsees; they kept going out. At first I took it personally, when my sponsor pointed out that I was still sober throughout each relationship. Yes, this program was indeed working!

Next Month: Fired?

- Kyle E.

PASS IT ON!