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PASS IT ON

Eastside Intergroup Newsletter

Issue 51 May 2021

My Favorite Hello and Hardest Goodbye

I am one of the blessed creatures in this world who is a parent. I've received an invaluable gift after many years of fruitless endeavors. Motherhood is my calling, or purpose – my reason for being. It is my assignment in life. I am its dutiful recipient.

May houses Mother's Day and June honors the fathers. I imagine holidays like Mother's Day or Father's Day are particularly hard for alcoholics. I have yet to meet one alcoholic that hasn't expressed some kind of strain in these close interpersonal relationships. We are sometimes estranged from those family members, our parents or children, by choice or necessity. The media saturation for these "Hallmark Holidays" has made me feel inadequate in the past. I was a mom that didn't even deserve to be with her son on Mother's Day – let alone receive a fancy bauble or breakfast in bed, served by a doting partner that wakes up with just the right amount of 5 o'clock shadow. It's all too perfect and that kind of stuff doesn't happen to me. I now know that I was approaching the situation with self-pity and resentment.

I have a strained relationship with my parents. In the rooms of A.A., I hear the same from many others. My father has become a genetic acquaintance. My mother is present, but I can't honestly say our relationship is healthy. It is healing, which is progress. We claim progress rather than perfection. Alcoholics Anonymous gives me the tools not to tie those conditions to my self value. I am learning that as I grow and recognize my involvement, I can healthily set aside resentments and repair broken relationships. If I am humble, and live life on life's terms, I can rewrite the narrative on what I once thought was irreparable damage.

Like many of you, one of the consequences I face in sobriety is that alcohol has forever changed the relationship with my child and his father. In my case, I maintain a long-distance divorce, and my 9-year-old son resides out of state with his father during the school year. This affords me very little opportunity to spend time with him. I never get to go to school picnics, parent meetings, assemblies, plays or chaperone field trips. I find myself resentful toward other parents who passively aggressively complain about having to entertain their children during Winter Break or summer vacation. I live for summer, when school is out of session and I can be nestled in the abandon of my son's sweetness for almost 3 whole months. We count the days until the next break, or the next time I can come down for the weekend. We talk on the phone nightly and thin strings tug my heart as I hear his laugh. I miss the patch of tiny freckles under his right eye and his wild hair. The last morning together is the hardest, as he wakes up in tears, shaking with separation anxiety. In those moments, my Higher Power directs me to maintain my focus and I am able to talk through these emotions with my son. When our time together ends, I say my hardest goodbye. Every. Single. Time.

Last year on Mother's Day, I was at Overlake Hospital for 6 days with acute pancreatitis. I managed to drink myself to death by the ripe old age of 38. My

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And Finally...

by Kyle E.

My Favorite Hello and Hardest Goodbye

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mental health history required that I be placed under suicide watch. COVID restrictions were in place. No one could visit. My mother even tried to come; I was dying after all (See? I told you it wasn't healthy). My boyfriend at the time sent me flowers, but all they did was remind me that I was alone again on Mother's Day, with the exception of the very bored intern assigned to my bedside at all hours. I yearned for my son and even the blessed physical relief my IV provided couldn't numb the real pain. Even at that juncture, I still didn't realize how my alcoholism was a problem. I continued drinking for 4 months after my near-death experience. I just didn't care.

Through the miracles of this program, this year was different. I traveled to visit for Mother's Day weekend. I went to my son's school carnival and watched him interact with his little friends. I talked in person with his teacher. I wore a crown of flowers handmade for me by the love of my life. I got to do normal parent stuff. I got to check out all of the cool things in my son's room and walk around the block with our dog. I got to spend time with my son and my dog, both resting on my lap; a moment some people live daily, but for me, was an immense reprieve from the chaos and unmanageability of the past few years. I was present for it and as a result, have a fond memory to recall when I find my heart lonely. I heard my Higher Power say, "Yes. This can be your life. If you are willing to do what it takes to have it."

I made the decision to relocate to where they live months ago. My ex and I decided not to tell our son until I secured a job there and could bring a concrete date to the table. I was of the mindset that I could be broke and miserable anywhere; I might as well be able to be there for our son. Although I had all of these great experiences over that weekend as evidence, there were other events that made me feel restless, irritable, and discontent. My PTSD was triggered; I was locked in a cycle of fear and panic that left me crying on the bathroom floor for two hours instead of engaging with my son. I wanted to say that this was my ex-husband's fault; his treatment of me led to this. I was angry at his immaturity and defiance. Then I realized: I'm angry at something I can't control (how he acts); I can control my reaction and response if I truly want to; and I'm wise enough in that moment to listen to listen to my Higher Power and see the difference. With the heaviest of mom hearts, I sought wisdom from my sponsor, therapist, mother, close friends, and strong women in the program. I opened my mind and heard my Higher Power say, "I told you; you have a lot of work to do. This won't look exactly how you want it to because it's not up to you."

I wanted to scream about the unfairness of this. I wanted to point out my accomplishments. I've stayed sober. I've been doing the daily work to maintain physical and emotional sobriety. I have three service positions. I've been working with women from the beginning and am doing my step work. I got out of an abusive relationship. I'm working with a great therapist. My self-worth is improving; my suicidal ideation is diminishing. I'm taking fewer medications. I've learned that I'm a strong, powerful woman who deserves happiness. So, why am I not ready to relocate? The answer is right here in this paragraph. The sentences all start with my or I. I'm making it all about me, and I'm selfish. I want a situation to be a certain way at this moment and nothing is right in the world until I make it so. Self-will run riot.

The weekend is over. I was hoping this would be one of our last long goodbyes. Yet here we are again. I now have faith instead of fear in these moments. I reach into my kit of spiritual tools laid at my feet. I choose acceptance- that this part of my life and this relationship isn't exactly how I wish it to be, and that's okay. I choose my Higher Power to keep me strong, centered, and mindful. I choose the courage to do my part and keep showing up for my son, sober and engaged. I choose to take a quick personal inventory, and instead of being resentful, realize my involvement in the situation so that I can progress. I turn to the evidence of A.A. reuniting so many broken families and mending wounded relationships.

I breathe deeply and wipe away my son's tears. I remind him that life is eternal, cyclical. When we say goodbye, it stands to reason we get the chance to say hello again – eventually. I cling to how hello looks as I watch him walk away. I think of the next time I'll see him. He'll drop his suitcase and run toward me with the boundless energy of a puppy. We'll both cry, a little, and embrace in silence for some minutes. These are the promises coming true – sometimes slowly. I'll bury my face in his tangled mass of curls and say hello. It will be my favorite hello. Every. Single. Time.

- Carmen A.

From the Spiral #22

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. I could not see my part.

One of the hardest experiences during my first three months of working the program was coming to the realization of all the people I harmed. I had a Doctorate in pointing the finger. Condemning anyone as long as it wasn't me had become an unconscious reaction. As the fog began to lift, my Sponsor asked me about my resentments. I loved writing them down because my memory of their part was clear. Then he dropped the bomb on me, which was the 4th column. I never saw it coming, but once he asked me what my part was, the nature of my list turned on me. Now when I hear about becoming willing to go to any lengths, for me, I am reminded of the 4th column. Am I willing to look at my part?

2. Don't use the same brain to figure this out that got you here.

In early recovery, as with any problems in my life, I always tried and struggled to figure it out. If I wasn't performing well at a job, I would try to figure it out only to end up more frustrated and exhausted. My Sponsor literally palmed the top of my head, lifted up, and set what was supposedly my brain aside. He also did this in a crowded coffee shop just to make sure that the humility took full effect, which it did. If the problem centers in my mind, then there's no way that the problem will be the solution. Being new to our program is uncomfortable, scary, and confusing because you're in a world that is the exact opposite of a way of life that was trying to kill you. Walking through the doors of Alcoholics Anonymous was my moment to learn from others how they became willing to take a step away from their brain, observe it from a distance, and do the work to not let control them.

3. When I try to control something that is out of my control, I lose control of the things that I can control.

In other words, see the Serenity Prayer.

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

-Matthew T.

May 2021 Office Report—April Activity



Happy May! I love the saying April showers bring May flowers.... What do they say about May showers?

I was on vacation for a couple of weeks during April, so the most important part of this office report is that Janet, our new office assistant together with various office volunteers, did a fantastic job while I was gone! Everything ran smoothly and I had a great vacation. I think it's a fabulous life when you love being on vacation, but you love coming home as well!

Not only did the office run well but they were able to input pictures of everything we have in the store into our Point-of-Sale system. They ran spot checks on inventory and double-checked numbers as new things arrived and everything seems to be flowing as it should between Point of Sale and QuickBooks. Next big jump is the store to go live on the website! So exciting!

We've had some new office volunteers join us as well as some returning. Thank you to Jan W, Wallene D., Lezli G, Ellie, Carmen, Doug H, David B, Lynn B, and Ted W. You are appreciated!

New from the Grapevine and now available at Eastside Intergroup "Free on the Inside".

We have also just added the Grapevine book "Women in A.A." in Spanish to our already large selection of Spanish literature at Eastside Intergroup.

During April we ran a special on the COVID coins and even though the sale is over, we still have some left if anyone is interested. I think the zoom coin with the year on it will eventually be a collector.

Now for our May special we have a new "keep it simple" butterfly coin with Swarovski crystals in it that is normally \$18 and for May it is \$16. You can see a picture of it on our website.

I am looking for volunteer(s) to help with what our next printed schedule will look like. The paper schedule currently printed by ESIG doesn't have enough room to list meetings, and then zoom or hybrid. I think a lot of the zoom meetings are going to stay around so I think this is going to be important. Please let me know if you are interested by emailing me at nancyo@eastsideaa.org – please put Meeting Schedule in the subject line.

Also remember, if you make your contributions via PayPal on our website and they are from your group, you need to specify which group otherwise they get posted under anonymous donations. We really like to give credit where credit is due! And, we appreciate how the community has continued to support us through this past year.

Lastly, thank you Janine B. and Sheree P. for your service to Eastside Intergroup as outgoing Board members and welcome to Aaron H., Holly F. and Misty M. our incoming members.

Nancy O.

ESIG Office Manager

Volunteers! Generosity! Birthday Club!

Thank You Hotline Volunteers!

Carmen A.	Ginny K.	Jody K.	Sheree P.	Hotline Back-Ups	
Chuck M.	Guy O.	Leslie G.	Tammy K.	Tom Z.	Cindy S.
Cindy S.	Jamie C.	Mark J.	Tom Z.	Jessica C.	Travis S.
Elton B.	Jamie L.	Paul J.	Tracy A.	Sheree P.	Nancy O.
Eric C.	Jessica C.	Richard J.	Travis S.	Hotline Coordinator: Tom Z.	
Genny B.	Jim M.	Sheldon A.			

24 Hours



425-454-9192

Thank You Office Volunteers!

Jan W.	Wallene D.	Lezli G.	Ellie	Carmen A.	Doug H.
David B.	Lynn B.	Ted W.	Bud B. assisted with IT in the office		

Faithful Fivers!

Faithful Fivers donate \$5/month to support ESIG

Nancy O.

Birthday Club!



Terry B.—40 Years!



Join the Eastside Intergroup Birthday Club! A.A. Works!

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!

Get your name & home group in the newsletter!

Send this form to: Eastside Intergroup

13401 Bel Red Rd. #B6

Bellevue, WA 98005

Name _____

Home Group _____

Sobriety Date _____

Contribution \$ _____

ESIG March 2021 Group Contributions

	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21	Apr 21	TOTAL
A Way Up	0.00	40.00	0.00	0.00	40.00
Anchor Group	0.00	0.00	0.00	198.50	198.50
Anonymous	728.57	1,970.00	1,231.80	825.00	4,755.37
Any Lengths Group	64.55	0.00	0.00	188.75	253.30
Bel-Kirk Saturday Breakfast	0.00	250.00	0.00	0.00	250.00
Bellevue Group	0.00	400.00	300.00	0.00	700.00
Bellevue Men's Meeting	0.00	0.00	400.00	0.00	400.00
Bellevue New Group	0.00	405.00	0.00	0.00	405.00
Bellevue Sunrise Group	209.93	0.00	0.00	236.40	446.33
Benevity Fund Donation	0.00	122.00	0.00	0.00	122.00
Big Book Step Study	0.00	0.00	0.00	75.78	75.78
Bothell Women's Step Study	0.00	0.00	125.00	0.00	125.00
Bothell Women STP	0.00	50.00	0.00	0.00	50.00
Came To Believe (Carnation)	0.00	0.00	8.12	0.00	8.12
Counter Sales	107.12	469.00	5.00	0.00	581.12
District 34	959.95	0.00	0.00	0.00	959.95
Duvall Sunday Morning	0.00	0.00	20.00	0.00	20.00
Eastside A.M. Reflections	0.00	300.00	0.00	0.00	300.00
Eastside Beginners	145.45	0.00	0.00	0.00	145.45
Eastside Men's Group	0.00	20.00	0.00	412.00	432.00
Eastside Women	0.00	0.00	125.00	0.00	125.00
Freedom from Bondage	0.00	122.00	3.00	14.00	139.00
Fresh Start	0.00	0.00	0.00	400.00	400.00
Friday night Live and Let Live	0.00	0.00	0.00	50.00	50.00
From the Hat	150.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	150.00
Frontstream (Boeing)	609.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	609.00
Grace Rules	0.00	0.00	67.00	0.00	67.00
Happy Destinies	0.00	0.00	480.00	0.00	480.00
Issaquah Tuesday Night Group	0.00	0.00	0.00	83.50	83.50
Kenmore Friday Nighters	200.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	200.00
Kirkland Sobriety Headquarters	0.00	0.00	100.00	0.00	100.00
Ladies Step Study	35.00	125.44	0.00	0.00	160.44
Living Sober	188.01	0.00	443.55	583.35	1,214.91
Moss Bay	360.00	0.00	0.00	80.00	440.00
Nameless Bunch Of Drunks	0.00	1,500.00	4,500.00	1,500.00	7,500.00
NBD International	0.00	1,022.40	465.75	463.00	1,951.15
Nooners	0.00	50.00	0.00	0.00	50.00
OSAT Golden Gardens	0.00	0.00	128.00	0.00	128.00

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ESIG March 2021 Group Contributions

	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21	Apr 21	TOTAL
Redmond Recovery	0.00	0.00	250.00	0.00	250.00
Regla 62	0.00	80.00	40.00	40.00	160.00
Sammamish Big Book Study	0.00	0.00	0.00	140.00	140.00
Serenity Break	0.00	242.46	0.00	299.87	542.33
Serenity on Sunday	200.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	200.00
Seven & Sober	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,250.00	4,250.00
Sharing the Legacy	0.00	250.00	30.00	0.00	280.00
Snoqualmie Stag	90.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	90.00
Sober Seniors	0.00	150.00	0.00	0.00	150.00
The Overlake Group	125.00	0.00	63.00	0.00	188.00
Tiger Mountain OSAT	0.00	120.00	0.00	0.00	120.00
Tuesday Issaquah Big Book Stag	0.00	300.00	0.00	0.00	300.00
Tuesday Nite Starters	0.00	0.00	100.00	0.00	100.00
Wake Up	0.00	426.98	0.00	0.00	426.98
Women's Saturday Steps	288.00	0.00	0.00	260.71	548.71
Women In Recovery	0.00	244.18	0.00	195.18	439.36
TOTAL	1,703.00	2,813.62	1,483.00	2,185.76	8,185.38

Don't Panic if you don't see your group contribution!

During the pandemic a good portion of our contributions have been coming in via Venmo and PayPal. Quite often the donation is in the name of an individual so we list it as anonymous if we don't have a group name to associate with it. This is why Anonymous Donations are so high on here.

If you know your group contributed, please call Nancy at 425-454-9192 with the date and amount and she will be happy to move the contribution from anonymous to the appropriate group.

Thank you all for your support!

Office Information

13401 NE Bel-Red Rd., Suite B6
Bellevue, WA, 98005

Phone: 425-454-9192
24-Hours a Day

Email: esig@eastsideaa.org
Website: eastsideaa.org

Office Hours: Open!
Mon - Thurs 10AM-5:30PM
Fri 10AM-5:00PM

Office Manager: Nancy O.
Email: NancyO@eastsideaa.org
Office Assistant: Janet S.
Email: JanetS@eastsideaa.org
Intergroup Representative Meeting
First Thursday of each month
7:30 pm-8:30 pm via Zoom

[https://zoom.us/j/181768191?
pwd=MG02L21hZXk1Y3N0UG1pZnlsVFKQT09](https://zoom.us/j/181768191?pwd=MG02L21hZXk1Y3N0UG1pZnlsVFKQT09)
All members welcome!

Pink Can Donations

Seven & Sober
Sunrise Group



Newsletter Contributors

Lead Story.....Carmen A.
From the Spiral.....Matthew T.
Kelli's Korner.....Kelli K.
Office Report.....Nancy O.
Editor.....Kyle E.

Interested in sharing your experience, strength, and hope in this newsletter? Send your story to us!

newsletter@eastsideaa.org

Errata (New Section!)

- None that I know of, but that could change!

Ed: This is where I provide corrections to the previous newsletters! As a volunteer and humble servant of Eastside Intergroup and A.A., I am prone to mistakes, and this new column is where I get to practice the principle of righting wrongs.

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

Eastside Intergroup

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Western Washington Area 72

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Bellingham, WA, 98226

General Service Office (GSO)

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New York, NY, 10163

District 34

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

District 35

Issaquah
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Issaquah, WA, 98027

District 36

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

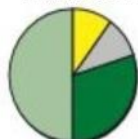
District 38

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

Publication Information

The *Personal Stories*, *From the Spiral*, *Kelli's Korner*, and *And Finally...* sections in *Pass It On* are the recovery experiences of the individual contributor. They are neither conference approved nor endorsed by the General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous

Photo Info:
Pg 1—Solar Eclipse, August 21, 2017

Pass It On is a publication of Eastside Intergroup



And Finally... *... from the Editor*

Okay, I missed last month, and I'm not even sure if I have a good reason. Sure, I could say I was celebrating my one-year anniversary of delivering the newsletter (except that was March), or I had sunshine fever (seems like we had some beautiful weather in April), or that I had to nurse the dishwasher along while we waited for delivery of a replacement (yes). Truth is, there will always be something to pull me away from something. Distraction. Procrastination.

This seems to be especially true when it is time for morning meditation and prayer. I spent many occasions throughout sobriety giving myself excuses for lapsing on this leg of my recovery. Much of it was 'not knowing how' to meditate. I spent a long time saying that since I didn't understand it, and listening to how others weren't doing it, to justify that I didn't have to meditate.

In attending a lot of meetings, working with others, and service work, a thought came to me that if I could not get past the roadblock of meditation, I could not honestly say I was working all of the steps.

Step 11 in the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions gives several ways to try, and provides encouragement to research the many insights of prayer and of meditation in other literature. Page 98 tells me: "There is a direct linkage among self-examination, meditation, and prayer. Taken separately, these practices can bring much relief and benefit. But when they are logically related and interwoven, the result is an unshakable foundation for life." Further down the same page, "We will want the good that is in us all, even in the worst of us, to flower and to grow. Most certainly we shall need bracing air and an abundance of food. But first of all we shall want sunlight; nothing much can grow in the dark. Meditation is our step out into the sun."

Interestingly, the time it takes me to talk myself out of prayer and meditation could easily be used to actually do it!

I think I'm starting to see the sun...

If you have a blurb or idea you would like to have published in the ESIG newsletter Pass It On, or suggestions or commentary on content, please reach out to me at newsletter@eastsideaa.org !

- Kyle E.