



PASS IT ON

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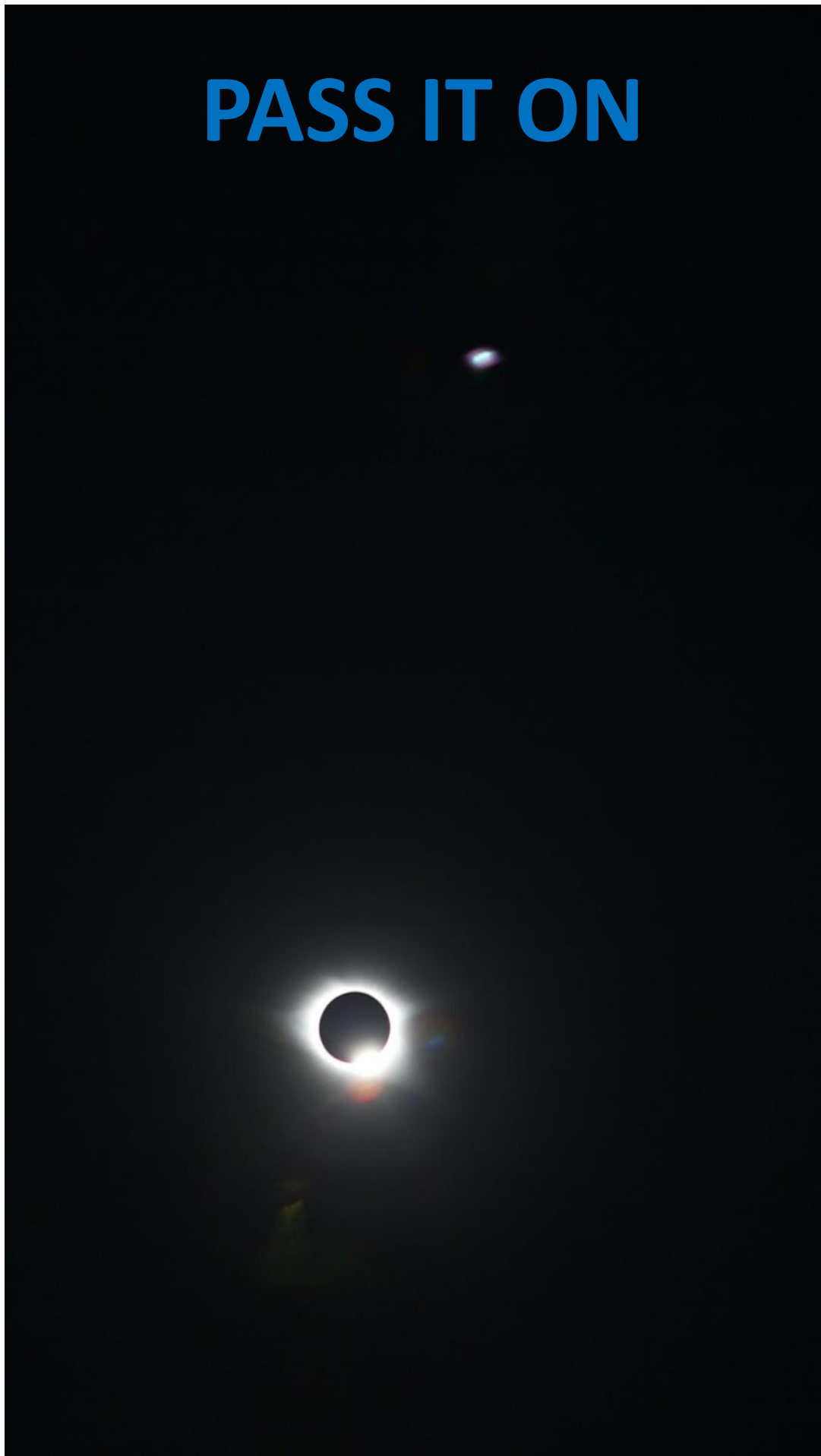
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PASS IT ON

Eastside Intergroup Newsletter

Issue 61 March 2022

I Wanted to Know How

“You are a late-stage, chronic alcoholic and you’re dying of a fatal disease.” Those were the words spoken by the demur and seemingly mild marriage counselor I hired to fix my broken wife. Or so I believed. He repeated that sentence again for effect, but this time tapping each word into the center of the chest of my full-length leather overcoat. I was shattered.

It was early January of 1999 and I had just come off my best year yet work-wise. My then wife had a good job, we had a nice home, two cars in the garage and loads of travel, dining, and entertainment. Despite it all, alcohol and drugs managed to create an unbridgeable intimacy chasm in our marriage which would be its demise. Our visit to this “relationship professional” did the one thing I was most afraid of. It allowed space for a neutral party to make a very clinical (and obvious) diagnosis. I was an alcoholic. I was terrified.

After a long, sleepless night I called the only person in the world that I knew who used to drink like me but didn’t anymore. My friend Eric had 8 years of sobriety under his belt by this time. We had known each other for years from around the neighborhood. We played league darts in the same Irish bars in Queens. We lost touch just after high school but ended up reacquainted by virtue of a common business relationship. He was different though. No longer the happy-go-lucky guy I knew from the bars, he was sullen and stoic. I asked the owner of the company he worked for what happened and he replied “Oh, Eric has the weakness! He’s on the wagon!” So, I decided to give him a pretty wide berth but ended up with a front row seat of his recovery from the beginning. I watched him go from living in his car, to renting an apartment, to buying a small house, to finding “the girl” to getting married, buying a bigger house, getting the “corner office” promotion...you get the picture. His upward trajectory was undeniable. He was happy. And he was sober.

I wanted to know how. So, we had the first of several 5-hour plus phone calls into the wee hours of the morning as he was on the east coast. In all honesty, I don’t recall much of what we spoke about. I know I threw every single intellectual argument I could string together to dismiss the notion that I could possibly be an alcoholic only to have them shot down by the facts already in evidence in our discussions. These chats always concluded with his extracting a promise from me that I would go to a meeting. I agreed, reluctantly.

They were awful at first. In fact, the first two meetings I went to were held in buildings that didn’t seem like they were fit for any human occupancy. This only enhanced my argument in seeing the “differences” rather than the “similarities” that I was so blind to. I just couldn’t let myself identify with anyone I met.

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And Finally...

by Kyle E.

I Wanted to Know How

(Continued from Pg 2)

My third meeting was the 7:30 Happy Destinies meeting at the ESAC. I met Sally C. that night (rest her soul) and she practically forced me to go to coffee at Denny's after the meeting. This despite my assurances that I was NOT a "Denny's" kind of guy. That evening terminated with a promise that I would return to club the next evening at 7:30 so Sally could take me to meet "my people". I wasn't sure what she meant, but I had now been to just enough meetings to have become truly afraid of the consequences of taking that first drink.

I met Sally as promised and we drove over to the Saturday Night Speakers Meeting. This meeting was much larger than any of the previous three. And everyone looked like that had all cleaned up well.

Vic K. was one of the speakers that night and he was in rare form, delivering a message through wit and irony with mastery. I laughed harder that night that I had in years. I also felt better than I had in a long, long time.

I also met Joe W. that night who became my sponsor. He wasted no time in introducing me to the fellowship far and wide. I'm pretty sure we saw each other a meeting every single day (sometime more than one) for several years. He introduced to me the men of the Monday night East Side Stag, which became my Homegroup. My first night, there was an announcement about an open service position, cleaning coffee pots and putting away chairs. Joe immediately volunteered me to fill that position. Much as I didn't fancy the idea, I decided I'd use the time to talk to some of these men and really understand what I was getting into.

I was several weeks into the program when it finally occurred to me that I no longer felt a compulsion to drink. When I mentioned this to Joe, he indicated that it was probably time to do my 4th Step inventory. He showed me precisely how to do that, right out of the Big Book, then gave me a date by which he expected me to do my 5th step. This was not an appointment I desired to postpone.

By this time my wife left the marriage as she was continuing to write the chapter on her first step, with divorce being the inevitable conclusion. I had nothing to come home to, so I immersed myself in the program and the fellowship, making many friends and acquaintances along the way. I worked all the steps and began helping others in earnest. Men like Dean T., Lloyd B., and Bob A. were instrumental guides on my path and I will always be so grateful to them for their kindness.

Jobs came and went as I ventured out, to understand what it was I really wanted to do with my life. With each new opportunity afforded me I faced a choice. I could either put my work on the plane of service and bring the tools of recovery to the business at hand, or I could attempt to squeeze whatever I could out of the job and move on. The latter being my instinctive approach, I found it much more gratifying to show up to work with my program front and center. My pal Eric reminded me that if he hadn't shared his story with me over the years, I may not have had someone to talk to about my alcoholism when I was ready. I have tried to bring the openness of my experience to every aspect of my life where appropriate.

After being mostly single during my sobriety, a program friendship developed into a romantic relationship with my wife, Mia. We spent a relatively long time getting to know each other before becoming intimate. I had always secretly harbored a fear that I may never meet "my person". But once again, I watched my fears melt away in the bright light of the promises like virtually every other unrealized fear I've nurtured.

What began as a lark, became a hobby and, eventually, a career choice. Mia and I decided to move down to Southern California to pursue our interest in the Entertainment Industry. It took us no time at all to reproduce the quality of fellowship in recovery down here that we enjoyed in WA. I spent the first 5 years at a noon meeting every day, plugging into our vast network of rich program experience.

Now, after almost 15 years living here, we do remember our "sober roots" with great nostalgia. We each realize how lucky we were to have such strong role models in recovery as we enjoyed in our Eastside community.

Our gratitude for all we've been given continues to be the guiding force behind all our success.

-Phil I.

From the Spiral #31

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 get to be the _____ that my _____ deserves.*

For this line, I decided to leave it blank for you so that as you reflect on your healing, you can fill in the blank lines as many times as you would like. For me, I get to be the husband that my wife deserves...most days. Truth be told, I have my challenges, but I have come a long way from how I behaved in my marriage when I was drinking. The program has taught me that love is not just something that one asks for, receives, and takes. Love goes both ways. I try to look at love as something that I give without reservation. I love by giving my time, attention, and experience away to others. What I have found is that when I give love, I feel a lot better than when love is given to me. The feeling of accomplishment and action of service is incredible and I highly recommend it to you regardless of where you are in the steps. As your sponsor suggests ways for you to give more and take less, you may find it easier to fill in the blanks of the above line.

2. *The small wins add up.*

It's not easy to observe yourself succeeding because as alcoholics, we tend to set an unrealistic bar so that we can always fail and then have a reason to detach from life in our bottles, pills, and other methods of excess. To this day, I still set myself up for failure, but along the way, I do manage some small wins. Unfortunately I cannot see these wins until someone else reminds me, which is why I am so staunch about having a sponsor and a close group of brothers and sisters from the program in your life. As you go through your week and month, you may find yourself overcome by low energy and a sensitive temperament. Be assured that you are probably winning more than you know, so please reach out to your sponsor, go to a meeting, meet with another alcoholic, or do all three so that you can let someone else show you the scoreboard.

3. *Alcohol wasn't my problem---it was my solution.*

I used alcohol and drugs as an anesthetic. A dentist uses an anesthetic to deaden the nerves so that the patient will feel no pain. My solution was to feel no pain. I am my problem and more specifically, the brain between my ears is the problem. The more I could drink, the easier it was to achieve quiet, calm, and numbness. Step One is all about coming to terms with what your problem really is and that your solution needs to be replaced by faith and works in a power greater than yourself.

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

-Matthew T.



March 2022 Office Report—February Activity

Big Books Available!

After a couple of months of waiting for Big Books that were on back-order at A.A. World Service we've received ours and have plenty available, about 400 to be more precise! Come on in and see us!

Inventory Done!

With Mask Mandates changing it is expected that in-person meetings will increase. With this, we are anticipating an increase in the demand for Pamphlets and Books as well as coins. We've asked the intergroup reps to help us by forecasting demand so we can start ordering.

District 25 – Online Only Meetings

District 25 has been created within Area 72 for online only meetings and has held elections for service positions. If your meeting is a zoom only meeting and plans to stay around even after things open up from the pandemic, you can register at [Register your meeting Area 72](#). Give your group a voice within the service structure of Alcoholics Anonymous. Be sure to indicate District 25. They hold their business meetings on the 3rd Saturday of each month at 4pm. [District 25 Business Meeting](#).

Volunteer Orientation

We had a volunteer orientation meeting on Thursday February 10. There were 4 attendees, 3 of whom were current or prior volunteers. We did bring on one new volunteer, Ken T. Welcome Ken, thank you for your service!

Thank You February Office Volunteers! Debbie M, Lisa S, Wallene D, David B, David R, Ted W, Vince Y, Carla Y, Lana A, Ken T, Terry McG, Jim McM. We appreciate your service!

12th Step Call List – We would still like to bolster our 12th Step capabilities by growing the number of people to take these calls. We've been chatting with Seattle Intergroup and would like to combine forces and have a wide area with numbers we can call when we need a 12th Step. Our 12th step coordinator, Robert is open to holding workshops when people are interested. They are done on zoom and help give you the basics of what A.A. does do and what A.A. does not do. If you are interested, please email Robert at 12thstep@eastsideaa.org.

We would like to ask our Intergroup Reps to reach out to members of their Home Groups and find out if there is interest of being on the 12th Step Call list. Most often the call you receive will be referred from a hotline volunteer who needs you to cover more information with the person.

What's the Difference Between the Hotline and the 12th Step List – The 24-Hour Hotline number is the Eastside Intergroup main number, 425-454-9192. This number is always available. During office hours, the phones ring at the Intergroup Office where a volunteer answers the call and after hours the calls are forwarded to an answering service. The service has a copy of the volunteer list maintained by Tom Z. our Hotline Coordinator hotline@eastsideaa.org. People that answer the 24-hour phone line are generally answering questions about Alcoholics Anonymous, about particular meetings, etc. When a caller needs extra help it gets referred to the 12th step call list. This may be someone looking for a ride, a person attending their first meeting that wants to meet someone first and many other scenarios.



March 2022 Office Report—February Activity

(Continued from Pg 5)

ESIG Zoom Committee Chair Meeting – Thursday March 10th we are holding a zoom meeting with all our committee chairs to hear ideas, questions, comments and to find out how we may better reach out to our Districts to be of service. Any District committee chairs that would like to attend are welcome.

Meeting ID: 879 6504 0088 Passcode: 052524 [Join Zoom Meeting](#) Please submit any topics you would like to cover by March 5th to nancyo@eastsideaa.org

Senior Discounts on Tuesdays – 10% off for anyone over 55 but please keep in mind, we aren't going to ask you if you're a senior, that might be awkward so it's up to you to speak up and let us know!

More ways to Help Support ESIG – If you want to make additional contributions to Eastside Intergroup, we have a couple of ways. Many people donate each year on their annual A.A. birthday. We post your name, Home Group, and number of years of sobriety in our newsletter. [Birthday Club Brochure](#)

Faithful Fivers is another way. This donation is \$5 per month and most people donate with a one time \$60 per year but some donate \$5 each month. We'll list you in the newsletter when you are a member of the Faithful Fivers. [Faithful Fivers Brochure](#)



We also have a QR code for contributions that will direct you to our PayPal account but please indicate how the contribution should be applied – *Thanks!*

Future Tripping – is a flyer of events for the upcoming week that we email out the beginning of every week. If you'd like to get on the list to receive this email, please let us know at esig@eastsideaa.org Subject: Future Tripping. [Sample Future Tripping](#)

ESIG received a generous donation of speaker cassette tapes from various AA conferences dating between the mid 1980's and through about 2012. In total, close to 500 tapes! We are in the process of cataloging them by speaker, AA/Al-anon, Conference and year. We are looking for someone who may have the capability to convert these cassettes to digital format. Primarily for preservation, but maybe someday we could have a digital lending library? The ask here is for digital conversions services. We did a cursory search and found that commercially it is expensive and likely not a good use of ESIG resources.

Stop in and Meet Doug - If you haven't already met Doug, I hope you'll stop in sometime soon. He's at ESIG Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons, all day Thursday and mornings on Friday. Doug is doing a fabulous job and I'm excited for people to get to know him. You can even stop in for a cup of coffee!

Is Nancy Retiring??? – Several people have asked if I'm retiring so I thought I'd try to clear it up. I am not retiring any time soon. Last year was rough with my health but things have turned around. I love working for Eastside Intergroup and with the help of our new assistant Doug, I don't have plans to leave anytime soon.

Thanks for letting us be of service!

Cheers!

Nancy O. & Doug H.

NancyO@eastsideaa.org

Doug_H@eastsideaa.org

MARCH RAFFLE! – Come in and purchase a raffle ticket prior to Saint Patrick's Day March 17th for a chance to win a Book Cover that holds both the Big Book and the 12 & 12 (your choice of color and size) Drawing on March 17th – Need not be present to win.

Tickets \$1 each, 6 for \$5 and 12 for \$10. Good Luck!



Volunteers! Generosity! Birthday Club!

Thank You Hotline Volunteers!

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

24 Hours



425-454-9192

Thank You Office Volunteers!

Lana A. Ken T. Terry Mc. Jim Mc. Carla Y. David R. Debbie M.
 Lisa S. Wallene D. David B. Ted W. Jan W. Vince Y. Aysen R.

Thank you Steve E. our Facilities Manager for installing our new lock and a bunch of other helpful stuff!!!

Faithful Fivers!

Faithful Fivers donate \$5/month to support ESIG

Mary B. Nancy O. Terri P. David W.

Birthday Club!



Your Name Here!!
Your Sobriety Count!!
Your Home Group!!
Let people know that AA works!!



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!

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 YTD 2022 Group Contributions

Group Name	Jan 22	Feb 22	TOTAL
Anonymous	453.10	183.75	636.85
Bel East Lunch	116.00	0.00	116.00
Bellevue New Group	0.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
Benevity Fund Donation	650.00	400.00	1,050.00
Big Book Step Study	140.37	0.00	140.37
Came To Believe (Carnation)	54.00	0.00	54.00
Counter Sales	30.92	151.22	182.14
Duvall Sunday Morning	50.00	0.00	50.00
Eastside Men's Group	0.00	10.00	10.00
Eastside Women	0.00	178.00	178.00
Frontstream (Costco)	1,209.60	0.00	1,209.60
Gay Men In Recovery	540.00	0.00	540.00
Grace Rules	268.00	0.00	268.00
Issaquah Tuesday Night Group	72.00	0.00	72.00
Joy Of Living	0.00	275.00	275.00
Kenmore Big Book	200.00	0.00	200.00
Kindred Spirits	100.00	0.00	100.00
Kirkland Sobriety Headquarters	0.00	125.00	125.00
Living Sober	0.00	608.58	608.58
Midway Group	171.00	0.00	171.00
Moss Bay	125.00	0.00	125.00
Nameless Bunch Of Drunks	1,250.00	1,250.00	2,500.00
Nameless Bunch of Drunks International	646.50	591.71	1,238.21
Nooners	127.25	0.00	127.25
Nooners Online	0.00	256.38	256.38
Raging On The River	50.00	0.00	50.00
Redmond Recovery	250.00	0.00	250.00
Regla 62 Grupo	40.00	40.00	80.00
Serenity Break	0.00	332.49	332.49
Serenity Break Online	125.00	0.00	125.00
Seven & Sober	1,500.00	1,000.00	2,500.00
Sisters of the Forest	40.00	75.00	115.00
Snoqualmie Stag	90.00	0.00	90.00
Sober Gals	2.00	0.00	2.00
Sober Seniors	100.00	0.00	100.00
Steppin Up	40.00	4.00	44.00
Sunrise	927.69	0.00	927.69
Up The Creek	0.00	40.00	40.00
Wake Up	20.90	96.62	117.52
Women's Saturday Steps	300.00	0.00	300.00
Women In Recovery	226.19	0.00	226.19
Women of Worth	0.00	75.00	75.00
Total	9,915.52	6,692.75	16,608.27

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

Intergroup Representative Meeting
First Thursday of each month
7:30 pm-8:30 pm via Zoom

[https://zoom.us/j/181768191?
pwd=MG02L21hZXk1Y3N0UG1pZnNLSVFKQT09](https://zoom.us/j/181768191?pwd=MG02L21hZXk1Y3N0UG1pZnNLSVFKQT09)
All members welcome!

Pink Can Donations

Seven & Sober

\$781.87

Sunrise Group

Eastside Women

Kirkland Sobriety
Headquarters



Newsletter Contributors

Lead Story	
From the Spiral	Matthew T.
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

- No one complained!

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

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

Western Washington Area 72

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

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, Duval, North Bend
P.O. Box 1963
North Bend, WA, 98045

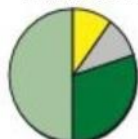
District 38

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*, *Inspiration Spot*, 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

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Pg 1—Solar Eclipse, August 21, 2017

Pass It On is a publication of Eastside Intergroup



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

It's kind of interesting how there are different ways to start the day. For me, it has come down to only two: (1) Prayer and Meditation, or (2) Not.

Now, when I say "prayer and meditation", I mean that I take some time to put my mind on a recovery plane, no matter what form that takes or how long. It means I now have a recovery reference point instead of "me", for times life comes and I have to employ some thinking.

If I'm on a recovery plane, I'm more likely to pause, more likely to be kind, and more likely to tell the truth. Why? Because I've shifted from "me" to "more". I'm less likely to be instantly reactive.

And you know what? I really could have used that time this morning! Instead, it was rush-rush-rush, feelings got hurt, emotions took over, and now I'm doing tenth steps left and right.

So again it comes down to the easier, softer way. Sure, it might be easier and softer to not spend some quiet time in the mornings. That extra nine minutes in bed sure is nice! But doing a tenth step, or two, or five, later in the day? The choice seems obvious.

Maybe I don't have to hit the snooze so many times tomorrow...

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.