

THE MESSAGE

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2022

Service Work in Sobriety

A Collective Intergroup Letter to The Fellowship of Area 14

Dear A.A. Members Within Area 14,

In the next couple of months, service commitments are coming to an end and Groups, Districts and Intergroups will be having elections for a new round of trusted servants. For the past year and a half, those of us who have a mutual interest in both Intergroups and General Service, have been gathering at the Area Assemblies to discuss various roadblocks and means of collaboration and cooperation between these incredibly vital A.A. entities.

We ask you to keep these ideas and suggestions in mind when considering how you want to serve A.A.:

Intergroup (IG Rep) and General Service Representatives (GSR), do not only serve their groups but the Fellowship at large. Both of these group representatives are a link in Fellowship wide communication chains where information flows. While it is important that your group be informed of what each branch of A.A. is doing, it is more essential that your group's voice is carried back to that entity.

“The Fourth Dimension that Bill W. talks about is out here and most of us found it when we began serving A.A. outside of our Home Groups.”

There are also more opportunities for service within Intergroups and General Service than simply carrying reports back and forth. Each facet of service has its own committees that work to carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous to the still suffering alcoholic. Be prepared to surprise yourself when you find spiritual gifts you didn't know you had. This often happens in service when you say yes to something new. You may also learn what you are not good at, which is as equally important. It is prized information to know that you are a better secretary than a public speaker, or that you are a better workshop organizer than a treasurer.

All entities that serve A.A. are interconnected and ever evolving. These entities that both serve the alcoholic, whether the alcoholic is suffering or not, need to be connected to each other. Often the services and committees are repeated at Intergroups and Districts. Liaisons that are willing to report between Intergroups and Districts are vital so that service groups

know what the other is doing. This way efforts and energy can join and be shared rather than repeated and possibly wasted. These entities can utilize each other's services to reach more people.

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Step 11

“Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of his will for us and the power to carry that out”



This is a spiritual step. We are making a mindful attempt at bettering our understanding of the path that our Higher Power has for us by talking and listening to our higher power through prayer and meditation.

You may occasionally find it necessary to be in the spotlight. You may find yourself being an educator and you will definitely have to be a cheerleader! This may involve explaining the purpose of a committee to encourage people to volunteer or sharing with your group how a Tradition has been implemented to come to a solution. Responsibility of sharing, educating and leading coming with the obligation of learning. But don't worry. You will meet people who have done this service for a long time. Service sponsors are real and they will present themselves to you just as Step Sponsors did when you were ready. All capable leaders follow the lead of someone else.

We hope that this letter does not intimidate or offend. We hope that it will stimulate interest and excitement. The Fourth Dimension that Bill W. talks about is out here and most of us found it when we began serving A.A. outside of our Home Groups. There is much satisfaction and gratitude in extending the hand of A.A. to the alcoholic before they walk into our rooms and that is the purpose of Intergroup and General Service. Then we can open the door for them and greet them when they arrive.

In Sincere Love and Service,
The Area 14 Intergroup Committee

Having
HAD A
spiritual awakening

AS A RESULT OF THESE **STEPS** TO ALCOHOLICS
and to **PRACTICE**
these principles in all our affairs

WE TRIED TO CARRY THIS MESSAGE

Step 12

By helping other alcoholics you are...

- Reminded of where you once were and where you no longer want to be ■
- Held accountable ■
- Given a sense of purpose ■
- Kept active in your recovery ■
- Enhancing your fellowship with others ■

And you are helping others by...

- being someone a new person to recovery can trust ■
- sharing your insights and wisdom ■
- being an inspiration and an example of successful recovery ■

When we join a 12 step program, where no one has a last name. We're often given a "handle" that becomes our claim to fame. So meet some of our new fellows, with "tongue in cheek" good fun. Because when we can laugh with each other, Recovery has begun!



Joyous Julia is full of fun and joy when she enters the room it is like a burst of golden sunshine. Her message is: "Joy is always in your head and your heart."



Holly was born on Christmas Day and she was always 'happy' until she found alcohol. Then for the next 10 years her holidays were a blur. Today Holly is looking forward to picking up her 2-year chip and happy to celebrate both of her birthdays.

Intergroup5.org Corner



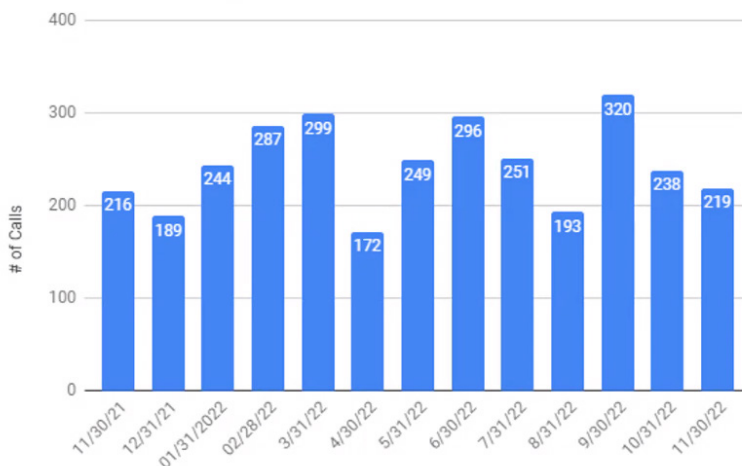
The “Primary Purpose” of Intergroup 5 is to assist AA groups in District 5 to carry the AA message to the alcoholic who still suffers. These functions are: (1) Providing a 24 hour “Hotline” service; (2) Making available [free pamphlets \(to individuals and groups\) and AA literature for purchase](#); (3) Maintaining a website that provides information on meetings, events, etc. related to AA; and (4) Publishing a newsletter for groups in the AA community. Please submit an article for this newsletter at intergroup5.org - Editor: message@intergroup5.org

Need 12th Step Work?

Intergroup5 Hotline has four openings. Interested in service work, contact Evelyn at helpline@intergroup5.org

Intergroup5’s business meeting is the first Wednesday every month, online at 7pm, via Zoom. The link to this online meeting is at the top of the intergroup5.org homepage. Intergroup5 service representative is an excellent way to perform recovery service work. Check with your A.A. group about being a representative. Please note everyone is welcome to attend these online meetings. Come see how it all happens.

AA Hotline Calls by Month 2021-2022

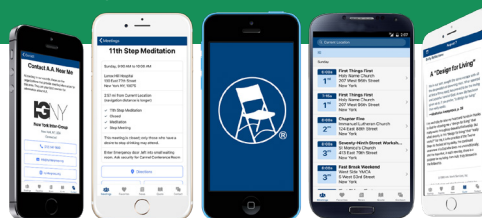


“**Newcomer Packets**” are now available from the Literature Store free to each A.A. group, with up to 6 packets per month as long as funds permit. Order yours from the Intergroup5 Literature Store.

Contact Intergroup5 for further information regarding any of our activities.

Get Your Own Personal “Where & When”

Download the Meeting Guide App! Intergroup5 has integrated our information with the Meeting Guide App. You can find a link for both Google Play and The Apple Store on the meetings page of intergroup5.org (<https://intergroup5.org/meetings>). The Meeting Guide can help you find meetings for many areas, including online meeting info.



Service Rep Does Your Group Have One?



SCAN ME



The Spirit of Service

When we first come into the program of Alcoholics Anonymous we are introduced to the practical aspects of service such as, making coffee, reading chapter 5 at the meeting, leading the meeting, and eventually becoming secretary of the group, and for the person who has had “fear of responsibility”, when that 6 month obligation comes to an end, they are all too happy to give it up.

These little preliminary responsibilities are just like training wheels and somewhere down the road we ask that same person to take that job again, and things aren't nearly as scary as the first time. These little activities are a veiled approach to taking that person out of his comfort zone and show them that they had nothing to fear in the first place.

The next thing I see when we take on service commitments is that our Ego does not want us doing these things. It wants us to make up excuses for why we can't do it and seems to have something to do with “fear of commitment”. A new person must be assured that they can't mess up an AA meeting and there is nothing to be afraid of; they always have a room full of people willing to help for they have been there themselves. This all helps us begin the process of taking our lives back from our Ego and that guy doesn't give up easily.

Service doesn't always come by way of a formal commitment but neither does neglect; a word I seldom ever hear being used in the rooms of AA. We know how to open a door for someone and how a gesture like that can warm our hearts ever so slightly and we never regret that we did it.

We alcoholics have spent a lifetime neglecting those little informal acts of service and as the result, there's not too much to like about ourselves. It cost us nothing to open a door or to make our bed or to return a shopping cart back to the rack, and what is to stop us from doing these things? You got it: Our Ego.

Alcoholics Anonymous is often referred to as an education in the art of living. The things we learn in the program are meant to be taken with us out into the community at large. As the result of the early service

commitments, that we are encouraged to perform, our confidence is restored, if only a little at a time, and we can face the risks and challenges that we used to avoid.

Service commitments and gestures are what I see as, the first step toward healing our conscience and the more selfless we become, the more our self esteem is restored and most of us become strong enough to take on those formal service commitments that we used to shy away from.

A lifetime of neglect has left us without much to like about ourselves but I can tell you from experience that the sack of rocks we hear mention of, in AA meetings, is not so full of rocks as it is full of pebbles depicting all of the little responsibilities that we selfishly neglected in the past that weighs on our conscience and produces

the negative vision that we have of ourselves. We didn't get that way over night and it will take time to establish a track record of unselfishness of the spirit.

One by one, as we recognize them, we must replace those deeds, that we selfishly ignored in the past, with unselfish actions, one pebble at a time, without

expecting anything in return. As we replace one negative habit with one kind habit we will feel an overwhelming surge of warmth inside that no amount of material gain could ever produce.

Unselfishness heals the spirit and the only one that is on the losing end of this level of service is my Ego. This is the true spirit of Alcoholics Anonymous. What more can I say?

By Rick R., Cleveland

<https://www.aacle.org/the-spirit-of-service/>

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