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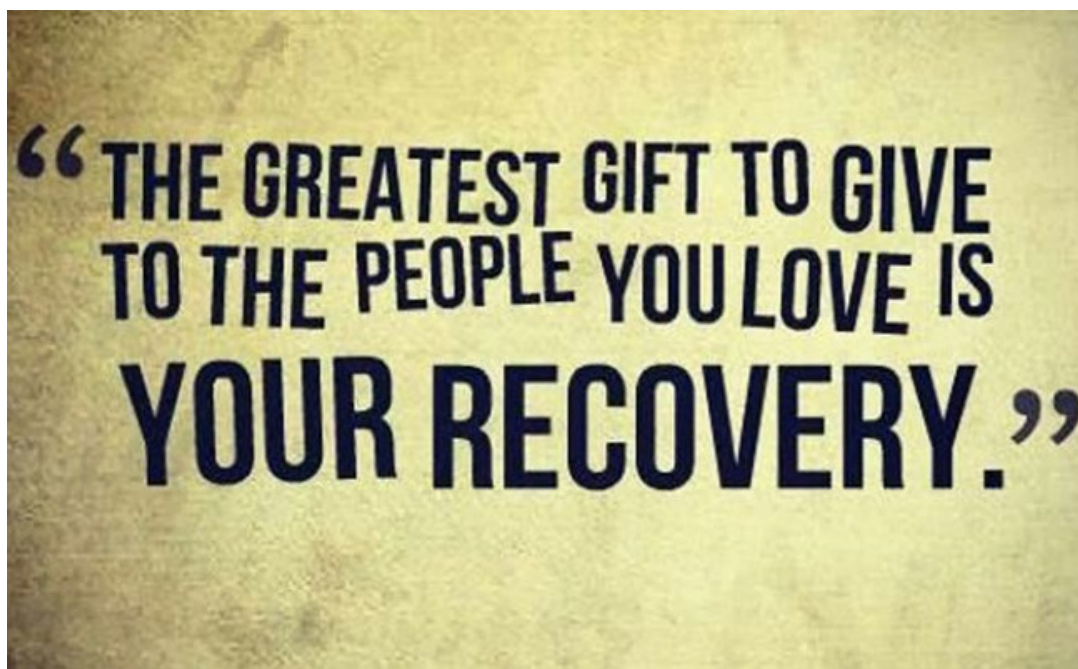
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# Sheets of Sobriety December 2020

[SOS@indyaa.org](mailto:SOS@indyaa.org)

**It's a beautiful day to be sober**



What kind of Service work do you do for your sobriety?

How has service work help keep you sober?

**"GSR, ALT DCM, CO-CHAIR HI & TREATMENT CENTERS, CORRECTIONS CHAIR AREA 22, SPONSOR, TWO BIG BOOK STUDIES A WEEK"**

**"Since covid, I have been hosting 3 zoom meetings weekly including a sponsor/sponsee meeting so my girls get to know their sisters in recovery. This helps them build a network. It's different today for folks getting sober when we don't have in person meetings. We meet via zoom to work steps, we have have discussed the triangle legacies of Unity, Service and Recovery, the Traditions and slogans. They don't get these as easily since they aren't attending meetings physically."**

**"I've done it all. I've learned that if I can survive and thrive on a committee of alcoholics and get anything accomplished, I can do anything in the world. Anything. The traditions work.**

**Sponsoring is not service work "per say"; it's the 12th step of the program. I sponsor for my life, not for others. Therefore, I'm serving me and NOT the fellowship in sponsoring.**

**Sponsorship is not optional for recovery; our lives depend on it. It's an ancillary benefit to the fellowship but a primary benefit for me.**

**The three legacies:**

**Recovery=steps**

**Unity=traditions**

**Service=concepts**

**It is because people see service work as "optional," that not**

**all do it. That is not "the message" to be carried."**

**"Service work helps to keep me sober, grounded and my mind off myself! I chair, make coffee, run a counter at a fellowship club & sponsor guys."**

**"It's about joining in. Being apart of like minded beautiful people. There are so many miracles in this program. In AA not around AA"**

**"Service work saved my grace 100 times over!!!! Grateful"**

**"When first getting sober I made the coffee. I try to always have a meeting commitment (Intergroup, secretary). I try to always have a sponsee or two in steps 1-3. It's harder with COVID now. I was volunteering at the jail but the program has been paused again. I only got to go one time. Service work gets me out of myself and I always feel great after helping someone."**

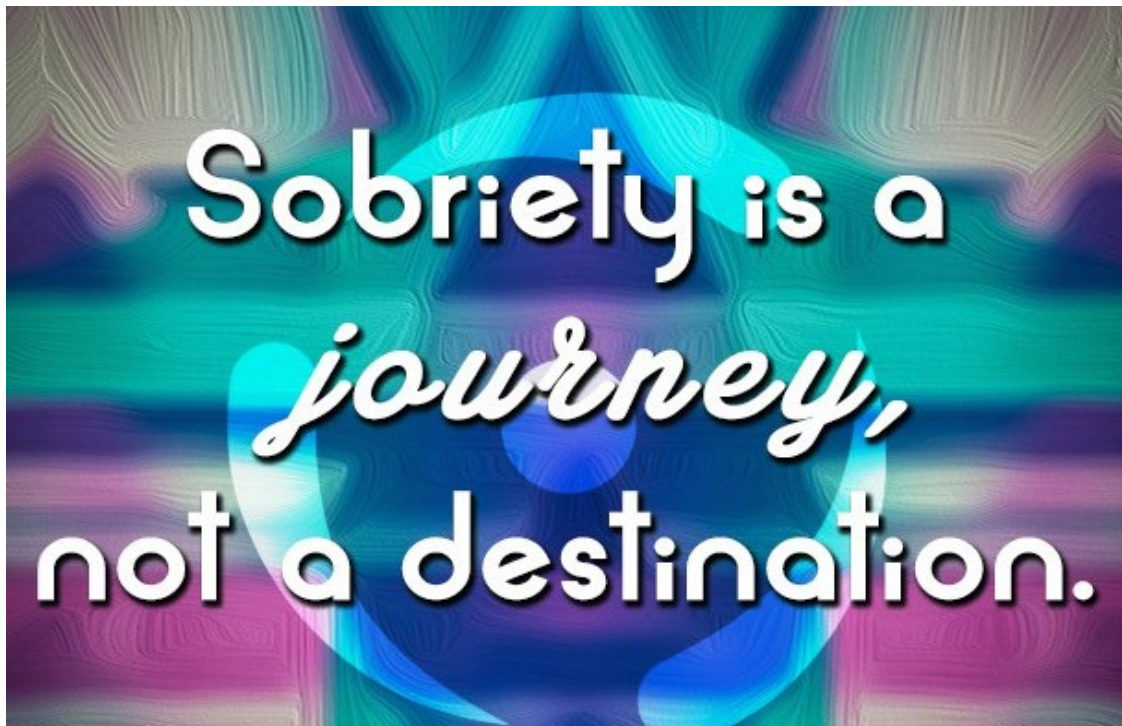
**"Make coffee. Chair. Gets me to commit"**

**"It's being a part of a wonderful whole and giving what was so freely given to me. I chair meetings, sponsor, give rides to other women to meetings, arrange service opportunities for others, serve as treasurer for my home group and co-treasurer for District 18, Intergroup rep. My work schedule allows me time to make these commitments, and I get the benefit of feeling useful and connecting with a wide variety of people in our recovery community."**

**"I was secretary for a meeting I had only been going to for a couple of weeks and theirs had to quit suddenly, did it for almost 2 years. Definitely needed that at that point in my sobriety, about a year in"**

"I was the editor of the South Eastern InterGroup news letter for 2 years. Now I'm in charge of our Fall Conference Registration. I also sponsor 3 ladies... and as far as giving back to the community, I sit on the Board of Directors for my local Food Bank, where I serve as the Treasure. Service work is very important to me, not only in AA but also within my community."

"Facilitating the zoom portion of the Sunday 8:30am 11th Step (meditation) meeting at SNC gets me to the meeting every week. And my sponsee helps keep me sober!"



## Interview with an Old Timer

Doug

3-26-1997

1) *Why did you come to AA? How did you get here?*

How did you know you were powerless over alcohol? I came to AA by way of the court system. At age 23, I was facing 2 to 15 years in prison for a litany of both civil and criminal charges. I also had a swollen liver, serious kidney infections and everything I owned could fit in a duffel bag. My parents were beside themselves. I'd totaled my car and had no place to live. I didn't know I was powerless over alcohol. When I first heard that statement, I had no idea what it meant. I knew I had a problem with alcohol. But as I came to discover, having an alcohol problem and being powerless over alcohol are two entirely different things.

## ***2) What was your first meeting like?***

It was quite uncomfortable. I was by far, the youngest person in the room. Like most newcomers, I tried to put up a brave front – figuring that nobody could see through it. But everyone did. In truth, the only thing holding me together was my clothes. It was a small, grungy room that was packed to capacity and clouded in a thick haze of cigarette smoke. I was the topic, as I was the newcomer. Everyone talked directly to me, sharing their stories. It wasn't until my third meeting that I met someone about my age.

## ***3) What was the most memorable thing someone did or said to you and your first years of sobriety?***

I was about two months sober when I got a call one night from another young man in my AA group. When I asked why he called, he said he wasn't feeling comfortable in his skin that night and wanted to do something to help himself. To get out of himself. By then I had heard enough in meetings about calling other alcoholics if you're feeling like you may drink or in need of help. He was a few months sober longer than I and I couldn't understand why he'd called me. Why not call someone with more time in the program than himself? He then told me that he had but had been told to call someone with less time than him to see if he could be of help. Because chances were good that they were having a harder time

than he. At first, I was angry, for I thought I was doing okay. But as we talked, I began to understand the concept of getting out of oneself and forgetting ones own problems by listening to the problems of another. I've never forgotten that first AA 12 step call.

#### **4) Why have you stayed and why do you keep coming back?**

I've stayed in AA for what I've now come to discover was the true reason I came to AA in the first place: Because I had no place else to go. AA was the first and still to date, only place where I felt I truly fit in and belonged. I had felt like an outcast and an outsider my entire life. I've often equated AA to the "Island of Misfit Toys". Surely everyone remembers the story of Rudolph the Red- Noised Reindeer and the Claymation television Christmas special where Rudolph meets Hermie, one of Santa's elves who hates being an elf and wants to be a dentist. They both sing the song: "Why am I such a misfit?" Then in a subsequent sequel special, Rudolph and Hermie find themselves on the island of misfit toys. Toys that were cast out for being different, mal-manufactured or broken. That's what I found myself to be and in AA, I finally found others who felt the exact same way. A bunch of square pegs who'd been trying to fit in a round holes all their life. And that's one of many reasons why I keep coming back. In AA, I'm a misfit among misfits. I also found that I can be useful in bring comfort and hope to others. It's also a great pleasure. I've never had so many friends in my life. I also owe a great debt to those that were here when I arrived. I will also never be cured; that my mind is still not my friend. It still is out to kill me or get me drunk whenever it sees an opportunity.

#### **5) What does "Hope" mean to you?**

Peace of Mind! Calm of Heart! Stillness of Soul! Every day is new. That God is in control and that everything is working for His purpose. That I live in His presence and under his constant care and direction. That He can take me further in life than I've ever

dared dreamed if I'm  
willing to take some constructive action.

### **6) What does "Fear" mean to you?**

War in the Mind! Chaos of Heart! Corruption of Soul! That I'm living my life by my plans and designs. That I have edged God out! (EGO) I am forcing life instead of living it; and as such, I am brought to great tension and pain.

### **7) Have you had a spiritual awakening? Tell me about it.**

Like many, my spiritual awakening has taken place in what we call the "educational variety". I did not ever experience a sudden tremendous celestial event or dramatic spiritual upheaval. My spirit has awakened gradually over time through my continued work and practice of the 12 steps and applying the principles behind them. But I will say that the sight of my father coming to tears when I came out of my last drunken debauch affected me in a way that nothing else ever has. For a man to see his father cry...Many men will certainly understand what I mean.

### **8) What was your hardest amends?**

Her name is Tonya. I met her when I was 18 and she was 21. A few months after my 20 th birthday, I was arrested yet again for drunk driving and thrown in jail. My parents were done at this point, and I did not dare call them. Tonya too, was at her wits end with me. I was living in her apartment and she was supporting me; both financially and emotionally. She was also pregnant with my baby. And once again, I was able to sweet talk her and she agreed to come bail me out. On her way, she was involved in serious car accident that nearly took her life. But thankfully, she survived. Tragically, our unborn daughter did not. As fate would have it, she'd been T-boned by a drunk driver, ended up dying from his injuries sustained in that accident. How easily that drunk driver

could've been me. Tonya fully recovered and by the grace of God, was able to have children later in her life.

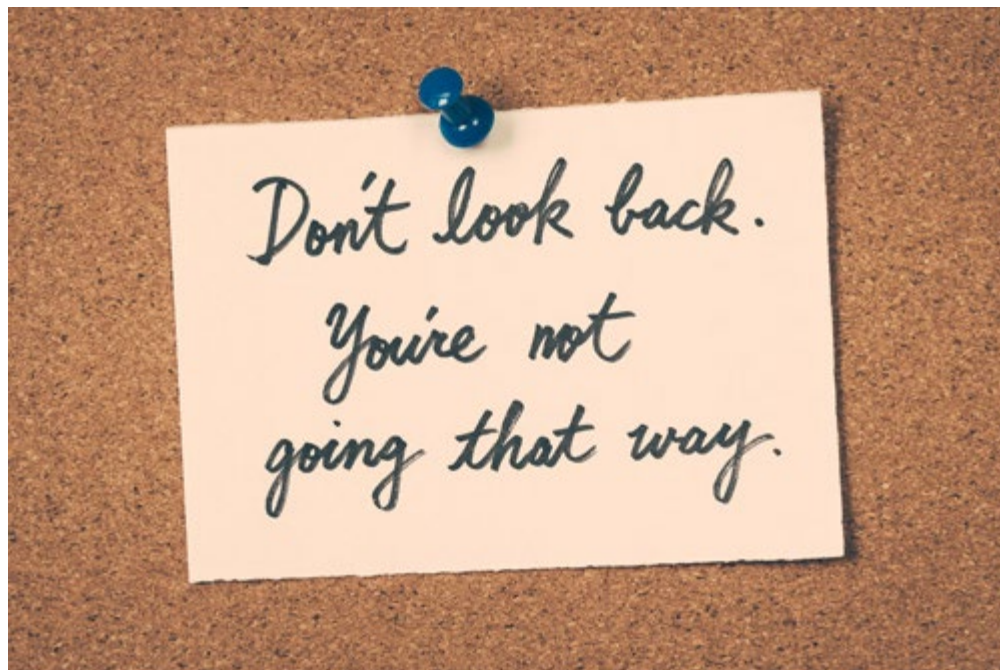
### **9) Tell me about how you work steps 10 and 11?**

Very simply. They have become a working part of my life. I've found that the longer you walk a spiritual path; the narrower your road becomes. By that I mean that certain behaviors that were once acceptable in my early sobriety are no longer so. As you continue to evolve and mature spiritually, unhealthy actions, habits and behaviors become increasingly more uncomfortable to live with. For example, if I steal from you today – it hurts me probably more than you. If I lie or fib to you today, it hurts me far more than you. If I cheat somebody or rage at somebody or ridicule, belittle – those all hurt me far more than the other person. So, you get to a point where it's easier to expel those behaviors than it is to account and amend for them. And as you further develop and deepen your relationship with your Higher Power – your path through life is made far smoother and considerably lighter. The best way to explain is to put it like this: Long ago, God and I made a deal. He said to me, in effect, "Kid, I don't care what you call me, how you call me, when you call – just as long as you do from time to time. I don't care if your angry, sad, glad, raging, sobbing, laughing, yelling, screaming, cussing or even hating me – I want our relationship to be open and totally; even brutally, honest. All that being as it may, as long as you do your best, day in and day out, to look after and take care of my other kids – I will always take care of you!" God, my father! God, my friend! God, my boss! God, my big brother! He is all these things to me. And most of all, he is faithful! He has always taken care of me and I know, He always will.

### **10) What is the best advice you would say to a newcomer?**

Welcome home brother or sister! Now, let's get you a Big Book, my phone number and the time of the next meeting.





## **How Service Has Helped Keep Me Sober**

**By: Brandy D.**

**Date of Sobriety 11-27-2017**

**In Chapter 7, "Working With Others," it says that "Practical Experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics. It works when other activities fail." What I have found is that this statement is true. When I first came into the program in 2010, I failed to heed the suggestions of service work as it was laid out by other alcoholics in the program. I went back out and struggled for 6 more years. When I finally had enough in November of 2017, I listened to those suggestions of others. I picked up a Sponsor, went to meetings and engaged in service work. At 6 months sober, I started taking meetings into the Boone County Jail, and I continue to take meetings into that jail 3 years later. At about 9 months sober, I was voluntold that I would be an Intergroup rep for my Tuesday night Big Book meeting. I held that position for over a year, and I am grateful that I was voluntold and that I was able to serve that group. Other service work that has helped me stay sober**

**includes setting up chairs at meetings, making coffee, greeting, handing out Pamphlets, talking to a newcomer (because I once was that person), passing out sobriety tokens, giving someone a ride to a meeting, picking up that phone when someone calls, reaching out to other alcoholics daily via phone or text, going to meetings, helping with workshops, and sponsoring other women. If I had not been involved in all these things, I know that I would not be sober. I have learned that we must suit up and show up and help others. Without service work, I would not be sober nor be the person I am today.**

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### **CHOICE IN DRINK?**

**Further reflection on Step One brought about a different understanding of its context. The first the two parts of this step are separated by a dash—not a hyphen. A dash fulfills both segments of a sentence, e.g.:**

***“We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.”***

**At first, I considered the second part “unmanageable” to mean; drunk tanks, getting fired again, losing friends, etc.— and it sort of does. However, much more prevalent is the word “powerlessness” in the first part which had caused my life to become “unmanageable.” My real powerlessness was when I started drinking, I could not stop, but when I stopped drinking, I could not stop starting. (Physical Allergy and Mental Obsession).**

**While years of “quitting drinking” failure by use of willpower, I never knew about the allergy obsession syndrome: I never realized that I was powerless; that I had: “no choice in the matter of drink.” (p. 24 of the BB)**

**As alcoholic despair deepened throughout the last Twenty-four years of drinking. My efforts were not superficial: No more Lucky Strike cigarettes! High protein milkshakes! Running! Handball! Swimming! Weightlifting! Why I felt wonderful! Who needs booze? I was like the guy on page 57 of the Big Book (Fitz M): “He couldn’t drink if he would.” But alas, I came to believe that I had to drink whether I chose to or not—it would seem as though “quitting drinking” just got me drunk—and often in short order.**

**Could I have the dramatic relief as Fitz? Well, like Fitz, I asked God for help and have not had to drink alcoholic since my very first AA meeting. Choosing to drink alcohol has been removed from my emotional vocabulary, e.g.: Choosing “to drink” or “not to drink” no longer occurs to me. I certainly hope that “choice in drink” never returns.**

**Bob S**

**Indyaa.org**

# Historical December Dates In A.A.

December 10, 1934 - Bill admitted to Towns Hosp 4th and last time  
December 12, 1934 - Bill has Spiritual Experience at Towns Hospital  
December 13, 1934 - Ebby visited Bill at hospital, brought William James's book, "Varieties of Religious Experience".

1934 - Bill & Lois start attending Oxford Group meetings.

1937 - Rockland State Mental Hospital takes patients to meeting in New Jersey

1937 - Bill meets with Rockefeller Foundation and tries to get money

1938 - Using Oxford Group principles, Bill closes the loopholes and changes the 6 steps to 12.

1939 - 1st AA group in mental institution, Rockland State Hospital, New York

1939 - Drunks in Los Angeles hold their 1st AA meeting there

1940 - Chicago Daily Tribune begins a series of articles on AA by Nell Hamilton

1940 - 1st AA group formed in St. Louis, Missouri

1941 - Dallas Morning News reports 1st AA group formed in Dallas

1943 - Bill speaks to 300 at meeting inside San Quentin

1948 - Dr. Bob's last major talk, in Detroit.

1949 - Sister Ignatia accepts Poverello Medal of St Francis on AA's behalf

1950 - Grapevine article signed by both Bill and Dr Bob

recommend establishing AA General Service Conference.

1955 - 'Man on the Bed' painting by Robert M. first appeared in Grapevine. Painting originally called 'Came to Believe'

1975 - "Birds of a Feather" AA group for pilots is formed

1982 - Nell Wing retires from GSO after 35 years of service

1997 - "As We See It" emailing list started December 8, 1997

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Check out more about Alcoholic Anonymous History at [aa.org](http://aa.org)

**GET INVOLVED!**



Join a Committee

**Intergroup**

# December 13, 2020

Next Intergroup meeting will be January 10, 2020

**Need a Northside Rep~ contact central Office if interested!**

Central Office is open and in need of volunteers to help answer phones! Central Office needs updated Intergroup Rep information  
Call Alex at 317-632-7864 or alex@indyaa.org

## **Service is the Secret!!!**

### ARCHIVES COMMITTEE:

Like any other A.A. service, the primary purpose of those involved in archival work is to carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous. Archives service work is more than mere custodial activity; it is the means by which we collect, preserve, and share the rich and meaningful heritage of our Fellowship. It is by the collection and sharing of these important historical elements that our collective gratitude for Alcoholics Anonymous is deepened.

**Looking for group histories to add to the archives. Email your group history!**

**Contact - archives@indyaa.org**

### CORRECTIONS COMMITTEE:

The purpose of a Corrections committee is to coordinate the work of individual A.A. members and groups who are interested in carrying our message of recovery to alcoholics behind the walls, and to set up means of smoothing the way from the facility to the larger A.A. community through prerelease contacts.

**10 people showed up for orientation to attend online meetings in**

**jails!**

**Contact - [correction@indyaa.org](mailto:correction@indyaa.org)**

### **COOPERATION WITH THE PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY (C.P.C.) COMMITTEE:**

**Members of C.P.C. committees inform professionals and future professionals about A.A.— what we are, where we are, what we can do, and what we cannot do. They attempt to establish better communication between A.A.s and professionals, and to find simple, effective ways of cooperating without affiliating.**

**Looking for a co-chair- service is the secret- email if interested or just wanting more information.**

**Contact - [cpc@indyaa.org](mailto:cpc@indyaa.org)**

### **PUBLIC INFORMATION COMMITTEE:**

**Like all of A.A., the primary purpose of members involved with Public Information service is to carry the A.A. message to the alcoholic who still suffers. Working together, members of local Public Information committees convey A.A. information to the general public, including the media.**

**Has a NEW chair and co-chair!! Will be getting the library project up and running again!**

**Contact - [chair@indyaa.org](mailto:chair@indyaa.org)**

### **TREATMENT and ACCESSIBILITIES COMMITTEE:**

**While A.A. is not affiliated with any form of alcoholism treatment, A.A. Treatment committees are essential in carrying the A.A. message to treatment facilities where the suffering alcoholic may be introduced to A.A. for the first time.**

**Accessibilities Committees assist A.A. members who have a variety of challenges to accessing the A.A. message in A.A. meetings, Twelve Step work and other A.A. service.**

**Looking for groups to go into treatment centers. Email if interested!**

**Contact - [treatment@indyaa.org](mailto:treatment@indyaa.org)**

**TELEPHONE ANSWERING SERVICE (TAS) COMMITTEE:**

**Members of TAS help to continue carry the message when the central office is closed. Members take call for after central office hours to answer general questions about AA, 12 step calls. meeting information and more.**

**Looking for chair and co-char \*Service is the Secret\* Email if interested!!**

**Contact - [tas@indyaa.org](mailto:tas@indyaa.org)**

**SHEETS OF SOBERITY (SOS) COMMITTEE:**

**Assembles articles and submissions for publication from Indianapolis A.A. Members, Intergroup Committee Chairs, and the Central Office Manager for the monthly newsletter; Sheets Of Sobriety (S.O.S.). Publications provided digitally via email subscription and on the [www.indyaa.org](http://www.indyaa.org), both free of charge.**

**Looking for co-chair and members to join the committee! Email if interested.**

**Always looking for fresh stories and poems. Share your story and help the next alcoholic.**

**Contact- [Sos@indyaa.org](mailto:Sos@indyaa.org)**

**DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE:**

**Members of the Development Committee helps to keep the unity in AA. Develops greater group representation at the monthly intergroup meetings.**

**Need Chair and co-chair -Service is the Secret- Email if interested!**

**Contact - [development@indyaa.org](mailto:development@indyaa.org)**



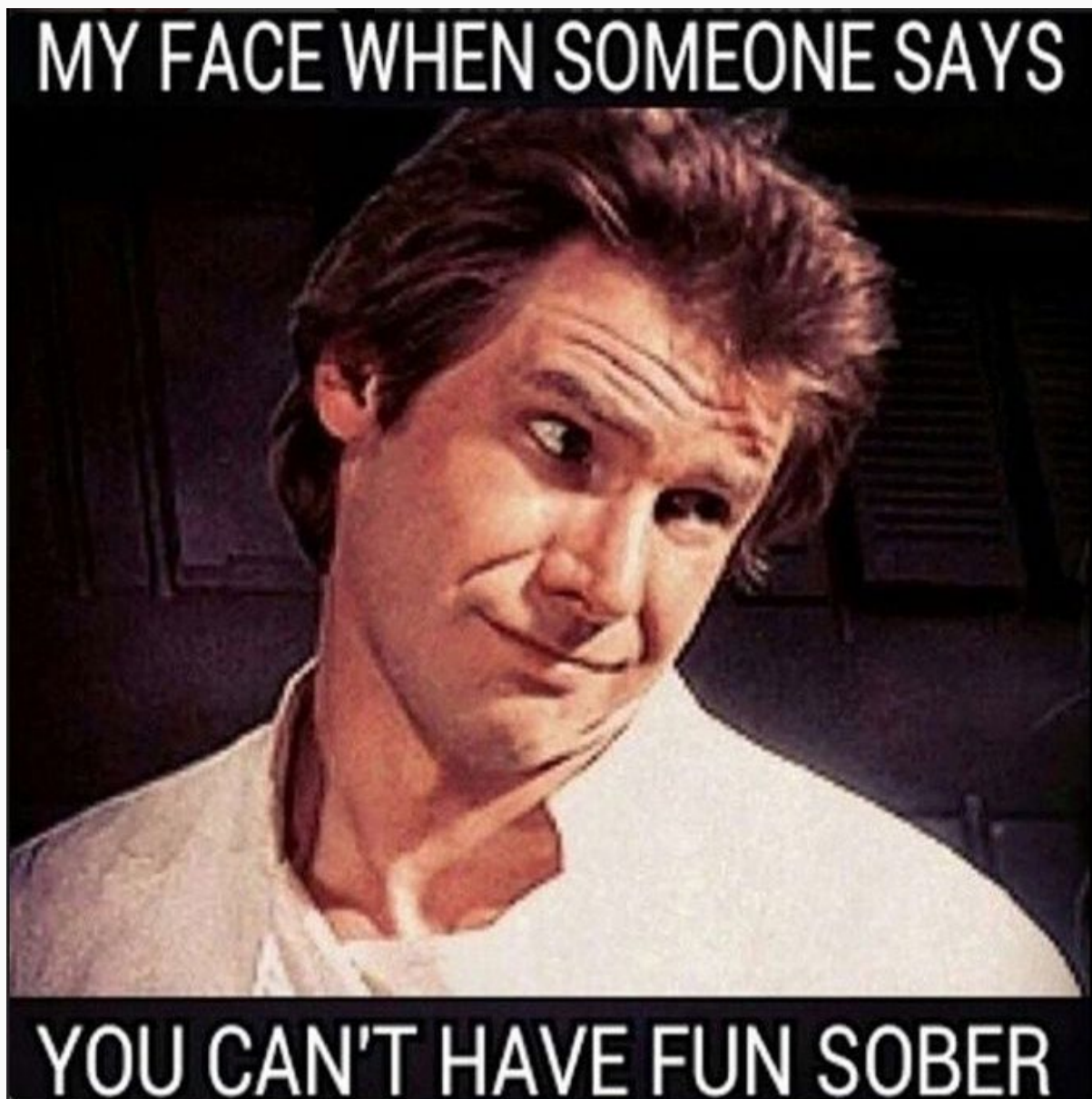
A girl working with her sponsor asked  
"Where can I read about my sex  
problems?"

Sponsor said, "That's covered on page  
69."

Later at home the page number got  
jumbled as she tried to remember and she  
turned to page 96 for her sex problems.

"Do not be discouraged if your prospect  
does not respond at once. Search out  
another alcoholic and try again. You are  
sure to find someone desperate enough  
to accept with eagerness what you offer.  
We find it a waste of time to keep chasing  
a man who cannot or will not work with  
you."





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A man in a hot air balloon realized he was lost. He saw a person on the ground and yelled down to him, "Can you help me? I don't know where I am." The man replied, "Sure, I'll help you. You are in a hot air balloon hovering 30 feet above the ground...between 40 and 41 degrees North latitude and between 59 & 60 degrees West longitude."

"Wow, you must be an AA sponsor", said the man in the balloon. "I am", said the man, "but what gave me away?"

"Well", answered the balloonist, "everything you told me is technically right

but I am still lost. Frankly you're not much help at all and you might even have delayed my trip."

"You must be an AA sponsee", replied the man. The man in the balloon was amazed and said, "I am, but how did you know?"

The man on the ground said, "Well, you don't know where you are or where you're going. You have risen to where you are due to a lot of hot air. You are expecting other people to solve your problems and the fact is that you are in exactly the same position you were in before we met, but, somehow now IT'S MY FAULT" !

When you meet all your internet friends after Covid-19



# Topic Time for January

## Homegroup

Tell us about your homegroup! Why did you choose it to be your homegroup? Why do you feel it's important to have a homegroup?

**Share your Experience, Strength, and Hope regarding the topic for the *January* Edition of S.O.S.**

**Submissions are not limited to the suggested topic and we encourage you to write about any topic as it relates to Alcoholism for any month.**

**Submissions for January are due by December 30th. Any submissions received after may be included in later Editions.**

**Please submit to [sos@indyaa.org](mailto:sos@indyaa.org) and title your email "Newsletter Submission".**

**Include a title for your submission where applicable. If no title is included, we may provide one for you.**

**If you wish to be published anonymously, DO NOT include your name in your document and please write "post anonymously" in your email submission to SOS.**

**If you wish for your name or initials to be published, please write it at the end of your submitted document exactly as you would like it published. If no indication of intent has been made, your submission will automatically be posted anonymously.**

**Please note, only first names, first name and last initial, or initials only, will ever be published. We will never post last names even if you submit them.**

**We look forward to hearing from you!**

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Sheets Of Sobriety - October - 2020**

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