

July Edition



Sheets of Sobriety



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July's Can't Miss: Some big things happening this month. Start making those memories!

Your Writings; You wrote in, we posted it

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A Look Ahead: Sheets of Sobriety focus for August and call for entries

Fun Fact Dates in AA History

July 15 1938 - 1st documented use of the name Alcoholics Anonymous, A.A. archives letter Bill to Willard Richardson.

July 1944 - Bob writes article for Grapevine "On Cultivating Tolerance".

July 11, 1960 - Time published article called "Passionately Anonymous" on the 25th Convention.

July 2, 1965 - "Best of Bill" and Pocket-Sized "12 and 12" 1st sold.



make
time
for
yourself.

Seed of Serenity 17th Annual Women's Retreat

When:

July 7, 2017 – July 9, 2017 all-day

Where:

Fatima House
5353 E 56th St
Indianapolis, IN 46226

Cost:

single room \$180 / double room \$144

Contact:

Central Office
317.632.7864

64th Indiana State Convention & East Central Regional Conference

Grand Wayne Convention Center

120 W Jefferson Blvd

Fort Wayne, IN 46802

Fri. Jul 14, 2017, 12:00PM - Sun. Jul 16, 2017, 2:00 PM EDT

Step 11 Spiritual Retreat

When:

July 21, 2017 – July 23, 2017 all-day

Where:

St Meinrad

200 Hill Drive

St Meinrad, IN 47577

Cost:

\$255.00 single room

Contact:

Visitation @ 8



Don't Call It A Vacation

By Anonymous

It was the summer of 2015 and I hadn't noticed that an entire year of working hard, maintaining responsibilities, and generally keeping my head down and plugging away at life had flown by. I was really "get'n it done". Naturally, I assumed life was in a good balance and I was in a healthy place. That's when I felt the first stir. It came out of nowhere, but moved pretty fast as these things always do. It was that old familiar tug at my heart to put down my work, step away from whatever I was in the middle of, kiss the cat goodbye, and escape to the mountains as fast as I could. I was being called by big sky, raging rivers, long trails, and a cozy tent built for one. I needed a vacation. Not a margarita drinking, sun bathing, site seeing vacation though. I needed a retreat.

How did I know the difference? Well, it's taken many frustrated trips where I came back more tired and cranky than when I had left to figure that out. My Spirit knows what it needs, even before I do. It talks to me, and it feels different when I need a Retreat vs. a Vacation. Completely different.

A Retreat starts as a tiny pull in my chest. An ache to find some solitude. A

desire for quiet and a need to metaphorically cocoon. It then becomes a deeper thirst to commune with my higher power. To surround myself with nature and allow myself the time to marvel at the beauty that can be seen all around once the distractions are removed. It then becomes a ravenous cry that lets me know that I owe myself this time. I'm not being irresponsible, I'm not being selfish. This is time that must be taken for my own personal growth. I can feel transformation bubbling just below the surface of my skin and I will bust at the seams if I don't give it its outlet. I have no idea what's waiting under the surface. I just know I need to make way for it. I had no idea what I was preparing the way for in the summer of 2015 but I knew I had to respect that call.

I've never felt like this when I've needed a vacation. For me, the urge to vacation is the urge to dive into life, not retreat from it. Vacations want a partner in crime, not a one man tent. My vacation itinerary consists primarily of outer world seductions, not inner world reflections.

If I can't take a vacation, I may feel a little sorry for myself. I may tell myself that's more time to save up and plan. When I ignore my spirit being called to Retreat however, I feel I've put the brakes on my personal evolution through my own neglect. Everything about the need to Retreat is much more dramatic.

What happened on my Retreat during the summer of 2015? I don't know. I can never know what happens in these moments. They're bigger than me. I just respond to them and wait to see what shakes out. I do know that all of that staring up at the stars business certainly caused me to wonder about the meaning of my life. Those full day hikes on a lonely trail with their sweeping views sure did make me feel humble yet completely significant all at the same time. The full grown Bull Moose, with antlers that spanned the width of a grand piano, who practically nodded at me as he passed through my campsite certainly made me feel part of the whole circle of life bit. I'm not sure what happened on my retreat of 2015 but I know I left for that trip as an active alcoholic (I barely had enough food to make it through the weekend because the beer was taking up all the room in the cooler). Somewhere between the stars, the view, and the friendly Moose, I must have come to grips with the fact that I was an alcoholic because I walked into my first AA meeting 3 weeks later.

I thank my higher power regularly for tugging at my heart and giving me the wisdom to listen. I often wonder what would have happened if I had hopped on a plane for Vacation instead.

Spiritual Experience

By Bill B.

When does a spiritual experience begin?

Right after the Third Step: "This was only a beginning, though if honestly and humbly made, an effect, sometimes a very great one, was felt at once." pg.63*

Right after the Fourth Step: "We hope you are convinced now that God can remove whatever self-will has blocked you off from Him. If you have already made a decision, and an inventory of your grosser handicaps, you have made a good beginning. That being so you have swallowed and digested some big chunks of truth about yourself." Pg. 71

When doing the Fifth Step: "Our fears fall from us. We begin to feel the nearness of our Creator. We may have had certain spiritual beliefs, but now we begin to have a spiritual experience. The feeling that the drink problem has disappeared will often come strongly. We feel we are on the Broad Highway, walking hand in hand with the Spirit of the Universe."

pg. 75

After Steps 6 & 7: "Now we need more action, without which we find that "Faith without works is dead." Let's look at Steps Eight and Nine." pg. 76

In the middle of the Ninth Step: "Reminding ourselves that we have decided to go to any lengths to find a spiritual experience, we ask that we be given strength and direction to do the right thing, no matter what the personal consequences may be."

pg. 79

After and during the 9th Step: "If we are painstaking about this phase of our development, we will be amazed before we are half way through. We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness. We will not regret the past nor wish to

shut the door on it. We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace. No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others. That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear. We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows. Self-seeking will slip away. Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change. Fear of people and of economic insecurity will leave us. We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us. We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves." Pg. 83-84

The 10th Step "And we have ceased fighting anything or anyone—even alcohol. For by this time sanity will have returned. We will seldom be interested in liquor. If tempted, we recoil from it as from a hot flame. We react sanely and normally, and we will find that this has happened automatically. We will see that our new attitude toward liquor has been given us without any thought or effort on our part. It just comes! That is the miracle of it. We are not fighting it, neither are we avoiding temptation. We feel as though we had been placed in a position of neutrality—safe and protected. We have not even sworn off. Instead, the problem has been removed. It does not exist for us. We are neither cocky nor are we afraid. That is our experience. That is how we react so long as we keep in fit spiritual condition." Pg. 84-86

And don't forget Step 12: "...nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics." pg. 89. Of course that's AFTER, the spiritual experience.

One more thing: "Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps..."
The Steps bring the spiritual experience fairly early.

**All excerpts taken from the Big Book*



COMING IN AUGUST

- **Conventions;** Planning to attend the 2017 Indiana State Convention & East Central Regional Conference? Submit your experience to the August newsletter!
 - **Sober Summer Vacations;** We want to hear how you're make those summer memories while staying on the beam! Got a great sober vacation story to share? We want it for the August edition.
 - **Got Home Group?;** So many groups, so little time. Share your secret for picking a home group with staying power. What does home group mean to you? Tell us all about it for
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submission in August!

- **Birthdays!** We're celebrating Dr. Bob's (belly button) Birthday in August and we want to hear about your most significant recovery birthdays. Share your experience, strength, and hope for August.

Submissions for August are due by July 25th.

Please submit to sos@indyaa.org and title your email "Newsletter Submission".

Please keep all submission around 700 words or less.

Please 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. 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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