

S O S

Sheets Of Sobriety

August Edition



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Significant Dates in AA History

August 8, 1879 - Dr. Bob is born in St. Johnsbury, VT.

August 16, 1935 - Sister Ignatia, with the help of Dr. Bob, admits the first alcoholic patient to St. Thomas Hospital in Akron, Ohio. This event made St. Thomas Hospital the first hospital in the world to treat alcoholism as a medical condition.

August 11, 1938 - Akron & NY members begin writing stories for Alcoholics Anonymous - Big Book.

August 1947 - Grapevine reports on Indiana progress. New

Groups column:

INDIANA - East Chicago; Broad Ripple Group, East Side
Group,

Home Group, Hub Group, North Side Group, Speedway
Group,

South Side Group, all Indianapolis.

August 1981 - Distribution of Alcoholics Anonymous - Big Book
passes 3 million.

↓ **August Can't Miss** ↓



The International Conference of Young People in Alcoholic Anonymous (ICYPAA)

August 17th - 20th

Chicago, IL

The number of young people suffering from alcoholism who turn to AA for help is growing, and ICYPAA helps to carry AA's message of recovery to alcoholics of all ages. This meeting provides an opportunity for young AA's from all over the world to come together and share their experience, strength, and hope as members of Alcoholics Anonymous. AA members who attend an ICYPAA return home better prepared to receive young people who come to AA looking for a better way of life.

<https://www.icypaa.org/>



Intergroup Committee Announcements

Checking in with the CPC

(Cooperation with the Professional Community)

It's been a busy summer for the CPC committee and our fellowship volunteers. July 13th and 14th we were exhibitors at the 10th annual Susan Li Conference for Clinical Professionals in the field of addiction. Thanks to Tony S. Kevin S. and Joe P.

August 22nd we are doing a 1 hour presentation and Q&A at the Hendricks County Probation Officers' Staff Meeting. For now, we have filled the openings for volunteers.

How blessed we are for so many willing to do service work.

September brings another opportunity for service work. We will be exhibiting at the Mental Health Association of Indiana (MHA) IN ARMS (Indiana Recovery Month Symposium). This event is scheduled for Tuesday, September 12th and Wednesday, September 13th. It will be held at the Indianapolis Marriott East. Set up Tuesday is at 8 am. Lunch is included. We are seeking 2 volunteers for each day. There will be a signup sheet at Intergroup Sunday, August 13th at the Union Hall.

We of the CPC committee continue to be grateful to provide opportunities for service work for our fellowship. Thanks for letting us serve.

I am responsible. When anyone, anywhere reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there. And for that, I am responsible.



A Gift From Above

By Sally D.

I have been told by many I look up to and admire that I am a very good writer, that I need to share my writing with others. Being that it is me they are speaking of, I have found it hard to believe, always wondering if my point is getting across, if it sounds good enough, if I am good enough. Like most addicts, low self-esteem fills my thoughts relentlessly yet I put pen to paper, even if only for my eyes to see.

Yet when reading over a writing I wonder if it truly takes the reader to that very moment in time when God put His hand upon mine to guide me as the words fill my mind, fill the pages. Are they able to close their eyes and be with me; seeing all I see, feeling the emotions I feel? Are their senses stirred by the smell of a bonfire, the sound of the wind rustling thru the trees and playing amongst the wind chimes, the taste of a snowflake on their tongue? Can they feel the warmth of the hug I so eagerly embrace, see the amazing beauty that fills my eyes? Can they feel the gut wrenching pain I feel, the frustration of my struggles, hear the calling from a bottle that awaits me if I make just one

wrong turn?

Then, just as quickly as those thoughts fill my mind, they are all but gone as the words begin to fill the page like an overflowing stream after a hard rain. The banks cannot possibly contain the ever rising water just as my mind cannot hold back the thoughts that long to find the pages that lie before me.

And just assuredly as I know this is a gift to be shared, I relinquish the reins. For it is not I who knows what you need, what vision you should see, what seed is to be planted within. It is not I who knows the struggles you keep locked deep inside, the pain you endure, your life as you go about the day. It is not I who knows the path you must take, the journey that is meant for only you. It is not I who holds your hand, carries you when you are weak, shares your joys and your sorrows. It is not I, it is God. I am but blessed to be the lowly sower of the seeds. God alone is the master artist who fills the canvas of your mind with the vision you need.

I pray that He leads me to the path of sharing, for only He knows where that path begins and whose life I may touch along the way. May your mind always open, your senses always alive, that you may receive His message no matter from where it may come.

The Dilemma

By Bill B.

Lack of power, that was our dilemma. We had to find a power by which we could live, and it had to be a *Power greater than ourselves*. Obviously. But where and how were we to find the Power? Well, that's exactly what this book is about. Its main object is to enable you to find a Power greater than yourself which will solve your problem. That means we have written a book which we believe to be spiritual as well as moral. And it means, of course, that we are going to talk about God. p.45.BB
...for deep down in every man, woman, and child, is the fundamental idea of God. He was as much a fact as we were. We found the Great Reality deep down within us.

In the last analysis it is only there that He may be found. It was so with us. p.55.BB
If I ever find myself in Heaven, it will only be from backing away from Hell.” ~Carl Jung
“We have found much of heaven and we have been rocketed into a fourth dimension of
existence of which we had not even dreamed.” There is a Solution, p.25.BB

Today, as I become more harmonized within, I become more in tune with all of God’s
wonderful creation. The singing of the birds, the sighing of the wind, the pattern of the
raindrops, the roll of thunder, the laughter of happy children, add to the symphony of the
world of which I am in tune. The heaving ocean, the driving rain, autumn leaves, the
stars of the heavens, the perfume of flowers, music, a smile, and a host of other things
tell me of the glory of God.

There are periods of darkness, but the stars are shining, no matter how black the
night. There are disturbances, but I have learned that if I seek patience and open-
mindedness, understanding will come. And with it direction by the Spirit of God. The
dawn comes and with it more understanding, the peace that passes all understanding,
and the joy of living that is not disturbed by the wildness of circumstances or people
around me. Fears, resentments, pride, worldly desires, worry, and self-pity no longer
possess me. Ever-increasing are the number of true friends, ever-growing is the
capacity for love, ever widening is the horizon of understanding. And above all else
comes a greater thankfulness to, and a greater love for “Our Father in heaven.”

“When we drew near to Him, He disclosed Himself to us?” ~BB pg 57

In spite of your schedule today, take the time for quiet. Begin to know that a God-
calmness is within your reach. Thank God for your life and all its blessings. Ask for
blessings for everyone you meet today. Be aware that the center of your being is filled
with the Divine Spirit and the calmness within this space is forever.

As you move through your day, rely on the stability of your spiritual center. When events
start to tip the balance, return your thoughts to God. Pray only for calmness and the
grace to treat others with dignity. Pursue your tasks with the assuredness of a Divine
Representative. Claim the peace that is yours. Remind yourself that you are a child of
God and that God’s grace is always available to help you through the ups and downs of
the day. Accept your role as that of God’s agent. Simply do your best and leave the
results in the hands of your Higher Power.

Tonight, return to the quiet within. Ask for the vision to see your day from a spiritual
perspective. Look for the instances where you were kind or helpful. Acknowledge God’s

presence in the difficult situations that were handled with quiet confidence. Begin to recognize his greatness within you. It's there.



Going Home

By Bernadette W.

What is the value of having a “home” group? Did you have a home growing up? Whether it was filled with your family or was a broken home or was just a place to go to eat, sleep and leave again is irrelevant. What matters is that you had somewhere you called “home”. Home is a place you relate to where you belong or where you wished you belonged. “Home” can be a safe place or it can be a place you never wish to visit again.

Having a home group in AA means that you have found a place that you feel safe, where you can relate to the people, where you fit in, where you yearn to be every time there is a meeting there, a place where you run to with happy or sad news.

Your home group allows you to have love multiplied and grief divided by as many times as there are people in the home group. Our home group is our family. It is a family of our choosing not just the family we were born into. We get to hand pick the group we choose to call family in our home group. The members are our brothers and sisters and can represent our biological family in many regards and they can also help us heal from past hurts by having a relationship with the people who may remind us of our biological family we no longer are able to have connections with.

The home group is a place where we are a “part of” and where we have a “voice”. We become attached to the group and we build strong ties to the members and we “feel” the good times and the bad times with these people as we weather the storms of life with them and celebrate the joys. Our home group lifts us up when we fall and they allow us to reach out with the hand of AA and help others who need us to share our experience, strength and hope with them. We get to be the baby sister or brother and then as we grow in sobriety time we become older sisters and brothers. The home group is one of the foundations we can build upon in our recovery life. The group many times will serve as a

higher power in our lives and will be the one force that can keep us coming back and sober at times.

Giving back by doing service work in and with our home group helps us grow up in the program of AA and give away what we gain so that we can keep our sobriety. There is no better feeling in the world as when we “go home” again. Home is where we came from, where we yearn to go back to and a place that is familiar and safe. Home is where we are fully and wholly able to be ourselves and to get honest, open minded and willing. And that my friends is how it works!

Why I Stayed

By Anonymous

I received hugs, claps and smiles at any group I walked into. AAers are friendly folk that way. There was the group that stuck around after the meeting to encourage me to get a sponsor. There was the other group that made my child feel welcome with me even when he acted up.

There are so many groups that behave in ways that are admirable, honest, warm, and kind. But I knew I found my home group when I noticed myself comfortable enough to give the hugs, the claps, and the smiles to those who walked in the room. I stayed and called it my home group when I found myself practicing fellowship long after the meeting had ended. My home group is the place where I find myself acting

admirably, honest, warm and kind because of their influence. It's the place where I like who I am because of who they are.



A Holiday To Remember

By Anonymous

Sitting on the beach watching waves crash upon the shore,
where once I was face down in the sand.

Learning to body board, muscles tired but energy high,
where once I was saddled up to a Tiki bar.

Conversations with locals and experiencing new cultures,
where once I was tossed out of the restaurant.

Being sober on my summer holiday I experience, I engage, I contribute, and I remember
fondly.

A Lesson Learned

By Sally D.

Every year, come mid-June, we pack our bags and hit the road for a 4 day fun-filled family reunion on my mother-in-law's side. I use the term "fun-filled" loosely because at times it can get a bit dicey, especially for an alcoholic with low self-esteem and boundary setting issues such as myself.

This year our two sons drove separately so it was just myself, my husband and his mother in tow. Around 30 minutes after picking her up my husband typically announces, "It's time to play the quiet game." I'm sure you can guess why. Hint; his mother is a fanatic back seat driver. That, coupled with the fact that too much conversation seems to somehow affect his driving skills, usually makes for a peaceful ride.

So we're driving along, chatting away when I look down at my watch and notice over an hour has passed with my husband actually enjoying the conversation. In fact, he's so into it that he's constantly injecting his thoughts into the middle of what I am trying to say every time I speak. Of course, instead of using what I learned in rehab and setting an obviously much needed boundary, I endured being cut off time after time.

You see I learned very early in life that my feelings don't matter. I learned it so well I became the gold medalist at stuffing, knowing full well what the very near future has in store for some unsuspecting victim. Yes, I can stuff and stuff but eventually that over used, over stuffed seam is going to give, sending out an unwelcome slew of emotions like a flame straight from Hell. Its intended victim was right beside me this time but in the past it has burned many an innocent bystander who have absolutely nothing to do with the stuffing they now wear.

I sat there in the passenger seat stuffing away as usual, contemplating the quiet game with only one player, me! I'll show him. I'll not speak another word the entire trip, maybe not even the entire reunion. That'll teach him! But just then something happened deep inside me. It had only taken well over 2 hours for the light bulb to finally turn on but once

it did it shined as bright as a lighthouse beacon. Quickly I pulled the new trick out of my sleeve, locked and loaded, I was ready for the next inevitable interruption. When it came I did what any well-meaning alcoholic would do; I said what I meant, I meant what I said and I even said it in a nice way!

“Excuse me, I was trying to speak and I was wondering if I could finish?” He gave me a funny look then said, “Go right ahead, who’s stopping you, you can say whatever you want.” After about four minutes of hearing how I could talk, I began again only to be interrupted after just two short sentences. “Excuse me, I was trying to speak and,” end of thought. He started in with the same old song and dance. So the next interruption I was ready. I calmly turned to him and said, “The human brain can only focus on one thing at a time. If we’re both talking no one will really hear either of us so you go ahead. Let me know when you’re done, I can wait.” To my utter joy it worked. He didn’t interrupt me again the entire reunion and continues to do well.

Isn’t it funny how God can teach you a lesson when you’re not even aware you need to learn one? It’s true that we teach others how to treat us. I had been teaching him what I had always thought to be true, that I have no value. Yet in that moment, stuck in a car with no out, I finally realized the truth; I am enough, I do have value. If this were last year I would have made a bee-line straight for the nearest liquor store upon arriving but instead I enjoyed the reunion uninterrupted. Well, at least until our annual Saturday evening group “discussion,” but hey, that’s another story.



COMING IN September

- **Conferences;** Did you attend a conference in August and want to share? Planning to attend one in September? Tell us all about your experience, your fears or your excitement for our September edition.

- **The Age of Sobriety;** Did you step through the doors in your teens or in your forties? Did your age affect your willingness? Could sobriety have come at any time? We want to know your thoughts in September.

*Submissions for September are due by August 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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Sheets Of Sobriety - August - 2017

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