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DISTRICT SIX AT A GLANCE

The District Business Meeting was held on March 13th with 14 people in attendance. Of those 7 were representing Groups and 6 were Standing Committee Members and there was one observer. This is a marked decline in attendance from our last two Meetings that was most likely due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the lack of District Representation it was decided that we would not vote on the motions tabled from February. While there was a good deal of discussion no business was completed.

Up coming events for the District have been canceled including the Area 28 Spring Assembly, the General Service Conference and the Area 28 Post Conference Forum. Motions that would have been voted on at the Spring Assembly will be attended to in the Fall. Some of the discussion points for the General Service Conference included changing language in some of the literature to be gender neutral, discussing the next edition of the Big Book, AA and social media, as well as the use of "digital basket's" to collect the 7th Tradition. Specific information will be provided during our Business Meeting from GSR's and District. NEFOTS and the International Conference, as well as a number of Young People's Conferences, are canceled for the next few months. Our Love and Service Chair is rescheduling an event was tentatively planned for May.

In the weeks since our Business Meeting a lot has been consistently and rapidly changing as Groups and AA's work adjusting to our current circumstances. Many meetings have been moved to online forums which present barriers to those who are not familiar with newer video chat platforms, as well as to the newcomer. Our Web Chair has worked diligently to update information on our website, hopefully helping many find meetings which have been temporarily displaced. There are many avenues to online Meetings, and the Hotline, if you are in need. These are challenging times, let's make sure to avail ourselves of all help available. The Hotline numbers are: 800-737-6237 and 207-774-4335 as listed on the Central Service Office website <http://csoaamaine.org/meetings/>. The

April Business meeting to be held online, using Zoom on the 2nd Friday of the Month at 6:00pm. If you have interest, the information is available on the District Website <http://aamainedistrict6.org/links.html>.

HELP WANTED

The following positions are open at the District Level:

ARCHIVES

The right person for this position would be willing and able to maintain files and documents that are historic for the district and the districts meetings, as well as attend the monthly business meetings for district six and area. There is a recommended guideline of 2 or more years of sobriety and proficiency with computers. Further information can be found at the District Six Website <http://aamainedistrict6.org/links.html> or the Monthly Business Meeting.

FUNCTIONS CHAIR

Looking for self-motivated person, willing and able to serve a 2 year term Chairing a Committee responsible for planning and throwing events for AA's in District 6. The role includes managing seed money, proposing events to the District Committee and working with a team to throw each event as well as attending the monthly District Meeting. More information can be found on the District Website <http://aamainedistrict6.org/links.html> or the at the Monthly Business Meeting.

HOTLINE

The Hotline Coordinator is responsible for attending monthly Business Meetings, maintaining updating the phone list and connecting with CSO to share information. This will include reaching out to Meetings and AA's in our District to get contact information so that we can continue to be actively involved in supporting those AA's in need who turn to the hotline for support. More information is available on District Six Website <http://aamainedistrict6.org/links.html> and at the District Business Meeting.

CNT PG 2





The Emmet Foxx Corner
With Michael J

Sentimentality

We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it. This 9th step promise reminds us of the threat that sentimentality can pose for the maintenance of our sobriety. In this instance, we are defining sentimentality as exaggerated and self-indulgent feelings of tenderness, sadness or nostalgia. The key concepts here are: exaggeration and self-indulgent. The intention is not to put Hollywood and the greeting card industry out of business, but rather to recognize the subtle ways in which sentimentality can provide justification for resuming our alcoholic careers.

Emmet Fox writes:

“Sentiment is usually a short cut to unhappiness and failure. It is more deadly than poison gas, more cruel than the Inquisition, more subtle than self-love.

Sentiment really means pretending. It means making believe that an emotion that is really dead is still alive. It means pretending that something is fine or joyous or worthwhile, when in fact it is none of these things. Thus it means a waste of time, a waste of the soul substance which is lavished upon a lie. Worst of all, sentiment shuts us off from the realization of good in the present moment.

Sentiment usually pretends that some happiness is lost beyond recall, or else it persuades us to worship an unreal abstraction of some kind on the grounds that actual conditions are not worth caring about.

Live in the present and let the dead past bury its dead. No good thing that ever existed is out of reach when you understand the spiritual nature of being. See to it that today and tomorrow are filled with beauty and joy, and this you can do through prayer and meditation. Remember that people never sentimentalize over present good; they enjoy it, and thereby glorify God. When they sentimentalize, it is always for something supposedly out of reach.

No good experience is out of your reach because God Himself is with you. “

The big book reminds us that sobriety may be nothing at all like we thought it would be. At first, it can be one big emotional roller coaster, full of sharp highs and deep lows. Your emotions may feel new and untested. You may not be entirely certain that you want to deal with them. As a member put it: “I cried when I should have been laughing. I laughed when I should have cried. Events I thought were the end of the world turned out to be gifts. It was all very confusing. Slowly things began to even out.”

Emmet Fox reminds us that:

“If you believe that God is good, God is love, God has all power, God is intelligence, all the conditions of your life will steadily improve. Some difficulties will clear up much sooner than others. Some people will demonstrate harmony and well-being

sooner than others. These things are only a matter of degree. But when you really believe that God is all these things, as unquestioningly, as unemotionally as you believe in the soundness of the George Washington Bridge when you cross it in a car, then everything will begin to come right. Details may challenge you. You may get a pain somewhere, just as though the “lower self” were saying, “What about this?” If you still believe in the oneness and goodness and power of God, you will overcome it.”

CNT FR PG 1

MEETING LIST

This position is a two year commitment to maintain a list of all meetings, times and locations in the district and to share said list with District Secretary and Webmaster so that it may be printed and distributed in the District. This position also updates this information with CSO. Further information can be found at the business meeting and on the District Six website. <http://aamainedistrict6.org/links.html>

BRIDGING THE GAP AND CORRECTIONS

Anyone willing and able to hold this position would be expected to attend monthly District 6 Business Meetings, connect new members that are being discharged from a facility to an AA in their community. Maintain relationships with hospitals, detox's, rehabs, jails, half-way houses etc. in our district to ensure exchange of contact info between AA and the facility as well as enabling them to contact new members within 24-48 hours of their release to make suggests several types of AA Meetings in the first week and to stress the importance of Sponsorship. This is a two year commitment, more information can be found online or at the Monthly Business Meeting.

Aly ,Reporter

My Experience as District 6 Chair Colt H.

I started out as the District Secretary for a 2-year term in January, 2016. I found the Service experience rewarding so at the end of my term I stood for our DCM1 position, which happens to also be the alternative chair should the District Chair be unable to attend the District meetings. That February our new District Chair resigned and I was thrust into the Chair Position. Talk about “learning on the job”! I had seen Nina and Bob’s work as Chairs, so I had something to go on, but it is quite different when you are in the seat! At first, we had many committee positions open, and only 5 GSR’s attended regularly. District 6 has over 30 Meetings and about 15 Groups, so our representation was somewhat poor. As the Chair, I committed to increase the GSR participation and to fill the open Committee positions. At the end of my term (December 2019), we had 9-10 GSR’s attending regular and had filled many of our open positions. One of our chief roadblocks was that we did not have any DCM’s (District Committee Members).

CNT PG 4

Acceptance is the answer...**By Mike - Freelance Writer**

How many times in my life have I found people, places and things unacceptable to me over the years, countless times I am sure of it.

Why is it that so many things cause consternation? Why after many years hanging out in AA are issues still disagreeable to me? Well part of the answer is I am an alcoholic first and foremost. I had spent so many years trying to arrange everyone and everything so that I would not be in a position to be hurt. Ah yes, the lies and deceit of many years sometimes still haunts me. I spent years arranging all the ducks so that I would not feel any discomfort, even after I stopped drinking. Why would anyone want to feel uncomfortable?

For a long time, I poured inordinate amounts of alcohol in my system to avoid those uncomfortable feelings.

Then there is the fear...wow, what I would do in the name of fear. I could not even begin to tell anyone how I was feeling. That fear of being judged and not being liked by my peers. Feelings of being less than and not having enough. All the esteem issues that can still haunt me to this day.

I have reached a point in my sobriety where the steps, and continued step work, have brought me to a place of peace. I have somewhat of a serene life save for sometimes at work that I find conditions and people disagreeable to me.

And acceptance...why do I struggle sometimes more than others? Why is it difficult to accept things, people, places and situations as they are?

This excerpt from the Big Book holds the key:

"And acceptance is the answer to all my problems today. When I am disturbed, it is because I find some person, place, thing, situation — Some fact of my life — unacceptable to me. And I can find no serenity until I accept that person, place, thing, or situation as being exactly the way it is supposed to be at this moment. Nothing, absolutely nothing happens in God's world by mistake. Until I could accept my alcoholism, I could not stay sober; unless I accept life completely on life's terms, I cannot be happy. I need to concentrate not so much on what needs to be changed in the world as on what needs to be changed in me and in my attitudes." (Reprinted from The Book "Alcoholics Anonymous" Page 417 with permission of AA World Service's INC)

I was told many years ago when I first came to AA that acceptance did not mean I had to like whatever it is that has me all beggared up. But why do I still feel plagued by unacceptance at times?

This is a troubling time for us all. How many of us have been through a pandemic such as Covid-19 in our lifetime?

My Mother-in-law uses the phrase "it is what it is" far too often as far as I am concerned. But is this another key? Finding peace and serenity is about modifying something within yourself so that the bothersome situation no longer has control over you and thoughts of doing something hurtful or worse thinking about drinking.

Why do I fight these feelings that have a stranglehold on me? I get so focused on wanting a situation to change to meet my standards (or ducks in a row) that I miss out on the opportunity to examine why it's got me so beggared up and do something to fix it. Why must I insist on going to a pity party when things are not going my way?

The answer is simple. These are old tapes, old playbooks that are deeply ingrained in me. But I have been given a way out and an opportunity to do things differently.

I feel that acceptance is somewhat of a process for me. First there is anger, then some self-centered fear mixed in.

These recent times have found me with too much time isolating, certainly not by choice. There has been a movement within AA to have meetings on the zoom platform, but I have been somewhat hesitant and defiant. Oh yes, the old tape of defiance has been rearing its head.

A recent vacation to sunny, warm Florida had to be postponed (canceled in my mind). A visit to Connecticut to visit my newborn Granddaughter Maebh has not happened due to the travel issues into a county there with community spread.

I have felt myself become angry with people around me because my ducks are not in a row. I have struggled with the ability to change me and my attitude in this moment in time.

So, the message is pick up the pace. Do the things I did early on when the chips were down. It seemed so much easier back in the day when I was struggling to stay away from booze. Attend more of these zoom meetings and change my attitude. We are all in the same boat. Find some good in the zoom meetings rather than the negative. Reach out to others more, read more of the literature, double down on prayer and meditation. Treat people the way I would like to be treated. Yes, there will still be those days when I am disturbed, sad or frustrated. There will still be those days when I allow myself to enjoy a pity party or two. But I will recognize much sooner that there is a better choice. I will be grateful for the opportunity to grow even more. I am so glad that I am a work in progress.

Peace to All



Editor Request

Adjusting to Motherhood

A friend of mine says that relationships are like miracle grow for character defects, I have always found this to be true for me. Much of the work I did when I first started out in Alcoholics Anonymous focused on this and I made, what felt like, significant progress attending to habits in relationships. I learned a lot about myself, and developed tools to address it. Then I had children.

Overnight I went from being an individual who regularly reminded me of what was and was not my business, or that other people were not my responsibility to being a person directly responsible for the well being on a tiny person. Many of the boundaries I had worked hard to create did not seem to apply to my newborn. I found myself compelled to use **CNT PG 4**

HERE & NOW


So, someone asked what it's been like for me during this time, as a sober alcoholic. I've been sober for a little over five years. With the help of my higher power and AA, I now live in the real world without alcohol. Some days are harder than others! The hard days are when I start living in my fear mind, which tells me all the same stories as when I was drinking. Here are just a few: I'm not enough and I never will be; everyone else is living a fabulous and happy life and I'm not; things will never get better so what's the use in even trying; nobody understands me because I'm so different; if I could just (fill in the blank), everything would be awesome. And, my fear mind doesn't wait for the big, bad stuff to happen, it can and does pop up at any time.

The easier days are when I live in my divine mind, which I only discovered in the last year or two. My divine mind tells me these kinds of stories, that are actually truths: no matter what, God loves me; look for God throughout my day; I'm totally ok, don't worry about tomorrow, it will take care of itself; as I trust God more and more, and go with love, I will feel a freedom and peace that can always be with me, no matter what I am walking through. That's the miracle: no matter what I am walking through.

When the world, and my world, started changing and my home group stopped meeting, my fear mind told me that no way could I continue doing the things that have been helping me feel better and better: no more meetings, no more coffee dates at Wild Oats, no more healthy food, no church, no yoga classes, and so on. And then, all of a sudden lots of online options for everything started popping up including this new thing called Zoom meetings. It's going to be ok, said Divine Mind. No it's not, said Fear Mind, this is overwhelming, you can't do it....Back and forth, back and forth.

Before the world started changing, I was following a gentle daily routine, some days more so than others. It includes a little of everything, things I enjoy (reading, contemplative prayer) and things I don't (litter box cleaning). And it has several parts that very intentionally bring me back to my divine mind if I'm not already there. For two days last week, I lived in my fear mind all day feeling sad, mopey and almost paralyzed by that fear. I learned from those days that the next day, I generally feel even more fearful. I have learned that returning to my divine mind always feels better.

Today, I am sober. I am trying my best to do the next right thing, just for today, and that starts with staying in my divine mind. God bless us all.

 Audrey, Reporter

CNT FR PG 2

DCM's are responsible for working with the Group GSR's and carrying the AA and District 6 messages. It was a challenge to

get some groups and many meetings involved. Now to the fun part:

As we got more participation, we had more arguments and disagreements. I was (rightly) blamed for many of the disagreements. I learned to have thicker skin, more tolerance and to hold my temper (and resentments) in check! I had to become more knowledgeable about Robert's Rules of Order, the process for voting, the airing of disagreements, etc. Most important, I had to try to keep my opinion quiet. The District Group Conscience mattered. This was difficult for me because as an alcoholic, I obviously was the smartest person in the room and knew the answer! Not! We got through it because all the folks who served at the District meetings were committed to working together. District Service for me has been an education - and a joy. I have attended the District Meetings for many Districts and District 6 can be proud of the organization they have built to serve the alcoholic .



Editor Request

DISTRICT FINANCES



Beginning Balance	\$1,964.96
Contributions:	
7th Tradition	\$24.00
So What Gr	\$30.00
Long Branch Gr	\$400.00
Sunrise Serenity	<u>\$126.98</u>
Total Contributions	\$580.98
Expenses:	
Newsletter	\$14.00
Insurance	<u>\$500.00</u>
Total Expenses	\$514.00
Ending Balance	\$2,031.94
Prudent Reserve	\$1,100.00
(Functions	\$750.00)
(Operating Expense	\$350.00)
Total Expendable Funds	\$931.94



Aly, Reporter

CNT FR PG 3

character defects I had not been troubled with for some time. Suddenly it was even more important to live by the things being taught to me in AA. I needed to be able to live in faith and not fear, even if the fear was based on science, or WebMD. This little person had to have a higher power that was not me. I could not be the director in this, not if I wanted to remain healthy or sober. There was a natural learning curve, I think. In a time that was already exhausting, unknown, **CNT PG 5**

WHY BRING MEETINGS TO JAIL?



I have never had to answer this question from anyone except for myself. I started bringing AA meetings to Jails in 1987 after getting sober in 1986. I was 51, Caucasian, a government employee, and had never been in a penal institution although the difference between penal institutions and enforced stays in mental health wards where I had been is mostly in name only. I got sober in the Annapolis, Maryland area and began by taking men's meetings to the Anne Arundel County Detention Center where the overwhelming number of inmates was African-American. I did this until I moved to Maine in 1999 and usually, but not always, had one of my African-American friends with me.

Soon after coming to Maine, I started bringing men's meetings to the Lincoln County Jail with my friend, Steve R. We did this once a month until Lincoln and Sagadahoc jointly created Two Bridges Regional Jail (TBRJ).

We got together with District 9 to start meetings at TBRJ and ran up against regulations that added new wrinkles since there were women inmates as well. This meant that initially our meetings were coed which added to some interesting situations where I occasionally had to use my Army voice to restore order. In a few months the meetings were no longer coed who made things easier and we developed a division of labor to bring in the meetings. Somewhere in the 2010's, we began talking up the Bridging the Gap (BTG) program in meetings.

In 2016, in a fit of temporary insanity, I moved to Maryland's Eastern Shore thinking that the rural nature of the area was like Maine's. It wasn't. I soon started taking meetings once a month to the Queen Anne's County Detention Center and after a year started taking meetings to the Eastern Pre-Release Center every other week.

I came back to Maine last August and soon got reinstated at TBRJ where I brought meetings monthly until COVID-19 caused TBRJ to ban outside people from entering the facility.

So, why do I do this? I think it is a God thing as we frequently say in AA.

My life and sobriety have been enriched from this experience and I even found my sponsor from this work. I know that but for the grace of the God of my understanding, it could be me who is inside the Jail.

Steve T, Reporter

IN THE MOMENT - David B

As we all find our way through this time of Quarantine, I want to share a bit about being in this program and what it has meant to me. I started drinking as a young child, and from the get-go I was a binge drinker. Most times I drank, I did it in isolation and hid it from others. I had one goal when I drank – to get drunk and to kill the loneliness and pain that I felt deep inside of me. I was trained to give a good impression and convinced myself that I wasn't an alcoholic since I didn't drink every day. I got a lot of strokes for caretaking, listening to others ,

being supportive, and being an intermediary. I learned to adapt to situations I was in; and to be a caretaker.

I took a vow as a child not to be an alcoholic. I didn't want to cause anyone pain like I had experienced growing up. I learned the cardinal rules of an alcoholic family: don't trust, don't talk, and don't feel. I became a mascot; I learned I could make others laugh and break the tension of any situation. All of those skills served me well in life; I became a therapist, clergyperson, and substance abuse professional. It was while working on a dissertation on alcoholism that I got sober. I was filled with shame when I realized that I was an alcoholic – of a different sort that the nightly and daily drinkers in my family. I was more like some of my uncles that were bingers like myself. The program has helped me look at myself, forgive others and myself, and make things right in my relationships. What could be better than feeling clean and free?

I have learned that there are many forms and shapes that alcoholism takes. I am so grateful to be here 38 years later. Working in the field of substance abuse was a challenge. I had to be careful about what I shared at meetings; and maintaining good and appropriate boundaries with clients who were in the program.

I do believe there are times when we all need help outside the program – be it from a doctor, a counselor, or a spiritual advisor. There is no shame in that. However, seeking outside help should not be a replacement for working with a sponsor, doing step work, or attending and participating in meetings.

I want to encourage people today to keep reaching out via text, email, zoom, skype, etc. Isolation is our tendency and our downfall. I am grateful all of you are here today and participating in AA. Without you I would not be here.

Editor Request

CNT FR PG 4

and emotional I found myself needing to recommit to the principles and practices of AA.

As my children have grown, so too has their impact on my recovery. While it started with boundary adjustments, I quickly found myself facing more practical and logistical problems. I have never felt unwelcome in a meeting, but the distraction caused by my fabulous children is not lost on me. I was no longer able to attend my once robust regiment of weekly meetings. I could not seek out fellowship whenever and wherever I wanted. While these are challenges many mothers face, I did feel this loss acutely in my recovery. For years fellowship and meetings had been constants in my life and they were now less accessible. I found myself seeking out more impactful experiences, rather than frequent ones. I became more involved in service, I sought out a community that was closer knit, and I became more dependent on my higher power than I had been since early recovery.

The adjustments and renewed commitments I made to my life and sobriety have enabled me to seek out and maintain a fulfilling and meaningful life in recovery. It gives me tools to face the day-to-day challenges of raising my children, and an ability to be grateful for the experience.

Aly, Reporter

