

December 2011

# Pass It On

Eastside Intergroup  
Newsletter

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### An Opportunity, Not An Obligation

by John M

Our mindset, how we view the world, is fundamental to our recovery and success in our efforts to stay sober and to grow. When meetings and sponsors and steps and helping others are viewed as opportunities, we have a really good chance to succeed.

When they are viewed as obligations, we're asking for trouble.

"I have to go to get my slip signed."

"I have to attend two meetings a week for my outpatient program."

"The court requires my attendance."

"They tell me I need 90 meetings in 90 days; that I need a sponsor."

"I'm not sure I really belong here?"

"I'm really too busy."

"I'm nothing like these people."

And on and on.

I know a few people who came to meetings or entered an outpatient program to "learn to drink responsibly." These same folks are now my friends who attend meetings regularly, have sponsors, sponsor others, work the steps and do AA service work. Why?

They had a shift in mindset. They re-examined their initial response to Step 1 and admitted that they were powerless over alcohol, that their lives had become unmanageable. So did I. Then things began to happen. We wanted what they had and were willing to go to any length to get it.

Meetings suddenly looked, felt and sounded different. The people attending weren't awful or so unlike us that we couldn't relate. In fact, they began to sound familiar. . . very familiar. When we finally heard their stories, they were sharing experiences very similar to ours. That wasn't what we heard in those earlier meetings we attended.

Then again, how could we have heard them? What we had felt before as an obligation was now an opportunity. It was a huge breakthrough, because we suddenly began to feel hope. Opportunity led to hope, where obligation had left us with the same pain, the same issues that brought us here in the first place. *(continued on page 3)*



[www.eastsideintergroup.org](http://www.eastsideintergroup.org)

Meeting Info  
Fellowship  
Stories  
Committees  
Daily  
Meditation  
Trivia  
Monthly Survey  
Fun & Games  
And  
lots more!



### Need to talk?

Call the A.A. Hotline any time of the day or night.

**425-454-9192**

## Upcoming Sober Events

For registration and contact information about any of the following events, please call the Eastside Intergroup office at 425-454-9192 or check online at [www.eastsideintergroup.org](http://www.eastsideintergroup.org).

**December 10 Live at Pine Lake Speakers Meeting**, 7:00pm at Pine Lake Covenant Church, 1715 228<sup>th</sup> Ave. SE, Sammamish. The speaker this month is Wally Z.. from Ingleside, Ill.

**December 31 New Year's Eve Extravaganza (dance)** at 7:00pm at Pickering Barn, 1730 10<sup>th</sup> Ave. NW, Issaquah. Entertainment, live music, hors d'oeuvres, dancing, midnight toast. \$15 in advance, \$20 at the door. More info and tickets at [psypc.org](http://psypc.org).

**December 31 New Year's Eve Speakers Meeting & Dance** at 8:00pm at St. Mark's Cathedral, 1245 10<sup>th</sup> Ave. E, Seattle 98012. Hosted by District 41 and in cooperation with the Deaf Access Committee. ASL interpretation provided. \$5 suggested donation.

**December 31-Jan. 1 New Year's Eve Roundup** in Seaside, OR. Info at [soberinseaside.com](http://soberinseaside.com)

**March 2-4, 2012 PRAASA 2012** at the Hyatt Regency in Bellevue, WA. Hosted by Western WA Area 72!!

**March 9-11, 2012 Northwest Pockets of Enthusiasm, *The Spirit Within***, at the Mirabeau Park Hotel in Spokane Valley, WA.

**March 14-17, 2012 Seniors in Sobriety 2012 International Conference** at the Hilton Garden Inn in Yuma, Arizona. Visit [www.bit.ly/sisconference](http://www.bit.ly/sisconference) for info and room registration.

*\*Events are listed as a service to our readers, not as an endorsement by Eastside Intergroup or Alcoholics Anonymous\**

### Christmas Alcathons

There will be round-the-clock meetings during the Christmas holiday at the Alano Club in Bellevue and the 12 & 12 Fellowship Hall at Country Village in Bothell. Call the office (425-454-9192) for details.

## Meeting Changes

***Please note the meetings that desperately need the support of more people. When a meeting gets so tiny that it can no longer pay the rent, the home group members are forced to close the meeting and remove it from the schedule. That means one less time and place for recovering alcoholics to hear the message and get the help they need. Please support these meetings and go to them, more than once! It never ever hurts to add a new meeting to your schedule – meet new people, hear new stories of experience strength and hope ... the possibilities are endless!!!***

### ~ NEW LOCATION ~

#### Empire Way

Mon. & Wed. 8:00-9:30

Our Lady of Mount Virgin Church  
2800 S Massachusetts St., Seattle

### ~ NEW LOCATION ~

#### That 12 & 12 Meeting

St. Clare's Episcopal  
8650 Railroad Ave. SE, Snoqualmie

### ~ BRING CHILDREN for childcare!! ~

#### Kirkland Daytimers

Thursday 10:00am

7<sup>th</sup> Day Adventist Church  
6400 108<sup>th</sup> Ave. NE, Kirkland

### ~ NEEDS SUPPORT ~

#### Woodinville Women

Monday 6:00pm

United Methodist Church  
17110 140<sup>th</sup> Ave. NE, Woodinville

### ~ NEEDS SUPPORT ~

#### Rainbow Solution Group

Wednesday 7:30pm

Eastgate Congregational Church  
15318 SE Newport Way, Bellevue

### ~ NEEDS SUPPORT ~

#### Big Book Study

Sunday 7:30 pm

Alano Club  
12302 NE 8<sup>th</sup> St.,  
Bellevue

### ~ NEEDS SUPPORT ~

#### Steps to Freedom

Thursday, 12:00pm

St. Jude Parish (Lovett Hall)  
10526 166<sup>th</sup> Ave. NE, Redmond

### ~ NEEDS SUPPORT ~

#### Sermon on the Mount

Tuesday 7:00pm

Eastgate Congregational Church  
15318 SE Newport Way, Bellevue



**Opportunity, Not Obligation** (continued from page 1)

We do have obligations within the program, though we don't have to live up to them. We do have an obligation to our sobriety if we choose to maintain it. We do have an obligation to help the alcoholic who still suffers, if we choose to reach outside ourselves. We do have an obligation to grow if we've chosen to work the steps for our own benefit. We do have an obligation to our sponsee if we have chosen to be a sponsor. We do have an obligation to show up if we have committed to secretary the meeting.

However, if we simply replace the word "obligation" in the previous paragraph with "opportunity" well, doesn't it fit nicely?

I attend four meetings a week. I'm not a Big Book thumper, though I find great value in the book. I'm not an AA zealot, though I love AA. I am involved deeply in my program. I do look forward to every meeting I attend. I am so very grateful that I have my sobriety and AA in my life.

**AA is my opportunity, not my obligation.**

**Bill W.'s Wisdom**

Let us never fear needed change.  
Certainly we have to discriminate between  
changes for worse and changes for better.

But once a need becomes clearly apparent  
in an individual, in a group,  
or in A.A. as a whole,  
it has long since been found out  
that we cannot stand still  
and look the other way.

The essence of all growth  
is a willingness to change for the better  
and then an unremitting willingness  
to shoulder  
whatever responsibility this entails.

Grapevine, July 1965

**Service  
Opportunities**

Call the ESIG office at  
**425-454-9192**  
for service opportunities!



Faithful Fivers are A.A. members who graciously pledge to contribute at least five dollars each month. This contribution will support Eastside Intergroup in its efforts to carry the A.A. message of hope and recovery to those alcoholics who still suffer in the Eastside area.

The Faithful Fiver idea came about when we remembered that we wasted much more than five dollars each month during our drinking days. Your contribution will help Eastside Intergroup provide the vital services necessary to carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Faithful Fiver members who pledge at least \$5.00 per month annually will receive a subscription to our monthly newsletter, *Pass It On*. Contributions are tax deductible under IRS Code 501(c)3.

*Yes! Please enroll me as a  
Faithful Fiver!*

Here is my contribution of  
\$ \_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_ months

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

*Many Thanks to  
New Faithful Fivers!*

Dave R., Debbie G.,  
Dorothy H., Pauline O.

## Eastside Intergroup Corner

### Office Report

I wish for all of you a safe sober serene holiday season that is rich with the joy of living and warmed by language of the heart. It can be a tough time of year for a great many people, as has already been evidenced by calls to the office and the Hotline. This year I am making a conscious effort, within and without the ESIG office door, to reach out with the hand of A.A. to those who are suffering during the holidays. Won't you please join me in this opportunity?

If you are reading this and you are one of those who needs the hand of AA, please call 425-454-9192 any time of the day or night. You will always talk to a real person, and you will get the spiritual help you need.

It has been a lively and interesting month of gratitude in the office. I've been grateful for so much. Mainly what I'm grateful for in this moment is the grace of the God of our understanding and the program of Alcoholics Anonymous. Can you imagine a life without AA? I can't imagine even one day without it, or even one hour of one day!

Come on in to buy some books, put a few pieces in the jigsaw puzzle, check out the office if you've never been here before, have a meaningful conversation, if you have time for that. We still have yellow roses in bloom in the flower bed ... now THAT is a miracle, if you ask me!

With AA Love  
and Laughter,  
Anne



#### **You put off getting to know me.**

You say you are hungry for faith, but you do not try to contact me.

You say you want change,  
but you are unwilling to allow for change.

In short, you are stuck, and  
I am who you blame for your condition.

I cannot coax you. You are stubborn.

You must learn to coax yourself.

Only you can swing open the door between us.

To do that you need willingness.

May you find it now.

Half measures avail you nothing.

You stand at the turning point.

It is my hope you will let go absolutely.

#### **What happens when you let go?**

**You leap and the net appears. I am the net.**

I, God, am your invisible support.

I am the power you are looking for,

the power that is the source of

right actions and attitudes.

Draw close to me and I can alter your life.

Come to me with your problems and  
watch me as I bring you their proper solutions.

**It is my joy to aid you with your life.**

It is my pleasure to be intimately involved in your affairs.

**Get to know me.**

In order to experience faith,  
you need only try to contact me.

I am an energy of transformation.

As you allow me to touch your will and your life,  
you will experience change for the better.

**Allow me to enter your domain.**

*From Answered Prayers: Love Letters from the Divine,  
by Julia Cameron*



**December** – If the holiday blues start heading your way, act as if! Act as if HP is really in the car with you as drive. Act as if HP is sitting with you as you work. Act as if HP is next to you during that holiday party. Because truth be told, HP is there! And since HP is there, say a few words of thanks and listen. Before you know it, the blues will be gone. **Keyword: HP Keystep: 10**

**January** – If you become too busy this month with the holidays, sit down and take a deep breath. Some things may not get done. Next, concentrate on what is important to you. Let me spell that out: **Y O U!** Here are some things that are important to you: your HP, your sponsor, your sponsees, being present and accounted for in life and in AA. Keep mini-meditations going on all month. This will center you and help you move through this busy time. **Keyword: Meditation Keystep: 11**

February – Each holiday is different than the last and this may be a very different holiday for you this year. Maybe you are newly sober or have made other changes in your life. Whatever the case may be, prayer is of the utmost importance, especially the Third and Seventh step prayers. Here's what you can do: Say the two prayers as one. Notice that the Third Step doesn't have an AMEN after it and so the Seventh Step reads quite nicely after the Third. Do this. It's fun! **Keyword: Prayer Keystep: 1**

**March** – You've been racking your brains out about what to do for that special someone. Maybe you can buy them something they always wanted or go on that special trip you've talked about. But, hey wait...what's this they asked Santa for???? Why, it's an amends! From you! Hmmmm, cheap, free and no gift-wrapping necessary. Seriously, your loved one may really need to hear you say "I'm sorry". **Keyword: Amends Keystep: 6**

**April** – An ultimate goal of AA is to become closer to HP. When you do, you become more compassionate towards others. What better way to show your compassion than by volunteering. Yes, volunteer during the busiest time of the year!! AA service is always welcomed as are working in the food banks or at your place of worship. The funny thing is, you'll end up receiving the most! **Keyword: Share Keystep: 12**

**May** – If you are concerned about temptations at holiday functions, remember that you do not have to be alone. HP is always there, as is your sponsor and the 24-hour phone lines. Help is only a phone call away. If you can't make it to a phone, repeat several times "Let go and Let God" and let HP take care of the details. Bring along phone numbers and memorize (425) 454-9192. **Keyword: Spiritual Keystep: 2**

**June** – Beware of cookies! Beware of drinks! This month watch what is handed to you at a special function. That innocent cookie can turn out to be a rum ball cookie. Or your drink could have alcohol in it. It's perfectly okay to say "I don't drink" at a party. In fact, it's perfectly okay not to go functions that might be slippery for you. Be accountable: call your sponsor before you go, while you are there, and after you leave. **Keyword: Others Keystep: 5**

July – Treat yourself to something special this month. There are many wonderful things you can do for yourself in AA that don't cost a dime. Go to some extra meetings this month (if you want to avoid traffic, there are online meetings and they're good!). Or help with the phone lines. The PI committee has some activities this month. Or if you want solitude, take a long walk or meditate in a quiet church. **Keyword: Quiet time Keystep: 3**

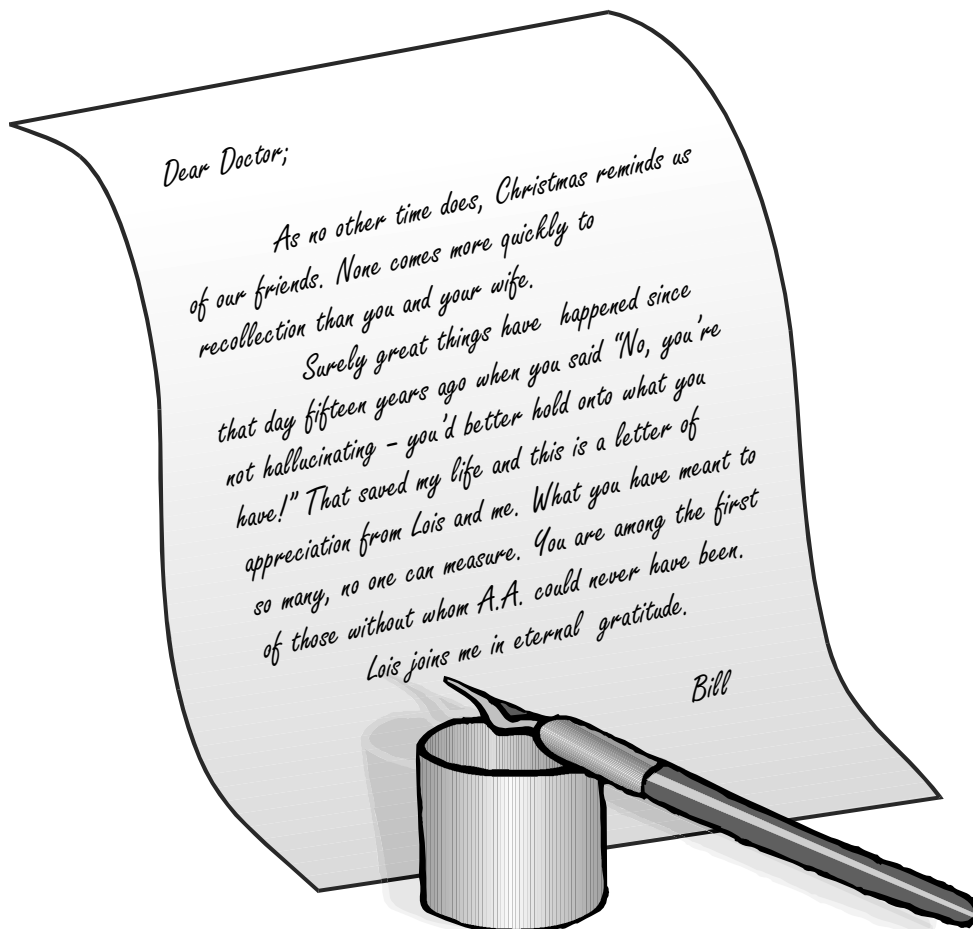
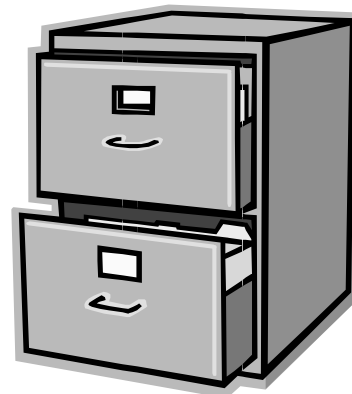
**August** – The secret of life is simply to live it! The secret of resentment is simply the message. The secret of the Christmas season is simply to enjoy it! Be open for miracles in unlikely places this month and enjoy! **Keyword: Simply Keystep: 4**

**September** – "If we examine every disturbance we have, great or small, we will find at the root of it some unhealthy dependency and its consequent unhealthy demand." (Language of the Heart, p. 238) This story discusses emotional sobriety (really humility) and spiritual development. So in the midst of your day-to-day life, read this story and meditate using the St. Francis Prayer. **Keyword: Light Keystep: 7**

**October** – Remember Christmas Past when you drank all the time and barely remembered Christmas Day? But remember the sadness in your children's eyes the day after. Now is Christmas Present. You will remember it and it will be good. Not for the gifts but because you are alive and well. Thank HP for the holiday and all your days here on earth. And daydream of what HP has in store for your Christmas Future. **Keyword: Light Keystep: 9**

**November** – This month may be a tough one for some of the people you love in the program. Here are some pointers: the only thing you can do with someone who went back out is ask if they want to go to a meeting together, the only thing you do for them is pray; the only thing you do at them is smile. While this is a joyous season for most, it is not for all. Be compassionate and pray. **Keyword: Compassion Keystep: 8**

Hello from the vaults of the District 38 Archives! This month I want to talk about some Christmas Spirit and Archives! I am reminded of a letter that Bill W. wrote to Dr. Silkworth in December of 1949.....



Wow!!! What a powerful letter to a great doctor. I too wish to thank all the people who have helped me on this great journey toward lasting sobriety. Without you all I would never have found the joy and serenity that working with others, through our history, has brought to me. Thank you all so very much! I also want to thank the Eastside Intergroup for the opportunity to write these articles on our history each month.

More will be revealed.....

P.S. Next month I turn 19 in the Fellowship and will continue to serve as Archivist and Historian for District 38. And as always I am available to answer any of your questions on our history. You can reach me through the Intergroup office or by email [oldaakepr@aol.com](mailto:oldaakepr@aol.com).



## ESIG Birthday Club

### ESIG Birthday Club

Many AA members celebrate their anniversaries by sending a **contribution of \$1 or \$2 or more for each year of sobriety.**

Your contribution supports the services provided by Eastside Intergroup Central Office.

**Join the Birthday Club, and celebrate with your birthday listed in the *Pass It On* newsletter!**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Group:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Sobriety Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail checks payable to Eastside Intergroup**  
1299 156th Ave. NE, #160 Bellevue, WA 98007

**Thank you for your dedication to AA's  
Legacy of Service!**

Eastside Intergroup Association  
1299 156th Ave NE, Suite 160  
Bellevue, WA 98007



Address Service Requested

To:

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## Renewal and Change of Address Form

Please consider renewing your Pass It On newsletter for another year. Just fill out and mail this form. A *voluntary \$15.00 subscription* fee (for the year) is requested to help offset the cost of printing and mailing.

However, a donation of whatever amount you'd like is greatly appreciated to help us keep on keeping on!!!!

Renewal?      Yes   No

Change of Address?      Yes   No

***PLEASE PRINT!***

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

(Optional) Telephone/Cell #: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Send to & make checks payable to:**

**Eastside Intergroup  
1299 156th Ave. NE, # 160  
Bellevue, WA 98007**

**For more information or questions, please call (425) 454-9192**