



Newsletter

Vol.1 No.1, Sept. 2017

SANDHILLS INTERGROUP

The BEGINNING Issue



A MESSAGE FOR GINNIE – THE DISEASE OF ADDICTION – IT'S SIMPLE
THE RIGHT TOOLS – THE ANONYMOUS ALCOHOLIC – MY PATH TO EARLY RISERS
PLEASE HEAR WHAT I'M NOT SAYING

**A message for Ginnie from
Sherri and the Sandhills Intergroup.**

Dear Ginnie,

Thank you for the 27 years of dedication and talent you so graciously devoted to the Sandhills Intergroup. Communicating the AA message is vital, and service work is the heart of AA. For the past 16 years, your commitment and hard-work creating the Intergroup's newsletter has touched countless lives. As you pass the production of this newsletter on to me, you reinforce the enduring message of unity, service and recovery. We are inspired by you and filled with gratitude for all you have done and continue to do as a 28-year member of the fellowship.

Sincerely, Sherri S,
Editor, Intergroup Newsletter



Newsletter Contributors

**David D.
Donna B.
John R.
Scott A.
Sherri S.**

Editor's note: All submissions are printed as submitted.

The Disease of Addiction

Hey my name is Scott and I am a alcoholic I was just gonna share my experience strength and hope and hopefully it will help someone out there struggling with the disease of addiction alcoholism I was Born in Pinehurst on August 12 1987 right here in Moore County My sobriety Date is April 29 2015 I have two Brothers and Two Sisters and what I've learned about this disease that I was a alcoholic before I Evan took the first drink me and my whole family are are ate up with this disease we all been to in out of the legal system at a real early age I've been to prison both my brother been to prison my sisters have been to prison so this disease does not care who you are I've been on and off probation sence I was 15 16 years old so I struggled with this disease for along time and never knew it I had a few friends that I use to run with that got clean before I did so I saw a change in them and what that did for me was give me hope I eventually went to treatment in Rockingham my first time going thru Treatment and they planted a seed there The Big Book Alcoholics Anonymous and what that did for me I got a chance to learn a lil bit about my self there the first time I went there I eventually within 6 month I went back to doing the only thing I knew I drank again it was because I was unwilling to do the things that's was asked of me and I see that today my sobriety Date let's go back there the last time I had a drink april 28 2015 I had court the next day and was sentence to 10

months in prison for the third time so what that did for me separated me from the alcohol and I'm so grateful for that today I don't think I would have ever quit drinking until something terrible would have happened I've had numerous DWI wrecks unhealthy relationships time I stole from friends family myself I could go on with all the things alcohol has done for Me so this time a few months

before getting released from Sandford correctional institution I reached out and asked for some help I was so sick of going in and out that's all I knew 85 percent of the people in there was because of Alcohol and Drug Addiction I went to 90 day New Direction Progam while I was in there and it all sounded alot like what I heard in treatment the first time so like I said I reached out and asked for some help on my own this Time I ended back in the same Treatment Center in Rockingham the Day I Got out of Samaritan Colony and went to one of there Recovery Homes so I could learn how to live again I Got a sponcer a week before leaving the colony what's worked for me Is going to alot of meeting working the 12 steps then doing the same thing for other people struggling so if there's anybody out there just give it a chance.

– Scott A.

IT'S SIMPLE

There's a part of me
that causes shame.

It's a disease is
what they claim.

Too much pain
and too much sorrow.

How can there be a better tomorrow?

Whatever the cure
I'm willing to pay.

They said it's simple
just come to AA.

So I took direction and now my life
Isn't always remorse and strife.

I have up days and down days
just like the rest.
But being sober
Is what I like best.

– Donna B.



The Right Tools

This is a true story

Bob recognized that I was distracted by the three women in bikinis jumping on their raft to test its inflation. Being new to the white water rafting guide crew, it was important to him that each rafter learned how to stay safe. He asked me "John, are you paying attention? This stuff could save your life" I admitted that I hadn't been but focused now. Bob was one of My sponcees and had just got the job as a river guide. I was scheduled for knee surgery and had a brace on my leg, but it was either go this weekend or I would be out for the summer. Of the Six of us on the raft four of us were in the program. We Rode down the first half of the Arkansas River and laid up for lunch. After lunch we tackled the lower run. Except for my wife each of us were bounced out of the raft at some point. The lower part of the river was much more difficult.

We ended up getting stuck on a recirculating suck hole. As the Raft started to flip I threw my weight against the rising side of the raft trying to force it back down. Over the side I went. It got really quiet and dark but then I came back up. I was underneath the raft that was still stuck on the suck hole. I scrambled for the edge where ropes were dangling but got sucked back down before I could get to one. It got really quiet and dark again. When I came back up I was still under the raft. Once again I scrambled for the edge but got sucked under another time. As it grew dark and quiet again I wondered to myself how many times I could make this circuit before I couldn't hold my breath any longer.

When I came back up I was once again under the raft. I was worried as I started to scramble for the edge. As I traversed the bottom of the raft I felt my paddle. I grabbed it and was reminded that I was told during the safety orientation to hold on to my paddle if I fell out of the boat. We would need it to finish the run. All of a sudden The entire orientation ran through my mind, including how to get out of a recirculating suck hole. I curled into a ball and counted to ten then started to stroke for where I thought the surface was.



I popped out of the water upstream from the raft and drifted by them. I "swam" about 3 miles of the Arkansas River. When I finally landed it was on a sand bar on the wrong side of the river. I was so exhausted I could hardly raise my arms as the raft floated by.

My friends on the raft beached it on the other side of the river and walked back upstream to where I was. They tried to throw a safety rope across the river to me but we could not get it to travel all of the way across. We worked on it for about a half hour when four guys in white water kayaks appeared on the river. They stopped, surfing the rapids that we had been fighting in our raft and asked if we needed help. One of the men in the kayaks beached his and came onshore to help me. I was using my paddle as a crutch as we found a better spot to cross the river. In the end he brought the end of the safety rope over to me. He told me how to hold the rope and jump in.

As I got out of the river on the raft side of the river, the kayaker that helped me paddled across and handed me my paddle. It was the wrong color. Our equipment was blue and this paddle was black. The Kayaker assured me that was the paddle I had given him.

There is no telling how long that paddle was making the circuit in that suck hole. I believe that God signs his work. I realized that he could have saved my life by me finding my own paddle. If I had found my own paddle it would not have seemed like a miracle. I feel he wanted my attention. He wanted me to know he has already given me the tools to live. I just need to remember them.

— John R.

JOIN SANDHILLS INTERGROUP

help
carry
the
message
to
the
alcoholic
who
still
suffers



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The Anonymous Alcoholic

Recently, I was blessed with a beautiful little girl. I had not intended to have any more children. My ex-girlfriend is usually trying to keep me from seeing her. This makes my timeline a bit more urgent. I don't make a lot of money making signs, & I really need to support my daughter. Through the years, I have also written and recorded a few songs, all of which relate directly to my own life. I have written a few songs when I was going through something bad or traumatic. I wouldn't call it singing the blues, rather the times I'm really in touch with my emotions. Sometimes it's the past, but usually it's how I've messed my personal life up in some new, bizarre way. Trouble seems to find me anywhere I go, but sometimes I'm my own worst enemy. I thought my life was on the decline, and I'd never really amount to much. I'm a good worker, but I never seemed to catch a break. When my daughter was born on D-Day, June 6th, thirteen weeks premature, in 2010, I didn't even know if she was mine or not. I hadn't known her mom at all.

She was a blind date to a Christmas party in 2009. Ours was but a short moment of lust, and we really don't seem to like each other at all now. I can suffer her presence to let her see my little girl, but I risk the drama that might play out as a result. I never have any idea what would happen next. Having been born at 2 pounds, 13 weeks premature, & of a mom who



is admittedly an opiate addict, & was during her 5 pregnancies that I'm aware of. My child was the only child of the five to survive. In this case, drug addiction is only a symptom of her behavior, not the other way around. Who knows? I need to stop letting her rent space in my head. I also have a big mouth, & I have a tendency to say exactly the worst thing at exactly the wrong moment. This is one of my character flaws. I feel bad about that. This eventually turns into a happy ending so far, anyway. Today, my beautiful angel & I are on vacation at the beach, & I have a sobriety date of New Year's Day, 2017. Sometimes, I think that this is as good as it gets, which I'm grateful for. Other times I think this is just the beginning of my daughter's path through life. I hope I can inspire her to accomplish greater things in life than you or I. I have a lot of skeletons in my closet, but to know me is to slowly start to cheer me on, as I try to turn a lemon's life into lemonade. I'm ashamed of my behavior in the past, but I believe that I have yet to reach my finest hour. We'll see.

— David D.

You no longer have a secret, you have a story.

Write it. Share it. Read it.

Send us your story, poem, quote, jokes or ideas.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED AT ANYTIME.

email your submission to:

SandhillsNews@gmail.com

Help someone help themselves, become a Sandhills Intergroup Newsletter contributor!

Please Hear What I'm Not Saying

Don't be fooled by me.
Don't be fooled by the face I wear
for I wear a mask, a thousand masks,
masks that I'm afraid to take off,
and none of them is me.

Pretending is an art that's second nature with me,
but don't be fooled,
for God's sake don't be fooled.
I give you the impression that I'm secure,
that all is sunny and unruffled with me, within as well as without,
that confidence is my name and coolness my game,
that the water's calm and I'm in command
and that I need no one,
but don't believe me.

My surface may seem smooth but my surface is my mask,
ever-varying and ever-concealing.
Beneath lies no complacency.
Beneath lies confusion, and fear, and aloneness.
But I hide this. I don't want anybody to know it.
I panic at the thought of my weakness exposed.
That's why I frantically create a mask to hide behind,
a nonchalant sophisticated facade,
to help me pretend,
to shield me from the glance that knows.

But such a glance is precisely my salvation, my only hope,
and I know it.
That is, if it's followed by acceptance,
if it's followed by love.
It's the only thing that can liberate me from myself,
from my own self-built prison walls,
from the barriers I so painstakingly erect.
It's the only thing that will assure me
of what I can't assure myself,
that I'm really worth something.
But I don't tell you this. I don't dare to, I'm afraid to.
I'm afraid your glance will not be followed by acceptance,
will not be followed by love.
I'm afraid you'll think less of me,
that you'll laugh, and your laugh would kill me.
I'm afraid that deep-down I'm nothing
and that you will see this and reject me.

So I play my game, my desperate pretending game,
with a facade of assurance without
and a trembling child within.
So begins the glittering but empty parade of masks,
and my life becomes a front.
I idly chatter to you in the suave tones of surface talk.
I tell you everything that's really nothing,
and nothing of what's everything,
of what's crying within me.
So when I'm going through my routine
do not be fooled by what I'm saying.

Please listen carefully and try to hear what I'm not saying,
what I'd like to be able to say,
what for survival I need to say,
but what I can't say.

I don't like hiding.
I don't like playing superficial phony games.
I want to stop playing them.
I want to be genuine and spontaneous and me
but you've got to help me.
You've got to hold out your hand
even when that's the last thing I seem to want.
Only you can wipe away from my eyes
the blank stare of the breathing dead.
Only you can call me into aliveness.
Each time you're kind, and gentle, and encouraging,
each time you try to understand because you really care,

**I want to be genuine
and spontaneous and me
but you've got to help
me. You've got to hold
out your hand even when
that's the last thing
I seem to want.**

my heart begins to grow wings--
very small wings,
very feeble wings,
but wings!

With your power to touch me into
feeling you can breathe life into me.
I want you to know that.
I want you to know how important
you are to me,
how you can be a creator

--an honest-to-God creator--
of the person that is me
if you choose to.
You alone can break down the wall behind which I tremble,
you alone can remove my mask,
you alone can release me from my shadow-world of panic,
from my lonely prison,
if you choose to.

Please choose to.
Do not pass me by.
It will not be easy for you.
A long conviction of worthlessness builds strong walls.
The nearer you approach to me the blinder I may strike back.
It's irrational, but despite what the books say about man
often I am irrational.
I fight against the very thing I cry out for.
But I am told that love is stronger than strong walls
and in this lies my hope.
Please try to beat down those walls
with firm hands but with gentle hands
for a child is very sensitive.

Who am I, you may wonder?
I am someone you know very well.
For I am every man you meet
and I am every woman you meet.

— Charles C. Finn
September 1966

My Path To Early Risers

This is how it went for me, after thirty years of obsessions, I found myself during the last eight years pleading with myself daily to stop drinking, but somehow this only caused my drinking to escalate. The greater my desperation, the more I drank. It's illogical, but it continued until my body could no longer take it.

One morning in April 2016, I woke in a cold sweat with a level of nausea far greater than normal. I remember thinking to myself, "just get going, eat something, drink some tea and get in the shower." But I couldn't eat, I could hardly stand and my chest was pounding, something was wrong. Most of this is vague, but I knew I needed help, I called an ambulance. I was admitted, stabilized, medicated and later that evening I was sent home.

I felt this was my chance, I wanted so desperately to stop drinking, I wanted to feel well, I wanted to see what life was like without alcohol, however this only lasted seven days. On the eighth morning, it was my husband that drove me to the hospital. This time they didn't send me home.

I spent five days in the hospital and by the time I was released, I was so medicated, I could hardly walk. Which honestly didn't bother me. They gave me pills to sleep, pills to calm down and pills for everything in-between. Despite the ill effects of the medication, it gave me time away from alcohol. The medication also prevented me from being able to drive. Which in hindsight, was a blessing, it took me out of control. When I say, out of control, I don't mean "crazy" person that is out of control, I mean, it took me out of the driver's seat both literally and figuratively.

In the rooms of AA, I hear that getting a DWI or going to jail is a blessing. I've discovered in AA, everything is a paradox, the more we want to stop drinking, the more we drink. DWIs and time in jail become good fortune. Our drinking and manipulation of those around us gives us security, but giving up that control through AA enables a security and serenity beyond our understanding. I didn't know it then, but I was being taught to rely on others. I was being taught to trust and most importantly, I was being taught to listen.

The hospital referred me to a therapist. The therapist referred me to an intensive outpatient program. I went to the therapist weekly, I started the outpatient program. I tapered off the medicine and began driving one month after being released from the hospital. It was working, I felt good. As I came into the last weeks of the outpatient program, attending AA meetings was a suggested part of the transition.

It was very clear to me that I had not stopped drinking by myself. During the outpatient program, I was sharing and engaging with "real" people who were just like me. Five days a week, three hours a day, I was telling people my story, my feelings and thoughts. I trusted the process, so I studied the AA schedule and decided that a meeting at 7:30 am would work for me.

After turning around in the parking lot three times immediately after arriving to AA, I finally walked into the Wilder Building on my fourth visit. I remember thinking, "ok, a lot of men, but wait, there's two women. Ok, I can do this." Shortly after, I met my sponsor and began attending meetings twice a week.

I soon learned the Early Risers began from a spouse's request to have her AA-member husband home rather than at AA meetings during their normal daily routine. I was also told that no one believed a 7:30 am meeting would last. Contrary to what people thought, it not only has lasted, it thrives.

My initial resistance faded quickly. I sat and listened, because I knew listening was all that was required. I soon became familiar with the "REGULARS," aka old-timers. They didn't know it, but they became my friends. It took months for me to actually speak to my new friends. But during the early months of my sobriety, I thought of the regulars often. More precisely, I had conversations in my head with them. In my thoughts, I let them know I was doing OK, thanked them for always being there when I walked into the Wilder Building and most importantly recalled what they shared.

I guess this is just another paradox of AA. Friends you don't have to talk to and who probably don't know your name. Friends who "on a dime" would have your back and give you precisely what you need without asking. And friends who tell stories that make you laugh and cry and teach you things you never knew before.

In the past sixteen months, I've learned about a persistent strain of "asshole-ism" that is somehow only alleviated by AA, and the fact that "everything comes back to fear." When I walked in the door to Early Risers, fear was the last thing on my mind because I spent years giving fear other names, such as, insecurity, false confidence, avoidance, ego, resistance and control.

I knew very well what my alternative was if I didn't break through my insecurity and resistance and sit down in a chair and listen. So I did, and little did I know what Early Risers would become for me. They call it AA and make it anonymous because of false stigma. I call it a chance, a simple yet unbelievably profound chance. It's the ultimate AA paradox, stand up to the stigma and the fear, and you will receive all the benefits you tried so desperately to find through your alcohol induced armor. It's an equation with no solution and something felt in your heart. People ask, "how does AA work?" No one can answer that, because it works differently for everyone. But if someone asked me how AA works, I would say, "because it's a chance of a lifetime!" And I give thanks for that chance with my gratitude for every person that walks through the doors to Early Risers.

— Sherri S.

LISTEN & SILENT

are spelled with the same letters.

think about it...

Sandhills Intergroup

The Sandhills Intergroup is a central office established to aid groups and meetings in Moore County carry the AA message to alcoholics who still suffer.

We provide:

24 Hour Answering Service

Website

Newsletter

AA Meeting List Distribution

Adopt-a-Pro Packets for Professionals

Recorded Speaker Meetings

We are funded solely by the AA groups in our county and we **NEED, ASK and THANK YOU** for your contributions and input.

Visit our website to listen to speakers from meetings in Moore County, more added weekly!

www.MooreCountyAA.org

Questions or comments email us at:
postmaster@moorecountyaa.org



Area 51 | District 52

NEWS

FALL BUSINESS MEETING,
WORKSHOP &
POT LUCK DINNER

**SUNDAY,
OCTOBER 1, 2017**

Meeting - 2PM

Workshop: *Carrying the
Message to Non Alcoholics* - 4PM

Pot Luck Dinner - 6PM

Aberdeen Wilder Building

504 Wilder Ave.

Officers

*DCM	David S.
*Alt. DCM	Joanne L.
Treasurer	Constance P.
Secretary	Katy H.
CP/CPI	Dan P.
CFC	Carlisle K.
Treatment	Kenny D.
Grapevine	Rebecca R.

**Newly elected officers.*

*District 52 comprises Moore, Hoke,
Richmond, Lee and Scotland counties.
Area 51 represents North Carolina.*

Freedom From Bondage Conference

March 11-13, 2018

Hampton Inn & Suites

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