

God, Grant me the  
Serenity to accept  
the things I cannot change  
the Courage to change  
the things I can, and the  
Wisdom to know  
the difference.

# Pipeline



A Publication of NH Area 43 Assembly February 2004

## Then and Now

reprinted from the May 1981 Grapevine

**A**t a meeting last night, another light bulb went on, to illuminate yet another facet of myself as I recover in the AA program.

Our group secretary chose "Freedom" as the topic for discussion. As the first person commented, a new idea took shape in my mind. I have attended other meetings where this was discussed, and the comparison was always made between the "then" drinking days and the "now" recovery days, with emphasis on the ability to move from the smallness of our world that was ruled by alcohol, into an openness of movement, free of real and imagined fears.

My light bulb allowed me to see for the first time that long before I added alcohol to my personality, I had been a captive of resentment, fear, self-centeredness, and dishonest thinking. I had not known I possessed these character defects, so I permitted them to influence choices and decisions I made. I even found myself doing right things for the wrong reasons, and was a slave to the opinions of others.

To this personality, I added alcohol and created an even worse state of mind. Being an accomplished rationalizer and justifier, I was able to adjust my values to suit my actions. I became even more adept at dishonesty, was chained to fear, drugged away at the care and feeding of resentment, and allowed self-centeredness to shackle me as no Simon Legree ever could have.

Only after coming into AA, bottoming out, and admitting my powerlessness over alcohol was I able to go on and, primarily through the Fourth Step, learn the exact nature of my wrongs and how they had influenced all of my life, before and during my years of drinking. With the Sixth Step, I realized that I had to bottom out on these defects, admitting powerlessness over them also, in order to progress. True freedom came only after I became willing to let God remove these defects of character from me, in order to give me not only openness of movement but also openness of mind and spirit.

Today, through the humility learned in Step Six and the discipline afforded by all the Steps, I have freedom unlike any I've ever experienced. Freedom from the "bondage of self," as expressed in the Third Step prayer in the Big Book, is the most valued, in spite of the constant vigilance and prayer necessary to maintain it.

Had I not become alcoholic and been led to this Fellowship, I might have spent the rest of my life in dreary drudgery, ignorant of the necessity to change or the resources available to help me change. Bless the changes!

C.K., Chicago, IL

*We are going to  
know a new  
freedom and a new  
happiness.*

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Throughout 2004, we will be featuring articles about the **Twelve Promises** of Alcoholics Anonymous. How have the promises come true in your life? Tell us about it!

Submit your articles to:  
attn: Pipeline  
NH Area Service Office  
1330 Hooksett Rd.,  
Hooksett NH 03101  
e-mail to: [office@nhaa.mv.com](mailto:office@nhaa.mv.com)  
(please put "for Pipeline"  
in the subject line)

### MARCH

*"We will not regret the past nor  
wish to shut the door on it."*

### APRIL

*"We will comprehend the word  
serenity and we will know peace."*

# Pipeline

A Publication of the  
NH Area 43 Assembly of  
**Alcoholics Anonymous**

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## Pipeline Statement of Purpose

*The New Hampshire Area Pipeline will be the voice of Alcoholics Anonymous within Area 43. Its editors and staff will be primarily accountable to New Hampshire A. A. Area 43 as a whole. Within the bounds of friendliness and good taste, the Pipeline will enjoy perfect freedom of speech on all matters directly pertaining to Alcoholics Anonymous within Area 43. Like the A.A. movement it mirrors, the primary purpose of the New Hampshire Pipeline will be to try to carry the A.A. message to alcoholics and practice the A.A. principles in all its affairs.*

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## Group Information

### New Groups

#### District 13

Brookline Wednesday 7 - 8 PM BX  
Brookline Big Book Study  
United Church of Christ Cong. and Meth. Church  
2 Main Street

#### District 19

Walpole Wednesday 7 - 8:30 PM BX  
Big Book Step Study  
First Congregational Church, Washington Sq.

### Meeting Changes

#### District 10

Plaistow Tuesday 2:30 - 3:30 PM SD  
Plaistow After School  
Timberlane High School, Room 201  
36 Greenough Rd.  
*Meets at 2:30 during school year; noon summer*

#### District 15

Dover Tuesday 7:30 - 8:45 HD  
We Care Group  
Friendship Center, 45 E. Broadway  
*used to meet 8 - 9 PM*

### Disbanded Meetings

#### District 10

Salem Tuesday 7 - 8 PM HBX  
It's In the Book Women's Meeting  
St. David's Church, Route 97

#### District 16

Ctr. Ossipee Wednesday 7 - 8 PM SD  
Back to Life  
St. Jude's Residence, 35 Rte 16B  
*disbanded while meeting room is redone*



## FROM OUR MAILBOX

My name is Michael K. and I'm an inmate at the N.H. State Prison in Berlin. I found a copy of your Area 43 Pipeline at our Substance Abuse Services Office, and seeing that I plan on living in the Manchester/Hooksett area I was hoping I could get some support information or a name to hook up with when I parole.

My plan right now is to go to a half-way house in the coming summer. I will need lots of numbers for support.

A little about myself. I'm 44 years old, and have been involved in AA since 1980. Obviously I haven't grasped the program. I was always under the umbrella of "I don't need AA." As you

## Greetings From Your Service Office

Connie D. of Derry recently notified the Service Office that there has been a slight change in procedure for getting a Tax Identification Number (TIN) for your AA group.

If your group is considering opening a checking account, you will want to obtain a TIN for your group, rather than tying it to a group member's social security number. You can register your group as a non-profit entity, and should not be charged any bank fees for your account.

There is a form that must be filled out by someone from your group. You may either download Form SS-4 from the Internal Revenue website at <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-fill/fss4.pdf>, or call the IRS directly to request the form at 1-877-829-5500. Once you have filled out the appropriate sections of the form (see page 2 for instructions, Opened a bank account), have your group treasurer call the IRS at 1-877-829-5500. Given the information on your completed form, they should then be able to assign your group a TIN right over the phone.

In office news, we are in the process of putting together a new statewide meeting list. As always, we appreciate any information you can pass on to us about the groups you frequent. We can't take on this project without YOUR help!

We want to thank Doris C. of Manchester, volunteer extraordinaire, for her weekly visit.

*In grateful service, Karen, Mary Anne and Ingrid*

can tell from the address where I'm at, (my attitude) didn't work. I've always heard you have three options if you don't want AA - prison, state asylum, or death. Well, I've experienced the first two and am not interested in the third. I never believed this but I guess the proof is in the pudding.

If there is something you might be able to do for me I would greatly appreciate it. I apologize for this letter coming out of the blue. I don't want to leave prison without any type of support, and seeing as I don't know anybody down there I figured I'd give this a shot.

I'm very committed to my sobriety today.

*Editor's note: Seventh Tradition contributions to Area 43 help to provide complimentary Pipelines to several correctional institutions in New Hampshire. We passed on Michael's letter to the Service Office and the Area Corrections Committee. An anonymous member donated a Pipeline subscription to be mailed directly to Michael each month. "When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, may the hand of AA always be there, and for that we are responsible." (Responsibility Statement)*

# Donations THANK YOU!

Barrington Group	Barrington
Derby Discussion	Berlin
Newfound Lake Group	Bristol
Coming Alive Group	Canterbury
BYOC	Concord
Sat Men's 12 Step	Concord
Derry Original Group	Derry
Derry Women's Group	Derry
Clean Sweep Group	Dover
Resurrection Group	Dover
Sat. Nite Commitment	Dover
Wednesday Noon Group	Dover
Fresh Beginners Group	Durham
Franklin 12&12	Franklin
New Life Group	Gorham
Women's Joy Of Living	Hampstead
Just For Today	Hampton
The Lunch Bunch	Hampton
Friday Night Group	Keene
On Awakening	Keene
T.O.A.D. Group	Keene
Women's Group	Keene
Kittery Original	Kittery
What's Good About Today	Kittery
Friday Nite Men's	Laconia
Up Close & Personal	Laconia
Lancaster Group	Lancaster
Lisbon Group	Lisbon
12&12 Step Group	Littleton
Original Happy Hour West	Manchester
Big Book Step Study	Manchester
First Light Of Day	Manchester
Free At Last	Manchester
Hard Hat Group	Manchester
How To 12&12	Manchester
Over 50 Group	Manchester
Precise Method	Manchester
Queen City	Manchester
Stepping Back To Basics	Manchester
There Is A Solution	Manchester
Melvin Village Group	Melvin Village
B & M Honesty	Merrimack
Merrimack Group	Merrimack
New Horizons Grp	Milford
Souhegan Sun	Milford
Winnie's Womens Group	Moultonboro
A New Day Group	Nashua
Downtown Group	Nashua
New Alternative	Nashua
Slogan Group	Nashua
So Nashua Today Group	Nashua
Sober, Free & Grateful	Nashua
Terrace Group	Nashua
New Boston Group	New Boston
GVD Group	New London
40 Plus Group	Newcastle
Early Morn. Big Book	Peterborough
Noontimers Big Book	Peterborough
Plainfield Friday Nite	Plainfield
Fri. Nite Live	Plaistow
Stepping Stones	Plaistow
Covered Bridge Group	Plymouth
Sunday Morning Daybreak	Portsmouth
3-7-11 Step Group	Rye
Sanbornville Group	Sanbornville
Quitting Time	Tuftonboro
W olfeboro Group	W olfeboro
Noontime Group	W olfeboro Falls

## The Sunshine of the Spirit

This is my experience related to the first promise, "If we are painstaking about this phase of our development, we will be amazed before we are halfway through."

Into Action, Chapter 6 of the Big Book concludes, "The spiritual life is not a theory. We have to live it." That means to me today that my life is a series of corrections. I always pray to find myself in the sunshine of my spirit. As a young woman I had a Higher Power. Thanks and gratitude were part of my dialogue with my H.P. But my life ran amok, and Amends entered into my shaky foundation. But even Amends didn't relieve the darkness of my spirit and I developed a Great Anger over time. I was a loser at life, in spite of extraordinary "efforts". I developed a hard position that was at odds with most of mankind. I was sober in AA, dry three years, as I entrenched myself in my futile effort to cope with loss. I ended up in a psych hospital! I emerged from the psych hospital shattered and terrified for the first time in what had been a confident life. I prayed to my H.P. that "this summer of 1897 would be the worst of my life," because I felt I could not be in more pain. I sold my beloved home, gave my best dog to a neighbor, and became what an alcoholic prisoner described to me as "a grim obligation." No sunlight of the spirit shown in my life, overall, for fifteen years. I drank until I could not stop drinking. Finally, unwilling to participate any longer, I took an intentional overdose of prescribed medication in April of 2003 after my second DWI.

I am happy to report that I, buoyed by new friends and old in

AA (the old friends are happy to see me doing better) and my new living partners – two women and lots of animals – and through the Gift of Desperation that occurred when I gave my grim life of "unaided will" last May – Hope and the Sunshine of the Spirit have again come to me. I have lightened up my load of possessions that for twenty years remained mostly boxed up in an attic and currently feel free, and happy with what I have. I find there are many more little things I can do for another person, and I measure my days by more opportunities to be of service. I feel the way I *used* to feel, but I am not the same woman at age 55 that I used to be. One of my temporary sponsors recently told me to consider "personal defects" as anything that removes me from my H.P. and other people. Today, this working definition for me means my fears, anger and resentments. My days are a series of corrections and I feel, overall, once again a Grateful Heart after a long period of darkness. I have no idea of what my life will become, but I am again in awe of the Great Mystery.

In outside measures my life has changed very little. I moved fifteen minutes down the road, now attend meetings in the Milford area as well as my old meetings in Peterborough, and I have roommates whereas I was living alone. I was given a Santa Claus hat on loan for four days from an AA friend. I went about town in the Spirit of Peace and Good Will toward all humans, a worthy tradition of the holiday season. I'm nowhere near perfect, but I take relief in the Path to Serenity.

*Nancy B., Wilton*

**Coming  
Soon!**

## 2004 Area 43 Convention

April 2, 3, & 4

The Wayfarer Inn, Bedford

Registration Forms available at the  
Service Office!

## AA Trivia Corner

Which founder's sobriety date marks the birthday of AA?

*(see page 4  
for answer)*

# Responses to Last Month's Mailbox

*Last month's mailbox inspired many of you to share your thoughts with the Pipeline. We will print many of these articles. Here are two ...*

## The Wonders of It All

Greetings to all. How disheartening to read that the disease of Alcoholism has got its claws into another one of us. To be filled with so much bitterness and pain and to of "picked up" after such hard work, is truly sad. I must keep in mind while typing this that the letter from the person who has chosen to use after 19 years is still sick and suffering. Longevity of time in the fellowship is a wonderful achievement but by no means does it make life any easier or raise our status amongst the fellowship.

When I have come to a point in my recovery when no power on this world could keep me sober, I turned to "The One" who brought me this far. I would ask for guidance, sometimes one moment at a time, I would ask for understanding of the things that baffle me, serenity to accept things as they are, and courage to help make changes when warranted. Then I have silent meditation, not necessarily for the answer, though they may come then, but for peace of mind. I remember that I have no control over people, places and things. That we are all tributaries off the great river of sobriety that will eventually end up at the same destination! Some tributaries are slow and some are fast, but regardless of how hard we work for recovery, as long as we do work on our own recovery we will all meet on this happy river to Destiny.

I take what I need from a meeting and I have learned to leave the rest. Opinions from others are food for thought for me. I do not make life altering changes in my life on the soul basis of others in the fellowship. I bring my recovery related topics to my sponsor, my medical related topics to my Doctor and the wonders of it all, to my God.

Down here in District 13 we welcome all who have a desire to be sober whether you come from a flop house or pent house, rich or poor, black or white, gay or straight, it makes no difference. There is the A.A. hotline, Hospitals, Keystone Hall and literally dozens of meetings morning, noon and night here that are waiting for the next sick and suffering alcoholic to walk through their doors - it only takes the first step.

*Gratefully Yours, Steve, a.k.a. your friend*

## **NERAASA 2004**

*(North East Regional  
Alcoholics Anonymous Service Assembly)*

Coming to the Sheraton Nashua  
February 27, 28 & 29, 2004

**Registration forms available at  
the Service Office!**

## Resentment Prevention

I have never written a letter to the editor of any publication that I read, but most recently the Pipeline published a letter by a person who drank after nineteen years of sobriety. This moved me to write my response. I hope the editors do the responsible thing and publish the sober point of view.

My first question after reading the letter: Why was there was there no mention of a sponsor? Did this person feel nineteen years absolved them of this need? I have twelve years of sobriety and still have an active relationship with my sponsor. I can tell you if I were referring to my home group as a bunch of "fakes and liars" I would promptly be told a couple of things: 1. Look at my own shortcomings; and 2. Find another home group. (If you don't think your home group is the best in AA; get another home group.) I am frequently told by fellow members, "If you didn't get anything out of this meeting, go to another meeting." I have a home group and I look forward to that meeting every Tuesday. I am active in that group. I also go to 5-6 other meetings a week. I live in an area that has a small population, so I see the same people at many of the meetings throughout the week. I sometimes have a hard time placing principles before personalities, so I go to a different meeting. It's my sobriety; I'm concerned with that first. By following this idea I have traveled all over the state to meetings. I call this "my resentment prevention plan."

It seems to me this person has put the cart before the horse. Fitting into a clique is not our primary purpose. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and to help others to achieve sobriety. Part of staying sober is growing up. I would encourage our friend to read another AA publication, "The Grapevine." This month, January 2004, is about "Emotional Sobriety." Bill W. points out in his essay on the topic published in 1958, "If we examine every disturbance we have, great or small, we will find at the root of it some unhealthy dependency and it's consequent unhealthy demand. Let us with God's help, continually surrender these demands. Then we can be set free to live and love; we may be able to twelve step ourselves and others into emotional sobriety."

The editors intent in printing the letter was to encourage groups to evaluate their role in reaching out to the still suffering. However, the statement we should pay attention to in the letter is, "I Chose to get drunk." If a person wants to drink, there is nothing a group can say right. If a person wants to stay sober, there is nothing a group can say wrong. We are responsible when a hand reaches out, but the point is, the hand needs to be out. Pulling drunks off of bar stools has never worked. I participated in a meeting a couple of years ago were the whole group did the most moving and beautiful twelve step work on a single individual for the entire hour long meeting. When it was over, the man said, "You people don't understand." He blew his brains out the next day. Is that the group's fault? I think not.

*Thank you. Anonymous Warner NH*

## **AA Trivia Corner**

Which founder's sobriety date marks the birthday of AA? If you said Bill W. you are incorrect. Remember, this program works when one alcoholic works with another. Thus, AA marks its own birthday on June 10, 1935 -- Dr. Bob's sobriety date.