



# Pipeline



A Publication of NH Area 43 Assembly March 2004

## Doors Are For Opening reprinted from the May 1980 Grapevine

If ever a human being felt that he or she had reason to shut the door on the past, it is the alcoholic.

When I first stepped across the threshold of AA, the past hovered over me like the mythical Furies of old. I was tormented endlessly by thoughts of what might have been.

Chapter Six of the Big Book contains the promise "We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it."

I have a friend whose first drunk was at the age of three, but my regrets did not begin until my teens. I regretted that I lacked social grace; that I never knew how to act, nor where to go, nor how to get there; that I was not good-looking, not popular in the way that football and basketball players were; that I did not know what to do with my life, nor what I was supposed to do, nor what was expected of me.

It doesn't sound too bad, does it? It could fit most teenagers for a brief time, but only briefly. Most of us humans, as teenagers, decide on a direction for ourselves and then get on with the business of living. Me? I turned that passing discomfort into the foundation for a lifetime of regrets.

There were three major regrets that troubled me throughout most of my early AA life. The first of these was that I had never arrived professionally. My contemporaries went on to become famous and rich, while I sank down in the mire of alcoholism. The name of one of those contemporaries is all but a household word in this country. What I did not realize down through the years of my regret was that the man was in deep trouble with problems of his own.

Thanks to my sobriety, I came to see that this man got somewhere in life by using his abilities. That is the way to accomplish things - do the best you can with what you've got. As for me, I was incapacitated and unable to use my talents. (Incapacitated is a rosy-sounding word that, in my case, meant suicidal, homicidal, and more than slightly batty.) Ironically, his star has dimmed in recent times, while mine has grown brighter than ever, thanks to AA.

The second of the major regrets that I brought into AA was a set of circumstances that prevented me from becoming a family man. I thought life had been cruel. But with time and lots of help, I turned my attitude around.

What I found was that I was in an ideal position. Many family men did not have the time to pursue kinds of Twelfth Step work for which I was available. Talk about God working in mysterious ways!

The third major regret had to do with the military draft after World War II. I was classified 1A but shortly thereafter reclassified as 4F. I told my drinking buddies a variety of stories. I never could keep them straight. I said that I had a punctured heart, or a rare spine disorder, or even flat feet. All the free drinks that were set out for me could not make up for the shame I felt. What I could not tell anyone, not understanding it myself, was that the prospect of military service had posed an insurmountable conflict. On the day of induction, at the height of a binge, I had attempted suicide.

For at least the first ten years of my AA life, I kept that episode a dark secret.

I resisted the healing grace and clung to my brooding over past "cowardice" and "moral weakness." I knew that AA worked for others at depth, but I was convinced it would not work for me. It couldn't. I had been too bad, too degenerate.

But AA was at work in spite of my contrariness. The alcoholic fog would lift occasionally, and I would see that I was making progress. Little by little, I was that part of growing up was learning how to measure myself by my own yardstick, not somebody else's. Perhaps the most significant leap forward came when I finally did the kind of searching and fearless stocktaking suggested by the Fourth Step. It did not mark the end of hurting over the old regrets, but it was the beginning of the end. With more time, meetings, and willingness, I was able to let go of the last of those old regrets and put an end to my wistful hiding from the past.

The slogans have been particularly helpful in dealing with the problem. Like a lot of others, I guess, I am a sloganeer at heart, and one of my favorites is "Doors are for opening." Considering how long it took to invent it, I hold it dear but not exclusive. You're welcome to use it. It works just fine.

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

W.H., Manhattan, NY

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# Pipeline

A Publication of the  
NH Area 43 Assembly of  
Alcoholics Anonymous

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Please put "For Pipeline"  
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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.*

## NH Area Assembly Service Office

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## Group Information

### Meeting Changes

- District 9**  
Hampstead Tuesday 8:30 PM - 10 PM HS\*  
Hampstead Tuesday Night  
Hampstead Hospital, East Road  
*Changed end time from 9:30*
- District 12**  
Manch. Monday 7:30 - 8:45 PM CB  
Amoskeag Falls Big Book Study  
NH Towers, 1750 Elm Street  
*Changed end time from 9*
- Manch. Tuesday 7:30 - 8:30 PM DC  
The Other 23 Hours  
Tirrell House, 15-17 Brook St.  
*Changed time from 8 - 9:15*
- District 13**  
Nashua Saturday 7 - 8:30 PM SD  
New Alternative  
1st Baptist Church, 121 Manch. St  
*Address cor. from Faith Baptist*
- Nashua Sunday 6 - 7:30 PM SD  
Sunday Nite Beginners  
Keystone Hall, Pine St Ext.  
*Time change from 4 - 5:30*
- Nashua Wednesday 7 - 8:30 PM HS  
Nashua Original Group  
Emmanuel Covenant Church, 24 Echo Ave  
*Did meet at Alpine Ridge Golf Club at 7:30*
- District 14**  
Ports. Sunday 10:30 - 11:30 AM SD  
Sunday Morning Discussion  
Sr. Citizens Ctr, next to Police Station  
*Moved from Town Hall, no longer closed,  
used to end at noon*
- District 20**  
N. Conw. Friday 8 - 9 PM SD  
Friday Night Group  
Christ Episcopal Church, Main & Pine  
*End time changed from 9:30*
- District 21**  
Lebanon Wednesday 6:30 - 7:30 PM HCX  
Wed. Nite Step Meeting  
Alice Peck Day Hospital, 125 Mascoma St.  
*While library is being renovated*

### Disbanded Meetings

- District 13**  
Nashua Monday 7 - 8:30 PM SDC  
Each Day a New Beginning Women's  
Nashua Community Council Crisis Center  
440 Amherst Street (Rte 101A)
- District 16**  
Ossipee Friday 7 - 8:15 PM  
Young People's Meeting  
1st Congregational Church, Old Rte 16

## Portuguese?

Alcoholism has no barriers - age,  
race, religion or language.  
If you speak Portuguese, we have a  
Twelfth Step opportunity for you!  
Please contact the Service Office  
at 622-6967.

## Greetings From Your Service Office

Did you ever wonder why, unlike so many mail-order businesses you may have done business with, the Service Office charges NO shipping and handling? It is because we are equally supported by all New Hampshire groups, from the more populous southern tier to the Great North Woods. Whether you're an AA group in Berlin or Nashua, Keene or Portsmouth, we want to extend the same level of service to you.

Groups in the southern tier often send a representative to the office to purchase literature in person. While this may be convenient for a Concord group, it is not often viable for a group in Colebrook. Why should the group up North pay more for their literature?

We buy our literature in volume from AA World Services and the Grapevine, giving us a slight discount from the base price. This discount pays for office expenses such as postage, so that we don't have to ask groups to pay shipping and handling. And yes, there are groups in Manchester that order their books by mail, too!

Some groups choose to include a small seventh tradition contribution with their orders to help offset shipping charges, and of course, this is appreciated. Some people choose to have their orders sent to their place of business, because residential deliveries are more expensive. But whether you drive to Hooksett or walk to your mailbox, we want you to know that your group is just as important to Area 43 as any other.

We hope to release the Spring 2004 meeting list either late this month or early April. As always, you can donate your old ones to Corrections by sending them to the office. Old lists are useful in designing general release plans for inmates.

We also want to remind you that Area 43 has taken over the old Consolidated Hotline. If your group wishes to make donations for the hotline, you can send them directly to the Service Office made out to NHAA, just like any other Area contribution. Please include your return address so we can thank you!

We want to thank Lin B. of Hooksett for her donation of paper goods; and Cynthia R. and Doris C. of Manchester, for volunteering their time.

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

Attention Grapevine/Literature Reps!  
Special Meeting March 14, 1 PM  
NHAA Service Office, Hooksett  
Please make every effort to attend!

## AA Trivia Corner

Was Dr. Silkworth an alcoholic?

(see page 4  
for answer)

# Donations THANK YOU!

Barrington Group	Barrington
Pass It On Group	Bedford
An Hour With Bill & Bob	Berlin
Newfound Lake Group	Bristol
Charlestown Group	Charlestown
Big Book 12 Step Study	Concord
Fri. Noon Acceptance	Concord
New Womens Step	Concord
Thurs Noon 12 Step	Concord
Wednesday Noon BB	Concord
Primary Purpose	Conway
Keep It Simple Beginners	Conway Village
Come As You Are	Ctr Conway
Derry Original Group	Derry
Let It Happen	Derry
Men's Beginners Group	Derry
Dover Original	Dover
Morning Reflections	Dover
Living By The Book	Epping
Simply Grateful	Epsom
As Bill Sees It	Exeter
Keep It Simple	Exeter
Gratitude Group	Farmington
Gilford Sunday Original	Gilford
Hampstead Angels	Hampstead
Hampstead Tuesday Night	Hampstead
Women's Joy Of Living	Hampstead
Eye Opener Group	Hampton
Pass It On	Hampton
Wednesday Big Book Grp	Hampton
Haverhill Old Time AA	Haverhill
New Beginning 12 & 12	Haverhill
A Vision For You	Hudson
Get It Together Group	Hudson
Men's Step Meeting	Jaffrey
T.O.A.D. Group	Keene
Kingston 12 & 12	Kingston
Sat Night Alternative	Kittery
Saturday Nite Alive	Laconia
Primary Purpose Grp	Lincoln
Original Sunday Night Grp	Littleton
First Light Of Day	Manchester
Free At Last	Manchester
Keep It Simple	Manchester
Mens 12 Step Intro	Manchester
North End Group	Manchester
Pathway To Sobriety	Manchester
Queen City Group	Manchester
Interlakes Beginners	Meredith
B&M Freedom Group	Merrimack
Merrimack Step	Merrimack
Milford No-Name Group	Milford
Milford Womens Grp	Milford
Souhegan Sunrise	Milford
Serenity Group	Mont Vernon
Early Bird Group	Nashua
New Alternative	Nashua
Peculiar Mental Twists	Nashua
Sat AM Women In Recovery	Nashua
Slogan Group	Nashua
So Nashua Today Group	Nashua
Saturday Morning AA	Salem
12 Step Group	Sunapee
BAIGIS Group	Tamworth
Warner CAP Group	Warner
Living Sober Group	Warren
Coffee And Doughnuts	Wolfboro

## The Man With the Sunshine Face

I have been stuck in my resolve to write my experience for Pipeline regarding each Promise from our Big Book, but felt a very weird breakthrough today at the Keystone meeting in Nashua. I was reminded of February's Promise #2: "We will know a new freedom and a new happiness."

These days, I tend to not think much about "freedom" in my life. I stick close to AA people and to their suggestions to keep sober. As happy as I am with what I have, I realize it is not the emotional happiness of love. The young man speaking at Keystone meeting was talking about our 13<sup>th</sup> Step (*Editor's Note: The so-called 13<sup>th</sup> Step is the discouraged act of becoming romantically involved with a new AA member*). I remarked that I have never committed the 13<sup>th</sup> Step! I talked briefly about my experience regarding an AA man I first met when I came to AA in 1984, again in 1999, and still see at meetings. Certainly, when I first came in 1984, my life was painful and confusing to me. I just didn't have that "kind" of energy. However, when I came back to AA in 1999 I had an experience of love and connection with an AA man sober for 27 years. I recalled the glimpse of a new freedom and happiness for me back then.

I never got together with the AA man, sober 27 years. It was enough to see him at meetings around town. To me, he represented the promise of laughter, for he was always laughing at what I said. He told me "Stop drinking, Nancy, and you'll get everything back." I must have looked at him with such a face because he drove off in his truck with loud guffaw. It set me to wondering about a distant past when I had laughter in my life. I realized how much I wanted that laughter back. That AA man promised me a life with laughter, if I just stopped drinking.

I didn't stay sober 5 years ago and more hard times befell me, but I am sober now for 7 months, having finally received the "gift" of desperation, ready for a life of freedom and happiness and laughter. Well, not entirely ready. Today is 24 hours of work on the spiritual principles of AA, emotional balance. The rewards are quiet and little happinesses, for which I give thanks and am satisfied. But today in our Keystone meeting, as I recalled that AA man's sunshine face, I realized he carried the gift of a new freedom and a new happiness for me, all within me, radiating out to reach others, as he reached out to me. I believe I radiate love and connection today toward all men and women I meet.

I first met the AA man of the sunshine face in 1984. He greeted me by name when I returned to AA in 1999. Once again I see him in meetings, still coming to AA after all those years. Recently I listened to him play music in a local sober club. I no longer focus my hopes for freedom and happiness to laugh on him, naturally. I actually focus my hopes on H.P. today and I have connection to freedom and happiness radiating out from my spirit to those people in my life.

Fortunately for me love and sex, those "imperious urges" discussed in our Big Book, were never an addiction. But I empathize with other AA men and women seeking love and connection to others in early sobriety. It has taken me patience and desperation to return to my Higher Power for my fill of love and connection to others. And, finally, after 20 years in and out of AA, I believe I have come around to that reliance upon my Higher Power. I long ago gave my "sex life" over to my H.P. and feel gratitude for this safe sober AA man who promised me laughter by his example years ago. I feel this Promise is within my reach today.

Nancy B., Wilton

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:

The Pipeline, NH Area Service Office, 1330 Hooksett Road, Hooksett NH 03106  
or email to the Pipeline's attention to office@nhaa.mv.com

**APRIL**

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

**MAY**

*No matter how far down the scale we  
have gone, we will see how our  
experience can benefit others.*

## Mailbox Revisited

*A recent mailbox inspired many of you to share your thoughts with the Pipeline. Here's another response:*

The article in the January Grapevine FROM OUR MAILBOX left me very sad. I remember what it was like to feel so much a victim, a person whose suffering was made worse by those about me, those who would not behave the way I wanted and needed them to behave. I felt so helpless and hopeless, because I knew I had no control over those people, that there was no way I could make them do what I was sure was necessary for me to feel better. I wanted to die, I could not see any future.

Then I came to AA, and learned the Serenity Prayer. I learned to ask my Higher Power for the serenity to accept the things I cannot change (those other people who will not react the way I want them to); courage to change the things I can (my attitude and behavior toward those other people); and the wisdom to know the difference (what is my business and what is the business of my Higher Power). Now I know that I can act in a different way toward someone I have difficulty with, and I will get a different reaction (of course, I have no control over what that different reaction will be, but it will be different, that I know!) Sometimes I have to try and try again, but I do have hope that my life will be better because I can take action and change. I know I can change me. I do not have to struggle against anyone anymore. I can look at my fellow AA members and all human beings as "to some extent emotionally ill as well as frequently wrong," as it says in Step Ten, and do my best to be patient and tolerant. Most of all, I must not blame them for not always reacting to me in the way I think they should. I must take my inventory first, always.

This becomes a way of life for many of us who have been around for a while, but I wanted to assure those who are new to this that there are other ways than drinking to deal with difficult situations. I always worry that someone on the edge might read such a painful description of the disease and conclude that there is no way out. I want to reassure you that this program does work.

Lucy E. Northwood

**Coming  
Soon!**

### 2004 Area 43 Convention

April 2, 3, & 4

The Wayfarer Inn, Bedford

Registration Forms available at the Service Office  
or the [www.nhaa.net](http://www.nhaa.net)!

Congratulations to Scott S. of Dover, for winning the raffle  
for a weekend for two at the Convention!

Service Office Hours M-F-10am-4pm•Sat.10am-2pm•622-6967•Fax 624-9507•e-mail [office@nhaa.mv.com](mailto:office@nhaa.mv.com)•Website-[www.nhaa.net](http://www.nhaa.net)

## Sobriety

Sobriety is not something that happen overnight. It takes one day at a time working the Big Book, understanding the Twelve Steps from Step One through Step Twelve – and not just the middle steps or doing them backwards! Trying that can make just about anybody drink again! It only takes a couple of pages a day. Even better, a couple of meetings a week; if not, it could make somebody *weak*, like you or me. There are also other books too, like *Living Sober* or *Came to Believe*.

Always remember where you came from – what happened and how it felt around the time of your first meeting. Get active with a group and ask someone to be your sponsor. Call that person!

And think about the chips, even if someone else thinks it's funny. That chip will be in your pocket, and you'll bring it wherever you go. The person without a chip won't be reminded about where they came from, but you will!

Dress up and show up. Be willing to go to any length and let it all happen. Good luck to you all who want this to be you:



And if not:



Ed K., Manchester

### AA Trivia Corner

Dr. Silkworth was not an alcoholic, but a medical practitioner who had treated Bill W. (several times), and had at one point deemed Bill's case "hopeless."

Dr. Silkworth wrote

"The Doctor's Opinion" in the Big Book.