**Queens Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous Newsletter**

**105-29A Metropolitan Ave. Forest Hills, NY, 11375**

**Office Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays 7pm to 9pm, Saturdays 10am to 2pm**

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It is with great sadness to announce the passing of one of our Steering Committee members – Barbara B., who served as Treasurer and was a member of the by-laws committee for the QIAA. John Francis, QIAA Advisor, was kind enough to submit an article eulogizing Barbara’s life.

**John Francis’ Article**

I met Barbara B. in the mid 1990s. A bunch of high school seniors used to drink and party in the basement of a mutual friend. I used to supply these older teens with “reefer” and they let the booze flow freely. Essentially, both Barbara and I were working on the early stages of our qualifications.

Twenty years went by, and since Barbara and I were just casual acquaintances, our paths did not cross. When I entered AA in 1993 for real, I met Barbara again. I mentioned that I knew her from Bob’s basement and we laughed and did the usual, “How is he? Do you see him?”

Barbara asked me if I had a homegroup and a sponsor; she told me to get a good network of men in my life, and generally showed concern regarding my recovery. Barbara and I did not frequently attend the same meetings over the years, but every time I saw her, she would ask me how I was doing. I always saw her greeting newcomers, and doing service whether it was set up, cleanup, or chairing/speaking. Barbara was a humble individual and was part of the planning of share-a-thons for years, and played a large role in the 20th year anniversary event.

Maybe 15 years ago, Barbara’s son tragically died. She stayed sober through that difficult time and reminded us of the saying “No Matter What.” While her fellowship service might have lessened during that time, she still attended meetings, a lot of times showing up on her motorcycle. The last 10 or so years, Barbara served Queens Intergroup in a Treasurer capacity, and when she rotated out, she still was available to help when needed. She was part of our currently inactive (COVID) By-laws Committee.

As in-person meetings opened, I saw Barbara two times right before she passed away. We set a date to review the By-Laws revising.

At Barbara’s wake, so many people stated that Barbara greeted and helped them when they were in early sobriety. It seemed to be a constant that I heard that whole afternoon. I met Barbara’s sister and told her I knew Barbara since the 1970s. It turns out her sister’s best friend lived on my block.

A while back, Barbara told me about an “Old West Town” in NJ. Barbara always went there, and I expressed interest in going with her once COVID sanctions were lifted, I told her sister the story and her sister said, “Amazing you should say that, the director of that town is right over there.”

Clearly, Barbara showed humility, love and concern, and demonstrated these qualities in her service in AA; and brought these attributes into her day-to-day life. She was a power of example to a lot of us and will be sorely missed.

Sincerely,

John Francis

QIAA Advisor

On the topic of service, while attending the QIAA Virtual Quarterly Intergroup Reps Meeting - Q1 2022, Darren & Mike presented the Institutions Literature Coordinator Report. Because of the pandemic, we lost many volunteers doing service. I thought it was of extreme importance to highlight the need for volunteers for Institutions. Here is a summary of their report:

**Institutions Literature Coordinator -- Darren & Mike**

● Need institutions volunteers! Please ask your homegroup to consider taking on an institutions commitment, or to commit to driving people to meetings. Have lost many people doing service during the pandemic. Contact Darren: 516.592.9517

(thepwr4u@yahoo.com) or Mike, 718.757.9317.

● Institutions will soon be reopening. Faith Mission and Cornerstone and VA are currently open. Cornerstone (64 meetings/month) is not completely full but close to capacity, some commitments open. Long Island Jewish may be opening again soon. Waiting for Flushing, Creedmor, Elmhurst, New Horizons Far Rockaway, Valley Stream to reopen.

● Placed order for $1,700 worth of literature. Will be purchasing literature cabinets. ● *Karen (Linden St. Albans)*: veterans interested in taking commitments ● Maura from Bridging the Gap spoke at H&I meeting recently.

Here is an article submitted by my pigeon brother, Rick W. (we share the same sponsor), who I met when he was a member of the PPAW Group. They met at the same location as my Homegroup Elm Heights, in Elmhurst Hospital. In case you didn't know, the acronym PPAW stands for Prayers, Promises, Actions and Warnings. Rick now lives in Texas and we see each other once a month on Zoom.

CHANGE? No, Thank You!

It’s a well-known fact that alcoholics, generally, are resistant to change. If your experience is anything like mine, when a new idea is presented to you, and IF it’s a drastic departure from what you’ve become comfortable with or are used to… as it says in our literature, “rebellion dogs our every step.”

Why is it that we alcoholics seem to be so unwilling to accept something new in our lives, even if we know it will help or benefit us? I’ll let psychologists and therapists battle that one out on the academic/therapeutic plane, but I CAN tell you that in my recovery today the thing that can bring a tear to my eye faster than anything is to watch someone (newcomer or long-timer) “get it” and wake up to the possibility of a better life through their willingness to take action.

I’ve long been a proponent of this idea that a spiritual experience (or spiritual awakening) is really nothing more than a change in my attitude to life itself. In the Appendix – “Spiritual Experience” (on page 567 of our book, 4th Edition), it very clearly states, “The terms “spiritual experience” and “spiritual awakening” are used many times in this book which, upon careful reading, shows that the personality change sufficient to bring about recovery from alcoholism has manifested itself among us in many different forms.”

For me, that was all the proof I needed to embrace the idea that I must “experience an entire psychic change” (as it says in “The Doctor’s Opinion”) for me to have any hope of recovery. The beautiful part of that passage is that it speaks to the truth that alcohol is not now, nor was it ever my problem. Changing what I drank, how often I drank, the amount I drank, etc., none of that is the change being referred to. I wish I could say that change came easily for me. Sure, in some ways, it was easy because in the beginning, I didn’t really want what “you” had – but I didn’t want what I had even more. Over time, I was willing to listen to what you shared through your experience and see that some kind of personality change was needed. That change for me came slowly and in many different areas of my life.

First, it was just in how I lived my daily life. It was the little things. I started making my bed on a regular basis. I started wanting to pay my bills on time. I started thinking of other people instead of only thinking of me (“Self-seeking will slip away. Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change.” – Into Action). I started showing up to family functions more often. I made it to work on time (and not hung over). I began to see that change was creating more positives in my life than negatives.

But the moment you suggest to me I need to stop doing this, quit doing that, remove this from my life, add that… we got a problem, dude! I don’t like anyone telling me what to do (ok, ok, suggesting…), especially if it flies straight in the face of some character defect I’m not willing to let go of in my life. I’ve heard folks in the Fellowship say before that “A.A. is nothing more than a behavioral modification program.” I haven’t heard it in meetings, but I have heard it at the coffee pot or at Fellowship after a meeting. While I agree with that statement in theory (scroll back up and re-read the definition of a Spiritual Experience in the Appendix), I believe I need to be careful on making sweeping statements like that which cannot be specifically supported in our literature. In general though, I can say that I am not the same man I was before walking into the rooms of A.A. primarily because of the relationship I have developed with a God of my understanding (“They flatly declare that since they have come to believe in a Power greater than themselves, to take a certain attitude toward that Power, and to do certain simple things, there has been a revolutionary change in their way of living and thinking.” – We Agnostics).

That, in and of itself, is the foundation to how the change has occurred. It didn’t occur because of some altruistic need I felt to become a better man; it came as a result of me watching you and seeing your life change and I wanted that life too. One dictionary definition of the word change is to transform or convert. I needed a transformation and didn’t even know it and I’m grateful that the transformation occurred on some level without me even knowing it. It just happened.

Why do I rebel against change? I believe it’s because I’m a selfish and self-centered man who only wants to believe that my way is the only way. Thank God our Steps help us to recognize that selfishness and give us the tools to be able to have tears come to our eyes when we see that change happening in OUR OWN lives.

“The great fact is just this, and nothing less: That we have had deep and effective spiritual experiences [personality changes] which have revolutionized our whole attitude toward life, toward our fellows and toward God’s universe.” – There Is A Solution.

<https://www.takethe12.org/>

Rick W.

**Share-A-Thons**

The Holiday Share-A-Thon was held in two parts. First part ran from Friday, December 24, 2021 starting at 3 pm and continued through Sunday, December 26, 2021 with the last meeting ending at 5:50 pm. Second part ran from Friday, December 31, 2021 starting at 3 pm and continued through Sunday, January 1, 2022 with the last meeting ending at 5:50 pm.

As usual, it was another successful event held by QIAA thanks to the tireless efforts of all the QIAA Facilitators, and you know who you are! There were 102 total meetings with an average of 55 participants per meeting.

I had the honor and privilege to participate in the overnight slot (12 am - 6 am) with my homegroup, Elm Heights.

In conclusion, let me just leave you with this one liner:

Alcohol is a perfect solvent: It dissolves marriages, families and careers!

Special thanks to Chelsea M., John Francis B. for edits, my sponsee Atif C., and the entire QIAA Steering Committee. If you have any articles that you would like to submit, you may email me at [shearseddie@gmail.com](mailto:shearseddie@gmail.com). Please limit articles to 1-2 pages and a maximum of 2,000 words. Lastly, I would like to personally thank Chelsea for emailing the 4th Quarter Newsletter to all the Group Representatives.