

Preserving the Text

I am one of those people whose life is inextricably tied up with the written word. I can hardly remember a time when I did not have a book in one hand and a pencil in the other, both actively employed to the exclusion of an existence engaged with other human beings. Very likely this was the inevitable result of having grown up in a household with two alcoholic English professors for parents, with books lining the walls floor to ceiling in every room of the house except the bathroom and kitchen. I became a sort of adolescent literary recluse long before I became an alcoholic, and it is a role into which I easily regress now that sobriety has eliminated chemical anaesthesia as a means of coping with the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune.

I was reminded of my stubborn clinging to particular texts, as if they were a particular formulation of my drug of choice, by a recent trivial incident involving a scientific paper I submitted for publication. The reviewer returned the paper, which he liked overall, with a request that I change the common name of a tree, because the name which has been in use for over a century contains a term considered by some to be derogatory to Native Americans. Now, this struck me as an annoying absurdity. Did it mean that every plant manual, every flora, every paper on forest tree diseases now needed to be revised in order to remove the offending term, and, one would suppose, revised again when other terms are added to the taboo list. If a technical paper on plant pathology, intended for a journal read only by specialists in the field, falls under the cognizance of political correctness in discourse, is anything exempt?

I mention this, because the resistance of the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous to revisions of basic texts bothered me when I first joined the program. By the standards of America in the 1930's and 1950's, the Big Book and 12x12 are models of tolerance and neutrality; by the standards of the twenty-first century, they emphatically are not. I cringed when it fell my lot to read how 'every boy in America cherishes the belief that he might some day grow up to be President' at a women's step study meeting. I mentally added: 'but girls scorn such unseemly ambitions.' It struck me as counterproductive when the only story in the Third Edition of the Big Book in which the writer identified himself as 'Indian' used bad grammar that sounded only a cut above 'ugh - me heap big alcoholic.' My first reaction was: why doesn't somebody do something about all this socially obsolete language?

Unfortunately, one woman's offensive term or phrase is not necessarily offensive to her neighbor. The same can be said for things which strike one as merely irrelevant, repetitive, or poorly-stated. Most of the meetings I attend do not use the Lord's Prayer, which, since it is not part of the canonical texts of Alcoholics Anonymous, they are free to do. Not only do I find this prayer inspiring, but I am attached to the wording from the King James Bible, and find it annoying when a church uses a newer version. Some of my fellow recovering alcoholics, on the other hand, find Bill W's texts of the Third and Seventh Step prayers to be offensive, because they are written in quasi-Elizabethan English and therefore recall, in their form, a relationship to the Deity of a denomination they have rejected.

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E.V.I. News

November 2003

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Emerald Valley Intergroup
1259 Willamette St. Eugene, OR
97401-3509
(541) 342-4113

AA Meetings:

New: Student Group meets Monday & Thursday, Wesley Foundation, 1236 Kincaid St., Eugene, 12:00-1:00 p.m.

Changed: Springfield Monday Night, 8 pm, has moved to Hope Lutheran Church, 1369 B St., Springfield.

Canceled: Hole in the Wall, Jesco Club, Thursday, 6:30. This is an NA meeting.

Topic of interest: Please note that the Oregon Area Website address is www.aa-oregon.org

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There are many dangers to rewriting a text once it has been put into its final form by the author, and has been tested and found to be eminently suitable for the purpose for which it was intended. The mere fact that significant numbers of people feel that a major overhaul is necessary is testimony to the wide application and durability of the vision, and thus, most revisions reach one portion of the audience more effectively at the expense of another. Also, modernizations typically have a much shorter life expectancy than the originals.

An intelligent person ought to be capable of doing his own editing, once he has examined the whole and made an effort to understand the difficult portions in context. When I read passages which strikes me as obnoxiously sexist in the Big Book or St. Paul, it is much more helpful for me to read them in the light of societal attitudes at the time they were written, and then, with due caution, to conclude that they are not to be taken as advice about how I should function in America in 2003, than it is to excise them or rewrite them in a way that distorts what the writer was saying. The committee which rewrites a text usurps this personal editing function, and with it a measure of our free will. I make a point of going back to the source, and I am grateful that the editorial policies of Alcoholics Anonymous mean that this does not make me an eccentric among the membership.

Martha S. Eugene, Oregon



Attitude

"The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life. Attitude, to me, is more important than the facts. It is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failures, than successes, than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness or skill. It will make or break a company...a church...a home. The remarkable thing is, we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change our past...we cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have, and that is our attitude...I am convinced that life is 10% what happens to me and 90% how I react to it. And so it is with you...we are in charge of our attitudes."

Charles Swindoll

Please remember to let us know if your group stops meeting. It's a lot easier to remember when you are starting a meeting, but if you stop meeting remembering to remove it from meeting lists may save someone frustration and more when they really need a meeting. To submit changes of any kind please fill out a form in the "Meeting Book Changes" book at the EVI office. Ask a volunteer at the front desk for it. Thanks!

Simply by being grateful one can

Practice Gratitude and Watch it Grow

Last night, I led a meeting up here in Connecticut, and I ended my story by saying that I felt particularly grateful because a visit from my family had gone off so well. They had done so much to make the visit a success, instead of a major engagement on the battlefield. I was grateful because I had heard a couple of my own character defects loud and clear. I heard my own tone of voice, my own words, when I got up-tight. The family had made me laugh at myself.

At the meeting, I added that I was grateful to be sober. I've had some lovely weeks in Wyoming in the summer with my three big grandsons; hiking, riding, going on wild, white-water float trips. I certainly never could have done this without AA. Drunk, I wouldn't have had any friends in my family. Indeed, I probably wouldn't be here at all.

Also, I felt an outpouring of gratitude because I was leading one of my favorite meetings, in the comfortable and cozy parlor of a lovely New England church. Good meetings can happen anywhere. This was just a dividend.

When we opened the meeting for discussion, Mary said she'd recently been on a plane with a poor, shaking drunk who had cuts on his face. Just the cold, bare, good fact of her being sober had given her a lift. She had wished she could slip him some literature. Hildy said she'd felt grateful when flying because the sunset on the enormous, round horizon above the clouds made her feel the presence of a Higher Power. Betsy said that she practiced gratitude. She said you could make it grow, like a muscle you used regularly. Jack said that he was grateful because his wife used to pray for him when he took off for the bars, and he was sure this had finally gotten him into AA. Ruth was happy that on the week-end of President Kennedy's assassination, she had a book by Paul Tillich. "I kept it right beside me to read every time I sat down. It gave me strength," she said.

We then went into the emotional definitions of gratitude. Hildy said that it was a sense of aliveness. Ruth said that it was a sense of security and freedom from fear. George said that it was a warm, wonderful, good feeling. Ken said that it was the feeling a baby has in its mother's arms.



EVI Office

1259 Willamette
Eugene, OR 97401-3509
Monday-Friday 9:00 am-5:30 pm
Saturday 9:00 am - 4:00 pm
Drop by for a visit!

EVI Web Site

www.efn.org/~eviaa

Meeting schedules, business meeting minutes, and much more.

The little squiggle in the address is found right next to the exclamation point on the keyboard. Save a book mark or favorite and check back often!

E.V.I. News

Emerald Valley Intergroup's Newsletter for the A.A. Community in Lane County

EVI News is a monthly newsletter of the Emerald Valley Intergroup. It is about, by, and for the members of Alcoholics Anonymous fellowship. Opinions expressed herein are not to be attributed to Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole, nor does publication of any article or event or notice imply endorsement by either Alcoholics Anonymous or EVI. (Exceptions: Quotations from A.A. books or pamphlets which are reprinted with permission of A.A. World Services, Inc.) EVI News is produced to support communication within the fellowship; please respect the anonymity of any A.A. member mentioned herein. EVI News reserves the right to edit any submissions for clarity, length, language, and editorial policy. Contributions gratefully accepted for consideration for publication.

Submissions due last Monday of each month. To submit articles or event information, mail them or drop them off at the EVI office c/o EVI Newsletter. Submissions can also be e-mailed to: eviaa@efn.org

Communication Committee (Newsletter & Web Site, Meeting Book) meetings are held at 6pm the first Friday of each month at the EVI office. Call John G (686-5602) with any questions.

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Contributions:

(October/year to date)
 Anonymous/Unknown 0/10.00
 As Bill Sees It 0/50
 Attitude Adjustment 0/1145.47
 Autumn Group 0/60.00
 Brown Bag Group 0/175.00
 Caduceus 0/113.00
 Cottage Grove Gratitude 54.00/54.00
 Cottage Grove Noon 0/10.74
 Courage to Change 0/78.00
 Daily Reflections 0/50
 Downtown AM Group 161.80/1199.59
 Early Firehouse Group 0/30.00
 Freedom of Choice 0/356.80
 Friday Night BB Study 90.00/209.22
 From The Heart 0/200
 Get Well Group 0/20.00
 Gratitude Group 0/80
 The Great Fact Group 0/15.00
 How It Works 0/493.00
 Last Chance Study Group 0/120.00
 Monday Mens Stag 0/330.26
 Monday Night Beginners 0/0
 New Freedom 0/395.50
 New Freedom II 360.00/600.00
 Primary Purpose 0/0.50
 Recovery By the Big Book 0/0
 Recovery By The Steps 0/100.00
 Rush Hour Group 0/53.00
 Saturday Morning Steps 0/220.00
 Search For Serenity 112.57/821.67
 Sober Awakenings 0/660.00
 Sobriety for Life 0/144.00
 Springfield Monday Night 0/15.00
 Sponsorship 0/20.00
 Stairway to Sobriety 175.00/375.00
 Sunday Morning B.B. 189.71/970.86
 Sunday Sunshine 0/285.00
 Sunlight of the Spirit 0/50.00
 Sunday Night B.B. Study 0/42.00
 Thurs. Men's Book Study 0/100.00
 Thurs. Men's Spons. Group 0/0
 Try God Group 325.92/1237.62
 Tuesday Night Mens Stag 0/40
 Veneta Gratitude Group 0/30.00
 Vet's and Friends 0/40.00
 We Need Each Other 0/100.00
 Wed. Night Men's Stag 100.00/400.00
 Women's Bedrock 281.34/281.34
 Women's Courage to Change 177/177
 Women's How It Works 10.00/84.66
 Womans Rd. to Recovery 0/205.25
 Women's Wednesday 0/2.00
 Total Contributions (month/year to date)
 Group month/ytd 2037.34/12254.48
Contributions/Individual
 Anonymous/Unknown 0/155.30
 Faithful Fivers 60.00/769.40
 Ind. Contributions/Other 3.30/339.56
 Total Contributions/Ind. 63.30/1191.62

I agree with Betsy that the practice of gratitude makes it grow. Indeed, gratitude is expedient for us; it is necessary for our growth in AA to feel grateful for what we have. When I am frightened, I pull in my antennae. When I am angry, I have blotted out the sun. I must always strive to free myself from character defects that stand in the way of my free attention, my freedom to make choices, my equanimity, my trust in a Higher Power. Gratitude gives me the confidence to go ahead and make some more efforts, cheerfully and without a sense of inadequacy. Gratitude for sobriety helps to keep me sober.

When I appreciate what I've received, I can give more discerningly. And I want to be discerning about the good things that happen each day. We are so quick to pick up the things that have gone wrong. I, for one, am sometimes slow to notice what's gone well, because the immediate things, the things in the now, often seem small in themselves. However, if I can enjoy a meal or a cup of coffee with you today, laugh with you and exchange views, engage in a little AA talk, isn't this part of the fabric of life itself?

I have so often chewed my nails because I was worrying about some problem that eventually turned out all right, or some disaster that never happened. Thus I have wasted a million golden moments when I could have been perfectly happy. I must practice my gratitude a day at a time. Gratitude is reality, an on-the-spot, right-here feeling. I said that the family had helped me to laugh at myself, and I thank God that I'm better at this than I used to be. Laughter dispels the imps and dragons inside us and helps us to stay sober in every way.

Gerard Manley Hopkins, that great poet and mystic, said, "Or what is else? There is your world within! There rid the dragons, there root out the sin. Your will is law in that small commonweal." (Personally, I prefer the word "mistake" to "sin.")

There was a latecomer to our meeting. He'd just been to a bar, though he was not incoherent. He said that he couldn't seem to stay sober. He said he went to meetings, but they were such a bore. We all talked to him. I hope he heard some of it. I know that when I was drinking, I was always hunting for the answer outside myself. I did not know that I had to identify with my good and respond to it. AA taught me that. Thanks to AA, I have learned that everything depends on my own attitude, not the other way around.

F. M., New Canaan, Conn.

November Calendar



Currently Available Service Positions:

H&I has a constant, and varied need for people willing to do a little to a lot of service work. There is also a special need for women volunteers for Lane County Jail, CCC, Willamette Valley Treatment, etc. The opportunity for this type of service has really expanded, and H&I has been doing a great job, but they need the AA community to step up and volunteer. This is real service work.

- 1st Mon Steering Committee 6:30PM
- Tue District 20, 6:30PM 418 A St. Ken L. 747-8270
- Tue District 33, 6:30PM Allen U. 741-2617
- Wed District 19, 5:30PM Sandy V. 485-4827
- Thur Speaker Mtg Committee, 7:00PM Angel 431-4924
- Fri Communication Meeting, 6:00PM John G. 686-5602
- Sat Cooperation with Professional Community, Noon
- Sun Activities, 5:00PM Mindy 954-2048
- 2nd Mon EVI Business Meeting 6:30PM
- Wed District 6, 6:30PM Tim A. 726-8558
- Sat Answering/Diverter, 9:00AM
- Sat EVI Speaker's Meeting, 7:30PM Country Club Road
- 3rd Tues Public Information, 6:00PM Bob P. 434-1045
- Last Wed H& I Committee, 6:00PM
- Last Day Literature Committee, 6:30PM



Fellowship Events

November 14-16, 2003, Grants Pass, OR. Oregon Area 58 Quarterly Assembly. District 7 is hosting at the Riverside Conference Center, 971 SE 6th Street, Grants Pass, OR. Contact Les at (541)659-6949, or Kevin at (541)621-8748.

November 15, 2003, Eugene, OR. Pathfinders (formerly Recovery Riders). West Eugene Wetlands Bike Trail Tour. Meet at 9:00AM at Albertsons on 18th and Chambers. Contact Robert - 342-2246

November 29, 2003, Eugene, OR. Pathfinders (formerly Recovery Riders). Spencer Butte Hike. Meet at 9:00AM at Unity of the Valley. Contact Gisela - 895-0901

December 7, 2003, Eugene, OR. First Sunday Speaker Meeting 1:30-3PM. Handicapped, deaf, and visually impaired access. Guest speaker, Bruce L. - Bend, Oregon.

February 19-22, 2004, Buffalo NY. 40th Annual International AA Women's Conference. Come for a long weekend of: Workshops, Panels, Alkathon, Tours, Banquets, Meetings, Sobriety Count Down, Entertainment and Fun & Fellowship.

The Promises

If we are painstaking about this phase of our development, we will be amazed before we are half way through. We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness. We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it. We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace. No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others. That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear. We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows. Self-seeking will slip away. Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change. Fear of people and of economic insecurity will leave us. We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us. We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.

Are these extravagant promises? We think not. They are being fulfilled among us, sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly. They will always materialize if we work for them.

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People:

OFFICE VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR
 Bill B. (685-9216), Doug R. (461-3872)
 ACTIVITIES
 Mindy H. (954-2048), Holly S. (338-0316)
 ANSWERING SERVICE
 Bob E. (747-2246), Julien X. (541-520-7408)
 ARCHIVIST
 Jim G. (689-5052), Neil C. (968-0190)
 COOP. PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY(CPC)
 Carola K. (736-8041), Nadine P. (683-5730)
 E.V.I. COMMUNICATIONS:
 John G. (686-5602)
 Newsletter: John G. (686-5602),
 Martha S. (687-9569)
 Website: Jessie(485-3474), Open
 Meeting Directories: Lee P.(741-9824), Open
 E.V.I. SPEAKER MEETING
 Vicki K. (688-5042), Kevin (520-0103)
 LITERATURE
 Todd P.(689-4646), Mindy F. (954-2048)
 OUTREACH
 Annie B. (431-6610), Open
 PUBLIC INFORMATION (PI)
 Bob P. (434-1045), Bill D. (461-6132)
 HOSPITALS & INSTITUTIONS (H&I)
 Chair: Larry W. (513-5626)
 HOSPITALS
 Chair: Steve S.(914-9258), Todd (302-6377)
 COOP. TREATMENT FACILITIES(CTF)
 Janis B. (935-8833), Cayce (520-5635)
 CORRECTIONS
 Chair: Tom R. (465-1832), Bob L.(689-6960)
 H&I Coordinators
 Lane County Jail: Ted H. (338-8380)
 C.C.C. (Women's): Sandy V. (485-4827)
 C.C.C. (Men's): Tom R. (465-1832)
 Alma Work Camp: Bud W. (935-8833)
 Pathways: Kenny (461-2937)
 Serbu Detention: Jack C. (463-1040)
 Carlton House: Joe C. (554-3558)
 W.F.T.-Friday Night: Janis (935-8833)
 W.F.T.-Book Study: Leslie B.(606-5776),
 Mindy H. (954-2048)
 Serenity Lane-Speaker: Cayce (746-6990)
 Serenity Lane-B.T.G.: Gus P. (463-1691)
 Serenity Lane-Sat. Cindy D. (988-0183),
 Jason (912-8217)
 L.C.P.H.: Todd(302-6377), Bruce(302-3050)
 Johnson U.: Steve(914-9258), Jill(302-1311)
 V.A. Meeting: Dennis (607-5127)
 E.V.I. STEERING COMMITTEE
 Chair: Harold B. (579-8087)
 Vice-Chair: Kurt J. (747-8925)
 Secretary: Roger H. (688-3641)
 Treasurer: Tom L. (683-7706)
 Vice Treasurer: Lori B. (684-8670)
 At-Large: Amanda W. (988-9656)
 At-Large: Bob T. (342-1588)
 At-Large: Steve O. (431-1205)
 At-Large: Jenne B. (688-1189)
 BOOKKEEPER: Kurt

Emerald Valley Intergroup

Business Meeting Minutes - October 13, 2003

Meeting brought to order at 6:30 by Harold B. with Serenity Prayer. Twenty five EVI Reps on hand including Dist. 20.

OLD BUSINESS

Elections Outreach Co-Chair - Tom S. 686-8388
Website Co-Chair - Karla B. 744-0509

NEW BUSINESS

Announcements:

2nd monday every month, EVI Rep. training before the business meeting at the EVI office.

Motions: None

EVI Rep. Statements: None

REPORTS:

Speaker Meeting: Angel. Regular meeting at Grace Community Church for October, Stay tuned for where new speaker meeting will be held.

Treasurer: Tom L. Doing really well \$ 1340.00 over prudent reserve.

Office: Bill B. Office hours are now 9 am to 5:30 pm to allow diverter volunteers time to reach home and allow people to come into office after work.

Literature: Mindy F. Set of 12x12 audio tapes are missing, whoever has them PLEASE return them.

Website: Jesse R. Looking for ideas for website viewers.

Meeting Directories: Lee P. New directories out. Group reps please keep the meeting meeting changes up-to-date so the directories will be accurate.

Newsletter: No Report.

Diverter: Bob E. Worked well in September. Will institute new changes on December 1st. Wants to thank all those involved in the revamp of the diverter and the volunteers manning the phones.

Public Information: Bob P. Lots of good stuff is happenning and they need more volunteers to help out.

CPC: No Report.

Activities: Sarah. Needs volunteers to help out at the Halloween dance.

Outreach: Brad M. Things are starting to happen and come together.

Archivist: No Report.

H&I: Larry W. Doing well.

Steering Committee: Harold B. December rotation of positions. Please consider if you would like to stand for one of these positions.

Meeting adjourned at 7:35 with Serenity Prayer.

Submitted by Roger H. Secretary

Echoes in the Valley

(Echoes in the Valley is a collection of wit and wisdom heard in and around the valley. While not always original, they are shared by local folk at local events. If you hear anything at a meeting that you think others would enjoy or benefit from, please drop it off in the Newsletter Box at EVI. Quotes are credited to the speaker with permission, otherwise they are anonymous.)

"Step 14? I heard that was 'sought through prayer and masturbation to avoid doing step 13.' "

Ask-It Basket, September Assembly, Hermiston.

"I've got this prehensile mind. It's got to grab onto everything."

Amanda, Sober Awakening.

"When I get a negative thought, I've just got to develop it. Then I enlarge it and make multiple copies."

Anonymous

"It's like for what I've done, I ought to get three days in the electric chair."

Mel, Sober Awakening

"The reason I stay busy is, it's hard for a feeling to find a moving object."

Dean, Sober Awakening

"Shame is like feeling you're a defective human being, and they're going to cancel your licence for being here."

Jane, Sober Awakening

"The only thing I ever took which didn't give me a hangover was my higher power," Dave, Sober Awakening.



Times Like These

"We of AA now find ourselves in a world characterized by destructive fears as never before in history. But in it we nevertheless see great areas of faith and tremendous aspirations toward justice and brotherhood. Yet no prophet can presume to say whether the world outcome will be blazing destruction or the beginning, under God's intention, of the brightest era yet known to mankind. . .

We AA's can say that we do not fear the world outcome, whichever course it may take. This is because we have been enabled to deeply feel and say, 'We shall fear no evil - Thy will, not ours, be done.' "

Bill W., January 1962



A man in a bar sees a friend at a table, drinking by himself. Approaching the friend, he comments, "You look terrible. Whats the problem?" "My mother died in June, and left me \$10,000", said the friend. "Gee, thats tough", he replied. "Then in July", the friend continued, "My father died, leaving me \$50,000".

The man looking concerned says, "Wow. Two parents gone in two months. No wonder you're depressed". The friend continues, "And last month my aunt died, and left me \$15,000".

"Three close family members lost in three months??? How sad!"

"And then this month," the friend said,

"... Nothing! Not a single dime!"



Faithful Fiver Pledge:

Emerald Valley Intergroup
1259 Willamette
Eugene, Oregon 97401

GET THE NEWS!

- I pledge \$5 per month to support EVI and service work in my community
- I'm feeling grateful, I can send _____ per month
- I will mail or drop off my contribution: Monthly
- Four times a year (\$15 each)
- Once a year (\$60)

Name:

Address:

when you acknowledge my contribution, please list me as (first name, Initial, or nickname):

"Faithful Fivers" are individuals who donate \$5 or more per month to help support Intergroup. We will post your nick name on a board in the office, with a little red dot placed for each months contribution, so you can track of your contribution. (We don't remind you, or otherwise keep track of it for you, and we will send you a newsletter whether or not you have remembered to send in your pledge.) You can contribute monthly, quarterly or yearly, and if you check the receipt box, and are on the News mailing list, we will send you a receipt at the end of the year. (If you want a receipt, but would like to save EVI postage by picking up the News at the Office, or the EVI Business Meeting, fill out your nickname and address, but write "no news" next to your address.)



stamp

Emerald Valley Intergroup
1259 Willamette Street
Eugene, Oregon 97401