

# Background Notes



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DISTRICT 0490  
Central New York  
Area 47

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Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for AA membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. AA is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy; neither endorses nor opposes any causes. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

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## FROM the Newsletter Chair:

When I first got to AA there was a group of people who took me under their wing. They were “old timers” one of whom became my sponsor and many who did service to local AA. Some were GSR’s for out then groups in the Rome district. Others involved at the area level, then HMB (Area 12). The district and area have changed. We formed district 0490 and joined the Area 47, CNY Area. Please remember, if you are a sponsor, involved in Area, district, or general service; please do for others what these folks did for me. Encourage and mentor the new folks you are involved with that they have a more robust sobriety and a responsibility to AA to do service. The way these men did this for me was two fold, they encouraged me, they dragged me along to teach me, and eventually they volunteered me! The eventual volunteering happened rather quickly. They had me publishing the news letter by the time I was 7 months sober. They had me attending the district meetings right around the same time. Of course they encouraged me to have a spinsor and then he did two things, got me a coffee commitment and took me through the steps. He also made sure my network included other man that had sober time and worked a good program. That was important because a lot of the friends I made in sobriety were originally people who had just gotten sober like me. They quickly started disappearing and having the older guys to talk to about this and mentor me turned out to be invaluable. Here is a question that I ask fro those of you wrking with others, doing service; GSR’s, Good group members, sponsors, people with time; are you teaching those trying to get sober how to make AA continue to be strong and there for the next heneration and the generation after that? It is an important question. More important it is an important part to keep AA healthy and your friends in early recovery to have a well rounded and good recovery. There is always a need in AA for people to be involved in AA at all levels. Are you teaching those behind you the different and robust ways to serve other alcoholic? - Bob K.



## *Dichotomy of Mind*

I had the personality and strange dichotomy of mind that led me right into alcoholism when I drank my first drink. I am also convinced that I learned I was alcoholic genetically by sober reflection through honesty and the twelve step process of my drinking history.

First, I will deal with the dichotomy of mind. Even before introducing alcohol by an honest review of my life, I realized that I had this strange twist of mind that rules did not apply to me. I also thought it was fun to push the envelope and do things I wasn't supposed to, of course that only applied to those things when I didn't get caught! I came from a good family, heavily involved in the community and church. So there was a moral and responsible concept that was taught and exemplified in my family. My brothers and I however were quite sneaky and found excitement and a sense of fun in putting up one example of being decent kids when that was an advantage (In the family, church, and organizations our family associated with) and quite another when we were out of sight of supervision. We also took advantage of a different time when other families watched and cared for each other. We would tell our folks we were going to the Jones's, the Davis's, or the Smith's (fictitious names to protect the innocent or in some cases, the guilty) while those kids told their parents they were going to other families. Our parents believed us, no real need to check in those days. Actually, that is likely why the parents of today check, they did the same thing. Then we were free to roam the neighborhoods without supervision. I was the last of six kids with two brothers immediately older than I, so we sort of had the good nucleus of a gang to start with. By the time I was 10 I had already been involved in theft, fights, general disruption, lying regularly, and some involvement with organized crime. All while being a good member of church, private school (with decent results, but never meeting my potential), sports teams each season, family, and many charities. The die was cast. We moved to a decent suburb and different city when I was 10. Many of the really scary things I was involved in stopped. I quit stealing for the most part. There was no organized crime presence to speak of. People in the new neighborhood didn't fight on a daily basis. But many of the behaviors still existed. The dishonesty. Finding fun in danger of doing things I wasn't supposed to do without getting caught. The ease in which I could remove myself of supervision without raising concern. The good things took up more and more of my life. Family, church, school, sports, community, and charity took a larger role. Enter alcohol and some drug use starting at around 13 years of age. I had actually drunk younger than that, but at 13, it became regular. I still was involved in decent things through High School, but more and more of my time was devoted to drinking and drugging. In fact, even the good things I was doing, I was often doing high. Alcohol and drugs took over my life at 13 almost immediately. It became my focus. Church and doing well in school became an afterthought. This is where the earlier ability learned or a personality trait actually gave me the ability to still present a decent image when I needed to, while living a morally bankrupt life with character defects run amok! As soon as I left High School I considered myself a man, went to college and had less and less incentive to put the effort into the lie of decency. Needless to say, I drank myself out of College within a year and a half. I sold it as something quite different. "College isn't for me!" "I am hands on, more of a business genius". "I'll be hiring and firing college grads before most of my classmates graduate". And that is exactly what happened. We are quite resourceful. I succeeded in business despite of my lack of continuing education. I started climbing the corporate ladder. With 1 1/2 years of leaving school, I was hiring college grads, evaluating them, and when not performing in spite of my continued effort to find the right career path for them, terminating their employment (BTW, I found that the hardest thing I ever had to do, besides eventually getting sober). There were other things this provided. It provided a source of money that I could fund my alcohol use with and the lifestyle that went with it outside of work. It provided the illusion of respectability even to continue to delude myself about alcoholism. It provided justification that alcohol use and drug use, at least in the way I did those things (which was more than excessive), was normal. The ability to live the dual life of success, acceptability, while being a total reprobate continued to drive me towards the point where the illusion was smashed, the delusion crushed, and the ability to live a dual life became impossible. I did it for many years. Each successive year the respectable activities became less important, the job ability was about to be smashed. I got closer to full alcoholism and less "function alcoholic" each successive year. Eventually I got to the point where I had a moment of clarity, I realized I had a drinking problem. Within a week, even without reaching out, someone I knew asked me if I wanted to go to a meeting. I hadn't mentioned my understanding of the problem with him. I have so many experiences like this in the

At end of my alcoholism and being brought into recovery that I hardly look at those as coincidence. Throughout my journey into recovery and continuing recovery, I look at these ot as coincidence but intervention of my higher power. They likely existed during my drinking days as well, but I never recognized nor acknowledged them for what hey were. God has always given me the opportunity to do the next right thing, when I missed it the first time he tried again, and again, and....Eventually in desperation I saw the truth. It is then when the journey began and I started to get honest with myself.

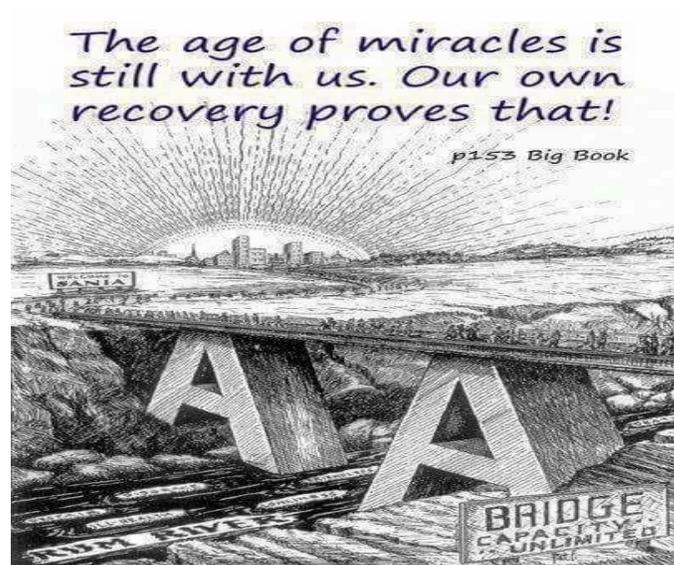
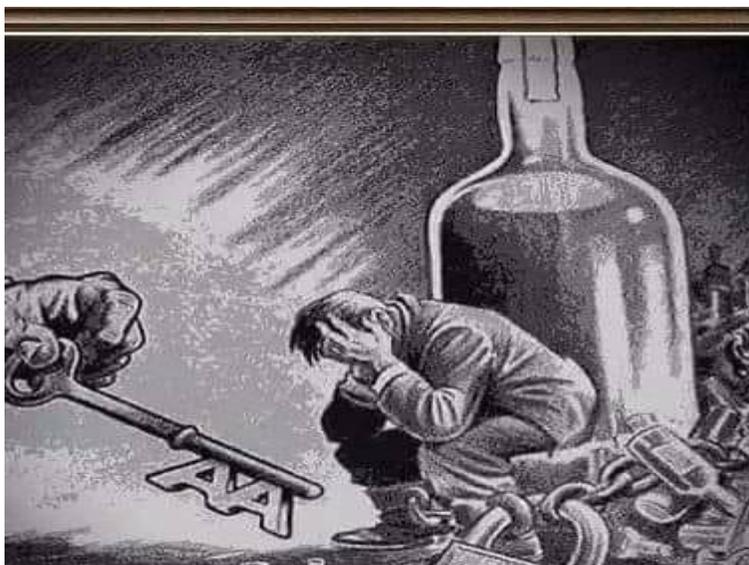
Upon reflection of my life and through the steps with the help of my sponsor, I saw the truth. The first time I drank I got drunk. The next morning even in severe hangover, I wanted to recapture the magic I felt the night before. My parents weren't happy, but there was enough alcoholism and eneblement on both sides of my family they showed a little disappointment in my behavior, but wanted life to get back to normal as well. Little did they know I found a new normal. My fathers side of the family had alcoholism on it but there was little family history available to me. My father was the only son of immigrant parents. My grandparents passed away before I was 10. The trail went cold. My mothers side however was rife with alcoholism and enablers. The alcoholism was often ignored and covered by the enablers. My mothers sister and brother both died from alcoholism. I am a recovered alcoholic, one of my cousins is a recovered alcoholic, and of those cousins my immediate siblings I can count 5 that although are not in recovery could use the program. There may be more. Combine that with the fact that the first time I drank and got drunk and then set out to get drunk each and every time I drank. Strange it took me about 20 years to figure out that might be a problem. The good news was, there is a solution.

Once I knew I had a problem and that there was a solution, I learned about the solution at the first meeting my friend took me to. I had an obligation to address the problem. Like many I had to combine multiple efforts at sobriety in order to have my character defects exposed and get to desperation required. Thank God for me that process only took eight months. Fo many it takes longer. I couldn't have lived the hell of drinking with the knowledge that I didn't have to any longer! Finally, I got a sponsor, worked the steps, went back to school, got several degrees, helped others, and built a sober history that I could be proud of. I only mention the degrees because it exemplies best what alcohol stole from me and what sobriety and God restored. Sobriety, the program of AA, and God with the help of many have restored each faze of my life with similar and as dramatic effect as that 1 1/2 year of failure being alcoholic followed by years of being a success at as a sober person. The most important change is my now new given ability to help others recover from alcoholism!

### ***Help Carry the Message:***

Our AA District 0490 is wholly dependent on contributions from the groups in our district to help carry the message of AA in it's many forms (Schedules, Newsletter, Website, Answering service; literature, pamphlets and reading material for facilities, corrections, and professional outreach, etc..). Our contributions of late have been sporadic and limited to a few of the groups in our area. Please bring up the need to consider the standard distribution at your home-group business meetings where and when ever possible! It is critical to our mission in carrying the message. With the district meetings starting again in September please remember to send donations with your DCM.

### ***On the Lighter Side***



**District News and Events**

What	When	Where	Details	Contact
Speaker Meeting	29th pm	Methodist Church— Corner of Main St. and Grove St., Oneida, NY	Speaker, Anniversaries, Dessert	N/A
Harvest Dinner	Nov. 24th, 7pm	OCS Methodist Church— Canastota- Center Street	Speaker, Anniversaries, Dinner	N/A

**Anniversaries**

Name	## Years	Home Group	Name	## Years	Home Group
Reggie T.	21	Wednesday Main & Grove	Tom W.	12	Stockbridge
Bill M.	2	Oneida Group	Domonic R	2	Nooners
Lesley A	2	Nooners	Joe B.	2	Main and Grove
Vanessa S	2	Nooners			

**District 0490**

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Oneida, NY 13421  
Email: [district0490@yahoo.com](mailto:district0490@yahoo.com)  
Website: [www.aadistrict0490.org](http://www.aadistrict0490.org)

Next District Meeting:  
Oct. 15, 2:00pm  
Oneida Rec. Center  
217 Cedar St, Oneida, NY

**HOTLINE NUMBERS**

Oneida	315-533-1227
Rome	315-201-6644
Utica	315-732-6880
Syracuse	315-463-5011

**Area 47**

CNY Area Committee Registrar  
PO Box 18063  
Rochester, NY 14615  
Website: [www.aacny.org](http://www.aacny.org)

Next Area Assembly:  
Sept. 12th, 1pm-5pm  
St Pauls Untd. Meth. Syr.  
visit website for details

**Alcoholic Anonymous World Svc.**

Grand Central Station  
Box 459, New York 10163  
Website: [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org)

