

RECOVERY IN THE SUN



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www.aa-costablanca.org

FREEDOM: JUST ANOTHER WORD?

A MONTH or so ago I chanced to meet a fellow member from our group on the way to the supermarket, and like many AAers in public, we initially avoided 'our' subject.

Strolling down the aisles, we chatted about the weather, the price of bananas, and whether or not strawberries were in season — just like 'normal' people would when they meet each other out and about.

And then she said it, clear and simple, and quite ecstatically: "It's so good to be free."

In 17 months of sobriety I have wrestled to find a word that could adequately sum up the accrued benefits of putting down the bottle.

The absence of hangovers; the release from the treadmill of drinking; the recommitment to work and personal relationships are all profits that have lived for me in their own little microcosms.

Yet here, among the shelves, was a fellow member with a similar time in sobriety (and for whom, incidentally, English is not a first language) who had summed it all up with the

one word that so far had eluded me: "*freedom*".

In the months that have passed I have thought much about that word as it applies to my new, improved, alcohol-free condition, and it crops up everywhere and in everything.

There is undoubted freedom in not having my mind preoccupied with the mental stress of where the next drink is coming from.

There is freedom in making choices and having



confidence that they are the right ones.

There is extraordinary freedom in not being quick to anger, in being a reasoned thinker.

And there is freedom in taking full responsibility for my own life and its consequences.

It is this last one — no longer blaming others for the failure in my life — that is, perhaps, the biggest freedom of them all.

In the excellent pamphlet *A Member's Eye View of Alcoholics Anonymous* a long-time member puts it thus: "There must come a day, when every alcoholic, in or out of AA, finally sits down in the presence of his enemies. When he does, he will be amazed to discover that he is attending a meeting of one — himself.

"The day the alcoholic in AA realizes that his enemy is within, that the tigers are largely creatures of his own design and lurk in his own unconscious, that is the day when for him AA becomes what I believe its founders meant it to be: a flight *into* reality."

While I may not necessarily 'work the programme' as much as some, nor be completely

willing to abandon my life to a 'higher power' as others may suggest, AA has over the last 17 months given me the freedom to be me — and that is something I had not felt in a very long, long time.

It is a reality that I can now not only face unafraid, but embrace wholeheartedly. And I thank a chance encounter with a fellow alcoholic for putting it all in perspective.

Costa Blanca AA Member

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CB North: 648 16 90 45

CB South: 625 912 078

Costa Calida East:

679 385 195

Costa Calida South West:

646 290 420

Valencia City:

686 685 860

Next CBIC meeting on 7 March 2010
at noon in Alicante

Recovery In The Sun The Costa Blanca's AA Newsletter



"Actually, I would like a drink, but I have to be somewhere by July."

PASSING IT ON

Costa Blanca International Committee (CBIC) Service Workshops held in Calpe and Torrevieja in February 2010

THE AA 'Growing into Service' workshops were successful and fun afternoons for Costa Blanca and visiting AA members.

The interactive sessions' primary aim was to enable the sharing of positive experiences between members on the subject of service and to define the meaning, for them, of AA service. Also, the workshop highlighted available service positions in home groups and at CBIC intergroup level.

The workshops took the form of an interactive session, encouraging discussion about the definition of service in AA, moving on to how service is structured within AA, both in the UK and the Spanish system.

Members present spoke about why service positions exist at all within AA and linked this to our primary purpose, 'to carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic'.

The myth that 'the main reason we do service in AA is to help others' was dispelled and the focus was placed on personal growth achieved by using

as secretary, treasurer etc., that came out of the workshop, was a lack of confidence by the prospective position holder of their ability to do the job.

Willingness to participate or lack of talents did not appear to be significant factors when looking at why people do not do service.

The Calpe workshop attracted nine attendees, with a range of experience levels from newcomer to Area 21 delegate. The feedback on the forms from all who attended was positive, with most people indicating they enjoyed the session and would most likely attend another workshop if available.

The Torrevieja workshop was attended by 18 people, with a range of experience levels, similar to that seen at the Calpe workshop. Again, according to the 15 feedback forms received, most people would like to attend another session.

The most common suggestion for future workshops, in terms of subject matter, was sponsorship, and a popular suggestion was also to make the session longer, with a break in the middle for refreshments.

Another suggestion offered was to deliver differing levels, allowing time for more detailed discussion. Paul, the coordinator of the workshops believes that this could be achieved by making the session longer, rather than offering two or three differing levels of workshop.

Although separate presentations were prepared to be presented covering Telephone Service, PI and Literature, unfortunately, at both workshops, we ran out of time for the full presentations.

Information about each of these topics was made available to attendees.

In terms of costings to CBIC, the amount for mileage incurred as a result of these workshops amounted to 61 euros. Paper, pens, printed material, flipcharts, etc. have not been claimed for.

Should another workshop be presented, Paul suggested considering



accounting for refreshments within the workshop budget.

Finally, Paul wishes to thank all those who made these workshops possible and contributed to their organization and facilitation.

The unabridged report of the two workshops can be found in the full March 2010 CBIC minutes.

Paul H, Costa Blanca AA Member and coordinator of CBIC workshops



members' talents for the benefit of AA as a whole.

Sponsorship into service was discussed and time was spent looking at some of the reasons members choose to, and choose not to, participate in service.

The main reason members do not participate in recognized services, such

☀ CBIC NEWS ☀

SERVICE POSITIONS VACANT

THERE are currently 2 CBIC service positions vacant. It is suggested CBIC officers have previous GSR experience at intergroup. Anyone interested in the following services will be supported by the rotating-out officers.

Costa Blanca North Telephone Liaison Officer — URGENT: Ensure the CB helpline is constantly manned and answered. Liaise with groups and responders to make sure telephones rotate and all responders are informed and updated.

Public Information Liaison Officer — URGENT: Carry the message of recovery to the still suffering alcoholic by informing professionals and the general public about AA.

See next page for details about above positions and more CBIC news.

YOUNG MAN'S WISDOM SENT ME TO AA

I THOUGHT alcoholics were people who drank all day and every day. But I wasn't like that, I didn't drink every day. So how could I be an alcoholic? Well, I'll tell you how.

I grew up in a loving family, never caused any trouble, got a good education, and went to work in the City of London.

I had friends and boyfriends. Never once did I have a problem with alcohol.

I never went home smelling of booze in case I got into trouble with my parents. They didn't approve of me drinking alcohol.

My mother never drank, she didn't like it. And my father was a social drinker.

When I was just twenty years old I got married and two years later I had my first child — a daughter. Two years after that my son was born.

We socialised with friends and I drank normally. I got drunk on the odd occasion

but so did everyone.

Then, one day at home with my children of one and three respectively I took a drink in the afternoon.

I don't know if I was bored or just plain crazy, I got drunk. I phoned my husband at work told him and he laughed.

He came home early, looked after the children while I slept it off. I'd like to say that was the end of it but it was just the beginning of my journey to hell.

I started to take a few drinks in the afternoons — not every day, not every week, not every month, but I always got drunk.

My husband wasn't laughing any more and I became severely depressed.

We moved house due to my husband's work and I thought that this would be a new start. By now my children were at school. They knew what I was doing. How I hated myself.

More house moves followed, the drinking took hold, I hid bottles, and lied.

My daughter looked at me with contempt.

I thought: 'I can stop'. The truth was I couldn't, and I knew I was in trouble.

I was so ashamed. Here I was, a respectable mother with two children. This didn't happen to someone like me. Did it?

Time went by and my children were 21 and 19 now.

My daughter hated me. My son, after seeing me drunk one evening told me I couldn't drink like 'normal people' then I should face the fact that I needed help before I died.

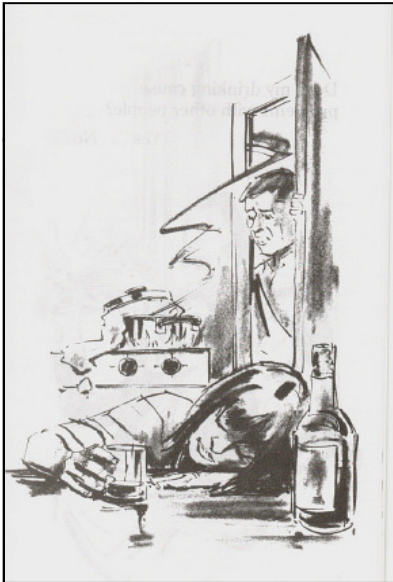
I was shocked, a lad with so much wisdom had managed to get through to me.

I phoned AA the following day and went to a meeting. I begged them to help me. I couldn't do it on my own.

Fourteen years on, I still go to Alcoholics Anonymous meetings, I work a programme of recovery and I don't drink on a daily basis.

I would like to thank AA for giving me my life back and my son for suggesting I got help before it was too late.

Costa Blanca AA Member



COSTA BLANCA INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

CB North Telephone Liaison Officer is due to stand down on March 7. The role of this position is to ensure the CB North Helpline is manned at all times which includes keeping the '3rd Emergency Phone' and answering after the 4th ring if responders do not pick up.

Contact with the group next responsible for the phones ensuring they have chosen 2 responders (with 12 months continuous sobriety) to provide cover.

Ensure the phones are passed from the current group to the next group at the end of each month.

Make sure all responders have the latest Responder Telephone Pack of information and fully understand the requirements and limits of their duty.

Ensure responders are supplied with the latest 'Where To Find' (Ron is new WTF Officer) and immediately informed about any changes.

Contact all CB Nth groups regularly to confirm the '12th Step Contact List' is always up to date and advise the current responders of any changes.

Keep in regular contact with the current

responders to assure the system is working well and there are no problems with providing cover.

Collect the completed log sheets from the groups at the end of each month. Collate log sheets to provide statistics.

Ensure the bank account for the Movistar payments has sufficient funds at all times to cover monthly bills. (CBIC Treasurer provides funds).

Quarterly report to CBIC including summary of calls received and financial report.

Public Information Liaison Officer stood down in September 2009. This service position involves carrying the AA message of recovery to professionals and the general public.

Liaising with PI Contacts throughout the CB via regular PI Team Meetings to create opportunities to pass the message whether through public talks, PI & Open meetings, radio, film or exhibitions.

Maintaining announcements in public media and placing articles about AA in the local press and other media.

Organizing and giving talks to clubs, societies, schools, doctors, nurses, social workers, etc.

AA Guidelines advise that 2 years continuous sobriety is required to be considered for the above posts.

Literature Officer stands down on March 7, to take up another CBIC service position.

It was agreed at CBIC intergroup that while it is regrettable that no volunteer has come forward, groups will be able to source literature directly when existing CBIC stocks have expired, and therefore this CBIC service position no longer exists.

Distribution of AA books and pamphlets currently held by CBIC will be discussed at its next meeting on March 7 and the outcome will be detailed in the full minutes.

Meanwhile, please continue to contact Ron if you need literature. He will let you know if your order can be fulfilled from remaining stock or suggest alternative purchasing options.

roncharris@gmail.com Tel: 96 678 6573

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

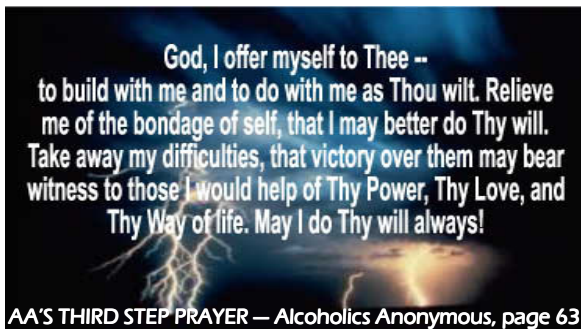
Thank you to those who have contributed to Recovery In The Sun. Please send meeting news and changes, comments, views, articles, suggestions, personal stories, or anything else you would like published in your AA CB newsletter to:

ourprimarypurpose@gmail.com

Mobile: (+34) 679 18 26 22. Landline: (+34) 96 648 1150.

Disclaimer: Articles in this publication represent the views of the authors which are not necessarily shared by other AA members or by the AA Fellowship as a whole.

REMINDER: the next CBIC (Costa Blanca International Committee) intergroup meeting is at 12 noon on Sunday, 7 March 2010 in Alicante at Area 21 offices – C/Virgen del Puig, 3 bajo, Alicante. Everybody is welcome. Meet us for coffee & Danish at 11.15am in nearby Cafeteria Alacant.



SEPT 2010 CONVENTION IN TORREVIEJA



'RECOVERY IN THE SUN'
AA English Speaking Convention
TORREVIEJA, COSTA BLANCA - SPAIN
3rd - 5th September 2010

Hotel Cabo Cervera

Ctra.Torrevieja a La Mata,
03188 TORREVIEJA,

Alicante, Spain

Tel: (+34) 966 921 717

Fax: (+34) 966 921 896

E-mail: info@hotelcabocervera.com

Web: www.hotelcabocervera.com

**Bookings & enquiries must be made direct with hotel,
by phone or email, quoting 'AA Convention'**

Double Room with Full Board €47.90 per person, per night.

(Half Board €41.11 pp,pn or Bed & Breakfast €32.48 pp,pn)

Single Occupancy in Twin Room with Full Board €65.01 pp,pn

Family Rooms also available. All Prices inc. VAT

Convention registration fee of €10 payable on arrival
from noon on Friday 3rd September 2010.

- All-day Saturday AA Marathon meeting.
- Saturday evening Raffle & Disco.
- AA and Al-Anon Open & Closed Meetings.

For further Convention information, contact

Helpline (0034) 625 912 078

E-mail: aaevent@gmail.com

or contact, John & Christine

From UK call 0844 3139304 (cheap rate)

ENUNCIADO

Alcohólicos Anónimos, es una Comunidad de hombres y mujeres que comparten su mutua experiencia, fortaleza y esperanza para resolver su problema común y ayudar a otros a recuperarse del alcoholismo.

El único requisito para ser miembro de AA es el deseo de dejar la bebida. Para ser miembro de AA no se pagan honorarios ni cuotas; nos mantenemos con nuestras propias contribuciones. AA no está afiliada a ninguna secta, religión, partido político, organización o institución alguna; no desea intervenir en controversias, no respalda ni se opone a ninguna causa. Nuestro objetivo primordial es mantenernos sobrios y ayudar a otros alcohólicos a alcanzar el estado de sobriedad.

ALTEA STEP CLOSES ITS DOORS

ALTEA STEP meeting on Wednesday, having recently moved to the earlier time of 6pm, has closed, due to lack of support.

The English-speaking meeting began in November 2004.

Thanks and gratitude go to those who started the meeting and those who kept it going as numbers decreased in the past few years.

Meetings on this coast have suffered from falling numbers. Partly due to the fact that several English-speaking members have left Spain and returned to their country of origin. And, tourism numbers and long, regular visits are down affecting the number of AA members visiting the area.

It is always sad when a meeting closes but AA experience shows it is never wise to endlessly struggle on with a meeting that is no longer able to be run, for whatever reasons according to AA traditions.

AA experience also shows that a meeting will thrive only where

there is a real need for it to do so and, that closing a meeting down often results in a new, healthier meeting being founded in its demise.

It has also been seen through AA experience that meetings able to follow the AA Guidelines, particularly with regard to rotation of service officers; compliance with the recommended terms of sobriety; and the holding of regular group conscience meetings, tend to promote strong sobriety and attract new members, thus ensuring the long healthy life of the group.

North Costa Blanca members who wish to continue studying the steps in a group framework can still do so by checking when other local groups hold their regular step meetings.

Teulada, for instance, holds its step meeting on the first Monday of each month in line with whichever month it is, i.e. March, being the third month in the calendar, is Step 3.