



## PI Service News

*“Easy does it.....  
but do it!”*

Shared Service Experience



## October 2020

Please pass on this newsletter to your friends in the Fellowship, either by forwarding via email or by printing copies to take to your local meetings. Anyone who wants their personal copy of the newsletter should send us their email address to the address below. You can also drop a line to GSO with any items for inclusion.

Please note the contact address: [aainformation@gsogb.org.uk](mailto:aainformation@gsogb.org.uk)

**General Service Board Member** *Justin T.* recalls his service experience:

Two weeks into recovery, my motives for sticking my hand up for a service position (as greeter) were a bit questionable. I liked the female volunteer who had also volunteered, and I wanted to impress the man whom I later asked to be my sponsor. I never saw her again, but I did get his help, support and guidance through the first steps.

I did the service for a couple of months, during which time I gained and polished a resentment against those regulars who brushed past me as though I was the doorman at a hotel. I resigned and found meetings at which I felt more comfortable. After job changes and house moves, it was a milestone in my recovery when I completed a full year in a role.

For the first 9 years or so, I always had a service position at group level. I'd been to Intergroup as a stand-in for our GSR, attending with my 'work' attitude and had judged it directionless and poorly run. I limited my service involvement, believing that a coffee pot and a couple of alcoholics was all it really took. None of my peers did service outside the group. I conveniently overlooked the Help Line, availability of literature and all the other functions fulfilled by the AA service structure and GSO. If I bothered to think about them, I thought that they were for other, more keen members to deliver.

As I was coming up to double-digit sobriety, I discovered that my sponsor, on another continent, had starting using drugs. I decided that was not going to be my future and on speaking with a new sponsor, it was suggested that I make some changes. I had self-doubt about what I had to offer (pride and ego at play), yet signed up for the London phone office rota, and later as a Prison Sponsor at HMP Wandsworth. I loved this work – it was fulfilling, fun and, beyond my individual recovery, helped make sense of the other two sides of the triangle: Service and Unity.

Ten years later I had married, moved back to my home-town and started a new career. We'd got a small meeting going locally and it was suggested that I give Intergroup another go. At the second Intergroup meeting I attended, there was a debate about the costs of the Phone service. There was some toing and froing about call rates and volumes, until a wise head asked: "How does this help the alcoholic who still suffers?".

That was the real lightbulb moment for me – this wasn't about saving pennies, it was about saving lives. I resumed prison service once more. Someone at Intergroup suggested that I put myself forward as a Conference Delegate, which I did for 3 years. I co-ordinated our Region's team, was Secretary, then Chair of my Committee, with a place on the Conference Steering Committee. Shortly after I had completed that, I was asked if I would be interested in a nomination as Board Trustee for my Region. Self-doubt and imposter syndrome raised their ugly heads once more, but I was counselled to be myself and see what my Higher Power had in store. I was accepted and began the role in lockdown. The fellowship and bonding with other Trustees that I might have expected in York has been via the Internet. I am fortunate in that nowadays, I am able to accept such switches as part of life's adventure, and not react like a spoilt child whose plans have gone awry.

My service journey has had phases – initially taking a commitment ensured that I got to meetings, then I learned that service was the 'doing' part of my Step 12, and thus kept me sober. I then saw carrying the message as payback in the 'deal' of getting sober within the fellowship. I now see it as part of my life, doing what I can to help, not beating myself up if it doesn't work out. It feels right. As a wise man once said to me in discussion about the Steps: "Be useful."

## YOUNG PEOPLE

**Birmingham I/G's YPLO Sarah J.** has become a contact for Birmingham City Hospital via *TLO Andy P* liaising with *Roxy* for female patients who have been discharged and are looking for a meeting. She is also working with a couple of young people who have been introduced via online meetings. She has been in contact with **Liverpool I/G YPLO Alex S.** They're holding a Zoom meeting on Sunday nights with a Young People focus. If any young people are interested, it's at 7.30, the ID is 106 618 113 and the password is 078063.

**Plymouth I/G's YPLO** reports:- 'I have recently done a telephone interview with Sophie Squires from **Plymouth Radio**. She posted an article on the website and I believe it was replayed on the radio. I have spoken to Jo Loosemore from **BBC Radio Devon** about the *YPLO* mission. She has asked for audio clips as she is running "daily diaries" series and said she will play 1 per day. *Matthew W, Caitlin* and *Amy* have submitted clips as well as me.

## Service – Our Third Legacy

I was taken to my first AA meeting by the man who 12 stepped me in October 1984. This was after 6 years of alcoholic drinking which resulted in me running away from home, losing my first job, an Apprenticeship on British Rail and doing what I later learned to be "Geographicals" to Scotland and back again to London. I was told to listen and keep an open mind at the meeting. I tried to do this and got a glimmer of hope. I kept going to meetings and eventually moved back home a couple of months later. My Mum and Dad were delighted as were my 2 Brothers and the rest of my Family.

I found a Sponsor and he took me through the Programme of Recovery found in the basic text, the "Big Book". I started to learn about our 3rd legacy of service at my home group. I became a Greeter and then did other commitments in the group.

I was sponsored into service at Intergroup by making tea at the founding meeting of Chelsea Intergroup in late 1985/early 1986. Chelsea (along with Kensington and Fulham) was part of the old Redcliffe Intergroup. About a year later, I was approached by the outgoing Prison and Probation Liaison Officer for Chelsea Intergroup and asked if I'd like to put myself forward for this role. We met over coffee one afternoon and he told me what the role involved. I said I was happy to be considered for election and duly became the Prison and Probation LO for Chelsea IG after my friend rotated out of the post. I was already attending Wandsworth Prison on a rota basis, a commitment which I loved and learned so much from.

After around five years of sobriety, I started drifting from my home group and let go of the service commitments I had in the group. I had rotated out of the role at Chelsea Intergroup and stopped going into Wandsworth Prison after 3 years on the rota. I moved with a job to Nottingham in August 1993 but didn't go to regular meetings there. Eventually I lost all contact with the Fellowship and became extremely isolated and alone. I lost any mental defence again the first drink and the inevitable happened. I had been sober for nearly 9 and a half years. I was in and out of AA for the next 3 years until 8 January 1997 when I had my last drink up until today Thank God. I had lost everything including jobs, my house and driving license. It's only by the Grace of God and the intervention of a good friend who wrote me a character reference, that I didn't end up in prison for drink driving. I moved back home to Mum's 2 days after my last drink as I was in Court for drunk and disorderly that morning. That was the last time I appeared in Court for a drink related offence and the Magistrate wished me well after I finally admitted that I needed help.

I went through the Steps again to mend my spiritual fences and to make the appropriate amends.

I got a job quickly and as I was living at Mum's she made sure I was eating properly with 3 meals a day, including packed lunch for when I was at work.

I got a service role again in my home group and life was looking up at last. I dealt with the untimely death of my youngest brother Michael, to a rare lung cancer. I also changed jobs, got married and divorced, had a couple of other relationships which didn't work out.

I became a GSR for my home Group in Braintree and enjoyed going to Essex Intergroup. I also became a Regional Rep which introduced me to Eastern Region. After a couple of years, I was elected as one of their Conference Delegates and I loved this role. I learned so much about how AA in Great Britain works through going to and participating in Conference which is the collective Conscience of AA GB.

I was nominated by my Intergroup and supported by Region to apply for the Employment Sub Committee. I learned how the Board works as the Sub Committees answer to the Board who in turn is accountable to Conference. The Employment Sub Committee did great work in producing its own Newsletter "Hello ELO's" and I was privileged to have been the Editor for that. It also hosted a Seminar in York which a great success.

My Region nominated me to apply for the role of Board Trustee. I applied and was interviewed in York. I prepared myself for what I thought would be the outcome, namely being unsuccessful. I thought my running mate would be chosen but was surprised and shocked that I had been chosen!

I went to my Induction and first Board meeting in January 2018 and was ratified or confirmed at Conference in April 2018, when I formally took up the role. It has been a wonderful commitment and I continue to learn so much about AA and being a Trustee of the Charity, The General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous Great Britain Limited. Part of my role as a Trustee is to attend my Regional Meetings and also to chair Sub Committees. The Disciplines I was given at my Induction were Archives and the Fellowship Survey. It has been a privilege to be involved in these Sub Committees.

I continue to learn through being involved in Service and it has helped me to stay sober. I love the page in AA Comes of Age (Page 234) where Bill W talks about the Cathedral with the Spire being called Service. He goes on to say "May it ever point upwards towards God".

Clive K. *General Service Board Member*

## Poster developments from Birmingham P.I.

<b>Digital poster Campaign</b>  <b>Birmingham</b>	<b>Contact Details:</b>  Caroline G.  PI Birmingham Intergroup  pi.birmingham@aamail.org
<b>Campaign dates: 16<sup>th</sup> Dec 2019 – 5<sup>th</sup> Jan 2020</b>	
<b>The Campaign</b>  <b>Cost Total: £1.080</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All 4 digital posters (called D 48s) = £900 plus vat at 20% - £1,080"</li><li>• Special offer for digitised posters in 4 key sites in Birmingham 62% off rate card</li></ul> <b>Timing: 3 weeks 'live' from 16.12.19 -5.01.20</b>  A "Digital D48" is a digital poster Size 6metres x 3 metres. The size is a '6 sheet" x 8 hence 48  <b>The campaign:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Digital 48s x 4 locations</li><li>• Advert every 5 minutes, 288 plays a day 24/7, with 24,192 plays</li></ul> <b>Images</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• AA poster jpegs sent to the agency</li><li>• get images from PI Resources Library on Google drive – ask Louise F on <a href="mailto:pi.sc5@aamail.org">pi.sc5@aamail.org</a> if you don't have the link, or</li><li>• from Emma at GSO <a href="mailto:Emma.Wilson@gsogb.org.uk">Emma.Wilson@gsogb.org.uk</a></li><li>• Agency was able to organise the artwork at an extra £40 – 60</li><li>• Using a local phone number as deemed to be more memorable than 0800 numbers.</li></ul> <b>Lead time to arrange:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Digital can be arranged more quickly than paper posters. So, End Sept Early Oct order for November digital placement should work.</li></ul> <b>Implementation</b>  Alight Media  Peter Harvey Direct Sales Manager - London  36 Soho Square, Soho, London W1D 3QY w: <a href="http://www.AlightMedia.com">www.AlightMedia.com</a>  m: 07701325232 t: 0207 183 2346 EXT. 1002	



## Examples



Park Bench Code 4029-page 2 winter



Man in window Code 6020

### Note:

*We have no particular affinity with this company Alight media. It's just one the Birmingham IG found, and did a good deal with. The company suggested to me they will want to do similar prices elsewhere where they can. I'm copying below part of the e mail they sent me about other poster sites they have.*

*Louise F. pi5.sc@aamail.org*

"D48 – Digital 48 roadside screens. We have these screens in:

Motherwell, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Newcastle, Sunderland, Hull, Loughborough, Nottingham, Manchester, Leeds, Sheffield, Liverpool, London, Birmingham, West Bromwich, Wolverhampton, Cambridge & Hemel Hempstead. And, Bournemouth – Digital 6: Digital 6 sheets. (1.2m x 1.8m i.e. Bus shelter side size)

The first steps would be finding out if these areas are places of interest, then I can send specific site and area information with prices.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate.

Best,  
Pete."

**PLEASE** pass on your experiences to the address below. PI Service news is fortunate to receive a great deal of information from throughout Great Britain and Continental European Region.

If anything you have sent hasn't appeared, please try again.

**INTERGROUP SECRETARIES** – please pass on Public Information Service News to Group Service Representatives, by e-mail or hard copy.

Please note the contact address: [aainformation@gsogb.org.uk](mailto:aainformation@gsogb.org.uk)