

Nathan's commentary from the 5 Year anniversary party (*Edited)

This being the 5-year anniversary celebration of the start of Reason and Recovery.

I want to talk a little about how this all got started and why.

To take some time at this five-year point to give some history and acknowledge the strength and community that this group of drunks have created together.

This group, Reason and Recovery, was born out of pandemic isolation and a need for community.

When the Corona Virus pandemic began. I started working from my home studio.

At that point I had over 33 years of continuous sobriety in AA.

I literally grew up in these rooms, but I had lost the feeling that the rooms of AA were still my home.

Surviving Alcoholics Anonymous as an atheist, I continually felt the need to fight against the religious normalization of our program.

I had stopped being of service to the meetings and sponsoring others because I could not take anyone through the steps, at least, the way they are written and the way I was taken through them.

I feel that half of those 12 steps are unnecessary to get sober and grow.

I was only going to one meeting a week, and being in a locked-down society, I could not even do that anymore.

I was living alone and isolated. I needed to find my community and discovered the Zoom app.

Zoom was a new tool that not many had heard of yet. It soon would become our lifeline for recovery.

Relying on a group of drunks for strength is not possible without a group.

I needed AA and found it on Zoom daily.

I found the same religious normalization of orthodox AA that I was experiencing at my local meetings.

So, I looked for something secular and found a few online meetings that had just started up.

What I found was something that I never realized existed, non-religious meetings of AA.

I thought that I had found something that I had visualized but had never experienced.

Unfortunately, what I found was that most of these secular meetings of AA wanted nothing to do with AA or a program of steps or sponsorship.

Most of the discussion revolved around anger and bashing of AA with an attitude of us versus them.

That was not going to work for me even though I had a lot of the same anger. I still loved AA.

I had a different vision for secular AA.

So, I decided to start this Zoom AA meeting.

I looked at the 12 steps and removed the ones that my experience showed me were not needed.

I changed the wording of the remaining steps to meet a secularized idea of what I thought an AA program could be.

A program for everyone not just secular people. There would be no us versus them, or exclusion from those that had different beliefs.

It would be an inclusive meeting that shared sober experience, not debates of faith or no faith.

We would have a written program of steps that included sponsorship. We would follow AA traditions.

On Sunday March 22, 2020, we had our first meeting.

We started to grow as a group and opened on other evenings and one in the morning too.

Eventually we opened more service roles and started a monthly committee meeting to keep it all organized.

That's when we came into adulthood as a group.

It is the service of the members that is the life of any group.

The generosity and commitment of those that love this group and what we stand for is the best demonstration of a sober life.

Utilizing the group conscience and our service committee, we have made many, and hopefully will continue to make positive improvements to our group.

We, of service, know that the only reason we open the doors of each meeting every week is to bring hope, a solution, and example to those in need.

We must continue to be a safe and inclusive space for others to find help.

We are AA, we concur that a group of sober members are a power greater than ourselves alone, and we utilize a program of action to help ourselves and then help others.

Welcome to Reason and Recovery.