

**384 Farnsworth Ave.
Bordentown, NJ
(609) 298-7785 office
(609) 298-7795 hotline
www.centraljerseyintergroup.org**

Central Jersey Intergroup

CJI NEWS

May/June 02009

The Best Mom I Could Be

Under the dictatorship of alcohol

Alcohol is a dictator. It told me when, where, and how I could drink and took me to places I didn't want to go. I was born the youngest of six girls on a tobacco farm in Southern Ontario, Canada. When I was three years old, my father passed away. Soon afterward, Mom put a grower on the farm, and we moved to a small village where I lived until I grew up and moved away. Mom never drank, smoked, or remarried, and she went to Mass every morning. There was no action at our house!

Then my oldest sister married, and her husband brought over a case of beer. My aunts and uncles came over and everyone began laughing and joking. I thought, I want a little bit of that! So I stole two bottles of beer, left the house, and went to my girlfriend's place. She got a couple of cigarettes, and we jumped on our bikes and went down the road to drink the beer. Well, I liked the buzz from the booze but threw up and blamed it on the cigarettes.

Sometime later, I met a young man. When I finished hairdressing school, we got married. We had one daughter and four sons, and when they started going to school full-time, I opened up a hairdressing salon in our home. More money meant more booze! Then, when one of our sons got cancer and died, my drinking became unbearable. All I wanted to do was argue with everyone I came across. If I saw a customer coming down the street, I would yell out the door, "Curl your own damn hair!" and close the door. And once, I cooked a chicken in so much wine that we drank the gravy and threw the chicken out. It was a terrible period in the life of our family. I did a lot of crazy things. I kept calling Fr. Hurley, complaining about my husband's drinking, yet he kept asking me about my own. I always responded that I only drank a couple of beers, but he always said, "Then it won't be so hard to quit!" One day Fr. Hurley told me about a fellowship of women and men who share their experience, strength, and hope with one another. When I was ready to call them, he would give me a telephone number, he said.

The turning point came one New Year's Day when our daughter invited us for dinner. My husband and I had been drinking throughout the holidays and fighting to such an extent that he and my oldest son refused to go to our daughter's home with us. Only my two youngest sons would go with me. When I walked out of the house, the cold air hit my face so suddenly that I threw up, but that didn't slow down this alcoholic. I went back to the fridge, grabbed a few more beers, and put them into my favorite purse—a nice big bag that hid all my bottles from the world! During the ride to my daughter's, I kept saying to my boys that I was going to join something called AA because Fr. Hurley had said, "If you join, then you don't have to drink anymore." Thirty minutes later, I pulled over and threw all the booze I had into a ditch. When we arrived at my daughter's home, dinner was not quite ready, so my daughter asked, "Who would like to have a glass of wine?" Well, guess who was the first one with her hand out—until I looked across the room into the bluest eyes you have ever seen. My sons couldn't even look at me. My daughter asked, "What's wrong?" and the boys said to their sister, "If Mom goes into something called Alcoholic Anonymous, she won't have to drink anymore!" I set down the wine and the next day I called Fr. Hurley. That was January 2, 1972, and I haven't had a drink since. It certainly hasn't been easy, but it's been possible. I pray to my Higher Power that I never allow alcohol to dictate to me again.

At my first meeting, everyone was laughing and joking and I thought, I can fit right in if I'm all drunk. Yet, I felt only hopelessness. That evening when I got home, my husband asked, "How long do you have to go to that outfit?" I told him, "After a year I get a medallion and a cake and I'm cured." I joined a group and got a sponsor and a Big Book, which I read in four days. I called Sheila on the fifth day and told her I wanted to talk to her because the book says to take these Steps and I wanted to do all of them that afternoon! She laughed and said, "And I want to talk to you, too."

When I had been sober a year and a half, my daughter came home one summer day and I made my amends to her. We had a wonderful day riding our bikes, eating hamburgers, and lighting a bonfire at the cottage. That evening, on her way back home, her car was hit by a drunk driver, and she died some days later. Thanks to AA, I didn't have to drink during this nightmarish ordeal. But if I thought my marriage was in trouble before her car accident, well, it was a disaster afterward. My boys were at college, so I sold the hair salon and moved out of an eleven-room home and into a three-room apartment. I got a job stringing wires to the back of stoves and fridges. (A guy in my group believes he bought one of my wired refrigerators, because it never really worked since the first day he bought it! I keep telling him that my wires have been crossed for a long time.) A year passed and my

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Central Jersey
Intergroup



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Web Site Addresses:

Cape Atlantic Intergroup -
www.capeatlanticintergroup.org
Central Jersey Intergroup -
www.centraljerseyintergroup.org
South Jersey Intergroup -
www.aasj.org
Area 45 -
www.njja.org
Area 44/Northern New Jersey -
www.nnjaa.org
AA World Services -
www.alcoholics-anonymous.org



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JAILBOX

Please contribute toward the purchase of conference approved literature for the incarcerated alcoholic so they can be in touch with our message of recovery 168 hours of the week.

Contributions of conference approved literature are also welcome!

Please see your Correctional Facilities Committee member or Intergroup Rep for instructions.

Go to www.centraljerseyintergroup.org to print out a 'JAILBOX' sign

All proceeds will go to incarcerated A.A. members via the:

Central Jersey Intergroup Correctional Facilities Committee

348 Farnsworth Ave.,
Bordentown, NJ 08505

2009 Northeast Regional Forum

With our U.S./Canada
General Service Board
Of Alcoholics Anonymous

June 26, 27, and 28,
2009

7pm to 10pm Friday

9am to 9:45pm

Saturday

9:30am to noon on

Sunday

Doubletree Hotel
200 Atrium Dr.
Somerset, NJ 08873
732-469-2600

There is no Registration
Fee

Central Jersey Intergroup
384 Farnsworth Ave.
Bordentown, NJ
(609) 298-7785 office
(609) 298-7795 hot line
www.centraljerseyintergroup.org

Officers

2008-2009

Chair – Chuck D.

Co-Chair – Laurie L.

Treasurer – Maureen R.-R.

Financial Secretary – Connie Y.

Recording Secretary - Justine D.

Committee Chairs

2008-2009

Answering Service – Mat M.

Computer— Open

Correctional Facilities - Rich G.

Hospitals & Institutions –

Jake T. & Rebecca C.

Literature - Tony G.

Meeting List – Doug P.

Newsletter – Jami D.

Public Information – Thom O.

Steering – Mike Z.

Unity – Tom V..

Web Site— Thom O.

Trustees

Wendy L.

Thom O.



*“Our leaders are but trusted ser-
vants. They do not govern.”*

Tradition Two

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health and confidence improved. As some of my integrity returned, I moved to a larger city where I got a sponsor and went to meetings every night. I also went to my first AA conference, where I heard a speaker say "I was the best mother my disease would allow me to be." Slowly, my guilt over not having been at home baking cookies for children at 4 o'clock began to melt away. When the city opened a recovery home, I was asked if I would like to volunteer a few hours a week, and I jumped at it. Within a few months, a government grant provided us with a little more money, and I was hired as assistant director.

It was at this time that I met my second husband. There was still something churning inside of me, so I reluctantly decided to repeat my Fourth and Fifth Steps at my sponsor's strong suggestion. Would I leave garbage on my kitchen table? my sponsor asked. Then I better not carry all this internal garbage around, either. I began writing down everything I could possibly remember. Then I called our parish priest, and after he had read my notes, he asked, "Do you know what I'm going to do when you leave?" (I thought, Mother of God, he's going to call the police!) He simply said, "I'm going to bury this in my garden, and if you ever want to return to the drunkenness, lying, stealing, and cheating, then come back here and we'll dig it all up." Well, I couldn't get out of there fast enough! I got into my car and felt as if the monkey was off my back-although I knew it was still in town. Gradually, I felt the new freedom that we in AA often speak about, and I discovered within me a new awareness and a new authenticity toward living.

Not long after that, one of my sons was chosen for a project overseas, and we started writing back and forth. One letter from him started with "Dear Friend." It was at this point I realized that I had been forgiven and that I was no longer the dictator. Another sign of change in our family came when my youngest son went up to the Yukon to mine for gold, and sent me a photo of himself, with his long hair and beard, standing beside a black bear. "Who is who?" I wrote back to him. You see, we can tease each other now. There was no joking in our home when I was drinking; unless I thought it was funny, no one could laugh. Things have indeed changed. Last fall, when I left for Florida, my oldest son told me that he loved me and would miss me because we had been getting together often during the summer. Thank God, I have received what I have instead of what I have deserved.

Now, there is something else that I would like to share with you, which shows how kind, loving, and incredibly gracious my Higher Power is. When I was sixteen years old, I had a child who was put up for adoption at birth. Sixteen years ago, I received a telephone call from an agency stating that my daughter had found me. How on earth was I going to tell my three sons, my daughters-in-law, and my grandchildren? I simply called my sons, and they came immediately. Through lots of fear and tears I told the simple truth of that short, yet dramatic, period of my life. After listening to me explain the situation, my sons said they knew about it all along because every time I got drunk I cried, "Who stole my baby?"

We have no secrets in AA. Our disease affects our physical, mental, and most importantly, our spiritual well-being, and I, like so many drunks, was not a bad person; only a sick person trying to get well. I had sickness of the heart and through AA I have discovered peace in a very real and authentic way. Yesterday, I was a false human being, a volunteer drinker, and a victim. Today I am becoming a truer person.

I once heard a speaker describe a stained glass window showing the Lord standing before a door with no handle. "The handle was on the other side. The only way to open the door was to search for the key of willingness," he said. Only then does my Higher Power take over. Today I know I was forgiven because I have told those I dearly love that I was the best mother my disease would allow me to be. My Higher Power has taken all the broken dreams of my life and has made me whole again.

Rita T.
Hamilton, Ontario
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Intergroup Phone Numbers

Cape Atlantic Intergroup

609-641-8855

24 Hour Hotline

1-800-604-HELP(4357)

Toll free not available with all cell phones.

Central Jersey Intergroup

(609) 298-7785 office

(609) 298-7795 hotline

South Jersey Intergroup

Toll free: 866-920-1212

Local: 856-486-4444

Northern New Jersey

800-245-1377 hotline

(908) 687-8566

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CJI Phone Commitments and Contributions

March 2009

Group	Contri- bution \$
Venture to Help	50.00
Came to Believe, Lawrence, 8:00 A.M.	226.90
Hamilton Twp. Group of A.A.	184.47
Tues. Nite Allentown Men's Big Book	200.00
Mustard Seed	120.00
Tuesday Noon, Al-An Club	250.00
#0170068	150.00
Cranbury Tuesday Night 1,2,3	40.00
Feelings in Sobriety	125.00
Happy Hour Hamilton Twp. Library	130.00
Traditions First Group	54.00
Bordentown Grapevine	18.00
Chrisann	2.00
Cranbury 1,2,3 Beginners	40.00
New Egypt Sunday Came to Believe	40.00
Feelings in Sobriety	50.00
Live and Let Live	600.00
Cranbury 12 & 12	122.00
Monday/Thursday Noon Cranbury	70.00
Plainsboro Friday Women's	120.00
Friday Night Big Book	55.00
Total	2647.37

April 2009

Group	Contri- bution \$
Bridging the Steps	100.00
End of the Line	94.00
Wed. 12:15 Lawrenceville	125.00
Pennington Wednesday Night	100.00
123 Step Tuesday 7:00 P.M.	100.00
Venture to Help	100.00
123 Beginners Step	90.00
Hightstown Early Birds	318.33
Trenton Saturday Morning	148.24
Tuesday Night Allentown Big Book Men's	200.00
Monday Night Women's Step & Tradition	30.00
Hamilton Township Group of A.A.	197.50
Casalan Friday Night	59.00
Total	1662.07

CJI Daytime Phone Commitments

If you are interested in a phone commitment email me at Munclemex@msn.com or call 468-5779

1st	Mike R 8am-4:55pm	Clay 10-12 Sharon Tom 12:30-4:55pm	Mike 10-1 Nora 1-4:55	Tony 1:00pm 4:55pm Sharon 8:00-12:30pm	Tom T 9-12 Don 12-4:55pm	Noreen 10-2 Judy 2-4:55pm	Kim 8:00-4:55pm
2nd	Mike R 8am-4:55pm	Clay 10-12 Sharon Tom 12:30-4:55pm	Mike 10-1 Nora 1-4:55pm	Tony 1:00pm 4:55pm Sharon 8:00-12:30pm	Tom T 9-12 Don 12-4:55pm	Glen 8:00-4:55pm	
3rd	Chris Ann	Clay 10-12 Sharon Tom 12:30-4:55pm	Mike 10-1 Nora 1-4:55pm	Tony 1:00pm 4:55pm Sharon 8:00-12:30pm	Tom T 9-12 Don 12-4:55pm	Noreen 10-2 Judy 2-4:55pm	Andy 8am-4:55pm
4th		Clay 10-12 Sharon Tom 12:30-4:55pm	Mike 10-1 Nora 1-4:55pm	Tony 1:00pm 4:55pm Sharon 8:00-12:30pm	Tom T 9-12 Don 12-4:55pm	Maureen 10am-4:55pm	Phil 8-11:55am
5th		Clay 10-12 Sharon Tom 12:30-4:55pm	Mike 10-1 Nora 1-4:55pm	Tony 1:00pm 4:55pm Sharon 8:00-12:30pm	Tom T 9-12 Don 12-4:55pm	Maureen 10am-4:55pm	

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Anniversaries

Bob M. - 34 years
 Betty - 29 years
 Bill K.- 28 years
 David E. - 28 years
 Jack G.- 28 years
 Booker T. - 27 years
 Karen - 25 years
 Shirley E.—25 years
 Robert H. - 25 years
 Laura C.- 24 years
 Jerry S. - 24 years
 Janice O.—22 years
 Mindi H. - 22 years
 Bob C. - 22 years
 Jim McK. - 21 years
 Bill H — 21 years
 Jim N.-21 years
 Jeannie H.- 20 years
 Bob S. - 20 years
 Angie N. - 20 years
 Jim E.-20 years
 Henry H.- 19 years
 Sharon - 18 years
 John F. - 17 years
 Kim A.—16 years
 Sheryl D.—16 years
 Albie M-16 years
 Andre F.—16 years
 Phil O. - 14 years
 Tom T. - 14 years
 Kelly W.—13 years
 Frankie C.- 13 years
 Vickie F. - 11 years
 Ron V. - 11 years

Bilal M.-10 years
 Mike Z. — 10 years
 Ed F. - 10 years
 Christine P.—10 years
 Jenna W. - 8 years
 Colleen D.-8 years
 Pete B. - 8 years
 Burt D. - 8 years
 Judy M. - 7 years
 Bob M.-7 years
 Darren G. - 7 years
 Joe M. - 7 years
 Mary B. - 6 years
 Jim H. - 6 years
 Jim M. 6 years
 Jami M.—5 years
 Karen F—4 years
 Jenn W. 2 years
 Rebecca C. — 2 years



Celebratè

Call Tony G. at
 (609) 298-7785 on Wednesdays between 1:00 and 4:30
 P.M. for literature deliveries at the Body Meeting