



DECEMBER 2016

Thursday Speakers

1st Patrick C.

8th Rhonda D.

15th Marty S.

22nd Bridgette B.

29th Brian A.

Saturday Speakers

3rd Ralph W.

Steps 8 & 9

10th Kay S.

Steps 10 & 11

17th Kane C.

Steps 10 & 11

24th Teri M.

Step 12

31st Pej A.

Step 12

Tuesday Leaders

6th Sarah A.

13th Shawn M.

20th Malina B.

27th Ritch

The Sunrise-Sunset Group of Alcoholics Anonymous

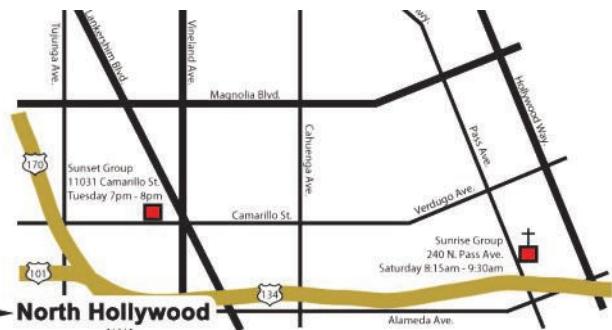
www.SunriseSunsetGroup.org

THE SUNSET GROUP
5056 Van Nuys Blvd., Sherman Oaks
Thursday 7:00-8:30pm



THE SUNRISE GROUP BIG BOOK STEP STUDY
SpiritWorks, 260 North Pass Avenue, Burbank
Saturday 8:15-9:30am

THE SUNSET GROUP BIG BOOK STUDY
11031 Camarillo Street, North Hollywood
Tuesday 7:00-8:00pm



This will be my ninth sober Christmas. It is the first I have looked forward to since I stopped drinking. It is about time. For too long, I have dreaded the festive season as a time when I have felt like a steak tartare tossed into shark-infested waters. Like any recovering alcoholic, one of the biggest lessons of my sobriety has been learning to have fun without a 100 proof bloodstream. Slowly, things have become easier.

I have developed a whole bag of tricks: at a party I drink cranberry juice because it looks like red wine or ginger ale on the rocks because it looks like whisky - this way I don't have to explain why I am not drinking. At a lunch or dinner I discreetly corner the cook upon arrival and ask which dishes contain alcohol, and then edit the menu accordingly. I turn down invitations to go to pubs, bars or clubs because experience has taught me that I always end up feeling left out. I have survived several office parties either by telling colleagues that I am taking antibiotics for an ear infection or by driving even if the venue is two minutes from my home because the "I'm driving" excuse has no comeback.

If I get a craving for a pint of Guinness I go out for a run because nothing chases away drink cravings like exercise. Out for dinner, as soon as I sit down I turn my wine glass upside down so the waitress won't fill it. On New Year's Eve I don't go to Trafalgar Square as I always end up drenched in champagne, freaking out about the possibility of osmosis triggering a relapse. Last but not least, I have recently fallen into a habit of saying bluntly, "I'm drinking orange juice because I'm a recovering alcoholic" whenever someone asks why I am not drinking, a response that, though oddly empowering, tends to result in much coughing and rattling of cutlery.

So there you have it, the sober Christmas survival kit. Now I feel ready to have fun in a new way. I have come to realize that learning sobriety is like learning a foreign language. My wife and I are learning Hebrew and as we try to get used to the alien words, wrestle with unfamiliar pronunciation and generally make fools of ourselves, I am reminded of early sobriety: how I found my feet, overcame the awkwardness, got frustrated, toughed it out, improvised, and eventually, as if by magic, fluency brought confidence and a new sense of belonging in the world. For this gift of sobriety, I will always be thankful.

- excerpted from "Sober Christmas Survival Kit", Nick Johnstone, *The Guardian*

A **normal drinker** finds a fly in his beer and asks the bartender to pour him a fresh drink.

A **heavy drinker** finds a fly in his beer, pulls it out by the wings, and continues drinking.

An **alcoholic** finds a fly in his beer and yells, "Spit it out! Spit it out!"



Dan B., Santa Cruz, California, September 1997

From "A Rabbit Walks into a Bar: Best Jokes & Cartoons from AA Grapevine"

The San Fernando Valley Central Office is at 16132 Sherman Way, Van Nuys CA 91406, 818-988-3001 (sfvaa.org). The Sunrise and Sunset Group and meetings are in District 17 (www.district17aa.org) of Central California (www.aaarea93.org).

If you would like to add to this newsletter please contact the editor at SunriseSunsetGroup@gmail.com