

Sunlight of the Spirit



History of the meeting 2016

Sunlight of the Spirit: History of the meeting

The history of Sunlight of the Spirit is as unique as the meeting itself. It is an 11th step meeting which is open to all and so its story begins. The group was started on October 10, 2007 and was founded by its original members of Joe A., Barbara M., Mark P., and Zoey. Having met at a guided meditation meeting in Doylestown, the group wanted to bring that same format into a new area. Originally, the meetings were held in the Grand View Hospital cafeteria located at 700 Lawn Ave. Sellersville Pa. 18960. The meetings were held every Wednesday night at approx. 7:30pm and lasted for about one hour. The format consisted basically of ten minutes of meditation followed by reading out of the Spiritual Awakenings book. It would then be followed by sharing and possibly an occasional speaker.

Being that the meeting was held in the cafeteria presented some early challenges that obviously were not hard to imagine. Not being the most serene environment for a meditative meeting, the group would try and secure one of the adjacent rooms around the cafeteria to hold the meetings. However, the rooms were often used for grief counseling or other hospital affairs that took priority. So the group would have to hold the meetings in the cafeteria itself. Despite the

adversity that these early conditions presented, the group's determination to practice what they preach coupled with God's guidance, the meditation continued. Mark being an atheist at the time was particularly challenged because he failed to see the immediate benefits of the meditation. However, over time it became more apparent to him as he would simply just try to clear his mind for ten minutes, he realized how vital and rewarding this practice could become. Mark's experience came to be "what you got out of meditation was what you were supposed to get out of meditation!"

An interesting anecdote to the meeting was that there was no coffee served early on, so Mark decided to go out and purchase a large stainless steel brewer to brew herbal tea! Hoping it would help create a more spiritual vibe, it also paints an amusing picture of (as Bill W. and Dr. Bob once coined the term) "a nameless squad of drunks" sitting around meditating and sipping tea!

As time passed on the group has seen its fair share of transitions. After about a year the group moved across the road from the Grand View Hospital to the basement of the Women's Village of Hope house on the grounds of the Penn Foundation located at 807 Lawn Ave. Sellersville Pa. 18960.

Now the Penn Foundation was a facility open to mental health services as well as drug and alcohol treatment.

So this opened up a new dynamic to the meeting as one could possibly imagine, so it was. A diversity of people with potentially debilitating conditions all coming together with a common goal of recovery through God's grace and the program of Alcoholics Anonymous. Outstanding!

Mark recalls being inspired when Zoey, the meetings original annual chair person, had a Rabbi as a guest speaker one night. He remarked upon how interesting it was hearing someone of a completely different faith and culture share about the common bond and benefits that came from the program! Unfortunately, Zoey eventually left the group over some of the diversities that were present such as the usage of non-AA approved literature. Joe and Mark took over as annual chairs and the group carried on.

Over the years, the group's size has ebbed and flowed. With sometimes just a handful of members or so, to other times a room full of twenty five or thirty people! Of course, as in life, people come and go in any group but this group has certainly seen its fair share of long standing members as well. The exiting of Joe and Mark after running the meeting for a few years or so led to other annual chairs, such as Roy M. for approx. four years and Dave B. for two years to present.

The group has not only continued to grow but has truly refined its format. With a weekly agenda of week 1)

reading the 11 step out of the Big Book followed by 15 minutes of meditation and then sharing, week 2) half hour guest speaker followed by sharing, week 3) spiritual topic followed by 15 minutes of meditation and sharing, week 4) spiritual literature followed by 15 minutes of meditation and sharing, and week 5) monthly chair persons choice. Each meeting is still on Wednesday night at 7:30 and lasts one hour long. All meetings begin with an introduction and an opportunity for anyone who is new to AA or this particular meeting to introduce themselves to the group.

The group celebrates its anniversary with a special meeting that offers a guest speaker and plenty of food for everyone! The group regularly embraces opportunities for members to announce their own anniversaries and sobriety dates. Also the group regularly extends itself to regional AA functions and events such as alkathons, detox center commitments, AA Hotlines, other meeting anniversaries, and so on. Nora A. is currently the groups GSR and keeps everybody well connected and informed! The group holds a monthly business meeting the last Wednesday of every month at the end of the meeting. All are welcome to attend.

The group also has a secretary, treasurer, an AA Grapevine rep & coffee maker (although tea is no longer served it is being reconsidered! :) , and now it has a historian.

Thank you and welcome to the

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