



Resentment Freedom

I'm currently in my ninth month of sobriety and, God willing, will be in my tenth by the time this is published. I'm still catching myself forming petty resentments in



my everyday life. I've made amends to coworkers, old employers, ex-girlfriends and most importantly, my father. I have worked hard at reconnecting and letting go respectfully. However, it can become too easy to get bent out of shape over small inconveniences seemingly caused by perfect strangers, be it a person standing on an escalator or my big bad cellular provider.

About a month ago, I arrived at my home group a few minutes late after running in a spring downpour. I didn't want to disrupt the 12-step room, so I quietly joined the beginners meeting. As we took turns reading paragraphs from the Big Book, I became agitated by some newcomers who happened to be quite young. They were talking, playing with their phones, leaving the room at inappropriate intervals and generally doing what newcomers - and often old timers - do. Being human. Human and alcoholic.

After the meeting I didn't stick around for fellowship but instead went home steamed about these "ungrateful brats". I found myself sharing about this incident the next day in a discussion on resentments. Was I, still early in sobriety, already forgetting what it was like coming to my first few meetings?

I realized that like most resentments, this was more my problem than that of the newcomers. I was the one who had to walk around with this burden while the resented were blissfully ignorant of the entire incident.

The next week I made a point of introducing myself to both young men and have since taken them to a few of my favorite meetings, introduced them to some friends and reminded them that they are not alone. I'm not saying I can singlehandedly save their lives, but now I feel better about myself, my program and most of all my recovery. It's never too late to right our wrongs and grow alongside sobriety.

- Patrick G., The Hill Group

CARRY THE MESSAGE!

Would you like **YOUR** Home Group featured in **Better Times**?

Contact us at bettertimes@aatoronto.org

BETTER TIMES is published monthly for AA members in the Greater Toronto Area.

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Opinions expressed in **BETTER TIMES** are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of Greater Toronto Area Intergroup.

How To Reach Us: Submit group news, medallions, other event notices, letters to the editor or articles to **BETTER TIMES** (before the 7th of the month prior to the month of issue), by mail, fax or email. Only signed submissions with a means of contact will be accepted. For subscriptions call Alexx at 416-487-8110 or subscribe at: www.aatoronto.org

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

The Better Times publication strives to offer its readership the voice of the Toronto AA community. Your article submissions are a vital part of the Better Times publication and allow you to share your experience, strength and hope with your fellows.

Submissions should be between 200-500 words, and may be made online at www.aatoronto.org or by emailing bettertimes@aatoronto.org directly.

For any inquiries or comments, please send your name and phone number to the Editor at bettertimes@aatoronto.org. Your anonymity will be protected.

Yours in Service,
The Better Times Staff.

Jobs & Notices...

- Volunteers are needed for both Phone Greeters (1 year of continuous sobriety and 1 phone training session required) and 12 Step List (especially women and speakers of languages other than English).

The monthly schedule is now a four-week rotation for the evening shifts on a day of the month, as opposed to the previous method of the evening schedule being on a date each month.

New Phone Training program began May 5th! New trainees will be given the training session by appointment only.

- Access Ability Committee seeking members for a "Buddy List" for members who are homebound or otherwise can't access meetings
- Correctional Facilities seeking people for "Bridging the Gap" program. Also, volunteers are required for the correctional facility in District 02. Toronto West also desperately needs volunteers; they have expanded to 'A' Tower with special needs and protective custody and hold meetings directly in the units. Donations of literature are also needed: soft-cover materials are accepted (no staples in the binding), as well as Grapevine donations (without staples).

**Check out the new aatoronto.org website.
Toronto meetings are also listed on the Meeting Guide app
- available for Android and iOS!**

Communications Committee is seeking volunteers for the following:

Helpers to assist with managing and updating the website.

The Communications Committee (Better Times, Website, etc.) continues to seek two or three dedicated members to help us carry the message of recovery in print and online. If interested, please email communications@aatoronto.org. We'd be delighted to welcome you!

ALSO:

We are no longer using the bteditor@aatoronto.org email address. Please send all correspondence to bettertimes@aatoronto.org. If you've sent any articles for consideration, comments, or questions to the old address, please resend.

ALSO:

We are seeking a new Editor-in-Chief as of January 2017.
Please contact bteditor@aatoronto.org for more info!

TO CONTACT COMMITTEES PLEASE EMAIL:

Access Ability: accessability@aatoronto.org
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Ontario Regional Conference: orc@aatoronto.org
Public Information: publicinfo@aatoronto.org
Twelfth Step: twelfthstep@aatoronto.org

that on
 Aug. 8, 1879
 AA's Cofounder
 Dr. Bob is born in St.
 Johnsbury, Vermont?

Did You Know courtesy of Eddy C.
 GTA Archivist - Thanks Eddy!

Thoughts From the Editor's Desk

It is always an honour and a privilege to have the opportunity to be of service in AA. It has been especially rewarding being the editor-in-chief of your Better Times these last 16 months. I have had the opportunity to go to different meetings, meet many fellow members, and live the program through your stories and shares.

I will be rotating out of this service position at the end of this year, and am hoping to work with your next editor on

some upcoming issues between now and then. If you enjoy meeting new people, collaborating with others, and are interested in helping to carry messages of recovery in print and online, then this position may be for you! Please send us an email to put your name forward or to refer a friend - bettertimes@aatoronto.org.

Marc S. - Editor-in-Chief (bettertimes@aatoronto.org)

Lifting the Burden - Step 5

I had been sober in AA for two years when I went to a meeting and admitted I felt ashamed of being an alcoholic. The feedback I got was extensive and helpful, and something one fellow said to me really clicked. "It sounds as if you're ready for Step Five," he said.

I was between sponsors at the time, so I asked a woman who attended one of my regular meetings if she'd hear my Fifth Step. Using all I had learned about Step Four in the meetings, I set about writing my inventory.

Searching and fearless it was, as I proceeded to write pages that unearthed memories I'd long buried. And along with my past history, I realized I wanted to be rid of a resentment against someone I'd been carrying since getting sober. I had tried to pray for the person and to let go of the resentment, but each day my anger toward this person still simmered. I knew I was finally ready to be rid of the resentment when I admitted it was hindering my progress toward sobriety and peace.

When I finished my Step Four writing, a friend suggested that I not let too much time go by between writing my inventory and sharing it. So one cold February day in 1990, I sat at her table and read my inventory.

Before I started, however, she offered some important guidance: "Remember that our Higher Power is also here listening" and "You can trust that nothing you say will leave this room." That second statement was especially helpful because if anything was an exercise in trust for me, it was this experience.

As I read my inventory, I was sure she'd be shocked or judgmental. What a relief to encounter only understanding and acceptance. I felt my shame melt away. When I finished, she said, "The things you've talked about today are over and no longer a part of you. If you do another Step Four and Five, it won't be on what you've addressed now, for that's gone."

I left her home that day feeling relieved of a huge burden and also cleansed. Several days later, I realized I hadn't once thought of the person I'd resented so much. This was a miracle. Through Step Five, God had removed my shame about being an alcoholic as well as the resentment I'd harbored for so long. And that freedom still exists, years later.

- Teresa P., Syracuse, New York

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QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"Step Eight is a social housecleaning, just as Step Four was our personal housecleaning. In Step Eight we're setting out to clean up all the bruised relationships and the pockets of guilt, pain, fear, resentment, and sadness that are stored inside, stuck to our shameful past deeds. For this undealt-with material blocks us from loving other people, ourselves, and God in the present."

A HUNGER FOR HEALING, P. 135-136

that in
 Aug. 1934 Ebby T.
 Bill W.'s school friend
 & sponsor,
 sobers up for 2 years?

Spiritual Reluctance

Getting sober I attended ninety meetings in ninety days. I kept count in a calendar: if I missed a day, I would double back for it. I got a sponsor, did fellowship, began working the steps. I was afraid that the window of my willingness would close again, that I would be caught outside living life like a zombie again, that I might not make it back.

I tried faking it. I tried kneeling by my bed at night. I tried imagining a God of my own understanding. But I just ended up feeling like I was betraying myself. I didn't believe... I wanted to, but I didn't. I got angry. At the folks sharing with their holier than thou self-righteous satisfaction

I became exhausted. Sitting in meetings, I would tune out when people would begin "I used to be agnostic until ... blah blah blah." Didn't they realize how patronizing they were being?

I began to share about this struggle in my women's group. Women approached me afterward and said that they could relate. This helped me feel like even though I was struggling with this integral part of the program, I was still welcome.

Then, I walked out of a meeting for the first time. I was sitting in a church basement with little painted hands on the wall and heard a woman proclaim that she would pray for me and I was overcome with frustration at the discomfort that I was feeling. I got up and I walked out: Remembering full well the words that "people walk out of meetings and often die."

One night I'd walked out of a meeting in frustration. I ran into a friend from the program who suggested I check out an agnostic meeting. They added that it might help me to take a break on GOD issue, while keeping myself squarely in the program.

I went to Beyond Belief.

I was relieved to encounter a number of people in the program with considerable sobriety time (10, 20 years), without anything resembling what a GOD-like higher power. But, they still attend meetings and work the steps (though slightly altered in order to be compatible). They are the rebels of AA – I immediately felt at home.

Attending that meeting made me realize that my spiritual reluctance might be more about resisting the discomfort of sobriety than to having trouble with semantics around a higher power. Here were others in the program who also struggled with the BB's language, but they were sober nonetheless.

My perception of the world as a gladiatorial arena where constant vigilance must be applied has been a difficult perception to reshape. As a brazenly drunk butch lesbian, sometimes perceived as an effeminate male, vigilance meant, to me, being ready to fight. Constantly having to reject cultural signals that I was deviant made drinking a solution to feel normal.

I can't say that I've found God. But I can tell you that when things get difficult, and the cravings come, I squeeze my eyes shut and affirm/ask/beg to find a way to be the Ali that I want to be. I repeat those words until they flush out everything from my consciousness. Am I praying? Yea I guess, but it's nobody's business if I'm praying to the white bearded man in the sky, to a part of my consciousness I can't access, to an entity-less source of structure in the universe that is, perhaps, best appreciated by chemists and physicists. I'd like to stay sober today, and I know that on my own, I can't make it.

- Ali G.

WOMEN IN RECOVERY & BETTER TIMES

Here at your Better Times we publish stories of recovery, struggle, and hope from AAs all over the GTA and beyond.

We have had the pleasure of including many stories FROM women in recovery FOR women in recovery.

We would like to continue doing so.

If you are a woman in recovery in the GTA, please get in touch...we would be happy to publish your story.

bettertimes@aatontario.org

DID YOU KNOW?
 that on Aug. 2, 1939
 Dr. Bob & Sister Ignatia
 start work at St. Thomas
 Hospital in Akron? They
 treat 5,000 cases in the
 next 10 years.

The Calvary Mission

Without the Calvary Mission (1926-1936) AA might never have started. First of all, alcoholic Pre-AA founder (who never joined AA), Rowland Hazard, had been an Oxford Group member since returning to NY from his first treatment with Dr. Jung (Zurich, Switzerland) in 1926—the Oxford Group had their meetings in the Calvary Parrish House adjacent to the Calvary Church and the mission was only a few blocks away.

“ Bill Wilson finished his final bottle of beer at the entrance of Towns Hospital: December 11, 1934. Bill’s gin did NOT outlast Ebby’s preaching! ”

Although Rowland was never a resident of the mission (He remained only on-and-off sober), he carried the Oxford Group message to Ebby Thacher in 1934 and convinced Ebby to become part of the mission staff as a member of the **Brotherhood of Twelve**, helping residents to pray their way into sobriety via a special Oxford Group style of surrender. Ebby, reportedly, was a very good listener and had a likeable personality, doubtless beneficial to resident alcoholics.

Through visits to his long-standing friends on Wall Street (He had once worked in an Albany brokerage office) he learned of his old schoolmate, Bill Wilson’s, desperate drinking problem. Part of the Calvary Mission program was to carry the Oxford Group message to other alcohol-

ics, so, on a bleak November day of 1934 he made a b-line to Bill’s home in Brooklyn Hts.

A description of their “kitchen table” conversation can be found on page nine of the Big Book. Though Bill stated that at the time he thought his gin would outlast Ebby’s preaching—it did not! Because a few days later, Bill visited the mission, albeit in a drunken state, just to see what was what. Shortly thereafter, Bill Wilson finished his final bottle of beer at the entrance of Towns Hospital: December 11, 1934. Bill’s gin did NOT outlast Ebby’s preaching!

Upon leaving the hospital on December 18, a week before Christmas, Bill started attending Oxford Group meetings and bringing ex-sots from the mission to his beautiful home offering food and prayer in effort to “fix” their alcoholic problem. The first few got drunk—as a matter of fact they all got drunk for the next five months! But Bill, forgetting his Wall Street dreams, charged ahead like an unstoppable steam roller. Although they all got drunk, as his faithful wife reminded him: He stayed sober. . . .and this lasted till he met Dr. Bob — and then continued for a lifetime!

So, the Calvary Mission brought Ebby Thacher to assist Bill Wilson find sobriety, but only after Rowland Hazard brought Ebby to the mission. It is easily recognizable the important, yea essential, role Calvary Mission played toward the existence of Alcoholics Anonymous.

– **Bob S.**

Did You Know...

In Aug. 1942 the AA Office in New York granted distribution rights for the Big Book to Dr. George Little? Dr. Little formally transferred these rights to the Toronto AA Club on Sept. 22, 1944.

On Aug. 2-4, 1968 the 11th International Conference of Young People in AA (ICYPAA) was held at the Royal York Hotel in Toronto?

On Aug. 6, 1981 the 1st meeting of the Archives Committee was set up by representatives from Ontario Provincial Committee (OPC) the 4 Areas in Ontario & Toronto Intergroup? In 1991 Toronto Intergroup becomes the sole sponsor of the Archives Committee.

On Aug. 18-21, 1988 the 1st Canadian National AA Convention was held in Halifax in an attempt to make it a regular 5 year Canadian event? Did not work out too well. Two 7th Traditions had to be requested in order to make it pay for itself.

On Aug. 3, 1993 Toronto Intergroup Offices at 234 Eglinton Ave. E. moved down from 502 to 202? Done for financial reasons. Money was short at Intergroup & the smaller space lowered the rent substantially.

In Aug. 1981 distribution of Alcoholics Anonymous (Big Book) passed the 3 million mark?

archives & announcements

Scarborough District 22
38th Annual Service Day

MORE THAN JUST MEETINGS

Saturday September 17th, 2016

9:30 am to 4:00 pm

Oakridge Community Centre

63 Pharmacy Avenue

(East of Victoria Park Station)

Ample Free Parking Available
Fully Accessible & Signers Welcome

FREE LUNCH & COFFEE

GUEST SPEAKERS, PANELS & FELLOWSHIP

Special Presentation - 12 Traditions Skit

Information on How to Get Active in AA Service

Access Ability o Archives o Corrections o Grapevine
Co-operation with the Professional Community
Public Information o Self-Support o Treatment Facilities

In the evening we will be hosting a
SOCIAL GATHERING WITH DJ

8:00 pm - 12:00 am

Tickets \$10.00 - Available From Your Group GSR

Mississauga Fall Round Up

"The Road to Recovery"

Saturday October 1st 2016

in the
BANQUET HALL
of the

Vic Johnston Community Centre

335 Church Street, Mississauga ON

- Plenty of free parking
- Close to Streetsville GO
- Accessible by Transit
- 8 AM - Registration & Coffee
- 9 AM - Program Starts
- 2:30 PM - Closing

Tickets - \$20 includes Hot and Cold Buffet Lunch,
Morning Timbits, Coffee and Tea all day

Featured Speakers:

Marsha S. - AA - from Austin, Texas

Jonathan S. - AA - from Austin, Texas

John B. - AA - from Ajax, ON.

Pat H. - Alanon - from North Toronto Group

Alateen Speaker: TBA

50/50 draw tickets will be sold at the event

For more information, visit our website

www.MississaugaFallRoundUp.org

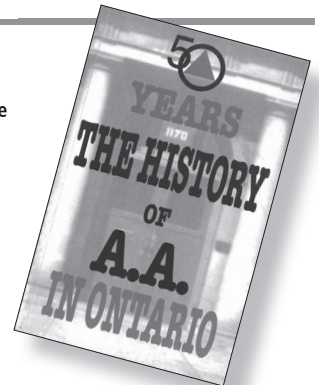


**I FOUND IT IN
THE ARCHIVES**

BACK TO THE REPOSITORY... with GTA Archivist Eddy G.

Archives Committee meetings are held on the 2nd Friday of each month in the boardroom at the
GTA Intergroup Office, 234 Eglinton Ave. E., Suite 202, Toronto.

- Miami Beach Group 50th Anniversary Key Chain.
- Eventide Group table cover (77" w x 39" h) donated by Patti (12 Tradition Group) former member of Eventide Group.
- King City Group History (updated July 2016) compiled & donated by Bernadette M. (King City Group).
- Rox Glen Traditional Group Items - 1st meeting notes & list of 20 names, list of churches, two group histories
- June 2014 & Jan. 2015
- Responsibility Meeting Minutes - Nov. 1994 - Aug. 2003 donated by Bryan W. (Rox Glen Traditional Group).



TO DONATE AA/GTA ARCHIVAL ITEMS TO THE GTA ARCHIVES PLEASE CONTACT THE GTA ARCHIVIST EDDY G. at 416-536-7536.

50 Years - *The History of AA in Ontario* is for sale at the Literature Department at 234 for \$10.00. This book was produced in 1993 by the Archives Committee of Toronto Intergroup (today GTA Intergroup). It's a great gift to give to a member on their anniversary.

... and please don't forget ...

Old GTA meeting books are needed for the GTA Archives.

announcements

PAST / UPCOMING MEDALLIONS

Renata P.	1	Sisters In Sobriety	June 29	June 29	Anthony D.	1	The Hill Group	July 27	Aug 4
Angela S.	1	Markland Wood Group	June 25	June 30	Dorothy C.	55	Danforth Group	Aug 2	Aug 4
Dara Z.	25	King City Group	Apr 17	July 4	Paul K.	5	New Anchor Group	Aug 18	Aug 18
Heather S.	1	King City Group	June 18	July 4	Marie B.	1	Anniversary Group	Aug 23	Aug 24
Robert H.	5	Bloordale Group	July 5	July 10	Harold S.	30	East York Group	Aug 26	Aug 30
Paul F.	20	Maple Group	July 1	July 12	Tammy S.	5	Reaching Out Group	Aug 30	Aug 30
Sarah H.	1	Sisters In Sobriety	July 10	July 13	Heather H.	25	Anniversary Group	Aug 18	Aug 31
Martin R.	10	Danforth Group	Jul 21	Jul 13	Carolyn B.	15	Sunnyside Group	Aug 19	Sep 1
Ellen S.	1	New Anchor Group	Jul 11	Jul 14	Chris T.	1	Six Points Group	Sep 5	Sep 12
John L.	5	Mississauga Group	July 12	July 17	Debe M.	10	New Anchor Group	Sep 1	Sep 15
Mike C.	15	Beverly Hills Group	July 17	July 22	Ron T.	5	New Anchor Group	Sep 19	Sep 22
Roger B.	5	East York Group	Jul 19	Jul 26					
Selena P.	5	East York Group	Jul 2	Jul 26					
Sarabjit S.	50		Jul 5	Jul 29					

IN THE LISTINGS, THE FIRST DATE IS THE SOBRIETY DATE, THE SECOND IS THE DATE OF THE MEDALLION CELEBRATION

Due to ongoing submissions this list may not be current. For the latest information visit: www.aatoronto.org

TORONTO WOMEN IN RECOVERY ROUND UP | 2016

One woman to thousands

A full day of speakers and panels to help women in AA in their sobriety

saturday
september **17**

9am - 5pm

doors open at 8:30am

**Neighbourhood Unitarian
Universalist Congregation**

79 Hiawatha Rd, Toronto

(South of Gerrard St E, 4 blocks East of Coxwell Ave)

\$15 (Includes pot-luck lunch
and coffee, tea & water)

There will be limited tickets available at the door

For more information, tickets or to volunteer contact:

info@torontowomeninrecovery.com

Smudge No Grudge

Birds of a Feather

AA Round-Up

Saturday, August 20, 2016

9 am - 5 pm

Native Canadian Centre
of Toronto

16 Spadina Road, Toronto

NEW MEETING!!!

OPEN BIG BOOK DISCUSSION

CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

1875 Sheppard Ave W.

(between Keele & Jane)

MONDAYS at 7:30 pm

Woodstock's 35th

Marathon of Unity Convention

Friday- Sunday, August 19-21, 2016

Unifor Hall, 126 Beale Street,

Woodstock, ON

First Annual Toronto

Women in Recovery Round-Up

See info on this page.

We are still looking for volunteers,

please email us at

info@torontowomeninrecovery.com

Humility — What?

After a meeting recently, a member approached me with an AA request: would I like to write an article for The Better Times? I thought to myself ... 'Finally. What took him so long to ask?' I immediately said yes, feeling duly recognised for my astonishing wordsmithy-ness. The member then informed me that I was to write on the topic of HUMILITY. What? I felt like the Coyote who has once again been led off the cliff and finds himself suspended in mid-air with 1,000 feet of nothing below. Oh Crap.

I have spent lots and lots of time in AA talking, listening and talking some more about ideas, concepts and beliefs. Today, I like what a member from my home group often says; 'No one cares about my ideas, concepts and beliefs...' So, following my friend's approach here are two stories that are (mostly) true.

Before sobriety:

I had a sponsor, was going to some meetings, and doing a little bit of work on the steps. And then I drank again. It was awful and I was crushed. I called my sponsor and we met for coffee. With a large sprinkling of 'poor me' and a few tears, I related what happened. I secretly hoped for a gentle and sympathetic response. Perhaps a donation for my now empty piggy-bank? All he said was "I'm not surprised you drank again....you weren't acting very desperate."

I had to admit, he was right. I'd been doing things my way:

acting upon my plans. I still thought I was The Director.

Now I knew I could not stay sober

without acting desperate. He reminded me

that I was to call him daily, never miss my home group (including business meetings) and do the step work we discussed. And so it began. Acting desperate became a new and useful mantra that has worked.

Today (actually, yesterday):

I play golf with a bunch of AAs. Most of us are really bad players and that includes me. The problem is, every once in awhile I hit an 'elite' shot, and the notion occurs... 'maybe I'm not that bad?' During a golf game each player can choose the location from where they tee off—good players tee off farther from the hole and bad players get to play a little closer. It all has to do with a reasonable estimation of your ability. Just yesterday on the 11th hole, with big money (I think it was \$5.00) on the line, I joined my partner (a guy half my age, and a former NHL hockey player) hitting from the far tees. It wasn't pretty. Let's just say my estimation of my ability requires some fine tuning. Seems I still need help accepting; who, how old, how good, how strong, and how talented I am.

— Tim O'B. (Tuesday Men's Solution Meeting)

DID YOU KNOW?
that on Aug. 16, 1948 a permanent secretary, Marg Meek was hired for the Central Committee (today GTA Intergroup) in Toronto? The office was at 331 Bay St.

DO YOU KNOW YOUR GROUP HISTORY? IS IT WRITTEN OUT ON PAPER? IF NOT, ASK YOUR GROUP LONGTIME MEMBER(S) IF THEY WOULD ANSWER THE GROUP HISTORY QUESTIONS BELOW AND SUBMIT A COPY TO THE GTA ARCHIVES.

- What was the founding date of the group; if unsure, when do you think the founding date was?
- What was the group's name when it was formed? Why was the name chosen?
- Has the group's name changed over the years? If so, when did it change and why?
- How did the group get started? Who were the founders of the group? (If uncertain, who may have started the group?)
- Were there any spin-offs of your group? Was your group created as a spin-off? What group did it spin-off from?
- When the group started, how often were meetings held? Has this changed over the years?
- What was the format of the meeting (open, closed, discussion, speaker, etc.)? Has this changed over the years?
- Any item(s) made by a group member(s) that is used at the meeting? (i.e. table cover, slogans, slogan board, wooden steps, book holders, painted pictures etc.) If so, who made them and in what year?
- Does the group hold social or special AA related activities? (i.e. holiday parties, candlelite meetings, picnics etc.)
- During the group's history has their location, date and time changed? If so, please list. (month/day/year)
- How many members are in the group today?
- Has there been an increase or decrease of group members over the years? Please describe.
- Does the group have any links with Al-Anon or Alateen? If so, what are they and when did they start?
- Does the group have any customs, traditions or interesting anecdotes? If so, will you share them?