



## STEP NINE

### *Recognizing grace in all our lives*

As I finished my Eight Step, and before I began making amends to those I had harmed, my sponsor asked me: “As you review your Eight Step list, how heavy are the memories, the guilt, the fear and shame you carry in your heart? Have you been thorough?” I recall looking down, knowing that I had wronged many and that guilt and shame was a heavy burden to bear. I made an honest and thorough effort in the Fourth and Fifth Steps and I had created an honest list of those I had wronged and I still felt guilty. At this point, I began to feel the release from fear, however in relationships there was still much to be done.

### *The benefits have been remarkable!*

I had “worked the steps” once before and had been sober for eleven years, experiencing the benefits of a spiritual life. At the same time, I got “busy” gradually taking back life’s “steering wheel” resulting in a “slip” that lasted five years. After wrecking sweet, loving relationships, despair set in. Significant wreckage had occurred and I found the progression of the

disease included a darkening guilt and the “messy bog of self-loathing.”

*“We wallow in this messy bog, often getting a misshapen and painful pleasure out of it. As we morbidly pursue this melancholy activity, we may sink to such a point of despair that nothing but oblivion looks possible as a solution.” (Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions)*

Step Nine is a call to action. I was asked to take responsibility for my behavior. Step Nine challenges me to work towards restoring those relationships I had harmed. And so I embarked on the journey of making amends. In many instances I experienced a healing grace, and in other cases it was not yet possible so I prayed to do God’s will and to make myself available for when the time is right. In some case, with input from my sponsor, a “living amend” was the best course of action to pursue.

The benefits have been remarkable. I feel release from the heavy feelings of guilt, remorse, fear, and shame, but most importantly, I began to treat others better. The Big Book suggests that we pray for the knowledge of His will and the power to carry it out. Taking responsibility, living honestly, and making amends when a wrong has been done, is doing God’s will. I have experienced joy as the result of living by God’s will. I am now a better husband, better brother, and better employee. The result has been a “new happiness and a new freedom.”

I, too, have been hurt by my addiction. Should my name also be on the amends list? Step Nine is another change to change self-destructive choices and attitudes that accompany my disease. I abused my body when drinking and now I try to take care of my body in healthy ways. I’ve sought outside help in order to better understand how past life events

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### ***The Lifeline: Purpose Statement***

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*The Lifeline* is the monthly newsletter of the St. Paul and Suburban Area Intergroup, Inc. It is about, by, and for groups and members of the A.A. Fellowship. Opinions expressed herein are not to be attributed to A.A. as a whole, nor does publication of any article imply endorsement by either A.A. or St. Paul Intergroup. We welcome articles on a Step, Tradition or Concept, in addition to descriptions of personal experience. We also welcome original cartoons and drawings expressing the wry side of A.A. experience.

Please email your article to [Lifeline@aastpaul.org](mailto:Lifeline@aastpaul.org) or send it by regular mail to Lifeline Editor, St. Paul Intergroup, 33 Wentworth Ave E, Suite 355. W. St. Paul, MN 55118-3431. Materials or articles mailed to us cannot be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope. Intergroup reserves the right to edit submissions for clarity, language, length, and content that might violate A.A.’s Traditions, etc.

**St. Paul & Suburban Area Intergroup, Inc.**

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affect my current mental health. I have left behind the negative “stinking thinking” which sabotaged relationships.

And finally, I’ve made amends to my Higher Power. I am no longer blind to the natural beauty and wonder of this world. I am no longer disrespectful of other’s expression of faith. I actively pursue prayer and meditation and know the experience of “walking in the sunshine of life.” Thank you, God, for the many A.A. members who have shown me your grace and through their example demonstrate the promises resulting in “living” the Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Reprinted from  
The Maui Serenity Gazette  
Sept 2019  
Written by:  
Another Member of AA

## STEP NINE

### *Amends, Guilt & Shame*

I dreaded this Step. To be honest, I didn’t make some amends when I had the chance, which I now regret. False pride runs deep in my family, and that was one of my character defects that I turned over to my HP and then took back on many occasions. But when I didn’t, I made amends for things like neglect, bad behavior, gossip, dishonesty, betrayal, and alienation.

Shame was a constant companion, and that was probably the biggest obstacle to making amends. In other words, it wasn’t only false pride that fueled missed opportunities to amend my past.

Someone asked me once if I knew the difference between shame and guilt. I mumbled something I can’t recall. But I remember the answer very clearly, She said, “Guilt is when you think you’ve *made* a mistake, shame is when you think you *are* a mistake.

Wow! That hit my bulls eye. Then and there I realized I had to go back to Step 4 and work on the shame piece. I did, but it never really went away until decades later.

In the meantime, I brought up the topic of shame at meetings because I was aware that it had a direct impact on my ability to work Step 9. I read about shame. I learned the difference between healthy shame and unhealthy shame. I learned how shame had been instilled in me since early childhood. “You ought to be ashamed of yourself,” my parents said. I felt deeply flawed because, as a kid, I made a lot of mistakes and heard this refrain all too often.

But when you’re a kid, you don’t have the cognitive ability to refute the shaming. Your parents are your gods. What they tell you must be true, right? So, this erroneous belief about myself was sown early and emerged time and again in my adult life.

Once I had learned about shame, my adult self felt so sad for the little girl, so I gave her a hug and explained that all kids make mistakes, and that’s called learning. There is nothing to be ashamed of. The trick is to learn and try to do it differently the next time.

Now I look at Step 9 not with a sense of shame but with the need to be accountable for past bad behavior, which in itself is a primary symptom of the disease of alcoholism.

Just because I fell pray to this disease doesn’t mean I’m not responsible for the bad behaviors of my past. I need to own them and then move on with my life.

But what about the other part of Step Nine that says “except when to do so would injure them or others?”

On my first encounter with Step Nine, I remember thinking, “It would injure me, so I’m not doing it.” My sponsor called me out on that quickly. There were other steps to take care of, she said. But with regard to “others.” she suggested I be mindful. I didn’t want to cause additional hurt or anguish. So we talked about specifics. Her guidance as I did this step was invaluable because I still tended to rationalize and lacked the discernment that would come later in sobriety.

As it turns out, for me, each amend is an act of learning, of remaining teachable, of being humble enough to know I am far from perfect but that, in sobriety, I must be accountable and responsible if I want to remain that way.

Reprinted from  
Tucson Just for Today  
Written by:  
Wendy S.



# WHAT IS THIS THING CALLED A.A.?

*The following was written by Judge Eugene K. Mangum,  
Phoenix, AZ.*

*He started a special Court Class for Alcoholics in Phoenix in  
the 1960's. Judge Mangum was a non-alcoholic.*

**1.** It is that which costs nothing, yet is more valuable than any other possession that an alcoholic can acquire.

**2.** It is that which has no monetary value, yet the wealthiest person will give up all their possessions, rather than lose this "Pearl of Great Price."

**3.** It is that which restores the rich to sanity, and brings the lowest derelict to a life of dedication and useful service to their fellow human.

**4.** It is that which is not "religion," yet it encompasses and strengthens and builds all religious faiths.

**5.** It is that which brings rest to a person, yet drives them from their bed at all hours of the night to bring A.A. to the suffering alcoholic.

**6.** It is that which causes the person to love all of humanity, yet which strengthens and deepens the love for their mate and their family.

**7.** It is that which makes a person totally selfish, in that their sobriety must, to them, be the most important thing in all the world; yet which makes the individual into a totally selfless person in their desire to share this with another fellow sufferer.

**8.** It is that which talks not of rewards after death, yet prepares a person for the greatest blessings eternity can offer—for "who has done it onto the least of these, my children, has done it unto me."

**9.** It is that which takes the weakest person and turns them into someone of courage, strength and great will power.

**10.** It is that which takes total strangers and almost instantly turns them into the closest friends.

**11.** It is that which requires no formal education, yet which turns a person into a philosopher.

**12.** It is that which a person must not give up, yet the more they give it away, the more they possess.

*After reading this recounting of how a non-alcoholic sees the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous —you may wish to call them:*

## The Twelve Paradoxes

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### *Fun Acronyms*

A.A. — **A**ttitude **A**djustment

A.B.C. — **A**cceptance, **B**elief, **C**hange

A.C.T.I.O.N. — **A**ny **C**hange **T**oward **I**mproving **O**ne's **N**ature

B.I.G. B.O.O.K. — **B**elieving **I**n **G**od **B**eats **O**ur **O**ld **K**nowledge

D.E.A.D. — **D**rinking **E**nds **A**ll **D**reams

D.E.N.I.A.L. — **D**on't **E**ven **N**otice **I**'m **L**ying

D.U.E.S. — **D**esperately **U**sing **E**verything but **S**obriety

E.G.O. — **E**asing **G**od **O**ut

F.A.I.T.H. — **F**ear **A**in't **I**n **T**his **H**ouse

F.E.A.R. — **F**alse **E**vidence **A**ppearing **R**eal

G.I.F.T. — **G**od **I**s **F**orever **T**here

G.U.T. — **G**od's **U**ndeniable **T**ruths

H.O.P.E. — **H**appy **O**ur **P**rogram **E**xists

I.S.M. — **I**ncredible **S**hort **M**emory

P.R.O.G.R.A.M. — **P**eople **R**elying on **G**od **R**elaying a **M**essage

R.I.D. — **R**estless, **I**rritable and **D**iscontented

S.L.I.P. — **S**obriety **L**oses **I**ts **P**riority

S.T.E.P.S. — **S**olutions **T**o **E**very **P**roblem **S**ober

S.T.O.P. — **S**icker **T**han **O**ther **P**eople

T.I.M.E. — **T**hings **I** **M**ust **L**earn

W.I.L.L.I.N.G. — **W**hen **I** **L**ive **L**ife **I** **N**eed **G**od

Y.E.T. — **Y**ou're **E**lligible **T**oo

*Thank you Cincinnati Intergroup  
for these acronyms!*



## THE PATH TO A NEW WORLD

The year 2020 has certainly been an adventure so far. That is nothing new to Alcoholics Anonymous—but it is certainly much more in our awareness these past few months. Not just our AA world, but the world at large seems to have moved onto a new course. The ‘new normal’ keeps changing faster that we can come to understand what it currently is. Challenges abound everywhere.

Here at St. Paul Intergroup it’s been even more of a challenge because we were faced with an office move just to add to the ‘excitement’ of it all. This, of course was taking place as the COVID pandemic was hitting its stride and in the middle of the protests which rocked Mpls/St. Paul. To say that we were feeling a bit overwhelmed is an understatement.

However, doing one thing at a time, and having faith in a Higher Power has kept us going in the right direction so far. There have been some great folks who have pitched in to ensure that we got done what we needed to.

There have been some questions that have come up during all this, and I thought I might take the time to offer some information regarding the office situation. Of course, anyone can join us at the Intergroup Representatives Meeting on the 3rd Tuesday of each month as well to pose any questions they may have. To put items on the meeting agenda, just email either [secretary@aastpaul.org](mailto:secretary@aastpaul.org) [chairperson@aastpaul.org](mailto:chairperson@aastpaul.org), or [manager@aastpaul.org](mailto:manager@aastpaul.org). And, of course, you can always call the office during business hours.

The first thing that generally gets asked has to do with the office move. The question usually is along the lines, **“Why did you move?”** And the answer to that is pretty simple. We were at the end of our lease at 608 W 7th and had tried on several occasions

to get the landlord (who was new to the building) to offer us a new lease. We were unable to elicit any response from the landlords office, *and were left with no other alternative but to seek space elsewhere.* According to the lease in operation at the time, our rent would have increased by 50% when that lease ended. Far more than we could possibly pay. Fortunately, an AA member who works for a firm in the building we now occupy let us know space might be available. While the lease cost was higher than we wanted, it was lower than the others we had looked at. The space is working out very well and the new landlords are wonderful to work and communicate with.

The second question has to do with money and generally is stated as, **“How is Intergroup doing financially?”** The answer to this has many aspects to it. I hope I can explain it well for you.

As you may know, we were essentially closed for 2 months. That caused a fairly severe impact on our revenue. A loss of about \$12,000. In one sense, we in St. Paul are more fortunate than some Intergroup Offices in that we don’t rely on quite as large a percentage of our money coming from sales as others might. But it did make a significant difference.

In addition, as groups moved to virtual meetings, many of our regular contributions disappeared, since baskets weren’t being passed. This also served to create a significant shortfall.

It was amazing how some of the groups and AA members, realizing that this may happen, really reached out to provide support. There were some groups who very obviously made great strides to send extra contributions to attempt to fill the gap. There were also some individuals who made some personal sacrifices to share what they could. **We are very much in their debt!**

We have really been impacted in 3 ways. First, we suffered due to the loss of sales as we cooperated with the Governors Stay At Home Order and closed our office.

Secondly, another impact came simply from the cost of moving. While we did all we could to keep the costs at a minimum, there are just some fees and costs that are unavoidable.

Third, we generally receive funds from the Gopher State Roundup as they share some of the funds that result from their attendance. With the event not occurring - there was no additional revenue. This is



St. Paul Area Intergroup Representatives' Meeting Minutes  
July 21st, 2020 7:30pm.

1. Opened with the Serenity Prayer, introductions, and read the Primary Purpose of Intergroup.
2. Last month minutes reviewed, motioned Rosemary and seconded by Jesse, motion approved.
3. Treasurer's Report, Mark J – Total Contributions: \$6062 No more withdrawal of Prudent Reserve for now. *See Treasurer's Report for full financial details.*
4. Office Report, Dennis – There is a new best of the grapevine collection and birthday cards available at the office. Volunteers are always needed and appreciated. *Please email [lifeline@aastpaul.org](mailto:lifeline@aastpaul.org) for further information.*
5. Night Owl Report, Frank N – The Night Owl training on the third Saturday of the month has resumed and has been updated online. *Please contact Frank N at [NightOwl@aastpaul.org](mailto:NightOwl@aastpaul.org) or leave a message at the Intergroup Office.*
6. Website Report, Jonathan L – Traffic has increased. 823 meetings by 290 groups. *Contact Jonathan & Sergey at [webservant@aastpaul.org](mailto:webservant@aastpaul.org).*
7. Outreach Program, – Please update your group contact info *Please contact [outreach@aastpaul.org](mailto:outreach@aastpaul.org).*
8. Update from the Board, Rachel P – We are having an open house on 6/25. Covid safety continues to be an intergroup priority
9. Liaison Reports: District 8: No update. District 15: Jennifer G, District is still meeting by Zoom. District 19: –
10. Intergroup Events:
  - a. Upcoming - Open House 6/25
11. Old Business:
12. New Business:
13. Group AA Announcements: St Paul Open Speaker meeting - Sunday 7pm, Board members needed.  
Uptown House - Opening for AI Anon meetings, adding an 8pm meeting Mon, Wed, Fri starting the 27th  
West End - New location at Intergroups old location, 2nd and 4th Fridays Potluck at 6, speaker at 7.
14. Suggestions for next month's agenda:
15. Grapevine Report, Jennifer; Volunteer for August, Jodie.
16. Concept VI review, Mary; Volunteer for Concept VII for August, Nancy.
17. Mock Rep Report, Mark; Volunteer for August, Ben.
18. Closed with the Responsibility Statement

Attendance:

Peter - One More Was Added to the Fellowship,  
Nancy R.- Mendota 10:30 AA,  
Mary S -Uptown House,  
Jesse O - Rule 62,  
Ben G - Main Idea,  
Ken S - No Time Like the Present,  
Jennifer G - District 15,  
Nancy - Como Park Big Book,  
Xavier - West End,  
Anne J - New Brighton Big Book,  
Rosemary F - White Bear Lake Sat. AM Women's AA,  
Frank N - 3rd Edition Big Book Study Group,  
Katherine A - Pocketing our Pride,  
Laura D - Fireside Women's Meeting,  
Joseph J - Uptown House,  
Greg S - Lakeview,  
Emily H - Rule 62,  
Jodie - St Paul Open Speaker Meeting.

Next Meeting: August 18th, 2020 7:30pm  
St. Stanislaus Church, 398 Superior St W, St. Paul, MN 55102

# MISSION ANONYMOUS

SEPTEMBER 19, 2020 11 AM – 1 PM

DIRECTED BY DISTRICT 8, AREA 36



## SPEAKER TOPICS

Anonymity as AA Sees It  
Social Media Pitfalls  
“Secret” Meetings

## Agenda

Speakers  
Large Group Q&A  
Breakout



This flyer will self destruct  
when you click close

### Zoom Meeting: Link

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81426293673?pwd=Y3VhKk3QrY25naDl3OWlPZHg5bWdMUT09>

Meeting ID: 814 2629 3673

Passcode: 365179



12th Step  
Calls

2



Website  
Visits

10,679



Temp  
Sponsor  
Requests

36



Night  
Owl Calls

239



Meeting  
Info Calls

93



Speakers  
Provided

2



Literature  
Purchased

172 Books

THE FOLLOWING GROUPS, MEMBERS AND FAITHFUL FIVER MEMBERS MADE THE ABOVE SERVICES POSSIBLE:

- 3 R's Group
- A Baffled Lot
- Anoka Day by Day
- Basic Text
- Como Park BB
- Day bt Dei Saturday
- Defiant Brats East
- Fourth Dimension
- Highland Park Groups
- Jumpstart 12 & 12
- Lake Elmo Thurs Night Grp
- Midway Friday 8PM
- North Hamline
- Ri ver Falls Serenity Sisters
- Rivertown BB - Hastings
- Rosemount Groups
- Roseville Wed Night
- Rukle 62 Step & Tradition Grp
- Shoreview 12 & 12
- Silver Lake Mens Grp
- SOS - Sharing Our Sobriety
- St. Joe's Hospital
- St.Peter's Fellowship AA Grp
- Third Tradition - Northfield
- This Simple Program
- Uptown Club
- Valley Creek Monday
- Valley Creek Thursday
- White Bear SAT AM Women's Grp

- 29 A.A. Groups contributed \$4,974
- 13 Gratitude Contributions totaled \$1,022
- 23 Faithful Fivers contributed \$1,000
- 15 Digital Store Revenue for \$866

THANK YOU !!!!

Many groups and individuals are continuing to send us more than their usual contribution. We are most grateful to all who have done this! This goes a long way in helping to overcome the shortfall from groups who have stopped contributing.

## THE POWER OF THE PROGRAM

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I had come to the AA program and had found a new way of life. I experienced a level of freedom and happiness I had never before known. Then, after almost five years of peaceful, contented sobriety, the honeymoon was over.

In my first year of sobriety, I had worked on the Twelve Steps. Upon the advice of a good sponsor, I had written an inventory. I had discussed my inventory with my sponsor in the Fifth Step. I had continued on through the amends Steps. I did about all I could do with those Steps at that time.

I was convinced from the beginning that the power of the program works through the Twelve Steps. The compulsion to drink left the day I consciously took the Third Step. My life seemed to become more comfortable as I worked my way through the rest of the twelve. I had what I consider a real spiritual awakening, i.e., a great change in my outlook on life, people and God.

It all came to an abrupt end, however, when things started happening in my life that I could not accept. I had enjoyed four years of sanity and sobriety, and now fear, frustration, anger, resentment and depression became the ruling emotions of my life. People who were important to me rejected me. All around me, people were doing things I didn't like or approve of. I reacted with every conceivable negative human feeling. The misery of those emotions was even more intense than it had been during my drinking days, because my senses were not sealed by alcohol or other chemicals. I started out to try changing the unacceptable circumstances around me by attempting to manipulate people and situations. Nothing worked. I became lost in a maze of confusing emotions. There seemed to be no way out.

I could argue quite convincingly that the problems in my life were being caused by the conduct of others. "If only these people would straighten up," I would tell myself. When I talked of my problems with others, I sometimes received sympathetic agreement. "You are absolutely right," they would say. "You have a right to be upset." That kind of sympathy I didn't need. (I don't want to exercise my right to be upset. What kind of "right" is that?) The effort to justify my resentments did nothing but intensify the problems.

For three or four months, I pursued the frantic search for my lost serenity. Because I had heard and believed the "spiritual axiom," I knew that something was wrong with me. To find out what was wrong, and where the answer might lie, I read extensively in psychology, philosophy, and theology. With each new theory or dogma I encountered, I thought, "Maybe this is the answer." There are many interesting, plausible, and possibly valid ideas available from many sources. But every time I thought I saw a glimmer of hope in some new system, I fell back into the pit of my black emotions. I considered seeing a psychiatrist. It

Perhaps our groups should be  
Step *application* groups instead  
of Step *study* groups.

seemed to me that the battle was no longer worth it. Five years without alcohol, and I was an emotional basket case.

Where had I failed? Had I missed something in the AA program? I continued to go to many meetings. I was doing much Twelfth Step work. I was still seeking through prayer and meditation for guidance in my life. I thought I was working the program.

Then I started to suspect that despite all outward appearances, I was not really practicing the principles in all my affairs. The Twelve Steps were things I had done, not something I was doing. In the Step study group I attended regularly, I had begun to talk of the Steps in the past tense. "When I took this Step..." I had begun to study, analyze and expound upon the Steps, but I had gradually ceased to make them a part of my life by actually working them and keeping them current each day. Perhaps the answers I had been seeking in more esoteric realms were back where I had left them, in the Twelve Steps. Indeed, they were.

With renewed commitment, I started again with Step One. By the time I had written a new inventory and taken the Fifth Step, I began to receive convincing demonstrations of the effect of reworking all the Steps. People began to appear in my life who eloquently expressed the continuing need to keep working on all the Steps. They urged me on and told me how to apply the Steps to my life today.

Now, when a particular Step is discussed at our meeting, I ask myself "What am I doing about that Step today?" or "what do I need to do about that Step today?"

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# THOUGHTS FROM THE BOARD

## DISTRICT SERVICE MEETINGS

### *District 8 (Ramsey Co.)*

Fairview Community Center  
1910 Cty. Rd B West, Rm 108  
Roseville  
3rd Wed., 7:30 PM  
Email: dist8@area36.org

### *District 15 (Wash. Co.)*

Christ Lutheran Church  
11194 N. 36th St.  
Lake Elmo  
4th Mon., 7:00 PM  
Email: dist15@area36.org

### *District 19 (Dakota Co.)*

Rosemount Community Center  
13885 South Robert Trail  
Rosemount  
2nd Wed., 7:00 PM  
dist19@area36.org  
Email: dist19@area36.org

### *District 26 (SE Ramsey Co.)*

Grace Lutheran Church  
1730 Old Hudson Rd.  
St. Paul  
2nd Sun., 7:00PM  
Email: dist26-area36.org

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Path To A New World - continued from Page 4

usually a significant amount.

Moving forward we will need to reassess our budget and, where possible, make some changes. What those changes will need to be is not known at the moment. Intergroup generally runs on a fairly tight budget. There really aren't many ways to reduce the budget with out making cuts somewhere.

It appears that we may not have the option to hold the events we usually do in the fall of the year—like the Ice Cream Social, Gratitude Night and the New Years Eve event. Time will tell - but it seems not likely. This will also reduce contributions.

So, we will appreciate any consideration that groups and members can give with regard to their 7th Tradition support as we venture into his new world where the 'new normal' is unknown.

Dennis B.

Office Manager

**M**y first experience with St Paul Intergroup was using the website meeting search to find out where to go for my first meeting ever. My second experience was to go into the office (then located in the Spruce Plaza) to purchase my first Big Book and Twelve and Twelve. Since then, St Paul Intergroup has continued to be a resource for meeting information, literature, and service opportunities.

It has been an especially important resource during the realities of AA during a pandemic when meeting in person has been difficult or impossible.

The hard work of the staff to create the virtual store to maintain access to literature, of the web servants to quickly update meetings as they become virtual, and the commitment of volunteers to continue phone-based twelve step calls and night owl shifts during the mandated shut down is both inspiring and not at all surprising.

The attitude of service and compassion is evident in all who give of their time to ensure that the message can be carried to the newcomer despite the logistical difficulties.

To serve the groups and individuals of AA is the great honor and privilege of St Paul Intergroup, and I am so grateful to be able to learn and grow in service as a part of the board.

I hope to meet many that are reading this and walk shoulder to shoulder on this path. Perhaps at the Intergroup Rep Meeting on the third Tuesday of every month at 7:30. Maybe at the office's new location at 33 Wentworth Ave S. while picking up medallions or the new best of the Grapevine collection. Possibly at the Night Owl orientation, or even at a meeting of one of the hundreds of groups that Intergroup serves.

Until then,

Paul W.

Secretary

St Paul Intergroup Board



## SELF-SUPPORT SUGGESTIONS FOR GROUPS

“Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.”  
The Conference-approved pamphlet: “Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix” offers the following suggestions for the distribution of group funds after group expenses have been paid:

50% St. Paul Intergroup.....  
33 Wentworth Ave E.  
Suite 355  
West St. Paul, MN 55118-3431

30% General Service Office.....  
P.O. Box 459  
Grand Central Station  
New York, NY 10163

10% Southern MN Area 36.....  
Area Assembly  
P.O. Box 2812  
Mpls., MN 55402

10% District Committee.....  
**Ramsey County:**  
District 8, P.O. Box 131523  
St. Paul, MN 55113

**Dakota County:**  
District 19, P.O. Box 1466  
Burnsville, MN 55337

**Washington County:**  
District 15, P.O. Box 181  
Lake Elmo, MN 55042

**SE Ramsey County:**  
District 26, P.O. Box 75980  
St. Paul, MN 55175

### LOOKING FOR A SERVICE OPPORTUNITY?

*Become a St. Paul Intergroup Night Owl*

Upcoming Night Owl Orientations:  
Saturday, Aug 15th, Sept 19th, Oct 17th  
Third Saturday from 10:00 - 11:00 AM

St. Paul Intergroup Office  
33 Wentworth Ave E, Suite 355  
West St. Paul, MN 55118-3431  
To RSVP - please call 651-227-5502

## 2020 INTERGROUP BOARD OF DIRECTORS

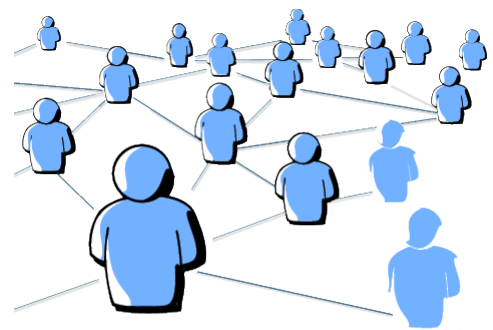
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Chairperson	Lindsey D.
Alternate Chairperson	Rachel P.
Secretary	Paul W.
Treasurer	Mark J.
Alternate Treasurer	Lisa L.
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2020 Member-At-Large	John K.
2021 Member-At-Large	Jeremiah W.
2021 Member-At-Large	Andrew LaB.
Manager	Dennis B.

спасибо 谢谢  
GRACIAS 谢谢  
**THANK YOU**

ありがとうございます MERCI

DANKE धन्यवाद

شُكراً OBRIGADO



## CONNECTIONS

### Office Volunteers:

Pat S., Frank D., Jimmy D., Frank K.,  
Caleb A., Neilla M., Mike S., Don C.,  
David P., Connie, Chris, Mary D., Steve  
L., Steve R.

# TRADITION NINE

*“A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards and committees directly responsible to those they serve.”*

The first portion of this Tradition is very well loved by many members. However, as is often the case with some other Traditions, only a small portion of it is often repeated. Drunks love the free-wheeling and devil-may-care approach that this seems to imply. After all, how can anyone hold us accountable in that kind of environment? In reality, that kind of operation masks the irresponsibility we have displayed for so very long during our active illness. Something which our well-developed sense of right & wrong continues to haunt us with, creating a measure of unsettledness that can often be seen in AA business meetings.

The first phrase does not suggest that our activities ought to be poorly operated, half-baked and chaotic affairs. Quite the opposite! It simply suggests that if we need to impose some kind of semi-permanent hierarchy in order to carry something—it ought to be structured in such a way that responsibility and authority are clearly understood by all.

We should also understand that there is a great difference between “efficiency” (which is never mentioned in the Big Book) and the word “effective” (which is mentioned in connection with 12th Step work). Efficiency, in the business world, often brings with it a plethora of rules and regulations. That is what this Tradition seeks to avoid. There is an enormous difference between regulation and communication! In Alcoholics Anonymous our goal is always communication, whether it is with one another or the still suffering alcoholic.

Therefore, this Tradition really sets out to help us achieve several things. First, it simply points out that we ought always to have a clear and coordinated understanding of what it is we are attempting to carry out. In that sense, we will need to take actions that are “coordinated” so that they communicate to everyone what our goal focuses on. When we meet our own responsibilities, God will handle the rest. On far too many occasions we can hear someone say, “Let’s just all be responsible.” Experience clearly indicates that this is the best way to defuse

responsibility, and therefore also clarity. It is a classic and well-used alcoholic avoidance technique.

Secondly, the Tradition follows its own advice in clearly spelling out what to do in the event more coordination and clarity are needed—create service board or committees where needed. In being consistent with our other principles, we will need to be clear with what we expect these bodies to do. We do not turn our will and lives over to one another – we turn them over to a Higher Power. What we turn over to one another is the need to communicate what is expected from any formed body in which we vest some responsibility and authority to carry out specific tasks. Communication is the key!

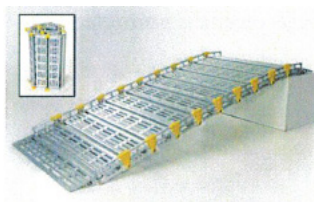
Finally, there is a very clear statement which determines who this formed body will have any authority over—only those who they directly serve. This is what creates the perfect balance that keeps AA both safe and secure. It allows us to task some people with certain responsibilities, but carefully avoids giving them the power to rule anyone. This is the method by which we manage, as a society, to continue to move forward without moving downward.

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651.227.5502 - to make an offer.**

Perhaps our groups should be Step *application* groups instead of Step *study* groups. I have seen others start to really work on the Steps either with renewed commitment of for the first time. You don't have to ask which members are doing it. You can tell. Lives are noticeably changed, far beyond the removal of alcohol, when we work and rework the Steps. People change.

Now, the important thing for me to remember about the program is that I must continue to work it and live in it and grow in it, or I will slide backward. It is not in the nature of things for me to get my life "fixed" and have it stay "fixed." If I don't keep working on it, it will, sooner or later, fall apart. How do I work on it? With the simple kit of spiritual tools offered to me by the AA people when I first came in—the Twelve Steps. I have tried other tools, but they don't work too well for me. Of course, I reserve the right as an individual to practice an form of religion or study any science, or mental discipline. But I have discovered that knowledge acquired through such study does not really solve anything in my life. Knowledge alone never does.

If I am to have a share of those promises enumerated in the AA book, there is a price I must pay. That price is "destruction of self-centeredness" (Big Book, page 14). The roadway to freedom, sanity, peace of mind, and serenity is not traversed by intellect. AA directs me toward a goal of greater humility and less self-centeredness. It means replacing some of my self-will with God's will for me. Acquisition of more knowledge has very little to do with that goal. My acceptance of a Higher Power came, not from understanding how God works, but from a simple faith based upon the premise that I need not understand as long as I have faith that the "Great Reality" is at work in my life.

Sometimes, I have deluded myself with thoughts of a lofty spiritual realm where I could rise above the problems of ordinary people and attain some exalted state of being. Such thinking, I know believe, contradicts the idea of the AA program—humility. It also seems to abandon the AA method of attaining some degree of that humility. The method, I'm told, is the practice of this simple program.

When I learned about the Twelve Step, I had the knowledge I needed to keep me sober. That same knowledge will give me maturity, sanity, freedom, serenity, and real happiness—but only if I keep applying that simple set of spiritual principles to my

life today.

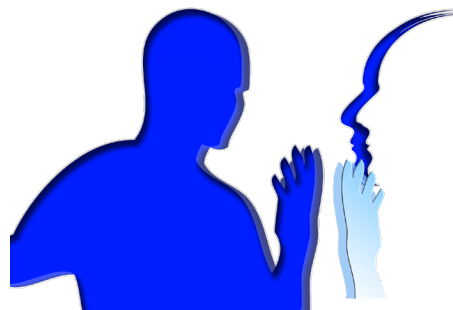
I will remember, I hope, that life is not always 100 percent built to my specifications. God doesn't work well under close supervision. When things do go my way, and when I have the pleasure of realized hopes and dreams, I want to meet those conditions with gratitude born of the realization that the good times are now possible because of God in my life and the AA program and the AA people. But when the disappointments come and the pain starts to reappear, they bring real opportunities for growth. The pain can also be a cause for gratitude. Without it, I probably wouldn't grow too much.

I am grateful today that I have been forced by the circumstance of my life too find a deeper meaning in the AA program.

Bill W., AA's co-founder, once said that we measure our progress in AA by two words, "humility" and "responsibility." May I ever keep my eye on those two yardsticks as I continue to seek only knowledge of His will for me. Where I found it before is the most likely place to find it again—in the Twelve Steps.

CS, Tulsa, OK  
Reprinted from  
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Oklahoma City, OK

## GOD DOESN'T WORK WELL



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