

The Lifeline



January, 2008

24 Hour Phone: 651-227-5502

Volume 43, Issue 1

STEP ONE:

We admitted we were powerless over alcohol — that our lives had become unmanageable.

Step One asks us to be truthful about whom we are – people from all walks of life who share a common illness, the disease of alcoholism. When we drink, we are powerless over the consequences of our illness and our lives fall into chaos. Step One is the start of recovering our lives from the insanity of a power greater than ourselves; “King Alcohol,” as it is called in the “Big Book.”

There is but one *must* to this simple program of recovery: we *must* be entirely honest about the truth of who we are and the truth of our disease if we are to recover from it. Sadly, there are those “unfortunates” who do not recover, usually men and women who seem to have been born “constitutionally incapable” of being “honest with themselves.”

Looking back on my journey through recovery, I did not get this the first time. I failed to be rigorously honest with myself. I still had the belief that somehow, someday I could drink again; that I could “beat the game.” I was “incredibly dishonest and selfish” in respect to this fundamental truth: I am an alcoholic.

Not only was I not truthful with myself about this simple fact, I was blind to the terrible damage I wrought around me because I would not be rigorous about this fact. I was like a “tornado roaring his way through the lives of others.” I was thoughtless. I was selfish and self-centered. Such are the defects from which spring all my troubles.

What happened is this: I let go of this program of recovery and I relapsed. I disconnected from the fellowship, the God of my understanding, and myself, and then I abandoned myself to drink.

For those of us who are alcoholics the choice is stark and simple: either we get who we are or we shall be doomed to failure. Either we acknowledge the truth before us that we are powerless over alcohol and our lives are a mess because of drinking, or we will inevitably end up institutionalized, in jail or in the ground. The choice is ours to make.

In his great poem, The Road Less Traveled, Robert Frost speaks of choosing between two roads.

We alcoholics also face two roads: the road of recovery and the road of alcoholism – one is a life of rigorous honesty, while the other is a life of lies and deceit. Day after day, I must make the decision which road I wish to travel. Today, I choose the road of Recovery. Today, I choose not to drink. Today, I acknowledge the truth of who I am: my name is Bill S. and I am an alcoholic - and that has made all the difference.

— Bill S., office volunteer

Tradition One:

Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.

When A.A. was very young, the first members clearly saw the preservation of its unity as a life-or-death matter for themselves and for the alcoholics still unrecovered. The First Tradition states this aim, and it is the common aim of all Twelve Traditions. . . .

Each of the other eleven Traditions explains one specific way to protect the unity of the Fellowship and the A.A. group. Those early members quickly recognized power-drivers as potential group-wreckers. And they're still around—the members who are always sure that they're always right—the members who are happily ready to assume all the burdens of leadership and grimly unwilling to share them, let alone give them up. But a group does need officers. How can we cope with this dilemma? Tradition Two provides the answer. . . .

From the A.A. World Services pamphlet, “The Twelve Traditions Illustrated,” reprinted with permission.

St. Paul Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous®

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Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday — 9 AM to 6 PM; Tuesday: 9 AM to 8 PM

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Editorial: Singleness of Purpose

For the survival of our AA program, it seems time for all of our groups to take a good look at what is going on regarding individuals who attend our meetings but do not identify themselves as alcoholics.

There was a meeting that came to our attention a short time ago where thirteen people were in attendance; eight of them introduced themselves as alcoholics and the other five called themselves "addicts."

If they were truly alcoholics at an A.A. meeting why did they introduce themselves as addicts? The squad leader was one of the addicts and started the Step meeting with a discussion of the First Step, which says "We admitted that we were powerless over alcohol and our lives have become unmanageable." It does not say we were powerless over cocaine, heroin, weed, etc. It would seem that this meeting was in direct violation of our Third Tradition which says anonymity is paramount. Here we apparently have five non-alcoholics in attendance at a closed meeting, one of which is squad leader.

Reports are becoming more frequent that incidents like this are becoming commonplace and are threatening our existence by deviating from our clearly stated Tradition Five singleness of purpose.

One of the first things Bill W. and cofounders started out with was that our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety. Bill also said, "We can't be all things to all people".

The following is taken directly from the pamphlet "Problems other than alcohol" by Bill W.

Sobriety - freedom from alcohol - through the teaching and practice of the Twelve Steps is the sole purpose of the A.A. group. Groups have repeatedly tried other activities, and they have always failed. It has also been learned that there is no way to make non-alcoholics into A.A. members. We have to confine our membership to alcoholics, and we have to confine our A.A. groups to a single purpose. If we don't stick to these principles, we shall almost surely collapse. And if we collapse, we cannot help anyone. This is a short treatise on a problem we have that is getting out of hand. Each group should avail themselves of this pamphlet and put their group conscience to work to help solve this threat to our program.

LET'S SEE IF WE CAN KEEP THIS PROGRAM CLEAN AND SIMPLE TO LAST SO IT CAN BE OF HELP TO OTHERS WHO NEED US.

— Ken S., City Steps Group

The Twelve Concepts: Concept I

The final responsibility and ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.

In the midst of the "exuberant success" of early A.A., Dr. Bob became fatally ill and Bill asked, "When Dr. Bob and I are gone, who would then advise the trustees and the office?" The answer, Bill felt, was to be found in the collective conscience of the A.A. groups. But how could the autonomous, widely scattered groups exercise such a responsibility?

(Continued on page 3)

2008 Steering Board

<u>Chair:</u>	Tom S.
<u>Alt. Chair:</u>	Mary Jo N.
<u>Secretary:</u>	Lesli D.
<u>Treasurer:</u>	Diane E.
<u>Members at Large 2008:</u>	Steve B. & Jeff H.
<u>Members at Large 2007:</u>	Lee B. & Lisa L.
<u>Advisor to the Board:</u>	Jeff T.
<u>Office Manager:</u>	Tom N.

Office Calls in November*

Meeting information	225
Inventory hours	20
12th step calls	17
Temporary sponsor	32
Speaker request	20
Special events	4
Outside issues	29
Info For Professionals	5
Administrative	117
Other	58
Total Calls	527
Daily average	25.1
Visitors	141

Call tally is for calls taken during office hours only and does not include calls taken during Night Owl shifts.

Saint Paul AA Intergroup Representatives' Meeting Minutes, November 20, 2007

- I. The meeting was called to order at 7:30 (see attendees below)
- II. The Primary Purpose of Intergroup was read.
- III. October minutes were approved with one amendment: Suzanne attended last meeting.
- IV. **Office Report** --Tom N. A) New items now available from World Services: "AA in Corrections" & "AA in Prison" videos. Stop by the office for more info.
- V. **Treasurer's Report.** Mary Jo. Oct. contributions were \$9648 (above budgets); 49 groups contributed in October. Sales were \$6848 (above budget). THANKS to all who contribute – it allows us to serve our groups. We have 571 meetings in our directory, and we average about 30 contributing groups per month.
- VI. **Website Report** – Jonathan. Working on Night Owl updates/FAQ's; Some issues viewing website with IE; try Firefox—it works great! Remember to send flyers to webservant@aastpaul.org for posting.
- VII. **Outreach Program** – Alfred K. A) Uncovering more MIA meetings and updating directories; B) Reminder to keep submitting The Lifeline essays; next one is due Dec. 12th.
- VIII. **Night Owl Report** – Diane. A) Shifts are FULL thru December!! Woohoo! Diane has started a waiting list.
- IX. **Intergroup Events.**
- Gratitude Night November 17th – Tom S. We had a record turnout – thanks to all who helped us celebrate gratitude and 50 years of the St. Paul Intergroup. Big kudos to our great speakers: Angela & Angie.
 - New Year's Eve December 31st—Jeff T. Speaker at 7 PM is our very own Lisa L. from NTLP group; Marathon meetings & Dance start at 9 PM; Live Music and a DJ.
- X. **Old Business:**
- By-Laws Committee: Marty M. A) Draft was handed out to the Board and hope to have final By-laws to January meeting for voting. Will also get an 'on-line' copy posted for Intergroup members. Once presented, the committee will schedule a special "Q&A" meeting prior to final voting.
- XI. **New Business**
- Elections: Congratulations to our upcoming new Board Members: Alt. Chair—Mary Jo N.; Treasurer—Diane E.; Secretary—Lesli D.; At-Large—Lisa L.; and At-Large—Lee B.
- XII. **Group Announcements or Concerns.**
- Website 12-step listing may have 'old' #'s on it—1 member got hold of some 'using' people. Matt/Tom will work on getting an updated list posted on Night-owl page.
 - Do groups need insurance for events? Depending upon location, (i.e.; church meetings usually covered under church's ins), a rider can be purchased for an event – check with your building's ins. carrier.
- XIII. **Concept Review (XI)** –Thanks, Matt Z. on a great job! Dan B. volunteered for December, Concept XII.
- XIV. **Mock Rep Report.** Thanks, Duane W. for tonight's report! Lee B. volunteered for December.
- XV. Closed with the Responsibility Statement and Lord's Prayer.

Groups & Officers in Attendance:

Joe S-Happy, Joyous, Free & WBL	Monty Z-WBL Mon. Night	Val L-Back to Basics, Burnsville	Marty M-Board Advisor
Steve B-Board At-Large	Suzanne-Mendota 10:30 AA	Ed M-Main Idea Sat 8am	Tom S.-Board Alt Chair
Lisa L-No Time Like Present	David M-Midway Thurs 8pm	Donald B-Main Idea Tues 8pm	Lee B-Como BB
Diane E-Night Owl	John D-Eagan,Brnsvl,Savage M/T	Matt Z-Roseville Wed	Alfred K-Board At-Large
Jeff H-Board At-Large	Greg M-OMD	Mary Jo N-Board Treasurer	Christine P-Maplewood AA
Jonathan-Web Servant	Tom L-Shoreview/Hazelwood	Jeff T-Board Chair	Brooklyn John C-West End
Mark K-Uptown squad	John F-Highland	Lesli D-Board Secretary	Jon C-3rd Edition
Dan B-Uptown squad	Peggy B-District 19/Dakota Co.	Tom N.-Office Manager	Jan B-Macalester/Plymouth
Jason H-Rosemount AA	Bill C-Uptown Sun 7pm	Duane W-Uptown Sun Orientation	

Next Meeting: Tuesday, December 18th

<p>7th Tradition Suggestions for Groups</p> <p>“Every group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.”</p> <p>Your group can make an informed decision regarding contributions with information from A.A. World Services. The information below is a suggestion taken from the pamphlet: “Self-Support: Where money and spirituality mix.”</p> <p>50% <u>St. Paul Intergroup</u> Spruce Tree Center 1600 University Ave. #407 St. Paul, MN 55104</p> <p>30% <u>General Service Office</u> P.O. Box 459 Grand Central Station New York, NY 10163</p> <p>10% <u>Southern MN Area 36</u> Area Assembly P.O. Box 2812 Mpls., MN 55402</p> <p>10% <u>District Committee</u></p> <p>Ramsey County: District 8, P.O. Box 2267 St. Paul, MN 55102</p> <p>Dakota County: District 19, P.O. Box 1466 Burnsville, MN 55337</p> <p>Washington County: District 15, P.O. Box 181 Lake Elmo, MN 55042</p> <p>SE Ramsey County: District 26, P.O. Box 75980 St. Paul, MN 55175</p>	<p>BE A NIGHT OWL !!</p> <p>Night Owls are often the first AA contact for the newcomer! A Night Owl shift is a once-a-month commitment to answer Intergroup phones after hours. Some shifts can be done in the office; all can be done from home. The commitment can be filled by an individual or a group. If you can help, call Matt at the office or go to our website: www.aastpaul.org</p> <p><u>District Meetings</u></p> <p>District 8 (Ramsey Co.) Fairview Community Center 1910 Co. Rd B, Rm 203, Roseville 3rd Wed., 7:30 PM</p> <p>District 15 (Wash. Co.) Christ Lutheran Church 11194 N. 36th St., Lake Elmo 4th Mon., 7:00 PM</p> <p>District 19 (Dakota Co.) Rosemount Community Center 13885 South Robert Trail 2nd Wed., 7:00 PM</p> <p>District 26 (SE Ramsey Co.) 1099 Payne Ave. St. Paul 2nd Fri., 6:00 PM www.district26-area36.org</p> <p>Thanks to all the terrific volunteers who helped in the Office during November!</p> <p>Tracy, Andy, Frank, John, Mia, Donald, Jack Ri., Jack Ro., Charlie, Lynette, Kelly, Bobbi, Mike, Bill, Jen & Gil.</p> <p>Thanks to all the Night Owl volunteers and groups as well!</p> 	<p>INTERGROUP INCOME FOR NOVEMBER</p> <p>Number Group Contributions: 35 Total Group Contributions: \$3252.12 Number of Faithful Fivers: 33 Total from Faithful Fivers: \$1928.00</p> <p>“Thanks!” to the groups that contributed in November:</p> <p>As Bill W. Sees It Back To Basics Big Book Study (2x) Basic Text Women's Group Burnsville Eagan Savage Tues. BB Dakota Alano Thursday AM (2x) Dakota Alano Wed. Roosters East Side AA Forest Lake Tues Men's Fourth Dimension Grover's AA Happy Hour Little Canada Hazelwood AA Highland Park AA Hugo AA Main Idea AA Maplewood AA Midway AA Monday 12 X 12 North Hamline Oakdale Transfiguration Observing Recovery Victoriously Pages of Wisdom BB Rivertown AA Rivertown Big Book AA Roseville Centennial AA Shoreview Big Book Plus Sisters of Serenity St. Luke Sat. Men's AA Third Tradition Northfeld Uptown AA Weekend Jumpstart II White Bear Groups White Bear Women's Wed. AM</p>
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The Lifeline: Purpose Statement

The Lifeline is a monthly newsletter of the St. Paul and Suburban Area Intergroup Association office of Alcoholics Anonymous. It is about, by, and for 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 Intergroup. (Exception: Quotations from A.A. books or pamphlets are reprinted with permission from A.A. World Services, Inc.; The A.A. Preamble is reprinted with permission of A.A. Grapevine, Inc.) We welcome articles of opinion or descriptions of personal experience, which should be sent to Lifeline Editor, St. Paul Intergroup, 1600 University Avenue #407, St. Paul MN 55104. Materials or articles cannot be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope. Intergroup reserves the right to edit submissions for clarity, language, length and contents that may violate A.A.'s Traditions, etc. The deadline is the 2nd of the preceding month.

UPCOMING A.A. EVENTS!!

Recovery, Unity & Service Conference

sponsored by the

Southern Minnesota Area Assembly

January 4 to 6, 2008

Marriott Minneapolis West, St. Louis Park

Study & Action Group

"Precisely how we have recovered"

Hopkins United Methodist Church - Hopkins, MN

Starting Sunday, January 6, 2008

www.into-action.com

Wild Rice Roundup

Lose Your Winter Blues

Shooting Star Hotel & Event Center

Mahnomen, MN

January 18-20, 2008

dgrain@arvig.net Fred: 218-935-5007

WINTER CONFERENCE

January 25th, 26th, 27th 2008

VICTORIA INN

1808 Wellington Avenue

Winnipeg, Manitoba R3H 0G3

reserve direct: 204-786-4801

Trudge the Road to Happy Destiny Men's Retreat 2008

January 25 - 27, 2008

Horseshoe Bay Resort on Leech Lake

www.trhdretreat.org

44th International Women's Conference

February 14 - 17, 2008

Portland, Oregon

www.intlwomensconf.org

Concept II (continued from page 2)

Over great resistance by trustees and members devoted to the status quo, Bill managed to "sell" the idea of calling an A.A. General Service conference (see Concept II), and eleven years later Bill was able to declare, "The results of the Conference have exceeded our highest expectations." This Concept is rooted in Tradition Two, which states:

"For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority — a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern."

The principles of Tradition Two are crystal-clear, Bill asserts: "The A.A. groups are to be the final authority; their leaders are to be entrusted with delegated responsibilities only." The outside world cannot imagine an organization run this way, but Bill calls it "a spiritualized society characterized by enough enlightenment, enough responsibility, and enough love of man and of God to insure that our democracy of world service will work..."

-Reprinted from *Twelve Concepts for World Service Illustrated*, with permission from AA World Services Inc.

Is your meeting represented at Intergroup?

The January Representatives' meeting will be held January 15, 7:30 pm,

at the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, 285 N. Dale St., St. Paul, 55103.

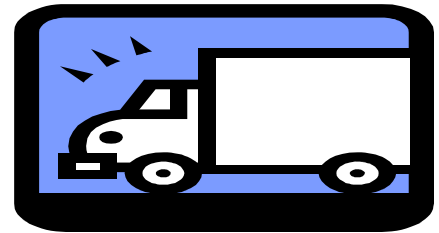
The church is located just south of I-94; from Dale turn west on Iglehart to park.

St. Paul Intergroup
Spruce Tree Center
1600 University Ave. W., Suite #407
St. Paul, MN 55104

Change Service Requested

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Please let us know if your address changes one month ahead of time. It saves us the cost of return postage and enables you to get each issue of the *Lifeline*. Our mailing permit does not provide for mail forwarding. Thank you!



St. Paul Intergroup Faithful Fiver Form

Faithful Fivers contribute five dollars to St. Paul Intergroup each month to enable us to continue to carry our life-saving message. Your contribution entitles you to a one-year subscription to the *Lifeline*. You may also contribute annually, quarterly, etc.

Name _____

Street _____

City, State, Zip _____

Please send this form and a check to:

St. Paul Intergroup, 1600 University Avenue W. #407, St. Paul MN 55104