



## **STEP FIVE: Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.**

What are we likely to receive from Step Five? For one thing, we shall get rid of that terrible sense of isolation we've always had. Almost without exception, alcoholics are tortured by loneliness. Even before our drinking got bad and people began to cut us off, nearly all of us suffered the feeling that we didn't quite belong. Either we were shy, and dared not draw near others, or we were apt to be noisy good fellows craving attention and companionship, but never getting it — at least to our way of thinking. There was always that mysterious barrier we could neither surmount nor understand. It was as if we were actors on a stage, suddenly realizing that we did not know a single line of our parts. That's one reason we loved alcohol too well. It did let us act extemporaneously. But even Bacchus boomeranged on us; we were finally struck down and left in terrified loneliness.

When we reached A.A., and for the first time in our lives stood among people who seemed to understand, the sense of belonging was tremendously exciting. We thought the isolation problem had been solved. But we soon discovered that while we weren't alone any more in a social sense, we still suffered many of the old pangs of anxious apartness. Until we had talked with complete candor of our conflicts, and had listened to some one else do the same thing, we still didn't belong. Step Five was the answer. It was the beginning of true kinship with man and God.

This vital Step was also the means by which we began to get the feeling that we could be forgiven, no matter what we had thought or done. Often it was while working on this Step with our sponsors or spiritual advisers that we first felt truly able to forgive others, no matter how deeply we felt they had wronged us. Our moral inventory had persuaded us that all-around forgiveness was desirable, but it was only when we resolutely tackled Step Five that we inwardly *knew* we'd be able to receive forgiveness and give it, too.

Another great dividend we may expect from confiding our defects to another human being is humility — a word often misunderstood. To those who have made progress in A.A., it amounts to a clear recognition of what and who we really are, followed by a sincere attempt to become what we could be. Therefore, our first practical move toward humility must consist of recognizing our deficiencies. No defect can be corrected unless we clearly see what it is. But we shall have to do more than see. The objective look at ourselves we achieved in Step Four was, after all, only a look. All of us saw, for example, that we lacked honesty and tolerance, and that we were best at times by attacks of self-pity or delusions of personal grandeur. But while this was a humiliating experience, it didn't necessarily mean that we had yet acquired much actual humility. Though now recognized, our defects were still there. Something had to be done about them. And we soon found that we could not wish or will them away by ourselves.

More realism and therefore more honesty about ourselves are the great gains we make under the influence of Step Five. As we took inventory, we began to suspect how much trouble self-delusion had been causing us. This had brought a disturbing reflection. If all our lives we have more or less fooled ourselves, how could we now be so certain that we had made a true catalog of our defects and had really admitted them, even to ourselves? Because we were still bothered by fear, self-pity, and hurt feelings, it was probable we couldn't appraise ourselves fairly at all. Too much guilt and remorse might cause us to dramatize and exaggerate our shortcomings. Or anger and hurt pride might be the smoke screen under which we were hiding some of our defects while we blamed others for them. Possibly, too, we were still handicapped by many liabilities, great and small, we never knew we had.

Hence it was most evident that a solitary self-appraisal, and the admission of our defects based upon that alone, wouldn't be nearly enough. We'd have to have outside help if we were surely to know and admit the truth about ourselves — the help of God and another human being. Only by discussing ourselves, holding back nothing, only by being willing to take advice and accept direction could we set foot on the road to straight thinking, solid honesty, and genuine humility.

(Reprinted from *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, pp. 57-59, with permission of A.A. World Services, Inc.)

### **St. Paul Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous®**

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Fax: 651-290-0209

Office Hours: Monday through Friday — 9 AM to 6 PM; Saturday 9 AM to 1 PM

1600 University Avenue W. Suite 407 St. Paul MN 55104

## **Tradition Five: What A Group "Ought" To Be—An AA says we can't transmit what we don't have**

The first thing Tradition Five tells us is what a group is, or at least "ought to be."

We are not a sociological entity, although sociologists find us fascinating. We are not a therapy group, although remarkable healing takes place among us. And we are not a religion, even though some people want to see us as such.

We are a spiritual entity, or at least "ought to be."

To me, that means that, although we are not saints, we "ought to" strive for spiritual progress. We follow a spiritual path laid out for us by Bill, Bob, and the first one hundred members of Alcoholics Anonymous. That spiritual path consists of the Twelve Steps, and by later development, the Twelve Traditions. They are suggestions only, but very firm suggestions--norms for our spiritual progress. We are a Fellowship of men and women who ought to come together as a spiritual entity.

We deal with two things here: our being and our doing. Clearly, what we are is going to have a lot to do with what we do. And what we do is going to have a strong influence on what we are.

We shake our heads at the "Two-Steppers" who, still on the First Step, take it upon themselves to run around "Twelfth-Stepping" whomever they can corner. We know they have not acquired a solid enough foundation in AA spirituality to pass it on to others. They forget the old saying: *nemo dat quod non habet* (No one can give what he doesn't have). Soon, without the gratification of instant success, discouragement sets in. The Two-Stepper must learn to be spiritual first, or give in to discouragement and quit AA.

Can this happen to a group? I think it can. When individuals in a group neglect the spiritual program of Alcoholics Anonymous and come to the meetings as if they were "fellowship" and nothing more; or when they dilute the meeting to focus on other things, or disparage spirituality, thinking it's the intrusion of religion; then, as a group, they stop being a spiritual entity. The group gets its spirituality from its members.

What does this mean to me personally? It means that my AA spirituality is the very foundation of my sobriety. The group will be as spiritual as its members are spiritual. So my spiritual condition strengthens or weakens the spirituality of the group. Therefore, it increases or lessens our chances for survival as a group, and our chances for sobriety as individuals in the group.

Besides taking good care of my own spirituality, I try to encourage activity that might strengthen the spirituality of the group, such as Twelfth Step workshops. Weekend events can become very popular and even traditional occasions in the life of the group. Whatever strengthens the spirituality of the group strengthens my spirituality, and vice versa. Whatever does that, increases my chances of staying sober, and at the same time, helps me and the group to remain focused on our primary purpose.

— Anonymous, Reprinted from the *A.A. Grapevine*, May, 2006, by permission.

## **The Twelve Concepts**

**Concept Five: Throughout our world services structure, a traditional "Right of Appeal" ought to prevail, thus assuring us that minority opinion will be heard and that petitions for the redress of personal grievances will be carefully considered.**

"The "Right of Appeal" recognizes that minorities frequently can be right; that even when they are in error they still persorm a most valuable service when they compel a thorough-going debate on important issues. The well-heard minority, therefore, is our chief protection against an uninformed, misinformed, hasty or angry majority. [ . . . ]

This Concept also warns us of "the tyranny of the majority" and points out that in A.A., a simple majority is seldom sufficient basis for a decision. That's why we usually require at least a two-thirds majority. Lacking this, it is preferable to delay the decision; or in the case of an election following the "Third Legacy Procedure," to "go to the hat." (See *Service Manual*, Chapter I.)

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### **2010 Steering Board**

<b><u>Chair:</u></b>	<b>Julie M.</b>
<b><u>Alt. Chair:</u></b>	<b>John D.</b>
<b><u>Secretary:</u></b>	<b>Don N.</b>
<b><u>Treasurer:</u></b>	<b>Michael K.</b>
<b><u>Members at Large 2010:</u></b>	<b>Katie R. &amp; Julie K.</b>
<b><u>Members at Large 2011:</u></b>	<b>Jess N. &amp; Charlie S.</b>
<b><u>Advisor to the Board:</u></b>	<b>Tom S.</b>
<b><u>Office Manager:</u></b>	<b>Tom N.</b>

### **Office Calls in March**

Meeting information	219
Inventory/hours	37
12th Step calls	21
Temporary sponsor	32
Speaker request	31
Special events	1
Outside issues	22
Info for professionals	3
Administrative	156
Other	91
<b>Total Calls</b>	<b>613</b>
<b>Daily average</b>	<b>26.7</b>
Visitors	260

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

**St. Paul Area Intergroup Representatives' Meeting Minutes, March 16, 2010**

- I. Open with Serenity Prayer and Introductions, Trisha read the Primary Purpose of Intergroup.
- II. Last month's Minutes approved.
- III. Treasurer's Report – Michael K. stepped down making Mark S. the new Treasurer. The Representatives were encouraged to inform their groups of the resulting Alternate Treasurer position. Anyone qualified should contact the Office to apply. Either the Board will make a decision or an election will be held next month if there are multiple applicants. Mark presented the Treasurer's reported the balance sheet is quite healthy. The complete financial report will soon be available on Intergroup's website in pdf format. Any questions or concerns can be sent to [treasurer@aastpaul.org](mailto:treasurer@aastpaul.org).
- IV. The Office Report – Tom N. Several on-going service opportunities are available. There should be a sign-up desk in the lobby next month for reps to sign-in before the meeting begins.
- V. Website Report – Jonathan. Let him know of AA related events for posting on Intergroup's website. Email at [webservant@aastpaul.org](mailto:webservant@aastpaul.org) or call the Office.
- VI. Outreach Program – Tim. Interested folks should contact Tim or Tom at the Office. Tim will be emailing folks who are interested in helping out.
- VII. Night Owl Report – Patti M – Reported two openings: first Wednesday of each month (10PM-6AM) and second Friday (10PM-9AM).
- VIII: Intergroup events:
  - Jes reported a low turnout from the Spring Traditions Workshop and sought ideas from the groups as to how to improve attendance.
  - TGIS - April 17– Julie K is the new co-host with John D. New fliers will be made and distributed reflecting ASL at that event.
  - Intergroup Office Open House – June 19<sup>th</sup> 11AM-3PM – Mark S., chair – Fliers are being prepared.
  - Ice Cream Social/Old Timers – August 21<sup>st</sup> 1-3:30PM Meeting starts @ 1:30 with How It Works, 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition, sobriety count-up, and 8 speakers sharing how they stay sober.
- IX. Old Business – ASL interpreters
  - Richard from the Midway Club expressed frustration with lack of ASL interpreters at AA events. This concern is also being discussed at District 8. Ways to fund ASL interpreters, such as the Green Can Fund, were discussed. This matter will be addressed further next month. Per Richard's request, an ASL interpreter will be provided at that time.
  - Gopher State Round Up Intergroup Hospitality Suite – Tom S and Charlie, Chairs - They will contact interested groups with details and assignments.
- X. Group AA Announcements – Anyone interested in the Young People AA events should contact Ryan.
- XI. Concept Review (III) – Michael H. Volunteer for Concept IV next month: Jes
- XII. Mock Rep Report: Dan Volunteer for next month: Chris S.
- XIII. Close with Responsibility Statement.

Attendance:

Rick, Donald B, Main Idea	Ryan, Students of Life	Bruce P, Uptown	Katie R, Board at Large	Don N, Secretary
Rick, Problem & Solution	Julie M, Chair	Tim, Defogged Men's	Tom, Senior Recovery	Rhonda, Basic Text
Charlie S, Board at large	Mark S, Treasurer	Colleen, Great Tidings	Frank, Third Edition	Tom S, Advisor
Jonathan, web servant	Chris S, West End	Dan, The Firing Line	Jes N, Board At-Large	Angela, Midway
Diana, Summit Hill	Craig, Happy Hour	Tom N., Off Mgr		
Doug M, Hole in the Donut	Joe, Happy, Joyous & Free	Judy, No Time Like the Present	Pattie, New Brighton BB	Richard, Jeanne, St. Paul Speaker Mtg
Julie K, Board At-large	Terry O (alt), Back to Basics Brnsvill	Mike H, St. Joe's Monday Night	Trisha, Fireside Women's	Craig B, Happy Hour 12 & 12

<p><b>7th Tradition Suggestions for Groups</b></p> <p>“Every group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.”</p> <p>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:</p> <p><b>50% <u>St. Paul Intergroup</u></b> Spruce Tree Center 1600 University Ave. #407 St. Paul, MN 55104</p> <p><b>30% <u>General Service Office</u></b> P.O. Box 459 Grand Central Station New York, NY 10163</p> <p><b>10% <u>Southern MN Area 36</u></b> Area Assembly P.O. Box 2812 Mpls., MN 55402</p> <p><b>10% <u>District Committee</u></b></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><b><i>BE A NIGHT OWL !!</i></b></p> <p>Night Owls are often the first A.A. 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. <b>If you can help, call the office or go to our website: <a href="http://www.aastpaul.org">www.aastpaul.org</a></b></p>	<p><b>MARCH CONTRIBUTIONS</b></p> <p>Number of Group Contributors: 42 Total Group Contributions: \$3725 Number of Faithful Fivers: 18 Total from Faithful Fivers: \$367</p>
	<p><b><u>District Meetings</u></b></p> <p><b>District 8 (Ramsey Co.)</b> Fairview Community Center 1910 Co. Rd B, Rm 203, Roseville 3rd Wed., 7:30 PM</p> <p><b>District 15 (Wash. Co.)</b> Christ Lutheran Church 11194 N. 36th St., Lake Elmo 4th Mon., 7:00 PM</p> <p><b>District 19 (Dakota Co.)</b> Rosemount Community Center 13885 South Robert Trail 2nd Wed., 7:00 PM</p> <p><b>District 26 (SE Ramsey Co.)</b> 1099 Payne Ave. St. Paul 2nd Fri., 6:00 PM <a href="http://www.district26-area36.org">www.district26-area36.org</a></p>	<p><b><i>“Thanks!” to the groups that contributed in March!</i></b></p> <p>11 West Bernard Group Amigos III Apple Valley Monday AM Women’s Burnsville Back to Basics Burnsville Primary Purpose City Center Group Cliffhangers I Como Park Big Book Cottage Grove Groups Dakota Alano As Bill Sees It Dakota Alano Friday 6pm Dakota Alano Thursday 11:45AM Dakota Alano Roosters Group Fireside Women’s Big Book Group The Firing Line Forest Lake Alano Groups Highland Park Groups Hillside-Buck Hill Group Hole in the Donut Group January 6th Group in Roseville Maplewood Groups Midway Groups New Brighton Alano Squad 14 North Branch Community Groups Oasis Group - Apple Valley Pages of Wisdom Big Book Study Ridge Runners I Roseville Centennial Group Sisters of Serenity St. Lucas Group Stillwater Morning Groups The Book Club - Oakdale The Twelve Steppers Third Tradition - Northfield Unity Group Uptown Groups White Bear Lake Groups</p>
<p><b><u>The Lifeline: Purpose Statement</u></b></p> <p><i>The Lifeline</i> is the 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.) 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 content that might violate A.A.’s Traditions, etc. The deadline is the 13th of the preceding month (i.e., submit a Tenth Step essay by the ninth month, September).</p>		



# UPCOMING A.A. EVENTS!!

## Second City Round-Up

May 7th — 9th  
Hyatt McCormack Place, Chicago  
Reservations: 1-800-233-1234

## St. Cloud Roundup's Spring Celebration of Recovery

Saturday, May 15, 5:30pm  
Moose Lodge, 1300 3rd St N, Waite Park, MN

## Gopher State Roundup

May 28 — 30  
Sheraton, Bloomington  
www.gopherstateroundup.org  
Visit the St. Paul Area Intergroup Hospitality Suite!!

## St. Paul Area Intergroup Annual Summer Open House

Saturday, June 19th, 11am to 3pm  
Spruce Tree Centre, 1600 University Ave. at Snelling

Minneapolis Intergroup presents  
"A Vision for You - 75 Years of AA"  
A Service Workshop  
Saturday, June 12th, 6pm  
Mizpah United Church, 412 5th Ave N, Hopkins

## Alcoholics Anonymous 2010 International Convention

July 1 — 4, San Antonio, Texas  
www.aa.org



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### Dear Bill W,

This seems to be the decade of the blow hard — on radio, TV, in music, and on the Internet, we see and hear people blasting their uncompromising views. It looks like fun! Can I be both sober and loud?

— An Anonymous Drunk

Nothing pays off like restraint of tongue and pen. We must avoid quick-tempered criticism, furious power-driven argument, sulking, and silent scorn. These are emotional booby traps baited with pride and vengefulness. When we are tempted by the bait, we should train ourselves to step back and think. We can neither think nor act to good purpose until the habit of self-restraint has become automatic.

From *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, p. 91, reprinted by permission of A.A. World Services, Inc.

## Is your meeting represented at Intergroup?

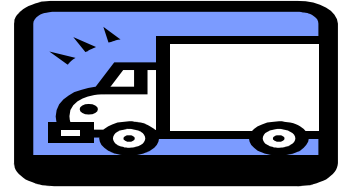
The May Representatives' meeting will be held Tuesday the 18th at 7:30 pm, at the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, 285 N. Dale St., St. Paul, 55103. The church is located just south of I-94. For parking, turn west on Iglehart from Dale.

St. Paul Intergroup  
Spruce Tree Center  
1600 University Ave. W. Ste. 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 \$5.00 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., Ste. 407, St. Paul, MN 55104

I would like to receive *The Lifeline* every month by email, not postal mail. My email address is:

(please print clearly) \_\_\_\_\_