

The Lifeline



April, 2011

24 Hour Phone: 651-227-5502

Volume 47, Issue 4

Step Four: Made a fearless and searching moral inventory of ourselves.

I understood the necessity for moral inventory well before I took the Fourth Step. On the morning of what turned out to be my first day of sobriety, a flood of thoughts and emotions overwhelmed me as I lay in bed. It suddenly became clear that my problem extended far beyond drinking; I was not merely a victim of alcohol and people. I had made decisions and conducted myself in ways which directly contributed to my misery and failure. Not only would I have to stop drinking, I would also have to stop doing other things that caused harm to myself and others—such as casual dating, given my recklessness and immaturity—if I were to achieve any satisfaction in life.

After I made the decision to turn my will and my life over to a Power greater than myself, I soon wondered how exactly I was supposed to not run my life on self-will. The decision came easily enough, but putting it into practice brought a lot of confusion. I knew what I wanted to do; what did God want me to do? The most I could guess was that I should avoid behaving the way I used to. So I began identifying those past behaviors as a basis for trying something new.

All of this happened without any “formal” work on the Twelve Steps. By the time my sponsor and I read Chapter Four in the *Big Book*, I’d been attempting to practice mindfulness for several months. To me, it seems that the Steps are not some foreign series of actions but, rather, the natural process that unfolds once we accept the hopelessness of our alcoholic condition.

When I did take the Fourth Step as outlined in the *Big Book*, followed promptly by the Fifth Step, I got to see myself from an entirely different perspective. I got to see other people and life from this new view. My perception began to change. Though painful, I faced the truth about myself: my attitudes, my actions, my defects of character. The pain subsided when I realized that I didn’t have to be like this anymore; with the help and loving guidance of a Higher Power, I could discover a much better way of living.

There are many methods for writing a moral inventory. In addition to the instructions of A.A.’s first 100 members, a number of individuals have produced Fourth Step worksheets and offer Fourth Step workshops. Whatever method someone chooses, I believe that the purpose is the same: to search out “the flaws in our make-up which caused our failure” (*Big Book*, page 64). Upon uncovering this key information about ourselves, we find humility, forgiveness, and hope—the hope of not repeating the same mistakes, the hope of repairing the damage we’d done, and the hope of achieving true satisfaction among our fellows.

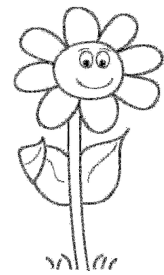
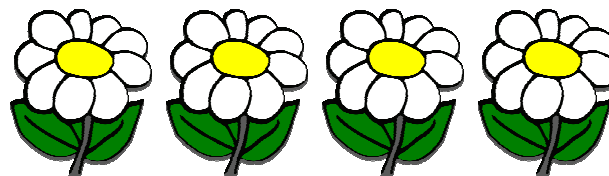
Jen M., Bridges Group, Shakopee

St. Paul A.A. Intergroup

Spring Celebration: Dinner, Meeting & Dance!

Saturday, April 30th

The Recovery Church
253 State Street
St. Paul, MN 55107



St. Paul Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous®

Web Site: www.aastpaul.org

E-mail: lifeline@aastpaul.org

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 Four: Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole.

Many times I have traveled throughout the country attending AA meetings in different cities, and made the abrupt decision that no one knows how to do AA except my group. You know, my way or the highway. My sponsor had to point out to me that all these people in all these different groups were staying sober.

This Tradition assures that groups will be allowed to conduct their affairs as they see fit, but with the caveat that the group always be aware of any effect their actions might have on AA as a whole or other surrounding groups. It is also important that I allow other members' actions to be different than mine, without putting them down. I found that I also must be willing to help a newcomer establish his/her own lengths to stay sober, as sobriety is the goal, not the right or wrong way to find a Higher Power.

This Tradition also reminds me that newcomers may be unaware of the nuances and language in AA. It is my job therefore to be the elder statesman and share. Last, but definitely not least, it is important to remember that I may represent the only AA someone knows, so that my actions would reflect on our beloved Fellowship. Therefore my behavior is under scrutiny whether I like to think so or not.

Thanks to Tom McM.
Sunday Big Book, Osseo, MN

CONCEPT FOUR: Throughout our Conference structure, we ought to maintain at all responsible levels a traditional "Right of Participation," taking care that each classification or group of our world servants shall be allowed a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge.

The principle of "Right of Participation" is built into the General Service Conference through the Conference Charter. Voting members include not only delegates, but also the trustees, and the directors and staff members of A.A. World Services (i.e., G.S.O.) and the A.A. Grapevine.

In the same way, the boards of these two operating entities include as voting members not only trustees, but also nontrustee directors and paid administrators and staff members.

[. . .] Finally, there is a spiritual reason for the "Right of Participation." All of us desire to belong. In A.A., no members are "second class." The "Right of Participation" therefore reinforces Tradition Two, that no member is placed in "ultimate authority" over another. We perform our service tasks better "when we are sure we belong — when our 'participation' assures us we are truly the 'trusted servants' described in Tradition Two."

— Reprinted from *The Twelve Concepts for World Service Illustrated*, by permission of A.A. World Services, Inc.

2011 Steering Board

<u>Chair:</u>	John D.
<u>Alt. Chair:</u>	Denise A.
<u>Secretary:</u>	Don N.
<u>Treasurer:</u>	Darrell B.
<u>Alt. Treasurer</u>	Cedar H.
<u>Members at Large 2012:</u>	Chris S. & Wanda B.
<u>Members at Large 2011:</u>	Jes N. & Charlie S.
<u>Advisor to the Board:</u>	Julie M.
<u>Office Manager:</u>	Tom N.

Office Calls in February*

Meeting information	190
Inventory/hours	16
12th Step calls	6
Temporary sponsor	22
Speaker request	13
Special events	1
Outside issues	328
Info for professionals	5
Administrative	110
Other	69
Total Calls	460
Daily average	19.17
Visitors	232

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, February 15, 2011

- I. Opened with the Serenity Prayer and Introductions. Matt P. presented Intergroup's Primary Purpose.
- II. Last month's Minutes approved.
- III. Treasurer's Report – Written report submitted reflected a healthy budget. The 2011 Budget will be submitted next month. Questions can be sent to treasurer@aastpaul.org.
- IV. The Office Report – Service opportunities available; Intergroup is slowly exploring the use of “new media” for posting last-minute service opportunities. Group feedback is welcome.
- V. The Website Report – Groups are encouraged to contact Jonathan (webservant@aastpaul.org) or the Office for AA-related events so than can be added to the website. Guidelines will be added to the site.
- VI. Outreach Program – Contact Roxi (chairperson) or the Office if interested.
- VII. Night Owl Report – Contact Leslie (coordinator) or the Office for current openings.
- VIII. Upcoming Intergroup events:
 Spring Traditions Workshop (Tradition 6) – March 19th – Darrell, Chair
 TGIS – April 30th (16th alt) – Jes & Wanda Co-Chair
- IX. Old Business:
 2011 Budget will be available next month
- X. New Business:
 Tom S. and Doug M. are liaisons between Intergroup and District 8
 All reps are encouraged to search for available sites for new Intergroup location.
- XI. Grapevine Report – Charlie Volunteer for next month: Harry
- XII. Concept Review (Concept II) – Matt Volunteer for next month (Concept III): Charlie
- XIII. Mock Report – Rick Volunteer for March: Scott
- XIV. Closed with the Responsibility Statement.

Attendance:

Julie, Happy, Joyous & Free	Rebecca, Fireside Women's Group	Bethann, Midway Alano	Scott, 3 rd Ed Big Book	Adrienne, Maplewood Groups
Jeff, Downtown Alano Club	Jim, Main Idea	Rick, Main Idea	Harry, Main Idea	Doug, Hole in Doughnut
Chuck, Rosemount Groups	Toni, Stillwater Morning Groups	Tom, Senior Recovery Groups	Christine, The Firing Line	Joe, Defogged Men's Group
Judy, No Time Like Present	Jonathan, Webservant	Matt, Outright Mental Defectives	Mark, Problems & Solutions	Scott, Northwestern Alano Sq. #1
Ryan, Students of Life	Jenni, New Brighton Big Book	Kate, Basic Ttext Women's Group	Terrie, Back to Basics Burnsville	Matt, Defogged Mens' Group
John , Chairperson	Denise , Alt. Chair	Darrell, Treasurer	Cedar, Alt Treas	Tom, Office Mgr
Don, Secretary	Charlie, Member at Large 2011	Jes, Member at Large 2011	Chris, Member at Large 2012	Wanda, Member at Large 2012

**7th Tradition
Suggestions for Groups**

“Every 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
Spruce Tree Center
1600 University Ave. #407
St. Paul, MN 55104

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 2267
St. Paul, MN 55102
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

BE A NIGHT OWL !!

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. **If you can help, call the office or go to our website: www.aastpaul.org**

District Meetings

District 8 (Ramsey Co.)
Fairview Community Center
1910 Co. Rd B, Rm 203, Roseville
3rd Wed., 7:30 PM

District 15 (Wash. Co.)
Christ Lutheran Church
11194 N. 36th St., Lake Elmo
4th Mon., 7:00 PM

District 19 (Dakota Co.)
Rosemount Community Center
13885 South Robert Trail
2nd Wed., 7:00 PM

District 26 (SE Ramsey Co.)
1099 Payne Ave. St. Paul
2nd Fri., 6:00 PM
www.district26-area36.org

Thanks to all the super volunteers who helped in the Office during February!

Tyler, Henry, Mike F, Shane, Louie T, Mark, Rich M, Amy N, Steve W, Cynthia, Jess, Erik. Frank, Burt, Mike S, Greg T, Robin G, Suzanne, Bill, Phil, Austin, Matt, Barb, Jordon, Chenery, Lynn, Rick, Will, James, and Ty.

Thanks to all the Night Owl volunteers and groups as well!



FEBRUARY CONTRIBUTIONS

Number of Group Contributors: 31
Total Group Contributions: \$2890
Number of Faithful Fivers: 10
Total from Faithful Fivers: \$157

Thanks to the groups that contributed in February!

- Burnsville - Primary Purpose
- Complete Defeat Group
- Coon Rapids - Day by Day
- Dakota Alano Sat. AM
- Dakota Alano Wed AM Roosters
- Defogged Men's Group
- Downtown Alano Club
- Eagan Burnsville Savage - Sat Speaker
- Forest Lake Alano
- Forest Lake Tuesday Men's
- The Grind
- Highland Park Groups
- Lakeville Wed. Beginners Group
- Maplewood Groups
- Midway Club
- North Dale Group
- Oakdale Monday Meeting
- Outright Mental Defectives
- Problem & Solution Meeting
- Rivertown BB Group
- Roseville Centennial Group
- Shoreview 12 x 12
- St. Croix Alano Tues AM
- St. John's Little Canada Group
- Stillwater Morning Groups
- This Simple Program
- Twelve Steppers - Arlington Hills
- Uptown Club
- Vadnais Heights Groups
- White Bear Lake

The Lifeline: Purpose Statement

The Lifeline 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).



UPCOMING A.A. EVENTS!!

**Southern Minnesota Area 36
Delegate's Workshop**
(Discuss Agenda Items for General Service Conference)
Gopher Hills Golf Club, Cannon Falls, MN
Saturday, April 9th, 9am - 4pm

Sunlight of the Spirit Weekend
Holiday Inn, Fairmont, MN
April 15 - 17

**Greater Minneapolis Intergroup
Gratitude Night**
Saturday, April 16th
Minneapolis Convention Center
6:30pm Social Hour, 7:30pm Speakers, 10pm Dance

Area 36 Committee Meetings
Best Western Hotel, North Mankato
May 14th, 9:30am to 5pm
www.area36.org

**Gopher State Roundup
XXXVIII**
Friday, May 27—Sunday, May 29
Sheraton Bloomington
www.gopherstateroundup.org

Camel Club Reunion
Saturday, June 11th
Speaker Meeting, raffle, pot luck!!
Richard Walton Park
1584 Haley Ave, Oakdale

Dear Bill W.,

I've had a few sponsors, and most of them said that I "took my will back" and wouldn't follow direction. This confused me because I've always wanted to work the A.A. program and do anything else that A.A. suggests, but some of my sponsors were very rigid about doing exactly what they said, when they said it, without discussion or compromise. I have worked through all twelve Steps more than once, and I've sponsored other alcoholics through these same actions. Nevertheless, there are still times when I fall short of the mark and don't feel happy. At my home group, a couple people indicated that I probably hadn't worked all the Steps thoroughly enough. I don't understand why certain A.A. members keep finding fault with the way I work the Program. Did I do something wrong? Am I going to drink again?

— An Anonymous Drunk

"The Oxford Groupers had clearly shown us what to do. And, just as importantly, we had also learned from them *what not to do* as far as alcoholics were concerned. We had found that certain of their ideas and attitudes simply could not be sold to alcoholics. For example, drinkers would not take pressure in any form, excepting from John Barleycorn himself. They always had to be led, not pushed. They would not stand for the rather aggressive evangelism of the Oxford Groups. And they would not accept the principle of "team guidance" for their own personal lives. It was too authoritarian for them. In other respects, too, we found that we had to make haste slowly. When first contacted, more alcoholics just wanted to find sobriety, nothing else. They clung to their other defects, letting go only little by little. They simply did not want to get "too good too soon." The Oxford Groups' absolute concepts—absolute purity, absolute honesty, absolute unselfishness, and absolute love—were frequently too much for the drunks. These ideas had to be fed with teaspoons rather than by buckets."

From *Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age*, pages 74–75, reprinted with permission of A.A. World Services, Inc.

Is your meeting represented at Intergroup?

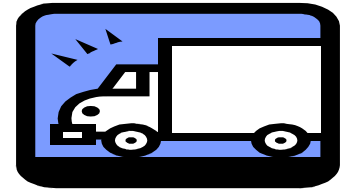
The April Representatives' meeting will be held Tuesday the 19th at 7:30 pm, at the Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 436 Roy St. N, St. Paul, 55104. The church is just south of the Spruce Tree Centre, across the street from the Intergroup office.

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) _____