

The Lifeline



November 2020

24-Hour Phone 651.227.5502

Volume 56 Issue 11

STEP ELEVEN

Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for the knowledge of His will and the power to carry that out.

IT is a step some view as a “maintenance “step. I view it differently. It should be grasped and actively worked every day. Bill W makes it clear this is a spiritual program. Spirituality is different from and in addition to organized religion or religious beliefs.

Prayer - one of the Webster definitions defines pray as an “earnest wish”. It can be through a formal or informal manner.

Meditation - is defined as engage in contemplation or reflection. It is practiced in many different modes.

With these definitions in mind, I think of this step in the following three practical ways.

The Three Ps:

Pray - authentically make an earnest wish for your sobriety and for the sobriety of others. You can use formal religion prayers or the Bible and I do that. You need not do that to accomplish prayer as step 11 suggests.

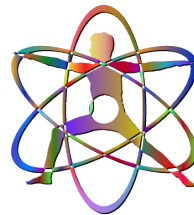
Practice - attending meetings is a form of prayer and meditation. Meetings bring a sense of calm and peace.

Purposeful engagement- whether through a text, email, call or coffee, step 11 is served by connecting with another in your recovery “republic”. It is a country you lead to protect you against the disease’s attacks. Why wouldn’t you dedicate time to those fellow citizens who protect

your republic? The citizen connection brings a meditation all its own.

From one of the most poignant stories in the Big Book it is stated on page 417, citing from Shakespeare, “all the world is a stage, and all the men and women merely players.” We cannot be the Director. Through prayer and meditation, we can come to grips with this truth.

Jim R.
White Bear Lake, MN



THE SPIRITUALITY OF STEP 11

UPON reaching Step 11, I developed the awareness that there was a need for me to break down the barriers from my past in order to move forward with my spirituality. When I was a child, my mother taught me to pray by teaching me the, “Now I lay me down to sleep” prayer. As a pre-teen and teen, I wasn’t praying, but rather doing what my friends were also doing: going after the things I wanted (e.g. bike), the best way I knew how: earning money from recycling, selling lemonade and cookies, making wrist corsages, baby-sitting. There was no concept of “God’s Will” for me then. And of course, when I was with King Alcohol, just about everything in my life was under its influence. Coming into the room as an adult Christian, I still didn’t have the slightest knowledge of/about God’s Will for me. Early on in the program, I thought that if I put all my focus on “praying” for something, then if it was God’s Will for me, I’d receive the object of my prayer.

The spirituality of the 11th Step was something I

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The Lifeline: Purpose Statement

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 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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Office Hours: Monday through Friday – 9 AM to 6 PM; Saturday 9 AM to Noon

wanted with all my heart and being. But, I was to learn, it does not just come overnight. It is done by one of AA's best slogans..."One Day At A Time". What will I pray for? And how do I meditate?" Hmm...did God really have a will for me and really want me to meditate so He could give me direction, knowledge, power and wisdom? Wow! He has not forsaken me?! I was to learn, that again, willingness was to come into play. That for my own sanity, serenity, and continued spiritual development, I needed daily guidance from God. Prayer is asking, meditating is listening to Him.

The words of Step 11, themselves, became a prayer for me. The words of the step are something to meditate on as I drive home from work. I have gotten to the point where I talk to God several times, anywhere and everywhere, during the day, and I try to listen to what He would have me do, asking only for the knowledge of His will for me, and the power to carry it out. There were, are, and will be days when I will cry out, "Help God, Help... I need YOU instantly," and I know He's got my back! I feel my connection.

These days, every morning upon awakening, I thank Him for another day of sobriety and ask that His will be done...not mine. It is so awesome to be in this place. The two main Prayers of AA are a huge help to me: The Lord's Prayer said at the close of every meeting, and the opening meeting prayer, the Prayer of the 3 Grants (aka The Serenity Prayer):

God Grant me the Serenity ...
To ACCEPT the things I cannot change,
The COURAGE to change the things I can,
And the WISDOM to know the difference. Amen.
{Thy Will be done...Not Mine}

- Danette G
Reprinted from
The COIN
San Jose Intergroup

THEY MAY BE GIANTS

Gratitude bestows reverence, allowing us to encounter everyday epiphanies, those transcendent moments of awe that change forever how we experience life and the world.

- John Milton

THE spiritual giants whom I have known in my life have all practiced gratitude daily. I have heard some say that they write a gratitude list in order to get themselves into their spiritual space.

This is an action that brings about a shift in their mental outlook that makes a great deal of difference in their lives. How often have we been walking, steeped in the troubles of our lives, when we've been startled by the beauty of a wildflower that suddenly comes into focus in our path? When have we been startled out of our self-obsessed thoughts by the trill of birdsong, bringing us back into the moment? What have we missed in the moments before? Freeing ourselves from the drudgery of our own drama by practicing gratitude in our daily lives makes us live more "in the moment," freer to experience the beauty and peace that surrounds us.

Forgetting to be grateful is an unfortunate part of my make-up; to be fair to myself, perhaps it is common to most of us. I need to be constantly reminded to stop the committee of voices in my head that are telling me what I must do, what I must think, or what I must say. Instead, I need to once again consider incorporating the practice of writing daily gratitude lists to escape from the loop of what I think I must control in my life. It's an action that reminds me that sometimes what is already there, what naturally unfolds, is simply something I need to notice and not act upon. It's an action that could mean a great deal of difference in my life.

Of course, I think I am too busy to be bothered to do this thing. But am I, really? Perhaps, subconsciously, it is easier to hold onto the negatives in my life, to arm myself with the reasons that I cannot be grateful. Holding onto the negative is a practice, too -- a bad habit that can be changed by exercising different ways of thinking.

Sure, sure, sure... I have a roof over my head (and a gorgeous Spanish tile one at that!); my family has ample food in our house; I have two healthy sons; I have my own health; I have a husband who can easily pay our household bills; I have been able to stay home to raise my two sons, etc. Yet, I manage to find plenty with which to find fault. I spend countless hours running through the audio reel of all that is wrong in my life. I simply refuse to credit the validity of the positives.

I remember how I used to feel irritated when, as a teenager, my mother would lecture me about how lucky I am, and how difficult life is for some people. "Just think about the poor people who don't have a roof over their head," my mother would say in response to my grumbling about some social drama with my friends. I thought my mother just didn't get

St. Paul Intergroup Contribution Drive!

We must reach NEW contributors to continue to provide vital services!

HOW: We need YOU!! Reach out to your AA Groups and fellow AA members and encourage them to contribute. www.aastpaul.org

- Become a “Faithful Fiver” – call 651-227-5502 to sign up!
- Online Contributions!
- Mail checks to the office!
- Visit the Office or shop online!
- Square Cash App: \$spintergroup

GOAL: \$25-30,000 for expenses through end of the year and another \$30,000 to build our prudent reserve by Jan. 31st, 2021.

WE CAN DO THIS!

We list 800+ meetings! If every meeting contributed \$18.75/month for the next 4 months, we would hit our goal! About ~24% of meetings contributed last year. ***Does your group contribute?***

THANK YOU, CONTRIBUTORS!!!!



REMINDER: How does St Paul Intergroup serve the still suffering alcoholic, the AA Fellowship, and Groups? ***Intergroup is who people reach when they look up AA.***

- Answers phone 24 hours a day.
- Publishes a Meeting Directory.
- Provides guidance about finding a sponsor to newcomers.
- Sells AA literature and medallions.
- Maintains the website with meeting and event information.
- Maintains a list of Speakers and those willing to do 12 Step work.
- Publishes the *Lifeline* newsletter!

NEED MORE INFORMATION? Email the Outreach Committee at outreach@aastpaul.org or contact Dennis B., Office Manager, (651) 227-5502, email: manager@aastpaul.org, Office location: 33 Wentworth Ave E., West Saint Paul MN 55118

ST. PAUL INTERGROUP 2021 PROPOSED BUDGET

INCOME

	2020 Budget	2020 YTD Jan-Sept	2021 Budget	2021 vs 2020 Budget
General Contributions	\$10,000	\$7,384	\$10,000	\$0
Special Contributions/Online Store	\$2,800	\$614	\$9,000	\$6,200
Group Contributions	\$56,000	\$34,942	\$47,000	-\$9,000
Faithful Fivers	\$7,500	\$8,086	\$10,000	\$2,500
TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS	76,300	51,027	76,000	-300
Office Sales				
AA Literature	43,000	15,066	19,186	-23,814
General Merchandise	40,000	16,023	21,000	-19,000
Printing Service	2,500	731	0	-2,500
TOTAL SALES	85,500	31,820	40,186	-45,314
TOTAL INCOME	161,800	82,847	116,186	-45,614
Cost of Goods Sold				
AA Literature	29,400	10,771	15,000	-14,400
General Merchandise	15,000	6,007	9,000	-6,000
TOTAL COST OF GOODS SOLD	44,400	16,778	24,000	-20,400
NET INCOME	117,400	66,069	92,186	-25,214
EXPENSES				
Salaries	65,346	46,433	37,440	-27,906
Taxes	1,640	1,732	10,920	9,280
Staff Training	1,500	0	0	-1,500
Payroll Service	2,000	1,464	2,236	236
Accounting Service	1,000		700	-300
Office Rent	23,256	13,873	22,500	-756
Internet Service/Telcom	6,000	4,703	6,000	0
Insurance - Board & Office	3,381	2,697	4,230	849
Office Supplies	3,600	1,847	2,000	-1,600
Postage	500	540	600	100
Equipment Lease	7,000	5,514	7,380	380
Grapevine Subscription	35	64	240	205
Outreach Expenses - Lifeline, etc.	6,200	1,253	4,000	-2,200
Contracted Services	1,200	1,706	2,000	800
Credit Card Fees	2,300	664	1,500	-800
TOTAL EXPENSES	124,958	82,490	101,746	-23,212
NET INCOME	117,400	66,069	92,186	-25,214
TOTAL EXPENSES	124,958	82,490	101,746	-23,212
TOTAL NET INCOME	-7,558	-16,421	-9,560	-2,002

EVOLVING MY CONSCIOUSNESS

STEP 11 is intended to become a daily part of our ongoing sober lives. And we don't have to wait until we reach the 11th Step to begin to practice it. Walks in nature, listening to the wind, admiring the snow on the Flatirons—these all can invite us into a meditative state, bring us into contact with God. But often the idea of sitting still and being quiet, even for short periods seems very difficult. I know I had an aversion to just being alone and present with myself with nothing to distract me for a long time.

Even though I had stopped drinking and was working through the steps, I still was really uncomfortable with myself. I still had a racing brain full of self-criticism and doubt. It was loud—and sitting quietly seemed like an invitation to spend some time hating on myself, letting the critical voice take over and obliterate me. So it was easier to stay busy and avoid sitting down with myself and the God of my understanding.

The perfectionist critic inside me won't go away if I ignore her. Like alcoholism itself, she will lay in wait and spring on me—when I try to sleep, when I'm alone in a quiet car, when I have a few unscheduled minutes—or waiting for a doctor's appointment, or other times when I'm forced to be alone with myself. It's only through self-acceptance and self-forgiveness that I can quiet that voice. Alcoholism thrives in an environment of self-hatred. I have

found it helpful to identify the critical voice as a form my disease takes in order to keep hold of me. This stance can give me the courage I need to sit quietly anyway, determined that the disease won't win. And yes, the first minutes and attempts are super uncomfortable, but as I persist, some kind of magic distancing happens, and I can watch myself think all that bad stuff, but I don't identify so strongly with it. A self-accusation or criticism could be followed by questioning its veracity. Is that really the truth, or am I just mimicking criticisms from parents, siblings, others and taking them on in a way that validates them?

Once I have a bit of space and quiet in my head, it's a magical time when I can use my imagination to envision how I could do something better or observe



my resistances to how things are, or my thoughts about what God might want for me. The 12x12 says this is the correct use of the imagination—rather than foreboding, imagine possibility. If we have decisions to make we can

ask for guidance. I heard someone say in a meeting the other day that they ask God to bless it or block it. It's a form of praying only for the knowledge of God's will for us. I have come to believe that everything in my life is an opportunity for spiritual growth. One of my favorite meditations is based on the following quote: Life will give you whatever experience is most helpful to the evolution of your consciousness. How do you know this is the experience you need? Because it is the experience you are having at the moment.

If I can live as if that is true, then I can say yes to everything and look for the miracle in it. This is one of the gifts that has come to me by making the practice of Step 11 a priority.

Blessings. ~Liza

*Reprinted from:
Messenger Newsletter
Boulder, Co Intergroup*



SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

I have read the spiritual experience several times in my 4.5 months of sobriety. I never really paid attention to the message that it delivers though. Within the first and second paragraph it clearly states “Yet it is true that our first printing gave many readers the impression that these personality changes, or religious experiences, must be in the nature of sudden and spectacular upheavals. Happily for everyone, this conclusion is erroneous.” This gives me hope. I am most definitely one of the people that felt like it should happen right away and after reading this chapter, I realize it doesn’t. It happens to everyone at different times and in different ways.

I have spoken to my dad in length about God and spirituality as a whole. His outlook is so simple, God lives in our heart and if we sit quietly and long enough with ourselves, we can hear his whispers and feel his presence. I just have to open my heart and mind to receive the love I was meant to have.

My Higher Power lives in the breeze that gently rustles the leaves on the trees. He is in the loud rumble of thunder and the beauty in a soft summer rain. He is the sunset in southern California when the sun sinks into the ocean and fills the sky with vibrant colors. He is in the tear that runs down my cheek and the light in my niece’s eyes. When I sit in the park looking at the beautiful colors on the trees and hear the sound of the stream trickle by, He is speaking to me. He is asking me to appreciate the beauty in His

creations. He is asking me to search within myself to find Him.

Today, I am working on repairing that relationship with my Higher Power and it has been an emotional journey thus far. I know now that it takes time, patience, willingness and love to build that relationship and this chapter has helped me realize that.

Going forward, I know I need to remain steadfast in my search to connect with my Higher Power. I need to remain open and connected with the signals and messages that He sends. I now understand this simple fact: I’ve been to hell and I don’t want to go back. I have learned that from this exercise. Thank you to my sponsor for her love, support, guidance and wisdom.

*Spiritual Experience
Reprinted from
Northern Delaware Intergroup Newsletter*

**God grant me the
Serenity to accept the things
I cannot change...
Courage to change the things I can...
and Wisdom to know the difference.**



12th Step Calls

1



Website Visits

7,641



Night Owl Calls

282



Meeting Info Calls

64



Speakers Provided

0



Literature Purchased

270 Books

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

- Clay City AA
- Defiant Brats East
- District 8
- Mendota 1030 AA Group
- Fireside women’s Big Book
- Forest Lake Alano
- Friends in Recovery
- Gloria Dei AA
- Hazelwood AA
- Highland Park Groups
- Mahtomedi Happy Hour 12x12
- Main Idea
- Midway Club
- Monday Morning Women’s Grp

- North Branch Community Grps
- North Dale Grp
- North Road Grp
- Safe Haven for Women Grp
- Saturday Morning PS Meeting
- Stillwater Rivertown BB Grp
- Summit Hill
- Third Tradition - Northfield
- UptownWhite Bear Lake Thur Night
- White Bear Sat AM Womens Grp

- 27 A.A. Groups contributed \$4,951
- 7 Gratitude Contributions totaled \$203
- 27 Faithful Fivers contributed \$1,315
- 14 Digital Store Revenue for \$1,597

THANK YOU !!!!

Many groups and individuals listed 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.

it... she didn't think about things as deeply as I did.

It's not popular to be grateful. It's not sexy to be grateful. These are the subtle messages that I pick-up from my environment. It's Pollyannaish to focus on the positive things in our lives.

My ego likes it when I think of myself as a more complex thinker-- isn't this person critical about the direction in which the world is moving? Who has time to be grateful when the country is going to hell? There seems to be a premium placed on pessimism. The people who truly know about the difficulties of life seem to move through their days with the heaviness of this knowledge. Right?

A few years ago, I attended a book reading with the brilliant Irish author, Colum McCann ("Let the Great World Spin" and "Transatlantic"). I really connected with the message he gave the audience. He talked about how he wants to promote the idea that the optimist is every bit as strong as the pessimist. As an optimist himself, he felt this subtle prejudice in the writing world that optimists are not as intelligent as pessimists. He said that he dreams of a time when the optimist will sit at the table with the pessimist and will flex his muscles the same way that the pessimist does; he will be regarded as just as strong, equally as intelligent.

It is the same way with gratitude - at least for me. Maybe I am the only one who really needs to learn this lesson, but I would like to buy into this idea that practicing gratitude will free me to fully appreciate life. All these years later, I now see the wisdom in the lessons that my mother was trying to teach me so long ago.

*Ellen A.
Campus Group
Reprinted from
Footsteps Newsletter
November 2019
Cincinnati Intergroup*



Acceptance

FOR most of my life, I was what people would call "a worry wart." I worried about the future. I worried about past. I worried about what you thought of me. I worried about situations and outcomes. Basically, I worried about everything. It was exhausting.

Alcohol was my sedative of choice. An escape from the chaos of my mind. However, alcohol never actually released me from that chaos. It was always there, lurking. Even after putting the drink down, it was still there. I needed relief!



It wasn't until I relapsed and finally took the suggestion of working the Twelve Steps, that I began to understand some of the roots of my chaos. Ah, yes, alcohol was but a symptom, my thoughts and subsequent actions were the real culprits in my life. If I could muster the courage to change the way I perceived myself and the world around me through working the Steps, one day at a time, then it was also possible that I could stay away from my go-to sedative of choice. So, with the help of a sponsor, I embarked on the "How To Change Me" journey. We began working the Twelve Steps. Oh, the gifts that came!

Step Eleven, in particular, gives me one of the most beneficial gifts of all. Something that had eluded me most of my life - peace of mind.

In sobriety, it took me many, many years to get the wrapping off these gifts to see what was actually inside! The wrapping was often super ugly, overly taped, and sometimes when I'd tear it off, there'd be a Russian Nesting Doll inside hiding even more! Let me tell you, I struggled—a lot! But, with patience and practice (things I've also learned in this program) the actual gifts do reveal themselves, and so far they've proven to be awesome!

Meditation is but one of those gifts. A gift that reminds me that I am ok in this moment. One that helps me to focus my attention to the here and now. It's also a mind-blowing reminder to me that I am never alone. Life is happening all at once, in any given moment, with all things - simultaneously. WHOA! A conscious contact, for sure!

Continued on page 8

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

Acceptance - Continued from page 7

Today I choose to leave worry at the door and do my best to accept outcomes. These days I grow to the situation instead of having the situation grow. I am choosing peace of mind over despair.

I am well aware that the choices I am trying to make for myself today are a direct result of getting sober AND doing the step work. I need to stay vigilant in practicing these Steps. I need to remain teachable and self-aware. I have no doubt that the chaotic state of worry can lead me straight to a drink, thus pro- pelling me back into my endless cycle of chaos and sedation. I am choosing to change my unhealthy thoughts and perceptions about myself and others. I am choosing to at least give it a try, one day at a time, here and now. There's no place I'd rather be.

*Reprinted from
Maui Serenity Gazette
Maui Intergroup, Maui, HI
November 2019
—Michelle G.*

HELLO, my name is Sergey and I am currently serving as a member of the Saint Paul Intergroup Web Servant team. As you may already know, we update and maintain a database with more than 800 regular meetings. We meticulously manage group outings and other local AA events. We make available certain audio recordings and meeting minutes from every monthly council meeting. This is only a small sample of the content you will discover on aastpaul.org. Most importantly, we provide an impersonal way for the newcomer to find their way into the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous. We offer a time and a place for the newcomer to be welcomed by other AA's and learn about the Twelve Steps.

I took on this commitment at the end of 2015 shortly after walking into the rooms myself. The incredible journey has truly taught me the meaning behind the responsibility statement. *"I want the hand of AA, always to be there. And for that, I am responsible"*. In many cases, our website will be the first experience a newcomer will have with Alcoholics Anonymous. Therefore, it is critical that we keep our meetings up-to-date and send the folks looking for help, to the right location at the right time. And this is where you (the individual AA) come in. I have the pleasure of exchanging emails with many of you and although I will likely never put a face to a name, I am extremely grateful for your immediate feedback and quick follow-up. ***Please keep in mind that our meetings can only stay up-to-date with your help.*** If your group makes any changes to start time, location, format, etc. Please let us know as soon as possible (Lifeline@aastpaul.org).

In my time serving as web servant I have tackled plenty of updates, but nothing quite like the changes presented by this pandemic. The web servant email account was simultaneously flooded with requests to add online links, phone numbers, and passwords. I was asked to suspend meetings for groups which closed their doors and add specific instructions (regarding masks and distancing) for groups which were still able to meet in person. I would be less than truthful if I told you I was eager to make all these changes. In all honesty, it seemed like an impossible task. But slowly, one meeting at a time, and with Jonathan's help, I processed these

Thoughts from the Board — continued on page 9

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

If you are interested - Contact:
Nightowl@aastpaul.org
to schedule training.

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

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



BOARD ELECTIONS NOVEMBER REPS MEETING!

Thoughts from the Board — continued from page 8

changes and made sure every AA member could find the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous whether virtual or in person. It is only when I complete my list of updates, usually in the late evening hours, when I am overwhelmed with a sense of gratitude and appreciation for everything AA has done for me and continues to do for the community in Saint Paul. I can truly say this service commitment has solidified my continuous sobriety over the past five years. Thank you for letting me be of service and, as always, make sure to email us with any meeting changes or updates.

Sergey

TRADITION ELEVEN

Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.

TODAY'S world is often one of sound bites and video clips. We, as a society, have become acclimated to receiving information that way. A close examination of those communications indicates that the “call to action” which underscores them has become even more aggressive or intense in order to accomplish its purpose – which is to motivate someone to do something they may not have planned to do. The formal term for that is “marketing.” It takes the ‘viewer’ and attempts to convert them into a ‘customer,’ with the ultimate goal of making them a ‘consumer.’ The real purpose is to improve the condition of the advertiser.

But we of Alcoholics Anonymous know that many of the “real world” ways of operating are not for us. And the way we communicate leads in that understanding. ***We don't promote anything!*** There was an old saying in AA years ago – “AA is for those who need it, not for those who want it.” Seems like a pretty calloused way of operating – but it really points to an interesting combination of the Third Tradition and How It Works. Entrance into AA only requires a desire to stop drinking, but stopping drinking requires that we be “willing to go to any lengths.” In any event, it is clear that we do not engage in any kind of promotion of our program, or even sobriety for that matter.

The Oxford Groups, a precursor to AA from which our roots grew, had a saying about themselves. “*We are an organism not and organization.*” Ann Smith mentions this in her diary, and it is mentioned elsewhere in histories of the Oxford Groups. The distinction is that an ***organism*** is a living and growing thing. An ***organization*** is an entity that expands through accumulation and acquisition. The organism seeks survival, an organization seeks domination.

What does this all have to do with our Eleventh Tradition? you might ask. It's all about ego!

We know, from our own personal experience,

that the ego is the basis for many actions that have proven to be harmful to ourselves and those about us. The story about the actor in the play on pages 60-62 in the Big Book stands as the best description of not only the various aspects of ego, but as an example of its true destructiveness. And so in Alcoholics Anonymous we set aside the ego to as great an extent as we possibly can.

Tradition Eleven suggests that we not only do this setting aside of the ego individually—but collectively as well. Somewhere in our literature there is a phrase which states that, “whole societies have gone on benders too.” Emotional sobriety is both possible and needed by the individual ***and*** the society. After all, what is a society but a compilation of its membership.

The challenge, both in our personal sobriety and our collective sobriety is to remain sober. An excess of anything is considered intoxication because it inevitably disturbs the balance of the body, or society.

The symptoms of intoxication are the same for both the individual and the society—a lack of a sense of proportion and a lack of a proper perspective. Essentially, temporary insanity. This often results in attempting what ought not be done. Something grander than what is possible. And therein lies the downfall.

So, Tradition Eleven invites us to avoid that pitfall. It suggests we act humbly combined with consideration and compassion. Most certainly we ought to offer what we have so freely been given. But an offering is quite different from a ‘call to action.’ An offering is a loving act, a call to action is a challenge based on a sense of superiority.

Thank God we have Tradition Eleven to remind us that we can share the gift of sobriety—but it is not ours to force upon anyone.



Office Volunteers:

Pat S., Neilla M., Lynn, Frank D.
Chris M., Mary D., Jeff T., Steve R.
Jimmy D., Charles M.

St. Paul Area Intergroup Representatives' Meeting Minutes,
September 15th 2020 7:30pm.

1. Opened with the Serenity Prayer, introductions, and read the Primary Purpose of Intergroup.
2. Last month minutes reviewed, motioned by Nancy. and seconded by Jesse, motion approved.
3. Treasurer's Report, Mark J – Total Contributions: \$7,578 Contributions up, sales down *See Treasurer's Report for full financial details.*
4. Office Report, Dennis – No longer offering temporary sponsors. *Please email lifeline@aastpaul.org for further information.*
5. Night Owl Report – No Report *Please contact Frank N at NightOwl@aastpaul.org or leave a message at the Intergroup Office.*
6. Website Report, Jonathan L – 809 meetings from 288 groups. There is a Virtual meeting search option in the meeting directory *Contact Jonathan & Sergey at webservant@aastpaul.org.*
7. Outreach Program, – There is a google doc to streamline checking in on meetings. *Please contact outreach@aastpaul.org.*
8. Update from the Board
9. Liaison Reports: District 8: – No report.
District 15: No Report
District 19: – No report..
10. Intergroup Events:
 - a. Recap - 10/10 virtual meeting for Long-timer's Recognition
11. Old Business:
12. New Business: Contribution Drive to offset lowered sales in the office
13. Group AA Announcements: Basic Text is now hybrid virtual/in person
14. Suggestions for next month's agenda: None
15. Grapevine Report, Lindsey ; Volunteer for October, Nancy F..
16. Concept VIII review, Jesse; Volunteer for Concept IX for October, Joe J.
17. Mock Rep Report, Katherine; Volunteer for October, Nancy F.
18. Closed with the Responsibility Statement

Attendance:

Mary S. Uptown House
Jodie, Sunday Night Open Speaker Meeting
Nancy R Mendota 10:30 AA
Jesse O Basic Text
Lauren D. Fireside Women's Big Book
Maddy R. Women's Basic Text
Katherine A Pocketing Our Pride
Joseph J Uptown House
Ken S. No Time Like the Present
Renee B
Nancy F Como Park Big Book
Greg S Lakeview
Ryan R Basic Text
Tom W. Firing Line
Rosemary F White Bear Lake Women's Big Book
Peter M One More Was Added to the Fellowship
Elly C Summit Hill
Ben G Main Idea
Gary

Next Meeting: October 20th 2020, 7:30pm
Zoom

Be on the lookout for the December issue of the Lifeline, which will come out at the November Reps Meeting. It will contain coupons for significant savings on AA literature and but one-get one free deals. You don't want to miss this chance to save some money or get great Christmas gifts!!



St. Paul & Suburban Area Intergroup
33 Wentworth Ave E
Suite 355
West St. Paul, MN 55118-3431

Change Service Requested

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 *Individual Contribution* Enrollment Form

Your Intergroup strives to be self-supporting, and with your personal support we can continue to carry our vital message of Hope and Recovery to all who need and want it. Your contribution entitles you to a one-year subscription to the Lifeline. Contributions may be made annually, bi-annually, quarterly, or monthly. Please consider becoming one of our *Faithful Fivers* (\$5.00/month), *Terrific Tennes* (\$10.00/month), or *Fantastic Fifteneers* & \$15.00/month).

1. Contact Information:

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: ____ ZIP: _____
Phone: _____
Email: _____

2. Amount & Frequency:

Amount \$ _____
Frequency: (check one)
 Monthly Quarterly Bi-Annually Annually
Start on: ____/____/____
 Faithful Fiver (\$5.00/month)
 Terrific Tenner (\$10.00/month)
 Fantastic Fifteneer (\$15.00/month)

3. Choose a Payment Method:

Credit Card/Debit
 Visa MasterCard AMEX Discover
Card # ____/____/____/____
Expiration Date: ____/____
Name on Card: _____

Signature: _____
**I authorize St. Paul Intergroup to automatically bill my account as specified (monthly, quarterly, etc). I understand that I am free to cancel this authorization at any time by contacting Intergroup.*

Check - Please make payable to:

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