



STEP THREE

Made a decision to turn our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.

I was the life of the party, in the beginning. I was the class clown in high school and tried to carry that title with me anywhere I went. I was the girl that would do anything for a laugh. I really knew how to have a good time. I loved the party life and I was good at it.

Something changed after college. I got a job as an educator in the local school district, where they insisted I show up on time. The nerve of those people, really. I had responsibilities and deadlines. Two things I was unsuccessful at accomplishing in college due to my extensive partying and heavy drug use. I tried to be a good teacher, but it was getting harder and harder as my disease progressed. To this day I am the only teacher I know that had to see the principal for bad behavior. I knew something had to change. It just couldn't be my drinking. Not at 24 years old.

Summer came at last, no more responsibilities and as much booze as I wanted. This is where things got bad.

I could no longer turn a blind eye to my life. I was in a bad place and needed out. I just didn't know how to do it. I tried to stop cold turkey, fail. I tried to join the military, fail; apparently they don't take drug addicts. I tried therapy, exercise, only beer, only wine, only two drinks, only clear liquor, getting new friends, getting new clothes, fail, fail, fail. I couldn't stop once

I started and couldn't not start.

One summer morning in July, after a night of the usual drinking to oblivion and putting chemicals in my body that didn't belong there; I woke up and checked my body to make sure I had all my limbs intact. At that moment I had a rush of fear and panic that I had never felt before. I was at the end of my rope, I saw no hope in living this way.

That day I entered rehab.

I was skeptical about a God program. The only emotion God made me feel was fear. Growing up thinking you're going to Hell for who you are can do that to someone.

I spent the last 24 years of my life thinking I was going to hell for being gay. I was raised Catholic, nothing against Catholicism, my parents were just really strict. Being gay meant Hell, end of discussion. So to say the least I was not buying what they were selling in rehab. "God of your own understanding", they call that blasphemy where I'm from. There is only one God, and he didn't like my kind at all.

One thing I am grateful for was that my rehab took us to AA every night. I didn't want to be the failing teacher anymore. I wanted to be happy like the people I kept seeing at meetings. So, I got connected with a group right after I was discharged. Found a sponsor to call me on my shit and faked the God thing until I couldn't fake it anymore.

It took a lot for me to shake off my childhood perception of a wrathful God. My sponsor, at the time, did an amazing job of convincing me God was

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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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SLIPS AND HUMAN NATURE

DR. WILLIAM SILKWORTH

BILLW'S DOCTOR

THE mystery of slips is not so deep as it may appear. While it does seem odd that an alcoholic, who has restored himself to a dignified place among his fellowmen and continues dry for years, should suddenly throw all his happiness overboard and find himself again in mortal peril of drowning in liquor, often the reason is simple.

People are inclined to say, "there is something peculiar about alcoholics. They seem to be well, yet at any moment they may turn back to their old ways. You can never be sure."

This is largely twaddle. The alcoholic is a sick person. Under the technique of Alcoholics Anonymous he gets well -- that is to say, his disease is arrested. There is nothing unpredictable about him any more than there is anything weird about a person who has arrested diabetes.

Let's get it clear, once and for all, that alcoholics are human beings. Then we can safeguard ourselves intelligently against most slips.

In both professional and lay circles, there is a tendency to label everything that an alcoholic may do as "alcoholic behavior." The truth is, it is simple human nature.

It is very wrong to consider any of the personality traits observed in liquor addicts as peculiar to the alcoholic. Emotional and mental quirks are classified as symptoms of alcoholism merely because alcoholics have them, yet those same quirks can be found among non-alcoholics too. Actually they are symptoms of mankind! Of course, the alcoholic himself tends to think of himself as different, somebody special, with unique tendencies and reactions. Many psychiatrists, doctors, and therapists carry the same idea to extremes in their analyses and treatment of alcoholics.

Sometimes they make a complicated mystery of a condition which is found in all human beings, whether they drink whiskey or buttermilk.

To be sure, alcoholism, like every other disease, does manifest itself in some unique ways. It does have a number of baffling peculiarities which differ

from those of all other diseases.

At the same time, any of the symptoms and much of the behavior of alcoholism are closely paralleled and even duplicated in other diseases.

The slip is a relapse! It is a relapse that occurs after the alcoholic has stopped drinking and started on the A.A. program of recovery. Slips usually occur in the early states of the alcoholic's A.A. indoctrination, before he has had time to learn enough of the A.A. techniques and A.A. philosophy to give him a solid footing. But slips may also occur after an alcoholic has been a member of A.A. for many months or even several years, and it is in this kind, above all, that one often finds a marked similarity between the alcoholic's behavior and that of "normal" victims of other diseases.

No one is startled by the fact that relapses are not uncommon among arrested tubercular patients. But here is a startling fact -- the cause is often the same as the cause which leads to slips for the alcoholic.

It happens this way: When a tubercular patient recovers sufficiently to be released from the sanitarium, the doctor gives him careful instructions for the way he is to live when he gets home. He must drink plenty of milk. He must refrain from smoking. He must obey other stringent rules.

For the first several months, perhaps for several years, the patient follows directions. But as his strength increases and he feels fully recovered, he becomes slack. There may come the night when he decides he can stay up until ten o'clock. When he does this, nothing untoward happens. Soon he is disregarding the directions given him when he left the sanitarium. Eventually he has a relapse.

The same tragedy can be found in cardiac cases. After the heart attack, the patient is put on a strict rests schedule. Frightened, he naturally follows directions obediently for a long time. He, too, goes to bed early, avoids exercise such as walking upstairs, quits smoking, and leads a Spartan life. Eventually, though there comes a day, after he has been feeling good for months or several years, when he feels he has regained his strength, and has also recovered from his fright. If the elevator is out of repair one day, he walks up the three flights of stairs. Or he decides to go to a party -- or do just a little smoking -- or take a cocktail or two. If no serious after-effects follow the first departure from the rigorous schedule prescribed, he may try it again, until he suffers a

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relapse.

In both cardiac and tubercular cases, the acts which led to the relapses were preceded by wrong thinking. The patient in each case rationalized himself out of a sense of his own perilous reality. He deliberately turned away from his knowledge of the fact that he had been the victim of a serious disease. He grew overconfident. He decided he didn't have to follow directions.

Now that is precisely what happens with the alcoholic -- the arrested alcoholic, or the alcoholic in A.A. who has a slip. Obviously, he decides to take a drink again some time before he actually takes it. He starts thinking wrong before he actually embarks on the course that leads to a slip. There is no reason to charge the slip to alcoholic behavior or a second heart attack to cardiac behavior. The alcoholic slip is not a symptom of a psychotic condition. There's nothing screwy about it at all. The patient simply didn't follow directions.

For the alcoholic, A.A. offers the directions. A vital factor, or ingredient of the preventive, especially for the alcoholic, is sustained emotion. The alcoholic who learns some of the techniques or the mechanics of A.A. but misses the philosophy or the spirit may get tired of following directions -- not because he is alcoholic, but because he is human. Rules and regulations irk almost anyone, because they are restraining, prohibitive, negative. The philosophy of A.A. however, is positive and provides ample sustained emotion -- a sustained desire to follow directions voluntarily.

In any event, the psychology of the alcoholic is not as different as some people try to make it. The disease has certain physical differences, yes, and the alcoholic has problems peculiar to him, perhaps, in that he has been put on the defensive and consequently has developed frustrations. But in many instances, there is no more reason to be talking about "the alcoholic mind" than there is to try to describe something called "the cardiac mind" or the "TB mind."

I think we'll help the alcoholic more if we can first recognize that he is primarily a human being -- afflicted with human nature.

*You'll have to practice the principles—
the Good Fairies Sobriety Wand
is out for repairs.*

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 (for Zoom info)

District 15 (Wash. Co.)
Christ Lutheran Church
11194 N. 36th St.
Lake Elmo
4th Mon., 7:00 PM
Email: dist15@area36.org (for Zoom info)

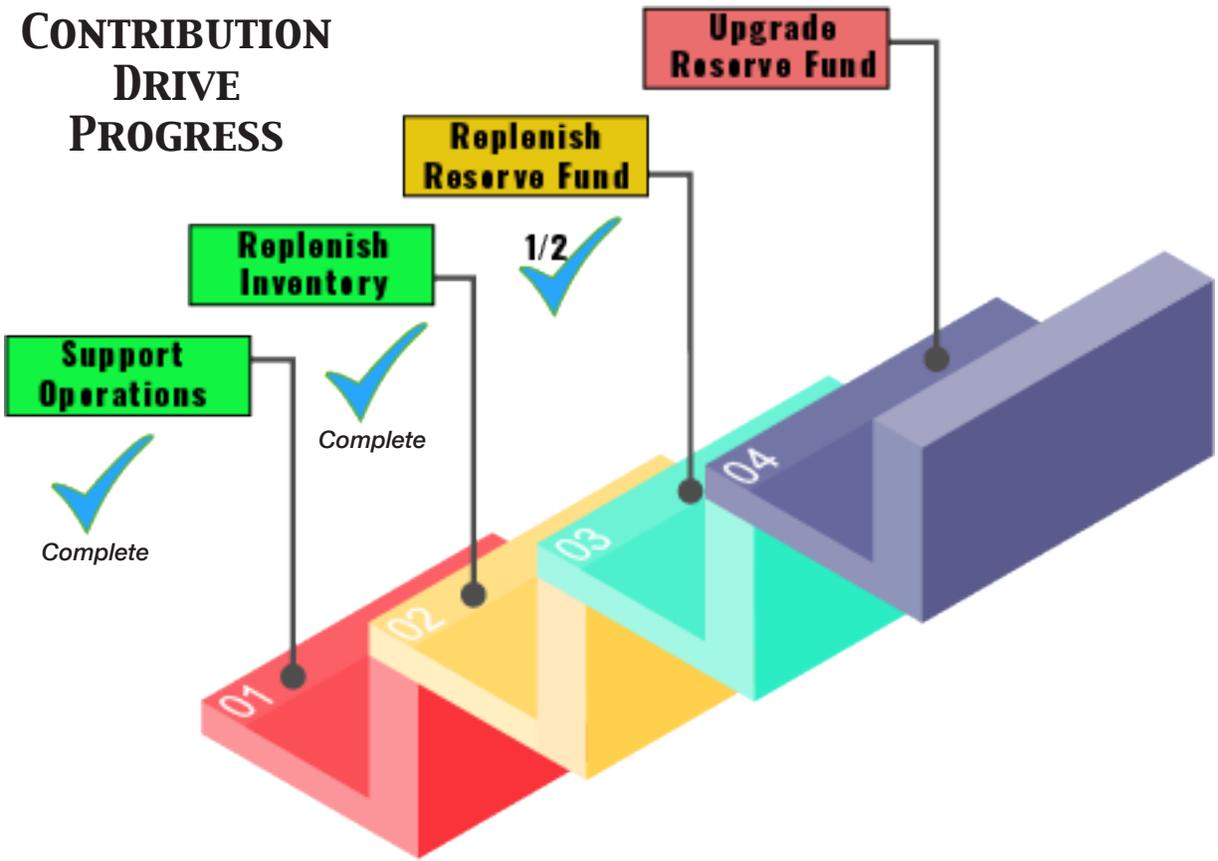
District 19 (Dakota Co.)
Rosemount Community Center
13885 South Robert Trail
Rosemount
2nd Wed., 7:00 PM
dist19@area36.org
Email: dist19@area36.org (for Zoom info)

District 26 (SE Ramsey Co.)
Grace Lutheran Church
1730 Old Hudson Rd.
St. Paul
2nd Sun., 7:00PM
Email: dist26-area36.org (for Zoom info)

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.



CONTRIBUTION DRIVE PROGRESS



The contribution drive has gone well so far. Both groups and many individual members have truly reached deep into their pockets and been willing to share with us. It has been a privilege to witness this in action!

We are about 2/3 of the way toward our goal. Reaching the goal will take a little longer than we had hoped for-but is still very much possible. We hope to be able to finish the replenishment of the Reserve Fund by the end of March and reach our goal for upgrading the fund level by the end of June or July. When AA Intergroup reached out in need - the "hands" of many of you were there for us! THANK YOU!



12th Step Calls

3



Website Visits

8,568



Night Owl Calls

301



Meeting Info Calls

81



Speakers Calls

0



Literature Purchased

127 Books

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

- A Baffled Lot
- Basic Text
- Defiant Brats
- Day by Dei - Saturday
- Eagan Tuesday Nighters
- Farmington Monday Night
- Forest Lake Alano
- Forest Lake Men's Feelings Mtg
- Friday Night 12x12 by the Book
- Friends in Recovery
- Gloria Dei AA
- Gratitude in Action
- Happy Hour Men's Mtg
- Happy, Joyous & Free - Mahtomedi
- Highland Park Grps
- It's Seven Somewhere

- Lake Elmo Thurs Night
- Lakeview Group
- Mendota 1030 AA
- Midway Club
- New Brighton BB
- North Dale Grp
- OMD
- Ridge Runners II
- River Rats
- Rivertown BB - Hastings
- Rosemount AA
- Roseville Wed Night
- Rule 62 Step & Tradition
- Sat Morning Serenity Group
- St. Joe's Hospital
- St. Paul Park Group

- St. Peters Fellowship AA
- Stillwater Relapse Prevention Pgrm
- Summit Hill
- Stillwater Rivertown BB - Sunday
- Third Edition Group
- Turning Point Grp - Wayzata
- Uptown Club
- Valley Creek Monday
- Valley Creek Thursday
- White Bear Sat AM Women's Grp
- Woodbury Serenity Sisters

-
- 44 A.A. Groups contributed \$7,370
 - 15 Gratitude Contributions totaled \$1,440
 - 26 Faithful Fivers contributed \$765
 - 20 Digital Contributions \$1,911

WE WANT TO EXPRESS
OUR DEEPEST THANKS
TO THE GROUPS AND
INDIVIDUALS WHO
HAVE SO GENEROUSLY
CONTRIBUTED TO THE
CONTRIBUTION DRIVE
THIS PAST MONTH!

THOUGHTS

FROM THE BOARD

HI Everyone! I am very excited to be a new member of the Intergroup Board, serving in the secretary position! Intergroup is very near and dear to my heart and my recovery, and you can ask anybody who knows me, the journey from when I first walked through the Intergroup doors on West Seventh St. nearly two and a half years to today, a transformation has been made!

You see, when I first volunteered at Intergroup, I was only newly sober, and it was sort of just a way to gain freedom privileges from Fellowship Club, where I was staying in treatment at the time. I was quite a mess, and I brought my drama with me to the Intergroup office, much to the chagrin of Dennis and Bill, I'm sure! But I listened to their wisdom, and that of the trusty volunteers there who had long-term sobriety, and faithfully put in up to three days a week for quite some time, even after I moved back home. I loved the atmosphere there, of being part of a team, of answering the phones, of chatting with the folks who came in looking for literature or picking up chips for their home groups.

I followed the AA program, worked with my sponsor, went to meetings, and became the Intergroup Rep for my home group at the time about a year and a half ago, and always thought it would be cool to be on the board someday. In the meantime, although life of course has not always been easy, my drama has died down! The family relationships that my alcoholism had destroyed are now healing and I am trying to be a more present and responsible human being!

So, although I haven't been around the office volunteering as much as I'd like to (and this is a plug that our awesome Intergroup office could use some awesome new, or old, friendly faces/voices to answer the phones – to be the hand of AA for the still suffering alcoholic), I am very honored to be the Board's new secretary!

Thank you for letting me be of Service,

Jodie TW

STEP THREE IS ONLY A BEGINNING

SEVERAL marbles began to spin in a somewhat circular motion a few weeks after my first AA meeting. I then began to recite the Third Step Prayer posted on my refrigerator door. I began excitedly chanting it everyday, over and over, hoping for recovery to be provided by the "Great Reality deep within," as promised in the Big Book. (p. 55) The main goal was, of course, to bring about the "personality change sufficient to bring about recovery from alcoholism," mentioned in Appendix II.

As months passed, I would chant, chant, chant this desperate petition for help, yet the terrifying obsession to drink clung like a tick on a hound dog. What was wrong? I seldom missed my daily meetings and I surrounded myself with AA members and practically lived at the local clubhouse. Then the fateful time came when the Drink-Demon pulled me into a bar with gin & tonic on my lips. However, I didn't speak those words—Thank you God!

A new sponsor brought to light that I had been asking God to become relieved of the "bondage of self," but I didn't even know what that was! I didn't know what I was asking God to remove from my deep inner self. I was reminded that "*self cannot rid self from self with self*," so I needed to ask God to do this for me, but first I needed to find out what I would be asking for! What was my bondage of self? Well, my sponsor explained that that was what Step Four was about! This vital step would help me discover those ingredients of the bondage of self that activated my drinking obsession. (Step Four was not about my 'good' aspects) Step Five, with a sponsor and God, is meant to expand on this newfound knowledge to know precisely what to ask God remove in Step Seven.

The Big Book tells us after praying the Third Step Prayer to "launch out" (hint) on a course of vigorous action and to start Step Four "at once" and to do step Five at "first opportunity; Step Six "then" not later; and Step Seven, "when ready." So, I believe, Step Three is not actually completed till the "timetable steps" are accomplished as above.

Bob S, Richmond, IN

St. Paul Area Intergroup Representatives' Meeting Minutes, January 19th, 2021 7:30 pm

1. Opened with the Serenity Prayer, Introductions, and read the Primary Purpose of Intergroup.
2. No December Minutes presented or reviewed.
3. **Treasurer's Report**, Lisa L – **Total Contributions:** \$21,054 **Expenses:** \$10,069 **Total Income and Net Income:** \$24,020 and \$12,420. Mary S motions to accept the Report, Brian M. seconded it.
4. **Office Report**, Dennis B – **Mentioned the generous end-of-year contributions, and that the year turned out well. Sales are up. Individuals and groups can order medallions to be shipped to them. The Office has been getting volunteers, but could use some more, so spread the word. Please email lifeline@stpaul.org for further information.**
5. **Night Owl Report**, Robyn W – There are 11 open shifts! Paul C is doing training as needed. There is a one-year sobriety requirement. Please bring back to your groups to see if we can fill them. *Please contact Robyn W at NightOwl@aastpaul.org or leave a message at the Intergroup Office.*
6. **Website Report**, Jonathan L – There are 784 regular weekly meetings and 291 groups hosted by the website. Traffic counts were down with the exception of meeting searches and homepage views in November. The website could use some volunteers. Please bring this service opportunity back to your groups. *Contact Jonathan & Sergey at webservant@aastpaul.org.*
7. **Outreach Program**, Lindsey D – Among those 784 weekly meetings, only a small portion of them regularly contribute to Intergroup, so outreach volunteers are needed to spread the word about Intergroup, its function, how it serves the AA community, and how groups can offer their support. *Please contact outreach@aastpaul.org if you are interested in serving as there is a protocol, a script to follow, and a list of meetings from which to choose.*
8. **Update from the Board**, Robyn W – The Board voted to transfer \$10,000 from Intergroup's checking account back into the Prudent Reserve. This had been the goal of the Contribution Drive to repopulate it.
9. **Liaison Reports:** District 8: Mike C District 15: Jennifer G District 19:
10. **Intergroup Events**,
 - a. Recap: New Year's Eve Dance Zoom DJ Event
 - b. Upcoming: No upcoming events yet, the Board will discuss them at our next meeting
11. **Old Business:**
12. **New Business:**
13. **Group AA Announcements:**
 - Sunday AM New Brighton Big Book Meeting is now meeting in person, 9:30 a.m.
 - Uptown House Medallion Meetings in person
 - Mahtomedi's 7 p.m. Friday night's 12 & 12 is meeting in person (but you have to give your name to the church secretary)
14. **Suggestions for next month's agenda:** *Please contact secretary@aastpaul.org*
15. **Grapevine Report**, Lydia; Volunteer for February: Elly C
16. **Concept review**, Tom W; Volunteer for Concept III: Brian M
17. **Mock Rep Report**, Robyn W; Volunteer for February: Mary S
18. Closed with the Responsibility Statement

Attendance:

Lisa L - Board Treasurer	Denise -
Gary - No Time Like the Present	Emily H - Rule 62
Lindsey D - Advisor to the Board	Tom W - Firing Line
Lydia S - Uptown House	Ken S - Intergroup
Rachel P - Board chair	Ryan R - Basic Text
Mandy O - Women's Basic Text - Sat. 10 am	Ben G - Main Idea
Brian M - Meeting of the Waters, Mendota	Robyn W - Alt Chair
Jenny T - Fireside Women's Big Book	Jennifer G - District 15, Member at Large
Mary S -Uptown House Co-Chair	Lynn P -- Sunday Night Saint Paul Open Speaker Meeting
Dayna K - Day by Dei Women's Mtg.	Dennis B -- Office Manager, Intergroup
Laurel M - Dei by Day	John K -- Member at Large
Ryan - One More Was Added to the Fellowship	Mike C -- District 8
Jeremiah W - Member at Large	Jonathan L -- Webservant
Nancy T - Safe Haven for Women	Elly C -- Member at Large
Nancy F. - Como Park Big Book/ Scandia AA	Jeff W -- Lakeview AA
Katherine A- Pocketing our Pride	Mandy -- Women's Basic Text
Melana M - 12&12 By the Book in Mahtomedi	Patti M -- New Brighton Big Book -- Sun. 9:30
Rosemary F. - White Bear Lake Women's Sat. am AA	Sergey -- Webservant
	Jodie W -- Secretary

Next Meeting: February 16, 2021 7:30pm

ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S ADDRESS TO THE
WASHINGTONIAN TEMPERANCE SOCIETY - 1842
(excerpts)

In my judgment such of us who have never fallen victims have been spared more by the absence of appetite than from any mental or moral superiority over those who have. Indeed, I believe if we take habitual drunkards as a class, their heads and their hearts will bear an advantageous comparison with those of any other class.

When one who has long been known as a victim of intemperance bursts the fetters that have bound him, and appears before his neighbors 'clothed and in his right mind,' a redeemed specimen of long-lost humanity, and stands up, with tears of joy trembling in his eyes, to tell of the miseries once endured, now to be endured no more forever: of his once naked and starving children, now clad and fed comfortable; of a wife long weighed down with woe, weeping, and a broken heart, now restored to health, happiness, and a renewed affection; and how easily it is all done, once it is resolved to be done—how simple his language! Human feelings cannot resist.

I have not inquired at what period of time the use of intoxicating liquors commenced; nor is it important to know. It is sufficient that, to all of us who now inhabit the world, the practice of drinking them is just as old as the world itself—that is, we have seen the one just as long as we have seen the other.

Those who have suffered by intemperance personally, and have reformed, are the most powerful and efficient instruments to push the reformation to ultimate success. It does not follow that those who have not suffered have no part left them to perform. Whether or not the world would be vastly benefited by a total and final banishment from it of all intoxicating drinks seems to me not now an open question.

The victims of it (alcoholism) were to be pitied and compassioned, just as are the heirs of consumption and other hereditary diseases. Their failing was treated as a misfortune and not as a crime, or even as a disgrace.

There seems ever to have been a proneness in the brilliant and warm blooded to fall into the vice — the demon of intemperance, ever seems to have delighted in sucking the blood of genius and of generosity. What one of us but can call to mind

some relative, more promising in youth than all his fellows, who has fallen a sacrifice to his rapacity? He seems ever to have gone forth like the Egyptian angel of death, commissioned to slay, if not the first, the fairest born of every family."

Happy day when — all appetites controlled, all passions subdued, all matter subjugated—mind, all-conquering mind, shall live and move, the monarch of the world. Glorious consummation! Hail, fall of fury? Reign of reason, all hail!

And when the victory shall be complete — when there shall be neither slave nor drunkard on the earth—how proud the title of that land which may truly claim to be the birthplace and the cradle of both those resolutions that shall have ended in that victory. How nobly distinguished that people who shall have planted and nurtured to maturity both the political and moral freedom of their species.

For the man suddenly or in any other way to break off from the use of drams, who has indulged in them for a long course of years and until his appetite for them has grown tenor a hundred-fold stronger and more craving than any natural appetite can be, requires a most powerful moral effort. In such an undertaking he needs every moral support and influence that can possibly be brought to his aid and thrown around him.

It is an old and a true maxim that 'a drop of honey catches more flies than a gallon of gall.' So with men. If you would win a man to your cause, first convince him that you are his sincere friend.

Is it just to assail, condemn, or despise them? The universal sense of mankind on any subject is an argument, or at least an influence, not easily overcome. The success of the argument in favor of the existence of an overruling providence mainly depends upon that sense; and men ought not in justice to be denounced for yielding to it in any case, or giving it up slowly, especially when they are backed by interest, fixed habits, or burning appetites.

Another error, as it seems to me, into which the old reformers fell, was the position that all habitual drunkards were utterly incorrigible, and therefore must be turned adrift and damned without remedy in order that the grace of temperance might abound, to the temperate then, and to all mankind some hundreds of years thereafter. There is in this attitude something so repugnant to humanity, so uncharitable, so cold-blooded and feelingless, that it never did nor ever can enlist the enthusiasm of a popular cause.

ONE ISSUE AT A TIME

ALCOHOLISM is an incurable disease contracted by you might say, 10% of the population. It is an incurable disease, but it can be arrested. It is no respecter of age, gender, intelligence, religion, or economic status. Why, you might say, 90% of the population can drink with impunity is hard to understand but we who have been in the AA program for a while, know that you can adopt a way of life that removes the obsession to drink without the white knuckling side effects and you will be comfortable in your own skin without the use of medicine.

The symptoms of alcoholism are a combination of mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual in nature. The alcoholic awakes every morning to face, "The hideous four horsemen, Terror, Bewilderment, Frustration, Despair." (pg. 151 BB.) Doctors, Counselors, Priests, and Ministers, when afflicted, come to AA to get relief from this horrible disease. When our desperation out-weighs our denial we show up at the doors of Alcoholics Anonymous and discover a road map to a life of peace and happiness that we believed did not exist.

Alcoholism is a progressive disease and Alcoholics Anonymous is a progressive solution and not a quick fix. These desperate alcoholics finds a degree of hope and comfort when first exposed to the AA group and the laughter and lighthearted banter going on between the members before the meeting even starts. They hear members sharing about Guilt, Shame, Fear and Insecurity and they identified with these symptoms. They hear laughter when a person describes a horrible incident in their life and they think they are laughing at the horror but, in fact, they discover that the laughter was focused on the absurdity of our alcoholic thinking, at the time, and they all identify with it.

If they are fortunate the long, slow process has just begun and each day becomes better than the last. They begin to understand why they did the things they did while under the influence of alcoholism and in the grip of alcoholic thinking. They begin to understand how their irrational fears influenced their decision-making and discover that the solution to that problem is too live by unselfish and proven principles.

They begin to understand that guilt, shame, fear, and insecurity were the core issues that could quickly be put to rest by alcohol and halfway through their second drink everything seemed right with the world. The world had not changed but their perception of it had.

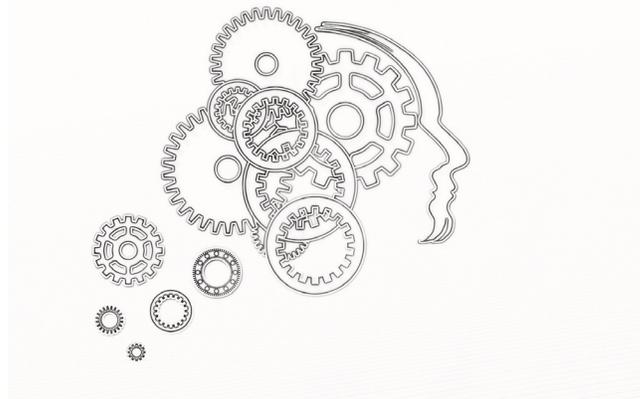
To compensate for the fears and insecurities they had to protect their turf, so they learned how to rationalize those established behavioral patterns they were not proud of. Family responsibilities took a backseat to the boozing and their family let them know about it so, back to the bar they went. The guilt and shame weighed heavy on their mind and to drink would take care of that temporarily.

In the program they come to learn how to admit their mistakes and make restitution for all those faulty behaviors and get on the positive side of the ledger. "---Selfishness---Self-Centeredness! That we think is the root of our troubles. Driven by a hundred forms of fear, self-delusion self-seeking and self-pity we step on the toes of our fellows and they retaliate". (BB pg.62) Can you blame them?

There are 12 steps in the program of Alcoholics Anonymous and each step is preparatory to the next. If we give due diligence to every one of those 12 Steps, we evolved into the person we always wished we could become.

We can't stop drinking if we can't stop the alcoholic thinking. Again, In the program, each day seems better than the day before. One day at a time. One issue at a time. One solution at a time. I can't explain My AA experience any better than that.

*Reprinted from the Jan 2021
Salt River Intergroup newsletter
Rick R.*



ISSUES & TISSUES

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

2021 INTERGROUP BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Advisor to the Board (non voting)	Lindsey D.
Chairperson	Rachel P.
Alternate Chairperson	Robyn W.
Secretary	Jodie T-W.
Treasurer	Lisa L.
Alternate Treasurer	Renee B.
2022 Member-At-Large	Jennifer G.
2022 Member-At-Large	Elly C.
2021 Member-At-Large	Jeremiah W.
2021 Member-At-Large	Andrew LaB.
Manager	Dennis B.
Web Servant (non voting)	Jonathan L.
Web Servant (non voting)	Sergey K.
Night Owl Coordinator (non voting)	Robyn W.



Office Volunteers:
Tomas, Katie, Lynn, Jimmy,
Chris, Mary, Michael, Roger,
Mallori

TRADITION THREE

The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.

I had been raised on the idea that a man's home was his castle and he the king of that castle. Thus, when my reign was being questioned because of my increased proclivity for liquid spirits rather than an ephemeral one, I wanted to impress upon my subjects that all was well within the realm. Around the dinner table on that beautiful Saturday afternoon in December, I publicly proclaimed to an inquiring spouse and supportive mother-in-law that I was indeed dealing with my drinking issue, not problem, albeit in an easier, softer way (any problem drinker who reads this will understand), since I had become a "member" of A.A. I patiently explained to these doubtful ears that because the only requirement for such membership was "a desire to stop"—which I professed most earnestly and, at that time untruthfully, which I had—I was doing A.A.

Privately, my truth was better expressed by Groucho Marx when he said he would refuse to join any club that would have him as a member. I wanted only relief from the inquisition, so I accepted the stigma of calling myself an alcoholic to gain a respite. Talk about going to any lengths—I had, but it was to keep drinking—not to stop. I wanted no part of the A.A. group or any A.A. club or becoming a new member or any of their A.A.-related hogwash.

However, while I continued to lie about my desires and intentions to all those near and dear, comforting myself with my spirits, I followed through on my actions; I attended those meetings, each morning at 7:00 A.M., to keep up appearances and the hounds at bay.

Luckily for me, you all just didn't seem to care. Each morning at the end of the meeting you asked for a moment of silence to ponder the plight of those who suffered from alcoholism. When I finally got honest with you after months of omitting the little fact that I remained a daily drinker, you didn't kick me out of your meeting. In fact, you were actually nicer to me! This bucked the worsening trend of my "loyal subjects" who had in the meantime revolted and removed me from my throne. You asked for not a penny, suggesting only a contribution, if I was

able, to help keep the doors open, the lights on... coffee too—if there was extra—for down the road. You weren't into public causes, you didn't ask me to pledge anything or get on any committees. You said that you met 365 days a year, rain or shine, and all were welcome—even me, the dishonest, arrogant, defrocked king, anytime I wanted to show up.

The people I met at those 7:00 A.M. meetings embodied the notion "Our membership ought to include all who suffer from alcoholism. Hence, we may refuse none who wish to recover. Nor ought A.A. membership ever depend upon money or conformity. Any two or three alcoholics gathered together for sobriety may call themselves an A.A. group, provided that, as a group, they have no other affiliation." Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions (the Long Form).

All were welcome— even me, the dishonest, arrogant, defrocked king. Though the coup within my realm was successful and I remain long in exile from that castle, I have indeed become a member of A.A. Though I joined with reluctance, I have stayed, and my commitment and gratitude have increased. As I have watched my group, our group—that fellowship to which I now belong by my choice, at the order of neither court nor person—accept each newcomer. I have seen the beauty of this tradition expressed again and again in real time. Very often, I see this leading to continued sobriety; to a life saved; to a life being put to useful purpose.

So, while I still love Groucho, I know where I belong and am so glad you will have me as a member.

*Reprinted from
The Point Newsletter
San Francisco, CA*



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too big to fit in a box or a building. It took six months of sobriety before I stopped fearing God.

I'm not saying AA is a sanctuary and all gays should run into its open arms to be free from the guilt they ever felt before about being alive. But that is what AA did for me. I no longer had guilt about being alive and I was no longer afraid of God. As long as I stayed in the program and trusted God, my life got way better.

The only time I go to the principal's office now is to discuss what else I can do to help out my school. No longer do I show up so hung over that I have no choice but to turn off the lights and show a movie.

Coming from this party girl, life has just begun thanks to AA.

*Reprinted from The Dialog
Dallas , TX Intergroup
God bless, Teresa C.*

AS WE PROGRESS IN OUR THREE LEGACIES

THE LEGACY OF RECOVERY

Through engaging in a dedicated and committed practice of the Twelve Steps, we become freed from the bondage of self — the manifestation of which allows us to give up our old personal ideas and consider the Group Conscience and those around us. This opens the door to:

THE LEGACY OF UNITY

Engaging in a dedicated and committed practice of the Twelve Traditions by which we become freed of the bondage to our group ideas — the manifestation of which is that we become engaged in the larger Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous and become interested in the well-being of our whole society. This opens the door to:

THE LEGACY OF SERVICE

Engaging in a dedicated and committed participation in the activities and actions of our entire Fellowship through the practice of our Twelve Concepts for World Service; which frees us from the old human ideas of how a society ought to function — the manifestation of which places us in a position to seek the will and guidance of a Higher Power (HP), or a set of Higher Principles (HP), for Alcoholics Anonymous.

THE RESULT

This progressive dedication and commitment, and its manifestations, place us in a position to nurture and grow the spiritualized society of Alcoholics Anonymous, that we have so freely been given, in order that we may pass it on to those who follow the path we have trudged.

**Minnetonka Big Book Study Group
of
Alcoholics Anonymous**

presents its

**27th Annual Serenity “Breakfast”
Sunday May 23, 2021**

Using a virtual Webinar format



**Guest AA Speaker
Butch M. from Barrie, Ontario**



Speaker will be ASL interpreted

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Webinar logon information and passcode will be sent upon registration

Speaker Meeting: 10:30 am to Noon



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