



STEP 2

“Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.”

For me, the second step was a no-brainer.

I was raised Protestant, in a seriously religious and literate family, so I had read much of the Bible and understood the doctrines. But in my late teens and early 20s, I began to see the local congregations of Protestants as irrelevant to my life. Still seeking a spiritual foundation, I began reading about religions, beliefs, and practices around the world: Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, and Paganism, with excursions into astrology, the Kabbalah, and Tarot cards.

In those younger years, I was actually seeking not just a way to understand the world, but to control it and make it do my will, without any hard work—magic, not spirituality. Meanwhile, I had begun using. In my college years, pot and LSD were my drugs of choice. Later, after I dropped out, left the campus, and turned 21, alcohol became easier to get, and it worked just fine.

As the years went by and my drinking gradually progressed, I developed, refined, and hardened my belief system: that church-

es were human institutions, not divine, run by humans with human failings, notably self-seeking. That any organized religion which reaches for or acquires political power thereby abandons and forfeits its purpose of connecting people to God.

But while my contempt for churches, priests, preachers, imams, mullahs, and holy men grew, I never lost my belief that there is a God. I just didn't know anything about the nature of God, and I disbelieved that you knew anything either. If you were preaching anything, you were trying to con me for your own purposes.

However, as the years went by, I met some people who were living good, peaceful, and happy lives, people whose spiritual beliefs and practices were central to their lives. Some of them were even Christian. I saw some miracles happen occasionally, when people and groups worked to do God's will as they understood it—not with any reasonable expectation of success, but with faith in God.

I did the first step in my early forties. I admitted—to myself, at least—that I was powerless over alcohol and that my life was unmanageable, but I wasn't ready to stop drinking. When I was finally forced to change things, I had no problem believing that God, whoever He, She, It, or They may be, could restore me to sanity.

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., 33 Wentworth Ave E, Suite 355, West St. Paul, MN 55118-3431

Website: www.aastpaul.org Online Store: aaspi.company.site E-mail: lifeline@aastpaul.org Phone: (651) 227-5502
Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday - Friday 9:30 to 5:30, Tuesday 11:30 to 7:30, Saturday 10:00 to 2:00 Sunday Closed

I balked for a while at turning my will and my life over to His/Her/Its/Their care, but eventually, I surrendered enough to get sober. I don't have to know the secret name of God. I don't have to know who's right—the Pope, the Grand Ayatollah, the Dalai Lama, Brigham Young, or H.P. Lovecraft.

There is a Higher Power, and She (so I shall tentatively pretend, for the time being) can restore me to sanity if I ask for Her help.

— Thanks to Frank D., office volunteer, for this submission.

TRADITION 2

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

I would like to share with my Grapevine friends a small portion of my Fifth Step and the experience with Tradition Two that led me to take this Step.

I try to live the gratitude I feel by carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers, whether newcomer or old-timer. After approximately six months of sobriety, I felt the need for a Sunday-afternoon group. (Toronto has over 180 meetings per week, but not one filled that time period.) When I spoke to a number of AAs, they all replied, “Sounds great! Call me when it's started.”

Everything will happen when it is meant to. Finally, a full year later, someone looked thoughtfully at me for a moment, then asked, “When do we get started?” With a lot of help from a lot of people, the discussion group held its first meeting only two weeks after that question was asked. At that time, we had two mem-



2025

**GOPHER STATE L
MAY 23RD - 25TH**

JOIN US AS WE CELEBRATE

50

Years!

DOUBLETREE HOTEL • BLOOMINGTON, MN

Hospitality Suites are a great opportunity for fellowship and service at Gopher State!

If your group is interested in hosting a hospitality suite, please fill out the Hospitality Suite Inquiry Form.

Don't forget, groups can co-host a suite and split the cost and commitment.



<http://tiny.cc/gopherstatehospitality>

If your group had a suite last year someone from the Hospitality Suite Committee will be reaching out to you

bers and about five visitors weekly. Three months later, we had grown to ten members and twenty to twenty-five visitors weekly—enough to break up into two smaller groups.

Now, there is one thing I failed to mention: I was with the group for the first of those months but was confined to the hospital or my home for the next two. Other AA members looked after the group. This period saw my thinking get more than a little squirrely. I believed that I had started the discussion group, that I had maintained it, and that I was responsible for helping all those people each Sunday.

My second week back at the group was our business meeting. I was elected secretary, but I wanted the position of GSR because it sounded more impressive. After all, didn't I deserve it? Needless to say, my ego was hurt.

My Friend Upstairs was taking care of me, though, as He has always done. For a couple of weeks, I'd go to other groups and unfailingly be asked to read the Traditions. Nobody but myself noticed my voice faltering on the Second Tradition:

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

More and more, that began hitting home. Looking at things honestly, I knew that a multitude of people provided the action behind the discussion group, including every individual who participated by coming. I admitted the obvious fact that the group had not only maintained itself while I was ill; it had grown tremendously and become a very popular meeting.

The other Traditions came into focus for me, and I realized that God as I understand Him had used me—I was merely an instrument enabled through His grace to carry out His will. Though I am still a bit ashamed to confess this, at first, I resented my Higher Power for taking the spotlight away from me. I took a mini-inventory and shared my findings with a wonderful man who had “just

happened” to speak on Step Five at a meeting earlier that evening. By the end of our discussion, I realized that God was again working through one alcoholic to help another. What could be more beautiful!

My work was not done. The Ninth Step was also connected with this. The following Sunday afternoon, when it came my turn to discuss what was on my mind, I began, “For what I am about to say, I will probably lose some friends, but...” And the story was told.

After the meeting, almost all the members came up to me and said little or nothing as they simply, lovingly put their arms around me. They understood.

I chose to share this experience with you because I know that somewhere someone is feeling what I did. To such a friend, I say:

“Others who have been there know the original anger and frustration. We know the hurt ego and the guilt that follows. We know the God-given feeling of peace that finally comes when we accept the fact that we are only instruments fulfilling His plan. You are not alone!”

— Y. T., Toronto, Ontario

Minnetonka Big Book Study Group
of
Alcoholics Anonymous
presents its

31st Annual Serenity Breakfast
Sunday, May 18, 2025

at the Minnetonka Community Center
14600 Minnetonka Blvd ~ Minnetonka, MN 55345



Guest AA Speaker
Paul G. from Brecksville, OH
Speaker Meeting: 10:30 am to Noon
Breakfast: 8:30 am to 10:25 am



Only \$15.00 in advance ~ \$20.00 at the door
(Speaker only = Seventh Tradition)

THOUGHTS FROM THE BOARD

FELLOWSHIP

Alcoholics Anonymous has given me a detailed program with steps and actions which have led me to a successful and sustained sobriety. Its members welcomed me with open arms, and regardless of how hard I may have pulled back, they have not let go. I didn't know of a connection such as the one I have found in the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous. My disease kept me distant and isolated. My shame and guilt kept me from being honest and open with those around me. To be vulnerable with another human being was terrifying. I was defenseless.

My ability to create a narrative in which I was alone, terribly unique from normal people, only fueled my need to protect myself and avoid being honest. But the shared experiences of all AAs was illuminating. Here I was, with all my garbage, past transgressions, everything that reinforced my idea of being an awful human being, and no one batted an eye. There was no judgement. There was acceptance and love.

The opposite of addiction is connection. Such strong connections are made through these shared experiences. We find connection because of our traumas. We find connection because of our disease. We find connection through laughter and love around our insane behavior and wild stories. I have found understanding.

When I entered these rooms I perceived myself as an outcast. Seeing others connect through a Zoom screen only strengthened this belief, as I didn't know any of these people. I didn't have a way of connecting. As time went on, as I heard all the similarities in our experiences, I started to soften to the idea that I was one of many. I began to connect outside of the rooms.

About a year and a half ago I went on a men's retreat with my sponsorship family. It was the first time I was meeting many of these men in person. Up until that point I had had no idea what I was missing by squirreling away in my office and only experiencing AA in an online format. The joy and love I felt being among so many fellow AAs illustrated to me what connection could really bring.

I have since began attending in-person meetings. I regularly attend fellowship after meetings. I have contact with alcoholics everyday outside of the rooms of AA. My sobriety has grown because I have put down my loner mentality, my need for isolation. The program of Alcoholics Anonymous has kept me sober. The love and fellowship of each of you has become one of many reasons I keep coming back.

-- Alex S.

Office Update

We have started off the year on a decent footing. The staff are happy and we've had a small increase in volunteers.

We have sold out of the Plain Language Big Book. We will be restocking as soon as possible.

I'm sure many of you are curious about the move of the office. We are currently looking for space available for some time in May or June. The current building that we are located in was under contract to be sold at the beginning of this year and the building has yet to sold. This means that the time frame for us to leave has changed and we are in no rush.

If the building is not sold we will continue to look at available options in the St. Paul area to move closer to a larger population of meetings and members of AA. Please stay tuned in with the office, Rep and Board meeting every third Tuesday of the month to have more up to date information.

The office always has service opportunities available. Currently we are looking for more volunteers to join our outreach committee.

Outreach Committee is where members of AA go to meetings and groups in the St. Paul and Suburban area to let members of AA know about St. Paul Intergroup and it's services.

The committee meets every 3rd Thursday of the month at 5pm via zoom to talk about plans of action.

Everyone is welcome and there is no sobriety requirement.

You can find the link on our website at www.aastpaul.org.

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 2407
James A Farley Station
New York, NY 10116-2407

10% Southern MN Area 36

Southern Minnesota Area Assembly
P.O. Box 2812
Mpls., MN 55402-0812

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

WAYS TO FINANCIALLY SUPPORT INTERGROUP

1. VIA SQUARE

Use the camera on your phone to scan this QR code to be redirected to the SPI contribution webpage :



2. VIA CHECK

You are always welcome to stop by during business hours, or mail a personal or AA group check to the office at:

Saint Paul Intergroup
33 Wentworth Ave E, Ste 355
West St. Paul, MN
55118-3431

AREA 36 PINK CAN PLAN

THE PINK CAN PLAN COLLECTS FUNDS TO PURCHASE AA LITERATURE FOR ALCOHOLICS IN CORRECTIONS FACILITIES IN SOUTHERN MINNESOTA.

MAIL CONTRIBUTIONS TO:

**PINK CAN PLAN
PO BOX 41633
PLYMOUTH MN 55441-0633**

✦ THE POINT IS... ✦



POTLUCK, KARAOKE, FELLOWSHIP!



170 MARIA AVENUE SAINT PAUL MN

Meeting at 5:30pm potluck after!

Bring a dish!

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 13TH 6:30PM



DISTRICT SERVICE MEETINGS

District 8 (Ramsey Co.)
3rd Wed., 7:00 PM
Email: dist8@area36.org (for Zoom info)

District 15 (Washington 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.)
2nd Wed., 7:00 PM
dist19@area36.org
Email: dist19@area36.org (for Zoom info)



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

2025 INTERGROUP BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Advisor to the Board: Kelly K.

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Alt. Board Chair: Alex S.

Treasurer: Brittani G.

Alt. Treasurer: Donald H.

Secretary: Andrew A.

Members at Large:

Emily M.

Brandon H.

Heather R.

Alex L.

Office Manager: Jacob F.

Webservant: Jonathan L.

GREEN CAN PLAN

PLEASE HELP PROVIDE AN ASL INTERPRETER AT AN AA MEETING IN DISTRICT 8



CHECKS CAN BE SENT TO

ASL FUND

PO BOX 131831

ROSEVILLE, MN 55113-0020

OR

CONTRIBUTE ELECTRONICALLY

VENMO @ASLFund-DistrictEight

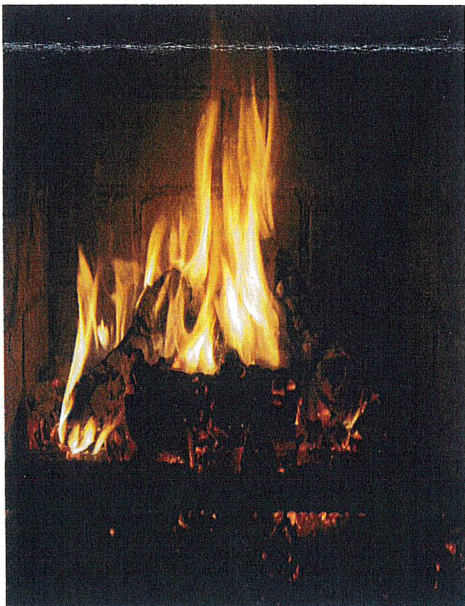
Contact District 8 ASL Fund Coordinator

17TH ANNUAL MEN'S FIRESIDE AA FELLOWSHIP RETREAT
"HALF MEASURES AVAILED US NOTHING"
FEBRUARY 21, 22 & 23, 2025

NORTHERN PINES CAMP

20033 County Road One
Park Rapids, MN 56470
218-732-4713

Men's www.northernpinespines.org



Moderator - Lanny L- Maplewood AA

Friday Feb 21st

4:00pm Registration
6:00pm Dinner
8:00pm Reception Speaker: **TBD**

Saturday Feb 22nd

8:00am Breakfast
9:30am Speaker: **Jerett S.** Big Lake (Step 4)
10:30am Small Group Discussion
12:00pm Lunch
1:30pm Speaker: **David D.** St. Croix Falls
(Step5)
2:30pm Small Group Discussion
5:30pm Dinner
8:00pm Speaker: **Rory L.** Rochester

Sunday Feb 23rd

8:00am Breakfast
9:00am Gratitude Speaker - **TBD**
10:00am 2026 Planning Session

**COST OF LODGING AND MEALS - \$150.00 PLEASE PRE-REGISTER AND PAY
BY JAN 1, 2025 (A FEW SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE)**

(Bring your own bedding, toiletries & towel.)

**Pre-registration: Mail a check payable to "Fireside Retreat" to
PO Box 21 Cambridge, MN 55008.**

For additional information please call:

Lanny L 612-819-4996, Jim C 612-221-4356,
Or Scott N 612-390-0456.

**Suggested - Bring an item to donate to the raffle.
Proceeds used for next year's scholarship fund.**

If you would like to financially contribute to St. Paul, this QR code will bring you to the St. Paul Intergroup website contribution page.



There are other ways to contribute to St. Paul intergroup as well and you can find those on our website or at the office in person.

Office And Thanks to our many Night Owl volunteers as well.
 Volunteers Hoot Hoot!
 Bernie
 Lynn E. If you are interested in being of Service, please Visit our Website or
 Frank D. Contact the office!!
 Mike
 Thanks to your all!

The following groups, members and Faithful Fiver members made the service of intergroup possible last month:

Thank You So Very Much!

- 25 A.A. Groups contributed - \$3,789.58
- Faithful Fivers contributed - \$1,049.00
- Total Contributions - \$6,221.25

Hope Church - Monday AA
 Sunnyside Group
 Happy Hour Men's Meeting
 Steps to Freedom
 Fairmont BB Study Saturday
 Second Sandwich
 It's Seven Somewhere
 Mendota St. Peter's Sat 9AM
 Grupo Una Luz En El Camino
 Wednesday Night Men's 12 x 12
 Old Timers
 North Dale Group

Valley Step Group
 Pages of Wisdom
 Saturday Morning Womens Group
 Lake City Group
 Midway Club
 Apple Valley Daily Reflections
 OMD
 Maplewood Groups
 Rivertown Big Book - Hastings
 Grovers Thursday Night



Meeting
Info Calls

47



Speakers
Calls

10



12th Step
Calls

6



Total
Calls
126

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

Change Service Requested

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage

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Twin Cities MN
Permit 7451

Please let us know a month in advance if your address changes. 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 Fifteeners \$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 Fifteener (\$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:

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