



STEP 6

Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

I was looking forward to a reunion with four women whom I went to high school with 50 years ago. Our weekends together had become an annual event. A stay in Maine in a lovely home surrounded by trees, flowers and blue sky was much anticipated. It was a time to come together to relive old memories and to make new ones. At times it felt like the pajama parties of the 1950's.

I was not overly concerned that they would be drinking wine. They knew of my sobriety and had been supportive. I had my literature and phone numbers. I looked forward to celebrating 35 years of sobriety in another month.

These were women that I drank with. My first experience of getting drunk happened with three of these women when we were 15. Barb (our hostess in Maine) had a babysitting job for a neighbor. She invited Lillian and me to keep her company. While Barb watched the children, Lillian and I had spotted the bottles of alcohol lining the family room wall and we decided to sample them. I felt like Alice in Wonderland with all these magic potions.

This was the first of my alcoholic drinking. For the next 18 years, I drank for effect. That was the beginning of blackout drinking, the loss of the values I had been taught, the mental obsession around alcohol and the physical compulsion after the first drink. Barb lost her job because of this, I had a hangover and a blackout and yet, I looked forward to when I could do this again! My disease progressed until my life spiraled out of control. Soon after, I arrived in Alcoholics Anonymous. I was 33 years old.

On Saturday evening, we started reminiscing about one of our classmates who was now deceased. We had bullied and teased her unmercifully. My friends chalked this up to adolescent behavior but I disagreed because I was ashamed of my part in this. As we discussed this, our hostess quietly announced that she felt she also was the target of our cruelty. This brought a hush over the room and she also announced she had forgiven us and that she loved us.

Later, in my room, I thanked God for another day sobriety. I then asked for guidance about making amends to my friend Barb for my part in destructive and hurtful behavior. I reflected that although I thought I had done the Eighth and Ninth Step, I had not been very thorough. I had tended to see myself as the victim rather than see the harm I had done others.

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

The following day the chance came and I was able to give a heartfelt “I am so sorry for having hurt you.” I was able to share with her some of my old feelings that I had back in high school: That I had never felt good enough or pretty enough and that sobriety has given me an opportunity to become a woman of dignity and worth. I think we both experienced a sense of healing.

By: Joan L. | Gloucester, Massachusetts

A 50th high school reunion afforded her an opportunity to make an amends to an old friend

THOUGHTS FROM THE BOARD

Second Surrender: A Journey Deeper into Recovery

Over the past 6 years I’ve heard tell of this terrifying “Second Surrender”. I use the word terrifying because those people I’ve heard share on the topic normally have this full-on life crisis that brought them to their knees. They share on the powerlessness and despair while in sobriety.

Well I’m here to report to you this is, in fact, my experience as well. But, do not be alarmed my fellows! The inability to navigate through this self-inflicted drama was a direct effect of me taking my will back from God and having an experience that brought me before my Maker on my knees and willing to do whatever it takes to stop harming His kids with my actions.

When it comes down to this Second Surrender, I feel as if it was much more of the “white light experience” Bill W talks about in his story or in the Spiritual Experience appendix in the Big Book. It was sudden, drastic and undeniable. I had a new found understanding as to the 3rd step as well as the 7th step.

This business of blocking God out of certain areas of my life was no longer sustainable. I need His power in every aspect of my life if I want to be useful to Him. I kept trying to fix this thing, this problem on my own. I kept thinking that if I was able to stay sober then surely I should be able to fix this other issue. It wasn’t until after the Surrender that I saw my main failure. My great blunder was thinking I got myself sober AND I’m the one keeping me sober. I failed to remember the A.B.C’s of Alcoholics Anonymous:

- (a) That we were alcoholic and could not manage our own lives.
- (b) That probably no human power could have relieved our alcoholism.
- (c) That God could and would if He were sought.

The first surrender that brings many of us into the rooms of AA is often born of desperation.

We've hit our bottom, whatever that may be. For some, it's losing everything—family, career, health. For others, it's the realization that we simply cannot stop drinking on our own power. This surrender is fundamental to our recovery. It's the admission of powerlessness over alcohol that opens the door to a spiritual solution.

But what many of us don't anticipate is that this initial surrender is just the beginning. Years into sobriety, when we've rebuilt our lives, regained trust, and established ourselves in recovery, we may find ourselves facing what old-timers call the "Second Surrender." This isn't about alcohol anymore—we've accepted that battle is best left to our Higher Power. Instead, this second surrender addresses something equally insidious: our self-will running riot in other areas of our lives.

In my case, the second surrender came after six years of continuous sobriety. From the outside, my recovery looked solid. I was actively involved in service work, had a sponsor, and worked with sponsees. I had repaired relationships and built a life that seemed unimaginable during my drinking days. Yet internally, I was suffering.

I had cordoned off certain areas of my life as "mine" to control. While I had surrendered my drinking to my Higher Power, I still believed I could manage my finances, relationships, and professional life on my own terms. After all, wasn't I staying sober? Wasn't that proof of my capability?

This illusion of control gradually led me back into the same thought patterns that had once fueled my drinking. Resentments began to build. Fear took hold. Self-centered thinking dominated my decision-making. Though I wasn't picking up a drink, I was returning to the "dry drunk" mentality that the program warns us about.

The crisis came suddenly. A series of personal setbacks—relationship difficulties, financial pressures, and career disappointments—converged at once. My carefully constructed world began to crumble, not because external circumstances were so terrible, but because I had been trying to manage everything through self-will alone. The mental and emotional pressure became unbearable.

It was then that I found myself on my knees again—not pleading for sobriety this time, but begging for relief from myself. This was my second surrender, and in many ways, it was more profound than the first.

Bill W. describes his spiritual experience in the Big Book as a moment when "the room lit up with a

great white light." While not all of us have such dramatic experiences, there is often a moment of clarity that comes with this second surrender that feels equally transformative.

For me, it was the sudden understanding that my sobriety had never been "mine" to begin with. Every sober day was a gift from my Higher Power, not an achievement I could claim credit for. The same principles that had saved me from alcohol were the only ones that could save me from my self-will in other areas of life.

This realization brought me to a deeper understanding of the Third Step: "Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him." I had made this decision regarding alcohol, but had failed to apply it to my entire life. Similarly, the Seventh Step took on new meaning: "Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings." My shortcoming was the belief that I could compartmentalize my surrender, giving God only the pieces I was desperate to be rid of.

Many of us in recovery fall into this trap of selective surrender. We're willing to admit powerlessness over alcohol or drugs, but we cling to the illusion that we can control other aspects of our lives through self-will alone. This is what our literature refers to as "half measures."

As the Big Book tells us, "Half measures availed us nothing. We stood at the turning point." This applies not just to our initial recovery, but to our ongoing spiritual growth. When we hold back parts of ourselves from our program, we inevitably find that the same character defects that drove our addiction begin to manifest in these "reserved" areas of life.

The Second Surrender acknowledges that our problem was never just alcohol—it was self-centered fear and the illusion of control. As the Big Book says, "Selfishness—self-centeredness! That, we think, is the root of our troubles."

The results of this second surrender have been as miraculous as the first. When I finally admitted complete defeat—not just over alcohol but over my life management in general—I experienced a new freedom. The Big Book describes it perfectly: "We have ceased fighting anything or anyone—even alcohol. For by this time sanity will have returned."

This sanity extends beyond the decision not to drink. It's a sanity that permeates all aspects of life. Most importantly, we discover that we no longer need to compartmentalize our lives. The principles that save us from drinking can transform every aspect of our

SAINT PAUL INTERGROUP ICE CREAM SOCIAL AND LONG TIMERS RECOGNITION

Fun
For
Family
&
Friends



SATURDAY JULY 19TH
3 - 4:30 pm

THE RECOVERY CHURCH

253 STATE STREET SOUTH

SAINT PAUL, MN 55107

Four Long Timer Speakers

existence when we allow them to.

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This sanity extends beyond the decision not to drink. It's a sanity that permeates all aspects of life. When we truly surrender our will and our lives to the care of God, we find that:

1. **Acceptance** replaces the need to control
2. **Faith** overcomes fear
3. **Humility** dissolves self-importance
4. **Service** becomes joyful rather than obligatory
5. **Gratitude** overcomes entitlement

Most importantly, we discover that we no longer need to compartmentalize our lives. The principles that save us from drinking can transform every aspect of our existence when we allow them to.

Brandon H

Board Member at Large 2024-2026

HOOTS! May 2025

Thanks to all the faithful Night Owl volunteers who helped to answer the phones this past month – Great Job! We currently have only one open shift:

1st Saturday 9am-2pm Starting in June. If you are interested in this shift, please send an e-mail at nightowl@aastpaul.org

We would also like to hear from you if:

Your group has a new Nightowl coordinator - we need their name, email, and phone number

You want to be added to the nightowl volunteer waiting list

You have a night owl story that you want to share

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

Office Update

We now have an easier way to sign up to be a Faithful Fiver. On our website contribution page, individuals and groups can easily sign up to make contributions through the provided link.

Important: Group Outreach

The office is struggling to find people willing to serve for group outreach. 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.

What makes group outreach so important, you may ask?

First, that we go to the meetings in our directory to make sure that a meeting is still there and that if it is there, it has clear instructions on how to find the meeting.

Second, that the meeting is in fact an AA meeting and is not asking it's members for payment or has any religious or other affiliations, or violates the 12 traditions in any other way.

Lastly, that the groups know of St. Paul intergroup and the services that it provides and has an opportunity to share it's voice at intergroup.

The committee meets every 2nd 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.

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 Weds. Of the Month -7pm to 8:30pm
Eagan Community Center
1501 Central Pkwy
Saint Paul, MN, 55121
Lone Oak Room
dist19@area36.org



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.

Board Chair: Ricardo G

Alt. Board Chair: Alex S.

Treasurer: Brittani G.

Alt. Treasurer: Don 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

THE 65TH ICYPAA

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

M I N N E A P O L I S

WELCOMES YOU TO:

**A NEW AND
WONDERFUL
WORLD**

PRE-REGISTER



**AUGUST 28TH-31ST, 2025
HILTON MINNEAPOLIS**

HOTEL ROOMS



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

Volunteers

Bernie

Lynn E.

Frank D.

Mike

Matt

Thanks to your all!

And Thanks to our many Night Owl volunteers as well.

Hoot Hoot!

If you are intrested in being of Service, please Vist our Website or Contact the office!!

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

- 25 A.A. Groups contributed - \$7,755.90
- Faithful Fivers contributed - \$945.00
- Total Contributions - \$9,055.13

Forest Lake Alano
Hope Church - Monday AA
Wednesday Night Men's 12 x 12
Day by Dei Saturday
Lake Elmo Thurs Night Group
Hugo Group
Complete Defeat Group
New Beginnings - Newport MN
Maplewood Groups
Valley Creek Monday
11 W. Bernard Group
OMD
A New Light
Men's Happy Hour
Hole in the Doughnut Group

Stepsisters of Northfield Group
Thursday Night Big Book - Nfld
Pages of Wisdom
Pocketing Our Pride
Summit Hill
Roseville Wed Night
WBL Thurs Bloom Ave
Stillwater Morning Groups
River Falls Alano
Happy Joyous and Free - Mahtomedi
Midway Club
Third Tradition Northfield
Farmington Groups
Dakota Alano - Sun - 4PM
Third Tradition Northfield

Thank You So Very Much!



Meeting
Info Calls

47



12th Step
Calls

6



Speakers
Calls

10



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

PAID

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 Tenners* (\$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:

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