



STEP 9

Return to sender

After I'd been in the program for about three months, I started getting into the Steps, slowly. I kept hearing that the Fourth Step was really scary. But when I got to that Step, I thought all the people who said it was scary were nuts.

Writing about all the people that I was upset with, man, that was easy. However, looking at my part in these conflicts was not as easy. But I kept at it. I did the Fourth Step in the way my sponsor "suggested" and soon had a four-column inventory, just like the Big Book talked about. Being a rebel, I didn't write it down by hand. I typed it out. Then I hit print and had it in black and white in front of me.

The biggest resentment I had was toward my father, who had certainly done more harm to me than I had to him. Even after I did my Fifth Step, I still had a major resentment toward my father. I could be sitting in a meeting and someone would be talking about his or her dad and I would get mad. They didn't even have to be talking about problems with fathers, it could be about the good times they were having with them now in sobriety and I'd be mad as a wet hen.

At one point I was told to try the "Page 552 trick," which refers to the story "Freedom From Bondage" in the Fourth Edition of the Big Book, which mentions praying for the person that you have the resentment against. You pray that they have all the good things you want in life. Do this for two weeks and by the time you're finished you will find you mean it.

Well, I did this for a full month every morning, and at the end I still sat in meetings getting angry when someone would talk about his or her father.

By three years in the program, I was on my third sponsor. The first two had both gone back out. "Isn't it time you did something about the resentment and the amends for your father?" my new sponsor said.

I reluctantly agreed to write to my father. So I typed up the letter and emailed it to my sponsor, asking for his opinion on what I had written. He responded by removing this and adding that. After sending the email back and forth a number of times, we came to an agreement. We hit a meeting after that and went to a local burger shop to talk it over. I read the letter again and we agreed it was ready to be sent.

Now, the Big Book talks about being willing, and I was still not really willing to send that letter. So when my sponsor said, "Send it," I handed him the letter, an envelope and a \$1 bill to buy a stamp. "I'm not going to send it," I said. He chuckled as he

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.

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Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday - Friday 9:30 to 5:30, Tuesday 11:30 to 7:30, Saturday 10:00 to 2:00 Sunday Closed

took the letter from me and said, “Good enough.”

That meeting with my sponsor was on a Saturday. When I returned home from work the following Thursday, I checked the mailbox and the letter was in it. On it was written: “Return to sender.”

I looked at the envelope in shock. I pulled out my cell phone and called my sponsor. I asked him to guess what was in the mail. He guessed it was a letter from my dad. Nope. I told him it was the very same letter we had sent. It was back. We talked about what that meant.

Since the day I got home and found the letter in my mailbox, my resentment is gone. I did my part. It's not up to me how my dad accepts or rejects my attempt to make things right. It's up to me to make the effort. That isn't to say that he and I are on speaking terms today, but I can share this story or hear others talk about their fathers without getting upset now.

About two years after all this happened, my sister contacted me saying that if I wanted to talk to our dad I had better hurry because his health was failing. “The last time I sent him a letter it came back unopened,” I told her, and she thought that over. “Don't try to contact him,” she said. “He has not changed.”

I spoke with my sponsor at the time and he asked how long had it been since I had thought about my dad. It was hard to answer that question, as the resentment was gone.

By: Joseph S. | Reno, Nevada

TRADITION 9

How Tradition Nine put her on the path to discover the wonderful world of AA beyond the group, and a host of spiritual principles

It seems that not a week goes by lately that some reference to Tradition Nine doesn't come up. The discussions—sometimes very lively discussions—fall into three general categories: 1) relationship with the non-AA professional community; 2) committee work within AA; and 3) personal application.

The first category is usually simple and straightforward. Whether I'm contacting a treatment facility administrator, a judge, a social service agency, or the probation department at the district court, Tradition Nine comes to life as soon as I introduce myself as a member of the committee for Cooperation with the Professional Community (CPC) within AA. And when I do that, I'm in harmony with other CPC members throughout the U.S., Canada and the world so long as I adhere to the learned experience hammered out and documented in the CPC Workbook, GSO Guidelines and related AAWS Conference-approved literature. Conformity is vital in this Twelfth Step work.

Within the scope of CPC work—or for that matter Corrections, Treatment, and Public Information committees—it is not uncommon to give a very brief, thumbnail sketch to non-AAs about how information flows within AA and its committees. For example, several weeks can sometimes pass from the time a Treatment Facilities Committee receives a request from a facility for AA presentations, to the necessary CPC outreach to that staff, and then the date that the local AA groups actually begin to carry AA's message into that facility. If I briefly explain AA's organizational structure, I can alleviate any impatience on the part of the professionals. While I'm always quick to clarify that we on the committee are non-profession-

al volunteers, outlining AA's committee system avoids perceptions of irresponsibility when things don't happen overnight.

Bill W. said that "we find that we must to some extent organize to carry the message—or else face chaos. And chaos is not simplicity." It's the second category—committee work within AA itself—where things tend to get a bit sticky. Not all the time, thankfully, but often enough to cause me to stop and pause when I witness Tradition Nine used as a weapon rather than a spiritual tool.

My first experience with this was a number of years ago when I was serving as a district committee member (DCM). Reaching out to groups in the hope of increasing participation at the district level, I found myself one night with an old-timer in my face, angrily wagging his finger at the Traditions window shade hanging on the wall as he yelled, "See? 'Ought never be organized.' Go away! We don't need you people from service. We keep it simple in this group." How grateful I am that many more groups felt just the opposite, that to live Tradition Nine was their responsibility, and they supported the various committees to the best of their ability.

How grateful I am that my sponsor and other old-timers guided me, through Tradition Nine, into general service. Through Tradition Nine, I learned about AA beyond my own backyard. Through Tradition Nine, my spiritual development continued during service on various committees such as Public Information, CPC, Treatment Facilities—not to mention the Grapevine committee. It was within these committees that I learned to better interact with others. It was here that I also learned more about when and how to apply the Concepts and warranties; to guard against overflowing treasuries; that no one was in unqualified authority over another, regardless of his or her "title"; that we don't take punitive action against anyone.

My two-year term as a delegate member of the General Service Conference was one of the most challenging exercises with Tradition Nine, ever reminding me of the fact that the "aim of our services is to bring sobriety within reach of all who want it." I came to believe that all com-

mittees and service boards within AA are equally important and should be supported equally. I also came to believe that while Tradition Nine guides us to have these entities, that every committee and service board must also embrace the spiritual principles embodied in the other Traditions, but in particular Tradition Five.

The essay on Tradition Nine in Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions offers a chilling warning if we in AA don't demand of our committees and service boards what we must adhere to as individuals: "Unless there is approximate conformity to AA's Twelve Traditions, the group, too, can deteriorate and die. So we of AA do obey spiritual principles..." Adhere, obey, conform. This we owe to AA's future.

By: Annemarie M. Excerpt from Grapevine article, September 1998 | Raynham, Mass

ST. PAUL INTERGROUP BOARD AND REPS MEETING

EVERY 3RD TUESDAY OF THE MONTH
AT 7:30 PM

All are welcome but we especially
love to see group representatives!
Meet is located in the same building
as the Intergroup office.

33 Wentworth Ave E, West St. Paul
MN 55118
2nd Floor conference room

CONTACT DETAILS:

manager@aastpaul.org

651 - 227 - 5502

You Win Some You Lose Some

Hypocrite: someone who says they have particular moral beliefs but behaves in way that shows these are not sincere.

I don't believe anyone can be a hypocrite 100% of their life, nor do I think one can be a hypocrite for 0% of their life. One analogy I like is the 'batting average' analogy. Hit snooze instead of waking up at that first alarm? That's an out. Grab McDonalds on the way home because it tastes better than the healthier already paid for food at home? That's an out. Go to an AA meeting even though you don't want to go to, and make an effort to spend time before and after the meeting getting to know others? That's a hit. Call your grandma because it means the world to her, even though you know it's going to be an hour long and will likely be very bland conversation? That's a hit, I like to think this is the game I play, every swing is a third step decision: Do I want to take the easier and more comfortable route? or do I want to do what I know is right?

The AA program is one of spiritual progress, not spiritual perfection. Sometimes my batting average goes down because I am selfish. Other times my batting average goes down due to forces beyond my control, and this is what I want to cover in Today's article. But first, I would like to describe where I currently stand with my AA program.

I am sold on the ideas that AA present, and have after many years, acquired true faith that: 1. I reap what I sow 2. My purpose is to fit myself to be of maximum

service to others 3. When I am disturbed, the problem is always me 4. If I stick close to my higher power and perform his work well (work on my batting average), I will always be provided with what I need.

The design for living described in the AA literature has taught me how to live if I want to regularly experience happiness, contentment, and even being 'rocketed into a fourth dimension' as the book says. Truly no words do justice the payment I receive when I walk the narrow path that the literature suggests that I walk.

I am so sold on the ideas presented in the book that I have moved past alcohol and drugs and have begun to work on other parts of my life. A few years ago, I was able to quit nicotine, and shortly after, caffeine. 18 months ago, I quit all social media. 9 months ago, I started eating healthy. A few months ago, my wife, who is also in the program, and I recognized that our spending habits were looking quite...alcoholic, so we started a budget. Most recently, my higher power seemed to think that I needed to start exercising, so I had a back injury, which led to physical therapy, and now I am spending an hour working out every morning, not the way I would have planned it, but as the book says on page 100: "When we look back, we realize that the things which came to us when we put ourselves in God's hands were better than anything we could have planned"

I say all of that to say this. What about when we can't do the right thing?

Example 1: At Christmas dinner, my grandma will serve me up a plate of what is basically a bowl of refined sugar, refined white flour, and about one walrus worth of fat. I cannot tell her no, and bring in my own salad to eat, that is not an option, this would cause a harm onto my grandma, more harm than eating this delicious dinner is going to do to me.

Example 2: I don't have kids yet, but when I do, they are definitely going to prevent me from getting my

perfect daily workout, meditations, meetings, and meals every day.

Example 3: My wife recently had surgery, and I nursed her for a week, which required around the clock attention and care. I was unable to go to my homegroup, my sponsor meeting, and my sponsee meetings.

The Joe and Charlie tapes talk about two 'powers' in AA. The power of the spiritual experience, which is the power that changes us, and allows us to become happy people even though we were once through and through restless, irritable, and discontent people. The other power they describe is the power of the fellowship, the power that supports us.

I am going to fall short; I am going to be a hypocrite, my batting average is going to go down some days, weeks, months, or even years. Sometimes this will happen because I am acting selfishly. Other times this will happen even when I am trying my best to work the program of Alcoholics Anonymous. Eating my grandma's food is the right thing to do, taking care of my wife is not only the right thing to do, but a privilege. When I have kids, I know there will be times when putting them first before my healthy habits will be the right thing to do. However, just because it is the right thing to do does not mean that I won't be impacted negatively. Missing meetings and falling short of my healthy habits will hurt my spiritual program, I know this because I have felt it and experienced it.

The support of the fellowship is the answer to this predicament. Have I been working on my batting average for long enough that a true fellowship has grown up about me? Am I surrounded by those who walk the narrow path? If so, they will be there to support me. If I am truly part of this fellowship, that implies that I too walk that narrow path, and there for my higher power and the fellowship WILL get me through whatever period of discomfort that I am in.

Ethan Willingham

Assistant Web Servant to the board 2022-current

Office News

The office is currently down in contributions and sales. Many of our long timers say that this is a common occurrence with St. Paul Intergroup and that we always pull through at the end of the year. Currently our Sales and Contributions are down around \$10,000 from last year. We are currently operating in the negative. If this trend continues we will finish the year in the red.

Currently St. Paul Intergroup is in a large need of help with group outreach. We are in desperate need of willing AA members to volunteer time to go to different AA meetings and Groups in the St. Paul and suburban area to make contact and let them know about St. Paul Intergroup and the services that we provide.

We are also working on getting more committees and activities set up. So please stay tuned for that.

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
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AREA 36 PINK CAN PLAN

*THE PINK CAN PLAN COLLECTS FUNDS
TO PURCHASE AA LITERATURE FOR ALCOHOLICS IN
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MAIL CONTRIBUTIONS TO:

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PO BOX 41633
PLYMOUTH MN 55441-0633**

St. Paul
Intergroup

Board Elections

November 18, 2025 @ 7:30pm

Open Officer Positions

- Alt Board Chair (3 year term)
- Alt Treasurer (3 year term)
- Secretary (1 year term)

All officer positions require 3 years of continuous sobriety

2 Member at Large positions open (2 year term)

Member at large positions require 2 years of continuous sobriety

The Board members meet every third Tuesday of the month at 6:15pm before the 7:30 rep meeting.

33 Wentworth Ave E, West St. Paul MN 55118

For questions call (651) 227-5502
or email manager@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.

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Emily M.

Brandon H.

Heather R.

Alex L.

Office Manager: Jacob F.

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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

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CONTRIBUTE ELECTRONICALLY

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Contact District 8 ASL Fund Coordinator

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Saturday
November 29, 2025
8:30AM - Midnight

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- AA & Al-Anon Speakers
- History Panel
- Pat Cronin Talk
- Call Up Step Meetings
- Hospitality Suites
- Banquet
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to go to
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\$25 - Pre-Register
\$30 - Day of Event
\$60 - Banquet Ticket

*Groups can
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Hospitality Room

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.

Thank You So Very Much!

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



Meeting
Info Calls

67



Speakers
Calls

13



12th Step
Calls

9



Total
Calls
132

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

- 25 A.A. Groups contributed - \$8,548.38
- Faithful Fivers contributed - \$637.50
- Total Contributions - \$10,793.80

Forest Lake Alano
Elements Group
Wednesday Night Men's 12 x 12
Downtown Alano Squad 50
4th Step Workshop
Sak's Daily Reflections Men's Thursday a.m.
River Rats
Una Luz en el Camino
Cottage Grove AA
Hugo Group
Sisters of Serenity
Rivertown Big Book - Hastings
Midway Club
Women's Basic Text
Roseville Wed Night

OMD
No Time Like the Present
A Baffled Lot
Steps by the Lake
North Dale Group
Saturday Morning Womens Group
Third Tradition Northfield
Maplewood Groups
Eagan Tuesday Nighters
Una Luz en el Camino
Summit Hill
Bright Promises AA
New Brighton Alano
Stillwater Rivertown BB Group Sun PM
Saturday Morning AA - Lindstrom

Most Important Thing Group--Sunday, Roseville
11 W. Bernard Group
Mendota 1030 AA Group
Complete Defeat Group
We Care Groups
Valley Creek Thurs Night
Highland Park Groups
Main Idea
Friday Nite 12x12 By The Book
Shivering Denizens
Hope Church - Monday AA
The Promises Meeting
North Hamline AA Group

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33 Wentworth Ave E
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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 *Terrific Tennes* (\$10.00/month), *Fantastic Fifteneers* (\$15.00/month), or *Thoughtful Thirtiers* (\$30.00).

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Name: _____
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Frequency: (check one)
☐ Monthly ☐ Quarterly ☐ Bi-Annually ☐ Annually
Start on: _____/_____/_____
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Expiration Date: _____/_____

Name on Card: _____

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*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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West St. Paul, MN 55118-3431