



STEP 4

Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

4th Step

Most people I sponsored have quit at the 4th Step. It is daunting to face a moral inventory of ourselves after a life corrupted by alcoholism. I get it. I was afraid of it, too, but it was totally worth doing it. I acted in ways that caused me remorse and guilt, and I had inclination towards shame to start. Maybe that latter part contributed to alcohol's appeal. The lack of control I suffered because of my drinking and my alcoholism, led me to drink at the expense of all else: my health, my relationships, my responsibilities. Alcohol was also part solace, deadening those negative feelings. I could hide behind it. But it was killing me and tragically drawing out sadness and chaos in my friends, associates, and family. I needed to face the truth and see how my thoughts and actions were harmful to find a new way. After having done this multiple times, I can say that the 4th Step is probably the most important step in my life.

But how can I face myself under this "wreckage of the past"? Where do I find the courage? One thought I have learned in the rooms of AA is that "if I'm not the problem, there is no solution." This actually gives me hope, because I have some control over what I do in the decisions I make. Having just

decided to" turn my life and will over to the care of God as I understand" it in the third step, I have some conception of an ideal direction in which to lead my life. I can make decisions to do "the next right thing." Having tried and failed at this, but on average mostly succeeded, I can say it has an accumulated effect of steering me in the right direction. I can change my behavior if I don't put alcohol in me.

In the process, I must forgive and find my true human self. It is interesting how I got there by following the wandering route of The Program, or to use a different analogy, by "peeling back the onion." I am instructed in the Big Book to start by looking at my resentments, which are described as a spiritual malady. They allow me to focus on others and not myself, where other components of my spiritual malady, such as my conduct and my beliefs, is situated.

For me, the 4th Step began the process of unraveling the truth about who my scape goats are and who I am. It happened slowly at first. The beginning yielded some truth and accountability. Then after yet another fourth and fifth step in my seventh or eighth year of sobriety, I finally was able to forgive all of us. As instructed, I was on my knees praying in a chapel for an hour after the 5th Step, reflecting on what was discussed, and it hit me as Devine Inspiration. I was made the way I was, warts and all, and so was everybody else. There must be a reason for this. At the very least I need to accept that reality and move on. It's a simple idea, but it is amazing that my mind has conjured up many others to obscure this. Tears

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 - Friday 9:30 to 5:30, Saturday 10:00 to 2:00 Sunday Closed

streamed down my cheeks. A weight was lifted from my shoulders.

The idea of forgiveness was in the 4th Step instructions in the Big Book all along, and it did not sink in after several readings until it did. I glossed over the “sick man prayer” on pages 66 and 67, which is explained by these words: “This was our course: We realized that people who wronged us were perhaps spiritually sick. Though we did not like their symptoms and the way these disturbed us, they like ourselves, were sick too. We asked God to help us show them the same tolerance, pity, and tolerance we would cheerfully grant a sick friend....”

The 4th Step is the crux upon which many of the subsequent steps rely. We use it in the 5th and gain more truth and humility--and hopefully love. We become sick of our defects by writing them out and discussing them, and we become willing to let them go and ask God to remove them in Steps 6 and 7. We see our harms and become willing to make amends in Step 8. It is through this process that I have been able to grow and find contentment. I somehow was endowed with a disease that contributed to my sorrow and moral decline with extreme frustration and lack of control. Yet, when I took responsibility and decided to engage in the healing process, I found the “happy destiny” free from alcohol. Without the 4th Step I don’t believe I would have come this far, so forgive yourself and others, seek the truth, and join me!

Gary K., St. Paul

TRADITION 4

Each group has but one primary purpose--to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers

One of my groups had an interesting turn recently. Somehow, the group simply allowed multiple Traditions to be thrown out the window. People either didn’t notice, didn’t understand or didn’t care. It seems most members didn’t know the Traditions well enough to comprehend what had happened. Most at the meeting thought that what happened seemed OK to them.

The group is a closed meeting of AA, which means attendance is limited to persons who have a desire to stop drinking. The group conscience was to state at every meeting our adherence to our singleness of purpose and that discussion at this meeting is limited to experience with alcohol and recovery from alcoholism.

Unbelievably, one day this meeting was chaired by a non-alcoholic. And no one objected. The person stated she was an addict and had never been a drinker. She said that she had tried alcohol but didn’t tolerate it so she didn’t ever pursue it. She proceeded to tell her story of addiction to benzodiazepines.

Nowadays we know many members, if not most, have had some drug use during their time drinking, so mentioning drugs can be commonplace. Here though, our chairperson had never had trouble with drinking. She said she had hesitated to speak because she didn’t know if that was OK. She had been encouraged and invited to speak by a group member.

Later, I told my group that it was painful for me to see our group conscience ignored. I also mentioned to the addict privately that the meeting was supposed to be limited to discussion of our alcohol use. She accused me of judging her and not liking her personally. She said that no one else had said this to her in four years of

attending AA.

I felt torn up but confused, as I couldn't put everything that was awry into concise words. So I turned to our General Service Office, as I had done in the past when I needed clarity on the Traditions. They went through the Traditions with me and shared relevant passages. They directed me to our pamphlet, "Problems Other Than Alcohol," written years ago. This is not a new problem. The pamphlet perfectly addresses the issue and is clear.

It seems many frame the problem incorrectly in the first place. We don't tell non-alcoholics they can't speak, attend closed meetings or chair any meetings out of arrogance or snobbery. It is not exclusion, it is a statement of humility. We simply only know one thing. To focus solely on drug addiction affects our unity, our common welfare and God's will as expressed in our group conscience, all while it violates our only requirement for membership. The Third Tradition is meant to be inclusive, so long as a member has a problem with alcohol. At one point, AA even deleted the word "honest" from the phrase, "a desire to stop drinking."

While speaking to our group, I sobbed at one point because it's about AA's future. I didn't even mind my ugly crying under the fluorescent lights to make my point. I don't believe anyone had ever seen me cry or be upset at all. I'm just an old-timer known for sharing my experience, strength and hope. Nonetheless, I was cross-talked and a woman with five years of sobriety stated that our founders included everyone and all our differences. She said that AA was all-inclusive.

What had made me sob in the first place was my memory of my old AA friend Frank, who was a very early member. I didn't know what the woman meant by her understanding of the founders, but I actually remember them first-hand. And Frank was one of them.

I met Frank in 1989 in New York City, where I began my AA journey. I was 26 years old and Frank was in his 80s. He was 45 years sober, which was much older than my entire lifespan. We'd have coffee and he'd

tell me about the old days. Frank got sober in 1944. God bless this man who spent time with me. I must have seemed like a kid. Frank described how a small number of members would get together for a meeting. Wives would be there because there was no AI-Anon then. Few worked or had money so they would buy something at the supermarket after the meeting and just talk. Frank was a simple man. He and his peers had been sober before the Traditions were written. They had been drunk before there was an AA. And they lived the early battles in meetings that threatened to tear our Fellowship apart.

The Traditions provide guidance, protection and solutions for issues that threaten our society. What those old-timers like Frank had in common was gratitude, fear of ego and pride, and a protective stance around the Traditions. They would stand up and interrupt a meeting when a Tradition was being ignored and explain why there might be a problem. They would shun praise and avoid people placing them on a pedestal. They were men of very few words.

I asked Frank if he had contributed to the writings in our book Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. He simply said, "Well, I guess I hope some of our group discussions ended up in there."

I will always remember those old-timers and their lasting warning: Do not take AA for granted as though it will always be here. It's up to us to keep it alive.

Open House & For Fun Cribbage Tournament

Saturday
May 16th

11am - 2pm

Cribbage,
50/50
Raffle &
Chilly
Dogs

Free Entry

Suggested
Contribution of \$6 for
food

Beverages \$2

33 Wentworth Ave E
West St. Paul MN
651-227-5502



Thoughts From the Board

Thoughts from the Board April 2026

This is my third year on the Board for St. Paul Intergroup. And truthfully, this is my first year feeling active, feeling like we are actually doing something. As secretary, I sat back, took the minutes, and kept my mouth shut. As alternate chair, I sat back, took some notes, and mostly kept my mouth shut. Honestly, I thought I was just keeping a chair warm until the next volunteer, willing or unwilling, was voted in to do their time.

I wasn't fulfilling the primary purpose of Intergroup, or of Alcoholics Anonymous. I wasn't even sure why we were meeting once a month: party planning? Money issues? And I noticed that my involvement in Intergroup was becoming much like my involvement in my own program. I was there physically, but I wasn't showing up spiritually or with the attitude of service.

Something we often hear in AA is "it works if you work it". And when I am struggling, when I am miserable, I can look at how I am showing up in my program. Am I calling my sponsor? Am I working with other alcoholics? Am I bringing my Higher Power into every aspect of my life? Typically one or all of those things are missing. The solution is to start doing these things, following the suggestions of the book, and working the program.

When it comes to Intergroup I had to realize that just like my program, it would only work if I worked it. I had to make the decision to start showing up. Now I know that I know very little about how a board is supposed to run. I'm not a money guy. I'm not in marketing. I sure don't

have all the answers. But lack of knowledge and experience should not excuse me from being active, especially in a service position I made a commitment to.

Why is Intergroup here? To be of service to the groups and to alcoholics. It's not about the money. It's not about cake or potlucks. So we decided it was time to do things differently. Oddly enough, that meant doing things the way they were outlined in the first place: Implementing committees, reviewing the books, and being of service.

I am very excited for what the next months and years of Intergroup are going to look like. We may trip, we may make some mistakes. But we have a right to be wrong. We are going to try new things, and really lean into some old things. Because like our program, Intergroup is going to work if we work it. Fear and doubt be damned. Perfection can be left behind. We are going to do our best to do our best. The power and purpose of the St. Paul AA community is far larger than 12 volunteers sitting around a table once a month. We are here to be of service to you. And we thank you for the opportunity to serve.

- Alex S.

How It Works

4th Step

Workshop

Where: *St Paul Intergroup*
33 Wentworth Ave
St Paul, MN 55118
Right Conference Room
(street level by front doors)

When: *Saturday April 18th (part 1) &*
Saturday April 25th (part 2)

Time: *10 AM to 3 PM*
(will break for lunch 12:00 to 12:45)

Bring: *Big Book, paper, pencils or pens & a*
friend or two. Everyone and all 12-step
programs welcome!

For sign-up and more information call

<i>St Paul Intergroup</i>	<i>651-227-5502</i>
<i>Christopher B</i>	<i>651-707-5551</i>
<i>Marty Y</i>	<i>651-261-5484</i>

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**

St Paul Intergroup's Annual

Spring Fling Celebration

www.aastpaul.org

Where: Recovery Church 253 State Street,
St. Paul MN

When: April 18th, 2026

Time: Speaker: Kevin G. @ 6:00 PM -
Fellowship, Food & Fun
Until 9:00 PM

\$10 Suggested Contribution



DISTRICT SERVICE MEETINGS

2025 INTERGROUP BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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

Advisor to the Board: Ricardo G.

Board Chair: Alex S.

Alt. Board Chair: Brandon H.

Treasurer: Don H.

Alt. Treasurer: Marc K

Secretary: Zach B

Members at Large:

Emily M.

Jamie Lynn

Matt

Kristine C.

Office Manager: Jacob F.

Webservant: Jonathan L. & Ethan

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



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

St. Paul Intergroup Outreach Committee

Together We Can Help

- Help keep meetings up to date!
- Let people know about Intergroup!



Volunteer!

Scan the QR
Code



**Truly Make a Difference in
the Life of an Alcoholic!**

The Hand of AA Always to be There...

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

(651) 227-5502
outreach@aastpaul.org

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, Frank, Mike, Matt, Sue

Thanks to your all and thanks to our many Night Owl volunteers as well.

Hoot Hoot!

If you are interested 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 in the month of January:

- 25 A.A. Groups contributed - \$5,289.92
- Faithful Fivers contributed - \$532.00
- Total Contributions - \$6,458.84

Forest Lake Alano
Downtown Alano Squad 50
Gratitude in Action - Mahto-
medi
Wednesday Night Men's 12 x
12
SOS Afton Sat Morn
South Saint Paul 301 Club
Stepsisters of Northfield
Group

Main Idea
Turning Point in Wayzata
Day by Dei Online Women's
St. Joes Monday Night - Stillwater
White Bear 96 Group
Dakota Alano - Sun - 4PM
Mendota 1030 AA Group
Dance Sober Not a Glum Lot
Woodbury Serenity Sisters

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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 Fifteeners* (\$15.00/month), or *Thoughtful Thirtiers* (\$30.00).

1. Contact Information:

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

2. Amount & Frequency:

Amount \$ _____
Frequency: (check one)
 Monthly Quarterly Bi-Annually Annually
Start on: ____/____/____
 Terrific Tenner (\$10.00/month)
 Fantastic Fifteener (\$15.00/month)
 Thoughtful Thirtiers (\$30.00/month)

3. Choose a Payment Method:

Credit Card/Debit
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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