

# the Point

*The point is, that we are willing  
to grow along spiritual lines.*

from Chapter Five of the book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*

2017  
4  
April

A publication of the Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous

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## Howling for the Moon

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The Point is published monthly to inform AA members about business and meeting affairs in the Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous (San Francisco and Marin Counties). The Point's pages are open to participation by all AA members. Nothing published herein should be construed as a statement of AA, nor does publication constitute endorsement of AA as a whole, our Intergroup, the Central Office, or The Point Editorial Committee. Letters and articles to help carry the AA message are welcomed, subject to editorial review by The Point Committee.

*Cover illustration by Anonymous*

# April 2017

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
<p>Persons requiring reasonable accommodations at Intergroup meetings, Intergroup committee meetings or service events sponsored by the preceding entities, including ASL interpreters, assistive listening devices or print materials in alternative formats, should contact Central Office at (415) 674-1821 no less than five business days prior to the event.</p> <div></div>			
2	3 FIRST MON Technology Committee Meeting Central Office 6pm	4	5 FIRST WED Intergroup Meeting 1187 Franklin St., SF Orientation 6:15pm Meeting 7pm
9 SECOND SUN Golden Gate Young People in AA Central Office 12pm <i>(even months at Central Office; odd months at Marin Alano Club)</i>	10 SECOND MON SF Public Information / Cooperation with the Professional Community (PI/CPC) Central Office Business Meeting 7pm The Point Committee Meeting Central Office 6pm	11 SECOND TUE Marin H&I 1360 Lincoln Ave, San Rafael 6:15pm SF General Service 1111 O'Farrell St Orientation / Concept Study 7pm Business Meeting 8pm	12 SECOND WED Marin Bridging the Gap 1360 Lincoln Ave, San Rafael Orientation 6pm Business Meeting 6:30pm
16 THIRD SUN Archives Committee Meeting Central Office 2pm <i>Business meeting followed by work day</i>	17 THIRD MON Marin General Service 9 Ross Valley Rd, San Rafael Orientation / Concept Study 6:45pm Business Meeting 7:30pm SF Teleservice Central Office Orientation 6pm <i>(business meetings will be quarterly)</i>	18	19
23	24	25 FOURTH TUE Marin Teleservice 1360 Lincoln Ave, San Rafael Orientation 7pm Business Meeting 7:30pm	26
30			

THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1
6	7	8
13	14	15 <u>THIRD SAT</u> SF H&I 2900 24th St, SF <b>Orientation</b> 11am <i>(odd months have a business meeting)</i>
20	21	22 <u>FOURTH SAT</u> <b>CNCA Meeting</b> 320 N McDowell Blvd, Petaluma 10am
27	28	29



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*"All alcoholics hanker for the moon when perhaps the stars would have done just as well."*

~ Bill W.  
September 1947



## Meeting Changes

### New Meetings:

Sun	12:00pm	Inner Sunset	Step Into Sunday, Gratitude Center, 1320 7th Ave. / Irving
M-F	12:00pm	Pacific Heights	The 45 Minute Hour, The New Macedonia Church, 2135 Sutter St. / Pierce

### Meeting Changes:

Tues	8:00pm	San Anselmo	The Headless Horseman, Sleepy Hollow Presbyterian Church, 100 Tarry Rd. (was at 8:30pm)
Thu	6:30 – 7:30pm	Outer Richmond	Thursday Night Women's, Lincoln Park Presbyterian Church, 417 31st Ave. / Clement (Previously 6:30pm – 8:00pm)

### No Longer Meeting:

Mon	7:30pm	Inner Richmond	Stepping Stone Step Study, 255 10th Ave. / Clement St. (Fire closed facility; meetings will resume after reconstruction)
Tue	7:00pm	Noe Valley	Tuesday Night Step, Holy Innocents Episcopal Church, 455 Fair Oaks St. / 26th
Sun	11:59pm	Inner Sunset	Everyone Shares, Gratitude Center, 1320 7th Ave. / Irving
Mon	11:59pm	Inner Sunset	Midnight Oasis, Gratitude Center, 1320 7th Ave. / Irving
Tue	11:59pm	Inner Sunset	Any Midnight, Gratitude Center, 1320 7th Ave. / Irving
Wed	11:59pm	Inner Sunset	Very Midnight, Gratitude Center, 1320 7th Ave. / Irving
Thu	11:59pm	Inner Sunset	Night Owl, Gratitude Center, 1320 7th Ave. / Irving

**Note: As of 1/15/2017 ALL MEETINGS at Nu Outlook have been cancelled.**

**PLEASE NOTE:** We occasionally receive reports that meetings listed in our schedule are missing or no longer active. Sometimes these reports turn out to be mistaken, and sometimes not. **If you know anything about a meeting that has relocated or disbanded — even temporarily —** please call Central Office immediately: **(415) 674-1821**. This helps us direct newcomers, visitors and sober, local alcoholics alike to actual meetings and not to rooms that housed a meeting once upon a time. *Thank you for contributing to the accuracy of our schedule!*



**Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous**  
serving San Francisco and Marin Counties

### Attention all A.A. groups and members:

The Intercounty Fellowship Board is seeking a Treasurer. We need your help reaching potential candidates no later than **May 1, 2017**.

- Treasurer serves as a member of the Board of Directors
- Knowledge of QuickBooks is needed
- Experience in small business financial accounting management is recommended
- Experience in non-profit accounting is a plus

This volunteer job requires a minimum of 10 hours a month with a two-year term **beginning July 1, 2017**.

*For a full position description and more information,  
please contact Central Office at (415) 674-182, or visit [aasf.org/treasurer](http://aasf.org/treasurer).*



Ashley H. — Harbor Lights Center  
Jim A. — Cow Hollow Young People's Meeting  
Joe H.



## From the Editor



### Paper Moon

*The alcoholic is emotionally on the childish side...[doctors] used the word "grandiosity"...(meaning by that that as a type we were what you might call "All or Nothing people.") Someone once described it by saying all alcoholics hanker for the moon when perhaps the stars would have done just as well.*

~ Bill W., September 1947

It's a coincidence how wolves howl when the moon's out. They'd howl to communicate whether there was a moon in the night sky or not. And grandiose alcoholics of a certain type would drink from longing for anything they can't have. Jay F.'s personal story on Page 4 describes how he narrowly escaped drinking himself to death. Talk about proving "we are people of extremes"—his fear of dying within the year from his disease was overcome by his fear of being without a drink. Also in this issue of *The Point*, Judy G. realizes what life could be when we figure out we don't have to carry tomorrow's burdens today (p. 9).

#### EDITORIAL POLICY

*The Point* is published monthly to inform A.A. members about business and meeting affairs of the Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. In addition, *The Point* publishes original feature articles submitted by local A.A. members that reflect the full diversity of experience and opinion found within the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. No one viewpoint or philosophy dominates its pages, and in determining the editorial content, the editors rely on the principles of the Twelve Traditions.

This statement is a summary; for the full editorial policy, please go to [www.aasf.org](http://www.aasf.org). To contact *The Point* committee directly, write to [thepoint@aasf.org](mailto:thepoint@aasf.org).

In *I Don't Do Spiritual*, Eben S. witnesses a tough woman's epiphany when she reads about a man, his slippers and a bottle. Even with no external similarities, she managed to identify with his story (p. 7). On Page 8, Rick R. muses about what half measures might have had in store for him.

Forrest P. breaks down Tradition Four's process for transforming bleating deacons into dignified elders. Bob S. shows how Bill W. modified his tone to ensure the Big Book's success. Karen C. talks about action steps that go beyond principles; Claire A. demonstrates courage through her process of overcoming fear; and another anonymous member puts good orderly directions into action. Some people say our character defects become our greatest strengths when they're brought into balance. Building routines of right action to level out our extremes may make the stars look just as good as the moon does.



## Faithful FIVERS!

Faithful Fivers are A.A. members Who graciously pledge to contribute at least \$5 each month toward the support of Central Office. Faithful Fiver contributions go a long way in helping make our vital services possible. We thank the following members:

Alejandro D.	David J.	Lance S.
Alex R.	Dianne E.	Laura B.
Alex L.	Don L.	Lauren H.
Allison M.	Don N.	Lavon T.
Ami & Nick H.	Ed K.	Layne S.
Amy Mc.	Eileen M.	Layne Z.
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Dan D.	Kim S.	Mike M.
Daniel M.	Kim D.	Mily T.
Danielle G.	Kurt P.	Nancy N.
David S.	Kurt C.	

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If you would like to become a Faithful Fiver, please download a pledge form from our website. You will receive a complimentary subscription to **The Point**. And remember, individual contributions are 100% tax deductible!



# Jay's Story

*Keep coming back; it works*

by Jay F.

I was a very heavy drinker and drug user for 30 years, and had never been sober more than a few days in my life—ever. While I did not suffer serious financial/professional/relationship consequences, my health was deteriorating rapidly towards the end of my drinking and drugging. I suffered from severe alcohol withdrawals, and every day was consumed by my need to have alcohol in my system to keep the nausea and tremors at bay. Talk about “one day at a time!” When I tried to stop on my own I would end up in the ER for alcohol withdrawal, and when I got home I would drink again. The doctors (some of whom recognized me by now) told me on more than one occasion that I was going to die within a year if I did not get sober. At that point the fear of never drinking again was greater than the fear of dying an alcoholic death. Sounds crazy, but it's true. Although the alcohol was killing me, I could not imagine my life without it. I saw no way out, and was resigned to the fact that I was going to drink myself to death.

***I saw no way out, and  
was resigned to the fact  
that I was going to  
drink myself to death***

At the urging of my family I went to a 30 day treatment center, and after a severe medical detox, I was exposed to A.A. for the first time. To be honest I found it very strange at first, and did not see what any of it had to do with stopping drinking. I went to a funky meeting where everyone sat on

pillows, they rang chimes, and then passed around a basket to collect money from people. Strange indeed, but now having gone to hundreds of meetings since, that format sounds pretty cool! After rehab I came back home, attended a few meetings here and there, but never really had a plan. I promptly relapsed and ended up in the hospital with alcohol poisoning. I had a blood alcohol level of 0.42 percent, and had officially reached my bottom. That was April 10, 2014, the date of my last drink and my A.A. sobriety date.



I went into a second rehab for 17 days, and unlike the first time, I had a plan when I got out. The plan was very simple: immerse myself in A.A. and go to a lot of meetings. I hit 90 meetings in 90 days (although truth be told it was probably closer to 100), got a sponsor, and began working the steps. I had read the first 164 pages of the Big Book (*Alcoholics Anonymous*) in rehab and was somewhat familiar with the steps; but once I got a sponsor and started really working them, things really changed for me. Step One—admitting

***The plan was very simple:  
immerse myself in A.A.  
and go to a lot of meetings***

I was powerless over alcohol and that my life was unmanageable—got me started down the road to recovery. I knew I had to stop drinking if I wanted to live, but actually admitting to myself and another human being that I was powerless was essential. Without that leap of faith I could not go any further. They say the steps are in order for a

reason, and now I know why Step One is first!

I bounced around a lot of meetings and was getting a lot of phone numbers, but I wasn't really making connections. More experienced members told me that I should get a

“home group,” so I set out to do just that. Although I still attend meetings whenever/wherever I can, I now have a regular Saturday morning meeting that is truly my home group. What a difference it has made in my recovery and in my life. Having that connection to a fellowship of people who share my common goal of living a sober lifestyle has truly energized my program. I feel a part of something bigger than myself now, and take comfort in the fact that I am no longer on this journey alone.

# MEET THE MEETING

## I Don't Do Spiritual

*The infinite and eternal exist in every single moment we experience*

by Eben S.

I skateboarded to the beach that morning in my wet suit, barefoot, with my surfboard under my arm. I brought shorts and a T-shirt in a backpack so I could change and head straight from the water to the beach A.A. meeting. After a dozen mellow waves I headed over. A small circle of people was forming around a portable pump coffee pot, a bag of cups and a carton of real half-and-half.

Sheri was sitting in an aluminum folding beach chair, wearing a bright orange Halloween novelty sweater which fit her ever-present San Francisco Giants motif. Today she had long tassel earrings with orange and black strands and feathers. She is a warm, weathered salt-of-the-earth Grandma with a sailor's mouth. She gave me a beaming smile that was equal parts mirth and mischief.

### *What happens when people and dogs mix*

The sun shone in a clear blue sky. The day felt immaculate. I didn't even bring shoes when I left the house and I told anyone who'd listen that I'd "surfed to the meeting." I talked to one woman about her dog, a Shiba Inu, a dog breed my twelve-year-old son keeps begging for. The dog was very sweet and let me scratch its back. I'd heard Shiba Inus were not a good breed for kids, were aggressive toward other dogs, and were nearly impossible to train. But here, Bu here was a wonderful creature who was obviously well-adjusted and adored. More people and more dogs showed up until the circle was quite full and the meeting began.



A skirmish between a small dog and a bigger dog erupted—just what happens when people and dogs mix. We used to be isolated in our disease but now life is buzzing with friendly activity. We read from *Daily Reflections*. For October 9, the reading was *A Spiritual Axiom*: Whenever we're disturbed by outside circumstances, we must look inward to see what in us is being disturbed. Then we can respond in a loving way, free from resentment and fear. The example in the book is a person who has different reactions to dogs barking in the backyard based on his spiritual condition. We all had a good laugh about the barking dogs coincidence. "Good one," I said pointing up to the sky as if speaking to God.

Sheri was first to respond in discussion. In warm-hearted defiance she said, "I don't do spiritual. I used to go to that book study in the preschool classroom where you were the secretary. I couldn't make heads or tails of the book. It's written for men, and I'm not a man. Then one night I read about the man who'd quit drinking for 25 years, then retired and *out came the slippers and a bottle*. Well, I didn't

have the slippers but I had the bottle and I just about drank myself to death. I remember I said out loud, "That's me." And I've loved the book ever since. And I've stayed sober. So I guess I do, do spiritual stuff."

That was her awakening. Sitting in a tiny chair in a nursery school classroom. Guided by an unknowing anonymous alcoholic whose name she couldn't remember. I got to be a part of that moment, the instant she "got it," when her whole being opened up and shifted away from her disease and into the solution. Her entire past, all her suffering, isolation and self destruction were ripped away in a single expression of "That's me. I am one, too."

### *We are on the ride right now*

The truth is we all do spiritual stuff. All life is spiritual—it's what's happening right now. When I stop looking for otherworldly experiences and see this life with its attendant suffering, pain and self-centeredness as the very bedrock of spirituality, then I am awakened. We are on the ride right now. There is nothing more mystical than a sunrise, more beautiful than a smile, more liberating than surrender, more sacred than forgiveness, or more humble than gratitude. The infinite and eternal exist in every single moment we experience.





# I'm Just Not Ready Yet

## *Standing at the turning point*

by Rick R.

Who can positively, describe the dynamics of alcoholic thinking? No one can, as it is as diverse as the number of alcoholics in the world. So how can anyone have the definite answers to any of the multitude of difficulties that we face? We find ways to address problems and reduce their effects on us, so they no longer undermine our mental calmness. If we are diligent about it, we will find a place of acceptance which is hard to describe.

I was in the Navy when I entered Alcoholics Anonymous in the late 1960s and was desperate enough to seek out A.A. for myself, with no coercion from the outside world. I've never had a problem with Step 1 and the drinking part of the program and honestly have never wanted a drink from that very first day, which brings us to the rest of the steps. I hear stories all the time about people with long-term sobriety, who have relapses. That seems to contradict the first sentence in Chapter Five in the Big Book that says, "Rarely have we seen a person fail who has thoroughly followed our path." I've heard it said that the co-founders wanted to change the word "Rarely" to "Never."

### *To thine own self be true*

Old timers that decide to drink again after long-term sobriety may have settled for the half measures approach to Steps Four and Five. This is not to criticize them for being unable to take that risk at the time, for we know how difficult it is to overcome the shame and embarrassment of our past behaviors. These fears are also symptoms of

the disease of alcoholism and no one can judge another for not being able to bring them to disclose these things too soon.

My first attempt at Step Four happened right before my one year anniversary, and I was doing the best I could with my shallow understanding of this process that we are supposed to go through. I then received orders to be shipped out to the Western Pacific, so I folded up my composition book containing my Fourth Step and stowed it away. I spent most of those four months at sea on an oil tanker, absent of any A.A. meetings and I had a lot of time to think about what I was going to do when I got back.

### *The fearless and thorough approach*

When I arrived home I unpacked that composition book and started to read what I had written and I became aware of how shallow my thinking had been at the time I was writing it. I threw out the drivel I had written, started over again and went on to revisit all "those tormenting ghosts of yesterday" in a somewhat fearless and thorough way. I believe that doing it that way is the cornerstone of all the rest of my steps. In time, I have addressed all of the rest of the steps with as much courage and thoroughness as I can muster. The results are an unshakable framework for life. If I hadn't been strong enough to revisit that step after four months I may have convinced myself that I had 'done it' and stopped after the half-hearted effort. Hiding behind a facade of half measures might have lead me

to be satisfied with "Just not picking up today."



The only way that I can see to bridge the difference between the *half measures approach* and the *fearless and thorough approach* is to be honest with myself about being in fear concerning the things I'm not willing to disclose in Four and Five. Denying them slams the door on the rest of the program. Admitting that they exist would be leaving the door open to getting back to it when you have a little more A.A. under your belt. If, on the other hand, you attempt to slip by with the half measures approach, you may not ever want to admit to it later and that would be tragic—it could end in a relapse after some serious years of sobriety. Some of these things take time and we shouldn't rush into them at the expense of self-honesty. "Simply say, 'I know I must, but I'm just not ready yet.'" One day you may run across someone that you feel you could trust with your life and be willing to take the risk. This is an approach that no one who counts will ever fault you for. It's very important to keep it clean. "*This above all, to thine own self be true, and it must follow as the night the day, thou canst not then be false to any man.*"

~ *Hamlet*, William Shakespeare





# One Day at a Time

*Slow down and enjoy all of the blessings of this program*

by Judy G.

I love the slogans. They are part of foundations of our program. I used to think they were just platitudes, but I realized that the slogans developed for a reason; so many years of wisdom and recovery in one phrase.

One of the most popular slogans in A.A. is "One day at a Time." We have probably heard it a million times, but do we stop and think about what it really means? I often compare the Twelve Steps to Buddhist philosophy. A basic tenet of Buddhism is mindfulness, which encompasses living in the present moment.

## *We can do anything for one day*

Thich Nhat Hanh, the Vietnamese Buddhist monk, says, "We are alive in the present moment, the only moment there is for us to be alive." Eckhart Tolle, author of "The Power of Now," says, "Most people treat the present moment as if it were an obstacle that they need to overcome. Since the present moment is life itself, it is an insane way to live."

In A.A., we say "One day at a Time."

Once I was at a meeting, and the speaker, with long-term sobriety, was talking about when she first got sober. She first went to a morning meeting, and the old-timers told her, "Just don't drink today. You can drink tomorrow. Just don't drink today, and come back here tomorrow morning." The next day, she went back, and they said, "Just don't drink today. You can drink tomorrow. Just don't drink today, and

come back here tomorrow morning." She pondered, "Oh, I get it." She only had to stay sober for one day. We can do anything for one day.

Another one of my favorite slogans is "Yesterday is history, and tomorrow is a mystery," truer words have never been spoken.

My three favorite days in the *24 Hour a Day* daily reader are July 29 through July 31. There are two days of week we don't have to worry about: yesterday and tomorrow. Yesterday is gone. There is no sense beating ourselves up over something we said or did. All we can do is make our amends and let it go. It does us no good to hang on to the past, the should-haves, the lost years of drinking. "Yesterday had passed forever beyond our control." The other day we don't have to worry about is tomorrow. As Lila R. says, "I have absolutely no idea what is going to happen tomorrow." As it says on July 30, we do not have to carry the burdens of tomorrow today. What a concept. We are just as powerless over tomorrow as we are over yesterday.

Therefore, that leaves today. We can do just about anything for one day. If you think about never taking a drink for the rest of your life, it can feel rather daunting. However, we don't have to worry about that. All we have to worry about is staying sober today. If you have one day of sobriety, you know that you can stay sober for a day. I ask my sponsees, "Do you want to stay sober today?" It's that simple.

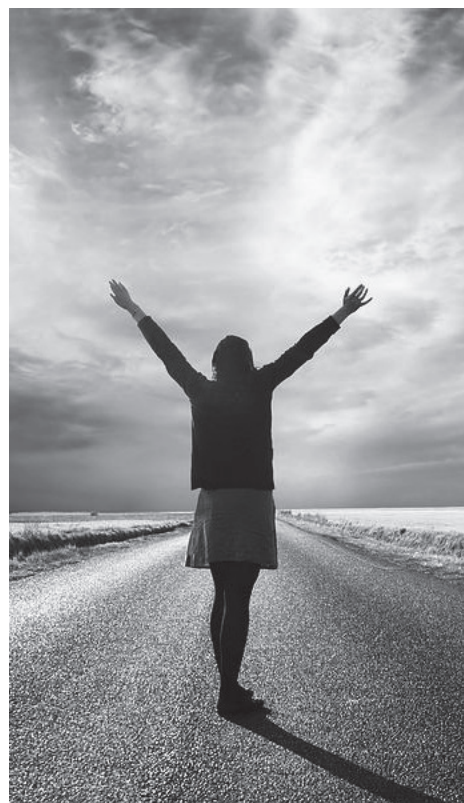
This way of thinking carries over into all aspects of our lives. Five years ago, I was out on disability from my job,

and was living in fear of the future—that I would never be able to get a job at the same level, etc. A program friend asked me, "Are you getting paid today? That's all you have to worry about."

## *The present moment is life itself*

We spend so much time fearing the future or regretting the past that we forget how much we have to be grateful. We need to slow down and enjoy all of the blessings that this program has bestowed upon us.

There is always something to be grateful for, and there is no better way to appreciate it than one day at a time.





# Tradition 4 Holds Groups Together

*We discuss and then vote*

by Forrest P.

***“Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole.”***

Tradition Four helps me understand what holds meetings together. Anything goes so long as it aligns with the group conscience. The current members of the group decide anything as it relates to the group. Our guidance is simple: We cannot affiliate with anything outside of A.A.

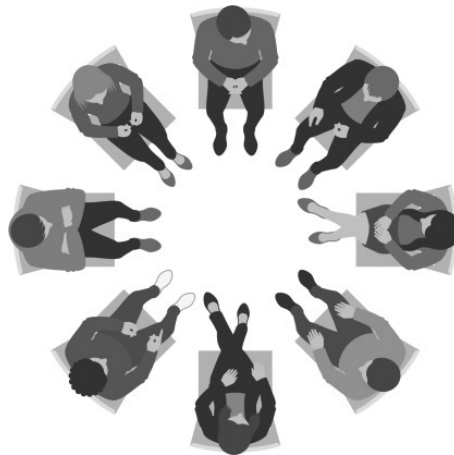
I’ve seen discussions about formats, times and location. Homeless and/or disruptive people. Coffee, yes or no? Sweets, yes or no? Dogs in, or dogs out? My home group even had to define “odor” as being something that disrupts the group. We have written into the format how we will deal with these things.

“All you need to start a meeting is a coffee pot and resentment.” I’ve seen meetings split apart into two meetings at the same time because of group division. Generally, it all works out.

As these things have come up in meetings, I’ve played all sides. I’ve been part problem and solution. I’ve had little to say and much to say. I’ve rallied people to vote my way. I’ve sat back quietly and done nothing. I’ve merely weighed in and then voted. Once we vote, I am done with it. I don’t let it linger or fester inside of me regardless of the outcome.

I went through the traditions with my sponsor. We utilized the

questions found in the *Grapevine* (circa 1969–1971). As I dove deeper into the traditions, my attitude at and during group discussions or business meetings transformed. I brought reason and harmony to such discussions. I went from being controlling and overbearing to helpful. I lead by example instead of acting like a ‘bleeding deacon’ (*Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, p. 135). I’ve even had people say they are appreciative when I attend a business meeting.



I’ve learned that the most important part in these matters is in the discussion, then the vote. Either way, the meeting continues on just like I do.

I had a chance to see this tradition in action at my Home Group. Several years ago our group met in an extremely small space. Maximum occupancy was 35 people. A newcomer started a small fire in front of the building. The landlord of the building took action. We were informed that we had to obtain liability insurance or be out in 30 days.

We held a couple business meetings to discuss this as our deadline

***Once we vote, I am done with it***

approached. We didn’t know what to do. How could we obtain insurance? We are only trusted servants that change every six months.

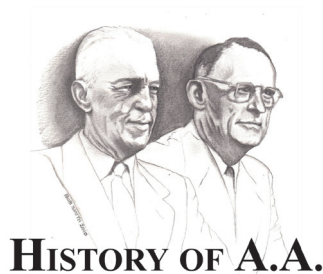
A member of our group had a business. He offered to see if he could add our group to his policy. We contemplated this. People looked to me for guidance as I was the old-timer in the group. I didn’t know. We turned to Tradition Four. After reading it and some more discussion, we decided we could not accept this offer. If we had, our group would be aligned with this man’s business.

***I went from being controlling and overbearing to helpful***

We temporarily disbanded our group.

I volunteered to find new space. No surprise that God had a plan. God always does. Within two weeks, we found a space that was at least five times larger! The first night of the meeting in our new location the meeting doubled in size. Within a month at the new location, it grew close to 100 people.

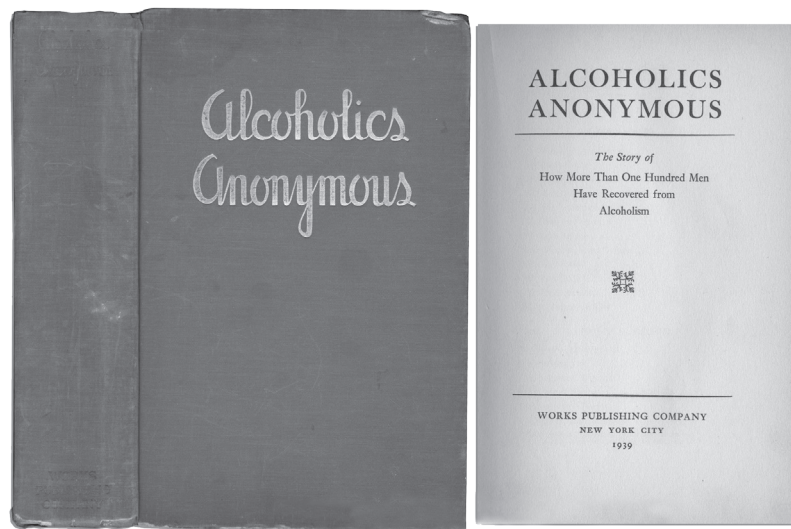
If we had let our fear over this meeting closing be our guide, we may have made the wrong decision. By letting this tradition guide us, along with group discussion, everything worked out. To this day, this meeting still meets and is the largest of its type in the city.



# The Big Book Had a Little Help from Our Friends

by Bob S.

The first edition of the Big Book (*Alcoholics Anonymous*) was published April 10, 1939, after many changes. One of the most important changes was modifying Bill W.'s manuscript tone of "Thou must under pain of drunkenness," to "This is what we did." This change was the result of editing by a Dr. Howard (his last name was possibly Hogan). It is probable that our book would never had become so popular—or even sold at all—if it remained in the original manuscript's preaching mode.



The Big Book's Twelve Steps were derived from many sources, including the Oxford Group tenets (Dick B., *Ann Smith's Journal*. Good Book Publishing Company, 1998):

- Step One benefited from Dr. Silkworth's explanation that alcoholism is a physical allergy coupled with a mental obsession.

- Step Two was deeply embedded in Bill W. shortly after his immediate spiritual transformation at Towns Hospital in 1934. He questioned what had happened till he read a book titled *Varieties of Religious Experience* by William James, who is often thought of as the father of modern psychology, no less!

- Step Three was probably derived, in part, from the Oxford Group tenet #9: "Decision – The action by which man verbalizes his surrender and gives in to God, saying, essentially, "Thy will be done.""

- Step Four was probably derived, in part, from Oxford Group tenet #10: "Self-examination – A 'moral' inventory in which man takes stock of his sins and their consequences."

- Step Five was doubtless derived, in part, by Oxford Group tenet #11: "Confession – Sharing

with God and another person the inventory results."

- Steps Six and Seven used the opposite meaning of Oxford Group tenet #19: "The Four Absolutes – Christ's standards, the standards of absolute honesty, purity, unselfishness, and love, by which man's life can be tested for harmony with God's will."

- Steps Eight and Nine parallels Oxford Group tenet #14: "Restitution – Righting the wrongs and enabling man to cut the cord of sin that binds him to the past."

- Step Ten is congruent with Oxford Group tenet #17: "Daily Surrender – A process in which man engages in daily self-examination and surrender to get rid of newly accumulated sin and selfishness."

- Step Eleven is, in part, like Oxford Group tenet #22: "Prayer – Talking to God."

- Step Twelve, in part, shares the general idea of Oxford Group tenet #28: "Witness by Life and Word – Sharing with others by personal evangelism the fruits of the life changed and the proof of God's forgiveness and power. "

Another important change: the first printing (1939) of Step Twelve contains the words "spiritual experience," which implies an immediate spiritual effect. However, in the second printing (1941) this was changed to a "spiritual awakening," which implies a slower spiritual change (p. 60).





# FEAR: Frantic Efforts at Avoiding Responsibility

## *I drank to push fear away*

by Claire A.

When I first came into A.A., I was full of fear, but I didn't know it. I thought I had things under control. I thought I just needed to learn how to drink reasonably. I was horrified to admit that I couldn't stop drinking. I promised myself that I wasn't going to have a glass of wine, and I certainly wasn't going to take the whole bottle to bed with me, and then I would wake up full of remorse because I had done it again. I felt pathetic.

When I stopped drinking, the feelings all rushed in. It was scary! I never realized how much I drank to push away fear. I drank to find courage. I drank to deny how I felt. For a while, it actually worked—and then it just didn't work anymore. I just felt bad all the time, to the point where I thought about ending my life on a daily basis—then I thought I was a coward for not killing myself.

***The worst part is that fear stops me, it keeps me in this miserable place***

Each time I have worked the steps with a sponsor, I have been shocked at how fear pervades my problems. Most of my problems have at least an element of fear in them. My procrastination, for example, is loaded with all kinds of fear: fear of failure, fear of success, fear of what people will think, fear of never “making something out of my life,” fear of being a fraud, fear of ageism.

The thing is, the worst part is that fear stops me. It keeps me in this miser-



able place where I am sober and I have ideas about how to do good things, but I don't get where I want to go because I listen to those fear messages in my head. Rather than taking the next step (forget about the next “right” step!), I avoid responsibility.

I am so grateful to be in A.A., where I can go to a meeting each day and listen to how other people cope with life. Because getting sober is the easy part. Staying sober is the challenge. In the face of all life has to offer—births, deaths, promotions, firings, disease, elation, deflation, etc.—can I stay sober? Can I see what my responsibility is, and meet it or, do I avoid it, in fear?

I don't want to avoid responsibility. I *want* to do the next thing. Well, OK, a lot of times I don't want to, but I do want to get things done. In order to take responsibility, I have to look squarely at my fear. I have to breathe deeply, and remember that the opposite of fear is faith. *Courage*, as Dorothy Bernard said, is fear that has said its prayers.

When I stop and think about courage, I'm aware that I think it's rather silly to have to summon courage to get through my ordinary day. I am not going to be sticking my head in a lion's mouth, after all. Nor will I be tight-rope-walking between skyscrapers. This is a way that I sabotage myself. I act as if my fear is not valid. But the fact that it isn't overwhelming, or that it isn't in response to high drama, doesn't make it any less real, or any less debilitating. When I deny fear's power over me, I give it more power.

***A.A. has given me courage***

So today, I'm going to try to look fear in the face. I am going to feel it. I'm going to let myself feel the knots in my stomach and my shoulders bunched up. I am going to feel those feelings, and I am going to pray. I am not going to deny that fear returns to me hour by hour, and that I have to keep facing it, again and again. And each time it returns, I can feel it, wherever it is in my body, and I can take a deep breath and pray.





# Words Matter

## *But action matters more*

by Karen C.

Whaaaa... The principle of Step Four is courage? Where do we get this well-intentioned misinformation — from an online recovery blog? That's the only place I could find these one-word descriptions of the principles. They're not in our Big Book, in the *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, or in anything I could find in the archives on the AA.org website. How has this new distillation of each of our action steps into a single word gone viral and somehow become the accepted definition of the principles of the Steps?

### *Specific guidelines for action*

Dictionary.com defines a principle as “an accepted or professed rule of action or conduct.” Action. Honesty, hope, faith and courage—the new-speak “principles” of the steps—are all wonderful spiritual attributes, but they're not what Bill was talking about when he wrote the steps. He was talking about specific guidelines for action. The principle of Step Four is the action of taking moral inventory and of self-examination. I can have all the courage in the world, but if I'm not practicing

self-examination I'm not practicing the principle of the Step Four.

During my drinking days I had plenty of “courage”—bravado, even. I had the “courage” to break into houses, to steal booze from the local Safeway, and to get into fights with people twice my size. I even had the courage to do some truly brave things, like walk away from a guy who was holding a gun to my head. But that's hardly what we're talking about when we resolutely look for our own mistakes — when I have to ask myself, “Where have I been selfish, dishonest, self-seeking and frightened?” to begin to take responsibility for my own actions. And this principle of self-examination that I learned when I first did Step Four in 1987 is exactly the same principle I practice today when I do Step 10.

The 12 Steps of A.A. are an expanded version of 6 principles from the Oxford Groups, namely:

1. Admission of personal powerlessness;
2. Surrender to and dependence upon God;
3. Need for moral inventory;

4. Confession of personality defects;
5. Restitution for harms done; and
6. Helpfulness to others (*Alcoholics Anonymous*, Forward to the Second Edition, and *Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age: A Brief History of A.A.*, p. 160).

### *I had plenty of “courage”*

The description of Bill writing the steps in *Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age* is very clear about what the principles were, where they came from, and Bill's decision to expand the 6 principles to 12 steps. He didn't want to leave “a single loophole through which the rationalizing alcoholic could wiggle out.” So when our Step 12 suggests we practice *these principles* (emphasis mine) in all our affairs, it's referring to those old Oxford Group tenets, not to lovely but over-simplified single words.

While those one-word attributes are undeniably helpful, even spiritually relevant, they leave out the most important aspect of these principles—namely, the action. Let's not make things so simple we lose the meaning and substance of our steps to recovery. They're just too big to be parsed down to a single word, no matter how appealing that may seem.

## St. Francis Prayer

*“Lord, make me a channel of thy peace,  
that where there is hatred, I may bring love;  
that where there is wrong, I may bring the spirit of forgiveness;  
that where there is discord, I may bring harmony  
that where there is error, I may bring truth;  
that where there is doubt, I may bring faith;  
that where there is despair, I may bring hope;  
that where there are shadows, I may bring light;*

*that where there is sadness, I may bring joy.  
Lord, grant that I may seek rather to comfort than to be comforted;  
to understand, than to be understood;  
to love, than to be loved.  
For it is by self-forgetting that one finds.  
It is by forgiving that one is forgiven.  
It is by dying that one awakens to Eternal Life.”*

# Intergroup Meeting Summary – February 2017

The following groups have registered Intergroup Representatives who attended the last Intergroup meeting. If your meeting was not represented, please elect an Intergroup Representative (IGR) and/or an alternate so your meeting is represented.

Marin Groups	Thursday Night Speaker	Blue Book Special	Embarcadero Group	Reality Farm
Happy, Joyous and Free	<b>San Francisco Groups</b>	Castro Discussion	Eureka Step	Saturday Beginners
Men's Two Plus	Artists & Writers	Cocktail Hour	Federal Speaker	Serenity Seekers
On Awakening	As Bill Sees It Th 6pm	Come 'n Get It!	Girls Gone Mild	Sometimes Slowly
Rise N Shine	Be Still	Cow Hollow Men's Group	Koo Koo Hump Day	Sunday Night Castro Discussion
Saturday Weekend Warrior	Beginners Warmup	Cow Hollow Young People	Mid-Morning Support	Too Early
Sunday Night Corte Madera	Big Book Basics	Each Day a New Beginning	Monday Beginners	What It's Like Now

This is an unofficial summary of the March 2017 Intergroup meeting provided for convenience; it is not intended to be the completed approved minutes. For a complete copy of the minutes and full committee reports see "Intergroup" on our website [www.aasf.org](http://www.aasf.org).

Our intergroup exists to support the groups in their common purpose of carrying the A.A. message to the still suffering alcoholic by providing and coordinating services that are difficult for the individual groups to execute.

The Intercounty Fellowship has been organized by, and is responsible to, the member groups in San Francisco and Marin for the purpose of coordinating the services that individual groups cannot provide.

The meeting was held on Wednesday, March 1, 2017 at 1187 Franklin Street in San Francisco. The meeting was started with a call to order and the Serenity Prayer. Baskets for rent and dinner were passed. The February 2017 minutes and the March 2017 agenda were approved. New Intergroup reps, Catherine, Jason, Lucy, and Jim, and Visitors were welcomed.

## Standing Reports

**Board Chair, Chris H.** Three open board positions; statement of interest in packet. FYI that Central Office manager review coming up. No one is chairing the Access Committee currently, so asking the other committees to think about how they can serve for Access. Matt reiterated that Access is important. Ensure IGR reps under-

stand how they can serve on committees if they so desire.

**Treasurer, Bob W.** January showed encouraging trends in contribution increase. January was "Excellent." Prudent reserve for 2017 has been adjusted and will be \$125K. Financial Statements have been reformatted so they are easier to understand and read.

**Central Office Manager, Maury P.** Introduced Nikki H., new special worker at Central Office. Open phone shifts still available. Jim A. passed away; he had 49 years sober and a member of Cow Hollow Young People's meeting. Maury was recognized for 28 years of sobriety and 15 years of service at Central Office.

## Intergroup Committee/Activity Reports

**SF Teleservice, Pete F.** is rotating; elections will be held at the next business meeting. We also need a new daily coordinator; interested parties should attend. We have three open teleservice shifts.

**The Point, Jane B.** Still looking for folks who can distribute *The Point* to some specific locations.

**Orientation, Greg M.** We had an overflow of new buddy sign-ups last month. Anyone is welcome to come to orientation meetings and talk about their experience as an IGR. Trevor has joined the committee.

**Technology, James O.** Producing a document to inform individual groups on how to do electronic contributions. Redesigning AASF website – implementing

a new WordPress template. Beta to be put together for IGR reps to test before it goes public. Intergroup having a private Facebook group and text teleservice capabilities? More to come.

**Fellowship, Michael P.** *I Am Responsible* production netted about \$1800; last few shows were sold out. Founders Day – Saturday, June 10 at Sober Circus 83. Looking to do carnival games, circus foods, etc. Next meeting we will talk about booth availability for groups.

## Liaison Reports

**SF H&I, Rich S.** Approved surplus distribution. SF County Jail has also asked if we can host a meeting for the LGBTQ inmates in addition to a meeting request for the psych ward. Next committee meeting is March 18.

**Marin Teleservice, Jessica S.** Open roles have been turned over! A couple of open shifts. Spaghetti Feed on Saturday, May 6 in Mill Valley; flyers to come next month.

**GGYPAA, Mac E.** Hosted a Valentine's Day dance and it was a success. Traditions Panel March 4 in San Lorenzo. March 18 meeting and dance with San Jose YPAA. March 12 GGYPA meeting in Marin.

**SF PI/CPC, Bob C.** Anyone looking to be a coordinator or speaker can come to the Public Information committee meeting on Monday, March 13. They are also looking to diversify the locations to which we provide speakers. Coordinating with H&I.

# Individual Contributions

to Central Office were made through March 15, 2017  
honoring the following members:

## IN MEMORIAM

Ray M.

Jennifer — Say Hey

## ANNIVERSARIES

Sue L. — 13 years

Alejandro D. — 14 Year

Curtis C. — 16 Years

Sally F. — 27 Years

Lynn W. — 28 Years

Karen C — 30 Years

Yvonne D. — 30 Years

**Marin PI/CPC, Summer L.** Upcoming presentations at Dominican College in Marin on March 20.

Marin General Service, Cathy P. (for Jacqueline P.) Marin County agenda topics workshop was well attended. Letter of support for GGYPA to host ACYPAA.

### What's On Your Mind?

Fiona B. shared that her meeting stopped passing around H&I can "due to H&I committee surplus." Maury and Richard shared that the H&I committee has addressed this in a letter.

Pete F. shared totals from Sobriety by the Bay and \$4336 was split between Central Office and seed money for next year's Sobriety by the Bay. Ken shared his group has had problems with homeless individuals causing disruptions and driving people away. Group discussed what to do based on traditions and Maury provided the new service piece from

GSO about safety and security. They decided that the group takes precedence over the individual and the group needs to be able to align to primary purpose. They are willing to share with other groups that may have a similar issue.

### New Business/Presentations

Charley discussed group insurance. Central Office has a new insurance policy that has the ability to get certificates for individual groups if the place where they meet requires insurance. This will be new business in April. Pete asked what the fee for groups would be to get the certificate, but that amount has yet to be determined.

### Old Business

Still need an Intergroup Board Treasurer; flyer in packet. Hospitality has been covered by Blu and John, but they are looking for another person to help.

*Continued on Page 17*

## COMMITTEE CONTACTS

The following is a list of names and email addresses for our Intergroup Officers and many of the committees. Please email that committee at the address below if you are interested in doing service on a committee, or if you wish to receive more information.

### BOARD OFFICERS:

#### CHAIR

Chris H. [chair@aasf.org](mailto:chair@aasf.org)

#### VICE CHAIR

Matt S. [vicechair@aasf.org](mailto:vicechair@aasf.org)

#### TREASURER

[open] [treasurer@aasf.org](mailto:treasurer@aasf.org)

#### RECORDING SECRETARY

Liz M. [secretary@aasf.org](mailto:secretary@aasf.org)

### COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

#### ARCHIVES COMMITTEE

Kim S. [archives@aasf.org](mailto:archives@aasf.org)

#### FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

Michael P. [fellowship@aasf.org](mailto:fellowship@aasf.org)

#### HOMEBOUND MARIN

Jane B. & David W. [homeboundmarin@aasf.org](mailto:homeboundmarin@aasf.org)

#### ORIENTATION COMMITTEE

Greg M. [orientation@aasf.org](mailto:orientation@aasf.org)

#### SF PI/CPC COMMITTEE

Jeff O. [picpc@aasf.org](mailto:picpc@aasf.org)

#### SF TELESERVICE COMMITTEE

Layne Z. [sfteleservice@aasf.org](mailto:sfteleservice@aasf.org)

#### SOS COMMITTEE

Dorothy V. [sos@aasf.org](mailto:sos@aasf.org)

#### SUNSHINE COMMITTEE

David C. & Carole P. [sunshine@aasf.org](mailto:sunshine@aasf.org)

#### THE POINT

Jane B. [thepoint@aasf.org](mailto:thepoint@aasf.org)

# aa *group contributions*

Fellowship Contributions	Feb. 17	YTD	Marin Contributions	Feb. 17	YTD	San Francisco Contributions	Feb. 17	YTD
Contribution Box		\$86.50	Wholly Together 11th Step Meditation W 7p		\$62.50	Meeting Place Noon F 12pm		\$520.15
GGYPAA		\$18.00	<b>Marin Total</b>	<b>\$2,121.69</b>	<b>\$12,208.41</b>	Mid-Morning Support Su 1030am		\$116.09
Intergroup		\$101.00				Mission Fellowship		\$88.69
Sobriety By The Bay	\$2,170.00	\$2,170.00	<b>San Francisco Contributions</b>	<b>Feb. 17</b>	<b>YTD</b>	Monday Beginners M 8pm		\$282.00
I Am Responsible	\$100.00	\$100.00	11th Step Power Power Power	\$56.35	\$56.35	Monday Men's Stag M 8pm		\$130.70
<b>Fellowship Total</b>	<b>\$2,270.00</b>	<b>\$2,475.50</b>	515 Smokeless M 515pm		\$114.00	Noon Smokeless W 12pm	\$132.00	\$132.00
			6am Dry Dock Sa	\$69.00	\$69.00	Progress Not Perfection Tu 830pm	\$272.00	\$272.00
<b>Marin Contributions</b>	<b>Feb. 17</b>	<b>YTD</b>	6am Dry Dock Su		\$164.00	Raising the Bottom W 8pm	\$60.00	\$60.00
12 & 12 Study Sa 815am		\$101.00	A is for Alcohol Tu 6pm		\$100.40	Rigorous Honesty Th 1205pm		\$136.55
7am Urgent Care Group 7D 7am		\$50.00	A New Start F 830pm	\$970.43	\$970.43	Saturday Beginners Sat 6pm		\$469.91
A Vision for You Su 730pm	\$46.39	\$46.39	AA As You Like It Tu 530pm	\$22.50	\$22.50	Saturday Night Regroup Sa 730pm	\$200.00	\$200.00
AA By The Bay Tue 730pm		\$36.00	Artists & Writers F 630pm	\$301.00	\$550.46	Serenity House	\$150.00	\$300.00
Attitude Adjustment 7D 7am		\$416.14	As Bill Sees It Th 6pm	\$284.62	\$284.62	Serenity Seekers M 730pm	\$1,147.04	\$1,147.04
Back to Basics Su 930am		\$130.00	Ass in a Bag Th 830pm		\$166.48	Sex and Love in Sobriety M 3pm		\$210.95
Big Book Study & Meditation M 7p		\$91.80	Be Still AA Su 12pm		\$303.90	Sober Saturday Sa 830am		\$188.80
Blue Book Special Su 11am		\$20.10	Beginners Warm Up W 6pm		\$88.10	Step Talk Su 830am		\$233.00
Crossroads Sun 12pm	\$162.76	\$255.05	Bernal Big Book Sat 5pm		\$179.46	Sunday Night Castro Speaker Disc 730pm	\$1,097.98	\$1,097.98
Happy, Joyous & Free 5D 12pm	\$407.05	\$494.05	Bernal New Day 7D		\$212.40	Sunday Rap Su 8pm		\$98.98
High & Dry W 12pm	\$62.00	\$62.00	Blue Book Special Su 11am	\$57.60	\$57.60	Sunday Silence Su 730pm	\$484.00	\$484.00
Intimate Feelings Sa 10am		\$370.06	Came to Believe Su 8am		\$243.56	Sunrise Sunset Women's Step Th 6pm		\$690.00
Los Ranchitos W 830pm		\$50.00	Castro Monday Big Book M 830pm	\$132.41	\$132.41	Sunset 11'ers Su		\$166.00
Marin Teleservice		\$2,000.00	Coit's Quitters		\$60.00	Sunset 11'ers Th		\$85.50
Men's 2 Plus M 7pm		\$69.50	Cow Hollow Men's Group W 8pm	\$267.94	\$970.67	Sunset 9'ers Th		\$50.00
Mill Valley 7D 7am		\$600.00	Design For Living BB Th 730am		\$102.00	Sunset Speaker Step Su 730pm	\$177.74	\$177.74
Monday Night Stag Tiburon	\$500.00	\$1,000.00	Design for Living Sat 8am		\$396.00	Surf Tu 8pm		\$673.20
Monday Night Women's M 8pm		\$246.44	Dignitaries Sympathy W 815pm	\$180.00	\$180.00	Ten Years After Su 6pm		\$681.14
Monday Nooners M 12pm		\$527.48	Each Day a New Beginning F 7am	\$766.89	\$766.89	The Drive Thru W 1215pm		\$578.68
Morning After Sa 10am	\$150.00	\$150.00	Each Day A New Beginning Su 8am		\$302.70	The Dry Dock Fellowship	\$207.89	\$207.89
North Marin Speaker Sun 12pm	\$255.00	\$255.00	Each Day a New Beginning Th 7am	\$326.76	\$326.76	The Parent Trap 2 W 4pm		\$87.00
On Awakening 7D 530am	\$350.00	\$350.00	Each Day a New Beginning Tu 7am		\$335.99	They Don't Know Who We Are Sat 7pm	\$57.60	\$57.60
Quitting Time M-F 530pm		\$1,083.73	Epiphany Group Th 7pm	\$253.00	\$253.00	Too Early Sa 8am		\$95.06
Rise N Shine Su 10am		\$300.00	Eureka Step Tu 6pm		\$238.09	Tuesday Downtown Tu 8pm		\$114.79
Serendipity Sa 11am		\$212.65	Excelsior "Scent" Free For All Sa 5pm	\$60.00	\$60.00	Tuesday Women's Tu 630pm		\$73.00
Sisters In Sobriety Th 730pm		\$53.66	Experience, Strength & Hope Sat 9am	\$388.98	\$388.98	Twelve Steps to Happiness F 730pm		\$60.00
Sober Sisters W 12pm		\$101.00	Firefighters & Friends Tu 10am		\$275.77	Valencia Smokefree F 6pm	\$153.49	\$153.49
Spiritual Testosterone Stag Su 830a		\$375.00	Friendly Circle Beginners Su 715p		\$350.00	Weekend Update Su 615pm	\$132.60	\$132.60
Sunday Express Su 6pm	\$81.99	\$81.99	Gold Mine Group M 8pm		\$383.09	West Portal W 8pm	\$329.31	\$329.31
Sunday Friendship Su 6pm		\$215.00	Grupo Central Th 10am		\$22.50	Women's 10 Years Plus Th 615pm		\$683.47
Terra Linda Thursday Men's Stag Th 8pm		\$517.50	Haight Street Explorers Th 630pm		\$226.61	Women's Came to Believe Sa 10am		\$192.66
The Barnyard Group Sa 4pm		\$111.64	Henry Ohloff House	\$80.00	\$80.00	Women's Meeting There is a Solution W 6pm	\$95.88	\$95.88
There is a Solution Tu 6pm		\$27.00	High Sobriety M 8pm	\$127.21	\$127.21	Women's Promises F 7pm		\$170.46
Three Step Group Sa 530pm		\$235.78	Huntington Square W 630pm		\$64.43	Work In Progress Sa 7pm	\$500.00	\$500.00
Thursday Night Speaker 830pm		\$326.25	It Takes A Village Sa 6pm		\$172.00	YAHOO Step Sa 1130am		\$283.12
Tuesday Chip Meeting Tu 830pm		\$793.10	Let It Be Now F 6pm	\$84.00	\$84.00	<b>San Francisco Total</b>	<b>\$9,884.41</b>	<b>\$22,771.57</b>
We, Us and Ours M 650pm	\$106.50	\$106.50	Like A Prayer Su 4pm		\$108.59			
Wednesday Sundowners W 6pm		\$250.00	Lincoln Park Sat 830pm	\$243.19	\$243.19	<b>YTD</b>	<b>\$14,276.10</b>	<b>\$37,455.48</b>
What's It All About F 12pm		\$34.10	Meditation, Prayer & Share Tue 730pm	\$15.00	\$30.00			





# Step 3 is Only a Beginning

*Put words into action*

by Anonymous

After 28 years of mind-obliterating alcoholism, I finally attended my first A.A. meeting. Within a few weeks, I became capable of memorizing the Third Step Prayer positioned on my refrigerator door. I would repeat it quite often throughout the day. My idea was that in so doing, I was turning my will, and my life, over to God...then, He would remove my problem—and that would be that!

This erroneous notion was justified by an overwhelming new happiness—please spell that A.A. h-o-n-e-y-m-o-o-n. After all, my phone was ringing off the hook and I had new A.A. friends galore! Of course, I was surviving on the fellowship by keeping my telephone real hot and attending

meetings every chance I had. I believe that was necessary because, otherwise, I would have headed right back to the bar room.

I thought this groovy-groovy (that was an expression back then) feeling was going to provide permanent protection from king alcohol, so I gave short shrift to the rest of the steps and waited for that persistent nagging mental obsession to disappear. Well, it didn't! I was six months sober and just after a parade on Hollywood Boulevard, I marched into a bar and almost ordered a drink. I didn't, but I was so terrified that I found a new sponsor to take me through the rest of the steps.

The Big Book speaks of the Great Reality deep within (p. 55). I believe this means I need to delve deep into my

subconscious self by working the rest of the Twelve Steps with a sponsor. I believe that Step 3 was only a beginning. This was only carried out by learning to do Steps 4 through 9 in my heart (not just my head), then continuing to put these directions into action by living in the spirit of Steps 10, 11 and 12. The last three steps include the essential elements of the first nine.

At some point during the first year or so of my new-found sobriety, I experienced a release from all obsession to drink; inexplicably it no longer exists in my emotional vocabulary. However, I am convinced that if I lose contact with the "Great Reality deep within," I will be back where I started—or worse.

*Continued from Page 15*

Facebook Group – Last month we discussed the "why" of having a Facebook page; this month discussing the "how." Would this secret group be just for IGR reps or is it for all AA members in San Francisco and Marin? There was a concern because past experience with a secret group proved to not be successful. Normies were getting invited and anonymity was broken. Consideration if we should have a committee of a few admins versus one person acting as an administrator. Also, concerns about our Facebook group losing sight of 10th tradition. It was asked if we could make it so only the admin could invite people. It was mentioned that another secret group has a policy where members must be approved by admin. Concern that info for IGRs would move only to Facebook, which wouldn't work for IGRs who don't have Facebook. James

clarified that Facebook would not be a replacement for communicating events, news, etc.

Concern that opening the secret group to the broader A.A. community may promote isolation and group replacement. It was noted that a lot of the San Francisco and Marin A.A. community isn't aware of what is happening in the area and a Facebook page may help increase participation. It was mentioned that there are existing "questionable" A.A. Facebook groups, so maybe a secret group would help provide a legit A.A. experience on social media. The discussion will continue next month.

Adjourned with the Responsibility Statement.

Next Intergruop Meeting: Wednesday, April 5, 2017 at 7pm at 1187 Franklin Street in San Francisco. Orientation is at 6:15pm, dinner is served at 7pm.

## All or Nothing by John W.

Shoot the Moon  
Let It Ride  
One spin of the wheel  
High card takes all

Cannot win if you don't buy a ticket  
Nothing ventured, nothing lost  
There is no point, so what's the point  
You live, You die, that's it!

All or Nothing, He is or He is not  
I bet on Nothing and was dying from it  
Abstained, got a taste of All, as promised  
With it, a glimpse of what Hope meant.

# Income and Expense Statement: January 2017

	Jan 2017	Budget	\$ vs. Budget		Jan 2017	Budget	\$ vs. Budget
Revenue				Filing/Fees	\$ 20	\$ -	\$ 20
Contributions from Groups	\$ 23,179	\$ 22,500	\$ 679	Insurance	\$ 1,670	\$ 1,700	\$ (30)
Contributions from Individuals	\$ 4,812	\$ 3,600	\$ 1,212	Internet Expense	\$ 149	\$ 150	\$ (1)
Gratitude Month	\$ 2,813	\$ 3,500	\$ (687)	IT Services	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Intergroup Event Revenue	\$ 4,425	\$ 2,080	\$ 2,345	IT Hardware	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Other Revenue	\$ 68	\$ 47	\$ 21	IT Software	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Sales - Bookstore	\$ 9,190	\$ 7,328	\$ 1,862	Office Supplies	\$ 0	\$ 120	\$ (120)
Cost of Bookstore Sales	\$ (6,988)	\$ (5,994)	\$ (994)	Paper Purchased	\$ -	\$ 125	\$ (125)
Gross Margin - Bookstore	\$ 2,202	\$ 1,334	\$ 868	Printing	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Revenue	\$ 37,500	\$ 33,061	\$ 4,439	Equipment Lease	\$ 733	\$ 408	\$ 325
Expense				Repair & Maintenance	\$ 356	\$ 340	\$ 16
Employee Expenses	\$ 12,444	\$ 13,323	\$ (879)	Security System	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Committees				Payroll Expenses	\$ 9	\$ 10	\$ (1)
PI/CPC	\$ -	\$ 100	\$ (100)	Telephone	\$ 194	\$ 200	\$ (6)
Access Committee	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	Phone Book Listings	\$ 93	\$ 93	\$ -
Sunshine Club	\$ -	\$ 25	\$ (25)	Travel	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Archives Committee	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	Training	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Committees - Other	\$ -	\$ 30	\$ (30)	Bad Checks	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Committees	\$ -	\$ 155	\$ (155)	Miscellaneous Expense	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Intergroup Sponsored Events	\$ 1,446	\$ 2,000	\$ (554)	Total Expense	\$ 21,979	\$ 23,697	\$ (1,718)
Professional Fees	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	Net Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	\$ 15,520	\$ 9,364	\$ 6,156
Postage	\$ 47	\$ 255	\$ (208)	Interest Income	\$ 45	\$ 45	\$ 0
Rent - Office	\$ 4,458	\$ 4,458	\$ 0	Depreciation/Amortization Expense	\$ (348)	\$ (348)	\$ -
Rent - Other	\$ 360	\$ 360	\$ -	Net Surplus/(Deficit)	\$ 15,217	\$ 9,061	\$ 6,156

## Treasurer's Report

For January 2017, Total Revenue was \$37,500, over budget by \$4,439. Total Operating Expense for January was \$21,979, under budget by \$1,716, primarily due to employee expenses and intergroup events. The result is Net Operating Surplus of \$15,520. Net Surplus for January was \$15,217, over budget by \$6,156.

Group Contributions for January were \$23,179, over budget by \$679. Individual Contributions were \$4,812, over budget by \$1,212.

Total Unrestricted Cash for January 2017 was \$78,530, an increase of \$24,564 from December 2016, primarily due to gratitude month and individual contributions in January.

Unrestricted Cash is over three months of operating expenses.

The rating for January 2017 is "Excellent."  
**OVERALL RATING: Excellent**

### Intergroup Finance Rating System

Every month we rate our monthly finances as "Excellent," "Good," "Fair" or "Poor." Generally speaking, here are the definitions of those terms:

**EXCELLENT:** We exceeded our budget. Our income was greater than our expenses for the month and we have more than two months' worth of operating expenses in unrestricted cash balances. Operating expenses are roughly \$22K/month, so we'd have over \$44K in unrestricted cash balances for the month.

**GOOD:** We are meeting our budget. Our income for the month, or for the YTD, was slightly greater than our expenses and we'd have approximately 1.5 - 2 months of operating expenses in unrestricted cash balances.

**FAIR:** We are not meeting our budget. Our expenses were greater than our income for the month and for the YTD, and our unrestricted cash balance would be somewhere between 1 and 1.5x our operating expenses.

**POOR:** We are not meeting our budget and our unrestricted cash balances fell below one month of operating expenses. The last time we were "poor" was in September 2016.

# January 2017 Balance Sheet

	31-Jan-17	31-Dec-16	\$ Change	31-Jan-16	\$ Change
<b>ASSETS</b>					
<b>Current Assets</b>					
<b>Cash</b>					
Unrestricted Cash	\$ 78,530	\$ 53,905	\$ 24,625	\$ 53,640	\$ 24,890
Restricted Cash	\$ 125,232	\$ 130,540	\$ (5,308)	\$ 131,825	\$ (6,593)
<b>Total Cash</b>	<b>\$ 203,762</b>	<b>\$ 184,445</b>	<b>\$ 19,317</b>	<b>\$ 185,465</b>	<b>\$ 18,297</b>
Accounts Receivable	\$ (32)	\$ 66	\$ (98)	\$ 89	\$ (121)
Inventory - Bookstore	\$ 23,318	\$ 26,774	\$ (3,456)	\$ 22,425	\$ 893
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>\$ 227,048</b>	<b>\$ 211,285</b>	<b>\$ 15,763</b>	<b>\$ 207,979</b>	<b>\$ 19,069</b>
<b>Fixed Assets</b>	<b>\$ 14,690</b>	<b>\$ 15,038</b>	<b>\$ (348)</b>	<b>\$ 16,967</b>	<b>\$ (2,277)</b>
Deposits	\$ 6,698	\$ 6,698	\$ -	\$ 6,698	\$ -
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 248,436</b>	<b>\$ 233,021</b>	<b>\$ 15,415</b>	<b>\$ 231,644</b>	<b>\$ 16,792</b>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; NET ASSETS</b>					
<b>Liabilities</b>					
<b>Current Liabilities</b>					
Accounts Payable	\$ 20	\$ 629	\$ (609)	\$ -	\$ 20
Payroll Tax Liabilities	\$ 4,117	\$ 3,517	\$ 600	\$ 19,140	\$ (15,023)
Sales Tax Payable	\$ 706	\$ 499	\$ 207	\$ 670	\$ 36
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>\$ 4,843</b>	<b>\$ 4,645</b>	<b>\$ 198</b>	<b>\$ 19,810</b>	<b>\$ (14,967)</b>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$ 4,843</b>	<b>\$ 4,645</b>	<b>\$ 198</b>	<b>\$ 19,810</b>	<b>\$ (14,967)</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>					
Net Assets, Beginning of Y	\$ 228,376	\$ 199,894	\$ 28,482	\$ 199,894	\$ 28,482
Net Surplus/(Deficit), YTD	\$ 15,217	\$ 28,482	\$ (13,265)	\$ 11,940	\$ 3,277
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>\$ 243,593</b>	<b>\$ 228,376</b>	<b>\$ 15,217</b>	<b>\$ 211,834</b>	<b>\$ 31,759</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; NET ASSET:</b>	<b>\$ 248,436</b>	<b>\$ 233,021</b>	<b>\$ 15,415</b>	<b>\$ 231,644</b>	<b>\$ 16,792</b>



by Carlyn C.

An old-timer comes home from his weekly group meeting, gets ready for bed, and is on his knees contemplating his evening prayers. He's in the middle of his "God blesses" saying, "God bless the guy who says the same thing no matter what the topic. God bless George, the 'cake lady.' God bless..." Suddenly he pauses and looks up. Then says, "You know, God, I wonder if there is A.A. in heaven. If there isn't A.A. in heaven, I don't know if I want to go there. These folks are so important to me, I don't want to spend eternity without them."

There's a bolt of lightening and a loud clap of thunder and the old-timer hears a voice saying, "I have good news and bad news. The good news is, there is A.A. in heaven. The bad news is you're speaking tomorrow night."



## Thank You Faithful FIVERS! Thank You

Faithful Fivers are A.A. members Who graciously pledge to contribute at least \$5 each month toward the support of Central Office. Faithful Fiver contributions go a long way in helping make our vital services possible. We thank the following members:

(Continued from Page 5)

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The Birthday Plan has been an A.A. tradition since 1955. Contributions to express gratitude for sobriety can be made in any amount. Some send a dollar per year; others, a penny a day. We would like to list in *The Point* your first name and last initial with number of years sober.



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# April 2017

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