

the Point

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

from Chapter Five of the book, Alcoholics Anonymous

2016
3
March

A publication of the Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous

Intercounty Fellowship
of Alcoholics Anonymous

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Rejoining Society

"Gossips . . . righteously denounce the local Wolves and Red Riding Hoods."

—Bill W.

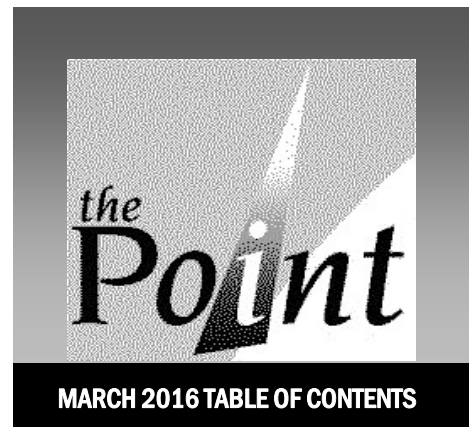
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The Point is published monthly to inform AA members about business and meeting affairs in the Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous (San Francisco and Marin Counties). The Point's pages are open to participation by all AA members. Nothing 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.

March 2016

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
		1 <u>FIRST TUE</u> Access Committee Central Office 6pm	2 <u>FIRST WED</u> Intergroup Meeting 1187 Franklin St, SF Orientation 6:15pm Meeting 7pm
6	7	8 <u>SECOND TUE</u> Marin H&I 1360 Lincoln Ave, San Rafael 6:15pm SF General Service 1111 O'Farrell St Orientation / Concept Study / BTG 7pm Business Meeting 8pm	9 <u>SECOND WED</u> Marin Bridging the Gap 1360 Lincoln Ave, San Rafael 6pm
13 Golden Gate Young People in AA 1360 Lincoln Ave, San Rafael 12pm	14 <u>SECOND MON</u> SF Public Information / Cooperation with the Professional Community (PI/CPC) Committee Central Office Business Meeting 7pm	15	16
20 <u>THIRD SUN</u> Archives Committee Central Office 2pm Business Meeting followed by Work Day	21 <u>THIRD MON</u> SF Teleservice Central Office Business Meeting 6pm Orientation 6:30pm Marin General Service 9 Ross Valley Rd, San Rafael Orientation / Concept Study 6:45pm Business Meeting 7:30pm	22 <u>FOURTH TUE</u> Marin Teleservice 1360 Lincoln Ave, San Rafael Orientation 7pm Business Meeting 7:30pm	23
27	28	29	30

THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
3	4	5
10	11	12 General Service District 6 Agenda Topics Workshop 1031 Franklin St, SF 12:30pm <u>SECOND SAT</u> <i>The Point</i> Committee Central Office 12pm
17	18	19 <u>THIRD SAT</u> SF H&I 2900 24th St, SF Orientation 11am Business Meeting 12pm
24 <u>FOURTH THU</u> Marin Public Information / Cooperation with the Professional Community (PI/CPC) 1360 Lincoln Ave, San Rafael Business Meeting 7pm	25	26 <u>FOURTH SAT</u> CNCA Meeting 320 N McDowell Blvd, Petaluma 10am
31		



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“Gossips... righteously denounce
the local Wolves and Red Riding
Hoods... After a time fear and
intolerance subside. Everybody has
learned a great deal.”

Who is a Member of AA?
Bill W., Grapevine, 1946



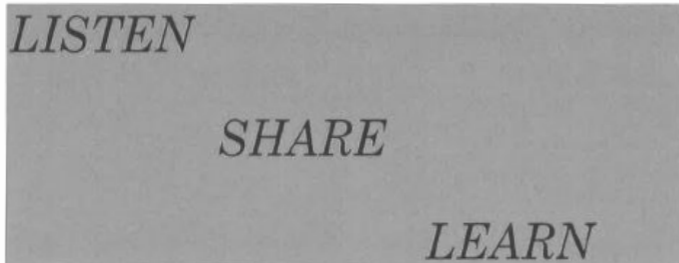
Meeting Changes

Sun	10:30am	Pacific Heights	MID-MORNING SUPPORT 2333 Buchanan St. Now in Conference Center, Level A (was in Enright Rm.)
Tue	5:00pm	Pacific Heights	SOBRIETY FIRST, 2203 Sutter St / Pierce (was a Speaker/Discussion meeting)
Wed	8:00pm	Mill Valley	THE MILL VALLEY LGBTQ ALL ARE WELCOME, 8 Olive St / Throckmorton (was called Gay Men & Women - All Are Welcome)
Sat	9:00am	Inner Sunset	EXPERIENCE, STRENGTH & HOPE 1327 7th Ave. Now Closed Mtg. (was Open Mtg)
Sat	8:30am	Novato	AWAKENINGS 5400 Nave Dr. Now Open Mtg. (Was Closed Mtg.)
Sat	6:30pm	Pacific Heights	THE 4TH DIMENSION, 2325 Union St / Steiner (was called Happy Destiny)

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 if only 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!***

DISTRICT 6

2016 AGENDA TOPICS WORKSHOP



A workshop for GSRs (and others) to learn how to present the Agenda topics to your groups and learn about some of the topics that will be presented at the 66th General Service Conference.

SATURDAY – MARCH 12th
12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

URBAN LIFE CENTER
1031 Franklin Street (at O'Farrell) San Francisco

All are welcome! Join us for interesting presentations and lively discussion!

Potluck Sweets
Please bring something to share

NCCAA





69th

Annual Spring Conference

**Northern California
Council of
Alcoholics Anonymous**

San Ramon, CA

San Ramon Marriott- 2600 Bishop Drive
March 18, 19, 20, 2016

Friday, March 18, 2016	
2:00 PM	Registration Opens
3:30 PM	Early Bird Meeting
8:00 PM	Open Speaker Meeting
	Mike L., Indianapolis
Saturday, March 19, 2016	
9:30 AM	General Service Panel Area (06)
11-12:30 PM	Open Delegate's Business Meeting
1:00 PM	Hospitals and Institutions
3:30 PM	Young People's Meeting
	Courtney A., Pleasant Hill
8:00 PM	Open Speaker Meeting
	David D., Millersville MD
10:00 PM	Dance Following Drawing
Sunday, March 20, 2015	
9:00 AM	All A.A. Services Panel Meeting
10:30 AM	Open Speaker Meeting
	Mildred F., Toronto Ontario Canada

*Marathon
Meetings*



Fellowship – Workshops – Speakers – Free Drawing – Dance
PRE-REGISTRATION CUT OFF DATE IS MARCH 1ST 2016

Hotel and map on back
With Al-Anon and Spanish participation

*Juntas en
Español*



Please remit with payment to: Treasurer NCCAA, P.O. BOX 293586 Sacramento, CA 95829
PRE-REGISTRATION - \$15.00 (per person) - AT THE CONFERENCE - \$20.00

From the Editor

March Comes in Like a Wolf

March comes in like a wolf (and Red Riding Hood) reminiscent of Bill W.'s *Grapevine* article: "At one time or another most A.A. groups go on rule-making benders . . . Most attempts at enforcement generate such waves of dissension and intolerance in the group that this condition is presently recognized to be worse for the group life than the very worst that the worst ever did." The third tradition means anyone could attend our meetings. We've all earned our chairs. Bill's 1946 essay on tolerance became the foundation for Tradition Three.

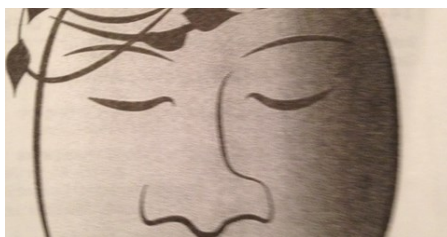
In this issue Judy G. details the fine lines between sponsors, sponsees, teachers and students. An anonymous member explores the process of releasing guilt and forgiving self. Bob S. elucidates the Third Step Prayer's relief from "the bondage of self." Rick R. discusses obsessing on OPD: Other People's Drinking.

Claire A. breaks *Educated Agnostic* from an older edition of the Big Book (from the A.A. compilation

volume *Experience, Strength & Hope*). And our history piece shows one view of an early AA framer's life: The man who carried the message to Bill W.

The whole staff sends grateful thanks to our departing editor Gilbert G. for his many selfless hours of service to the cause. Thanks also to Duran for creating a lovely cover illustration for the February issue and Navarre for March's. Here's hoping your month is filled inclusivity in the spirit of the Third Tradition.

tP



From the February cover
illustration by Duran M.

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 is a summary; for the full editorial policy, please go to www.aasf.org.)



Faithful FIVERS!

Faithful Fivers are A.A. members who graciously pledge to contribute at least \$5.00 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:

Aaron H.	Emily C.
Alejandro D.	Erin S.
Alex. R.	Fay K.
Allison M.	Forrest P.
Ami and Nick H.	Frederick D.
Amy Mc.	Gerald F.
Anonymous	Gilbert G.
Barbara L.	Gladys G.
Barbara M.	Gregory G.
Becca M.	Henry P.
Ben H.	Herman B.
Ben W.	Hilary M.
Beth N.	James P.
Bette B.	Jane B.
Bharanidharan A.	Jane K.
Blu F.	Janet B.
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CJ H.	Karen K.
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Dale B.	Stephen R.
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Daniel M.	Kathleen C.
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David S.	Kris H.
Dianne E.	Kurt C.
Don L.	Kurt P.
Don N.	Laura B.
Ed K.	Lauren H.
Eileen M.	Lance S.

(Continued on p. 19)

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!

A Sponsee May Be Your Sponsor One Day

There are no rules around the sponsee/sponsor relationship

by Judy G.

In preparing to write this article, I turned to the A.A. pamphlet on sponsorship. Several things stood out: “In A.A., sponsor and sponsored meet as equals. An alcoholic who has made some progress in the recovery program shares that experience on a continuous, individual basis with another alcoholic who is attempting to attain or maintain sobriety through A.A.” and, “We find that we need constant, close support as we begin learning how to live sober.” Sounds simple enough.

How do you go about choosing that sponsor? I have heard countless stories of new members being assigned a sponsor at their first meeting. Another member shared that she was way too picky in choosing a sponsor, and had to remind herself that she was not choosing a mate.

*I don't want to have
to look my daughter
in the eye and tell her
that I drank.*

As Lila R., my A.A. speaker guru says, a bit tongue in cheek, you come into A.A. and do everything your sponsor tells you to do—for the first two years. There is much wisdom to be shared, and after all, it is a program of letting go of our self-will.

Just as there are infinite concepts of a higher power, there are just as many diverse sponsor/sponsee

relationships. I know people who are friends with their sponsors and socialize frequently with them. On the other end of the spectrum, there are sponsor/sponsee relationships that mirror a therapeutic relationship, with the relationship being more one way, i.e., the sponsor does not reveal that much about herself personally, other than relating her personal experience in recovery.

Even though the A.A. pamphlet says that sponsors and sponsees meet as equals, I am from the school that believes in the “hierarchy.” The relationship resembles more of a teacher/student relationship. If your sponsor tells you to do something, if at all possible, you do it.

Today, I am going to my sponsor's house to give her my fifth step, and I feel like I am about to enter hallowed ground. (The flip side is that I tend to put people on pedestals, whether they deserve it or not).

Can you effectively sponsor someone who used to be your sponsor, and vice versa? My answer is, that depends. It depends on the individual. For some people that would work, and for others, probably not.

Two important things about a sponsor/sponsee relationship are: Respect and accountability. I heard a man say awhile ago, “I don't want to have to look my daughter in the eye and tell her that I drank.” Accountability to his daughter was helping to keep him sober.

I feel that way about my sponsor. I don't want to have to tell my sponsor that I drank. So when the urge comes, I now have enough recovery

to take the pause, play it forward, and evaluate all that I have to lose, including having to tell my sponsor that I drank. And for some, that means losing your sponsor. I previously had a sponsor who said, “I don't work with people in relapse.”

When I thought about writing this article about whether an A.A. could sponsor someone who used to be her sponsor, my first thought was no; I am too old-school, and the relationship is too structured for that to work. But as I thought more about it over the time it took me to write this, my sentiments changed.

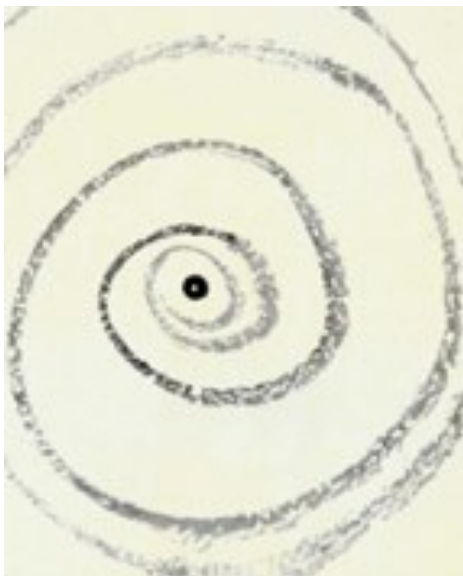
*I don't want to have
to tell my sponsor
that I drank.*

Even for me, if enough time had gone by, I think I could sponsor someone who used to be my sponsor. But could I be sponsored by someone who used to be my sponsee? If I respected her program and felt accountable to her for my sobriety, perhaps. And it would greatly depend on why that person wasn't my sponsee anymore.

When all is said and done, a sponsor's role is to guide you through the steps and to help keep you sober. However that works for you is divine.

JP





by Bob S.

It seemed as though my Fourth Step had enough guilty substance to last several lifetimes. I have been told many times that I felt guilty because I *was* guilty. Very true! But then I listened to people around the A.A. tables who told of how they had forgiven themselves.

*I remember the
judge pointing
his angry finger
at me shouting...*

Well, I had tried that from the very first time I was released from a terrifying experience. I remember the judge pointing his angry finger at me shouting: *"You have disgraced your mother and father . . . I don't feel sorry for you at all! Ninety days in the Indiana Penal farm."*

There had been three drunken arrests in a row at age 19, yet luck was on my side; in finality, I was released to the custody of my father, but wow, did I feel guilty! For the sake of relief, I found reason to

Forgiving Self?

The program of A.A. grants us relief from guilt

believe that I was a victim because the cops were always after me. It was *not* my fault! I seemed to forgive myself, yet that annoying hole in my stomach only grew larger.

As my drunken misadventures continued throughout my 20s and 30s I would seek solace from my bar-room buddies, and they would agree with me—I was just an unfortunate victim having bad luck. I believed that, too! Yet that cavity in my stomach grew evermore annoying and painful.

*I heard someone say:
'Self cannot remove
guilt with self.'*


The truth is painful, but as long as I could drink on a lie, I could find some comfort, at least while I was drunk. I truly believe that an alcoholic cannot drink on the truth. An alcoholic can only drink on a lie — and I was an expert at believing my own lies.

After some time sober—guilt still all knotted up in my stomach—I heard someone say: "Self cannot remove guilt with self." If that was true, then who can?

The answer came to me on page 86 of our Big Book (bottom of the first full paragraph): "After making our review, we ask *God's forgiveness* and inquire what corrective measures should be taken" [italics mine].

Of course, here the Big Book is speaking about a nighttime critical analysis of the day, but I now use this

*That cavity in
my stomach grew
evermore annoying
and painful.*

for my entire past life. I now try to live in the spirit of Steps Ten, Eleven, and Twelve, thereby practicing the "corrective measures" mentioned above. Consequently, save for brief moments, that guilty pain has disappeared. Thank you, God! 



Contributors Wanted

thePoint@aasf.org



The Point is looking for articles,
illustrations & poetry reflecting the
experience, strength & hope
of local members



Step Three in Action

Third Step Prayer: Take away my difficulties

The Third Step Prayer remains on my refrigerator year after year—not that I haven’t long ago memorized it, but it evokes a different meaning with each reading, starting with the first sentence:

“God, I offer myself to Thee—to build with me and to do with me as Thou wilt.”

Here I realize that I don’t know exactly God’s will for me, but I do have a fairly good idea. I am left off the hook here by a sentence on page 85 of the Big Book, *“Every day is a day when we must carry the vision of God’s will into all our activities.”*

And yes, I do have a general idea (vision) of appropriate action as each new circumstance arises. Of course, this may involve many Eleventh Step prayers throughout each day.

“Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Thy will.”

Before learning about the Twelve Steps I had no idea of what constituted the *bondage of self*. But then when I did Steps Four and Five with my sponsor, he was not faint to point them out.

I have come to believe there is an underlying four-part set of grosser handicaps which populate this deadly barrier from truth in drink: selfishness, dishonesty, resentment and fear.

*I don’t exactly know
what is God’s will
for me*

“Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of Thy Power, Thy Love, and Thy Way of life.”

I have developed a good notion of my “difficulties.” When I bring to light the many times I took the easy path when I knew, absolutely and for sure, that it was not my vision of God’s will. As the famous comedian, Red Skelton, used to say, “I just ‘dood’ it!”

“May I do Thy will always!”

I used to think that living the A.A. program of action was calling my sponsor, going to meetings, conventions, Twelve Stepping, etc. However, I have come to believe that “always” means how I drive a car or a



Letter to the Editor

Great to see the letter on the financial status of the CO (SF Central Office). I thought the following might be helpful given the current financial situation at our Central Office, I wanted to share a simple formula for how the **smaller groups** I attend determine our responsibility to be fully self-supporting,. Obviously this is the minimum requirement, larger groups have economies of scale which should allow them to make larger contributions.

Using the average cost (from the GSO website www.aa.org) of \$147 per group per year, and assuming

literature to be self-funding, we take the 30% GSO distribution and calculate the rest based on the 60/30/5/5 distribution formula.

Annual costs (minimum):

GSO @ 30%	\$147.00
C. Office @ 60%	\$294.00
CNCA @ 5%	\$ 24.50
SFGF @ 5%	\$ 24.50
Yearly Goal	\$490.00 (\$9.42/week)
Add in Yearly Group Expenses	
Yearly Group Rent:	\$ XX.xx
Yearly Coffee Expenses:	\$ XX.xx
TOTAL Yearly Collection Needed:	\$ XX.xx

Divide it all by 52 and that’s the weekly group nut. If we don’t collect it, we pass the basket a second time. Our groups are happy to acknowledge that the spirit of service is about the sacrifice of money as well as the sacrifice of time.

If we can’t be FULLY self-supporting, then perhaps we should consider merging with another group so that together we can be fully self-supporting.

Yours in grateful service,
Karen C.





Tradition Three – the only requirement for A.A. membership is the desire to stop drinking

by Anonymous

This Tradition, like several others, is all about striking a balance between seemingly contradictory elements—in this case the balance between inclusivity and exclusivity. The overriding focus is toward inclusiveness, that there be no other conditions for membership for all who suffer from alcoholism, whether high bottom or low. We simply cannot take away any alcoholic's chance for recovery and for life.

Yet in looking at our history there is also the underlying element of exclusivity. Having arisen from the Oxford Groups (which was the model for our spiritual solution), we early on realized the unique value of one alcoholic working with another alcoholic.

Although Dr. Bob was a long-time member of the Oxford Group, the spiritual solution didn't work for him until he heard Bill "speak his language", i.e. what it was like to be an alcoholic. So what set us apart was our conviction that alcoholics could affect other alcoholics as no-one else can. So Tradition Three says we're open to anyone who has a desire to STOP drinking. Not to anyone who has a desire NOT to drink, because the clear implication of stopping drinking is that you have to have been drinking in the first place.

Otherwise anyone who thought drinking was a bad idea, whether from a religious, moral or even health standpoint could be a member. But unless we have, as the pamphlet Problems Other than Alcohol says, "a genuine alcoholic history" we don't have the necessary experience to relate to the alcoholic newcomer. Over and over our literature cites the necessity of identification. If we don't have alcoholic experiences to relate, how can we work with a newcomer?

*Tradition Three says
we're open to anyone
who has a desire to
STOP drinking. Not
to anyone who has a
desire NOT to drink...*

How can we do our 12th Step work? Remembering that A.A. was started by alcoholics for alcoholics, we must be able to speak to THEM, both now and in the future.

And for those of us with problems other than alcohol, this Tradition and Dr. Bob's Nightmare give us excellent guidance on how to handle it in A.A. The story of the alcoholic who also had an "addiction even worse stigmatized than alcoholism" was the

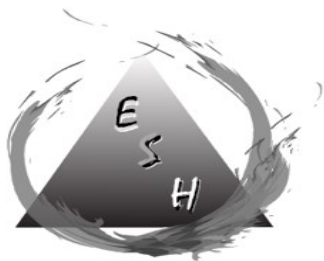
watershed moment of inclusivity by accepting members who have other addictions.

Similarly, in reading Dr. Bob's Nightmare we see that he had significant experience using drugs, yet he only relates it in passing, and focuses his story on his experience with alcohol. While I've heard members use this as a justification for talking about drugs at A.A. meetings, the converse is actually true and the story clearly shows that our focus must always be on our experiences with alcohol.

Finally, our sister Fellowship, Narcotics Anonymous, also has a Third Tradition and it says "The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using." Do we have the right to usurp their Tradition by expanding the definition of 'alcoholic' to encompass all substance abuse? Do we think that because we're the oldest, the biggest, the original 12-step program we can just take their seat at the recovery table?

The key to respecting both our Tradition and the Tradition of our sister fellowship is for A.A. to embrace all who are alcoholics and guide those who aren't to the appropriate fellowship. We're not doing anyone any favors by ignoring our one and only requirement for membership.





Obsessed

Down deep inside...with the abstinence part

by Rick R.

In the third tradition it tells us that, the only thing that is required of us in order to become a member of A.A. is a desire to stop drinking. It doesn't even require it to be an honest desire or even to actually quit drinking. There is no requirement to take, or to work, the steps or specify how many meetings we should attend. It doesn't require us to get a sponsor, take on service responsibilities, or to call anybody. It's pretty much up to the individual, how far he wants to embrace these and many other suggestions.

With that in mind, I observe a cross section of new members, who come to us, that range from the very desperate, to the guy that wants to fulfill a legal requirement to get the charges dropped (so to speak), and everything in between.

This brings me to the next observation that seems to be a pattern among the different degrees of thoroughness are suggested. The very desperate one seems to have an easier time of surrendering and embracing the program, much more thoroughly, than the less desperate one who has been introduced to the program long before he/she was

“It's pretty much up to the individual, how far he wants to embrace these and many other suggestions”

ready to surrender, and still doesn't truly believe that he /she is that bad off.

“The very desperate one seems to have an easier time of surrendering and embracing the program, much more thoroughly, than the less desperate one who has been introduced to the program long before he/she was ready to surrender.”

Down deep inside they seem to be obsessed with the alcohol abstinence part of the program—that the drinking was the problem—and they have trouble addressing the life issues that made it necessary to drink for the relief it brought. If it was that simple, all a person would need to do is purchase a bushel basket full of Antabuse and take one every day, and for those that say that they drank on Antabuse, I would ask, what happened the second time you did it, and there was never a response.

Unfortunately we have many who raise their fist in the air and state that, “I just don't pick up today” and think that is the message that the

A.A. program is trying to present, but it isn't. It actually conflicts with the A.A. message expressed in the Big Book and the 12x12 in three different areas.

You can read the bottom paragraph on page 31, right after the words *ad infinitum*, in the Big Book, and you can read from the bottom paragraph on page 100 to the end of the chapter. Then to reinforce again, you can read the second 2 pages in Step 1 in the 12x12 which is almost word for word what was explained in the Big Book. These things are worth reading and are not based on my opinion.

Those that are still obsessed with the alcohol topic, years after they have been in the program, often get stuck in that quagmire and they seem to be equally obsessed with what others are drinking, as well as, what's on the liquor shelves at the market, and they have a perfect right to do so, when the more fortunate ones that arrived in that state of desperation mentioned earlier, are all about becoming better parents, husbands, wives, employees, etc.

Those who search for the answers in the Big Book and the 12x12, and resist the temptation to modify the text, to fit their own agenda, have a chance to experience all of the promises that are on pages 83—84 in the Big Book, and live a meaningful, happy and peaceful life.

TP



Making Decisions & Accepting Ourselves

by Annia R.

Sometimes I struggle with indecision. It can be something mundane, like deciding between tea and coffee. Other times, I have to make a bigger life decision such as which job to take or whether to move to a different city.

When I am faced with making a decision, oftentimes I feel so much pressure to make the “right” decision. I put a lot of pressure on myself to pick the correct choice as if my life depends on it. In reality, most decisions are not permanent. Also, we have the right to change our minds if we decide to change our course of action.

In 2013, I got a new job and I had a hard time with the long commute. I decided to leave San Francisco and move 30 miles south to a suburb, closer to my job. Within a few months, I realized that I really missed the city, and I regretted the move.

Thankfully I remembered what my therapist once told me, that most decisions are not permanent. I decided to move back, and within a month I was back in my favorite neighborhood of the city. When facing a dilemma, we can pause and consider our options. We may talk to a trusted friend or write a pro/con list. Once we make a decision, we need to be gentle with ourselves and remember that we made our choices the best way we could with the information we had.

I used to fantasize about being a person who springs out of bed every morning at 6am, then goes to the gym to cheerfully take a 90-minute cycling

Thought for the Day

When I find myself struggling with a decision, I will relax and take it easy. I will remind myself that most decisions are not permanent, and there is no “right” way to live life. I will do the best I can with the information that I have, and let go of results.

class, followed by a day in an office as a high-powered executive. I wished that I loved business or law and earned a lot of money. In reality, I am not a morning person. I hate to exercise in the mornings, and I could never cycle for 90 minutes straight.

I don't enjoy managing others and I have no interest in the business world. I have always been interested in psychology and helping others find happiness.

It took me years of therapy and recovery work to start accepting myself as I am, and finding ways to be the best person I can be. I found that I am innovative and creative in my own way, and that I can bring value to others just by being myself and doing what I love.

I realized that I loved being in recovery, and I started doing more of what I loved. Eventually I finished graduate school in psychology and found a meaningful career in the recovery field, working at drug and alcohol treatment centers as a therapist.

When we let go of expectations of what we think we should be like, or what other people think we should be like, we can focus on accepting and loving ourselves just the way we are. It does not mean that we give ourselves permission to misbehave or indulge in our character defects – we are still responsible for our actions. It means that we stop competing with others and comparing ourselves to them.

Thought for the Day

I will accept my uniqueness and I will do more of what I love. I will appreciate my natural talents and creativity, and I will let go of unrealistic expectations.





Educated Agnostic

Gradually, in a manner I cannot explain, I began to re-examine the beliefs I had.

by Claire A.

The line above is the one that jumps out at me in this story from *Experience, Strength & Hope*. It sums up, more or less the manner in which the author came to believe in a power greater than himself. And this describes my experience, too—not a great epiphany, but a series of small, sure moments of realization.

When I first got sober, in the cloud of early sobriety, unsure how the heck I would get through a weekend at KOA in Cloverdale without having a beer around the campfire, or a glass of wine with dinner, I called my sponsor. I remember sitting in the car, talking on the phone, feeling completely at sea. My sponsor, gently suggested I get to a meeting if I could. She helped me find the meeting.

I was scared to death to go—it was way outside my comfort zone. I didn't know the area or the roads, not to mention anyone in the Cloverdale fellowship. So I was very nervous as I made my way into town.

The drive from the KOA to town is pretty, with lots of vineyards and rolling hills, curvy roads and lovely vistas. Coming around one of the bends, a hawk flew down past the windshield from above, and out in front of the car, then up and away. It was close enough that I could have touched it. It seems silly to me now to say it, but at that moment I breathed a huge sigh of relief, and felt I was headed in the right direction. Who knows? Maybe the

hawk simply brought me into the present moment. But it felt like encouragement from some Higher Power.

It turned out the meeting had been cancelled, so I never went to that meeting, but I learned so many things anyway—to just go, without worrying about the consequences, taking a break when I feel on edge, and to realize there is a huge, gorgeous world out there in which I can take part, if I just walk out the door.

I still wasn't ready to talk about God after this early experience, and to this day, I am careful about talking about God. I do so mainly with my sponsor and others I am sure will receive that word in the spirit in

*Realize there is
a huge, gorgeous
world out there*

which I intend it—a power greater than me, the force that drives everything forward, whatever that is. I believe “God” is just shorthand for whatever we believe in.

And these moments of grace still come to me, more often when I work a diligent program, but even when I am full of self-indulgence and self-pity. One happened just the other day.

I had spent several days feeling really resentful about the direction of my

life. Some changes were happening, and I felt I'd gotten the short end of the stick. I was angry one moment, dull the next, and sad after that. I was exhausted from travel, and I wasn't too pleasant to be around. I had to do some shopping, though, and while I was out (angrily walking around

*Little moments...
make me believe there
is something bigger*

feeling sorry for myself because the rain was falling on me), I saw one of my neighbors walking in the same direction. He's not someone I know particularly well, and to tell the truth I'm kind of scared of him.

When I looked up at him, though, he smiled at me with an encouraging smile and nod. I smiled back, and we went on our ways; all I could think was “thank you” to God for putting someone in my path that brought me out of my self-pity. It's those little moments—those unexpected turns, those human connections—that make me believe there is something bigger than all of us.

When I turn toward God, I am received, every time. When I put my life in God's hands, it is easier for me, no matter what. I don't know why I need so many reminders; I guess that's the alcoholism, so I think I'll keep coming back!



The History of A.A.

Ebby's Story

by Robert S.

Edwin Throckmorton Thacher, or “Ebby,” as Bill W. knew him, was born April 29, 1896, into a wealthy family that manufactured railroad wheels. Thomas Thacher, Ebby’s distant grandfather, came from England in the mid-1600s and was the first pastor of Old South Church in Boston. The family included three mayors of Albany, New York. Ebby’s father, George, hobnobbed with Abraham Lincoln’s son, Robert Todd Lincoln, and President William Howard Taft.

The Thachers’ vacation house was across from Bill Wilson’s wife Lois’ parents, Dr. Clark Burnham and Matilda Burnham. Lois remembers seeing Ebby still in a crib in 1896. He was a mischievous youth yet found friends like Bill Wilson and other Oxford Group (OG) members since nearby Williamstown was the center of local Oxford Group activity in 1932-1933.

Albany Years (1915-1932)

Ebby started his drinking at the Ten Eyck Hotel bar when he was 19. When his teachers learned of his binges it was the end of his formal schooling. Ebby’s older brother, John Boyd Thacher II, or “Jack,” was Albany’s mayor. If there is anything a politician would like to avoid it’s a brother getting into scrapes. Ebby recalled: “Several times in Albany, I had been reprimanded by the authorities for drinking too much. My brother [Jack] was a prominent man in town and I wasn’t doing him any good. So in the fall of 1932 I took off for Manchester.”



*I got into trouble
with the law twice.
The first time was for
driving my car
into the kitchen of
a woman’s house*

Bill W. visited Ebby in January 1929: “This was the first and only time Bill and I ever got drunk together.” During the course of this all night binge, they decided to hire a barnstormer pilot to fly them to the six-month old Equinox Airport in Manchester, Vermont. Bill wired his prominent friends, Mr. and Mrs. Orvis, informing them as to time of arrival. In those early days of flight, this was considered a fairly exciting and special event. Word spread through Manchester and a large crowd assembled with the high school band.

Years later, Ebby reported the particulars of their landing: “Once it landed both Bill and I staggered off, falling to the ground drunk, embarrassing ourselves in front of all the onlookers.” Ebby was less concerned about this dismal event than Bill, who wrote a letter of apology to his friends the following day.

Manchester, 1932-1934

During his Dallas talk, Ebby spoke of his six months of sober work in the Green Mountains in the winter of 1932-1933. He drank two pints of gin on the way up and that was the end of it, till he came down the mountain the following spring. Ebby enjoyed the life style of cutting trails and hunting on the weekends. When he left he opened a room in the large, but mostly empty Thacher family residence in Manchester, which had been closed for some time. One might think his large inheritance was running low because he moved into the only furnished room with contained his brother’s furniture. His drinking scrapes continued in Manchester.

By 1934, Ebby had the reputation of a rather mischievous and fun-loving individual; however, he was well liked and accepted by most of the townspeople. But his reputation suffered through his drunken episodes. “Within a few months, I got into trouble with the law twice. The first time was for driving my car into the kitchen of a woman’s house. I stepped out of the car and politely asked her if I could trouble her for a cup of coffee.”



Intergroup Meeting Summary—February 2016

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	On Awakening	Any Lengths	Extreme Makeover: Women's SS	Weekend Update
Blackie's Pasture	Saturday Weekend Warrior	As Bill Sees It Th 6pm	Friendly Circle	Women's Big Book
Friday Night Book	Sunday Night Corte Madera	Be Still AA	Haight Street Blues	Women's Promises
Happy, Joyous and Free	Thursday Night Speaker	Beginners Warmup	High Noon F	
Men's Two Plus	Tuesday Newcomers	Big Book Basics	Miracles (Way) Off 24th St.	
Mill Valley	San Francisco Groups	Cow Hollow Young People	O.A.D.W.	
Monday Night Stag Tiburon	Alumni	Creative Alcoholics	Shamrocks and Serenity	

This is an unofficial summary of the February 2016 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.

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 Feb. 3rd, 2016 at 101 Donohue, Marin City CA.

The meeting was started with a call to order and the Serenity Prayer. Baskets for rent and dinner were passed. The January 2016 minutes and the February 2016 agenda were approved.

Officer Reports

Board Chair, Carolyn R. We missed a committee chairs meeting so had one today before the meeting instead, discussing suggestions for how to prepare for it. Dorothy and Virginia had suggestions. The Board met on the 4th Monday, working on the budget shortfall from last year and proposed for this year.

Treasurer, Joanne H. Gratitude Month brought in 13,399+ dollars. Still trending under budget for group contributions. We have ideas on how to make up the budget shortfall and are taking suggestions. See

the financial report for more information. Maury mentioned gratitude contributions were received in December.

Central Office Manager, Maury P. We can use support with phone shifts, both regular weekly shifts, 2-3 hours long and help with the substitute pool. There is a training shift. We are open M—F, from 10am—6pm. We have an information sheet with clarifying information about Central Office such as the difference between deficit vs. debt; that our lease is up, and a breakdown of Marin / SF Contributions in relation to possible book store in Marin. Good news! 22 people have become Faithful 5'ers. Get the word out; those 22 people reduced the deficit by 50%. We will likely see contributions continue to decline so we'll want to see a positive shift in income. Ray M, long time Intergroup member and volunteer, passed away last month.

Intergroup Committee/ Activity Reports

Access, Virginia M. Our committee met and wrote an ASL policy, covering the needs of the deaf alcoholic.

Orientation, Greg M. We are passing around sign-up sheet for the new Intergroup buddy program to help mentor new IGRs. Signups included Elizabeth M, Tom B, and Allison D.

SF Teleservice, Pete F. There are 5 open shifts, but actually it's more; because we have the same people filling all of those shifts. Do service in your pajamas or if you have an especially lazy sponsee, sign up! We also need a Monday coordinator.

Fellowship, Michael P. Our Founder's

Day event will be held June 18th. Ask your groups if they can take a task and work it together (4-6 people) such as greeting, setup, breakdown, activities.

Liaison Reports

NCCAA Conference, Dan, Chair In San Ramon The conference will be at the Marriott in San Ramon, March 18, 19, 20 about 45 mins away off the 680 corridor. We are bringing in speakers from around the world, David D from Maryland, Service workshops, a Young People Speaker meeting, a large Saturday night meeting with 1000 people. To preregister, go to www.norcalaa.org, \$16 in advance, \$20 at the door. There will be marathon meetings and ASL service. Rooms are \$109 a night. We need to rent 90 rooms on Friday and 100 on Saturday to get the better rate.

California Northern Coastal Area, Joanne L, Chair On April 9th and 10th, General Service will have a Pre-Conference Assembly here in San Rafael. Agenda topics come from us, the fellowship. Feb 15th the topics are delivered to delegates who will disseminate to the 23 districts who can host sharing sessions and gather a group conscience. Agenda topics workshops on how to host a sharing session will be held on Feb 20th in Santa Rosa, Feb 28th in San Rafael, and SF the second weekend in March. We are not really a business; we are a spiritual entity. Decisions are more about how we feel about an issue, and we care about the minority opinion.

New Business

Survey results show that people are interested in having a satellite or separate bookstore in Marin. There is the Marin

Individual Contributions

to Central Office were made through February 15, 2015
honoring the following members:

IN MEMORIAM

Billy C., Flossie N., Lee M.

ANNIVERSARIES

John V. – 45 years, Sean C. – 38 years

Linda L. – 32 years, Kevin C. – 29 years

Intergroup Exploratory Committee, which is independent of SF/Marin Intergroup. Is there anyone in SF/Marin Intergroup who would like to explore this option and lead a committee? Virginia and Charles raised hands. Pete made a motion that we form an ad hoc committee who would look into all options and feasibility of an independent bookstore, Central Office, Intergroup. It was seconded. Chris mentioned we will hold a 2/3 majority vote. Many hands for the motion. One voted no. The one shared a minority opinion that it feels there is a dividing presence happening. There was no change in vote due to the minority opinion. The vote carries. It will be called the Ad Hoc Research Committee.

ASL Interpreter Policy Language Virginia revisited the and mentioned the original ASL policy regarding accessibility. We have a document created to stamp on event flyers and orientations. It's called the Accommodations Statement. It reviews the ASL Interpreter Policy and instructs the Access Committee and Central Office how to get ASL interpreters out to meetings. There has been confusion in the writing, not the spirit of the document. There was a housekeeping motion to put AA (meetings) in the doc. We heard from the Board regarding problems with the policy, so we reconstructed it. See the hot pink colored pamphlet for more information. Virginia is asking for ratification. Chris mentioned the Board thought it was important enough to devote 15 minutes each month until resolved. The Board already published the policy. Virginia mentioned we don't define an AA meeting, whether something is listed in our schedule or more of a long form tradition where

any two people join for a meeting. Margaret mentioned that the pink paper says any AA meeting and would prefer it to say any meeting that Intergroup has in the schedule or has sponsored.

The 2016 Intergroup Budget is currently a deficit budget. We can decide to go the route that it's simply a budget and can be adjusted as we go along, or analyze line items in detail, or ask the fellowship for more contributions, etc.

Matt S. mentioned the lease, which is an unknown liability, kicks in after October. Be cognizant that group contributions are down, so it's a somewhat tenuous situation. Think about the services that Central Office provides. The landlord is not negotiating with us at this point but that is still on the table (upcoming). Virginia asked what the salary expenses are. Bronwen asked whether we should cut services. What are the services costing? Elaine asked if we can hear about big ticket items. Maury responded that there are some smaller items, nothing big. For example, the telephone book listing is about \$1100 per year. The budget demonstrates flat items. Committee requests were not fully funded, but kept flat, reflecting what was spent the prior year. We already reduced staff and don't even have two full time employees. Income was \$35,000 less in 2015 than in 2014. We would like to see outreach with accurate information, not misinformation.

Meeting adjourned with the Responsibility Statement at 8:30pm

Next Intergroup Meeting: Wed. March 2, 2016, 7pm, 1187 Franklin St. SF CA. Orientation is at 6:15pm, dinner is served

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

Carolyn R. chair@aasf.org

VICE CHAIR

Chris H. vicechair@aasf.org

TREASURER

Joanne H. treasurer@aasf.org

RECORDING SECRETARY

Sam W. secretary@aasf.org

COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

ACCESS COMMITTEE

Virginia M. access@aasf.org

ARCHIVES COMMITTEE

Michael P. archives@aasf.org

FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

Michael P. fellowship@aasf.org

HOMEBOUND MARIN

Frank T. homeboundmarin@aasf.org

ORIENTATION COMMITTEE

Greg M. orientation@aasf.org

SF PI/CPC COMMITTEE

Erin S. picpc@aasf.org

SF TELESERVICE COMMITTEE

Pete F. sfteleservice@aasf.org

SOS COMMITTEE

Dorothy V. sos@aasf.org

SUNSHINE CLUB

David C. & Carole P. sunshine@aasf.org

THE POINT

Jane B. thepoint@aasf.org

aa *group contributions*

Fellowship Contributions	Jan. '16
Intergroup	\$ 109
Novato Fellowship Group	\$ 656
Contribution Box	\$ 88
Total Fellowship	\$ 853

Marin Group Contributions	Jan. '16
Mill Valley Discussion W 830pm	\$ 179
Attitude Adjustment 7D 7am	\$ 500
Monday Blues M 645pm	\$ 157
Friday Night Book F 830pm	\$ 298
San Geronimo Valley M 8pm	\$ 44
Why It Works Sun 6pm	\$ 289
Women's Big Book Tu 1030am	\$ 561
Awareness/Acceptance M 1030am	\$ 75
Back to Basics Su 930am	\$ 35
Big Book Study & Meditation M 7pm	\$ 24
Fireside Fri 8pm Bolinas	\$ 24
Quitting Time M-F 530pm	\$ 697
On Awakening 7D 530am	\$ 350
Young People's Chopsticks Sa 1030pm	\$ 88
The Broad Highway Th 730pm	\$ 100
Young People's BYOB Sat 7pm	\$ 82
Thursday Night Speaker 830pm	\$ 447
Pathfinders Tu 12pm	\$ 79
We, Us and Ours M 650pm	\$ 71
Corte Madera Saturday Candlelight 8pm	\$ 168
Working Dogs W 12pm	\$ 689
Sober Sisters W 12pm	\$ 93
AA By The Bay Tue 730pm	\$ 36
Happy, Joyous & Free 5D 12pm	\$ 145
Crossroads Sun 12pm	\$ 227
Rise N Shine Su 10am	\$ 210
Stinson Beach Fellowship Th 8pm	\$ 200
Refugee Th 12pm	\$ 50
Living in the Solution F 6pm	\$ 650
Closed Women's Step Study Tu 330pm	\$ 67
Three Step Group Sa 530pm	\$ 599
The Barnyard Group Sa 4pm	\$ 62
Monday Night Madness M 6pm	\$ 50
Marin Total	\$ 7,342

San Francisco Group Contributions	Jan. '16
Women's Promises F 7pm	\$ (525)
Fourth Dimension Solution Th 515pm	\$ 26
Any Lengths Sat 930am	\$ 480
Women's Promises F 7pm	\$ 444
Each Day a New Beginning W 7am	\$ 363
Firefighters & Friends Tu 10am	\$ 107
Bernal New Day 7D	\$ 165
Newcomers Tu 8pm	\$ 174
No Reservations M 12pm	\$ 88
Best Damn Big Book Disc Th 8pm	\$ 108
What It's Like Now M 6pm	\$ 195
Sober Saturday Sa 830am	\$ 208
Friendly Circle Beginners Su 715p	\$ 72
Potrero Hill 12 x 12 M 630pm	\$ 44
Rigorous Honesty Th 1205pm	\$ 157
As Bill Sees It Th 6pm	\$ 160
Monday Men's Stag (SF) M 8pm	\$ 82
Be Still AA Su 12pm	\$ 500
Sunday Night 3rd Step Group 5pm	\$ 360
Sunset 9'ers M	\$ 63
Rebound W 830pm	\$ 55
Friday Morning 12 Steppers 7am	\$ 75
Weekend Update Su 615pm	\$ 175
Haight Street Blues Tu 615pm	\$ 152
Each Day a New Beginning M 7am	\$ 131
Each Day a New Beginning Tu 7am	\$ 317
Back to Basics Th 730pm	\$ 125
Coit's Quitters	\$ 135
The Parent Trap 2 W 4pm	\$ 60
Women's 10 Years Plus Th 615pm	\$ 697
Wholly Together 11th Step Med W 7pm	\$ 98
Wednesday Noon Step Study 12p	\$ 225
Ten Years After Su 6pm	\$ 256
Wharf Rats Th 815pm	\$ 52
Saturday Easy Does It Sa 12pm	\$ 485
One, Two, Three, Go! W 1pm	\$ 20
BYOL W 1pm	\$ 29
10am Daily Reflections Th	\$ 23
Pocket Aces Sun 7pm	\$ 291
Eureka Step Tu 6pm	\$ 313

San Francisco Group Contributions	Jan. '16
7am Speaker Discussion Th 7am	\$ 60
Women's Promises F 7pm	\$ 525
Monday Beginners M 8pm	\$ 86
High Noon Sunday 1215p	\$ 82
Valencia Smokefree F 6pm	\$ 40
Cow Hollow Men's Group W 8pm	\$ 356
Beginners Warm Up W 6pm	\$ 287
Sundown W 7pm	\$ 614
Blue Book Special Su 11am	\$ 38
Serenity House	\$ 150
Steps To The Solution W 715pm	\$ 377
The Leaky Cauldron Su 930am	\$ 127
Women's Came to Believe Sa 10am	\$ 119
Agnostics & Freethinkers Su 630pm	\$ 100
Artists & Writers F 630pm	\$ 535
Haight Street Explorers Th 630pm	\$ 177
Tuesday Big Book Study Tu 6pm	\$ 164
Mission Fellowship	\$ 254
Sometimes Slowly Sa 11am	\$ 925
Sunday Night Castro SD 730pm	\$ 271
High Sobriety M 8pm	\$ 92
Easy Does It Tu 6pm	\$ 100
Walk of Shame W 830pm	\$ 125
Fireside Chat Group Th 8pm	\$ 107
Mid-Morning Support Su 1030am	\$ 250
Monday Beginners M 8pm	\$ 132
Excelsior "Scent" Free For All Sa 5pm	\$ 60
Sunday Rap Su 8pm	\$ 224
O.A.D.W. Mon 7pm	\$ 42
As Bill Sees It Th 830pm	\$ 167
Experience, Strength & Hope Sat 9am	\$ 157
11th Step Power Power Power	\$ 113
We Care Tu 12pm	\$ 100
Brothers in Arms M 8pm	\$ 135
YAHOO Step Sa 1130am	\$ 138
High Steppers W 7pm	\$ 60
San Francisco Total	\$ 14,271
YTD	\$ 22,466

Ebby's Pigeon Story and other Tales



bbby's pigeon story went like this: "Another time after drinking heavily, I decided I wanted to rid the house of pigeons. It was dark outside, and believe me, it was pouring down rain, so I loaded the old double-barreled shotgun and I went out and I was backing up . . . to get a shot at them. [The lawn was wet from all the rain.] Down I went and landed on my back. So there I was lying on my back and I didn't see any reason to get up and shoot at them, so I was banging away from the ground. I guess my neighbors could see me and I imagine they complained to the law."

He went on to say: "In Vermont at that time there was a law that anyone arrested three times within a year would serve a mandatory six months in jail. I had been drunk in public, along with the other two incidents, so I had three strikes. I spent a lot of time in the house so I couldn't be arrested until I decided to go to town. Once I did, the local constable arrested me and took me to Bennington. It was a Friday afternoon and the judge happened to be the father of Cebra, one of the two men who called on me a few weeks earlier. He told me to be back in court on Monday and to be sober."

The pigeon incident took place in late August or September, but Ebby stated that in early July or early August two old drinking friends, Cebra Graves and Shep Cornell, had talked about how the Oxford Group "straightened out their lives" and suggested that I "turn my life over to God as I understood him." He wasn't ready for any of that, but a seed was planted. "Once home, I remembered I had three cold bottles of Ballantine Ale in the basement. I started thinking how I could nurse those

three bottles over the weekend and still appear in court on Monday sober. I went downstairs for a bottle, but began to think what I was doing wasn't honest. What the judge really

*I didn't see any
reason to get up
and shoot at them,
so I was banging
away from the
ground*

meant was: Don't drink.

Ebby made several trips up and down, but honesty won out; he finally surrendered and gave all three bottles to a neighbor. Ebby now relates the miraculous result: "And believe me that was weight lifted off my shoulders. I felt a release from that time on. And I know that night I sat down beside my bed and said my prayers like I had never said them in years. I said to God, 'I really mean this; I want to quit this drinking.' I hadn't prayed like this ever before, I hadn't prayed much at all for a very long time." (Bill W. had a similar sudden "release" detailed on page 13 of the Big Book.)

When Ebby appeared in court on Monday, his friend's father, Judge Graves, released him on his own recognizance to Rowland Hazard. Ebby had never met him before. Rowland had found sobriety with the Emmanuel Movement in Boston, Massachusetts — yet he carried the Oxford Group message to Ebby.

Rowland spent several days helping Ebby clean house. Rowland's "cabin" was just 15 miles south of Manchester, near Shaftsbury, Vermont. Ebby said of this period:

"Rowland invited me to stay with him for a few weeks. We took road trips throughout Vermont, speaking at various places about the Oxford Group. The first weekend I spoke five times: at two churches, a junior college, and two town meetings." He told of guys arriving from New York, and they would have house parties.

Rowland taught Ebby the major ingredients of the Oxford Group (OG) fellowship, placing emphasis on the "Four Absolutes" [Honesty, Unselfishness, Purity, and Love]. Though newly sober, Rowland spent nearly three years in attendance at house parties and conventions. Traveling with Rowland and presenting OG talks had a powerful effect on Ebby. He was going through what he described as a "Pink Cloud" period. "Pink Clouds" are typical for newly sober alcoholics, but often

*Ebby made several
trips up and down, but
honesty won out*

short lived.

Ebby's inheritance was gone, so money was important, yet he took Rowland's offer to spend a few weeks at Shep Cornell's Manhattan apartment as a spiritual worker with the "Brotherhood of Twelve Men" at Calvary mission. Here, he might help residents learn a new-found life; perhaps finding the precious sobriety he had so recently found. Ebby's Oxford Group style surrender took place on November 1, 1934. He was perhaps two months sober at that time.

To Be Continued . . .



Profit and Loss Statement: December 2015–YTD

	Dec 15	Budget	Jan - Dec 15	YTD Budget		Dec 15	Budget	Jan - Dec 15	YTD Budget
Ordinary Income/Expense					Payroll Fees	\$11	\$10	\$127	\$125
Income					Phone Book Listings	\$93	\$95	\$1,116	\$1,140
Gratitude Month	\$13,399	\$10,695	\$20,076	\$15,195	Postage	\$478	\$200	\$1,309	\$1,425
Group Contributions	\$12,752	\$17,026	\$138,692	\$161,326	Printing	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$950
Individual Contributions	\$10,456	\$12,609	\$40,979	\$39,747	Professional Fees	\$125	\$0	\$1,425	\$1,485
Newsletter Subscript.	\$11	\$11	\$154	\$198	Rent - Office	\$4,458	\$4,458	\$51,784	\$51,784
Sales - Bookstore	\$7,438	\$7,034	\$98,387	\$112,034	Rent - Other	\$180	\$180	\$1,020	\$1,020
Intergroup Events	\$0	\$0	\$3,252	\$2,300	Repair & Maintenance	\$240	\$240	\$3,117	\$3,100
Total Income	\$44,056	\$47,375	\$301,540	\$330,800	Security System	\$131	\$125	\$518	\$500
Cost of Goods Sold					Shipping	\$192	\$408	\$3,404	\$4,900
Cost of Books Sold	\$5,639	\$5,966	\$68,561	\$81,285	Software Purchased	\$0	\$0	\$519	\$550
COGS - Shipping	\$62	\$26	\$353	\$300	Telephone	\$172	\$230	\$2,081	\$2,760
Credit Card Processing	\$346	\$372	\$4,275	\$5,137	Training	\$0	\$695	\$524	\$1,100
Inventory Adjustments	(\$73)	\$0	\$556	\$0	Travel	\$0	\$0	\$3,297	\$1,200
Total COGS	\$5,974	\$6,364	\$73,745	\$86,722	Total Expense	\$19,200	\$20,480	\$244,558	\$247,842
Gross Profit	\$38,082	\$41,011	\$227,795	\$244,078	Net Ordinary Income	\$18,882	\$20,531	(\$16,762)	(\$3,764)
Expense					Other Income/Expense				
Committees	\$0	\$31	\$466	\$1,382	Other Income				
Bad Checks	\$0		\$12		Bag Fees	\$2	\$3	\$28	\$30
Employee Expenses	\$12,440	\$12,895	\$157,222	\$156,591	Customer Shipping	\$254	\$400	\$3,546	\$4,900
Equipment Lease	\$326	\$412	\$4,897	\$4,900	Interest Income	\$110	\$78	\$729	\$927
Filing/Fees	\$25	\$0	\$452	\$970	Miscellaneous Income	\$30	\$30	\$488	\$360
Insurance	\$0	\$0	\$2,471	\$2,760	Total Other Income	\$396	\$511	\$4,791	\$6,217
Intergroup Events	\$0	\$0	\$4,524	\$3,050	Other Expense				
Intergroup Literature	\$24	\$59	\$409	\$850	Depreciation Expense	\$223	\$204	\$2,676	\$2,453
Internet Expense	\$129	\$133	\$1,614	\$1,600	Total Other Expense	\$223	\$204	\$2,676	\$2,453
Office Supplies	\$174	\$204	\$1,155	\$2,450	Net Other Income	\$173	\$307	\$2,115	\$3,764
Paper Purchased	\$0	\$104	\$1,095	\$1,250	Net Income	\$19,055	\$20,838	(\$14,647)	\$0

Treasurer's Report

For December 2015, Individual and Group Contributions were under budget by (\$2,153) and (\$4,247), respectively. Total Net Income was under budget by (\$1,783).

Our Unrestricted Cash balance was up \$11,839 largely due to Gratitude Month Contributions coming in.

We ended 2015 with a \$15,000 deficit and are not meeting our budget. We would like to hear ideas from you as to how we might make up this deficit, which correlate with decreased Group Contributions. (See 2015 P&L above.)

OVERALL RATING: Poor – We are not meeting our budget and our expenses were greater than our income for Dec.

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 \$19K/month, so we'd have over \$38K in unrestricted cash balances for the month. The last time we were “Excellent” was January 2013.

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. The last time we were “Good” was March 2015.

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 2015.

December 2015 Balance Sheet

	Dec 31, 15	Nov 30, 15	\$ Change	Dec 31, 14	\$ Change
ASSETS					
Current Assets					
Checking/Savings					
Restricted Cash					
Capital One	\$162,504	\$162,393	\$110	\$192,603	(\$30,100)
Total Restricted Cash	\$162,504	\$162,393	\$110	\$192,603	(\$30,100)
Unrestricted Cash	\$21,733	\$9,894	\$11,839	\$32,289	(\$10,556)
Total Checking/Savings	\$184,236	\$172,287	\$11,949	\$224,892	(\$40,656)
Accounts Receivable					
Accounts Receivable	\$23	\$62	(\$39)	\$3	\$20
Total Accounts Receivable	\$23	\$62	(\$39)	\$3	\$20
Other Current Assets					
Inventory - Bookstore	\$22,389	\$16,790	\$5,600	\$27,210	(\$4,820)
Prepaid Literature Orders	\$411	\$1,564	(\$1,153)	\$1,623	(\$1,212)
Undeposited Funds	\$3,192	\$425	\$2,767	\$1,313	\$1,879
Total Other Current Assets	\$25,992	\$18,779	\$7,213	\$30,146	(\$4,153)
Total Current Assets	\$210,251	\$191,128	\$19,123	\$255,040	(\$44,789)
Fixed Assets					
Comp. and Off. Equipment (Net)	\$1,269	\$1,327	(\$58)	\$1,965	(\$696)
Leasehold Improvements (Net)	\$15,904	\$16,069	(\$165)	\$17,884	(\$1,980)
Total Fixed Assets	\$17,172	\$17,395	(\$223)	\$19,848	(\$2,676)
Other Assets					
Deposits	\$6,698	\$6,698	\$0	\$6,698	\$0
Total Other Assets	\$6,698	\$6,698	\$0	\$6,698	\$0
TOTAL ASSETS	\$234,121	\$215,221	\$18,900	\$281,586	(\$47,465)
LIABILITIES & EQUITY					
Liabilities					
Current Liabilities					
Other Current Liabilities					
Payroll Liabilities	\$3,576	\$3,713	(\$137)	\$6,144	(\$2,568)
Sales Tax Payable	\$591	\$609	(\$18)	\$674	(\$83)
Total Other Current Liabilities	\$4,167	\$4,322	(\$155)	\$6,819	(\$2,651)
Total Current Liabilities	\$4,167	\$4,322	(\$155)	\$6,819	(\$2,651)
Long Term Liabilities	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$0	\$60,167	(\$30,167)
Total Liabilities	\$34,167	\$34,322	(\$155)	\$66,986	(\$32,818)
Equity					
Net Assets	\$214,601	\$214,601	\$0	\$216,250	(\$1,649)
Net Income	(\$14,647)	(\$33,702)	\$19,055	(\$1,649)	(\$12,998)
Total Equity	\$199,954	\$180,899	\$19,055	\$214,601	(\$14,647)
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	\$234,121	\$215,221	\$18,900	\$281,586	(\$47,465)



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(Continued from p. 5)

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