

the Point

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

from Chapter Five of the book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*

2018 **4**
April

A publication of the Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous

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of Alcoholics Anonymous

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“When the spiritual malady is overcome, we straighten out mentally and physically.”

~ Alcoholics Anonymous, p. 64

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with Their Feet

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.

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April 2018

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
1	2 FIRST MON Technology Committee Central Office, 1821 Sacramento St., San Francisco 6:00pm	3	4 FIRST WED Intergroup Meeting First Unitarian Universalist Center 1187 Franklin St., San Francisco Orientation 6:15pm; Dinner 6:30pm Meeting 7pm
8 SECOND SUN Golden Gate Young People in AA Central Office, 1821 Sacramento St., San Francisco 12:00pm Archives presents The History of Central Office Mission Fellowship, 2900 24th St., San Francisco 4:30-6:00pm	9 SECOND MON SF Public Information / Cooperation with the Professional Community (PI/CPC) Central Office, 1821 Sacramento St., San Francisco Speaker Workshop 6:00pm Business Meeting 7:00pm	10 SECOND TUE Marin H&I Marin Alano Club, 1360 Lincoln Ave., San Rafael Orientation 6:15pm Business Meeting 7:00pm SF General Service 1111 O'Farrell St., San Francisco New GSR Orientation / Concept Study 6:30pm Business Meeting 7:30pm	11 SECOND WED Marin Bridging the Gap Marin Alano Club, 1360 Lincoln Ave., San Rafael Orientation 6:00pm Business Meeting 6:30pm
15 THIRD SUN Archives Committee Meeting Central Office, 1821 Sacramento St., San Francisco 12:00pm <i>Business meeting followed by work day</i> Woman to Woman Conference Hilton Hotel, 2200 Harvard St., Sacramento 7:00am - 11:30am NCWomanToWoman.org	16 THIRD MON Marin General Service 9 Ross Valley Rd., San Rafael Orientation / Concept Study 6:45pm Business Meeting 7:30pm SF Teleservice Central Office, 1821 Sacramento St., San Francisco Orientation 6pm	17	18
22	23	24 FOURTH TUE Marin Teleservice Marin Alano Club, 1360 Lincoln Ave., San Rafael Orientation 7:00pm Business Meeting 7:30pm	25
29	30		

THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
5	6	7
12	13 SECOND FRI Woman to Woman Conference Hilton Hotel, 2200 Harvard St., Sacramento 3:00pm - 11:00pm NCWomanToWoman.org	14 SECOND SAT The Point Committee Meeting Central Office, 1821 Sacramento St. San Francisco 12:30pm Woman to Woman Conference Hilton Hotel, 2200 Harvard St., Sacramento 7:00am - 11:30pm NCWomanToWoman.org
19	20	21 THIRD SAT SF H&I 2900 24th St., San Francisco Orientation 11:00am Business Mtg 12:00pm
26 FOURTH THU Marin Public Information / Cooperation with the Professional Community (PI/CPC) Marin Alano Club, 1360 Lincoln Ave., San Rafael 8:00pm SF H&I Orientation Central Office, 1821 Sacramento St. San Francisco 6:30pm	27	28 FOURTH SAT The 12 Traditions Today Central Office, 1821 Sacramento St. San Francisco 11:00am CNCA Meeting 320 N. McDowell Blvd., Petaluma 10:00am
<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>		



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"Resentment is the "number one" offender. It destroys more alcoholics than anything else."
~ *Alcoholics Anonymous*, p. 64



Meeting Changes

Meeting Changes:

Tue	5:30pm	Cathedral Hill	Broad Highway , Urban Life Center, Fireside Room, 1101 O'Farrell St. / Franklin St. (Was Thu at 6:30pm)
Wed	8:30pm	Castro	Mixed Nuts , Castro Country Club, 4058 18th St. / Hartford St. (Was Castro Steps & Traditions)

No Longer Meeting:

Mon	7:30pm	Inner Richmond	Stepping Stone , 255 10th Ave. / Clement St.
Thu	7:00pm	Terra Linda	Four Horsemen , Aldersgate Church, 1 Wellbrock Hts. / Trellis Dr.
Sat	6:00pm	Mission	It Takes a Village , Mission Fellowship, 2900 24th St. / Florida St.

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!*



Aura S. — Faith, Hope & Charity meeting
Virginia K. — Be Still meeting

**H&I Orientation
@ Central Office!**

**Thursday, April 26
6:30pm**

1821 Sacramento Street

MONTHLY TRADITIONS WORKSHOP

**4th Saturday of each month
San Francisco Central Office
11:00AM – 12:30PM**

Tradition 4 - April 28, 2018

Tradition 5 - May 26, 2018

Tradition 6 - June 24, 2018 ... and each following month

This we owe to AA's future; To place our common welfare first; To keep our Fellowship united. For on AA unity depend our lives, and the lives of those to come.

From the Editor

Overcoming Resentment

"The problem has been removed. It does not exist for us. We are neither cocky nor are we afraid. That is our experience."

~*Alcoholics Anonymous*, p. 85

A sponsor once said anything I had a problem with could be handled by "taking it Steps Four through Nine." Either the person, place or thing would leave, or it wouldn't be an issue anymore. Or, as our *Long-Term Sobriety* writer says, "Nothing really matters." No, it's not a tribute to singer Freddie Mercury—it means channeling energy into resentments doesn't give G. the same rush anymore. Blame has lost its value and been replaced by acceptance. He describes what it's like to be confident in his own shoes, at peace with the world and ready to take chances in life.

On Page 10, Bob S. talks about the early days of A.A., when Dr. Bob was still busy getting "Boiled as an owl." In the same spirit, Rudy S.' story includes avoiding showers for fear of falling due to drunkenness or being hung over. Luckily he found a service commitment and now has over 34 years sober. On Page 8, another A.A. member compares living life obsessed with personalities to one led by principle. Cash register honesty

evolves into the general concept of fairness. Side benefits are saving energy and having a clear conscience.

Carla H. went back to meetings after staying away for 17 years and found a higher power in a Group of Drunks (including a tow truck driver and a Zen guy from the Bronx). The group helped her stop feeling so scared she wanted to jump out of her skin. Claire A. finds even difficult times represent opportunities for family to join together through life's changes in a beautiful showing of support and love.

John W. votes for the meetings he likes (and those he dislikes), exploring ideas about autonomy and group conscience. *The Smiling Leaf* from Eben S. presents a parable about non-dualism that provides a new slant on oneness with a higher power. Ken J. sums up with *The First Drink*: "If I did take a drink today, what would die is my life that I have built in Alcoholics Anonymous. The candle of hope would be blown out. Life as I have known it in sobriety would be dead." Fortunately he's internalized the principles of the steps, is neither cocky nor afraid, and remembers to replace resentment with gratitude.

~ Michelle G.

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.

To contact *The Point* committee directly, write to thepoint@aasf.org.



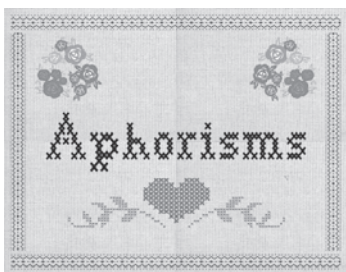
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Faithful Fivers are A.A. members Who graciously pledge to contribute at least \$5 each month toward the support of Central Office. Faithful Fiver contributions go a long way in helping make our vital services possible. We thank the following members:

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The First Drink

The choice of one life over the other

by Ken J.

"It's the first drink that gets you drunk." How could that be? I didn't get it. I could literally throw back a couple shots of scotch before I really felt anything. Sure, the first one set my throat on fire and got my mouth watering. But it didn't make me drunk.

After a while I did understand the meaning of the phrase. But I didn't grasp the full implication of it. Normally once I started drinking, I did not stop. The first drink became the 15th in no time at all. It was ironically "fluid." The progression from the first drink was seamless and thoughtless, and I was powerless. I honestly don't even remember any of that though. It was just second nature for me. I drank. Everybody knew I drank. And they knew I drank a lot. They joked about my "wooden leg."

When I went out drinking, it was never an issue of how much I would drink. It was only what I would drink. I used to sit in this one bar, with this group of "happy hour celebrants." We would drink and tell each other lies. During happy hour this particular bar served three drinks for the price of two in a large glass called a "bucket." That's really classy. The bartender once told me he could always set up his regulars' drinks when they walked in, but with me he never knew what I would order. He only knew to grab a "bucket." I thought that was sweet. He noticed. In this entire world of horrible and uncaring people, this bartender cared enough to take an interest in me.

The first drink being that one that gets you drunk was obvious after all. *But*—there's always a *but*—*But* what about the times when I actually had one drink and didn't get drunk? It was rare, yes. *But* some things are out of your control. It's a short flight and you only get one drink between take-off and landing. I could only sneak one drink during work. The host at the party only offers you one drink. You have one drink at the bar and then have to make a run for it because someone you need to avoid just walked in. There were times when I had a drink and didn't get drunk.

The first drink keeps the sickness of my soul alive

So how to reconcile that? The other night I was in a meeting and I heard something so profound that it caught my breath. A woman said, "If I were to take the first drink now, I probably wouldn't die right away. With my family history I'd probably drink and live miserably for many years. But if I did take a drink today, what would die is

my life that I have built in Alcoholics Anonymous. The candle of hope would be blown out. Life as I have known it in sobriety would be dead."

The first drink symbolizes throwing away everything

How amazing is that? Thank God for remaining teachable. Thank God that I still remember to take the cotton out of my ears and put it in my mouth. Thank God for the gift of being able to see when I am ready to see, to be able to hear when I am able to hear, and to feel when I am able to feel. Thirty-two years sober and I finally understand the conundrum of the "first drink." Literally, the first drink introduces alcohol into my system, which begins the craving and the insanity, and keeps the sickness of my soul alive. Symbolically the first drink is the choice of one life over the other—the choice of pain, suffering and despair, over happiness, joy and freedom. The first drink symbolizes throwing away everything that my life has been, is and ever will be in sobriety.



I fully believe that when I got sober I gave up the choice to take the first drink. Today I know that also includes the choice to cherish the life possible because of that choice.



Long Term Sobriety

*It was the parents' fault; then wasn't
the parents' fault; then yeah, it was,
but it doesn't matter now*

by G.F.G.

It doesn't matter now. Nothing really matters to me anymore. It's not that I don't care about anything or that I'm depressed. After 26 years of sobriety, I've faced many challenges clear-headed and without having to take a drink. Many obstacles that I might have once perceived as life-or-death and all-or-nothing situations have lost their impact. I now channel my energy into activities and causes in which I have interest and which give me joy. I once channeled a lot of energy into resentments towards my parents for their behaviors and their possible contributions to my alcoholism. Boy, was that a waste of energy!

I once channeled a lot of energy into resentments

"Whose fault was it?" was a question I had asked myself many times during my sobriety. Did my parents contribute to my drinking? Did my upbringing within a household of their socioeconomic status contribute to it? What was my part in it? I have many memories of waking up to the sound of my parents arguing because my father had arrived home drunk. Usually, my mother was getting ready to go to work at her early job shift as my father dragged himself into bed. Occasionally, neighbors called the police to calm the domestic disputes. So, I can blame my alcoholism on my role models: my parents. It's their fault.

Then came sobriety and the Twelve Steps, the result of which has helped me to achieve a spiritual awakening. Oh, and my sponsor's advice also helps



me immensely. The work I do with my sponsor helps me grow to become the man I had always thought I wanted to be. I'm not talking about my childhood fantasy of becoming an astronaut or a doctor. I am talking about becoming a man confident in his own shoes, at peace with the world and himself, and ready to take chances in life.

Acceptance is the answer

I will give you an example. Last year I decided to try new types of service commitments. One type of service I added was H&I (Hospital and Institution committee). I attended the orientation, got a background check, and started co-chairing a meeting in a city jail. I chose this service commitment because being in a jail is what scares me the most. I first thought, "What do I have to offer these incarcerated men?" As it turns out, all I need to offer anyone is my experience, strength and hope. For the men in the jail, that seems to be enough, and they

seem appreciative of their meetings. I try to end my shares with an emphasis on what A.A. has given me. That would be hope.

For a long time I complained to my sponsor about my many fears—mostly unfounded. He gently suggested that I go back and study Step Three. If I truly feel that I have completed that step, then I should have the faith to know that I will always be taken care of, *if I* "pick up the key of willingness." Thus, I try to live my life secure in the knowledge that, no matter what happens, I will be taken care of. This brings me back to A.A.'s gift of hope.

I no longer blame my parents, the government or society for my problems. I stand fully responsible for my life now, along with my HP, and that's a good feeling. Blaming anyone for anything doesn't have value to me anymore. I try to keep my side of the street clean, do service and stay sober. That's the best that I can do and, as a result, "nothing really matters."

Problem by Problem or Principle by Principle

It renders my ego a weak contender

by Anonymous

When people come through the doors of Alcoholics Anonymous, they are usually overwhelmed with problems. Some of these problems are of a legal nature, while others may be due to marital strife, and still others may just be because of desperation due to a life that has been spinning out of control. The one thing that is the common denominator in all of these matters is the use of alcohol, otherwise why would they be coming to A.A.?

A life that has been spinning out of control

In the beginning, you will hear the horror stories of the divorce proceedings or of the legal fees for the DUI case. You will see well-meaning members of the program telling them how to get around some of these problems. Occasionally, that person gets away with it, he thinks that the DUI was the problem. Often it was but a symptom of the real problem of alcoholism. Most of the wreckage of the past is the result of our unbridled thinking and if, in the beginning, we focus only on getting out of trouble and not on the thinking that got us into those difficulties in the first place, it often gives us the feeling that we are on safe ground and can relax.

A half-hearted effort leads to more faulty thinking—rationalizing why we do what we do. This often leads to a succession of relapses before they open up to change. If, at that time, they are encouraged to live by proven principles (and not modify those principles to suit their own agenda), they have a chance to live a meaningful life.



In my experience, living by A.A. principles is much easier than anything I could have come up with myself. When we solve a problem and we don't change our behavior, it's only a matter of time before another similar problem arrives. We can solve one problem at a time or, we can set in place a principle that governs many problems of a similar nature.

They finally have a chance to live meaningful lives

Take for instance: cash register honesty. This, to me, means much more than just not cheating the person at the cash register. It means that I should never take unfair advantage of anyone.

With this approach in mind, I think before I act and I get it right the first time—as a result, I have a clear conscience. Why focus on one problem at a time when I can live by unselfish principles and take the decision making out of the equation. If I can just be honest with myself and do what's right, it takes away all of the guilt and shame and lightens my spirit. This is reward enough for me and it far outweighs any material gain I could have acquired by taking the selfish path.

I can live by unselfish principles

After practicing this way of thinking—over a period of time—my load gets lighter. My ego seems to run my problems and strives for material victory over them, while my conscience decides my principles. When I follow those principles, I stop making the mistakes of the past and my spirit heals—I'm no longer ashamed of my behavior. Over time, as I continue to rely on my conscience to fashion a life of unselfish principles, a drink has no appeal to me and in the end, it renders my ego a weak contender.



Rudy's Story

Off the Ferris wheel

by Bree L.

When Rudy S. came to San Francisco, he didn't find much in the way of A.A. In 1953 A.A. was still young. Once arrested for drunkenness, his only choice was jail for 30, 60 or 90 days. He was a binge drinker and once he started drinking he didn't stop. Sometimes it would be a month before he'd come back to his life. The usual routine in those days was getting arrested for being drunk and disorderly. It was a Ferris wheel of going in and out of jail. He had over 100 arrests and sentences without a thought to any further treatment. Once a jail attendant said, "Why don't you talk about your experiences with one another?" It seemed to be a viable suggestion, but Rudy couldn't see how talking could possibly work.

Along with the 100 arrests were roughly 150 jobs hired and lost. Rudy could only find menial jobs such as a dishwasher, busboy or light construc-

tion worker. He figures he worked in 24 of the 26 hospitals of San Francisco and at least 20 hotels. His usual routine was to work until the end of the week when he got paid and then get drunk. He'd miss the next Monday. Employers would usually give him a pass that first Monday. But when he didn't show up on the second Monday, he'd get fired. Rudy said he met some really nice people on all of these different jobs and wanted to get to know the people better but he never could.

Once he started drinking, he didn't stop

At 17 he went into the Army to fight in the Korean War. He was discharged when he was 22 and was arrested that same week. He ended up in San Bruno jail. That was the beginning of his Ferris wheel ride. He figures that he drank for 32 years and got drunk and went to jail at least 5 times a year. That makes at least 160 trips to jail.

Sometime in the 1970s, the judge asked him if he wanted to go to jail or into treatment. Prior to that in the '50s and '60s, his only choice was jail. This was a new choice for him and he grabbed it. They gave him a paper to get signed. He says, "I came to meetings to get the paper signed, eat the donuts and look at the girls—but I kept on drinking. I couldn't get 30 days to save my life." He wore a nice suit, looked good and had money in his pocket, but he could not relate to anyone in the meetings.

Rudy smelled bad because he wasn't showering. He was afraid of falling and busting his head when he was drunk or hung over. Then one day he came to his senses. Looking around he found he was the oldest person in the room. He'd been arrested more times than the age of the kids there. A fellow member cursed at him and said, "You know what, a**hole? You've been coming to meetings for years. You raise your hand as a newcomer every time. What's the matter? Do you think this is just playing around?"

He worked in at least 20 hotels

That statement launched his career as coffee maker when he finally decided to take a service commitment. He found a group of five or six others also getting sober and they hung out together. They were keeping one another sober. That was October 2, 1983. They all now have at least 34 years.

Today Rudy says, "I'm positive I can stay sober if I continue to hear the message every day and do what I'm doing. That's a good feeling."





Learning the Steps vs. Living the Steps

The event is not the process

by Bob S.

During his third day of treatment at Towns Hospital, Bill W. found the essence of our Twelve Steps while being assisted by his former schoolmate, Ebby T. Directly thereafter, Bill experienced a radical personality change which allowed a release from his alcoholic obsession. However, this blessed happenstance would have been only temporary unless followed by putting Ebby's "neat little formula" into action, which was, at that time, the tenets of the Oxford Group.

Directly after leaving Towns Hospital, Bill didn't return to his long-standing passion of Wall Street finance, but was instead guided to Calvary Mission in an

attempt to carry his new-found sobriety message to drunken sots. Lucky for us this became a lifetime process which allowed him to maintain permanent sobriety. His spiritual experience event became a lifetime process.

Dr. Carl Jung explained to millionaire Rowland H: "Ideals, emotions, and ideas which were once the guiding forces of the lives of these men are suddenly cast aside, and a new set of conceptions and motives begin to dominate them." Although armed with this invaluable knowledge, Roland was unable to follow the Oxford Group tenets; consequently, he maintained only spotty sobriety. Learning the Group's

tenets was sadly only an event, not the necessary lifetime process.

Dr. Bob had been exposed to the Oxford Group tenets for over two years before meeting Bill W. but was not actually living in the spirit of them. No matter how hard he tried, he would end up boiled as an owl. After a five-hour talk with Bill, he experienced a much stronger desire to stay sober. This was an exciting event, but he was unwilling to follow the process of making the required amends. He got drunk! Later, he did make amends, and began living the Twelve Steps (as they were later to be called). He never drank again!

Half measures availed us nothing.



Hard Drinker? Not Me!

*Self-will plus self-knowledge
equals whiskey*

by Bob S.

"Self cannot rid self of self with self." This cliché proved true with respect to my obsession to hit the bottle over and again. No matter how hard or how many times I tried to quit forever, I always ended all soused up in some watering hole. After nearly 30 years of "quitting drinking forever," I luckily landed in A.A. Also fortunately, I was armed with indisputable evidence that self-will and self-knowledge would not work for me. I was helpless and hopeless both before and after I took a shot of whiskey. Obviously, "Self" was of no avail, so when A.A. offered me a power greater than myself I grabbed it with

desperation. Terror led me to exclaim: I believe! Guess what? It worked. I did the steps and the obsession left me within the first year.

But what about my drinking friends who simply quit drinking or learned to drink moderately on their own? The doctor told a friend, who drank worse than I did, that he had diabetes and would soon die if he didn't quit. He did, and that was that. So, why couldn't I? Page 21 of the Big Book explains the nature of a "hard drinker" who can stop or moderate. My friend must have been one of those—a horse of a different color. His willpower and knowledge worked just fine and he didn't need a power greater than "self" to solve his

drinking problem. There are such types.

I once attended a "We Agnostics" A.A. meeting where members were prohibited to discuss any sort of supernatural power (especially God). Some were even proclaimed atheists (the Steps and the Traditions were not read). Some had been sober many years. I had to wonder whether they were horses of the same color as me? I had to remember what page 21 inferred: that some hard drinkers can use willpower and knowledge successfully.

I have to conclude that I fit into the category of the "real alcoholic," who cannot use self-will and/or self-knowledge to stop or moderate. What about you?



A Meeting Is a “God Shot”

A miracle out of nowhere

by Carla H.

Years passed when I went to virtually no meetings. Things were fine until I started getting anxious at work, based on my assessment of the type of women who were being hired in the creative department, where I worked: young award-winners. The opposite of me. Suddenly I was afraid of being fired. I was so frightened, I wanted to jump out of my skin. The only real relief from terror I'd found, other than therapy, was going to a meeting. I saw the “Lunch with Bill” group in the meeting listing and went right away, expecting a miracle.

I got one, something I'd now call a “God Shot.” The first time I went to the meeting, I got there early and couldn't find the room. I walked through St. Patrick's and around the building complex several times, up and down stairs, trying all kinds of doors, looking for signs or someone to ask—to no avail. It was past the start time. But I didn't leave. That amazes me to this day.

A guy appeared, saying he was looking for a meeting, and I said I was too but couldn't find it. He said, “Well, they say all it takes is two people to have a meeting, right?” I had never heard that before, but I agreed anyway. He continued, “I feel like I want to use.” That freaked me out. I'd never heard anyone talk about drugs around A.A. before. Of course there are drugs in my own story but hearing it out loud from someone else made it sound so serious. I just stood there.

And out of nowhere, a woman appeared, saying, “Are you looking for the meeting?” “Yes,” we said.

She pointed to a door I hadn't noticed before. The guy and I both went in. The meeting was in progress but he and I found empty seats. He left early. I stayed.

Their shares eased my anxiety

A man sitting right in front of me shared, “I haven't been to a meeting in 15 years. But I'm here today.” This blew my mind because I hadn't been to a meeting in about 17 years. No one seemed to have an issue with his confession. I raised my hand at that point, saying, “I haven't been to a meeting in longer ... but I'm a grateful recovering alcoholic.” No one batted an eye. What a relief.

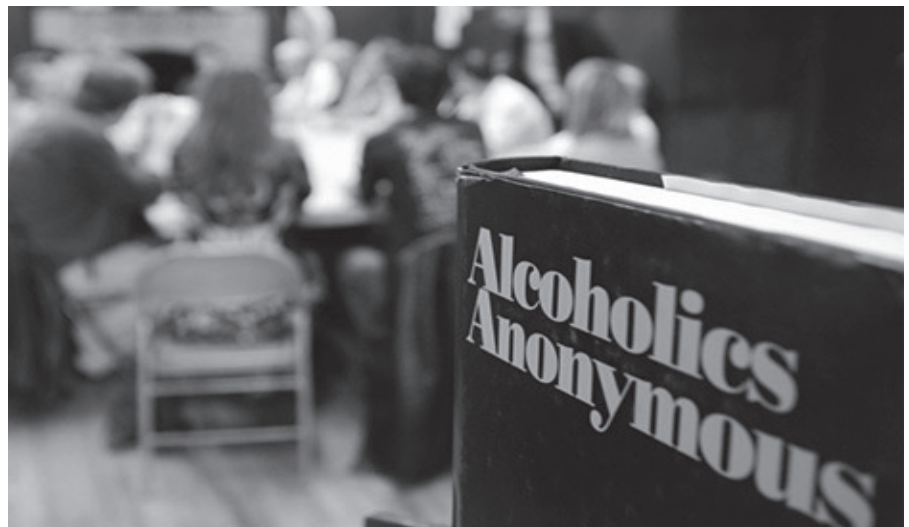
I continued going to that meeting for months. I was comforted by the wisdom and calm shares from the old timer who talked about her higher power being a Group of Drunks, by the tow-truck driver on his lunch break, by the Zen guy originally from the Bronx.

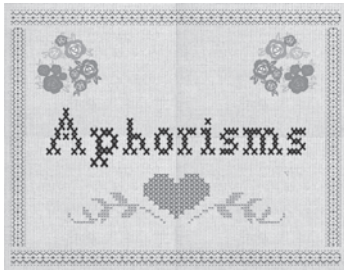
Their shares eased my anxiety and I could go back to work.

In fact, I lost my job that year, due to the economy (not due to the young award-winning women; they lost their jobs, too). These days when I'm in meetings I hear the similarities, not the differences. I hear my own story, my hopes and fears and my experiences in others' stories and shares. I hear serenity. I hear the solution.

The only real relief from terror I'd found

I take comfort in the rituals at each meeting: The readings, the collection for the Seventh Tradition, the Serenity Prayer, familiar faces and fellowship. I take comfort in our openness to everyone, in our service to each other and especially to newcomers. I take comfort in the idea of principles before personalities. And now I define “comfortable” as “safe.” My higher power always has my back.





Stay Sober—Life Changes

Change is constant

by Claire A.

I like this saying. It's true for me on at least two levels.

First, for me, "life changes" means that if I am patient, whatever is happening will shift. Discomfort is seldom completely permanent. Lately I've been looking for a job, and the discomfort has made my skin crawl. I just want to know what is going to happen. I hate wondering. I want an answer and I want it now, because I can't handle the committee in my head that is reading off a gigantic list of "what-ifs" or reminding me that I haven't had an office job since 2008, and shouldn't I find some decent clothes? or obsessing about how my interview went, and what the inflection in the interviewer's voice meant, not to mention planning the decor in the office of the job I don't have.

So, in this sense, the saying means, "have patience, this too shall pass, just stay sober, work your program and things will change." This is true for me, sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly.

Sober, present and grateful for the difficult times

Working the program has made a tremendous difference as I look for a job. I have reached out to people in A.A., but also to my "normie" friends, for help. Setting aside my pride has been a huge positive change for me. I've

discovered that people like helping, and I've learned a ton and gotten helpful feedback. It feels great to be in the stream of life.

I think the saying is true on another level, too, in the sense of "don't assume things won't change." People are born, people die, they get jobs, they move away, they move in, they get fired, they quit, they date, they marry, they divorce—these are only a few of the big life changes. There are



millions of tiny ones. They move the toilet paper at the store. They tear up the street that you live on. You lose a client. You gain a puppy. Change is constant.

I used to think I liked change, back in my drinking days. I liked starting fresh, I thought. Now, I think what I liked was not having to deal with endings. I burned through friends and roommates because I was an inconsiderate person.

I thought I was changing friends, but what I was actually doing was running away from relationships that I had messed up.

Whatever is happening will shift

Now I am aware that I don't like change all that much. If I had my way, I wouldn't change—but the reality is that I have no choice about change.

My hair is getting grayer, my kids are growing up, my dad is getting older, my husband's sister died last year. Life is changing.

The best way I can deal with this is to stay sober for it. I want to be sober, present and grateful for the positive changes. I want to watch my kids as they do school stuff and sports, and I want to be there for them as they grow. And, I want to be sober, present and

grateful for the difficult times. When my husband's sister died, it was awful, but it was also a time when the family came together in a beautiful show of support and love.

Now I want to be there for change, even though I am not a big fan of change. It can be so hard, so painful—it's also where the beauty of being alive is, and if I am sober, I get to witness it.



I Learned in A.A. that One “Votes” with Their Feet

Meetings sure helped me get sober

by John W.

When new to the process, and while trying to “make points” with a spouse who was soon to become an ex-spouse, I inquired of her friend China, whom I had discovered within the walls of the same meeting to which I had been “sentenced,” if she would be willing to help me in my quest to get sober. I requested that such aid should be in the form of positively endorsing my stellar attendance record for the past 72 hours with my wife, to show how hard I was trying to stop, albeit without success at the time.

*... I being the arrogant,
stubborn type ...*

She said that she would indeed help me. Then she went to the literature rack, got a meeting schedule, and began circling meetings on it. Her aid would help me discover new meetings to attend, since I would likely need two, three, or possibly even four a day to begin to make a dent in my alcoholism. I thought she was crazy and I politely told her so. With several decades of sobriety then behind her, she had seen the likes of me before, and she politely so responded. It took several weeks, I being the arrogant, stubborn type, before her advice began to sink in and I began to follow the practice she espoused.

As I ventured from the known and safe confines of my Home Group, I began to see the vitality and the method of a plan revolving around the idea that “Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole.” I realized for instance that not every

meeting started with “How It Works” or ended with “The Promises.” Some groups prayed a lot, while others did not and, if at all, only once—at the end. The more I stuck around, and the longer I practiced the principle China had aided me with, the more I saw the wisdom in her suggestion. While it hadn’t helped with the marriage (to my knowledge she never talked to the spouse), it sure helped with me getting sober, finally, and staying that way, gratefully, one day at a time until now, over a decade later.

As time passed, I saw how each A.A. group was responsible to no authority other than its own conscience. I was a bit taken aback when I chanced upon a meeting which was “closed” and a member asked that two guests, medical students who were only interested in seeing how A.A. worked and had said so, excuse themselves because they were not alcoholics. I saw when she later that day shared why she needed that safety zone for her sobriety.

When my Home Group struggled with our very own agnostics, atheists and non-Christians who bridled at closing every meeting with “The Lord’s Prayer” getting vocal about it, I saw up close and personal how a Group Conscience can be achieved and how it works, in

real time. Ironically, the solution posed by a newcomer, when she remarked that a choice of a prayer might be an answer, ended up being an expression of that Group’s Conscience as it was finally adopted.

*Some groups prayed a lot,
while others did not*

In response to an initial rejection, she retorted that it could hardly be wrong if, for instance, we said the Serenity Prayer not only as was our routine to begin the meeting, but a second time at the closer’s choice to also end it. Watching the resistance melt in the face of that idea was Tradition Four at work.

As I expanded my A.A. experience, I learned too that I could express my support, or lack thereof, in a way that was both subtle and direct—I could “vote with my feet.” If I did not care for the way a meeting was conducted I could stay and become resentful (bad idea), I could take action to try to change things (not always practical), or I could just attend another meeting next time or start one myself. Knowing that I could elect this decision helped me to see how the common thread of working the Steps could be woven into countless and very different tapestries, each with its own special look and feel, beloved or not, in the eyes and ears of each beholder.

Each group thereby in their individual way is contributing to A.A.’s common welfare which is, at the taproot, paramount.



Intergroup Meeting Summary: March 2018

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	Weekend Warriors	Beginners Warmup	Design for Living	Pocket Aces
Attitude Adjustment	Women's Big Book	Big Book Basics	Each Day a New Beginning	Reality Farm
Cover to Cover		Blue Book Special	Experience, Strength & Hope	Saturday Beginners
Friday Night Book	San Francisco Groups	Came To Believe	Girls Gone Mild	Serenity Seekers
Last Stop Men's Step Study	A is for Alcohol	Castro Discussion	High Noon Sat	Sometimes Slowly
Men's Two Plus	AA As You Like It	Castro Monday Night BB	Join the Tribe	Sundown
Quitting Time	Any Lengths	Cocktail Hour	Kool Fresh Kids Club	Sunset Speaker Step
Rise N Shine	Anything is Possible	Cow Hollow Men's	Lunch with Bill	Weekend Update
Mill Valley LGBTQ All are Welcome	As Bill Sees It Th 6pm	Cow Hollow Young People	Monday Beginners	Wharf Rats
Thursday Night Chip	Be Still	Creative Alcoholics	Monday Night Stag Tiburon	

This is an unofficial summary of the March 2018 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" at 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 7, 2017, at First Unitarian Universalist Center, 1187 Franklin Street in San Francisco. The meeting was started with a call to order and the Serenity Prayer. Basket for dinner was passed. The February 2018 minutes and the March 2018 agenda were approved.

Standing Reports

Board Chair, Liz M. The Grapevine Challenge (www.aagrapevine.org/grapevine-challenge) is to get more subscriptions to *The Grapevine*. Make

sure groups and their trusted servants are registered with Intergroup at aasf.org. Early IG board opening; looking for statements of interest. How to get involved? Lots of committees are looking for more interested folks.

Treasurer, Alix F. Current rating is "Excellent." Total Revenue for January 2018 was almost \$40K, which was over budget. Group contributions for January were over budget, while individual contributions were under budget. The Prudent Reserve will be adjusted by just over \$8K per our policy.

Central Office Manager, Maury P. Updated Marin schedules will be printed for April 1. San Francisco schedule booklets will most likely be printed in the next 6-8 weeks, so submit any changes now. With the decline in purchases of the printed schedule, it takes longer to sell out of the booklet; we need to order a significant quantity to keep the price at \$1 and may want to consider different options going forward. Stepping Stone on 10th Avenue in San Francisco has closed after 50+ years of service. There are open shifts at Central Office; one year of sobriety is required. There were about 500 total calls to Central Office in January and February. We've already had a lot of calls so far in March, even with the new chat feature on AASF.org. We reviewed year-by-year

group contribution data showing total dollar amount per year and the number of groups contributing per year. This data was from 2012 through 2017.

Intergroup Committee/Activity Reports

Archives, Kim S. Next business meeting is March 18 at Central Office. They did a History 101 Talk at All California Young People in Alcoholics Anonymous (ACYPA). The History of Central Office talk is happening on Sunday, April 8 at 2900 24th Street from 4:30-6pm.

Technology, James O. Moved aasf.org to a Linux server and it's now several times faster. The Intergroup Facebook page admin has been established. A new chat service on aasf.org has launched! A new sub-committee is formulating of "knowledge sharing," FAQ, etc. regarding technology within A.A.

Fellowship, Michael P. The 83rd Annual Smith-Wilson Family Picnic will be June 9 from 5-9 pm at First U. There will be a picnic, sack race/other games, crafts table, raffle, Family Feud and speakers. There will be a sign-up sheet for volunteers at next month's meeting.

The Point, John B. We are looking for a chairperson for *The Point* committee. Editorial skills are ideal. Position requires 4-6 hours a month. Past issues

Individual Contributions

to Central Office were made through March 15, 2018

honoring the following members:

IN MEMORIAM

Bob C. — Hilldwellers, Marin PI/CPC

Joe Y. — Tuesday Beginners

Barbara E. — Friday All Groups

ANNIVERSARIES

Sue L. — 14 years

Sally F. — 28 years

Karen C. — 31 years

Yvonne D. — 31 years

Sean C. — 40 years

of *The Point* are being archived and possibly made searchable on aasf.org. Members who can handle distribution are needed for Marin locations.

The Buzz, Anne-Marie C. *The Buzz* will be part of the Intergroup Facebook group. Working on a Service Round-up feature so that committee requests can be more specifically featured in *The Buzz*.

Liaison Reports

District 10 / Marin PI/CPC, Cathy P. Dominican College's nursing program in San Rafael has two presentations scheduled for March 26. Outreach to 60 Bay Area radio stations is going well. Many stations prefer to read a "PSA" script. GSO provided various 10- and 20-second scripts. District 10 outreach coordinator had an interview with iHeartRadio "Public Affairs" segment about A.A. on February 14 and it is available as a podcast. Contacted Veterans Agency as part of the Marin Health and Human Services. A.A. presence was requested at an upcoming national conference, "Aging in America," in San Francisco March 26-28. Please let Cathy know if you are available to help staff the booth. Cathy attended the Pacific Region A.A. Service Assembly (PRAASA) conference in

Sparks, Nevada, which reinforced the importance of Public Information.

IGR Reports

Maury P. reminded us that we're in 4 to 5 months of not having a San Francisco PI/CPC chairperson/liaison. SF Teleservice also hasn't had a co-chair for six months. We might bring this up for further discussion next month, but reps should share this info with their groups at this time.

James O. addressed the fact that we do not currently have a process or policy in place when a new meeting key request is made. He put the following two items up for discussion and we will revisit next month: 1) Who should determine the new policy (Intergroup, the board)? 2) Also who determines if a new designation is added? Is it the board's decision, Intergroup's decision, or are individual groups able to determine a new designation for themselves?

Discussion Items

Discussed the video on voting procedures. (NAATW presentation) viewed at previous Intergroup meetings. Premise: frustration with the formality and complexity of the decision-making

Continued on Page 19

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

Liz M. chair@aasf.org

VICE CHAIR

John R. vicechair@aasf.org

TREASURER

Alix F. treasurer@aasf.org

RECORDING SECRETARY

Carolyn R. secretary@aasf.org

COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

ARCHIVES COMMITTEE

Kim S. archives@aasf.org

FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

Michael P. fellowship@aasf.org

ORIENTATION COMMITTEE

Greg M. orientation@aasf.org

SF PI/CPC COMMITTEE

[open] picpc@aasf.org

SF TELESERVICE COMMITTEE

Layne Z. sfteleservice@aasf.org

SUNSHINE CLUB COMMITTEE

Carole P. sunshine@aasf.org

TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

James O. tech@aasf.org

THE BUZZ COMMITTEE

Anne Marie C. thebuzz@aasf.org

THE POINT COMMITTEE

John B. thepoint@aasf.org

aa group contributions

Fellowship Contributions			Feb. 18	YTD	Marin Contributions			Feb. 18	YTD	San Francisco Contributions			Feb. 18	YTD
Contribution Box			\$87.18	\$195.56	Wholly Together 11th Step Meditation W 7p				\$94.00	Lincoln Park Sat 830pm				\$33.87
GGYPAA			\$12.00	\$12.00	Women's Big Book Tu 1030am			\$571.58	\$571.58	Meditation, Prayer & Share Tue 730pm			\$34.00	\$49.00
Sobriety By The Bay				\$2,000.00	Working Dogs W 12pm				\$1,120.33	Meeting Place Noon F 12pm				\$128.00
Fellowship Total			\$99.18	\$2,207.56	Marin Total			\$5,404.49	\$14,636.94	Mid-Morning Support Su 1030am				\$156.00
Marin Contributions			Feb. 18	YTD	San Francisco Contributions			Feb. 18	YTD				Feb. 18	YTD
12 & 12 Study Sa 815am				\$80.00	11th Step Power Power Power			\$68.23	\$68.23	Monday Men's Stag (SF) M 8pm				\$72.97
A Vision for You (Fairfax) Su 730pm			\$192.32	\$192.32	6am Dry Dock Tu				\$240.00	Monday Monday M 1215pm				\$102.40
Attitude Adjustment 7D 7am			\$570.30	\$1,442.91	A is for Alcohol Tu 6pm			\$150.00	\$150.00	Monday Night Big Book Study M 8pm				\$79.57
Back to Basics Su 930am				\$118.00	A New Start F 830pm			\$664.20	\$717.86	No Reservations M 12pm				\$166.88
Big Book Study & Meditation M 7p				\$23.31	AA As You Like It Tu 530pm			\$88.80	\$88.80	NYX Sat 7pm			\$322.63	\$322.63
Caledonia Sun 8pm	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00			Afro American Beginners Sat 8pm				\$253.20	Ocean of Sobriety W 830p				\$200.00
Closed Women's Step Study Tu 330pm	\$56.84	\$56.84			Agnostics & Freethinkers Su 630pm				\$262.00	Raising the Bottom W 8pm			\$56.80	\$56.80
Conscious Contact Sa 6pm	\$280.00	\$280.00			Artists & Writers F 630pm				\$880.79	Reality Farm Th 830pm				\$817.20
Corte Madera Saturday Candlelight 8pm				\$398.08	As Bill Sees It Tu 1210pm			\$57.46	\$57.46	Rebound W 830pm				\$129.12
Crossroads Sun 12pm				\$125.23	Be Still AA Su 12pm				\$705.82	Road to Freedom Mon 12pm				\$72.00
Fireside Fri 8pm Bolinas				\$41.49	Bernal Big Book Sat 5pm			\$272.68	\$461.71	Safe and Sound Family Support				\$77.00
Friday Night Book F 830pm				\$270.89	Bernal New Day 7D				\$276.00	Saturday Beginners Sat 6pm				\$482.71
Gratitude Tu 8pm				\$250.00	Big Book Basics F 8pm				\$86.11	Saturday Easy Does It Sa 12pm				\$306.45
Intimate Feelings Sa 10am				\$37.79	Big Book Beginners F 105pm			\$100.00	\$100.00	Saturday Night Regroup Sa 730pm				\$180.00
Keep It Simple Sister Thu 7pm	\$427.50	\$427.50			Big Book Study Su 1130am				\$174.00	Serenity House	\$150.00			\$300.00
Larkspur Haven Su 12p				\$352.00	Blue Book Special Su 11am				\$74.48	Serenity Now Tue 830p				\$177.77
Mill Valley 11th Step Mtg Tu 730pm				\$646.00	Came to Believe Su 8am			\$33.90	\$33.90	Sober Saturday Sa 830am				\$96.00
Mill Valley 7D 7am	\$600.00	\$600.00			Castro Discussion (Show Of Shows) Th 730p				\$31.77	Sobriety & Miracles S&M Group Sa 5pm				\$131.40
Mill Valley Discussion W 830pm				\$185.00	Compass Group Sun 10am				\$312.00	Sunday Morning Gay Men's Stag Su 930am			-\$1,026.00	\$867.64
Monday Miracles M 630pm	\$130.00	\$130.00			Cow Hollow Men's Group W 8pm				\$1,189.96	Sunday Night 3rd Step Group 5pm				\$377.28
Monday Night Stag Tiburon				\$500.00	Design For Living - Big Book Th 730am				\$115.50	Sunday Night Castro Speaker Disc Su 730pm				\$423.60
Monday Night Women's M 8pm				\$251.31	Design For Living - Big Book Tu, Th 730am			\$130.32	\$130.32	Sunrise Sunset Women's Step Th 6pm				\$135.22
Monday Nooners M 12pm				\$443.61	Design for Living Sat 8am				\$344.65	Sunset 11'ers F			\$78.75	\$78.75
Morning After Sa 10am	\$500.00	\$500.00			Each Day a New Beginning F 7am				\$684.84	Sunset 11'ers Su				\$120.00
Noon Discussion Thu 12pm	\$22.00	\$22.00			Each Day a New Beginning M 7am				\$97.12	Sunset 11'ers Th			\$34.26	\$34.26
Noon Hope				\$77.50	Each Day a New Beginning Su 8am				\$224.07	Sunset 11'ers Tu				\$114.00
Noon Reveille Su 12pm				\$16.00	Each Day a New Beginning Th 7am				\$362.01	Sunset Speaker Step Su 730pm				\$72.87
Novato Spirit Discussion F 2pm	\$165.00	\$165.00			Each Day a New Beginning Tu 7am				\$382.17	The Drive Thru W 1215pm				\$667.25
Quitting Time M-F 530pm				\$900.72	Each Day a New Beginning W 7am				\$218.70	They Don't Know Who We Are Sat 7pm				\$18.76
Serendipity Sa 11am	\$80.00	\$80.00			Early Joyous & Free Th 7am			\$60.00	\$60.00	Twelve Steps to Happiness F 730pm				\$62.00
Sober Sisters W 12pm				\$96.00	Early Start F 6pm			\$1,133.92	\$1,133.92	Valencia Smokefree F 6pm				\$567.25
Steps to Freedom M 730pm	\$250.00	\$250.00			Excelsior "Scent" Free For All Sa 5pm			\$60.00	\$60.00	Wake Up On 3rd St Group			\$152.25	\$152.25
Stinson Beach Fellowship Th 8pm	\$255.50	\$255.50			Experience, Strength & Hope Sat 9am				\$439.00	We Care Tu 12pm				\$72.00
Sunday Express Su 6pm				\$191.00	Extreme Makeover M 730pm				\$75.96	Weekend Worker Sat 7am				\$168.00
Sunday Friendship Su 6pm				\$205.00	Federal Speaker Su 12pm				\$67.57	West Portal W 8pm				\$454.78
The Barnyard Group Sa 4pm				\$115.73	Firefighters & Friends Tu 10am				\$160.24	Wharf Rats Th 815pm				\$190.08
There is a Solution Tu 6pm				\$50.00	Fireside Chat Group Sa 9pm				\$138.00	Women's 10 Years Plus Th 615pm			\$431.40	\$431.40
Three Step Group Sa 530pm				\$396.00	Friday All Groups F 830pm				\$144.00	Women's Came to Believe Sa 10am				\$109.70
Thursday Night Speaker 830pm				\$300.00	Friday Smokeless F 8pm			\$260.08	\$260.08	Women's Kitchen Table Tu 630pm			\$48.60	\$48.60
Tuesday Beginners' Meeting	\$303.45	\$303.45			Friendly Circle Beginners Su 715p			\$146.00	\$363.10	Women's Promises F 7pm				\$378.60
Tuesday Chip Meeting Tu 830pm				\$400.00	Gold Mine Group M 8pm				\$344.88	YAHOO Step Sa 1130am				\$328.37
We, Us and Ours M 650pm				\$108.32	Haight Street Explorers Th 630pm				\$172.00	San Francisco Total			\$3,862.28	\$22,626.65
Wednesday Night Candlelight (Marin) W 8pm				\$135.00	Join the Tribe Tu 7pm			\$354.00	\$354.00	YTD			\$9,365.95	\$39,471.15
Wednesday Night Speaker Discussion W 7pm				\$431.53	Like A Prayer Su 4pm				\$120.00					



The Smiling Leaf

Nondualism, transcendence and steps

by Eben S.

I nearly drank myself to death. My life was a meaningless, monotonous wheel of pain and disappointment. My best friend from childhood overdosed. I was broke. I was about to lose my girl and my job, and I felt like I was losing my mind. Death was closing in, yet I could not stop. I was guided to A.A. by an old college buddy with 75 days of sobriety. I quickly found a sponsor who said to stay sober I must turn my life over to God *as I understood him*. But how?

I started by going to meetings and doing the Steps. Soon I was sponsoring others and sharing my experience with any alcoholic willing to listen. I said the Serenity Prayer and Third Step Prayer every morning. The life that unfolded was a manifestation of God's grace.

I gave my life to God through my commitment to the beautiful path made clear to me when I released self-centeredness. Over time I have come to see every part of my life and will belong to God, including my blunders. If I take back my will, I am reminded over and over how I am not running the show. And so I have come to know there is no separation of me from God. It is all God. The separation is merely an illusion.

The story of the smiling leaf is a parable about how someone learns this lesson: We are never separate from God. One need only pause and silently enter the space of selfless love to come home to this ultimate knowing. The sweet little leaf is such a dear—he doesn't even know what a leaf is. Trees are free of dualistic consciousness. Only people, with our complex self-awareness, dream we are not the tree: God.

The Smiling Leaf

A boy who had recently lost his father to illness was walking down a path. He saw a smiling leaf lying on the forest floor. He asked the leaf, "Why are you smiling?"

The leaf replied, "I am smiling because I am a magnificent tree."

Confused, the boy said, "You're not a tree. You are a leaf."

The leaf responded, "What's a leaf?"

The boy began smiling, and his smile illuminated the entire world.

Separation is an illusion

The boy returned to the forest years later in search of the happy leaf. He was now a man and had recently lost his son in war. He was despondent when he could not find the leaf. Then he heard a voice, "Hello, old friend. I am here."

"Oh, wonderful," he replied. "I have lost so much: My father, my son. Now I can no longer see your smiling face. Tell me again of your magnificence, mighty tree. Tell me of your deep roots that anchor you to the earth and the sturdy trunk that supports your massive branches. Please tell me how you provide shade to the woodland floor, and bear delicious fruit for creatures of the forest."

The voice replied, "Alas, old friend, I am no longer a tree. But thank you for telling me about the leaf. I lived a wondrous life. I was glorious and resplendent as I transformed into mulch. I was scattered by

the wind. I swam in the waters of the stream. I even burned in a great fire and was turned into smoke and vapor. It is true I am no longer a tree, or even a happy leaf, but I am now so much more—I am the very essence of life. I am the universe, the all. I am free from form. I have become nothing and everything, both infinite and eternal. Sit, my old friend, and breathe deeply."

We are all part of Spirit

The voice continued, "Breathe me into your very heart and know that it is here through this doorway that I shall always dwell. Sit with me in meditation and know that all is one." The man sat and began smiling, and his smile illuminated the entire universe.



Revenue and Expense Statement: January 2018

	Jan 2018	Budget	Jan 2018	Budget		Jan 2018	Budget	Jan 2018	Budget
Revenue									
Contributions from Groups	\$ 30,105	\$ 25,232	\$ 30,105	\$ 25,232	Postage	\$ 49	\$ 48	\$ 49	\$ 48
Contributions from Individuals	\$ 4,344	\$ 4,414	\$ 4,344	\$ 4,414	Rent - Office	\$ 4,592	\$ 4,615	\$ 4,592	\$ 4,615
Gratitude Month	\$ 3,190	\$ 3,529	\$ 3,190	\$ 3,529	Rent - Other	\$ -	\$ 335	\$ -	\$ 335
Intergroup Event Revenue	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	Filing/Fees	\$ -	\$ 26	\$ -	\$ 26
Other Revenue	\$ 196	\$ 29	\$ 196	\$ 29	Insurance	\$ -	\$ 1,005	\$ -	\$ 1,005
					Internet Expense	\$ 124	\$ 148	\$ 124	\$ 148
Sales - Bookstore	\$ 7,907	\$ 8,977	\$ 7,907	\$ 8,977	IT Services	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Cost of Bookstore Sales	\$ (6,162)	\$ (7,163)	\$ (6,162)	\$ (7,163)	IT Hardware	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Gross Margin - Bookstore	\$ 1,745	\$ 1,814	\$ 1,745	\$ 1,814	IT Software	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
					Office Supplies	\$ 393	\$ 5	\$ 393	\$ 5
Total Revenue	\$ 39,580	\$ 35,018	\$ 39,580	\$ 35,018	Paper Purchased	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Expense					Printing	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Employee Expenses	\$ 14,566	\$ 13,328	\$ 14,566	\$ 13,328	Equipment Lease	\$ 437	\$ 440	\$ 437	\$ 440
					Repair & Maintenance	\$ 483	\$ 206	\$ 483	\$ 206
Committees					Security System	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
PI/CPC	\$ -	\$ 165	\$ -	\$ 165	Payroll Expenses	\$ 6	\$ 10	\$ 6	\$ 10
Access Committee	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	Telephone	\$ 179	\$ 226	\$ 179	\$ 226
Sunshine Club	\$ -	\$ 17	\$ -	\$ 17	Travel	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Archives Committee	\$ -	\$ 298	\$ -	\$ 298	Training	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Committees - Other	\$ -	\$ 4	\$ -	\$ 4	Bad Checks	\$ 12	\$ -	\$ 12	\$ -
The Point Committee	\$ -	\$ 174	\$ -	\$ -	Total Expense	\$ 21,157	\$ 21,050	\$ 21,157	\$ 20,876
Total Committees	\$ -	\$ 658	\$ -	\$ 484	Net Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	\$ 18,423	\$ 13,968	\$ 18,423	\$ 14,142
					Interest Income	\$ 44	\$ 47	\$ 44	\$ 47
Intergroup Sponsored Events	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	Miscellaneous Income	\$ -	\$ 35	\$ -	\$ -
Contribution CC Processing Fees	\$ 315	\$ -	\$ 315	\$ -	Depreciation/Amortization Expense	\$ (348)	\$ (340)	\$ (348)	\$ (340)
Professional Fees	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -		\$ 18,119	\$ 13,710	\$ 18,119	\$ 13,849

Treasurer's Report: January 2018

For January 2018, Total Revenue was \$39,480, over budget by \$4,562. This was mainly due to increased group contributions, which were over budget by \$4,874. Total Operating Expense for January was \$21,157, over budget by \$108. The result is a Net Operating Surplus of \$18,119.

Group Contributions for January were \$30,105, over budget by \$4,874. Individual Contributions were \$4,334, under budget by \$71.

Total Unrestricted Cash for January 2018 was \$106,944, an increase of \$28,841 from December 2017. Unrestricted Cash is over 5 months of operating expenses.

The rating for January 2018 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. The Intergroup rating has been "excellent" since December 2016.

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.

Balance Sheet: January 2018

	31-Jan-18	31-Dec-17	\$ Change	31-Jan-17	\$ Change
ASSETS					
Current Assets					
Cash					
Unrestricted Cash	\$ 106,944	\$ 78,103	\$ 28,841	\$ 78,530	\$ 28,414
Restricted Cash	\$ 125,232	\$ 125,232	\$ -	\$ 125,232	\$ -
Total Cash	\$ 232,176	\$ 203,335	\$ 28,841	\$ 203,762	\$ 28,414
Accounts Receivable	\$ (297)	\$ (309)	\$ 12	\$ (32)	\$ (265)
Inventory - Bookstore	\$ 21,962	\$ 21,741	\$ 221	\$ 23,318	\$ (1,356)
Total Current Assets	\$ 253,841	\$ 224,767	\$ 29,074	\$ 227,048	\$ 26,793
Fixed Assets	\$ 10,514	\$ 10,862	\$ (348)	\$ 14,690	\$ (4,176)
Deposits	\$ 6,698	\$ 6,698	\$ -	\$ 6,698	\$ -
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 271,053	\$ 242,327	\$ 28,726	\$ 248,436	\$ 22,617
LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS					
Liabilities					
Current Liabilities					
Accounts Payable	\$ 9,113	\$ 3,145	\$ 5,968	\$ 20	\$ 9,093
Payroll Tax Liabilities	\$ 4,302	\$ -	\$ 4,302	\$ 4,117	\$ 185
Sales Tax Payable	\$ 550	\$ 560	\$ (10)	\$ 706	\$ (156)
Total Current Liabilities	\$ 13,965	\$ 3,704	\$ 10,261	\$ 4,843	\$ 9,122
Supplemental Compensation	\$ 2,083	\$ 1,736	\$ 347		
Total Liabilities	\$ 16,048	\$ 5,440	\$ 10,608	\$ 4,843	\$ 11,205
Net Assets					
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	\$ 236,886	\$ 228,376	\$ 8,510	\$ 228,376	\$ 8,510
Net Surplus/(Deficit), YTD	\$ 18,119	\$ 8,511	\$ 9,608	\$ 15,217	\$ 2,902
Total Net Assets	\$ 255,005	\$ 236,887	\$ 18,118	\$ 243,593	\$ 11,412
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	\$ 271,053	\$ 242,327	\$ 28,726	\$ 248,436	\$ 22,617

Continued from Page 15

process is what keeps members from becoming engaged. Also, the rules seemed to get in the way as often as they helped. The purpose of Robert's Rules of Order used roughly in A.A. is to make things move quickly, not getting off track. However, when participants do not know the rules or aren't prepared, the proceedings tend to break down. Consensus may fit our principles. It is a spiritual decision-making process, not a voting process. What is proposed:

Taking stack: the chair appoints someone to note everyone who's hand is raised, which allows focus on the conversation versus a confusing order of who gets to speak.

Clarifying questions: this allows full discussion before a motion/second.

Test of consensus via hand signals: this can help avoid piggybacking and save time.

Consensus style of voting: you can

vote "yes," "no, but you are OK if it moves forward," or "block and see if there is a compromise that everyone agrees upon." If a compromise cannot be found, it can still pass but may require a higher percentage of "yes" votes to pass.

Dog Policy: The Mayor's Office on Disability states individuals with disabilities with service or support animals are allowed equal access to all City sponsored programs, facilities, services, and activities. This discussion topic refers to Intergroup-sponsored meetings or events. Individual groups are still autonomous and can decide at the group level. Discussion will continue.

Adjourn with Responsibility Statement

Next Intergroup Meeting: Wednesday, April 4, 2018, 7:00 pm, at First Unitarian Universalist Center, 1187 Franklin Street in San Francisco. Orientation is at 6:15 pm; dinner is served at 6:30 pm.



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)

Mary D.	Penelope C. &	Stephen S.
Maryellen O'C.	Robert S. Jr.	Stephen S.
Matt S.	Penelope P.	Steve F.
Matt S.	Peter F.	Steven G.
Michael M.	Phyllis S.	Susan C.
Michael M.	Rachel G.	Suzanne C.
Michael W.	Robert J.	Ted R.
Michael Z.	Robert S.	Teddy W.
Nancy N.	Robert T.	Theresa M.
Naomi L.	Ron H.	Thomas H.
Nicholas P.	Roseanna H.	Thomas M.
Niels R.	Ryan D.	Timothy Mc.
Pamela K.	Sara H.	Tom S.
Pat P.	Scott C.	Tomas L.
Patrick R.	Sean B.	Tony R.
Patrick S.	Sean C.	Tripp Mc.
Paul K.	Sean M.	
Peggy H.	Sheila H.	

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!



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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