

# the Point

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

from Chapter Five of the book, Alcoholics Anonymous

2018 **6**  
June

A publication of the Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous

Intercounty Fellowship  
of Alcoholics Anonymous

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## Accepting Freedom

7 Letting Go

11 Need to Know Basis



13 As We Understood God

17 Four Stages of the 12 Steps

*Cover illustration by Anonymous*

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.

# June 2018

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
<p>Persons requiring reasonable accommodations at Intergroup meetings, Intergroup committee meetings or service events sponsored by the preceding entities, including ASL interpreters, assistive listening devices or print materials in alternative formats, should contact Central Office at (415) 674-1821 no less than five business days prior to the event.</p> <div>     </div>			
3	<b>4</b> <b>FIRST MON</b> <b>Technology Committee</b> Central Office, 1821 Sacramento St., San Francisco 6:00pm	5	<b>6</b> <b>FIRST WED</b> <b>Intergroup Meeting</b> First Unitarian Universalist Center 1187 Franklin St., San Francisco <b>Orientation</b> 6:15pm; <b>Dinner</b> 6:30pm <b>Meeting</b> 7pm
<b>10</b> <b>SECOND SUN</b> <b>Golden Gate Young People in AA</b> Central Office, 1821 Sacramento St., San Francisco 12:00pm <i>(even months at Central Office; odd months at Marin Alano Club)</i>	<b>11</b> <b>SECOND MON</b> <b>SF Public Information / Cooperation with the Professional Community (PI/CPC)</b> Central Office, 1821 Sacramento St., San Francisco <b>Speaker Workshop</b> 6:00pm <b>Business Meeting</b> 7:00pm	<b>12</b> <b>SECOND TUE</b> <b>Marin H&amp;I</b> Marin Alano Club, 1360 Lincoln Ave., San Rafael <b>Orientation</b> 6:15pm <b>Business Meeting</b> 7:00pm <b>SF General Service</b> 1111 O'Farrell St., San Francisco <b>New GSR Orientation / Concept Study</b> 6:30pm <b>Business Meeting</b> 7:30pm	<b>13</b> <b>SECOND WED</b> <b>Marin Bridging the Gap</b> Marin Alano Club, 1360 Lincoln Ave., San Rafael <b>Orientation</b> 6:00pm <b>Business Meeting</b> 6:30pm
<b>17</b> <b>THIRD SUN</b> <b>Archives Committee Meeting</b> Central Office, 1821 Sacramento St., San Francisco 12:00pm <i>Business meeting followed by work day</i>	<b>18</b> <b>THIRD MON</b> <b>Marin General Service</b> 9 Ross Valley Rd., San Rafael <b>Orientation / Concept Study</b> 6:45pm <b>Business Meeting</b> 7:30pm <b>SF Teleservice</b> Central Office, 1821 Sacramento St., San Francisco <b>Orientation</b> 6pm	19	20
24	25	<b>26</b> <b>FOURTH TUE</b> <b>Marin Teleservice</b> Marin Alano Club, 1360 Lincoln Ave., San Rafael <b>Orientation</b> 7:00pm <b>Business Meeting</b> 7:30pm	27

For more details regarding our calendar of events, visit [aasf.org](http://aasf.org) and go to the "News & Events" tab.

THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2
7	8 <b>NCCAA 71st Summer Conference</b> Northern California Council of A.A. Centre Plaza, 1000 L St., Modesto, CA June 8 - 10 Register: <a href="http://www.norcalaa.org">www.norcalaa.org</a>	9 <b>SECOND SAT</b> <b>The Point Committee Meeting</b> Central Office, 1821 Sacramento St. San Francisco 12:30pm <b>83rd Annual Smith &amp; Wilson Family Picnic</b> First Unitarian Universalist Center 1187 Franklin St., San Francisco <b>Festivities 5pm</b> <b>Meeting 7pm</b>
14	15	16 <b>THIRD SAT</b> <b>SF H&amp;I</b> 2900 24th St., San Francisco <b>Orientation 11:00am Business Mtg 12:00pm</b> <b>Sunshine Club &amp; S.O.S. Orientation</b> Gratitude Center, 1320 7th Ave., San Francisco 2:30pm
21	22	23 <b>FOURTH SAT</b> <b>The 12 Traditions Today</b> Central Office, 1821 Sacramento St. San Francisco 11:00am <b>CNCA Meeting</b> 320 N. McDowell Blvd., Petaluma 10:00am
28 <b>FOURTH THU</b> <b>Marin Public Information / Cooperation with the Professional Community (PI/CPC)</b> Marin Alano Club, 1360 Lincoln Ave., San Rafael 8:00pm	29	30



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"If you will pray for the person  
or thing that you resent, you  
will be free."

~ *Alcoholics Anonymous*, p.552



## Meeting Changes

### New Meetings:

Thu 6:00pm Mission **Las Spanglish de AA**, Meeting Place, 3557 20th St./Lexington St.

### Meeting Changes:

Sun 7:30pm Castro **Sunday Night Castro Speaker Discussion**, Most Holy Redeemer, 110 Diamond St./18th St. Ellard Hall (Was listed at 100 Diamond St.)

Tue 12:15pm Financial **As Bill Sees It**, St. Patrick's Church, 756 Mission St./4th St. (Was at 12:10pm)

Thu 8:00pm Western Addition **Fireside Chat**, 1442 Fulton St./Broderick St. (No longer YP; now Literature, Discussion, Gay, Lesbian; enter driveway, stairs to 2nd floor)


### No Longer Meeting:

Tue/Fri 7:00am Corte Madera **7 AM Urgent Care**, 649 Meadowsweet Dr./Tamalpais Dr.

Thu 6:00pm Mission **Mission Women's 12x12**, 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!**

**GGYPAA PRESENTS**  
**VolleYPAA**



**Golden Gate Young People in AA**  
invites you to come play volleyball,  
socialize or just hang out and have fun!

Saturday, June 23  
BBQ: 11am  
AA Meeting: 12pm  
Volleyball Tournament: 1pm to 3:30pm

Piper Park  
250 Doherty Drive  
Larkspur, CA 94939

Suggested donation is \$10 but nobody will be turned away for lack of funds.  
Email ggypaa415@gmail.com for more info.

**FOUNDER'S DAY 2018**  
Celebrate 83 Years of AA  
WITH THE  
Novato Events Committee

**Saturday, June 9th**  
6:00PM - AA Speaker Meeting  
Jackie B - San Francisco

7:00 - 9:30 PM  
**KARAOKE**  
ICE CREAM SOCIAL  
Tickets Advance/Door  
\$10.00

Druid's Hall - 801 Grant Ave, Novato (enter on Reichert)  
More info/text/call 415-515-9637

CELEBRATE FOUNDERS' DAY AT THE

**83rd Annual**  
**SMITH & WILSON**  
**FAMILY PICNIC**  
Saturday, June 9, 2018 - 5pm-9pm

TICKETS AND INFO: <https://bit.ly/2EttqK>

**7PM MEETING**  
**\$15 ADVANCE \$13**

ALL THE FUN!  
CARNIVAL GAMES, TUG-O-WAR  
HOT DOGS, HACHOS  
VEGGIE BURGERS  
SALADS... OH MY!

OVERNIGHT, FAMILY FEUD, SACK RACE

**Bring Pie!**

FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CENTER  
1167 FRAWLIN STREET, SAN FRANCISCO

SPONSORED BY: INTERCOUNTY FELLOWSHIP OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, SAN FRANCISCO AND MARIN  
Persons requesting reasonable accommodations, including sign language interpreters, assistive listening devices or print materials in alternate format, should contact the SF/Marin Central Office (415) 674-1821 no later than five business days prior to the event.

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From the Editor

## Do the Right Thing

"The only real freedom a human being can ever know is doing what you ought to do because you want to do it."  
~Wynn C.L., "Freedom from Bondage,"  
*Alcoholics Anonymous*, p. 552

In Spike Lee's *Do the Right Thing*, the main character, Mookie, threw a trash can through a store window. His action could be interpreted either as encouraging violence or as saving the lives of the storeowners. Maybe it's possible to evolve to the point that our first impulse is usually to do what we ought to.

Rick R. remembered to do what was right even when no one was watching; he took responsibility for handling the "elephant" in the room (Page 9). Claire A. reflects on the pause before taking action that lets her speak to children more gently, stand up for herself when necessary or make a difficult phone call. Even if answers don't come to her right away, she can still move through whatever's blocking her (Page 10). Kathleen C. trusted her guide, accepted

direction and became part of a crew to ride out the Salmon River's rapids sober (Page 7). John W. also shows how guidance can work hand-in-hand with a group conscience (Page 12).

Also in this issue, empty nester Jana describes her past—how she used to go to hospital emergency rooms and say, "Something's wrong and I don't know what it is." Her reaching out for help led to a moment of clarity. Bob S. explains how Step Two is not theological, but it is evidential. Another anonymous member's sponsor divided the 12 steps into 4 stages to make them more accessible. For a final blueprint for progress: Jamie M. used to hear people talking about "HP" and wondered what Hewlett Packard had to do with anything—proving that even a sketchy version of a higher power can get someone to the next right thing. Mookie from the 1989 movie knew the difference between property values and the value of human life. Perhaps the key for evolution is empathy.

### EDITORIAL POLICY

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

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



## Faithful FIVERS!

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

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David S.	Kevin H.	Michael M.

(Continued on Page 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!





## To the Editor:

Let me start by saying I've noticed an appreciable improvement in the quality of the content of *The Point* recently; thank you for that. Regarding the article "Now that Marijuana is Legal in California" (May issue), however, I'm disturbed by the apparent lack of acknowledgement of our sister Fellowship, Narcotics Anonymous (N.A.). When we publish articles that substitute NA's requirement for membership for our own, we step on the toes of our spiritual fellows by appropriating what is theirs. When we support the implication that A.A. can and should do everything N.A. can, we are disrespecting their role in the recovery community. Where does NA fit into this talk of any addict can self-identify as an alcoholic whether they are or not? Are we supposed to pretend N.A. doesn't exist, that they don't have a Tradition that addresses exactly that problem?

While everyone has a right to their personal opinion, a publication which carries the aegis of our Intergroup should, perhaps, be more circumspect. Can we put ourselves in the shoes of our brothers and sisters in N.A. and ask ourselves how we'd feel if someone usurped our Third Tradition? Whether we like it or not, per their First, Third and Fifth Traditions, N.A.'s position ... [is] all addictive substances are essentially the same; that may be true, or it may not—AA has no stated opinion on the issue. We only say any alcoholic is a member of A.A. when she or he says so. If we use our standing as the oldest 12-Step Fellowship to imply we can be all things to all people—i.e., that A.A. is a place for all who suffer

from addiction rather than a place for "all who suffer from alcoholism"—we are pushing N.A. out ... To say nothing of ignoring the actual wording of our own long form of Tradition Three. Rather presumptuous (and bullying) of us, isn't it?

Perhaps in the true spirit of love and cooperation, we should be conducting ourselves with respect for others and encouraging addicts who aren't alcoholics to join N.A. As a publication, perhaps *The Point* could take the lead in respecting our sister Fellowships when considering articles which make the presumption we're the Fellowship best qualified to treat all forms of addiction.

While *The Point* tries to embody the widest possible view of the A.A. Fellowship, it also relies on the principles of the Twelve Traditions, which are quite clear about our one requirement for membership and about to whom we carry the message. If, in the Infinite Wisdom of the group conscience, our Fellowship decides to change its name to 'Alcoholics and Addicts Anonymous,' to change the only requirement for membership to 'the desire to stop drinking and using' and our primary purpose to 'carrying the message to the alcoholic and addict who still suffers,' then I'm totally on board with that, too. Until that happens, perhaps we can all stick to the Twelve Traditions as they are, not twist them into something we might wish they were.

In love and service,  
Karen C.

## Reply to Karen C.:

*The Point Committee has great respect for our sister fellowships, including N.A. (not to mention Marijuana Anonymous). 'Alcohol is a drug — period.' Forgetting that leads to jails, institutions and death.*

*The Point's pages are open to all A.A. members—yet publication in the newsletter isn't an endorsement by A.A. as a whole, our Intergroup, the Central Office or The Point editorial committee. Similarly, one of us telling a war story at a meeting doesn't speak for A.A. as a whole. That's why we print a reminder on our cover.*

*Forrest's article is in keeping with the spirit of our sister fellowship's Third Tradition (although our newsletter doesn't claim to represent them, either). "Refusing admission to any addict, even one who comes merely out of curiosity, may be a death sentence for that addict," from <https://www.na.org>.*

*It's important for all viewpoints to be heard so organizations stay healthy. As Ken J. summed up in last issue's Concept Five article, A.A.'s concern for individual freedom of expression illustrates the democratic nature of our fellowship. The medical marijuana article was a hot topic for several editorial committee meetings. We decided publishing it would encourage robust debate. (The Point committee meetings are on the second Saturday of each month and we'd love to have your input.)*

M.G.  
Editor



# Letting Go

*Trust your guidance and accept direction*

by Kathleen C.

"Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character..." ~*Alcoholics Anonymous*, page 59.

For me the most important part of Step Six has been to let go of my old ideas. When I finally stopped drinking and came to Alcoholics Anonymous, I thought sobriety would diminish my life. If I wasn't drinking or smoking dope how could I try new things, relax and be around people? When I became willing to give up my preconceptions about sobriety, instead of becoming smaller, my life got bigger.

## *Let go of old ideas*

As an example, before I got sober I went whitewater rafting with my husband, his brother, his brother's wife and a bunch of other friends. We flew to Oregon and met our professional guides who supplied every comfort you could imagine—good food, comfortable sleeping bags and tents, seaworthy rafts. Despite all the reassurance and creature comforts, I was still nervous and worried that because I had never done this before I would look stupid. I didn't feel I had anything in common with the guides and I felt as if everybody but me knew what they were doing. I felt different.

I was scared all the time; I thought I would fall in the river and drown. It wasn't even a very challenging river. It was this little meandering stream called the Owyhee on the border between Oregon and Nevada. I could hardly wait for our final landing of the

day where we would gather on the riverbank and have cocktails.

## *Instead of becoming smaller, life in sobriety got bigger*

Fast forward many years later. We went with the same group for a much more challenging float on the middle fork of the Salmon River in Idaho. The river was high that year; there were Class 3 and 4 (even borderline Class 5) rapids. We would be running rapids with names like Washing Machine and Tidal Wave. Unlike the other trip, this time I was sober.



Before we set out, our guide, who had assumed this Viking superhero name, Ragnar, told us, "Don't just sit there holding your paddles and ride through the rapids. I need you to paddle hard so I can steer the raft. When I tell you, to dig in, then dig in!"

Ragnar would be in the back of the raft steering as we roared toward a whirlpool and he'd yell, "Dig in! Dig in!" and I would paddle like a maniac because this time I trusted our guide,

I had learned how to accept direction, and instead of feeling all on my own, I was one of the crew.

The last day of the trip, just before our final run, Ragnar warned us that we might encounter a notorious standing wave that routinely flipped rafts, dumping everybody in the river. He told us to be ready to dig in. We rounded a bend in the river and there it was, a huge arc of water crashing from left to right. "Dig in! Dig in!" Ragnar yelled. We all reached into the river with our paddles and pulled harder than we ever had.

I was near the front of the raft on the right-hand side and even though we paddled as hard as we could, the monster wave engulfed us and I plunged overboard into the churning rapids. My world was a roaring blackness as the cold water closed over my head.

Then I felt Ragnar grab me by my life jacket and I rode out the rest of the rapids alongside the raft. On the beach that evening, as I sipped my sparkling water, I told him, "Ragnar, the sweetest words I ever heard were, 'I've got you.'"

In sobriety I had become willing to let go of my old ideas about being on my own, turn myself over to the group and the guide, follow directions, and participate 100%. That's sobriety for me and it's fantastic.



# Jana's Story

## Transformation through spiritual growth

by Bree L.

I was a single parent, home alone. My two daughters had moved on with their own lives. I'd kept it together when the girls were home but after they left I started drinking a lot. My work as a bookkeeper was temporary, sporadic. I spent about one and a half years at home drinking. Every so often I'd take myself over to the hospital emergency and say, "Something's wrong and I don't know what it is."

"Everything's fine," they'd say and send me away, so I'd go home and drink some more.

### *They welcomed me wholeheartedly*

I come from a long line of alcoholics. My great grandparents were both alcoholics. My great grandmother was a Cherokee Indian and her husband a bootlegger in Chicago. His daughter, my grandmother, was a terrible alcoholic. She helped sell the bootleg whiskey her father made. Everyone in that lineage, including my father, was an alcoholic. My father's brother ended up getting hooked on Valium. He'd sleep all day and watch TV through the night. They didn't have any A.A. or at least even know it existed. My own brother died at age 50 from cirrhosis of the liver and pneumonia or—more accurately—complications of alcoholism. His son still carries on with his drinking and pharmaceuticals. There is so much sadness and alcoholism in my history. I'm the first person in the family to get sober.

One day, I don't know why, I decided to call Central Office and someone came out to see me. They said, "Just

try this A.A.; you can always go back." So, I did what they said and stopped drinking. The date was February 25, 1981. My first meeting was at Tuesday Downtown. It was in the cathedral, it was a huge meeting where they gave out chips and everything. I don't remember anything else but that I went.



Illustration by Diane O.

The thing is that I also owned some property, a little house in back of a motel up by Yosemite that I'd visit every so often. That was where I drank a lot. I needed to sell the place and ended up selling the motel to this 12-Step group. For some reason they thought A.A. would be a good idea for me and kept suggesting it. I never drank in front of them and don't know why they would suggest such a thing.

Soon after I stopped drinking I went back to Yosemite. They welcomed me

wholeheartedly. The first time I shared in a meeting was at that motel—it felt safe for me, the place where I'd drank so much red wine.

### *My first meeting was Tuesday Downtown*

I've always had an interest in psychology. My journey prior to A.A. was to seek and check out other things. But once I got sober, I found what I was looking for. I went back to school and got a degree in Jungian psychology. My recovery has been a path of spiritual awakening especially with the unconscious, as Jung teaches. I've worked a lot of 12-Step programs (ACA, Al-Anon) in

my spiritual journey. Before, I was afraid they'd lock me up but now I know where I'm going. I belong to a group of psychologists working the Twelve Steps around the teachings of Carl Jung. His work is fascinating and huge for me. I also do dream work around Jungian philosophy. It shows different areas to grow, especially around the 6th and 7th Step. I've had a lot of transformations from my dreamwork. I believe long-term sobriety is about spiritual growth and self-exploration and with that comes transformation.





# Neglect: the Elephant in the Room

*Continuous credibility leads to integrity*

by Rick R.

When we are satisfied we have given Steps One through Five our best effort, we have identified the most glaring defects of character and shortcomings. It's now time to effect changes in the most obvious of our faulty thoughts and the behaviors that stem from those thoughts. These we address in Steps Six and Seven.

To be successful in this endeavor, we must first get honest with ourselves and begin to establish some credibility and by that I mean, *always doing the things we say we are going to do*. We bring most of our basic flaws out in the open as we become aware of them.

Then, if we are sure that we are committed to the program, we will want to set in place principles to live by that cut off our own escape when we stumble and want to revert to that old way of thinking. Most of us do this with the help of a sponsor or a mentor, if you like, and go by the book as best we can.

## *Do I do what is right even when there's no one watching?*

I did what I thought was a pretty thorough job of it. Then one day about 20 years ago, I was trying to park my car in a somewhat crowded parking lot and as I found the spot I wanted, there was a shopping cart blocking my way. I got out of my car and moved the cart aside, then parked my car. I then got that shopping cart and pushed it back to the store entrance, then went about my business.

From that day on, when parking at any market, I search for a stray shopping cart and take it back to the store just to make up for all the times I shoved one into the flower bed and drove away.

to me that if I wanted to regain some form of self respect and dignity, I was going to have to put the word *neglect* on my list of shortcomings, and question my integrity. Do I do what is right even when there's no one watching?



If credibility is always doing what I say I'm going to do, then *integrity* to me is a whole bunch of credibility. To cut off my own escape I do routine things every day that cost me nothing, and the result of that is a clear conscience. If I am doing the little things that I should, I find it much easier to give the big things that same

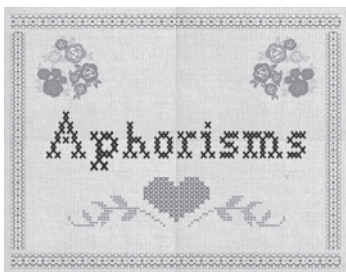
After telling that story at meetings over the years, I hear people telling how it is very uncomfortable for them to leave a cart adrift in the parking lot, and we all get a big laugh out of it.

As best I can tell, the word *neglect* is only mentioned two times in the Big Book (p. 97 and p. 129) and two times in the *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* (p. 81 and p. 151). Seldom, if ever, has it been the topic of a meeting that I can recall. It is like the proverbial elephant in the room.

As I started to catch myself shirking my responsibilities it became obvious

sort of attention. I never throw trash out of the car window, I pick up after myself, I never walk away from my bed in the morning without making it, and I liken that to being an unspoken prayer saying, "I will be responsible, I will be orderly, I will be neat, and I will not be neglectful, I will be respectful, I will stay on the unselfish side of the ledger in all of my decisions."

I sometimes revisit those pages in the Big Book and the *12&12* and I try my best not ignore the elephant in the room.



# If God Brought Me to It, God Can Bring Me Through It

*The chance to go toward a goal, not retreat*

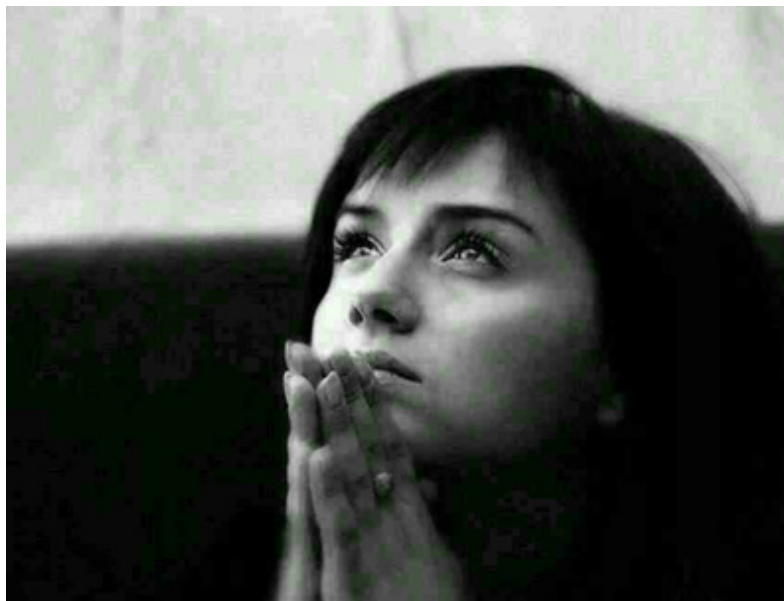
by Claire A.

When I came in to the program, I was lost. My “solution,” alcohol, was no longer working. I remember flopping on my bed, looking out the window at the darkening sky, and feeling like my life was hopeless—what was the point? Drinking no longer took the pain away—I simply felt guilty and wrecked. I was ashamed of stumbling around my own house in oblivion, but I didn’t know what else to do. I’m grateful that someone pointed me to A.A., and to the women who welcomed me there, and showed me the way.

***Drinking no longer took the pain away—I simply felt guilty and wrecked***

One of those women was my first sponsor, who taught me to pray. I was completely at sea with prayer. I thought prayer was just for people who went to church; I didn’t think I was allowed to pray. I didn’t know what to do, whether or not to kneel, where to be, what to do with my hands. I let that get in the way of my connecting with my Higher Power. My sponsor kept it simple. She encouraged me to think of my Higher Power in whatever way was comfortable. She suggested I kneel by my bed—a safe, comfortable, private place. She suggested that I start by simply saying the Third Step prayer. She said I could have the prayer in front of me if that helped.

I found all of this incredibly comforting—first, the fact that she didn’t laugh at me for not knowing these things, and second that she gave me



was scared of them. Drinking gave me the courage to talk with people who intimidated me otherwise. At least, that’s how it felt. I’m not sure I actually was more outgoing; I think I was just numb, so that my shyness

concrete things to do and matter-of-fact suggestions.

Since then, I’ve expanded my praying to other places and situations: standing in line at the grocery store, waiting for take-off on planes, waiting for news about school placements, trying to make decisions of all kinds, and so on.

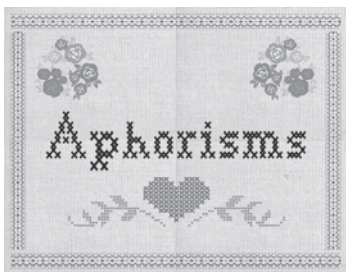
I’ve found that having a quick word with my Higher Power is never a bad idea. I often get the pause I need before I act, so that I can speak more gently with my children, or stand up for myself when I need to, or make a difficult phone call. There is no shortage of higher power. I can tap into that strength whenever I need to.

And I do need to! My life has expanded since I joined A.A. Opportunities have opened up, and with them, many more chances to interact with people. Back then interacting with people was one of the reasons I started drinking. I

bothered me less. At any rate, now that life has expanded, there are more people to interact with, and I find that prayer is an actual solution to my problem of not knowing how to interact with people.

***I can tap into that strength***

Which brings me back to the saying: “If God brought me to it, God can bring me through it.” In my old life, I had lots of opportunities and moments where I had a chance to go toward a goal or retreat into myself. With alcohol, I retreated. Now with prayer, I feel I can move forward. When I reach a point where I feel I can’t go on, or don’t know what to do, I can be still and pray. I may not find the answer immediately, but I do find that I can take it easy. Where before I felt stuck, today with the help of my Higher Power, I can move through it.



# Need to Know Basis

*You don't need to know what a higher power is, as long as you know you're not it!*

by Jamie M.

Have you ever heard someone say this at a meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous? I heard it a few times when I was new. And thought it was one of those old sayings everyone already knew, until I mentioned it to someone recently. That person had never heard it, despite having been in the program for several years.

I had an on-again, off-again relationship with formal religion, so Capitalized Words had a negative effect on me. I had been selling to semiconductor and other tech companies, so when people made references to “HP” or “my HP” I wondered what Hewlett Packard had to do with getting sober—until I realized they were talking about a Higher Power. It put me off, it really did.

## *I wondered what Hewlett Packard had to do with it*

Fortunately, I was going to meetings in the Haight. A lot of people had issues with the whole G-- thing or capitalizing higher power. I felt right at home. One meeting (sort of) closed with the (sort of) Lord's Prayer because so many of us had issues. Everyone held hands, everyone said something out loud, everyone kept to a certain rhythm, but they changed the words so much that it went (sort of): “Our (something), who art in (something), hallowed be thy name. Thy (something) come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in (something).” And so on. The main thing was we held hands and kept to the rhythm.

For one person, the higher power might be Gaia. For another, one's

inner Buddha nature. There were Wiccans, and I'm not sure there weren't any Satan worshippers. But people did all have something. One night a guy with a purple Mohawk, a skateboard and a bone in his nose summed up the negative view thus: “God is not an old man with a long white beard up on a cloud looking at my genitals.” That got an appreciative laugh from a SRO room full of drunks. Everyone was so rebellious that the people who changed the reading of program literature by saying “God” instead of “him” because they didn't like using a masculine pronoun ran afoul of the people who didn't want to use the G-word at all. Even using the group as a higher power seemed like a grudgingly taken step for some. People contemptuously—and vociferously—rejected the old chestnut about using a doorknob as a higher power.

The deeply moving take-home lesson for me was that people felt it was necessary to *have* a higher power. It was often said that in the Third

Step we turn our will and our lives over to God as we *don't* understand him, or her, or it, or them. That was easier for me to accept. To work the program successfully I don't even try to have theological definitions. Leave that to theologians. After all, that's an outside issue about which we have no opinion as a group, despite the opinions some of us have as individuals. The willingness to agree on the idea that we get sober by relying on a higher power, despite the disagreements about the details, hit home with me. Despite all the changes that people made in the different words of the Lord's Prayer, you could always hear the consensus when it came to the phrase, “Thy will be done.”

## *Someone's higher power might be Gaia*

It has been years since I first heard “You don't need to know what a higher power is, you just need to know you're not it.” I have continued to have a complicated relationship with my higher power (Higher

Power). But I've always been able to accept that I'm not it. I'm sure that has had a key role in staying sober for over 30 years—something that I still, oftentimes, find hard to believe.





# T raditions

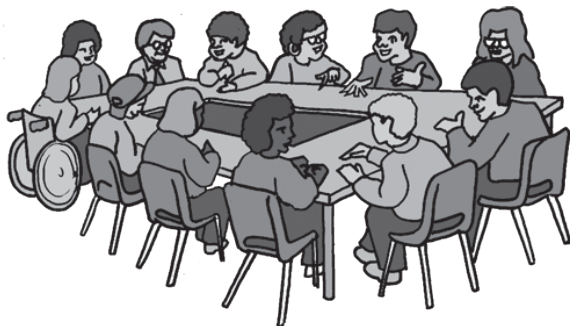
## Bound To No One

### *Tradition Six*

by John W.

An A.A. group ought never endorse, finance or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose. ~*Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*

OK, I got the part about A.A. not running hospitals or rehabs, but otherwise this Tradition seemed as irrelevant to me as the Steps did when I wanted to stop drinking or the Promises did shortly after I did stop. Of course with each new day of sobriety came a better understanding of just how the Steps needed to be interwoven into my being so I might have some hope of achieving the Promises in the time I had left on this earth—if I was painstaking. But then there were these Traditions, those which kept me from homicide, as the Steps had kept me from suicide.



After over a decade of being sober and contributing along a number of the many service opportunities that were available and which had been suggested, I had again read the story of the guy who would be the front man for the ad program on “How It Worked” that was to be sponsored by the Spirits Industry and if he would take the job.

When finally the light dawned on him that this job quite simply was not the “next right thing,” he was quoted in what became for me an extraordinary insight when told there was no legal impediment to him taking on the job under consideration.

“But this is no time for legalities. Alcoholics Anonymous saved my life, and it comes first. I certainly won’t be the guy to land A.A. in big-time trouble, and this would really do it.” (*Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, p. 159)

I have no way to know how many times I had read this quote over the years, but for some reason it made so much more sense this time. I realized it was because the chord it struck was the “spiritual one,” the “life and death one,” for the same was quite true for me. Alcoholics Anonymous saved my life, and it comes first. I began to think about how that played out in real time. It was easily more important than sleep and comfort, just thinking about how many times I had gone to that 7:00 am meeting (they met every day, 365 days a year) when sleeping in felt so good—but A.A. came first. Ironically, it also seemed that those were the days some newcomer showed up needing what I was fortunate

enough to have been given by others. My attendance record wasn’t perfect, but thank goodness we sought to progress, not to perfect. Likewise, I had learned that when A.A. called, my answer was “yes.”

But when I saw the spiritual aspect of Tradition Six play out the fog lifted.

Our group was in the throes of a rent increase for our beloved meeting place and the group was splintered about leaving behind 20-plus years of local tradition to save rent money. Our solution: the Old Timers suggested we pray for guidance! Pray for guidance? You have got to be kidding me, I fumed. Get some comparable prices, focus our “pitch” to the local township for a rent break because of how valuable we A.A.ers were to the community about us. That’s what the situation called for, plans not prayers. But they just smiled, said it would all work out, and suggested that asking for guidance and listening for an answer was the winning plan.

### *This Tradition seemed as irrelevant to me as the Steps did*

Sure enough, everything did work out. A couple of newer folks really stepped up, did their homework and set upon a serene path that worked. Guidance came from those who had been around forever and who knew what to say, how to say it, when to say it and to whom to say it. In this way obstacles vanished, rough edges were smoothed and everything worked out. I saw our principles being practiced in this important, group-wide affair. The spirituality of the program, unblocked and unfettered by the business mentality I thought had to control the circumstances, had worked, it really had. In this simple way I had learned a valuable lesson which the group had honored in the best way possible. When it had applied to our problem this tradition reminded us that we could be *bound to no one*.





# As We Understood God

## *The debate between psychology and religion*

by Bob S.

Very few of today's two million-plus A.A. members claim to possess a satisfying scientific definition of God. However, there is undeniable evidence that God's power has released countless of its members from alcoholic obsession. Step Three and Step Eleven contain the phrase "God as we understood Him." When I was new, I found this insert both challenging and confusing. Consequently, I soon found myself delving into books on theology, theosophy, philosophy, and other mystical readings—but all to no avail. I soon realized that I was no further along understanding God than when I started. Months of studying left me without any satisfying logical or scientific definition—what to do? After all, am I not supposed to "understand God?" If not, perhaps my sobriety would be in jeopardy. Confusing times!

### *Step Two is not theological; it is evidential*

But then I came across a watershed idea from Bill W.'s Oxford mentor, Reverend Sam Shoemaker, who had written: "Step Two is not theological; it is evidential." [Bill W. once wrote in the *A.A. Grapevine*, "Dr. Sam Shoemaker was one of A.A.'s indispensables. Had it not been for his ministry to us in our early time, our Fellowship would not be in existence today."] Of course, I could plainly see the evidence of God's work by simply observing numerous members around A.A. tables with many years of sobriety. They all claimed that contact with God or a "Higher Power" of some kind was keeping them sober. It was evidential. I had been barking

up the wrong tree. I no longer needed to search for a logical definition of God, but I still needed to improve my conscious contact with God. Step Eleven convinced me that I could begin to know God through prayer and meditation—then there would be no need of a logical or scientific understanding of Him.

I have come to believe that I need to contact (know) God from my deep innermost self (heart) and not from my ever-inquiring alcoholic mind. I had been searching for God from the wrong place all along! After all, doesn't the Big Book speak of the "Great Reality deep within"? (p. 55). So, in conclusion, I state what I once read in a cartoon: "The better I understand God, the less I know God."

### *I found this both challenging and confusing*

Jimmy Burwell is credited with introducing the phrase "God as we understood Him" during the fall of 1938 when the Big Book manuscript was being written. Bill W. called this a ten strike because it settled the debate between those who wanted our



book to be more psychological than theological and those who wanted it to be more religious. The Akron contingent was much more Bible-based. They leaned toward a religious version as taught by the Oxford Group. Don't forget the Akron members were still meeting at T. Henry and Clarence Williams' house parties in 1938. "God as we understood Him" (any God) would not gel well with those alcoholics.

So, I take it that the Big Book doesn't expect its readers to define God, but each can have their own special view. I always liked the slogan: "A God defined is a God confined." I often hear members share that they don't understand God any better now than when they first came to A.A. My view is that the important goal is to get to know God through prayer and meditation in Step Eleven.

# Intergroup Meeting Summary: May 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.

<b>Marin Groups</b>	On Awakening	Big Book Basics	Embarcadero Group	Sometimes Slowly
Cover to Cover	Quitting Time	Blue Book Special	Experience, Strength & Hope	Sun Night Castro Speak/Discuss
Friday Night Book	Mill Vall LGBTQ All Are Welcome	Came To Believe	Girls Gone Mild	Sunset Speaker Step
Marin Young People	Weekend Warriors	Castro Discussion	Join the Tribe	Too Early
Men's Two Plus	Women's Big Book	Castro Monday Night BB	Kool Fresh Kids Club	Valencia Smokefree
Mill Valley 7am	<b>San Francisco Groups</b>	Cocktail Hour	Lunch with Bill	Weekend Update
Monday Blues	A is for Alcohol	Cow Hollow Young People	Pocket Aces	
Monday Night Stag Tiburon	Beginners Warmup	Creative Alcoholics	Saturday Beginners	

This is an unofficial summary of the May 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" on our website [www.aasf.org](http://www.aasf.org).

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

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

The meeting was held on Wednesday, May 2, 2018, at St. Andrew Presbyterian Church, 101 Donahue Street in Marin City. The meeting was started with a call to order and the Serenity Prayer. Basket for dinner was passed. The April 2018 minutes and the May 2018 agenda were approved.

## Standing Reports

**Board Chair, Liz M.** Quarterly committee chair meeting happened last month. We are still looking for PI/CPC chair. The next meeting will be in July. Also discussed how to get more outreach beyond The Buzz and The Point. The Central Office Manager

title is changing to Executive Director. Presented the call for Statement of Interest for Intergroup Board; there are three positions open.

**Treasurer, Alix F.** Rating for March 2018 was "Excellent." Group contributions in March were over budget, while individual contributions were under budget.

**Executive Director (formerly Central Office Manager) – Maury P.** 25% of the volunteer shifts at Central Office are open. This is a great opportunity for 12th Step work. Shifts are two or three hours in length. The sobriety requirement is one year. Of the 236 calls Central Office received in April, 90 were looking for a meeting (38%), which is a 7% increase from the previous month. Central Office is seeking a donation of a used PC, 3-4 years old, for one of the volunteer stations. Also looking for a volunteer to help with layout of some of the locally produced material (i.e., schedules). There's space for notes, takebacks, etc. on the yellow sheet in Intergroup packet to make it easy to bring news back to your home group and other meetings you attend. Drew volunteered to take over Intergroup Board Secretary once Vanessa's IGR rotation ends after June. Vanessa to help transition the role. Maury gave a plug for Faithful Fivers as those contributions are declining for the year so far.

## Intergroup Committee/Activity Reports

**Archives, Kim S.** Archives gave a presentation on April 8 about the history of San Francisco's Central Office that went well. The next presentation will be in August. Expect Archives fun stuff at the Founders Day picnic. Committee can always use more volunteers.

**SF Teleservice, Layne Z.** Teleservice has open shifts during the month and four open Daily Coordinator positions. We are also going to add 12th Step work training to our teleservice training, which is on the 3rd Monday of each month at Central Office. Please announce it at your meetings; it's service you can do from home! Most shifts are four hours, whenever Central Office isn't open. Sobriety requirement is one year.

**The Point, John B.** It was decided the "search functionality" feature committee has looking into is a no-go due to costs. New committee member Jenn M. has taken on newsletter distribution. Writers and artists are always needed. If interested, email [thepoint@aasf.org](mailto:thepoint@aasf.org). The Point meets the 2nd Saturday at 12:30 pm.

**Technology, James O.** Intergroup Facebook page (for Intergroup members only) is growing. Passed around a sign-up list for interested IGRs who aren't already part of the group but would like to be.

# Individual Contributions

to Central Office were made through May 15, 2018

honoring the following members:

## IN MEMORIUM

Bob C. – Hilldwellers, Marin PI/CPC

Joe Y. – Tuesday Beginners

## ANNIVERSARIES

Don R. – 27 years

Peggy H. – 30 years

**Fellowship, Michael P.** Celebrating Founders' Day, Saturday, June 9 is the 83rd Annual Smith-Wilson Picnic at First United Universalist Church in San Francisco. Doors open at 5:00 pm. One activity is playing a Family Feud-style game and we still need more responses to questions. Volunteers are needed, both individuals and groups.

**SF PI/CPC, Justin H.** Meet on 2nd Monday at Central Office at 7:00 pm (6:00 pm orientation). There are positions open. Working on getting back into schools, particularly outside of San Francisco. Working on getting more presentations at senior centers. The presentations at jail/prison facilities have been going well. Considering a podcast in June where members would anonymously share what is going on with A.A.

### Sunshine Club/SOS, Clayton

**M.** Presenting a joint orientation workshop on Saturday, June 16 at the Gratitude Center in San Francisco. Committee is attempting to gain more volunteer interest.

### Liaison Reports

**SF General Service, Steve** They gathered May 12 at Solano Fairgrounds. A delegate was available to discuss the upcoming topics/changes for the larger General Service meeting.

### Marin General Service, Jacqueline

The District approved a motion

to secure funding to plan a Safety Workshop with SF General Service and Intergroup. It will probably happen in October 2018. Our Unity Day location will be chosen soon and the planning committee meets weekly on Mondays at the Marin Alano Club in San Rafael. Marin Teleservice holds its annual Spaghetti Feed on Sunday, May 20 at the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church on Lynwood Drive with a 5:00 pm dinner and 6:00 pm speaker meeting. Marin 20/20 reports establishment of a new website at aamarin.org.

**GGYPAA, Justin H.** GGYPAA positions turn over Sunday, May 6 at the Alano Club. You can email ggypaa415@gmail.com or go to the GGYPAA website for more information.

### Old Business

#### Non-Service Animal Policy

Drew brought up a meeting where they have a "Dog Liaison" so that if an animal is disruptive, they can help. Maury clarified service animals and emotional support/non-service animals are categorized differently and we're just looking into how Intergroup outlines their policy about non-service animals at Intergroup-specific functions. She also shared technically non-service animals are not allowed at facilities where we hold our monthly Intergroup meetings. It was clarified by several members

*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](mailto:chair@aasf.org)

#### VICE CHAIR

John R. [vicechair@aasf.org](mailto:vicechair@aasf.org)

#### TREASURER

Alix F. [treasurer@aasf.org](mailto:treasurer@aasf.org)

#### RECORDING SECRETARY

Carolyn R. [secretary@aasf.org](mailto:secretary@aasf.org)

### COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

#### ARCHIVES COMMITTEE

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

#### FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

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

#### ORIENTATION COMMITTEE

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

#### SF PI/CPC COMMITTEE

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

#### SF TELESERVICE COMMITTEE

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

#### SUNSHINE CLUB COMMITTEE

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

#### TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

James O. [tech@aasf.org](mailto:tech@aasf.org)

#### THE BUZZ COMMITTEE

Anne Marie C. [thebuzz@aasf.org](mailto:thebuzz@aasf.org)

#### THE POINT COMMITTEE

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

# aa group contributions

Fellowship Contributions			Apr. 18	YTD	Marin Contributions			Apr. 18	YTD	San Francisco Contributions			Apr. 18	YTD
Contribution Box			\$92.61	\$340.17	Sober Sisters W 12pm				\$96.00	Cow Hollow Men's Group W 8pm			\$963.40	\$2,153.36
GGYPAA				\$12.00	Step 11 Gong Meditation Thu 530pm			\$70.00	\$70.00	Design For Living - Big Book Th 730am				\$115.50
Sobriety By The Bay				\$2,000.00	Steps to Freedom M 730pm				\$250.00	Design For Living Big Book Tu/Th 730am				\$130.32
<b>Fellowship Total</b>			<b>\$92.61</b>	<b>\$2,352.17</b>	Stinson Beach Fellowship Th 8pm				\$255.50	Design for Living Sat 8am				\$344.65
					Sunday Express Su 6pm				\$191.00	Dignitaries Sympathy W 815pm				\$161.00
					Sunday Friendship Su 6pm				\$205.00	Each Day a New Beginning F 7am			\$745.96	\$1,430.80
<b>Marin Contributions</b>			<b>Apr. 18</b>	<b>YTD</b>	The Barnyard Group Sa 4pm			\$126.60	\$242.33	Each Day a New Beginning M 7am			\$436.45	\$533.57
12 & 12 Study Sa 815am				\$80.00	There is a Solution Tu 6pm				\$50.00	Each Day A New Beginning Su 8am			\$199.31	\$423.38
7AM Group 7D 7am				\$197.64	Three Step Group Sa 530pm				\$396.00	Each Day a New Beginning Th 7am				\$362.01
A Vision for You (Fairfax) Su 730pm				\$335.59	Thursday Night Speaker 830pm				\$300.00	Each Day a New Beginning Tu 7am			\$324.60	\$706.77
Attitude Adjustment 7D 7am			\$725.36	\$2,732.94	Tiburon Women's Candlelight W 8pm				\$48.80	Each Day a New Beginning W 7am				\$218.70
Awakenings Sat 830a				\$139.54	Tuesday Beginners' Meeting			\$834.00	\$1,416.95	Early Joyous & Free Th 7am				\$60.00
Awareness/Acceptance M 1030am				\$220.00	Tuesday Chip Meeting Tu 830pm				\$400.00	Early Start F 6pm				\$1,133.92
Back to Basics Su 930am				\$203.00	We, Us and Ours M 650pm			\$192.50	\$300.82	Eureka Valley Topic M 6pm				\$907.16
Beginner's Help Th 8pm			\$75.00	\$75.00	Wed Night Candlelight (Marin) W 8pm				\$135.00	Excelsior "Scent" Free For All Sa 5pm			\$60.00	\$180.00
Big Book Study & Meditation M 7p				\$23.31	Wed Night Speaker Discussion W 7pm			\$269.44	\$700.97	Experience, Strength & Hope Sat 9am				\$439.00
Caledonia Sun 8pm				\$1,000.00	What's It All About F 12pm				\$243.00	Extreme Makeover M 730pm				\$75.96
Closed Women's Step Study Tu 330pm				\$56.84	Wholly Together 11th Step Med W 7p				\$94.00	Federal Speaker Su 12pm				\$213.84
Conscious Contact Sa 6pm				\$280.00	Why It Works Sun 6pm			\$100.00	\$100.00	Firefighters & Friends Tu 10am				\$160.24
Corte Madera Saturday Candlelight 8pm				\$398.08	Women's 12 x 12 Fri 1030am				\$495.18	Fireside Chat Group Sa 9pm				\$138.00
Crossroads Sun 12pm			\$280.46	\$405.69	Women's Big Book Tu 1030am			\$640.44	\$1,212.02	Friday All Groups F 830pm				\$144.00
Fireside Fri 8pm Bolinas				\$41.49	Women's Lunch Bunch F 12pm			\$189.00	\$189.00	Friday Smokeless F 8pm				\$260.08
Friday Night Book F 830pm			\$231.00	\$501.89	Women's Meeting Su 430pm				\$150.00	Friendly Circle Beginners Su 715p				\$363.10
God Could & Would 5D M-F			\$150.00	\$150.00	Working Dogs W 12pm			\$84.21	\$1,204.54	Gold Mine Group M 8pm				\$344.88
Gratitude Tu 8pm				\$250.00	<b>Marin Total</b>			<b>\$5,531.59</b>	<b>\$26,238.43</b>	Haight Street Explorers Th 630pm				\$172.00
Greenfield Newcomers Su 7pm			\$268.23	\$268.23	<b>San Francisco Contributions</b>			<b>Apr. 18</b>	<b>YTD</b>	Happy Hour F 630pm			\$60.00	\$60.00
Intimate Feelings Sa 10am				\$37.79	11th Step Power Power Power				\$68.23	Happy Hour Ladies Night F 530pm			\$60.00	\$60.00
Keep It Simple Sister Thu 7pm				\$427.50	6am Dry Dock Mon			\$72.60	\$72.60	Huntington Square W 630pm				\$195.28
Larkspur Haven Su 12p				\$352.00	6am Dry Dock Tu				\$240.00	Join the Tribe Tu 7pm				\$354.00
Living Sober Ladies Thu 10am				\$287.30	A is for Alcohol Tu 6pm			\$24.00	\$204.00	Keep Coming Back Sa 10am			\$990.00	\$990.00
Los Ranchitos W 830pm				\$87.00	A New Start F 830pm				\$717.86	Like A Prayer Su 4pm				\$120.00
Marin Teleservice				\$1,750.00	AA As You Like It Tu 530pm				\$88.80	Lincoln Park Sat 830pm			\$47.67	\$81.54
Mill Valley 11th Step Mtg Tu 730pm				\$646.00	Afro American Beginners Sat 8pm				\$253.20	Living Sober with HIV W 6pm				\$190.80
Mill Valley 7D 7am				\$600.00	Agnostics & Freethinkers Su 630pm				\$462.00	Meditation, Prayer & Share Tue 730pm				\$86.00
Mill Valley Discussion W 830pm				\$185.00	Artists & Writers F 630pm				\$880.79	Meeting Place Noon F 12pm				\$128.00
Mill Valley LGBTQ All Are Welcome W 8p			\$216.85	\$216.85	As Bill Sees It Tu 1210pm				\$57.46	Mid-Morning Support Su 1030am				\$156.00
Monday Miracles M 630pm				\$130.00	Be Still AA Su 12pm				\$705.82	Monday Beginners M 8pm				\$520.00
Monday Night Stag Tiburon				\$500.00	Bernal Big Book Sat 5pm			\$210.60	\$672.31	Monday Men's Stag (SF) M 8pm				\$72.97
Monday Night Women's M 8pm			\$411.00	\$662.31	Bernal New Day 7D				\$696.00	Monday Monday M 1215pm				\$102.40
Monday Nooners M 12pm				\$443.61	Big Book Basics F 8pm				\$86.11	Monday Night Big Book Study M 8pm				\$79.57
Monday Nooners M 12pm				\$500.00	Big Book Beginners F 105pm				\$100.00	No Reservations M 12pm				\$166.88
Morning After Sa 10am				\$22.00	Big Book Study Su 1130am				\$174.00	NYX Sat 7pm				\$322.63
Noon Discussion Thu 12pm				\$22.00	Blue Book Special Su 11am			\$49.73	\$124.21	Ocean of Sobriety W 830p			\$50.00	\$282.00
Noon Hope			\$90.00	\$167.50	Came to Believe Su 8am				\$33.90	One, Two, Three, Go! W 1pm				\$11.00
Noon Reveille Su 12pm				\$16.00	Came to Park Sat 7pm				\$394.00	Raising the Bottom W 8pm				\$56.80
North Marin Speaker Sun 12pm				\$179.00	Castro Discus (Show Of Shows) Th 730p				\$31.77	Reality Farm Th 830pm				\$817.20
Novato Spirit Discussion F 2pm				\$165.00	Castro Monday Big Book M 830pm				\$125.80	Rebound W 830pm				\$265.92
On Awakening 7D 530am			\$350.00	\$1,550.00	Cocoanuts Su 9am				\$205.00	Rigorous Honesty Th 1205pm			\$180.00	\$180.00
Quitting Time M-F 530pm				\$900.72	Compass Group Sun 10am				\$312.00	Road to Freedom Mon 12pm			\$150.00	\$222.00
San Geronimo Valley M 8pm			\$27.50	\$27.50						Safe and Sound Family Support				\$77.00
Serendipity Sa 11am				\$80.00										
Six O'Clock Sunset Th 6pm			\$200.00	\$200.00										



San Francisco Contributions	Apr. 18	YTD
Saturday Afternoon Meditation Sa 5pm	\$126.00	\$126.00
Saturday Beginners Sat 6pm	\$544.32	\$1,027.03
Saturday Easy Does It Sa 12pm		\$306.45
Saturday Matinee Sa 2pm	\$60.00	\$60.00
Saturday Night Regroup Sa 730pm	\$194.72	\$374.72
Serenity House	\$150.00	\$600.00
Serenity Now Tue 830p		\$177.77
Shamrocks & Serenity M 730pm	\$769.32	\$769.32
Sinbar Su 8pm		\$127.08
Sisters Circle Su 6pm		\$204.11
Sober Saturday Sa 830am	\$80.76	\$176.76
Sobriety & Miracles S&M Group Sa 5pm		\$131.40
Sometimes Slowly Sa 11am	\$447.68	\$447.68
Stepping Stone Step Study M 730pm	\$60.00	\$60.00
Stonestown M 8pm	\$270.00	\$270.00
Sun Morning Gay Men's Stag Su 930am		\$867.64
Sunday Night 3rd Step Group 5pm	\$343.03	\$720.31
Sun Night Castro Speak Disc Su 730pm		\$423.60
Sunday Rap Su 8pm	\$79.46	\$79.46
Sunrise Sunset Women's Step Th 6pm		\$135.22
Sunset 11'ers F		\$78.75
Sunset 11'ers Su		\$120.00
Sunset 11'ers Th		\$34.26
Sunset 11'ers Tu		\$114.00
Sunset Speaker Step Su 730pm		\$72.87
Ten Years After Su 6pm		\$1,060.04
The Drive Thru W 1215pm		\$667.25
They Don't Know Who We Are Sat 7pm		\$18.76
Too Early Sa 8am		\$871.71
Twelve Steps to Happiness F 730pm		\$62.00
Valencia Smokefree F 6pm		\$802.27
Wake Up On 3rd St Group		\$152.25
Walk of Shame W 830pm		\$114.31
We Care Tu 12pm		\$72.00
Wednesday Sunrise Smokefree 7am	\$65.00	\$120.00
Weekend Worker Sat 7am	\$180.00	\$348.00
West Portal W 8pm		\$454.78
Wharf Rats Th 815pm		\$290.08
What It's Like Now M 6pm	\$202.69	\$202.69
Wits End Step Study Tu 8pm	\$120.00	\$120.00
Women's 10 Years Plus Th 615pm		\$431.40
Women's Came to Believe Sa 10am	\$78.94	\$188.64
Women's Kitchen Table Tu 630pm		\$48.60
Women's Mtg There is a Solution W 6pm		\$205.41
Women's Promises F 7pm		\$378.60
Work In Progress Sa 7pm		\$600.00
YAHOO Step Sa 1130am		\$328.37
<b>San Francisco Total</b>	<b>\$8,396.24</b>	<b>\$38,517.68</b>
<b>YTD</b>	<b>\$14,020.44</b>	<b>\$67,108.28</b>



## Four Stages of the 12 Steps

### *From giving in to living up*

by Anonymous

#### *Steps One through Three, Giving it up:*

The cliché “Meeting makers make it” can be helpful—sort of. Group sharing, early on, helped me to solidify that I was really an alcoholic (Step One). Additionally, that a spiritual power “greater than myself” could restore my sanity and consequently, I would never again have to wake up in a drunk tank (Step Two). Those many meetings made clear that I needed to ask God for help, pronto (Step Three). I was however, told that “Survival on the fellowship was untreated alcoholism.” I was also told that although meeting makers may make it to lots of meetings, and learn important and hopeful facts, it was not my solution. This process was only a beginning—many albies who stopped at this point got drunk! Certain of the less sensitive refer to this as the: “1-2-3 cha-cha-cha” (not recommended).

#### *Steps Four Through Six, ‘Fessing it up:*

My sponsor pointed out just after we did the Third Step prayer together, that all my new-found spiritual gusto would soon fade away unless we begin Step Four at once (*Alcoholics Anonymous*, p. 64). After a short period of spontaneous God-inspired writing, followed by my own reflections, I then had enough honest information to allow my sponsor to take me through the Fourth Step Process. Step Five was done at first opportunity (*Alcoholics Anonymous*,

p. 74), which started only a few minutes later. Now, being armed with those defects and shortcomings that constituted the bondage of self I confessed that I had to become willing to have them removed (Step Six).



#### *Steps Seven Through Nine, Cleaning it up:*

I then asked God to remove these suddenly revealed destructive facets in Step Seven, then reviewed and added to my mostly written Step Eight list. After a conference with my sponsor, and prayers to God, I began making my Step Nine amends as suggested in the Big Book.

#### *Steps Ten through Twelve, Living it up:*

I have learned that the above nine steps were only a teaching of the heart event. Steps Ten, Eleven and Twelve, are a lifelong process. Living these last three steps is a continuous re-doing (living) of the first nine. My life is easier, and much happier now—I have begun the process of living it up!

# Revenue and Expense Statement: March 2018

	March 2018	Budget	YTD	Budget		March 2018	Budget	YTD	Budget
<b>Revenue</b>									
Contributions from Groups	\$13,616.69	\$10,875.00	\$53,087.84	\$51,753.00	Postage	\$49.75	\$0.00	\$98.50	\$49.50
Contributions from Individuals	\$2,635.50	\$4,925.00	\$10,451.26	\$11,785.00	Rent - Office	\$4,591.98	\$4,592.00	\$13,775.94	\$13,776.00
Gratitude Month	\$93.75	\$334.00	\$3,783.19	\$4,465.00	Rent - Other	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$100.00	\$100.00
Intergroup Event Revenue	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	Filing/Fees	-\$187.99	\$5.00	\$0.00	\$31.00
Other Revenue	\$196.03	\$45.00	\$477.06	\$143.00	Insurance	\$0.00	\$490.00	\$0.00	\$1,495.00
					Internet Expense	\$46.00	\$355.00	\$314.94	\$650.00
Sales - Bookstore	\$7,908.36	\$7,543.00	\$23,583.76	\$24,145.00	IT Services	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Cost of Bookstore Sales	-\$6,504.59	-\$5,569.00	-\$18,543.50	-\$17,694.00	IT Hardware	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$52.07	\$0.00
Gross Margin - Bookstore	\$1,403.77	\$1,974.00	\$5,040.26	\$6,451.00	IT Software	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$465.65	\$210.00
					Office Supplies	\$109.15	\$150.00	\$779.95	\$609.00
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$17,945.74</b>	<b>\$18,153.00</b>	<b>\$72,839.61</b>	<b>\$74,597.00</b>	Paper Purchased	\$52.05	\$125.00	\$52.05	\$375.00
<b>Expense</b>					Printing	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Employee Expenses	\$13,958.39	\$14,557.00	\$41,746.64	\$40,490.00	Equipment Lease	\$407.24	\$443.00	\$1,251.72	\$1,328.00
					Repair & Maintenance	\$363.69	\$265.00	\$1,210.59	\$795.00
<b>Committees</b>					Security System	\$144.27	\$131.50	\$144.27	\$131.50
PI/CPC	\$0.00	\$165.00	\$0.00	\$495.00	Payroll Expenses	\$8.00	\$10.00	\$18.00	\$30.00
Access Committee	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$50.00	Telephone	\$227.76	\$190.00	\$585.14	\$570.00
Sunshine Club	\$0.00	\$17.00	\$0.00	\$34.00	Travel	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Archives Committee	\$0.00	\$298.00	\$0.00	\$889.00	Training	\$0.00	\$34.00	\$0.00	\$100.00
Committees - Other	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$18.00	Tot Bad Checks	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
The Point Committee	\$86.74	\$174.00	\$156.14	\$520.00	Net Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	<b>\$20,867.79</b>	<b>\$23,405.50</b>	<b>\$62,395.18</b>	<b>\$65,441.00</b>
<b>Total Committees</b>	<b>\$86.74</b>	<b>\$654.00</b>	<b>\$156.14</b>	<b>\$2,006.00</b>	Interest Income	<b>-\$2,922.05</b>	<b>-\$5,252.50</b>	<b>\$10,444.43</b>	<b>\$9,156.00</b>
					Miscellaneous Income	\$44.82	\$45.00	\$128.81	\$135.00
Intergroup Sponsored Events	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	Depreciation/Amortization Expense	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Contribution CC Processing Fees	\$185.76	\$579.00	\$818.58	\$1,870.00	Net Surplus/(Deficit)	<b>-\$348.00</b>	<b>-\$339.00</b>	<b>-\$1,044.00</b>	<b>-\$1,026.00</b>
Professional Fees	\$825.00	\$825.00	\$825.00	\$825.00		<b>-\$3,225.23</b>	<b>-\$5,546.50</b>	<b>\$9,529.24</b>	<b>\$8,265.00</b>

## Treasurer's Report: March 2018

For March 2018, Total Revenue was \$17,946, under budget by \$207. We are nearly on target for the year and lower contributions by individuals was offset by higher group contributions. Total Operating Expense for February was \$20,868, under budget by \$2,538. The result is a Net Operating Deficit of \$2,922.

Group Contributions for March were \$13,617, over budget by \$2,742. Individual Contributions were \$2,636, under budget by \$2,290.

Total Unrestricted Cash for March 2018 was \$88,251, a decrease of \$10,232 from February 2018. Unrestricted Cash is over 4 months of operating expenses.

The rating for March 2018 is "Excellent."

**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: March 2018

	31-Mar-18	28-Feb-18	\$ Change	31-Mar-17	\$ Change
<b>ASSETS</b>					
Current Assets					
Cash					
Unrestricted Cash	\$88,251.00	\$98,483.00	-\$10,232.00	\$79,528.00	\$8,723.00
Restricted Cash	\$130,816.00	\$125,232.00	\$5,584.00	\$125,232.00	\$5,584.00
Total Cash	\$219,067.00	\$223,715.00	-\$4,648.00	\$204,760.00	\$14,307.00
Accounts Receivable	\$770.00	\$420.00	\$350.00	-\$800.00	\$1,570.00
Inventory - Bookstore	\$16,502.00	\$18,848.00	-\$2,346.00	\$21,031.00	-\$4,529.00
Total Current Assets	\$236,339.00	\$242,983.00	-\$6,644.00	\$224,991.00	\$11,348.00
Fixed Assets	\$9,818.00	\$10,166.00	-\$348.00	\$13,994.00	-\$4,176.00
Deposits	\$6,698.00	\$6,698.00	\$0.00	\$6,698.00	\$0.00
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$252,855.00</b>	<b>\$259,847.00</b>	<b>-\$6,992.00</b>	<b>\$245,683.00</b>	<b>\$7,172.00</b>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; NET ASSETS</b>					
Liabilities					
Current Liabilities					
Accounts Payable	\$422.00	\$3,858.00	-\$3,436.00	\$0.00	\$422.00
Payroll Tax Liabilities	\$1,909.00	\$2,598.00	-\$689.00	\$4,589.00	-\$2,680.00
Sales Tax Payable	\$583.00	\$571.00	\$12.00	\$551.00	\$32.00
Advanced Sales	\$748.65	\$748.65	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$748.65
Total Current Liabilities	\$3,662.65	\$7,775.65	-\$4,113.00	\$5,140.00	-\$1,477.35
Supplemental Compensation	\$2,777.76	\$2,430.54	\$347.22		
Total Liabilities	\$6,440.41	\$10,206.19	-\$3,765.78	\$5,140.00	\$1,300.41
Net Assets					
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	\$236,886.00	\$236,886.00	\$0.00	\$228,376.00	\$8,510.00
Net Surplus/(Deficit), YTD	\$9,529.00	\$12,755.00	-\$3,226.00	\$12,167.00	-\$2,638.00
Total Net Assets	\$246,415.00	\$249,641.00	-\$3,226.00	\$240,543.00	\$5,872.00
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$252,855.41</b>	<b>\$259,847.19</b>	<b>-\$6,991.78</b>	<b>\$245,683.00</b>	<b>\$7,172.41</b>

## Continued from Page 15

we should adhere to the policies of the facilities where Intergroup functions are happening; so if they say "no non-service animals," we have to comply. If the facility doesn't have a policy regarding non-service animals, it is up to Intergroup to determine what we allow. There was clarification if an animal bites someone at an Intergroup function, we (as an organization) would likely be responsible. A motion was made only certified service animals be allowed (no non-service animals) at Intergroup functions, at indoor facilities and at Central Office. Motion passed, 31 votes.

## Discussion Items

### Intergroup committees and responsibility of the Intergroup

### members to staff the committees

Ideas: collect more sponsees and suggest ways to be of service; talk to people one-on-one; ask for volunteers at the group level; sending text messages to interested folks the day before committees meet; remembering to make announcements at your meeting each week, not just during a business meeting.

### Can we make the Intergroup meeting longer?

Group decided "No."

### Adjourn with Responsibility Statement

Next Intergroup Meeting: Wednesday, June 6, 2018, 7:00 pm, at First Unitarian Universalist Center, 1187 Franklin Street in San Francisco. Orientation is at 6:15 pm, dinner 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)

Michael P.	Peter F.	Steve F.
Michael W.	Phyllis S.	Steven G.
Michael Z.	Rachel G.	Susan C.
Michele F.	Robert J.	Susan C.
Mily T.	Robert S.	Suzanne C.
Nancy N.	Robert T.	Taran R.
Naomi L.	Robert W.	Ted R.
Nicholas P.	Ron H.	Teddy W.
Niels R.	Roseanna H.	Theresa M.
Pamela K.	Ryan D.	Thomas H.
Pat P.	Scott C.	Thomas M.
Patrick R.	Sean B.	Timothy Mc.
Patrick S.	Sean C.	Tom S.
Paul K.	Sean M.	Tomas L.
Peggy H.	Sean R.	Tony R.
Penelope C. &	Sheila H.	Tripp Mc.
Robert S. Jr.	Stephen S.	William D.
Penelope P.	Stephen S.	

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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# June 2018

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