

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

From Chapter Five of the book, "Alcoholics Anonymous."

The Point

May 2005

A publication
of the Intercounty Fellowship
of Alcoholics Anonymous

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The Point

is published monthly to inform A.A. 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 A.A. members. Nothing published herein should be construed as a statement of A.A., nor does publication constitute endorsement by A.A. as a whole, the Intercounty Fellowship Board, the Central Office, or *The Point* Editorial Committee. Letters and articles to help carry the A.A. message are welcomed, subject to editorial review by *The Point* Committee.

Making Amends to Mom

by Anonymous



I was ruled by selfishness from age 13 to 30, when I most recently got sober. This is the first time I've applied myself to the steps and been willing to make amends. My last go at sobriety ended in a relapse when I balked at the Ninth Step, so this time around I was more willing to swallow my pride and admit my wrongs to the people I hurt over the years. My mother is certainly one of those people.

I was often mean to my mother, and I blamed her and my father for many problems which were actually the result of bad choices on my part. In my twisted thinking, I pointed to my mother and father's shortcomings as the source of most of my pain. My father was abusive toward me and wasn't very present as a dad. He is a workaholic and drank when I was growing up. My mother was a classic codependent martyr and picked up the slack in a way that sometimes made her overbearing. This dynamic made them good scapegoats for me.

After a thorough inventory of myself during my most recent Fourth and Fifth Steps, I was finally able to own up to the fact that I am responsible for myself. I could see that my parents are just people who did their best to raise three headstrong girls with the only tools they had.

My mother came to visit me this last Thanksgiving, and I had the opportunity to make amends to her. For the first time, I took responsibility for my behavior over the years and apologized for blaming her for my troubles. I also told her that she has been a wonderful mother to me and apologized for my having unrealistic expectations of her. I told her the truth about several big lies I had told her and my father in an effort to manipulate them.

My mother really listened to me during my amends and several times I saw her visibly relax when my words sank in. It was as if a huge burden was being lifted off her shoulders as I spoke. I saw her sit up straighter on the couch next to me as I continued to talk. When I was done speaking, she hugged me and told me she is very proud of the woman I've become.

The opportunity to make amends to my mother in person is one of the biggest gifts of sobriety I've received so far. This year, as Mother's Day approaches, I find myself feeling very grateful for the Twelve Steps of A.A., which have given me the power to clear the air with my mom—the woman I love most in this world.



May 2005....

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	<p>2 FIRST MON Archives Committee, Central Office, 6:00 pm</p> <p>Spirit of SF Committee, Central Office, 7:30 pm</p>	3	<p>4 FIRST WED Intercounty Fellowship Board Orientation 6 pm Meeting 7 pm 1187 Franklin St. at Geary, SF (Meets in Sausalito in Feb, May, Aug & Nov., Star of the Sea Church, 180 Harrison Ave.)</p>	5	6	7
8	<p>9 SECOND MON SF Public Information Committee Central Office, 7 pm</p>	<p>10 SECOND TUE SF Bridging The Gap 1187 Franklin St. at Geary, SF 6:30 pm</p> <p>SF General Service 1187 Franklin St. at Geary, SF Orientation: 7 pm Meeting: 8 pm</p> <p>Marin H&I Lagunitas & Shady Ln Ross 7 pm</p>	<p>11 SECOND WED 12th Step Committee Central Office, 6:30 pm</p> <p>Marin Bridging the Gap 1411 Lincoln Ave., San Rafael 6:45 pm</p>	<p>12 SECOND THU Website Committee Central Office, 6 pm</p>		
<p>15 THIRD SUN Mission Fellowship Steering Committee 2900 24th / Florida SF 1 pm</p>	<p>16 THIRD MON SF Teleservice Central Office, 6:30 pm</p> <p>Marin General Service 9 Ross Valley Rd, San Rafael GSR Sharing: 7 pm District Meeting: 8 pm</p>	<p>17 THIRD TUE San Mateo General Service St. Andrews Church 15th & El Camino Real San Mateo, 7:30 pm</p>	<p>18 THIRD WED Literature Review Committee Central Office, 6:30 pm</p>	<p>19 THIRD THU Outreach Committee Central Office, 6:30 pm</p>	20	21
<p>22 FOURTH SUN Living Sober Convention Committee 1668 Bush, SF 5:30 pm</p>	23	<p>24 FOURTH TUE Special Needs Committee, 6:30 pm Special Events Committee Central Office, 7:30 pm</p> <p>Marin Teleservice 1360 Lincoln Ave San Rafael Alano Club 7:30 pm</p>	25	<p>26 FOURTH THU Marin PI Committee 1360 Lincoln Ave San Rafael—Alano Club 7:15 pm</p> <p>LAST THU SF H&I Old First Church, 1751 Sacramento St. Orientation: 7:15 pm Business Meeting: 8pm</p>	27	<p>28 FOURTH SAT General Service CNCA Meeting 320 N. McDowell Petaluma DCMCs: 10 am Business Meeting: 12:30 pm</p>
29	<p>30 Memorial Day Central Office Closed</p>	31				

The Point Editorial Policy (adapted from the A.A. Grapevine)

The Point is published monthly to inform A.A. members about business and meeting affairs of the Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous in San Francisco and Marin counties.

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.

The Point illustrates the shared experience of individual A.A. members working the A.A. program and applying the spiritual principles of the Twelve Steps. Yet what works for one individual or A.A. group may not always work for another. For this reason, from month to month, articles may be published that appear to contradict one another. Seeking neither to gloss over difficult issues, nor to present such issues in a harmful or contentious manner, The Point tries to embody the widest possible view of the A.A. Fellowship.

The Point welcomes submissions from all A.A. members in San Francisco and Marin counties. Nothing published should be construed as a statement of A.A. policy, nor does publication constitute endorsement by A.A. as a whole, the Intercounty Fellowship Board, the Central Office, or The Point Editorial committee. Submissions of letters or articles that help communicate an individual's experience, strength and hope and carry the A.A. message are welcomed.

Please note that submission of an article does not constitute promise of publication. Articles are evaluated based on the Twelve Traditions, and while editing is done for purposes of clarity, style, and length, the editors encourage all writers to express their own experience in their own unique way. No payment can be made for submissions, nor can material be returned. At times, articles may be reprinted without the author's permission, but the author's byline will always be included in these cases. Email submissions to thepoint@aasf.org.

This policy is subject to revision. 

**Don't miss the new
SECRETARY'S MONTHLY
insert!!**

Announce these **HOT NEWS ITEMS**
at your meetings.
Help Central Office get the word out.
And don't miss the
COMING EVENTS
listed on back.

Thanks to The Point Committee:
Cami W., Don R., Kathleen C.,
Maury P., Mike L., and Stephen R.

and to all who contribute time and
energy in creating our newsletter! If you
want to help or submit an article, email
thepoint@aasf.org or call 415.674.1821.

Joke of the Month

A drunk man was in no shape to drive, so he wisely left his car parked and walked home.

As he was walking unsteadily along Main Street, he was stopped by a policeman.

"What are you doing out here at 2 a.m.?" asked the officer.

"I'm going to a lecture," he man said.

"And who is going to give a lecture at this hour?" the cop asked.

"My wife," replied the man.



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MEETING CHANGES

Meeting Changes:

Mon	11:00 am	Sunset	SUNSET 11'ERS 340 Irving St./ 5th Ave. (was 1329 7th Ave./ Irving)
Mon	1:00 pm	Sunset	MONDAY AT A TIME 340 Irving St./ 5th Ave. (was 1329 7th Ave./ Irving)
Tue	9:00 am	G.G. Park	SUNSET 9'ERS Clubhouse @ Tennis Cts., G.G. Park, Middle Dr. & Bowling Green Dr. (was 1329 7th Ave./ Irving)
Tue	1:00 pm	Sunset	TUESDAY SUNSET NOONERS 340 Irving St./ 5th Ave. (was 1329 7th Ave./ Irving)
Tue	8:00 pm	Mission	TUESDAY NIGHT OPEN HOUSE 3550 Cesar Chavez (add "Men")
Wed	9:00 am	G.G. Park	SUNSET 9'ERS Clubhouse @ Tennis Cts., G.G. Park, Middle Dr. & Bowling Green Dr. (was 1329 7th Ave./ Irving)
Thu	9:00 am	Mission	SUNSET 9'ERS 601 Dolores St. (was 1329 7th Ave./ Irving)
Thu	12:30 pm	Sunset	SUNSET REFLECTIONS 340 Irving St./ 5th Ave. (was 1:00pm @ 1329 7th Ave./ Irving)
Thu	6:00 pm	SOMA	RED ROAD HEALING CIRCLE 555 De Haro St. (Pioneer Sq. Bldg.) No meeting on 3rd Thu. of the month (was Wed. 6pm @ 390 4th St)
Fri	9:00 am	G.G. Park	SUNSET 9'ERS Clubhouse @ Tennis Cts., G.G. Park, Middle Dr. & Bowling Green Dr. (was 1329 7th Ave./ Irving)
Fri	11:00 am	Sunset	SUNSET 11'ERS 340 Irving St./ 5th Ave. (was 1329 7th Ave./ Irving)
Fri	6:30 pm	Mission	FRIDAY BIG BOOK STUDY 3550 Cesar Chavez (add "Men")
Fri	8:30 pm	Corte Madera	FRIDAY NIGHT GAY MEN'S STAG DISCUSSION GROUP, (was Friday Nite Unmanagables)
Fri	12:00 am	Marina	MIDNIGHT MADNESS MEDITATION, 2118 Greenwich (was Marina Dock Midnight)
Sat	2:00 pm	Marina	SATURDAY BIG BOOK, 2118 Greenwich (was Rebound Group)

No Longer Meeting:

Mon	8:30 pm	Novato	NOVATO GENERAL, 710 Wilson Ave.
Fri	6:00 pm	Novato	THE YOUNG AND THE RESTLESS, 1007 Simmons Lane

Temporarily Cancelled:

Mon	9:00 am	Sunset	SUNSET 9'ERS 1329 7th Ave./ Irving
Mon, Fri	1:00 pm	Sunset	SUNSET 11'ERS 1329 7th Ave./ Irving
Wed	1:00 pm	Sunset	BYOL 1329 7th Ave./ Irving
Fri	1:00 pm	Sunset	BEYOND 164, 1329 7th Ave./ Irving

Reported Missing:

Wed	8:00 pm	Western Addition	ENOUGH IS ENOUGH 1726 Steiner St.
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Please Note: The Central Office occasionally receives reports that meetings listed in our schedules are not there. Sometimes these reports turn out to be mistaken—and sometimes not. The office relies primarily on information that is given to us by A.A. groups, but when a group disbands, informing the Central Office is a common omission. **If you know anything about a meeting that is reported missing, please call the Central Office immediately, 415-674-1821.** If we hear no objections during the month following publication here, the meeting will be assumed disbanded and removed from the schedule. **Thank You!** ↑

Recently Registered Trusted Servants

March 2005 We'd like to thank and recognize the 17 San Francisco Trusted Servants and three Marin Trusted Servants who registered with Central Office during March 2005.

San Francisco: Beginner's Warm-up Wed. 6pm; Big Book Basics Fri. 8pm; Come 'n' Get It! Fri. 6:30 pm; Diamond Heights Tue. 8:30pm; Each Day a New Beginning Thur. 7am; Early Start Fri. 6pm; Eureka Valley Topic Mon. 6pm; Federal Speaker Sun. 12pm; Friday All Groups Fri 8:30pm; Lite Steppers Sun. 7pm; Marina Discussion Fri. 8:30pm; Meeting Place Noon Fri. 12 pm; Mission Terrace Wed. 8pm; Red Road Healing Circle Thur. 6pm.; Too Young Sun. 8:30pm; Trans Recovery Fri. 6:30pm; Women's Promises Fri. 7pm

Marin:

Fairfax 12 & 12 Tu. 7:30pm; Friday Night Gay Men's Stag Discussion Group Fri. 8:30pm; The Fearless Searchers Fri. 8pm

Download a Trusted Servant Registration Form Today!

1. Go to www.aasf.org
2. Click on "Resources for A.A. Members" from the main menu
3. Click on "Trusted Servant Registration"
4. Send your completed form to Central Office to receive your free copy of *The Point* each month!

Group Speakers for May 2005

BRISBANE BREAKFAST BUNCH

250 Visitation Way
(Community Center under the Library)
Brisbane, Sunday, 11 am

DATE	SPEAKER	FROM
5/01	Bill R.	Serenity Seekers, SF
5/08	Jeff O.	Castro Disc. Show of Shows
5/15	Tom F.	Day at a Time, Belmont
5/22	Alex E.	High Steppers, SF
5/29	Sophia	El Cerrito Fellowship

TUESDAY DOWNTOWN

1101 O'Farrell, Urban Life Center, San Francisco
Tuesday, 8 pm

DATE	SPEAKER	HOME GROUP	DOS
5/03	Michael M.	Sunset Group	12/24/92
5/10	Jean C.	Tues. Daily Reflections	7/22/83
5/17	Tonus	S.F.P.O.A.	5/15/95
5/24	Dan M.	Serenity House Stag	12/7/85
5/31	TBA		



Dr. Bob



Bill W.

Founders' Day Celebration

Saturday,
June 18, 2005

6:00 pm: A.A. Archives & Fellowship

6:30 pm: Spaghetti Feed/ Potluck

8:00 pm: A.A. Meeting-Oldtimers' Panel
Dance to Follow!

\$8 per person/ \$15 per couple

Presented by the I.F.B. and S.F. General Service

The Women's Building, 3543 18th St./ Valencia

More info and tickets at ohmout@aol.com;

650-222-7227



**COME CELEBRATE THE
5TH ANNIVERSARY OF
THE MISSION FELLO-
SHIP AT 2900-24TH ST**
 (previously 1010 Valencia and 1364 Valencia)

Join in Food, Fun and Fellowship
50/50 Raffle

Saturday, May 28, 2005
Dinner at 5:30 PM
 (chicken entrée provided -
 please bring a side dish)

**Followed by an A.A. meeting with a
three-member panel at 7:00 PM**



IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT: Who Runs A.A.? You do!

To: The trusted servants of the San Francisco and
Marin A.A. Fellowship

From: The Intercounty Fellowship of A.A.

Re: 2005 ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Intercounty Fellowship of
Alcoholics Anonymous will be held June 1, 2005
at 7:00 p.m. at 1187 Franklin St., SF

- Annual Report to the Fellowship
- Vote on Bylaws changes
- Seating of new Intergroup Reps

PLEASE HELP US ENSURE THAT EVERY A.A. GROUP
IS REPRESENTED IN DETERMINING THE POLICIES TO
OPERATE THE CENTRAL OFFICE BY HAVING YOUR
GROUP SEND A DELEGATE TO THIS MEETING.

Call Central Office if you have any questions:
(415) 674-1821

Happy and Joyous: One Member's Perspective *by Anonymous*

It's springtime! Winter is over. Living things start to renew and wake up out of their cold slumber. It's a new day and time to shed those old "skins" and develop new ones. In A.A., however, getting those new "skins" is sometimes a long, arduous task that doesn't automatically happen at springtime. One elusive part of that task in my life is the A.A. notion of being "happy, joyous and free." What does that mean?



After going to A.A. meetings for a while, I saw that I was not alone in faking a happy state when in the throes of my drinking days, that the miracle elixir of my past had caused me to stop growing. My emotional and spiritual development was halted when I picked up the bottle. I was frozen in time—locked in unhappiness and despair! Only then did I see that I had a lot of sober growing-up to do, which included experiencing unmasked feelings.

I am not used to being happy—let alone joyous. I came to A.A. at an extremely low emotional and spiritual bottom. I was used to and rather comfortable with unhappiness and the feeling of complete defeat that goes along with it.

I had been rather unhappy my whole life, but learned to fake a happy and joyous state because I was supposed to. I had to act happy so no one would see how lonely and sad I truly felt. I was a bad and shameful person and I had no right to be happy.

The miracle elixir of the bottle came into my life at a young age and proved to be just the thing to make me the happy and out-going guy that people either loved or avoided. I was "happy and joyous" for many years, as long as I had my bottle—why did I need A.A.?

After many meetings, commitments, working the steps and practice being a "human being and not a human doing," I started feeling some relief and serenity. A happy state suddenly cropped up and it was OK. I could even feel happy and sad at the same time!

Joyousness is still elusive to me. I don't jump around in tulip fields and hum a happy tune all the time. I'm sure that will change too. My new "skin" is still being developed and it may take a lifetime to grow. Happy feelings do come a little more frequently these days and that joyous state is just around the corner. My new feelings may not be expressed in the same way as others', but maybe that has something to do with discovering the "free" part. **1**

Cleaning House

by Anonymous

I fired my sponsor last week. It sounds so harsh and demeaning. He was not my employer, nor my employee, but in A.A. lingo, the act of firing one's sponsor—or sponsee, means it's time to make a change and move on.

There are many reasons for finding another sponsor—communication conflicts, lack of availability, personality differences or even the possibility of becoming romantically attracted to a sponsor. In my case, it was none of these reasons. I simply felt the need to start fresh and work the steps again. At a little over four years of sobriety some of my character defects are messing with my spirituality. I've had RID (restlessness, irritability and discontentment) on a consistent basis lately and it is a warning sign for me.

My sponsor and I agreed when we started working together that our relationship would be on a "maintenance" basis and not one of formally working the steps from ground zero. I agreed with that at the time and our relationship worked for a long while. Recently, however, I have had the feeling of complacency and an "easier, softer

way" was creeping in. I was subconsciously, or even consciously, enjoying the laid-back attitude that I've done the steps already. Oh yes, I do one, two and three every day and ten through twelve too. But I haven't started from Step One and done them all in the way I did them when I first got sober. I feel that a sponsor who has a different way of looking at things and possibly one that cracks the whip now and then may work well for me now.

I haven't asked someone yet to take on this responsibility with me. I am listening right now at meetings to see who my Higher Power will match me up with. I know the slippery slope I would soon be on if I don't get a new sponsor in a timely manner. I know how my head works and have a good grasp on my tendency for denial. Sobriety has been the best thing that's happened to me and I don't want to screw it up. Right now, the fellowship and my HP are my temporary sponsors until the one that is "worthy of working with me" comes in the picture. Oh yeah, my next sponsor has to have a sense of humor too! **1**

Dear Alky

This is only one drunk's opinion. For a more in depth discussion, CALL YOUR SPONSOR!

Dear Alky,

Since I got sober my relationship with my mother has gotten much better. We talk frequently and have a lot of loving conversations. She is getting older and lives in a very rural area of Ohio. I feel that I need to go there to help her get around, but I am fearful that my sobriety will suffer. There are not any A.A. meetings near her—the closest one is about an hour's drive away. How do I maintain sobriety and help my Mom at the same time?

Momma's Boy



breaking. Sometimes our feelings are so overwhelming we have to shut them out for self-preservation. This is why we drank—to soothe the pangs of life on life's terms. Give yourself some time to heal. If you can, share at meetings about what you have just gone through. You may help another alcoholic who is also feeling a pain so deep it is unbearable. In *As Bill Sees It*, Bill W. talks about the A.A. "kinship born of common suffering," of using prayer to deal with psychic pain, of "walking toward serenity" using walking meditation and of helping someone else. As the books say, "It is better to comfort than to be comforted." Pray, meditate, and reach out to the still-suffering alcoholic. In time I hope you will find peace with your mother's death.

In sympathy,
Alky



Dear Momma's Boy,

You don't have to figure this out by yourself. Get some advice and look at all your options. Many A.A. members are caring for aging parents. It is both an obligation and a privilege. Do you think your Momma would be looking to you for help if you were still drinking? Ask your friends about their experiences with the same situation. There are agencies that deal with the needs of elderly people and they can advise you about resources in her community. Ask her what she wants. Maybe she would prefer to move to where you are. Take the easier softer way. The difficult path may not be what your Higher Power wants for you. Even if you do move to her area, check in with A.A. there, try out some online meetings at www.aa.org and sign up with LIM (Loners and Internationalists Meetings). If sober soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan can maintain contact with A.A., so can you in rural Ohio!

In fellowship,
Alky



Dear Alky,

I'm sitting here in a strangely neutral state. I recently "pulled the plug" on my mother after a week on life support. It seemed I stood outside myself as I held her hand and watched her vitals signs trickle away—an eerie experience. I made amends and we had four caring, communicative years together. Where are my feelings? Dry-eyed.

Dear Dry-eyed,

Please accept my condolences on the loss of your beloved mother. Even though your eyes are dry, your heart must be

Dear Alky,

I have a sponsee I am worried about. He has mental illness, in addition to alcoholism, and sometimes he asks me for advice about his meds, his therapist, and that sort of thing. I feel OK telling him to go to meetings and I meet with him whenever I can but lately he has been getting better and so he does other activities instead of go to meetings. He had a pretty full life before he went into the hospital the last time and now that he is sober and has his disorder under control he wants to enjoy himself. What do I do?

Just a Sponsor

Dear Just a Sponsor,

You answered your own question when you described yourself as "just a sponsor." You are not his therapist, social worker or doctor. As it says in the book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, our Higher Power has given us physicians, psychiatrists and psychologists and they can be of help. I too have had sponsees with mental illness, in addition to alcoholism. I found myself wanting to give advice about their treatment. Don't do it. Your best answer when he asks your opinion about his therapy or his medication is probably, "I'm not qualified to say; why don't you ask your doctor?" Stay sober yourself, encourage him to go to meetings and offer to work with him one on one. Remind him in the nicest possible way that without sobriety he might not have that new life he is enjoying. And pray for him. A lot.

In serenity,
Alky

COMMITTEE CONTACTS

The following is a list of the names and contact information for the IFB Officers and Chairpersons of most of the service committees.

If you are interested in doing service on a committee or if you wish to receive more information about a committee, please contact these committee chairs.

INTERGROUP OFFICERS:

CHAIR—

Joe G. 415.350-0373

VICE CHAIR—

Steve R. calmont1@aol.com

TREASURER

Danna P. dannajp@earthlink.net

RECORDING SECRETARY

Don B. 415.777-9374

COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

CENTRAL OFFICE COMMITTEE

Danny F. dannyf112@earthlink.net

12th STEP COMMITTEE

Needs a Chairperson call CO for info

ARCHIVES COMMITTEE

Lynnore G. lynnore1@aol.com

LITERATURE COMMITTEE

Gary D. 415.922-1341

ORIENTATION COMMITTEE

Tim M. gryffindor-house@earthlink.net

OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Lou H. ljhmarin@hotmail.com

THE POINT

Steve R. calmont1@aol.com

SPECIAL EVENTS

David B. ohmout@aol.com

SPECIAL NEEDS COMMITTEE

Pene P. 415.200-6261

WEBSITE COMMITTEE

Michael R. michaelr@aasf.org

SF TELESERVICE COMMITTEE

Rick P./Mary P. sfteservice@aasf.org

SF PI/CPC COMMITTEE

Laura N. 415.931-2567

Recovery ❖ Unity ❖ Service

The IFB Needs You!

by Steve R.

Ideally, an IFB Representative would report monthly to each group, with every member present for that report. The reality is far short of the ideal. Of 714 weekly A.A. meetings in San Francisco and Marin, only 59 are represented on the IFB and not all of those participate regularly. (Only 75 meetings have currently registered secretaries!) The non-profit corporation of the Intercounty Fellowship of A.A. has an annual budget of a quarter million dollars but less than ten percent of its member groups are represented on its Board of Directors. Fortunately this is a great time of year to improve that percentage and raise awareness generally.

The annual membership meeting of the IFB is just around the corner (June 1, First Unitarian Church, 1187 Franklin St., 7 p.m.). This is a review of the past year's activity of Central Office, the Board and its member committees. Any A.A. member may attend and any group may send a delegate whether or not it has an IFB Rep. This year there are a number of IFB developments worth noting in advance.

Finance is always near the top of the list. You'll hear what happened after the late-summer cash position decline. The new Treasurer, Danna P., now three months into her service, will also give projections for the rest of this year. Come hear about the IFB's financial condition.

The Special Worker, Peter M., will step up and report for Central Office Manager, Maury P., who will be on parental leave. He'll review the range of Central Office functions, such as literature and bookstore sales, phone shifts and interaction with the committees.

The Twelfth Step Committee has fallen on hard times. While referrals are still made, at this writing there are no members to update, organize or recruit A.A. members for Twelfth Step calls. Come find out what's being done about it.

The Special Needs Committee will report on its survey of group needs and accessibility listings, and on its work identifying and serving the hard-of-hearing and deaf alcoholic.

Perhaps the most exciting news this year comes from the newly-formed Outreach Committee. During April and May the first fledgling steps will have been taken towards visiting every group in SF/Marin and inviting each of them to participate on the IFB. This requires a lot of physical footwork to be effective.

The second reason this is an opportune time is that terms for new IFB Reps begin the same night at the shortened monthly business meeting which immediately follows the annual meeting. This means that you still have time to encourage your group to elect an IFB Rep or ask someone to volunteer. This is a great service opportunity for an individual, and also a chance for other members of the group to get involved with the various committees.

Perhaps it's you yourself who will help fill the void on the Twelfth Step Committee, or bring accurate information back to your group for a more-informed group conscience. And remember, if Central Office or Teleservice can reliably refer newcomers to your meeting because of accurate information, that's one important way to extend the hand of A.A.

Come join us for the 2005 IFB Annual Business Meeting June 1, 2005 at 7:00 p.m. at 1187 Franklin St., San Francisco. 

The line about the “conceited Irishman who thinks he can run the whole show” is a real gem from Bill. We know from this line that the Tradition Five chapter of the *Twelve & Twelve* was not written recently. A generation or two ago, no one thought twice of making that sort of ethnic characterization. It's important not to make too much of it, but here is just another sign that the literature in front of us comes from another time and place. Even more, to our politically-correct West Coast sensibilities, this line jumps out as though highlighted in neon.

We need to look past such things, if we can. It's dangerous enough when we compare instead of identify in meetings. With our literature, it's all the more important to look at the principles instead of the personal differences.

The anecdote itself is a nearly perfect example of the practical benefit of Tradition Five. It's easy to identify with Bill's “tough Irish customer” here, suspicious as many newcomers are. We show up to A.A. beat up by our alcoholism, so even when reaching out for help, we're often looking for the catch, keeping our guard. When, we may wonder, is my sponsor going to ask for my credit card number?

In time, we see that what the others in the fellowship are getting from us is the same thing that we're getting from it ourselves—another day without picking up a drink. Yes, the groups pass the hat, but the treasuries never do much more than pay for the group's expenses. A treasurer running off with the group's money is usually in for a very short vacation indeed!

If there were other agendas besides carrying the message of sobriety, where would that leave the trustworthiness of our Twelve Step work? Whether the newcomer would see us as trustworthy, we'd always have some other competing interest that would get in the way of maintaining our sobriety. Instead, any purpose an A.A. group or service entity has must follow our primary

purpose. When we meet, when we take meetings into jails and institutions, when we answer the phones, make coffee for a meeting or put away chairs after the meeting is over, it's all part of carrying the message, even if it's just making sure that the meeting will continue to have a space to meet.

Then later on, as we grow past the first blush of sobriety, we see the relief that comes from not having a conflict of interests in our service work. When our own prospects ask, as did the man in this chapter, “How much does your scheme cost?” it will be as great a relief to us to say, “Nothing at all.”

Some of us are good salespeople. Others of us may have other skills. But because we don't have anything up our sleeves, nothing else to gain but our own sobriety, we don't need to sell anything. To steal a few words from another of our Traditions, there's nothing for us to promote. Our recovery

is either attractive or else it isn't. As it says on page 150 and 151 of *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, “The unique ability of each A.A. to identify himself with and bring recovery to the newcomer *in no way depends upon his learning, eloquence, or on any special individual skills*” (emphasis mine). Our sales skills don't carry the message, but our living example and our ability to relate to the still-suffering alcoholic does.

There's another important aspect to the Tradition Five chapter in *The Twelve & Twelve*, and that's the analogy of the group of physicians holding a cure to cancer. When this hypothetical cure is hit upon, a change comes over the individuals, each of whom has a specialty and skills. In the face of the benefit that can come to those who can be helped, the individual ambitions are set aside and the single goal is pursued. A cynical view might see this as an unrealistic fairy story based on hopes for a world with more selflessness than we see around us.

(Continued on page 15)



A.A. On the Road: Amsterdam

by Jill M.

In March, my husband and I had the good fortune to travel to Amsterdam. While we were there we made it a point to check out an English-speaking A.A. meeting.

The meeting was held at the English Reformed Church. Many meetings are held there during the week and most are English-speaking meetings. When we arrived, a long conference table was mostly filled. I whispered to my husband, "It feels like a San Francisco meeting." What did I mean?

Well, there was a certain casual hipness about the crowd. Lots of smiles and welcomes were offered. It was clear this meeting was a "group" and not just a meeting. The chatter was lively and most everyone seemed to know one another. And they also knew we were visitors.

The meeting began and after the preliminaries, we were asked (being the visitors) to share briefly on our experience, strength and hope. We did. I mentioned that I felt immediately comfortable and was happy to be there. My husband shared and made a few people laugh



(as he usually does wherever he goes), then the meeting of the "regulars" began and we listened as they shared their experience.

It was great to hear that problems are the same everywhere. The steps were discussed as spiritual solutions, and like many meetings in San Francisco, the book *As Bill Sees It* was used to launch the meeting.

The women were particularly interesting to me. I had spotted t-shirts in souvenir shops stating, "Good girls go to heaven and bad girls go to Amsterdam." And yes I did get that! Many of the speakers were formerly Americans who "dropped out" and traveled to Amsterdam and then decided to stay. I could see why. The city was beautiful and the Dutch are a very kind and hardy group of people. And of course there were all those other reasons to go to Amsterdam way back when....

Anyway, I'm sober today and glad to share our travel to another country with our fellows on this happy and joyous road in sobriety. 📌

FAITHFUL FIVERS! Thanks for Your Support!

Faithful Fivers are A.A. members who graciously pledge to contribute at least Five Dollars each month toward the support of Central Office in its efforts to carry the A.A. message to alcoholics who still suffer in the San Francisco and Marin area. As a Faithful Fiver, your personal contribution can and will make our vital services possible. We'd like to thank the following members for joining:



AMI JOY Y.
BARBARA M.
BRUCE D.
DAVID B.
DAVID B.
DENNIS & LUCY
FRANCES L.
GILES H.
HARRY M.
JANET B.
JERRY N.

JIM H.
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NANCIE G.
PEGGY M.
PETER F.
PHILIP G.
RALPH P.
RICH G.
RICHARD C.
SCOTT N.
STEVE A.
WICKIE S.



Literature Review: Two Winning Pamphlets

by Kim O.

There is much portable A.A. history in our Central Office in the form of pamphlets, which come from A.A. World Services in New York. These pamphlets answer many questions and provide different perspectives on our remarkable fellowship. They're also fairly discrete reading for commuters.

The Twelve Traditions were particularly impressive in my first year of A.A., so I selected two pamphlets about them for my A.A. literature review assignment. The Twelve Traditions are what kept me coming back, when I would have fled—they provided the framework that kept A.A. from becoming a cult or being diverted from its primary purpose. They were responsible for the fellowship's survival since 1935, without being corrupted by money, fame or other organizational perils.

The Twelve Traditions Illustrated looked intimidating to me at first, with the hungry tiger drooling on its cover. It suggested the style of *Whatever Happened to Joe*, the 50's gothic style cartoon that was circulating years ago. But in fact, its illustrations are early clip art in style—a bit of company-newsletter camp, that are actually quite fun in supporting the expository paragraphs.

The Twelve Traditions Illustrated gives readers a straightforward history on how our traditions developed, through the 1970's. The pamphlet folds out, one page per tradition, with a few paragraphs of discussion on each. The text is surrounded by drawings that portray the essence of each tradition in an amusing way.

The major rationale for each tradition is explained clearly, along with some specific history on its evolution. Reading this colorful pamphlet will give you a good foundation for full participation in A.A.


A.A. Tradition, How It Developed, by Bill W., identified by its brick and white cover, is a deeper review of the

traditions and other founding principles of A.A. It has no illustrations and is written in the passionate style of the 1940's, culled from articles Bill W. wrote for the Grapevine. The deeper dimensions of all the traditions are highlighted when telling their history.

Grouchy readers, looking for reasons to criticize, may seize upon the slightly sexist language that crops up occasionally when Bill talks about “our womenfolk” and the like, but such references are thankfully few in this jam-packed pamphlet.

The interior text of the pamphlet is dense, giving readers a book's worth of knowledge in a light, slim format. It may seem daunting to some readers, but others will be glad to have a mini-book that includes Bill W's passionate perspective on the following topics: A.A. Unity—how the traditions uphold that goal; Traditions Three, Six, Seven, Eight, and Nine; and three articles on Tradition Twelve (Bill W.'s thoughts on that topic from 1946 to 1955).

The evolution of each tradition is discussed in greater detail than in the illustrated pamphlet, with background from the early days of A.A. Many issues I had wondered about were clarified—why we can't accept bequests from non-A.A.'s, for example. It seems that outside funding was accepted in the very beginning, but refused later on as the value of being self-supporting became more apparent. Bill W. describes the spiritual dimension of the Seventh Tradition, hoping adherence to it will mean “we shall have steered clear of that golden, alluring, but very treacherous reef called Materialism.”

Both of these pamphlets would be an excellent addition to your A.A. library, especially as you or your sponsees get involved in service opportunities like running a meeting or being your group's representatives to General Service (GSR) or the Intercounty Fellowship Board (IFB). 

CONTRIBUTIONS

to the Central Office were made through April 15, 2005 honoring the following members:

ONGOING MEMORIALS

Bill M. (Philadelphia-4 years)
Bud C.
Fran H.

ANNIVERSARIES

Bette S.-37 years Beverly C. - 25 years Veronica M.-24 years
Gwendolyn F.-21 years Ardis J.-13 years
High Noon Friday: Sandy C.-1 year
Endless Summer: Jim, Josie, Siaheeda, Marty, Thomas, Mikey, Sarah, Ted – 1 year; Christine, Cynthia, Aaron – 2 years; Jessy – 5 years, Paily – 10 years; Rob – 14 years

AA Group Contributions - February 2005

Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous - San Francisco and Marin Counties

Name	Feb. 05	YTD	Name	Feb. 05	YTD
Fellowship Contributions			As Bill Sees It Th 6pm		141.95
Brisbane Breakfast Bunch	31.60	59.40	As Bill Sees It Th 830pm		140.09
Contribution Box	75.57	75.57	Ass in a Bag Th 830pm		40.80
IFB	76.50	160.22	Beginners' Step Study Sat 630pm		124.53
Marin Teleservice		500.00	Bernal Big Book Sat 5pm	152.15	188.37
Unidentified Group	139.80	540.82	Big Book Basics F 8pm		175.29
Total Fellowship Contributions	323.47	1,012.54	Big Book Study Su 11am	64.00	64.00
			Blue Book Special Su 11am		97.42
Honors			Buena Vista Breakfast Su 12pm	220.00	220.00
Endless Summer F 830pm		38.38	Castro Monday Big Book M 8pm	137.42	137.42
Total Honors		38.38	Creative Alcoholics M 6pm		180.00
			Drive Thru W 1215pm	224.84	224.84
Marin Group Contributions			Each Day a New Beginning F 7am		455.60
7am Urgent Care Group 7D 7am	200.00	200.00	Each Day A New Beginning Su 8am		488.06
A Vision for You (Fairfax) Su 730pm	66.13	66.13	Each Day a New Beginning Th 7am		304.00
Attitude Adjustment 7D 7am	1,412.00	1,412.00	Each Day a New Beginning Tu 7am		254.58
Candlelight Group Sun 8pm		69.94	Easy Does It Tu 6pm		139.36
Day At A Time 7D 630am		198.51	Embarcadero Group 5D 1210pm	182.00	318.80
Fairfax Friday Night F 830pm		68.96	Fireside Chat Sa 9pm		23.61
Greenfield Newcomers Sun 7pm	120.00	120.00	Fireside F 830pm		94.00
Intimate Feelings Sa 10am		183.69	First Place		39.60
Island Group Th 8pm		228.50	Four Forty Niners F 8pm		28.55
Just Can't Wait 'til 8 M 630pm	32.75	32.75	Friday Lunchtime Step F 12pm		140.00
Living in the Solution F 6pm		306.00	Happy Hour (S.F.) F 630pm		63.70
Mill Valley 7D 7am	750.00	750.00	High Noon 5D 1215pm	298.70	298.70
Monday Night Stag (Tiburon) 8pm		142.35	High Noon Monday 1215pm	122.34	168.64
Noon Tu 12pm	219.50	219.50	High Noon Tuesday 1215pm	440.47	571.26
Pathfinders Tu 12pm		105.00	High Noon Wednesday 1215pm	246.00	246.00
San Geronimo Valley Book Study F 8pm		43.45	High Sobriety M 8pm		327.60
Saturday Serenity Sa 8pm		100.00	High Steppers W 7pm		301.75
Six O'Clock Sunset Th 6pm		106.69	Hilldwellers M 8pm		84.00
Stinson Beach Fellowship Th 8pm		451.04	Home Group Sat 830pm	61.43	61.43
Terra Linda Group Th 830pm		500.00	How It Works Sat 2pm		62.94
The Barnyard Group Sa 4pm	96.00	96.00	Ingleside Beginners Su 5pm	33.00	33.00
Tiburon Beginners (Closed)		512.00	Join the Tribe Tu 7pm		244.42
Tiburon Haven Sun 12pm		675.00	Keep It Simple Sat 830pm		503.77
Tiburon Women's Candlelight W 8pm	225.00	225.00	Let It Be Now F 6pm		100.00
Tuesday Chip Meeting Tu 8pm		500.00	Like A Prayer Su 4pm		128.57
Wednesday Mid-Week W 6pm		63.11	Living Sober W 8pm		128.82
Women's Big Book Tu 1030am		45.00	Lush Lounge Sa 2pm	145.00	196.60
Women on Monday M 7pm		79.79	Midnight Meditation Sat 12am	140.74	140.74
Women's Step Study Group M 12pm	240.00	240.00	Miracles Off 24th St W 730pm		111.48
Total Marin Group Contributions	3,361.38	7,740.41	Mission Terrace W 8pm		122.90
			Monday At A Time M 1pm		30.00
SF Group Contributions			Monday Monday M 1215pm	216.41	216.41
A is for Alcohol Tu 6pm	33.28	33.28	New Friday Big Book F 12pm	27.15	27.15
A New Start F 830pm	111.06	111.06	New Hope Big Book M 630pm	285.54	285.54
A Vision for You (SF) Su 630pm		67.00	No Gurus Meditation Su 7pm		21.36
AA Step Study Su 6pm		198.30	Pax West M 12pm		136.44
Afro American Beginners Sat 8pm	32.74	83.74	Pinehurst Tu 730pm		128.00
All Together Now Th 8pm		180.00	Rigorous Honesty Th 1205pm		50.00
Artists & Writers F 630pm		331.20	Rule 62 W 10pm	84.00	84.00

Name	Feb. 05	YTD	Name	Feb. 05	YTD
Saturday Easy Does It Sa 12pm		124.80	Sunset 9'ers Su	262.78	262.78
Saturday Night Regroup Sat 730pm		67.50	Sunset 9'ers W	32.31	58.69
Seacliff Th 830pm		60.50	Sunset Sobriety Th 730pm	411.00	411.00
Serenity House	300.00	500.00	Surf Tu 8pm	650.39	650.39
Sesame Step Tu 730pm		9.95	Ten Years After Su 6pm		190.80
SFPOA Th 7pm		72.00	The Pepper Group F 12pm	45.00	45.00
Sisters In Sobriety M 7pm (SF)		25.00	Thursday Night Speaker Th 830pm		935.00
Sober & Centered F 7pm		175.03	Transrecovery F 630pm	5.02	5.02
Sometimes Slowly Sa 11am	59.68	59.68	Unidentified Group	270.70	270.70
Step Talk Su 830am	52.20	52.20	Valencia Smokefree F 6pm	73.13	73.13
Steppin' Up Tu 630pm		85.00	Women's 10 Years Plus Th 615pm	304.00	304.00
Steps to Freedom M 730pm		116.36	Wednesday Noon Steps W 12pm		104.27
Sunday Express Sun 6pm	111.80	111.80	Women's Promises F 7pm		186.00
Sunday Morning Gay Men's Stag Su 1030am	908.63	908.63	Women Living Sober Sa 1030am		18.53
Sunday Rap Sun 8pm		60.00	Women Who Drank Too Much Tu 615pm		63.20
Sundown W 7pm	174.00	174.00	Work In Progress Sat 7pm	23.34	23.34
Sunset 11'ers W		52.65	Total SF Group Contributions	6,942.25	16,294.75
Sunset 9'ers F		137.13	TOTAL	10,627.10	25,086.08

Gratitude Month 2004— Groups

Group	Feb. '05
SF	
Women's 10 Years Plus Th 615pm	84.00
A New Start F 830pm	80.00
High Noon Tuesday 1215pm	211.21
Keep Coming Back Sa 11am	258.00
Keep It Simple Sat 830pm	72.00
Sunday Express Sun 6pm	24.00
Total SF Gratitude Month	729.21

Total Gratitude Month 2004 for Feb. \$729.21

NOTE: In the April 2005 Issue of *The Point*, Stinson Beach Fellowship with \$451.04 and Terra Linda Group with \$500.00 were incorrectly listed under San Francisco Contributions. They have been credited to Marin Contributions as of this issue. I apologize for any inconvenience. Lauren H.

Individual Contributions Dec. 2004 & Jan. 2005

HONORS

	50.00
	85.00
	18.00
	10.00
	50.00
	18.25
	14.00
Total HONORS	\$245.25

INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS

	44.00
	500.00
	25.00
	20.00
	9.00
Total IND. CONT.	\$598.00
TOTAL	\$843.25

Are you getting *The Point*?

We send a complimentary issue of *The Point* to registered trusted servants from each group in order to keep the Fellowship informed about current A.A. activities.

The Point includes important announcements and financial information about our Intergroup. It is important that this information be delivered to as many members as possible. Information expands the Group Conscience, one of the strengths that holds Alcoholics Anonymous together.

If you haven't seen a copy of this newsletter at your meeting, let us know. And let your group Secretary and Treasurer know that registration forms are available on our website at www.aasf.org.

Secretaries and Treasurers who register are asked to please share the copy of *The Point* mailed to you with your group. And don't forget to read the announcements from the *Secretary's Monthly* insert.

What I Learned at PRAASA

by Therese G.

The Pacific Region Alcoholics Anonymous Service Assembly (PRAASA) is held once a year in different cities around the region. People who serve in all capacities of General Service share ideas, concepts and experience. The Pacific Region consists of 15 Areas within eight of the Western states. San Francisco and Marin are in Area 06—known as California Northern Coastal Area (CNCA).

Although I've been involved in General Service for many years in various capacities, this was my first PRAASA. It was three days of nonstop service information—both overwhelming and spiritual to say the least.

The 2005 PRAASA was held in Tucson March 11-13. There were well over 1500 current and past trustees and delegates in attendance from all over the Western U.S., Australia and Japan.


Many things weighed on my mind and heart when leaving PRAASA—a few are worth sharing. The reason I do service of any kind is that service allows me to keep any problems I might have in their proper perspective. My problems, quite simply, are made smaller and nearly insignificant because of my involvement in the third legacy (service) of my sobriety.

When I say out loud, "I'm an alcoholic, my name is Therese," I am at that moment fully engaging all three legacies—recovery, unity and service. By saying, "I'm an alcoholic," I may be of service to someone else who may not yet know that there is a name for their malady. I am instantly

unified with others, and I am participating in my recovery from a hopeless state of mind and body.

Alcoholics Anonymous, GSO, AAWS, the conference process and all of its trusted servants are alive, thriving and well both here and abroad. A.A. is ready to stand and welcome any controversy that may come its way, because central to A.A.'s survival is the fact that controversy is a good thing for us. All 36 principles are built on this idea. And the sentiment for each of us to consider is, "How are we safeguarding Alcoholics Anonymous?"

There are those that think we must enclose the A.A. program in steel bars to protect it from being "diluted" but rather, I believe the question must be, "How do we safeguard all 36 principles with love and tolerance so that all who need to come here have a place to come when it's their turn?" Someone said that she would rather have someone who is unsure if they are an alcoholic be IN the rooms of A.A., then sitting OUTSIDE the rooms of A.A. By allowing that to happen we are practicing our code of love and tolerance.

If you would like to know more about PRAASA, you can borrow the tapes from your San Francisco/Marin Central Office. A.A. is alive and well in and around the country and I am continually reminded by how vast it is. A.A. continues to thrive, grow and touch countless lives and I thank you for allowing me to serve. 

Meetings With Childcare

by Anonymous

Not long ago, it was always easy to make an excuse to skip a meeting. Some of my best excuses included, "I'm too tired," or better yet, "I just don't feel like going."


Since giving birth to my son last year, getting to a meeting has become a real luxury. There are many times when I would love to run out to a meeting, but because I can't find childcare, I either stay home or, if I am really desperate, I might go anyway and spend the majority of the time out in the hall keeping the baby quiet.

After sitting through numerous meetings, half listening and worrying that my fussing baby was disturbing others, it was with great relief that I found two meetings in San Francisco with free professional childcare.

The meetings with childcare are at the Talk Line Center located at 1757 Waller (at Stanyan). During the meeting the childcare takes place in a massive playroom with a

plethora of toys for all ages, from newborns on up. It is staffed with a fantastic team of professionals whose caring manner and experience is capable of winning over even the most cautious and doting parent. The two meetings are held on Monday at 12:30 p.m. and on Thursday at 2:15 p.m.

I will never forget the joy I felt the first time I attended one of these meetings and I could really listen to the shares and participate without the distractions of a squirming child.

These meetings are open to everyone and are in need of support. If you know someone who is a parent and needs to get to a meeting, please pass on the word. Not a week goes by that I don't thank my higher power for the gift of sobriety and the fellowship I have found. For this sick alcoholic, these meetings are a reminder that there is a solution and I am not alone. 

Learning From my Mistakes

by Kristen H.

It's all too easy for me to concentrate on and even obsess about my mistakes. During the final two years of my drinking, I experienced debilitating panic attacks in lieu of what used to be average headache and fast-food craving hangovers. I felt as though my own body and mind were far beyond my control and punishing me for what I thought, at the time, was typical twenty-something partying.

There seemed to be two selves alive inside of me: the self that would rationalize and justify the mistake of infidelity, for example, and the self that would focus so intensely on my feelings of embarrassment, shame and hopelessness that I would eventually attempt suicide, and failing that, self-mutilation.

I thought this hellish existence would come to an immediate end with my decision to stop drinking, admit my alcoholism, and enter the rooms of A.A. I hadn't yet learned to accept that we heal "sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly." I also struggled with perfectionist tendencies.

As a woman in early recovery, I felt immense guilt and anxiety about my past. Although sober, I continued to experience intense panic attacks. At times, I felt as if I was just one big walking mistake. I was seeing everything in black and white extremes.

With my first anniversary of sobriety on a near horizon, I still find myself indulging the "shoulds/shouldn'ts" (*Now that I'm sober, I should have all my finances in order... Now that I'm sober, I shouldn't be feeling depressed... I should have given up my seat on the bus... I shouldn't have been manipulative and passive-aggressive with my partner*).

This spiral of negative thinking could go on ad infinitum.

*Self-acceptance
and love are
powerful agents
in helping me
move forward in
my recovery.*

I can always find *some* mistake, something wrong with me, and when I pander to this type of brainstorm I find myself sinking into an abyss of guilt. This is where I need to turn it over and let go. I'm slowly learning that it's trying to force my recovery to happen that is the mistake.

Somewhere, deep down in my soul, I do believe that there is no such thing as a mistake, that every "failure" is truly an opportunity, given to me by God, to learn.

Mistakes are simply part of the path. Extended guilt doesn't solve anything for me, and it never has. Excessive worry does not control any situation. I must continually remind myself, through prayer, regular inventories, and talking with my sponsor and therapist that this is a program of action. Instead of feeling the hopelessness of my lack of control, I have the power to make an amends, change a behavior, or *just let it go*. I make the choice to feel guilty and I can make the choice to feel good about myself. Most importantly, I have the power to ask God for help. I have the power to have faith in my *Higher Power*. God decides what lessons I learn from "mistakes," and in what timeframe—again, sometimes quickly, sometimes painfully, and agonizingly slowly).

Every single step can help us learn from our mistakes. I recently began working on Step Ten, and I'm doing my best to follow my sponsor's advice that taking inventory does not mean judging myself as bad *or* good. I can learn to balance my victories with my missteps. And I can do all this in the spirit of self-acceptance. Self-acceptance and love are powerful agents in helping me move forward in my recovery. When I accept myself as an alcoholic without judgment, I learn to see the opportunities, the lessons, and the good in everything. In recovery, this is my practice of progress, not perfection. 📌

Treasures of the Twelve & Twelve: Tradition Five

(continued from page 9)

Then the story is changed to fit our situation, and it becomes less distant. When illuminated by the "great paradox" that we can "seldom keep the precious gift of sobriety unless we give it away," this practice of carrying the message takes elevated priority. It's not just the newcomers whose lives are at stake here, our very own lives and sanity depend on it. With that kind

of premium placed on carrying the message, all the other pieces of the argument fit together. We must keep the message clear so that we may effectively carry it without distraction so that we can reap the benefit of giving freely what we've received.

Therefore, our Fifth Tradition is where Alcoholics Anonymous puts "Keep It Simple" to work. 📌

IFB Meeting Summary

The IFB is the Board of Directors for our local AA Central Office (San Francisco and Marin Counties)

**Regular Monthly Meeting
Intercounty Fellowship Board
1187 Franklin St., San Francisco, CA
Wednesday, April 6, 2005**

The following groups have registered Intergroup Representatives. Those marked "P" attended the most recent IFB meeting. If your group was not represented, consider electing an Intergroup Representative (IFB) and /or an alternate so your group's voice is heard.

Intergroup Rep	Group		Intergroup Rep	Group		Intergroup Rep	Group	
Amber W.	Sisters Circle	P	Grant D.	Ten Years After	P	Nick T.	Cocoanuts	A*
Bill V.	Attitude Adjustment, Fairfax	A*	Greg S.	Keep Coming Back	P	Omar C.	Tues. Chip	P
Brian C.	Mission Terrace	P	Heidi S.	Cow Hollow Young People's	P	Pascal G.	Marin Stag (Mon. Night...)	P
Carol W.	Miracles Off 24th St.	R	Jacqui G.	High Noon Thursday	A*	Penelope P.	Amazing Grace	P
Charles M.	Founders Group	P	Jim T.	First Place	P	Peter M.	Special Worker	P
Dan Z.	Sunday Morning Gay Men's Stag	A*	Joe G.	Beginners	P	Peter S.	All Together Now	R
Daniel B.	Too Early	P	Johnny G.	High Noon Tuesday	R	Ray M.	Sunday Rap	P
Danny F.	Each Day A New Beginning	P	Judi C.	Tuesday's Daily Reflections	P	Rebecca S.	Room To Grow	R
David A.	Living Sober	R	Kristine F.	Castro Discussion	P	Rebekah D.	Fell Street Step	P
David B.	Beginner's Warmup	A*	Larry L.	The 24 Hour Plan	P	Ryan W.	Tiburon BB	P
David B.	Federal Speaker	P	Lillian R.	Women's Promises	A*	Rudi D.	Serenity Seekers	P
David P.	Goodlands	P	Lou H.	Mill Valley 7AM	P	Russell G.	Regroup	P
Don B.	Friday Fell Street	P	Lynnore G.	Walk Of Shame	P	Scott N.	Sunset 11'ers Sa	P
Danna P.	Treasurer	P	Martha C.	449'ers	A*	Steve N.	Terra Linda Group	P
Dave F.	Reality Farm	A*	Matt Sanford	Waterfront	P	Stephan S.	Artists and Writers	P
Doug D.	As Bill Sees It Sat. 11am	A*	Maury P.	Office Manager/ On Leave		Stephen R.	Valencia Smokefree	P
Edward F.	Happy Hour	A*	Melanie L.	Second Chance	R	Steven S.	Homegroup	P
Francesca K.	West Portal	P	Meredith R.	High Noon Friday	P	Tim M.	Join the Tribe	P
Gary D.	Work in Progress	A*	Michael R.	Huntington Square	P	Tim T.	Some Are Sicker Than...	A**
Gaspar L.	Keep It Simple	A*	Mitzi H.	New Hope Big Book	P	Tom B.	Eureka Valley Topic	P
Georgia L.	Friendly Circle Beginners	P	Monika H.	SFPOA	P	Victor V.	Steppin' Up	P
Janet B.	As Bill Sees It Sat. 11am	Alt.						

P = Present; A = Absent; R = Resigned. The * above indicates an absence; more than one indicates the number of consecutive absences. A Board member who has three consecutive absences from IFB meetings is no longer a member of the Board, as stated in the Bylaws.

New IFB Reps Present				Liaisons Present	
Anthony J.	Sesame Step Tu 7:30pm	Marvin R.	Bernal Big Book Sat. 5:00 pm	Matt T.	Marin Teleservice
Greg S.	Beginner's Warmup Wed. 6:00pm	Michael S.	Sunset 9'ers Sat. 9:00 am	Trevor F.	Marin General Service
John B.	Rule 62 Wed. 10:00 pm				

Following is an unofficial summary of actions, information, upcoming business and service opportunities discussed at the April 2005 IFB meeting. It is provided for your convenience and it is not intended to be the completed approved minutes. For a complete copy of the minutes, contact the Central Office.

A. IFB Reports

Chair's Report: Joe G. gave the report. The Annual Meeting of the IFB will be June 1, 2005. Committee Chairs are required to submit an Annual Report for their committees. In July, the IFB will be electing new officers for the 2005-2006 term. Volunteers are needed for committees, especially the 12th Step Committee, which currently has no members. For more information about any of the committees, contact Joe or the Central Office. Maury P., Central Office Manager, is on maternity leave and while she's gone Peter M. and Lauren will be staffing the Central Office with assistance from members of the Central Office Committee.

Treasurer's Report: Danna P. gave the report. Net income for January through February exceeds budget by \$2,283. Discretionary cash as of

February 28, 2005 totaled \$36,252 and is sufficient to pay the budgeted expenses for the next two months. The prudent reserve money market account and the general ledger account were increased by \$5,100 in accordance with our bylaws.

Central Office Manager's Report: Peter M., a Central Office Special Worker, gave the report. Beginning July 1, the price of all books, with the exception of the Big Book, will be increased. This increase from the General Service Office in New York will result in an increase in the prices Central Office will charge. There are substitute telephone shifts available at Central Office. Suggested length of sobriety to volunteer for a telephone shift is one year.

Central Office Committee Report: Danny F. gave the report. The COC established a policy for flyers inserted into *The Point*. He will make that policy available at the next IFB meeting. Maury P.'s anniversary as Central Office Manager was March 4. She was given a raise that was budgeted.

(Continued on page 17)

(Continued from page 16)

B. Action Item: COC Vacancy: There is a vacancy on the COC due to a resignation. Ray M., Chair of the Nominating Committee, reported that of the five original candidates, two had withdrawn their names: Bill V. and Chris T. The remaining candidates, Rudi D., Lynnore G. and Victor V. made presentations in support of their candidacy. A vote was taken and, in accordance with the Third Legacy, Lynnore G. was elected by more than a 2/3 majority.

C. Bylaws Reading: The Bylaws require that changes to the Bylaws be read and considered at three consecutive IFB meetings before being voted on. Steve R. read the proposed amendments, which were also included in the meeting materials. Joe agreed to email the proposed revised Bylaws to any IFB members requesting them prior to the next IFB meeting, so members could review the revised Bylaws prior to the meeting.

D. IFB Committee Reports

Outreach Committee: Lou H. gave the report. IFB members were requested to sign up to attend three AA meetings that do not have IFB representatives and make a pitch for the groups to elect an IFB representative. The committee will meet at 6:30 pm on the second Thursday in April and then return to its regular schedule of the third Thursday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the Central Office.

Literature Review Committee: Steve N. gave the report. The committee continues its project of standardizing the format of locally produced literature. Members of the Literature Review Committee will coordinate with *The Point* Editorial Committee to provide articles for *The Point*. The committee meets the third Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the Central Office.

The Point Editorial Committee: Steve R. gave the report. An author is needed to write an article on Tradition 6. *The Point* will remain at 20 pages.

Orientation Committee: No report. The orientation of new IFB members takes place at 6:00 pm, one hour prior to the monthly IFB meeting.

Website Committee: No report.

12th Step Committee: No report. The committee meets the second Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the Central Office.

Special Events Committee: Georgia L. gave the report. The committee will collaborate with SF General Service in putting on a "Founders' Day" event, scheduled for June 18th. The proposed cost of admission will be \$8 per person and \$15 per couple. There will be a dance, an oldtimers' panel and a spaghetti feed/potluck. A venue has not yet been selected. After discussion the following motion was made and seconded: Motion: That the IFB commit a maximum of \$1,500 for Founders' Day event expenses. Action: Motion passed with 35 in favor and 3 abstentions.

Special Needs Committee: Pene P. gave the report. There is an article about the committee in the April issue of *The Point*. The committee continues to research the wheelchair and hearing impaired accessibility of AA meetings. The committee meets the 4th Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the Central Office.

Archives Committee: Lynnore G. gave the report. The committee continues to catalog materials. The committee would like to compile a history of long time meetings. The committee meets the 1st Monday of the month at 6 p.m. at the Central Office.

E. IFB Standing Committee Reports

SF Teleservice: No report. The committee meets on the 3rd Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the Central Office.

PI/CPC: No report. The committee meets on the second Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at the Central Office.

F. Group Rep Reports: Victor V. of the Steppin' Up group read a letter his group sent to local clergy informing them of the availability of local AA meetings and AA as a resource for church members. Ryan reported that there is a public service announcement on radio station 105.5 announcing the Waterfront meeting on Sunday nights at Fort Mason.

G. Non-IFB Liaison Reports

General Service, SF: Brian C. reported that General Service is interested in working with the Special Events Committee on Founders' Day activities. General Service may also contribute funds to cover the expenses of the event, which would reduce the amount that IFB will need to contribute. The committee meets the second Tuesday of the month at a new location: 1187 Franklin St./ Geary. Orientation is at 7:00 p.m. and the business meeting is at 8:00 p.m.

General Service, Marin: Trevor F. reported that there will be a post-conference assembly in mid-May. The committee meets the third Monday of the month at 9 Ross Valley Road, San Rafael. GSR Sharing: 7:00 p.m. District meeting: 8:00p.m.

Teleservice, Marin: Matt T. reported that the spaghetti feed held on February 26 was a success, however it did not make any money. The committee meets the fourth Tuesday of the month at 7:30 p.m. at 1360 Lincoln, San Rafael.

PI/CPC, Marin: No report. The committee meets the fourth Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at 1360 Lincoln, San Rafael.

Bridging the Gap: No report. The SF committee meets the second Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at a new location: 1187 Franklin St./ Geary, San Francisco. The Marin committee meets the second Wednesday of the month at 6:45 p.m. at 1411 Lincoln, San Rafael.

H & I: Georgia L. gave the report. The committee needs more volunteers. A written financial statement was submitted with the IFB meeting materials. The SF Committee meets the last Thursday of the month at 1751 Sacramento St., SF. Orientation is at 7:15 p.m. The Marin committee meets the second Tuesday at 7:00 p.m. at Lagunitas and Shady Lane, Ross.

Spirit of San Francisco: No report. The committee meets the first Monday of the month at 7:30 p.m. at the Central Office.

H. The Point Committee Membership Policy

Joe G. reported that he will request that *The Point* Committee conduct a group inventory and explore the possibility of establishing a membership policy.

The next IFB meeting will be held Wednesday, May 4, at Star of the Sea Church, 180 Harrison Street, Sausalito, CA at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Don B., IFB Secretary



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 Office website today:**
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Slogan of the Month

Came...Came to... Came to Believe

by Fran J.

When I was 17, my father, in yet-another drunken binge, became violent and threatened me with a gun. I went with my distraught mother and sisters to our pastor and he opened the church so we could go in and pray for a solution to our crazy situation.

Later that same day, the "solution" came when my father turned a gun on himself and committed suicide in front of us. I felt I had been abandoned by my father and by God. I was to be abandoned as well by my church. Because my father was not of our faith, our pastor said he could not perform a service for him. So instead of our familiar, comforting church, we had a service in a cold, strange, funeral parlor. From that moment on, I felt that God was nowhere near and that I was totally on my own. I felt contempt for people who believed as I once had. I searched for my answers in therapy, science, "non-belief" belief systems and, yes, in booze and drugs.

Fast forward 20 years of drinking and drugging—searching for meaning and finding fewer answers as my life became narrower. When I hit bottom and landed at an A.A. meeting, the notion of God or a Higher Power hardly even registered in my self-absorbed state. When it did, the old feelings of contempt came up. "You can't be serious about this God business! Don't you know what a joke it is to believe that God exists?" I did not believe a Higher Power could restore me to sanity, but over time I "Came...Came to... Came to Believe."

After I had a few months of meetings under my belt (still feeling miserable), my sister called and asked me to go with her to a monastery on a silent retreat. Intrigued, I agreed. The day I was supposed to drive up there, my car died. Fortunately, I had an old camper van, so I decided to take it. Halfway to the monastery, it started to overheat. I happened to be passing by an airport, so I pulled in and rented a car. In retrospect I recognize that the car problems were tests of my "willingness to go to any lengths." I made it to the retreat and had a one-on-one session with the spiritual director. I told her my story of abandonment and how angry I was over all that I had suffered. She asked me if I could forgive the church for being a human institution. I thought about that and something began to thaw.

Then she asked me if I could forgive God. *Forgive God?* What a notion! I realized that I had been trying to "pay God back" for all the wrongs that had been done to me by my father, the church and day-to-day life.


I realized that I had still been involved in a relationship with God—a dysfunctional one—acting sullen and angry toward God and his "minions." It was a relationship all the same. God had not abandoned me. I had been trying to abandon him! In truth, when I looked back over the 20 years when I believed God was absent, I could count many blessings that had come my way that I had never properly attributed to their source. The source was indeed God. God was there. God is there. God will always be there. May you find him now! 



ILLUSTRATION BY ANTHONY RUGGIO

Got Something to Share?

The Point needs articles every month. We encourage A.A. members in the San Francisco and Marin Fellowship to share experience, strength and hope in *The Point*. We ask that you make your story specific and anecdotal.

Dear Alky

Got a problem? A concern? A question? Write *Dear Alky* a letter of 50 – 100 words.

Literature Review

Have a favorite A.A. book or pamphlet? Up to 600 words.

Service, Recovery, Unity—How about a favorite A.A. commitment or an experience that taught you something about unity or recovery? Up to 550 words.

AA on the Road


Gone to A.A. meetings while traveling for business or pleasure? Moved from SF or Marin and want to tell us about the meetings in your new home? 500-600 words.

Inside Stories

Have an anecdote you would like to share? A moment of clarity? A spiritual awakening? 500-700 words.

Cover Story

Cover stories can be about any theme related to sobriety. Up to 850 words.

Email your submission as a Microsoft Word attachment to: thepoint@aasf.org 

Financial Statement

February 2005 - Intercounty Fellowship of AA

	Feb 05	YTD
Ordinary Income/Expense		
Income		
Group Contributions		
Honors	0.00	38.38
Group Contributions - Other	10,627.10	25,371.17
Total Group Contributions	10,627.10	25,409.55
Individual Contributions		
Faithful Fiver	108.00	294.00
Honorary Contributions	245.25	631.90
Individual - Unrestricted	598.00	1,097.00
Total Individual Contributions	951.25	2,022.90
Gratitude Month		
Gratitude Month - Groups	729.21	2,731.93
Total Gratitude Month	729.21	2,731.93
Newsletter Subscript.	41.50	149.40
Special Event Income	33.00	33.00
Sales - Bookstore	6,684.64	16,029.25
Total Income	19,066.70	46,376.03
Cost of Goods Sold		
Cost of Books Sold	4,217.38	10,027.27
Total COGS	4,217.38	10,027.27
Gross Profit	14,849.32	36,348.76
Expense		
Bad Checks	-70.60	0.00
Employee Expenses		
Wages & Salaries	7,357.50	14,557.50
Employer Tax Expenses	987.93	2,105.98
Health Benefits	742.00	1,484.00
Total Employee Expenses	9,087.43	18,147.48
ASL Expense		
ASL Other	0.00	130.00
Total ASL Expense	0.00	130.00
Bank Charges		
Cr Card Fees	113.65	198.60
Bank Charges - Other	18.40	67.30
Total Bank Charges	132.05	265.90
Equipment Lease	569.62	1,139.24
Filing/Fees	0.00	20.00
Insurance	0.00	2,312.68
Internet Expense	59.85	59.85
Office Supplies	327.42	445.94
Postage	77.00	152.00
Shipping	128.78	16.47
Rent - Office	3,708.75	7,417.50
Rent - Other	75.00	75.00
Repair & Maintenance	178.00	356.00
Security System	33.50	132.00
Telephone	386.85	767.58

Utilities	177.14	421.90
Total Expense	14,870.79	31,859.54
Net Ordinary Income	-21.47	4,489.22
Other Income/Expense		
Other Income		
Interest Income	65.77	136.49
Total Other Income	65.77	136.49
Other Expense		
Depreciation Expense	408.17	816.34
Total Other Expense	408.17	816.34
Net Other Income	-342.40	-679.85
Net Income	-\$363.87	\$3,809.37

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