

# the Point

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

from Chapter Five of the book, Alcoholics Anonymous

2010 **12**  
**December**

A publication of the Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous

A publication of the

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of Alcoholics Anonymous

1821 Sacramento Street

San Francisco, CA 94109-3528

San Francisco (415) 674-1821

Marin (415) 499-0400

Fax (415) 674-1801

[www.aasf.org](http://www.aasf.org)

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

Spirit of Future Sobriety

## Holiday Spirits





Ghosts of Alcohol Past



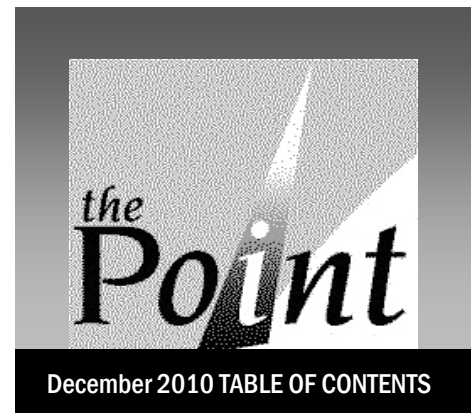
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The Point is published monthly to inform AA members about business and meeting affairs in the Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous (San Francisco and Marin Counties). The Point's pages are open to participation by all AA members. Nothing published herein should be construed as a statement of AA, nor does publication constitute endorsement of AA as a whole, the Intercounty Fellowship Board, 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.

# December 2010

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
<p><i>Persons requiring reasonable accommodations at meetings of the IFB, COC, IFB committees 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.</i></p> <div>     </div>			<p><b>1</b></p> <p><u>FIRST WED</u></p> <p>Intercounty Fellowship Board Meeting 1187 Franklin St. Orientation 6pm Meeting 7pm</p>
<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<p><b>7</b></p> <p><u>FIRST TUE</u></p> <p>Access Committee Central Office 6pm</p>	<p><b>8</b></p> <p><u>SECOND WED</u></p> <p>12th Step Committee Central Office 6:30pm</p> <p>Marin Bridging the Gap 1360 Lincoln Ave San Rafael Alano Club 6:30pm</p>
<b>12</b>	<p><b>13</b></p> <p><u>SECOND MON</u></p> <p>SF Public Information/Cooperation with the Professional Community (PI/CPC) Committee Central Office 7pm</p>	<p><b>14</b></p> <p><u>SECOND TUE</u></p> <p><i>The Point</i> Committee Central Office 5:30pm</p> <p>SF Bridging the Gap 1111 O'Farrell St 6:30pm</p> <p>Marin H&amp;I 1360 Lincoln San Rafael 6:15pm</p> <p>SF General Service 1111 O'Farrell St 8pm</p>	<b>15</b>
<p><b>19</b></p> <p><u>THIRD SUN</u></p> <p>Archives Committee Central Office 2pm Business Meeting followed by Work Day</p>	<p><b>20</b></p> <p><u>THIRD MON</u></p> <p>SF Teleservice Central Office 6:30pm</p> <p>Marin General Service 9 Ross Valley Rd San Rafael 8pm</p>	<p><b>21</b></p> <p><u>THIRD TUE</u></p> <p>Outreach Committee Central Office 6:30pm</p>	<b>22</b>
<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<p><b>28</b></p> <p><u>FOURTH TUE</u></p> <p><i>The Point</i> Committee Central Office 5:30pm</p> <p>Marin Teleservice 1360 Lincoln Ave San Rafael Alano Club 7:30pm</p>	<b>29</b>

THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
2	3	4
9	10	11
<b>16</b> <u>THIRD THU</u> Trusted Servants Workshop Committee Central Office 6:30pm <u>DUE TO HOLIDAYS:</u> SF H&I Old First Church, 1751 Sacramento St, SF Orientation 7:15pm Committee Meeting 8pm	17	<b>18</b> <u>DUE TO HOLIDAYS MEETING ON THE THIRD SAT</u> General Service CNCA Meeting 320 N. McDowell Petaluma 12:30pm
23	Holiday Central Office Closed	25
30	Holiday Central Office Closed	



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"Each day, somewhere in the world, recovery begins when one alcoholic talks with another alcoholic, sharing experience, strength and hope."

*Alcoholics Anonymous*, p. xxii

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# Meeting Changes

## New Meeting:

Sun	3:00pm	Hayes Valley	AA-ASL WOMEN'S GROUP, SF Alano Club, 1748 Market St/Octavia (ASL via webcam, WH, WO)
Fri	6:00pm	Hayes Valley	DEAF GRATEFUL, SF Alano Club, 1748 Market St/Octavia (ASL via webcam, WH)

## Meeting Changes:

Thu	7:30pm	Novato	SISTERS IN SOBRIETY, Motel, 8141 Redwood Blvd - North, Main Entrance, Upstairs (was Youth Center, 680 Wilson Ave)
Sat	4:30pm	Inner Sunset	STEPPING OUT, 1329 7th Ave/Irving (was 6:00PM)

## No Longer Meeting:

Thu	7:15pm	San Rafael	LESBO THURSDAYS, Marin Alano Club, 1360 Lincoln
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**Please Note:** 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. **If you know *anything* about a meeting that has disbanded, please call the Central Office immediately: (415) 674-1821. Thanks for your help in keeping the schedule accurate!**

## Mission Fellowship



### 2010 Holiday Alcothons

1 1/2 hour meetings held every even hour

#### Xmas Alcothon

Kickoff Meeting at 6am Friday, Dec. 24<sup>th</sup>

Last Meeting 10pm Sunday, Dec. 26<sup>th</sup>

2 to 4pm on Dec. 25<sup>th</sup> Potluck Dinner  
(Please bring your favorite Holiday dish)

#### New Year's Alcothon

Kickoff meeting starts at 6am Friday, Dec 31<sup>st</sup>

Last meeting starts at 10 p.m. Sunday, Jan 2<sup>nd</sup>

(New Year's Meeting - Midnight Dec 31<sup>st</sup>)

## Western Round Up living Sober



**New Year's Eve Fundraiser  
Celebrates The NEW YEAR**

**Friday, December 31st, 2010**

**AA meetings at 8pm/Al-Anon at 8:30**

**Party at 9:30**

**Harvey Milk Civil Rights Academy  
4235 19th Street (btw Collingwood and Diamond)**

**Suggested Donation: \$15.00**

**More Info: [livingsober.org](http://livingsober.org)  
or 415 978 2478**



From the Editor

## Holiday Spirit

Some of us love this time of year; some of us hate it. Whatever we think of it, the holiday season is not something we can change, so acceptance must kick in. Even if we could ignore the prevailing cultural holidays, there isn't much we can do about shortened days and longer nights, even though it *was* the original reason for humans to adopt mid-winter celebrations: to bring back the sun. Like many rituals, the original reason (to affect the behavior of the heavenly spheres) has changed (to warm our hearts in the darkness of winter, for example), but the power of the celebration is intact.

A friend pointed out that the *Grapevine* November issue was entitled "Holidays Shmolidays" in acknowledgement of the generalized hate/love relationship that alcoholics in recovery have with the Thanksgiving/Christmas/New Year's triumvirate of overdoing it. I say let's reclaim those days, in the name of gratitude, generosity, and new beginnings. If we can increase our practice of saying "thank you" for every little thing, if we can open our schedules, wallets, and hearts to serve someone who needs help, and if we can start even a tiny new component to our program for 2011, we can personally take back

the Holy Days of Over-consumption. Take the pledge: our pledge, to live the authentic life.

With this issue, we complete our *Point*-proclaimed Year of the Ritual with a final article (on page 8, "The Ritual of the \$2 Bill") and the rituals of the "How Was Your Week?" group (on page 13). And we continue last month's theme of "conscious contact" with the article on page 10, about connecting with HP through cycling. We have been proud this year of publishing many new contributors through introducing themes of interest and reaching out to the fellowship to invite new writers for these pages. Please, if you have ever thought about writing, or if you've ever had a reaction to what you've read here, however fleeting, write to us at [thepoint@aaaf.org](mailto:thepoint@aaaf.org). Whether or not for publication, we love hearing from you, especially constructive criticism.

Lisa C., whose articles always featured service because she is an expert (although she wouldn't say so, I can), has a new job and can't continue on *The Point* committee. While we are glad for any upturn in the economy, we selfishly are sorry to see Lisa fully employed and moving on. Thank you, Lisa.



### EDITORIAL POLICY

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

(This is a summary; for the full editorial policy, please go to [www.aaaf.org](http://www.aaaf.org).)



Faithful Fivers are A.A. members who graciously pledge to contribute at least \$5.00 each month toward the support of Central Office. Faithful Fiver contributions go a long way in helping make our vital services possible. We thank the following members:

Alejandro D.	Kurt P.
Andrea C.	Laura B.
Andrew Z.	Lauren H.
Ann & Denise	Laurie L. & Richard L.
Arthur A.	Layne S.
Barbara L.	Lelan & Rich H.
Barbara M.	Leo H.
Beverly C.	Lisa M.
Brian O.	Liz & Aiden D.
Bruce S.	Mabel T.
C.J. H.	Marit L.
Carole K.	Mark A.
Caroline A.	Mark O.
Casey L.	Martha S.
Celia H.	Mary C.
Charles D.	Maryellen C.
Charlie O.	Matt S.
Chuck S.	Michael P.
Chris H.	Michael W.
Chris L.	Michael Z.
Craig G.	Mily T.
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David P.	Mitch R.
David S.	Molly G.
David S.	Pat P.
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Eric P.	Paul M.
Evan K.	Peg L.
Fay K.	Pene P.
Frances L.	Penelope & Robert
Gloria G.	Phil M.
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Jeff B.	Robert W.
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John G.	Sara D.
John M.	Sheila H.
John V.	Steve A.
Karen C.	Steve F.
Karen K.	Stu S.
Kate R.	Susan G.
Kathleen C.	Terry H.
Kathryn M.	Thomas H.
Kathy M.	Tim M.
Kevin S.	Tracy F.
Kristina F.	

If you would like to join the Faithful Fivers, download a pledge form from our website. You will receive a complimentary subscription to *The Point*. Individual contributions are 100% tax deductible!

# Struggling with the Holidays



by Harris E.

## Driven to Drink after Midnight Services

Beginning with Thanksgiving until after the New Year, there is a great holiday tension. A quick look at December's calendar reveals many holidays. There is Hanukkah, Christmas, the African-American celebration of Kwanza and New Year's Day. Our religious and cultural landscape is marked with these days and times of joy, remembrances, and gift giving. They can be a beautiful time for people, but they also mean lots of busyness. And there is also the pressure of sadness, losses remembered, depression and nostalgia. It is definitely a set-up for old resentments to arise. The December days are full of times for competing struggles of personal joy and sorrow.

During this time, there are all kinds of challenges in our personal and professional lives. For me as a pastor (now retired), this was the time of year that I had to face some very poignant struggles. Most importantly, I sensed the frustration of living with two competing life interests: my family and my work.



Being a pastor and married man with family, I had come to live with the tension of priorities. Which one is more important when the two come into conflict? Which and who comes first: the demands of work life or the

### *How can we make everyone happy?*

responsibilities of family life? Whom do I please, or satisfy; to whom am I faithful? Lots of families know the stress over whose home we visit at the holidays. How can we make everyone happy?

As a person who has always lived with high expectations of myself, I thought I coped successfully with this kind of tension. But in sobriety I have learned how that tension (and others in my life) contributed to my addiction. Sure, I managed the demands fairly well, but I never did so without feeling that whatever I did was not quite enough. I was an alcoholic who wanted to make everyone 100% happy.

When I think about what stands out for me about holiday time, most often I recall what it was like for me every Christmas Eve. After the midnight service at church, I had a lot of unwinding to do. The build up of expectations over the days, countless encounters with people in one kind of crisis or another – happy ones, sad ones, family planning, church planning – the release of all this tension came rolling out of me as I locked the church door, got in my car, and drove away.

I arrived at home where all was quiet, with the family asleep. Only

the lights of the Christmas tree were lit, as if they were waiting for me.

With the aid of many bourbons, I would unwind. Over the years this had become a ritual. It was my way of burying the tension of who came first, family or church. I sat in the living room and carefully wrapped my gifts for the family, a busy

pastor, always doing personal family things at the last minute. When the task was done and I was sleepy enough, off to bed for a few hours before dawn and the little voices awakening me. "Please come downstairs so we can start opening our presents!" Another demand, the tension continues, let's have some champagne!



My life in sobriety has helped me, not to resolve the tension or to make it go away, but to live with it in a more healthy way. Rather than using the tension in order to drink, I am more willing to let it be my "friend" in helping me say "no" and setting limits. With the help of my higher power, I can let go of my need to please or satisfy others. With grace, I can find real joy in the holiday times.



# The Importance of the Twelve Traditions

## Maintaining Integrity In the Face of Change

by D. K. of San Francisco

In the late 1930s and early 1940s, the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous experienced a period of extraordinary growth in its membership. As with any period of growth in any organization, there were many divergent ideas on how to maintain the integrity of the fellowship and to ensure unity among its members. The uniqueness of alcoholics – some call us a fellowship of non-conformists – made the defining of principles very difficult. It was obvious, however, that without the creation of some simple guidelines, our fellowship

that the new members arriving today will have the same solid fellowship that has allowed us to find our much-needed solution. Is it not the obligation of all our members to remain vigilant in our protection of these cherished principles? Principles that took years of painful trial and error to form and that have withstood the all-important test of time?

The fellowship today is experiencing the same dynamic growth that our forefathers experienced. Since the 1980s we have seen our numbers swell worldwide with alcoholics and “dual-diagnosed” members sent by



efforts. It is our responsibility to instruct and guide our new members on the importance of maintaining the fellowship as it has been outlined in the traditions ratified at the 1950 International Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous in Cleveland, Ohio. We the sober men and women of A.A. have a duty to stop what some perceive as a bending of the fellowship to fit the new people who join – and return to assisting the newcomers in adjusting to our time-tested way of doing things in A.A.

The fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous exists today because some of our members felt that the Twelve Traditions were important enough to fight for. Many of us are sober today because of the crusty old-timer sitting in the corner of the meeting that would not let the group stray from its primary purpose. It seems that as those old-timers begin to retire to that “big meeting in heaven,” we that remain need to step up and take their place in protecting the integrity of this life-saving fellowship.

*Some of our elder statesmen have begun to comment on how our meetings are becoming more about the feelings of the newcomers and less about the Fifth Tradition*

would surely perish. As Bill W. wrote in the 1946 pamphlet *A.A. Tradition – How It Developed*, “Without permanent unity we can offer little lasting relief to those scores of thousands yet to join us in their quest for freedom.” On p. 561 of the Big Book he expresses a similar sentiment: “We alcoholics see that we must work together and hang together, else most of us will finally die alone.” This was his motivation for the “Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous”, first published in the *Grapevine* by Bill W. in 1946.

The Twelve Traditions are intended to answer the questions “How can A.A. best function?” and “How can A.A. best stay whole and so survive?” Equally important, the traditions allow those of us who have been in A.A. for a period of time to ensure

the courts and institutions, in addition to people who have become aware of our program due to our increasingly high profile in today’s society. It has become even more important in these fast-changing times that we remember the traditions that have held us together for so long. Some of our elder statesmen have begun to comment on how our meetings are becoming more about the feelings of the newcomers and less about the Fifth Tradition, which may be doing a disservice to the very newcomers we are trying to reach.

Due to the sheer volume of new members, those of us who count ourselves among the lucky ones who have recovered from a hopeless state of mind and body should be even more conscious of our founders’



by Charley D.

*Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles above personalities.*

Tradition Twelve comes full circle to where the A.A. journey begins. At Step One, the alcoholic has admitted personal powerlessness over alcohol. That First Step, so difficult and demeaning, requires the suffering alcoholic to swallow pride and admit personal ineffectiveness. By trusting in a Higher Power and relying on fellow drunks for guidance and inspiration, the alcoholic can then find freedom from the urge to drink coupled with a new peace and happiness.

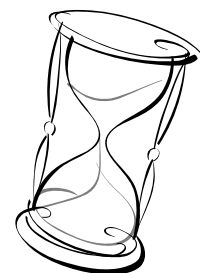
As Tradition Twelve states, that loss of self, even to the point of forsaking our own name, forms the spiritual basis of the program. While A.A. meetings give out chips or other mementos to mark the passage of time – a week, a year, a

decade – even decades of sobriety do not make an A.A. member any more accomplished, deserving, or powerful. A timid, reluctant newcomer nursing a hangover or even showing up to a meeting still buzzed from that last drink has status equal to the old timer. An old timer's sobriety gets measured in the same 24-hour increments and, in fact for most, requires constant re-visitation of Step One.

It's pointless to seek power in this fellowship because the fellowship itself disavows power over everything, even its members. The Twelve Steps themselves are but suggestions, not commandments. Members may accept them or not. A.A. has no leaders, no instructors, and certainly no graduates. Each member serves as teacher and pupil to her fellows. The principles of the program, anonymity first among them, count for everything. This fits closely with A.A.'s central purpose – not to make its present members

better, but to carry its message to the alcoholic, drinking or not, who still suffers. That means members focus on helping those who need help rather than on themselves. Paradoxically, that commitment to service makes it easier for A.A. members to stay sober.

With anonymity as a core principle, A.A. has no "type" or "personality." Rich, poor, old, young, gay, straight, drunk, sober, A.A. welcomes all. Step One suggests an admission of powerlessness as the first stride in recovery. Tradition Twelve reminds us we're never really through with Step One. To stay sober, we must embrace anonymity and continually put ourselves aside.



A police patrol car was parked outside a neighborhood tavern. Late in the evening, the officer in the car noticed a man who'd just left the bar weaving so badly he could barely walk.

The man stumbled around the parking lot for a few minutes, trying his keys on five vehicles, with the officer quietly observing. The man

managed to find his car. He fell into it, sitting for a few minutes, apparently in a stupor, as a number of other patrons left the bar and drove off.

Finally he started the car, switched the wipers on and off (it was a cloudless, dry night), then flicked the turn signal on, then off, tooted the horn and then switched on the headlights.

He moved the vehicle forward a few feet, reversed a little and then remained stationary for a few more minutes as some more vehicles left.

At last he pulled out and started to

drive slowly down the road.

The police officer, having patiently waited all this time, now started up the patrol car, put on the flashing lights, promptly pulled the man over and carried out a Breathalyzer test.

To his amazement the Breathalyzer indicated no evidence of the man's intoxication.

The police officer said "I'll have to ask you to accompany me to the police station - this breathalyzer equipment must be broken."

"I doubt it," said the man, "Tonight I'm the designated decoy."





## TRUSTED SERVANTS WORKSHOP COMMITTEE

by Gloria E.

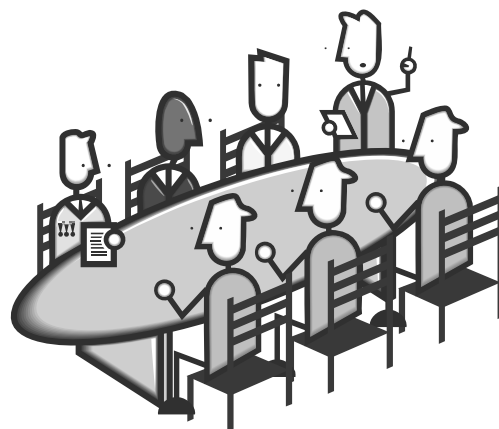
When I started to go to A.A. meetings, I was too defeated and depressed to have many questions. The question that dominated my mind was, “How am I going to not drink today?” Alongside that were, “What in the world happened to me?” and “Am I ever going to stop feeling so lousy?” A question I did not bother asking was, “What is that basket they are passing around, and where does the money go?” So, I just put in a buck and passed the basket along, because that’s what I saw everyone else doing. My willingness to conform to what the rest of the fellowship was doing is a gift that has saved me many times, and one that I’m very grateful for.

I made it past those first few months and, after a couple of years, was elected IFB representative. In that service position, I have been able to learn the answers to questions I didn’t even know to ask about the basket and the money that went in it. I am very grateful for all that A.A. has given me, but I had no idea of all the work that goes on beyond the meetings that I attend – how the schedule gets made and printed, who answers the phones 24 hours a day for anyone who needs help with their drinking problem, how our groups can easily go and get literature for their meetings.

After serving in the IFB for a bit, I joined a committee called the Trusted Servants Workshop Committee. It puts on workshops several times a year to help A.A.s understand and discuss the responsibilities involved in various service positions. When I was newly sober, such a workshop wouldn’t have held much interest for me. I would have been more interested in a workshop entitled, “How to Survive Sobriety” or “What To Do Now That You’re Not Drinking Ten Hours a Day.” But now, I am excited to go to a workshop about, for example, the treasurer position, because I realize what an important job it is. The treasurer is the person whose responsibility it is to make sure that the money that we put in the basket goes to the places the group has decided it should go. The treasurer makes sure the rent is paid so that we have a place to meet and are there for the newcomers who haven’t yet found a solution to their problem. The treasurer is responsible for sending the money to our Central Office and the New York office. This ensures that when an alcoholic in need of help reaches out, the hand of A.A. is there. I don’t want to imagine what would have happened if the first meeting I attended wasn’t there, or if there wasn’t a schedule where I could

look up meetings, or if there wasn’t “A Newcomer Asks” pamphlet to answer the questions I was too afraid to ask anyone else.

The longer I am sober, the more reverence I have for A.A. service. I want to know how best to guarantee that A.A. is available to anyone who



needs help, because A.A. was there when I needed it. So I’m going to keep learning all I can about how to be of service in A.A., and that includes how to be the best trusted servant (treasurer, meeting secretary, etc.) I can be. Our workshops include a panel of sober alcoholics who share their experience being trusted servants, followed by a potluck, and then a question and answer session.



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**PLEASE MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO: The Intercounty Fellowship of A.A.**

**MAIL CHECK TO: Central Office with this request for subscription to *The Point* — 1821 SACRAMENTO ST., SF CA 94109**

# Cycling Into Conscious Contact

## Connecting To the Present Moment

by Carlin H.

There was a time when I thought that “conscious contact” was something akin to hearing the voice of God in my head. (I grew up with movies such as DeMille’s *The Ten Commandments*). My current understanding is less dramatic and more achievable.

“Conscious contact” for me is the awareness of my connection with a reality larger than the one in my own mind. This larger reality can be my community, A.A., humanity at large, the Spirit of the Universe and/or God. Connection to it is the key to being able to live “life on life’s terms” in

These days I find that riding my bicycle is not only a healthy physical practice; it also provides clear metaphors for understanding what conscious contact is. For example, when I’m riding along in a dedicated bike lane, I need to pay attention to the truck that’s double-parked in my path, so I can adjust my course and go around it. But when I think I know how something ought to be, it can blind me to what is. If, instead of paying attention, I am attached to the sanctity of the bike lane, I’m likely to crash into the truck.

I also find guidance from the present moment when I have no idea what to do. Recently, I was riding for the first



*If I am truly present in each moment  
of my life, then I am connected to it.*

sobriety. It’s the core of a way of life that replaces the fearful, separate self that seeks relief in alcohol. It is what gives me power and keeps me going when the road is hard.

I believe that if I am truly present in each moment of my life, then I am connected to it. It means I am not in fantasy, obsession, fear or resentment. It means that I am not in some other place or time. If I am connected to the moment, then I am available to receive the information that exists in the totality of that moment to guide me to the next. I let go of the idea that I know something—including what my life should look like. I become aware of how many opportunities for gratitude there are in daily life.

time through the panhandle. At Stanyan Street, I realized that navigating the intersection was going to be particularly complex. As I started to try to “figure it out in my head” I saw that there were about half a dozen other cyclists also stopped at the light, and wearing the sort of attire that suggests serious cycling skill. It struck me that they probably knew what to do and that I could follow their example. I did, and it worked out well. Sound familiar?

Finally, I find numerous opportunities for practicing gratitude while cycling. There are many things in my life that I take for granted but would regret losing if they were taken away. I don’t want to wait until something “ordinary” is gone to realize its value,

so I try to be aware of how truly blessed I am. I start with the fact that I can ride at all at age 67, after crashing five years ago. Cycling in city traffic truly is an act of faith; there are so many near misses. I find myself saying “thank you” out loud for each averted crash, each smooth intersection, etc.

Am I fully present and grateful in every moment? Nope! But when I’m on my bike I practice – and that practice makes it possible to reach that ideal state elsewhere in my life. I have a friend who is fond of saying that if you want to build up your physical condition, you work out your body and if you want to develop your spiritual condition, it is likewise necessary to work out spiritually. I think it’s a win/win that I can do both at the same time.



# The Ritual of the \$2 Bill

by Ardis J.

Several years ago, I had the privilege of serving on the Intercounty Fellowship Board, specifically as a member of the search committee to locate a new Central Office. At that time, Central Office was struggling with expenses in excess of income from the groups located in San Francisco. The Marin County fellowship was sending Seventh Tradition money on a consistent and regular basis. The IFB suggested that members who could afford it should begin contributing \$2 to the basket.

As a member of A.A. and the IFB, I made a personal decision to do just that. I had been blessed with a new life and \$2 a day was but little in repayment for it. I went to my bank and

bought all the \$2 bills they had. It became a secret wish of mine that if everyone in A.A. would do the same, then soon \$2 bills would become common in San Francisco and Marin; each time one of us would get one in change, we would be reminded that another A.A. member had been there before us. (It might also confound the Federal Reserve.) To this day, my bank tellers save me their \$2 bills and have stopped asking what I do with them. (I told them I was repaying a debt.)

I did another thing to help with the Seventh Tradition. The group I was serving as the IFB rep was rarely self-supporting (which includes rent *and* contributions to Central Office). I asked for a group conscience and

from that day forward, we pass a second basket on the first Friday of every month directly for Central Office.

If your group is not supporting Central Office, you might want to follow our lead.

I remain grateful in sobriety and on the lookout for \$2 bills!

AP



## 'Twas the Night Before Christmas

'Twas the night before Christmas, we were all in the club,  
Enjoying a meeting, instead of a pub.  
The ashtrays were clean, and the coffee was made,  
The Big Books were out and we all had prayed.  
When out in the lot, there arose such a clatter,  
We all jumped up to see what was the matter.

The Chair with his Big Book, and I with my smokes,  
Headed outside to find these two blokes.  
They came inside and sat at a table,  
And said that they'd chair, as soon as they're able.

To start with, they said, "It's more than not drinking;  
It's doing your best to fix your sick thinking."  
"Think, Think, Think!" and the slogans we used,  
Help keep the newcomer from getting confused.  
Step One is a start, they said we should know,  
But after Step Two, we'll be all aglow.

We made a decision when we got to Step Three;  
Step Four was real tough, we all could agree.

Step Five is the one where we let it all out,  
And after Steps Six and Seven, we are left with no doubt.  
When we got to Step Eight, we made our list;  
And then with Step Nine, we have to persist.

After Step Nine, the promises ring true;  
We didn't just make that up, right out of the blue.  
After that, it's on with the rest;  
The things we must do, to be our best.

They put on their coats and got ready to leave;  
A pretty good end, for this Christmas Eve.  
As to their names, we only could guess;  
Must have been Bill W. and Dr. Bob S.

The two men hopped into a '35 Ford,  
And as they pulled out, one of them roared:  
"We leave this message, for our sisters & brothers:  
trust God, clean house, and be of service to others.  
And for all of you people, I just want to say:  
have a nice holiday, but don't drink today!"

AP



*This month we feature a query from a family member heading home for the holidays who will confront her “new, improved” parents. We also field a request for meeting schedule information on “dog friendly” meetings.*

**Dear Help,**

**My mom and dad are entering recovery for alcoholism. They are in Ohio. I heard that as a family member you are permitted to attend meetings to help the person who is recovering. I would like to attend meetings in San Francisco to help to prepare myself for when I go home to Ohio. I hear that it is good to get accounts of what to expect and how to treat a recovering alcoholic.**

**I know some meetings are closed and some are open. What is the normal protocol for family members who want to attend meetings? What are your thoughts?**

**Thanks,**

**Dutiful Daughter**

Dear D.D.,

You must be very pleased that your parents are going in to rehab.

Our website at [www.aasf.org](http://www.aasf.org) lists all the meetings in San Francisco and Marin. You are welcome to attend

any meeting unless it is specifically listed as "C" or "closed" (and unless it is a men's meeting and you are a woman).

Alcoholics Anonymous does not have an official policy on family members attending meetings, but my personal opinion is that you would find it interesting and that your parents would probably appreciate that you have made the effort to understand what A.A. is about.

If you would like to talk to a recovering alcoholic, you can call our Central Office at 415-674-1821. The volunteer who answers can help you find a meeting at a convenient time and location.

As for you and any other family members, there is a program for those affected by the alcoholism of family and friends. It is called Al-Anon. You may find it useful for yourself. The local phone number is 415-834-9940. That organization would be best suited to let you know what to expect when you next see your parents.

Best of luck.

Sincerely,

e-Volunteer

**Dear Central Office people,**

**Do you by chance have a list of meetings that are dog friendly that you could send me? If not, might I suggest that that might**

**be useful information for the next schedule publication.**

**Dog-lover**

Dear D-L,

I hope things are going well for you in A.A. and thank you for asking about the dog idea in the schedules. While many of us love dogs and think it might be helpful to put this information on the site, we decided that it would be up to each group individually to offer that information.

Many groups make an announcement about whether dogs are allowed at the beginning of the meeting, so it is a good idea to ask the secretary before bringing your dog to the meeting. Some facilities only allow tagged service animals, so it's good to ask. Group policy can be quite different from meeting to meeting. And remember, there are those with serious (even life-threatening) allergies to animals, so don't take anyone at a meeting by surprise with your dog. And some members find animals as distracting as others find children.

e-Volunteer



# Meet THE MEETING

by Kristen E.

"Welcome to the best meeting in San Francisco." More than one elected secretary of the "How Was Your Week?" 10AM Saturday group has opened the meeting with this statement, and many of us who consider it our home group agree. It's hard to say *why*, exactly, but I suppose when you find a meeting you consider your home group, this is how you hope to feel.

Ever since I have been attending it (roughly four years), it has been a "beginner's meeting." The fact that it's listed that way in the schedule means we get our fair share of newcomers entering the rooms, and newcomers – as those of us who have been around just long enough to know – are like gold. Their presence is bolstered by a number of regular attendees with double-digit sobriety who keep everyone on the right track and firmly rooted in the "solution."

A raw honesty runs through this meeting. "There's no bullshit here," as one member says. The meeting is organized as topic/discussion, with the topic determined by the first couple of people who raise their

hands. This format often lends itself to an informal help-response kind of structure: the person who selects the topic is often (though not always) struggling with something, and asks the group to share about how to deal with it. The next hour is then filled with different people's solutions – or similar struggles – on that one topic.

At 45 minutes past the hour, the discussion stops to hand out chips. "How Was Your Week?" offers chips every single month for the first year of sobriety, and multiples of a year afterward. I first came to this meeting in my early sobriety, and there was something about being able to raise my hand every fourth meeting, announce my birthday and collect my chip, that made me want to keep coming back.

The very first time I attended, the woman who held the "chip person" commitment shared about having gone out recently, and how she was struggling to stay in the rooms. The following Saturday she was dead – and now her name is stenciled in red letters on top of the chip box. I assumed the chip commitment not long after that – and seeing her name on top of that box every week helped to remind me of how lucky I was to

be there, even when I didn't feel like smiling or hugging anyone.

There are some long-standing rituals in this meeting. Brian, whenever he is in town, reads from "More About Alcoholism" (pages 30-31 of the Big Book). When he reaches the part about "taking a trip" or "not taking a trip," we yell those words with him. We also yell in concert that, "we could increase the list ad infinitum."

More important is the ritual of fellowship after the meeting. A group of between five and fifteen of us regularly storm a nearby restaurant on Lombard Street for a long brunch filled with loud laughter. The owners know us, put up with us, and ask about us if we don't show up for a week or two.

Along with the honesty that accompanies true recovery, "How Was Your Week?" celebrates the joy of being alive: we are *not* a glum lot, not us. We're loud, irreverent, and, most of the time we're happy to be there, even when we're not happy. This is what keeps me coming back.

*"How Was Your Week?" meets every Saturday at 10AM at The Dry Dock, 2118 Greenwich St. at Fillmore.*



## How Was Your Week?

## CAPRICORN (Dec 22 - Jan 19)



Capricorn is usually described as practical, steadfast, money-hungry and status-thirsty -- no wonder they get left off the astrological cocktail-party list.

But this is the sign of David Bowie and Annie Lennox, not to mention Elvis. Capricorn is the true rock star: independent, powerful and seriously charismatic, not

too eager to please. And if they make money being themselves, who are you to quibble?

But just like most rock stars, they're either totally on or totally off, and they generally need a little social lubricant to loosen up and enjoy the after party, especially if they can hook up with a cute groupie.

# IFB meeting summary—November 2010

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

The following meetings (and *service entities*) have registered Intergroup Representatives who attended the last IFB meeting. If your meeting was not represented, consider electing an Intergroup (IFB) Representative and /or an alternate so your meeting is effectively represented

Any Lengths	Early Start	High Sobriety	Mill Valley 7am	Sunday Night Castro SD	Women's Promises
Attitude Adjustment	Embarcadero Group	Join the Tribe	Mission Terrace	Ten Years After	
Blackie's Pleasure	Friday All Groups	Living Sober With HIV	Nativity Big Book	Tuesday Newcomers	<i>General Service San Mateo</i>
Blue Book Special	Happy, Joyous and Free	Marina Discussion	Say Hey	Valencia Smokefree	<i>Marin Teleservices</i>
Cow Hollow Men's	High Noon (Monday)	Men's Gentle Touch	SFPOA	Walk of Shame	<i>Marin H &amp; I</i>
Each Day a New Beg.	High Noon (Thursday)	Mid Morning Support	Steppin' Up	Women Who Drank Too Much	

This is an unofficial summary of the November 2010 IFB 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 "IFB" on our website.

The purpose of the Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous is to carry on the movement of Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.) in keeping with the intent and spirit of the Fellowship as exemplified in the books *Alcoholics Anonymous*, *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, and *Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age*.

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

The monthly IFB meeting was held on Wednesday, November 3, 2010 at St. Andrew Presbyterian Church, 101 Donahue St., Marin City, CA. Next month's meeting is Wednesday, December 1, 2010, 7—9 PM at First Unitarian Universalist Church, 1187 Franklin at O'Farrell, SF, CA.

For info call Central Office, 674-18.21, or email [aa@aasf.org](mailto:aa@aasf.org)

## IFB Reports

**Central Office Committee:** COC spent most of last meeting previewing the first draft of proposed 2011 budget. Full report online.

**Treasurer's Report:** Complete report and financials are available online. Total income for September was just under \$14K, with group contributions lower than the budget. YTD income was \$173K, compared

to projected income of \$143K. Expenses for Sept were \$18K, slighter better than budgeted expenses of \$20K. YTD expenses were \$176K, slightly more than budgeted expenses of \$174K. Had projected a -\$28K net loss by now, so much more favorable. Timing differences in monthly expenses sometimes show up as variances, corrected over the year. Prudent reserve is still the same as level that was increased to in June. We're in process of finalizing the 2011 IFB budget to be presented in December, 2010. A request goes out to committees to submit requests right away for proposed budget items for the upcoming year. Questions? Contact [treasurer@aasf.org](mailto:treasurer@aasf.org)

**Central Office Manager:** There are a couple of open phone shifts; IFB members encouraged to do some one-on-one recruiting to fill the spots available. CO will be closed Thursday November 11, and Thursday-Friday, Nov. 25th and 26th; Teleservice volunteers to cover phone shifts during these closures.

## Liaison Reports

**San Mateo General Service:** Everyone is invited to an Alcolthon, in Belmont November 24-26 starting noon with round-the-clock meetings. NCCAA conference is planned for March, 2011.

**ICYPAA (International Conference of Young People in AA):** One of ICYPAA's goals is to keep IFB informed about events and coordination between the organizations. They are co-hosting event with ACYPAA November 20th; Strobe light Dodge ball (see [acypaa.org](http://acypaa.org)). There will be a New Year's bash with speaker meeting, entertainment and dance until 2:00 am. The 53rd

ICYPAA will be on Labor Day weekend, location TBD. Jeff explains difference in the following organizations: ACYPAA: All California Young People in Alcoholics Anonymous; WACYPA: Western Area Conference of Young People in AA, covers western regional states; ICYPAA: International Conference of Young People in AA

**Marin H&I:** Meets every 2nd Tuesday 6:15, Marin Alano Club.

**SF H&I:** presented by Michael P.: The November business meeting, usually the last Thursday of the month, will be at Unity Day this month. December meeting will be on the 16th, at the regular meeting location at Sacramento and Van Ness. SF H&I Has published a budget.

## Unfinished Business

**Commemorative plaque:** Goal is to place a plaque to commemorate the site of the 1st A.A. meeting on West Coast. The home owners have been contacted, appear to be in favor and suggest placement of the plaque on a post outside.

**ASL Request Policy:** Final draft presentation. The Access Committee was requested to look at the policy for managing ASL interpreters for meetings, and to clarify the processes involved. The policy is not about budget, rather about how the money is spent to manage ASL interpretation at SF and Marin meetings. The motion was presented, seconded and, after discussion, the motion carried.

**Announcement:** There will be a third legacy vote next month for selection of Central Office Committee member to replace Michael S. Any questions regarding the position please contact Michael P.,

## Individual Contributions

to Central Office were made through November 15, 2010  
honoring the following members:

### ONGOING MEMORIALS

Conrad G., Dick O'L., Lyle W.

### ANNIVERSARIES

**Firefighters & Friends:** Shirley K. 42 years

**Novato Fellowship:** Kathryn M. 30 years

Laura B. 25 years

**High Sobriety:** Ken J. 25 years

**Newcomers Tues 8pm:** Brad T. 16 years

(email [chair@aasf.org](mailto:chair@aasf.org))

**Committee Focus:** Each month the IFB profiles some of its committees.

**Access Committee:** Mission is to explore, develop and offer resources to make the A.A. message available to everyone who reaches out for it. AC meets every first Tuesday at Central Office. 1 of 5 are with, and soon 1 of 4 persons will be with disabilities in US. Website: Michael P. has done an incredible job in making the [aasf.org](http://aasf.org) accessible! From Homepage click on icon that says accessibility, it brings up lists, etc.

**Outreach Committee:** A large part of what the OC does is maintain an up to date list of A.A. meetings in SF and Marin. Meetings are usually verified by registering, buying literature or making contributions. If none of those things happen in a year, OC will do the footwork and find the meeting or group to see if still exists. It's suggested that we check with our own meetings to see if the trusted servants are registered, if group is making contributions, if the online and published schedule is correct, etc. (Everyone can check the meeting schedule online, click on address

of meeting in meeting list for SF and Marin to see above details.) OC is also trying to increase participation in IFB. The OC meets on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at Central Office. Next on November 16.

**The Buzz:** The Buzz is an electronic newsletter for A.A. in SF and Marin published every other week. The Buzz welcomes more information to make the publication more robust, and is interested in learning how forthcoming issues might be expanded. (Some weeks lighter than others) Just over 1000 people are sent The Buzz. If interested you can sign up to receive it online, or contact email [thebuzz@aasf.org](mailto:thebuzz@aasf.org)

Next month we'll present Central Office Committee, Sunshine Club and the Archives Committee.

**STANDING REQUEST:** Let your groups know about IFB membership opportunities- great service - 1 year sobriety recommended. Many committees need members. Orientation precedes the monthly IFB meeting - 6 PM the first Wednesday of each month.

## COMMITTEE CONTACTS

The following is a list of names and email addresses for IFB Officers and for most of the IFB committees. If you are interested in doing service on a committee, or if you wish to receive more information about a committee, please email that committee at the address.

### INTERGROUP OFFICERS:

#### CHAIR

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

#### VICE CHAIR

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

#### TREASURER

Dashiell T. [treasurer@aasf.org](mailto:treasurer@aasf.org)

#### RECORDING SECRETARY

Thayer W. [secretary@aasf.org](mailto:secretary@aasf.org)

### COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

#### CENTRAL OFFICE COMMITTEE

Margaret J. [coc@aasf.org](mailto:coc@aasf.org)

#### 12th STEP COMMITTEE

Gloria E. [12thstep@aasf.org](mailto:12thstep@aasf.org)

#### ARCHIVES COMMITTEE

Tracy F. [archives@aasf.org](mailto:archives@aasf.org)

#### ORIENTATION COMMITTEE

Ted R. [orientation@aasf.org](mailto:orientation@aasf.org)

#### FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

Virginia M. [fellowship@aasf.org](mailto:fellowship@aasf.org)

#### THE BUZZ

Celia H. & Li L. [thebuzz@aasf.org](mailto:thebuzz@aasf.org)

#### THE POINT

Charley D. [thepoint@aasf.org](mailto:thepoint@aasf.org)

#### ACCESS COMMITTEE

Muriel P. [access@aasf.org](mailto:access@aasf.org)

#### TRUSTED SERVANTS

#### WORKSHOP COMMITTEE

Ted R. [tsw@aasf.org](mailto:tsw@aasf.org)

#### WEBSITE COMMITTEE

David S. [website@aasf.org](mailto:website@aasf.org)

#### PI/CPC COMMITTEE

Glen R. [picpc@aasf.org](mailto:picpc@aasf.org)

#### SF TELESERVICE COMMITTEE

Seth H. [sfteleservice@aasf.org](mailto:sfteleservice@aasf.org)

## November was Gratitude Month ~

Many groups passed a second collection basket during the month of November and will send these contributions directly to Central Office. We are sincerely appreciative of Gratitude Month contributions which allow us to fulfill our mission of assisting the alcoholic who still suffers. If your group chose to participate, please go ahead and send the contributions in now. If you would still like to make an Individual or Group Gratitude Month contribution, please mark your checks accordingly (i.e. "Gratitude Month 2010") THANK YOU!



# aa group contributions

Fellowship Contributions	Sept. '10	YTD
Anonymous	\$ 500	
Brisbane Breakfast Bunch	\$ 40	\$ 254
Contribution Box	\$ 63	\$ 703
Deer Park Discovery Group	\$ 30	
From the Start to the Finish	\$ 120	
Gay & Lesbian Friday Nights	\$ 20	
Gay Newcomers Group	\$ 20	
General Service District 11	\$ 19	
H&I (Marin)	\$ 160	
IFB	\$ 101	\$ 961
MCYPAA	\$ 250	
Pax West M 12pm	\$ 243	
San Francisco Young People in A.A.	\$ 800	
Serenity House	\$ 150	\$ 1,200
Sunset Group (Napa)	\$ 18	
TSWC	\$ 55	\$ 55
<b>Total Fellowship Contributions</b>	<b>\$ 409</b>	<b>\$ 5,353</b>

Marin Contributions	Sept. '10	YTD
12 & 12 Study Sa 815am	\$ 557	
7am Urgent Care Group 7D 7am	\$ 500	
A Vision for You Su 730pm	\$ 63	
Attitude Adjustment 7D 7am	\$ 1,782	
Awakenings Sa 830am	\$ 86	
Awareness/Acceptance M 1030am	\$ 155	
Be Still AA Su 12pm	\$ 46	
Beginners & Closed Tu 7pm & 830pm	\$ 410	
Blackie's Pasture Sa 830pm	\$ 296	
Caledonia Sun 8pm	\$ 250	
Closed Women Step Study Tu 330pm	\$ 324	
Cover to Cover W 800pm	\$ 197	
Creskide New Growth Sun 7pm	\$ 186	
Crossroads Sun 12pm	\$ 1,288	
Day At A Time 7D 630am	\$ 702	
Downtown Mill Valley F 830pm	\$ 343	
East San Rafael Big Book	\$ 130	
Experience, Strength & Hope Sa 6pm	\$ 50	
Four Horsemen Thu 7pm	\$ 25	
Freedom Finders F 830pm	\$ 321	
Friday Night Book F 830pm	\$ 247	
Friday Night Gay Men's Stag F 830pm	\$ 96	
Girls Night Out W 815pm	\$ 125	
Gratitude Tu 8pm	\$ 700	
Greenfield Newcomers Sun 7pm	\$ 790	
Happy Destiny F 7pm	\$ 83	
Happy Hour (Marin) Th 6pm	\$ 50	
Happy, Joyous & Free 5D 12pm	\$ 1,250	
High & Dry W 12pm	\$ 285	
Intimate Feelings Sa 10am	\$ 223	
Inverness Sunday Serenity Su 10am	\$ 140	
Island Group Th 8pm	\$ 244	
Living in the Solution F 6pm	\$ 267	
Marin City Groups 5D 630pm	\$ 278	
Marin Young People F 830pm	\$ 30	

Marin Contributions	Sept. '10	YTD
Mill Valley 7D 7am	\$ 2,218	
Mill Valley Discussion W 830pm	\$ 361	
Monday Blues M 630pm	\$ 432	
Monday Night Stag (Tiburon) 8pm	\$ 905	
Monday Night Women's M 8pm	\$ 501	
Monday Nooners M 12pm	\$ 743	
Morning Attitude Adjustment	\$ 228	
Nativity Monday Night Big Book M 8pm	\$ 200	
Newcomers Step M 730pm	\$ 629	
Noon Hope F 12pm	\$ 276	\$ 465
Novato Basics Tu 8pm	\$ 100	\$ 450
Novato Monday Stag M 8pm	\$ 300	
Off Broadway Book Th 730pm	\$ 6	
On Awakening 7D 530am	\$ 525	
Pathfinders Tu 12pm	\$ 364	
Primary Purpose W 830pm	\$ 280	
Quilting Time MWF 530pm	\$ 100	
Refugee Th 12pm	\$ 340	
Reveille 5D 7am	\$ 900	
Rise N Shine Sun 10am	\$ 150	\$ 692
San Geronimo Valley Book Study F 8pm	\$ 140	
San Geronimo Valley M 8pm	\$ 66	\$ 138
Saturday Women's Speaker Sa 6pm	\$ 240	
Sausalito 12 Step Study Group	\$ 196	
Serendipity Sa 11am	\$ 282	
Serenity Sun 6pm	\$ 71	
Sisters In Sobriety Th 730pm (M)	\$ 55	
Six O'Clock Sunset Th 6pm	\$ 466	
Sober & Serene F 7pm	\$ 531	
Spiritual Testost. Sun Men's Stag Su 830a	\$ 460	
Steps to Freedom M 730pm	\$ 144	
Steps To The Solution W 715pm	\$ 304	
Stinson Beach Fellowship Th 8pm	\$ 100	
Streelfighters Sa 9am	\$ 43	
Sunday Express Sun 6pm	\$ 350	
Sunday Friendship Sun 7pm	\$ 200	
Sunday Night Corte Madera Sun 8pm	\$ 200	
Sunlight of the Spirit Th 7pm	\$ 150	
T.G.I.F. F 6pm	\$ 309	
Terra Linda Group Th 830pm	\$ 250	
The Fearless Searchers F 8pm	\$ 38	
There is a Solution Tu 6pm	\$ 199	
Thursday Night Book Club Th 7pm	\$ 107	
Thursday Night Speaker Th 830pm	\$ 863	\$ 2,914
Tiburon Beginners & Closed Tu	\$ 505	
Tiburon Haven Sun 12pm	\$ 474	
Tiburon Women's Candlelight W 8pm	\$ 148	
Tuesday Twelve Step Tu 630pm	\$ 60	
Unidentified Group	\$ 98	
We, Us and Ours M 650pm	\$ 260	
Wednesday Night Candlelight W 8pm	\$ 296	
Wednesday Night Speaker Discussion	\$ 32	
Wednesday Sundowners W 6pm	\$ 126	
What's It All About F 12pm	\$ 300	\$ 500

San Francisco Contributions	Sept. '10	YTD
Women For Women W 12pm	\$ 100	
Women on Monday M 7pm	\$ 85	
Women Who Drank Too Much M 730pm	\$ 219	
Women's Big Book Tu 1030am	\$ 400	\$ 1,005
Women's Meeting Su 430pm	\$ 142	
Women's Step Study Group M 12pm	\$ 200	
Working Dogs W 1205pm	\$ 250	\$ 1,156
Young People's Chopsticks	\$ 61	\$ 61
<b>Marin Total</b>	<b>\$2,465</b>	<b>\$ 36,504</b>

San Francisco Contributions	Sept. '10	YTD
10 AM Dry Dock Fellowship 7D 10am	\$ 119	
130 PM Dry Dock Fellowship 5D 130pm	\$ 67	
330 PM Dry Dock Fellowship 7D 330pm	\$ 67	
10am Step Study M 10am	\$ 78	
130 PM Dry Dock Fellowship 5D 130pm	\$ 50	
330 PM Dry Dock Fellowship 7D 330pm	\$ 50	
330 Smokeless W	\$ 28	
515pm Smokeless Tu	\$ 8	
515pm Smokeless W	\$ 30	
6am Dry Dock 7D	\$ 53	
6am Dry Dock Sa	\$ 165	
6am Dry Dock Th	\$ 35	
6am Dry Dock W	\$ 412	
7am As Bill Sees It Fri	\$ 50	\$ 155
7am Grab Bag M 7am	\$ 46	\$ 46
7am Living Sober W 7am	\$ 71	
7am Smokeless Sa 7am	\$ 43	
7am Speaker Discussion Th 7am	\$ 211	
7am Step Discussion Tu 7am	\$ 46	\$ 46
830am Smokeless F 830am	\$ 455	
830pm Smokeless W 830pm	\$ 20	
A is for Alcohol Tu 6pm	\$ 78	\$ 132
A New Start F 830pm	\$ 1,127	
A Vision for You (SF) Su 630pm	\$ 100	
AA Step Study Su 6pm	\$ 129	
Acceptance Group M 530pm	\$ 101	
Afro American Beginners Sat 8pm	\$ 41	
Afro American F 8pm	\$ 35	
After Work M 6PM	\$ 180	
Agnostics & Freethinkers Su 630pm	\$ 157	\$ 157
All Together Now Th 8pm	\$ 38	
Alumni W 830pm	\$ 295	
Artists & Writers F 630pm	\$ 554	
As Bill Sees It Sat 8pm	\$ 102	
As Bill Sees It Th 6pm	\$ 455	
As Bill Sees It Th 830pm	\$ 143	
As Bill Sees It Tu 1210pm	\$ 133	
Ass in a Bag Th 830pm	\$ 478	
Be Still AA Su 12pm	\$ 256	
Beginner Big Book Step Th 630pm	\$ 77	
Beginners 12 x 12 F 7pm	\$ 720	
Beginners Meeting (Old Sutter St) Sat 6pm	\$ 706	
Beginners' Step Study Sat 630pm	\$ 141	\$ 575



San Francisco Contributions	Sept. '10	YTD	San Francisco Contributions	Sept. '10	YTD	San Francisco Contributions	Sept. '10	YTD
Beginner's Warmup W 6pm	\$	126	Happy Hour Ladies Night F 530pm	\$	136	Room to Grow F 8pm	\$	258
Bernal Big Book Sat 5pm	\$	190	High Noon Friday 1215pm	\$	568	Rule 62 W 10pm	\$	85
Bernal New Day 7D	\$	1,822	High Noon Saturday 1215pm	\$	206	Saturday Afternoon Meditation Sat 5pm	\$	260
Big Book Basics F 8pm	\$	298	High Noon Sunday 1215p	\$	60	Saturday Beginners Sat 6pm	\$	372
Big Book Beginners F 105pm	\$	79	High Noon Thursday 1215pm	\$	337	Saturday Easy Does It Sa 12pm	\$	466
Big Book Study Su 1130am	\$	379	High Noon Tuesday 1215pm	\$ 63	\$ 820	Saturday Night Regroup Sat 730pm	\$ 216	\$ 958
Blue Book Special Su 11am	\$	307	High Noon Wednesday 1215pm	\$	210	Say Hey Group M, Tu, F 6pm	\$	442
Buena Vista Breakfast Su 12pm	\$	129	High Sobriety M 8pm	\$ 388	\$ 388	Second Chance Th 215pm	\$	28
By the Book Sa 10am	\$ 22	\$ 22	Hilldwellers M 8pm	\$	325	Serenity House	\$	150
Came To Believe Su 830am	\$	183	How Was Your Week? Sa 10am	\$	1,344	Serenity in the Park W 7pm	\$	66
Came to Park Sat 7pm	\$	866	Huntington Square W 630pm	\$	334	Serenity Seekers M 730pm	\$	226
Castro Discussion (Show Of Shows)	\$	415	Join the Tribe Tu 7pm	\$ 240	\$ 575	Sesame Step Tu 730pm	\$	108
Castro Monday Big Book M 830pm	\$	115	Joys of Recovery Tu 8pm	\$	29	Shamrocks & Serenity M 730pm	\$	895
Chips Ahoy Tu 12pm	\$	106	Just Alkies F 7pm	\$ 50	\$ 175	Sinbar Su 830pm	\$	264
Closed Women Step Study Tu 330pm	\$	139	Keep Coming Back Sa 11am	\$ 831	\$ 1,163	Sisters Circle Su 6pm	\$	162
Cocoonuts Su 9am	\$	60	Light Brigade Discussion Su 7pm	\$	193	Sober 5150's W 8pm	\$	69
Code Blue Big Book Study W 7pm	\$	232	Like A Prayer Su 4pm	\$	100	Sober Across the Board M-Sa 830am	\$	133
Common Welfare Th 8pm	\$	151	Lincoln Park Sat 830pm	\$	92	Sober at State MW 1210pm	\$ 40	\$ 55
Cow Hollow Men's Group W 8pm	\$	481	Live and Let Live Su 8pm	\$	1,030	Sobriety & Beyond W 7pm	\$	90
Dark Secrets F 10pm	\$	71	Living Proof Th 630pm	\$	49	Sometimes Slowly Sa 11am	\$ 176	\$ 707
Design for Living Sat 8am	\$ 181	\$ 581	Living Sober W 8pm	\$	415	Sought to Improve Th 730pm	\$	60
Diamond Heights Tu 830pm	\$	258	Living Sober with HIV W 6pm	\$	671	Sp. Founded Prog. Of Action (SFPOA)	\$	637
Doin' the Deal Sun 10pm	\$ 120	\$ 206	Luke's Group W 7pm	\$	135	Step Talk Su 830am	\$	952
Each Day a New Beginning F 7am	\$	1,898	Luke's Group W 8pm	\$	70	Steppin' Up Tu 630pm	\$	214
Each Day a New Beginning M 7am	\$	541	Lush Lounge Sa 2pm	\$	205	Stepping Out Sat 6pm	\$	154
Each Day A New Beginning Su 8am	\$	903	Meeting Place Noon F 12pm	\$	402	Stonestown M 8pm	\$ 110	\$ 210
Each Day a New Beginning Th 7am	\$	804	Meeting Place Noon W 12pm	\$	356	Straight Jackets Th 9am	\$	26
Each Day a New Beginning Tu 7am	\$	748	Mid-Morning Support Su 1030am	\$	1,189	Sunday Bookworms Sun 730pm	\$ 124	\$ 244
Each Day a New Beginning W 7am	\$	299	Midnight Meditation Sat 12am	\$	122	Sunday Morning Gay Men's Stag	\$	1,440
Early Start F 6pm	\$1,134	\$ 2,339	Miracle (Way) Off 24th St W 730pm	\$	268	Sunday Night 3rd Step Group 5pm	\$	1,014
Embarcadero Group 5D 1210pm	\$	1,359	Mission Terrace W 8pm	\$	60	Sunday Night Castro Speaker Disc	\$	134
Eureka Step Tu 6pm	\$	165	Monday Beginners M 8pm	\$	400	Sunday Night Castro Speaker Disc	\$	431
Eureka Valley Topic M 6pm	\$ 258	\$ 835	Monday Men's Meeting M 8pm	\$	485	Sunday Rap Sun 8pm	\$	360
Excelsior "Scent" Free for All Sa 8pm	\$	252	Monday Monday M 1215pm	\$	171	Sunday Silence Su 730pm	\$ 40	\$ 90
Extreme Makeover M 730pm	\$	169	Moving Toward Serenity W 830pm	\$	376	Sundown W 7pm	\$	422
Faith, Hope & Charity F 12pm	\$	168	New Life W 7pm	\$	345	Sunrise Sunset Women's Step	\$	236
Federal Speaker Su 12pm	\$	244	Newcomers Tu 8pm	\$	667	Sunset 11'ers F	\$	100
Fell Street F 830pm	\$	137	No Reservation M 12pm	\$	1,103	Sunset 11'ers Sa	\$	397
Fell Street Step Su 8pm	\$	169	Noon Smokeless F 12pm	\$	279	Sunset 11'ers W	\$ 80	\$ 284
Firefighters & Friends Tu 10am	\$	588	Noon Smokeless M 12pm	\$	29	Sunset 9'ers M	\$	72
Fireside Chat Group Th 8pm	\$	204	Noon Smokeless W 12pm	\$	255	Sunset 9'ers Sa	\$	78
Fireside Chat Group Tu 8pm	\$	176	Off Broadway Book Th 730pm	\$ 15	\$ 81	Sunset 9'ers Su	\$	571
Friday All Groups F 830pm	\$	569	One Liners Th 830pm	\$	447	Sunset 9'ers Th	\$	133
Friday at Five F 5pm	\$	35	One, Two, Three, Go! W 1pm	\$	10	Sunset 9'ers Tu	\$	2
Friday Lunchtime Step F 12pm	\$	222	Our Morning Meditations Sa 715am	\$	25	Sunset 9'ers W	\$	238
Friday Night Women's Meeting	\$ 52	\$ 52	Parkside Th 830pm	\$	457	Sunset Speaker Step Sun 730pm	\$	219
Friday Smokeless F 830pm	\$	195	Pax West M 12pm	\$	650	Surf Tu 8pm	\$ 105	\$ 706
Friday Smokeless F 8pm	\$	245	Pax West Th 12pm	\$	443	Ten Years After Su 6pm	\$	1,483
Friendly Circle Beginners Su 715pm	\$ 36	\$ 340	Potrero Hill 12 x 12 M 630pm	\$	67	The 12 Schleppers Th 8pm	\$	80
Full Flight From Reality Sa 1230pm	\$	129	Queers, Crackpots & Fallen Women	\$	180	The Lads Fr 730pm	\$	307
Gold Mine Group M 8pm	\$	325	Rebound W 830pm	\$	60	The Parent Trap 2 Wed. 430pm	\$	113
Haight Street Blues Tu 615pm	\$	424	Relapses, Rebounds, Retreads...	\$ 344	\$ 428	The Parent Trap M 1230pm	\$	153
Haight Street Explorers Th 630pm	\$	265	Richmond Step Study M 730pm	\$	86	The Pepper Group F 12pm	\$	100
Happy Destiny Sa 630pm	\$	38	Rigorous Honesty Th 1205pm	\$	215	They Don't Know Who We Are Sat 7pm	\$	225

# profit and loss statement: September 2010

	Sep 10	Budget	Jan - Sep 10	Budget		Sep 10	Budget	Jan - Sep 10	Budget
Ordinary Income/Expense					IFB Literature	232	0	315	180
Income					PI/CPC	0	0	70	480
Contributions from Groups	9,430	11,024	121,301	104,399	Filing/Fees	0	0	0	118
Contributions from Individuals	1,964	962	22,367	13,167	Insurance	0	0	1,740	901
Gratitude Month	0	0	4,215	3,139	Internet Expense	127	119	1,077	1,071
Sales - Bookstore	8,821	7,254	84,682	78,943	Office Supplies	152	170	2,107	1,530
Sales - Bookstore	8,799	7,244	84,414	78,621	Paper Purchased	0	208	2,166	1,872
Newsletter Subscript.	22	10	269	322	Software Purchased	0	96	410	288
Cost of Goods Sold					Shipping	50	21	86	189
Inventory Adjustments	0		(192)		Printing	38	0	38	0
Cost of Books Sold - Shipping	42	12	304	223	Equipment Lease	0	0	4,700	4,638
Cost of Books Sold	6,179	4,998	56,327	54,248	Repair & Maintenance	254	226	2,330	2,277
Credit Card Processing Fees	302	185	2,571	2,012	Security System	118	175	354	377
Cost of Books Sold	(6,523)	(5,195)	(59,009)	(56,483)	Payroll Expenses	5	5	39	45
Total Income	\$13,692	\$14,045	\$173,556	\$143,165	Telephone	0	256	2,240	2,304
Gross Profit	20,215	19,240	180,079	148,360	Phone Book Listings	0	84	779	756
Expense					Travel	577	93	1,138	505
Sunshine Club	0	0	20	684	Training	0	0	20	20
Archives Committee	0	0	140	0	Bad Checks	0	0	45	12
IFB Sponsored Events	0	0	834	1,211	Miscellaneous Ex- pense	0	0	0	0
Reconciliation Discrepancies	0	0	(179)	0	Total Expense	\$18,403	\$20,136	\$175,934	\$173,601
Employee Expenses	12,283	12,374	111,403	104,049	Net Ordinary Loss	-\$4,711	-\$6,091	-\$2,378	-\$30,436
Professional Fees	0	1,000	413	2,124	Other Income/Expense				
Bank Charges	0	0	15	0	Other Income				
Postage	0	0	663	864	Interest Income	\$65	\$271	\$2,442	\$2,439
Rent - Office	4,493	4,493	40,439	40,437	Total Other Income	\$65	\$271	\$2,442	\$2,439
Rent - Other	75	150	675	675	Interest Income	\$65	\$271	\$2,442	\$2,439
Access Expenses	0	666	1,859	5,994	Net Income (Loss)	-\$4,645	-\$5,820	\$64	-\$27,997
IFB Literature	232	0	315	180					

## group contributions, cont.

San Francisco Contributions	Sept. '10	YTD	San Francisco Contributions	Sept. '10	YTD	San Francisco Contributions	Sept. '10	YTD
They Stopped In Time M 8pm	\$ 47		Twelve Steps to Happiness F 730pm	\$ 71		Wombley's Clapboard Factory	\$ 4	
Thursday Morning Men's BB Study	\$ 250	\$ 825	Unidentified Group	\$ 77		Women Living Sober Sa 10am	\$ 60	\$ 240
Thursday Night Women's Th 630pm	\$ 308	\$ 626	Valencia Smokefree F 6pm	\$ 194	\$ 518	Women Who Drank Too Much	\$ 22	
Thursday's Children Th 515pm	\$ 36		Veterans' Coffee Break W 1030am	\$ 9		Women's 10 Years Plus Th 615pm	\$ 521	
Too Early Sat 8am	\$ 1,823		Walk of Shame W 8pm	\$ 159		Women's Kitchen Table Tu 630pm	\$ 6	\$ 671
Trudgers Discussion Su 7pm	\$ 180		Waterfront Sun 8pm	\$ 195	\$ 811	Women's Meeting There is a Solution	\$ 552	
Tuesday Big Book Study Tu 6pm	\$ 180		We Care Tu 12pm	\$ 361		Women's Promises F 7pm	\$ 225	\$ 717
Tuesday Downtown Tu 8pm	\$ 64		Wednesday Morning Men's Meeting	\$ 146		Work In Progress Sat 7pm	\$ 1,093	
Tuesday Men's Pax Tu 12pm	\$ 384		West Portal W 8pm	\$ 315		YAHOO Step Sa 1130am	\$ 337	
Tuesday Night Step Tu 7pm	\$ 22		Wharfrats Th 815pm	\$ 24	\$ 263	<b>San Francisco Total</b>	<b>\$6,556</b>	<b>\$79,445</b>
Tuesday Women's Tu 630pm	\$ 30		What It's Like Now M 6pm	\$ 152	\$ 245			
Tuesday's Daily Reflections Tu 7am	\$ 247		Wits End Step Study Tu 8pm	\$ 94		<b>YTD</b>	<b>\$9,430</b>	<b>\$121,302</b>

# Counting To Seven

## The Meditation of Spiritual Connection

by Bree L.

As I was looking at yet another unexciting A.A. birthday, I decided it might be good to have a sponsor closer to home – someone who went to some of my same meetings.

This new sponsor encouraged me to meditate. She said, “Prayer is talking to your HP; meditation is listening.” She challenged me to hear what my head was telling me.

In earlier times, Southern Comfort calmed my nerves and helped me sleep – but sleep required larger and larger glasses, so I signed onto A.A. My easy fix of Southern Comfort, I realized, was not really an option. However, I was still an alcoholic and figured

maybe this meditation stuff would help. My sponsor reported good results. Who knew? It might even be a bit like my old Southern Comfort standby.

So I decided to give it a try. Should I pray while I sat quietly? But she said praying would be talking to my HP, not listening – even when I knew a raft of some real kick-ass prayers. So the plan was just to sit there and listen. She suggested I count my

breaths up to seven, and then start over – but the deal was that if I thought of anything other than “listening” (such as my children or the plants that needed watering or what to cook for dinner) I had return to one and start counting again.

It seemed easy enough. I got up to four a couple of times.

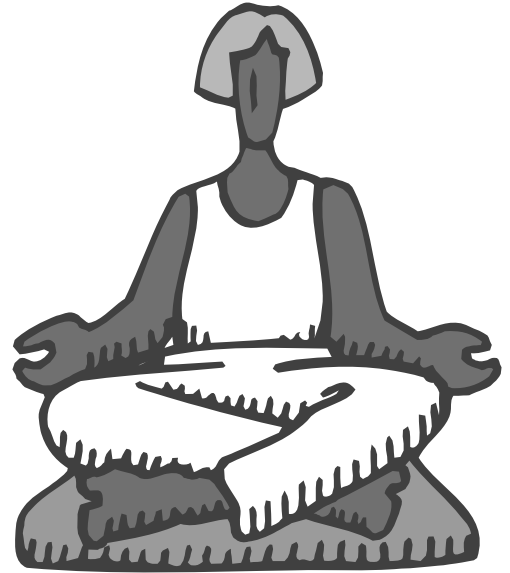
This meditation practice made me realize that because I’m an alcoholic it might not be the easiest thing to do. I am not exactly a golden retriever who goes down at the “lay” command. ADD is part of my genetic make-up, along with hyperactivity and oppositional disorder (self-diagnosed). For god’s sake, that’s

*My HP is included in the mix of daily living – and that includes meditation.*

why I drank – and it helped for a short time.

But something was missing. My sobriety was pretty much okay, but serenity eluded me.

I needed a spiritual connection, that Step Three injection. It’s fine to inhale and exhale, but where was my HP with all the deep concentration? A tree might fall in the forest, but what’s the point if there’s no one listening? I believe that even a tree



has spiritual connection. The Twelfth Step tells me to practice these principles in all my affairs, not just at meetings or while doing A.A. work. It means my HP is included in the mix of daily living – and that includes meditation. It was time to bring my HP into the mix.

Now I am enjoying meditation. It’s not all that bad. I do have some “control issues” over my thoughts, though just the experience of watching my parched plants drive by in my mind while I return to inhaling and exhaling and counting has helped. My HP can water the plants while I’m getting a taste of what this spiritual connection is all about.



**Central Office, 1821 Sacramento St., San Francisco, CA 94109**

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# December 2010

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