

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

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

The Point

2011
10
October

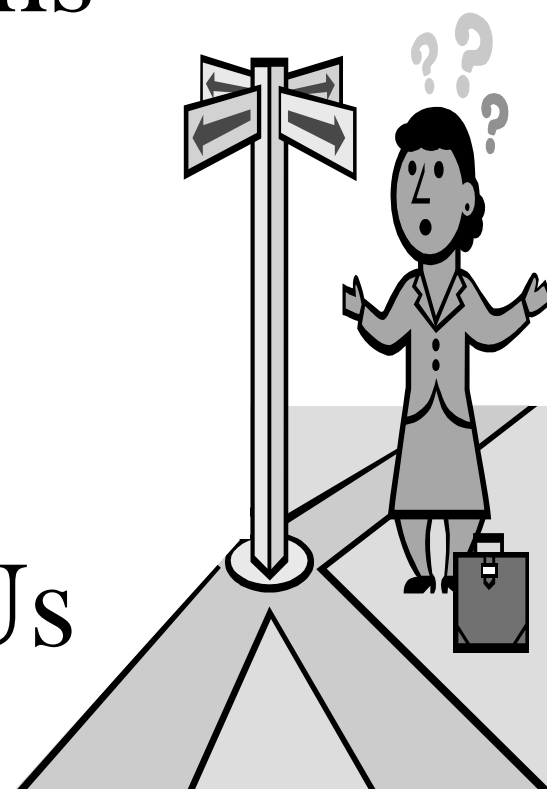
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The Point





is published monthly to inform
A.A. members about business and
meeting affairs in the Intercounty
Fellowship of Alcoholics
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are open to participation by all
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help carry the A.A. message are
welcomed, subject to editorial
review by *The Point* Committee.

Situations Which Used to Baffle Us

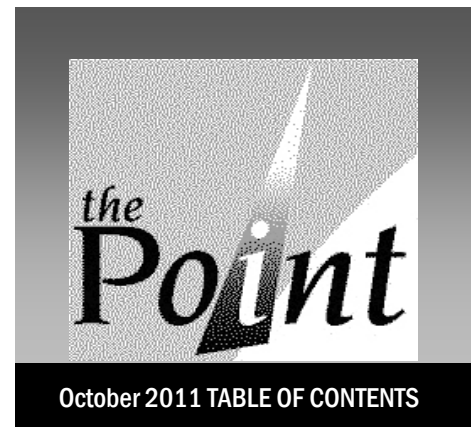


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October 2011

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>			
2	3	4 <u>FIRST TUE</u> Access Committee Central Office 6pm	5 <u>FIRST WED</u> Intercounty Fellowship Board Meeting 1187 Franklin St. Orientation 6pm Meeting 7pm
9	10 <u>SECOND MON</u> SF Public Information/Cooperation with the Professional Community (PI/CPC) Committee Central Office 7pm	11 <u>SECOND TUE</u> The Point Committee Central Office 5:30pm SF Bridging the Gap 1111 O'Farrell St 6:30pm Marin H&I 1360 Lincoln San Rafael 6:15pm SF General Service 1111 O'Farrell St 8pm	12 <u>SECOND WED</u> 12th Step Committee Central Office 6:30pm Marin Bridging the Gap 1360 Lincoln Ave San Rafael Alano Club 6:30pm
16 <u>THIRD SUN</u> Archives Committee Central Office 2pm Business Meeting followed by Work Day	17 <u>THIRD MON</u> SF Teleservice Central Office 6:30pm Marin General Service 9 Ross Valley Rd San Rafael 8pm	18 <u>THIRD TUE</u> Outreach Committee Central Office 6:30pm	19
23 <div>30</div>	24 <div>31</div>	25 <u>FOURTH TUE</u> The Point Committee Central Office 5:30pm Marin Teleservice 1360 Lincoln Ave San Rafael Alano Club 7:30pm	26

THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
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6	7	8
13	14	15
20 <u>THIRD THU</u> Trusted Servants Workshop Committee Central Office 6:30pm	21	22
27 <u>LAST THU</u> SF H&I Old First Church, 1751 Sacramento St, SF Orientation 7:15pm Committee Meeting 8pm	28	29 San Francisco Unity Day See flyer - page 4



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“And when we turn away from meditation and prayer, we likewise deprive our minds, our emotions, and our intuitions of vitally needed support.”

Twelve and Twelve, p. 97, "Step Eleven."



Meeting Changes

Meeting Changes:

Sat 8:30am Novato
Sat 6:30pm Marin City

AWAKENINGS, 789 Hamilton Pkwy (was 646 Canyon Rd/Hill Rd)
UNITY IN THE COMMUNITY, 101 Donahue St (was Friday 8:00pm)

No Longer Meeting:

Sun 3:00pm Hayes Valley
Mon, Wed 7:30am Castro
Tue 6:15pm Corte Madera
Wed 8:30pm Larkspur
Wed 10:30pm Sausalito
Fri 7:30am Castro

ONLY A LITTLE AT A TIME, SF Alano Club, 1748 Market St/Octavia Blvd
DESIGN FOR LIVING - BIG BOOK, Castro Country Club, 4058 18th St
THE 50-MINUTE HOUR, Clinic, 150 Nellen Ave/Fifer Ave
LARKSPUR STEP, Church, 110 Magnolia Ave/Alexander Ave
PASSAGES, Summer Beach Meeting - Returning Next Year
DESIGN FOR LIVING - BIG BOOK, Castro Country Club, 4058 18th St

PLEASE NOTE: We occasionally receive reports that meetings listed in our schedule are missing or no longer active. Sometimes these reports turn out to be mistaken—and sometimes not. **If you know *anything* about a meeting that has relocated or disbanded — even if only temporarily — please call Central Office immediately: (415) 674-1821.** This helps us direct newcomers, visitors and sober, local alcoholics alike to actual meetings and not to rooms that housed a meeting once upon a time. ***Thank you for contributing to the accuracy of our schedule!***



San Francisco General Service & Intercounty Fellowship Board

Present

UNITY DAY 2011

October 29th - 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

**St. Mark's Urban Life Center
1101 O'Farrell Street (at Franklin)
San Francisco**



(Public transit: accessible by the 38 Geary bus line.)



Join us for a full day of food & fellowship and learn how to connect with service committees in your area

Persons requiring reasonable accommodations, including sign language interpreters, assistive listening devices or print materials in alternative formats should contact the SF/Marin County Central Office at (415) 674 - 1821 *no later than October 24, 2011.*

44TH ANNIVERSARY

Sunday – October 9th

BRISBANE BREAKFAST BRUNCH



10:00 am for POT LUCK

11:00 am FOR AN A.A. MEETING

PLENTY OF FOOD AND ARMS LENGTH SOBRIETY!!

AT THE COMMUNITY CENTER (UNDER THE LIBRARY)

250 Visitacion Avenue Brisbane

***Speaker: Charles M.
Federal Speaker Group - San Francisco***

From the Editor



Gut Feelings: The Return of Intuition

by MEM

Proof of fulfillment of the promise that “we will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us” is abundant in this issue. Mr. Webster’s dictionary tells us that to baffle is to “defeat by confusing or puzzling (to disconcert)” or alternately “to break the force or flow of (to deflect).” For myself, acknowledgement of the truth being spoken by my “gut” and obedience to “that little voice” become easier with each passing day in A.A. I’ve always known the right thing to do, only I tried to drown that knowledge with alcohol, leaving me confused, defeated and blocked.

Our contributors have come forward to share their triumph over the daily defeat and confusion they suffered living as a drinking alcoholic, and to acknowledge, celebrate and claim the return of the full force and flow of the spirit guide in their lives today.

An anonymous writer found the grace to carry the message to an

alcoholic who still suffers, with the amazing realization he was also continuing to make the amends that had been cut short by the death of a loved one. Suzan C. thoughtfully explores what the return of intuition means in her life and in her state of mind, as she follows the steps to recovery. Jill M. was able to overcome the fear that had caused her to walk away from a sponsor diagnosed with AIDS when confronted with the terminal illness of her new sponsor, giving thanks to both for their teaching by example. And Leah Z. credits immersion in the spiritual program outlined by A.A. for her newfound success in life (including even Spanish class).

The Point editorial committee takes some time for a mini-retreat this month and hopes to intuitively know how to plan for 2012. Suggestions from our wonderful readers would be welcome at thepoint@aasf.org. Let us know how we can better serve our community as we all learn to grow along spiritual lines. That’s *The Point*, after all.



EDITORIAL POLICY

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

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



Faithful FIVERS!

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

Alejandro D.	Laura B.
Andrea C.	Lauren H.
Andy Z.	Laurie & Richard L.
Ann & Denise	Layne S.
Ardella H.	Lelan & Rich H.
Arthur A.	Leo H.
Barbara L.	Linda L. & Kevin C.
Barbara M.	Lisa M.
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Brian O.	Liz & Aiden D.
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If you would like to become a Faithful Fiver, please download a pledge form from our website. You will receive a complimentary subscription to The Point. And remember, individual contributions are 100% tax deductible!

A Moment of Clarity

Holding Your Liquor Does Not Mean Having Sober Friends

by Jamie M.

I was going through another of those rocky, on/off relationships. My girlfriend had dumped me because of my "mood swings," most of which were chemically induced. We had started to get back together after I'd gone on the wagon for a couple of weeks and were on the phone. We had an argument. It wasn't the worst we'd ever had, but when the call was over, I needed to talk to someone – well, someone else. I realized that if I wanted to go sit in a bar and talk to the next sorry customer, I knew lots of places to go to do that, but if I wanted to talk to someone who knew me and might actually care – someone who could listen without getting loaded, and remember clearly everything I said – there was no one like that in my life.

So I went to the liquor store and bought a pint of whiskey. I drank it in a couple of hours, didn't get too drunk, and the next morning I wasn't particularly hung over; a pint was not a lot to me at the time. And for the first time, it occurred to me that to



*I'd been proud of my ability to hold my liquor.
But it was no longer an achievement.*

drink a pint of whiskey for dinner, not be particularly drunk, and not particularly hung over the next day was not the good thing I'd previously thought it was.

I'd been proud of my ability to hold my liquor. But it was no longer an achievement. I went to an A.A. meeting the next day. It was not exactly a blinding white-light experience, nor was it the last time I got loaded, but those two things –

realizing that I had no one to talk to sober, and that "holding my liquor" was not something to put on a resume – were what it took to get me to make the call.

I am truly blessed. I went to my first A.A. meeting on a Wednesday, and got loaded for the last time that Saturday. The intervening time was what it took for me to realize that stopping alcohol and continuing to do other drugs was not going to work. The final straw was being in a loud, rowdy bar on Saturday night, paranoid (from the other drug: I had turned down a beer from my friend, explaining that

I was going to A.A. meetings) and feeling completely out of place. I compared the way all the other patrons were ignoring me to the way one very shy guy had held his hand out to me at a small A.A. meeting and said, "Keep coming back." He had clearly been uncomfortable greeting and encouraging a stranger, but it had seemed important to him to do so anyway.

I haven't always had the best spiritual program, but I've been sober ever since.

tP



by Anonymous

After closing time at the bar, a drunk was proudly showing off his new apartment to a couple of his friends. He led the way to his bedroom, where there was a

big brass gong and a mallet.

"What's that big brass gong?" one of the guests asked.

"It's not a gong. It's a talking clock," the drunk replied.

"A talking clock? Seriously?" asked his astonished friend.

"Yup, it is," replied the drunk.

"How's it work?" the friend asked, squinting at the clock.

"Watch," the drunk replied. He picked up the mallet, gave the gong an ear-shattering pound and stepped back.

The three stood looking at one another for a moment....

Suddenly, someone on the other side of the wall screamed, "You ASSHOLE! It's THREE-FIFTEEN in the MORNING!"



REFLECTIONS ON SERVICE

So You Don't Want to Drink? Then Serve.

by Herman B.

With over 40 years of continuous sobriety, Herman B. is a living demonstration of the A.A. mantra "service keeps you sober."

I'm not one of the people who made it in A.A. on his/her first trip. I had stayed sober for ninety days and then went back to drinking for a year. I

*I recognized I wanted to feel a part of A.A.
and service was my entree.*

returned to A.A. with the thought, "I have to make it; there's no place else for me to go."

So I was attending the old Tuesday Ambassador Group at St. Boniface Church and during the discussion after the speaker, I said I was going to do things very differently this time by becoming more involved. After the meeting, the speaker came up to me and said he was the secretary of the Sunday 60 Minutes Group at 1354 Valencia and invited me to his meeting, and I decided to go.

Shortly after arriving at the meeting, he threw me the keys and said I could be the coffee maker. I thought he had lost his mind for I was still very shaky, but he convinced me I could do it. I can't begin to tell how much I agonized over that job: and thus my initiation into service began. This gentleman became my first A.A. sponsor. I recognized I wanted to feel a part of A.A. and service was my entree.

Later, I became secretary even though I was very frightened being in front of the group. Again my sponsor reassured me I would be just fine. I was about six months sober at the time and starting to relax a little. And once again I opened my big mouth when there was a discussion on joining H&I by going into the prison at Vacaville. Sure enough, the person

who was coordinating the meeting called me and said, "I heard you are interested in going to Vacaville." I was caught off guard and ended up saying yes. Thus began a ten year stretch of monthly visits to Vacaville. We would go up, have dinner at the Nut Tree and then head to the meeting. Sometimes we got in, sometimes we didn't; that's how prison visits work. Some of the people I met on those trips have become my life long friends and I still do H&I service with one of them. I have been to prisons from Tehachapi to Folsom, the idea being that the inmates would have a local contact if they were paroled to the Bay Area.

At the same time, I had started attending a meeting an A.A. couple held in their home on Thursday evenings. They were very interested in the Young People's Group at Grace Cathedral and in General Service; so most of us more or less followed suit

and the Young People's became our home group. I also became a GSR and I can't tell you how many district meetings and area assemblies I attended. I took to heart the General Service theme, "Whenever anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. to always be there. And for that I'm responsible." After some time, life dictated, I needed to just stick to H&I.

I recall once complaining about going to another prison: "I've done my share!" And the person I was speaking to asked, "Tell me, how much is your share?" I remember fuming but couldn't come up with an



answer. Today I have a lot of gratitude to have been able to be a small intimate part of A.A. by welcoming others and working to keep the doors of A.A. open for those yet to come.



Intuitively Handling Baffling Amends

Healing Through A.A.

by Anonymous

When it comes to baffling situations, what could exceed dealing with the lover of a deceased ex-spouse?

My ex-wife died fairly suddenly, with just few weeks' warning, at the end of last year. Fortunately, just before she died, we had a wonderful reconciliatory meeting. By then, she'd found

to extend a friendly hand to J, for whom she cared deeply. I asked my children (of whom J remains fond) if they'd mind if I invited him to join us. They all said they'd be happy to have him come.

I called J. No answer. I left a voice-mail with the invitation. When I didn't hear back, I sent an email inviting him to join us. Still no answer. Finally with

I got an email the next day from J accepting my invitation. We met the weekend of the ride at the rented house. He looked worn out, sad, and beaten. After we'd greeted each other, he said, "I'm with you now." I gave him a puzzled look. He said, "I'm not drinking anymore." I said, "Great. Let me know what I can do to help."

The weekend's weather could not have been worse for a long bicycle ride. It rained, blew, hailed and stayed bitter cold. Still, I made it around the lake, chilled and soaked to the bone. J was there cheering and taking pictures at the start and finish. I invited J to stay with me in the Bay Area after the weekend as he planned a visit to his former home (he'd moved to Southern California with my ex-wife). He made dinner for me one night at my place. Afterward, I took him to his first A.A. meeting.

How improbable to take my ex-wife's lover to an A.A. meeting after letting him stay several days with me. And yet, nothing about it felt strange. I was only trying to reach A.A.'s helping hand out to someone who seemed to need it. That J was that someone made no difference. Or maybe it did make a difference. It enabled me to make a small amends to my ex-wife, now gone, by helping the man she loved. I felt and still feel good about it. Amazing.



I was only trying to reach A.A.'s helping hand out to someone who seemed to need it.

someone new. If you scoured the four corners of the earth to look for a man as different from me as you could imagine, you'd probably have come back with her new boyfriend, J. Quiet, rather shy, J contrasts markedly with my extroverted personality. When my ex-wife died, J literally lost everyone close to him in the world.

An especially aggressive form of acute leukemia took my ex-wife's life. Shortly after she died, our son and I decided to participate in a bicycle ride around Lake Tahoe to raise money for a foundation that supports leukemia research. For the weekend of the event, I rented a house at the lake for my children and friends who would come to support us. It did not, at first, occur to me to include J. A few weeks beforehand, I was pondering how to make amends to my ex-wife, now dead. It occurred to me that a way to do that would be

a week to go before the ride, I called my ex-wife's sister, who has stayed in touch with J. She told me she'd heard from J just the day before, that he'd received my invitation and planned to join us. She also said J had been drunk when she spoke to him and admitted to having turned to alcohol in the wake of my ex-wife's death.





OUT OF THE FOG AND INTO THE ETHER

“We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us.” Big Book, p. 84.

by Suzan C.

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines “intuition” as “the power or faculty of attaining to direct knowledge or cognition without evident rational thought and inference.” This is not too different from what we read on page 87 of the Big Book of A.A., “we find that our thinking will, as time passes, be more and more on the plane of inspiration.” The Ninth Step promises suggest a state of mind that is the exact

families, careers. For me, the ability to intuitively handle situations is not a skill I had before, except for “the occasional hunch” referred to in the Big Book. So what is it about sobriety or the program that gives me special powers of knowing things without even trying? Certainly it must have something to do with turning my will and my life over to the care of God as I understand God. Maybe when I sign up

intelligence to guide mine, my brain becomes a powerful and balanced tool.



Often, knowing how to “handle situations” comes down to being quiet or doing nothing right away. Recently after a meeting someone mentioned the acronym WAIT (Why Am I Talking). It is true that sometimes words are required, but the right words are always measured and respectful of self and others. The program teaches me that I have ceased fighting anything or anybody. So “how to handle situations” is definitely not about fighting. And despite use of the word “handle,” the promises do not say I will finally know how to read people’s minds so that I may control them better.

There are many things that I would lose if I were to decide to return to drinking. Besides the big, obvious things, I would lose the gift of intuitively knowing how to live in this confusing world with its odd people and their contradictory behavior. Back in that foggy place, holding a tilting martini, vaguely aware that something’s wrong.



Intuitive thought consists of more than simple clarity

opposite of baffled: an ability to understand what to do next, without even trying. A hunch is not the result of tortured analysis. Nor is it a rash decision born of fear or anger. It doesn’t involve thinking; it is a feeling, or more precisely, a knowing.

To effortlessly solve dilemmas that used to perplex me is just as miraculous as having no desire to drink even though it used to be my main preoccupation. What does it take to get from one shore to the other? The Ninth Step says we must be “painstaking about this phase of our development,” which refers to making amends. However, recovering alcoholics experience the promises “sometimes quickly.”

There are many things that alcoholics recover in sobriety: health, self-esteem,

for God Care, I get some special perks, like magical knowing powers. Maybe not.

Intuitive thought consists of more than simple clarity enjoyed by the unpickled brain. Page 87 says, “What used to be the hunch or the occasional inspiration gradually becomes a working part of the mind.” To say that inspiration and intuition become a working part of the mind suggests that they are an adjunct to my other senses, my other means of perceiving the world. If my ego is quiet, my eyes and ears are open, and I am free from the interference of fears and selfish motives, then I can gather the data my heart and mind need to make the right decision. When I am serene enough to involve my heart in a decision, then I use my human intelligence to its fullest. If I invite my Higher Power’s

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My God's Bigger Than Your God

"Godless" Versions of the Steps

by Mike M.

Revising that old dog food commercial jingle ("My dog's bigger than your dog! My dog's bigger than yours!") takes me quickly from the sacred to the profane and back. (OMG, did I just say "dog"? We all

As a repeat fallen angel, I struggled over many years to enter the doors of A.A.

know what *that* spells backwards.) Yes, he's not only bigger, but stronger and faster and has a more lustrous coat. He's the one who has urged countless Christian Soldiers, Marching As to War. And, just to be perfectly clear, according to Bill W., he's the God of my understanding, so the rest of you can just butt out, thank you. Is it any more profane to compare God to a dog than to his best friend? I have choked all my life at the force-feeding of a God who is so human in attributes. Just *who* was created in *whose* image and likeness?

The God wars are not raging only in my head and elsewhere today, but are also alive and well in Canadian A.A. According to an online article published on June 3, 2011 by thestar.com (on-line arm of the *Toronto Star*), two Toronto groups, Beyond Belief and We Agnostics, have apparently been "de-frocked" by Toronto A.A. and removed from meeting directories both in print and online, in another flare-up of the eternal debate. Their crime against A.A.? – online posting of a "Godless"

version of the Twelve Steps as adapted by the Beyond Belief group. I found the list to be the nearly identical to those I had been furnished at a San Francisco A.A. meeting for atheists and agnostics.

Bill W. used the token phrase,

"God as we understood Him," as a lure for atheists and agnostics to come on board without really having to believe right off that bat – it will surely come, if you work and pray for it. As a repeat fallen angel, I struggled over many years to enter the doors of A.A., only to find God blocking the threshold with all of His Incredible Baggage. My last time through the doors, I was able to put aside my "thing" with God and resolved to wait-and-see. I was sure that the more meetings I attended, I would hear the voices of others speaking of exactly how they understood God and showing me some new ways to understand He Who Cannot Be Understood. Instead, I've heard time after time that people simply give up and default to speaking of God for the sake of convenience. And I won't even start on the gender issue; being a man, I don't have much of an issue with that, but empathize greatly with all wo- or non- or questioning- men who have a double or triple hurdle here.



I've created a table showing side-by-side comparisons of selected excerpts from the Twelve Steps, the Canadian version (as reported in the on-line article above), and a Russian version of questionable origin printed in *The Point* in June 1997. If this reaches Toronto A.A., may it bring them pause to take a deep breath and reconsider A.A.'s primary purpose.

On second thought, let's all take a deep breath and reconsider A.A.'s primary purpose.

Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions	Beyond Belief's Version	San Francisco Version (Atheists & Agnostics)	Russian Version
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.	2. Came to accept and to understand that we needed strengths beyond our awareness and resources to restore us to sanity.	2. Came to believe and to accept that we needed strengths beyond our awareness and resources to restore us to sanity.	2. Came to believe that the natural creative force which animates all life could restore us to equilibrium.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.	3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of the AA program.	3. Made a decision to entrust our will and our lives to the care of the collective wisdom and resources of those who have searched before us.	3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the effect of that healing phenomenon.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.	5. Admitted to ourselves without reservation, and to another human being, the exact nature of our wrongs.	5. Admitted to ourselves without reservation, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.	5. Realized the damage we had done to those whom we had disappointed and admitted to ourselves and a comrade of our choice, the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.	6. Were ready to accept help in letting go of all our defects of character.	6. Were ready to accept help in letting go of all our defects of character.	6. Were entirely ready to permit the conscience of our group to remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.	7. Humbly sought to have our shortcomings removed.	7. With humility and openness sought to eliminate our shortcomings.	7. Humbly asked them to remove our shortcomings.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.	11. Sought through mindful inquiry and meditation to improve our spiritual awareness, seeking only for knowledge of our rightful path in life and the power to carry that out.	11. Sought through meditation to improve our spiritual awareness and our understanding of the AA way of life and to discover the power to carry out that way of life.	11. Sought through introspection and self analysis, to improve our contributions to the world around us, in accordance with the guidance we received from the conscience of our group.





Just a reminder, our column uses pseudonyms and changes details to protect anonymity.

Dear Help,

I need to get help with my drinking problem. I don't really want to go to some meeting with a bunch of strangers, so I am wondering what some options are. I am 31 and this problem has been around since I was 20 or so. I don't do drugs, but I turn into a bit of a monster when I drink. I black out, and generally act like an ass. I think I can just stop on my own, but my family says that won't work. I have done it before, but only for a bit over a month. Anyway, any advice is welcome.

Ian

Dear Ian,

My name is Luther, and I have a problem with alcohol as well. I am an alcoholic. I can relate to a few things

that you mentioned, one being the fact that you cannot stop on your own. I stopped on my own for five years. I am 50 years old and started drinking when I was 18. I was an unpleasant person because I was not happy and I became more unpleasant when I drank. Even when I stopped, I was still unhappy. Alcohol made me feel better temporarily, but after I drank I felt worse both physically and emotionally.

Alcoholics Anonymous is an organization of men and women who want to stop drinking and lead "normal" lives. It was very difficult for me to go into a room of strangers and listen to what they had to say because I thought I could stop on my own. But in some strange way all of the "strangers" in A.A. had a lot more in common with me than I knew. They all had alcohol problems and were interested in not drinking, which was what I wanted. It's kind of the same way I could relate to some of the things you were talking about.

People in A.A. are also willing to help fellow alcoholics. There is no obligation of any kind in order to attend meetings and all alcoholics are welcome. You can come and go as you please.

I can only give you guidance as it relates to Alcoholics Anonymous, not really other alternatives, because it is what I know about. The program of Alcoholics Anonymous can change your life, but like anything else it depends on how much effort you put into it. A.A. has helped more people and has a better success rate than any other program. I hope that you overcome your feeling of not wanting to be around strangers. These strangers can help you more than you know and all you have to do is ask for it. Please feel free to write back and ask any other questions.

Hope to see you at a meeting one day.

Luther



When Sponsors Die

by Jill M.

In 1990 my sponsor of five years, Michael, a gay man, was diagnosed with AIDS. At that time, I (and others) didn't know much about the disease and there wasn't a cure. I did know I would lose him to the disease. I couldn't deal with my feelings of letting go of this man that had become such an important part of my

recovery. It was all about me. Being too afraid to deal with his loss and the disease, I walked away.

I heard the next two years were difficult for him. And yet I didn't contact him. When I got word about his death I felt very sad and nervously accepted the invitation to attend his memorial service. I thought his partner would be mad at me. It was

still all about me. As I walked into the church, Michael's bright blue eyes from a photo brought immediate tears. His partner welcomed me warmly and told me that I had been such a joy in Michael's life and he was grateful for the time we had together. He also told me that neither of them held blame toward me, understanding why I had to go. That was typical of

(Continued on page 13)

Meet THE MEETING

Bernal Big Book

It is a great meeting for newcomers.

by Bree L.

This Big Book study is one of the older meetings in San Francisco. One regular member said he had been attending somewhere between 20 to 25 years. It is located in his neighborhood and he can easily walk down the street for the meeting. A third generation San Franciscan, he comes to the place where he and his children were baptized, St. Kevin's Church.

The format of the meeting is that the speaker selects a passage from the Big Book and then shares for five to ten minutes on the selection. The chosen passage can be any length: a sentence, a paragraph or a whole chapter.

Tom K., the current secretary, says he appreciates the format because he can never predict what the topic will be or where it will go. "There's something special," he says, "about a person choosing a section that I might have read many times, but when I hear their take on that passage, it evolves into something I could never expect." The next phase

comes after the speaker shares. This is when members bring to the mix their take on the reading and the speaker's share. They tell how they are impacted by the reading.

It is a great meeting for newcomers. There is no heavy-handed Big Book thumping, but there is an expression of one alcoholic talking to another while the teachings of the Big Book shine through.

The speaker during my visit, David A., read the entire Appendix II, titled "Spiritual Experience," and then told of his unexpected enlightenment on a recent trip to Florida. Additionally, another member pointed out that the spiritual experience description is noted on both pages 25 and 47, but few take the time to read it. This was followed by shares on what a spiritual experience can be. Many said the gradual awakening was the most beneficial as it was unanticipated, and often it wasn't realized until the experience had passed. That was when the full impact occurred.

Historically, the Bernal Big Book

group began in the Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center. The Center began to schedule conflicting events as Saturday afternoon was a popular time. So, the Big Book Study moved a block away to St. Kevin's basement meeting room. That worked for a while, but once again ran into conflicts with events at St. Kevin's. Their most recent move was to a smaller meeting room in the back with the entrance off Anderson at Jarboe.

The great benefit of this meeting is experiencing how our program works as there are so many ways to interpret the Big Book but they all end up in much the same place. As one person said, he can read passages over and over and every time it seems that a new awareness comes into his mind. It is a matter of being open to what the Big Book offers.

Bernal Big Book Meeting
704 Cortland Ave. at Anderson St.
St. Kevin's Church, enter on Jarboe
Saturday, 5 PM

Street parking is available.



(Continued from page 12)

my sponsor and one of the many reasons I loved him. Yet I still could not forgive myself.

Ten years later Lita G. was my sponsor. She was a wonderful wise woman and valuable part of my recovery and my life. We met weekly. My husband and I frequently hosted her for weekend brunches. After three years of being fortunate enough to have her in my life, she was diagnosed with terminal cancer. My first instinct was to run. And then something

happened. I realized I could finally do the right thing and also make amends to my first sponsor by being there for Lita. The next 16 months were difficult. Every Sunday my husband, Yvonne D. and I visited Lita, seeing her through all the stages of cancer: depression, sickness, weight loss, anger, fear and finally acceptance. We also got to experience the richness of being there right to the end. We struggled, laughed, loved, and cried. We also had the opportunity to give her a 29-year chip. She was so proud of that chip, and she died a few days

later.

After it was all over I knew that it was a grace to see her go. While I cannot change the past, I got a chance to make it better. I finally got to understand that (for me) the Alcoholic Anonymous promise of "intuitively knowing how to handle situations" is about practicing integrity in all my affairs, even and most importantly, the difficult ones.

Thanks, Michael and Lita, for helping me become a better person.



IFB meeting summary – September 2011

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

11th Step Stretch & Surrender Yoga	Each Day A New Beg (M-F)	Marin Stag	Sober Saturday	Tuesday Chip
Any Lengths	Each Day A New Beg (Su)	Marina Discussion	Step Talk	Walk Of Shame
Attitude Adjustment Hour	Embarcadero Group	Miracles (Way) Off 24th St.	Sunday Night Castro SD	Waterfront
Back To Basics	Friday All Groups	Mission Terrace	Sunday Rap	Wharf Rats
Bernal New Day	Friday Morning 12 Steppers	Monday Beginners	Sunset Speaker Step	Women's Promises
Blue Book Special	Friendly Circle	Noon Smokeless	Ten Years After	GGYYPAA
Castro Discussion (Show Of Shows)	Haight Street Blues	Reality Farm	The Parent Trap 2	ICYPAA
Come 'n Get It!	High Noon (Mon)	Saturday Beginners	They Don't Know Who We Are	San Mateo General Service
Cow Hollow Men's Group	Huntington Square	Saturday Easy Does It	They Stopped In Time	SF General Service
Cow Hollow Young People's Group	Join The Tribe	Sesame Steps	Thursday Thumpers	SF H&I
Daily Reflection	Live & Let Live	Sober 5150's	Tiburon Haven	SF Teleservice

This is an unofficial summary of the September 2011 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 aasf.org.

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 September 7, 2011 at First Unitarian Universalist Church, 1187 Franklin at O'Farrell, San Francisco, CA. Next month's meeting will be Wednesday, October 5 2011 at 1187 Franklin St. in San Francisco.

Announcements, Rich G.

Access Committee; lots of materials and service opportunities. See AASF.org/aaresources See also: 12stepradio.com.

Teleservice; Always has openings. See Seth H. or Carolyn for details.

IFB Officers Report

IFB Chair, Margaret J.

We have been mostly working on bylaws; much thanks to Thomas H. and Michael P. for their ton of work on the bylaws.

January is 65th anniversary of Central Office to be celebrated with a spectacular event. Fellowship committee is requesting volunteers to assist in planning, coordination and working the anniversary event.

Treasurer's Report, Michelle C.

July contributions: \$838 under budget for the month, \$5,024 less than budgeted YTD (January to July).

Operating Expenses YTD is \$9,933 or 6-7% under budget due to rent and access expense savings.

Unrestricted Cash is about \$4,000 over one month's operating expenses (\$19,654 per month).

Rating of "Fair" indicates one month unrestricted Cash.

Central Office Committee, David S.

Status update for online book sales and contributions through aasf.org. Will set a soft launch date, then a public launch date, to be announced in *The Buzz* and other outlets. Reviewed COC Goals for 2011-12; Improve efficiency of financial reporting; Increase awareness to AA fellowship of Central Office opportunities, including but not limited to professional service opportunities; Update Operations policy manual and Employee handbook consistent with bylaws and incorporating all changes since 2002; Quantify non-financial

operational growth.

Central Office Manager Report, Maury P.

Met with Northern California CO Managers. Discussion of communication with GS in NY. Currently no effective way for COs to weigh in on operational issues that affect our offices. A workshop at last Area Assembly on issue of communication very well attended. End of month will be attending the Annual Intergroup Seminar in Tucson, AZ. (CO Managers, Intergroup Chairs, others). Maury chairing a workshop on this topic. Will be putting a motion forward to change seminar policy to allow decision making by group. (Currently not allowed). May make a collective decision to forward a suggestion to GS such as to consider tiered pricing. This to avoid putting other COs at financial risk by direct sales instead of local. NEXT assembly Nov 5, conflicts with our own Volunteer Appreciation party so we have rescheduled our party for November 12.

Liaison's Reports

San Mateo General Services, District 5, Frank S. Had Central Office party last Sunday. Sharon A., a past delegate, was speaker. Ruffled a trip to Hawaii for conference.

Coming up is San Bruno 10th Annual picnic, October 1, San Bruno Park from 11-5.

44th anniversary of Brisbane Breakfast Bunch, October 9 at the community center in Brisbane.

Individual Contributions

to Central Office were made through September 15, 2011
honoring the following members:

ONGOING MEMORIALS

Jonathan L., Dick O'L., Matt S., Lyle W.

ANNIVERSARIES

Too Early: John T. 33 years

Ten Years After: Carlin H. 29 years

Women's Promises: Karen O 10 years

Valencia Smokefree: Steve R. 25 years
Rene C. 7 years

High Noon: Judith K. 30 years, Sean 19 years

Nikki H. 10 years, Jose L. & Vera T. 1 year

Sunset 9'ers: Karen K. 10 years

We, Us, & Ours: Sheila H. 30 years

Big Book Basics: Martha S. 30 years

Waterfront Group/GGYPA, Kevin S.

Waterfront Group hosts regular events:
Ski trip, barbecue, camping, and next a
Dance: On the Waterfront, a formal dance
9/24/11. Speaker at 7:30, Dance 8:30 –
12:00.

GGYPAA (Golden Gate Young People in AA), Robin

ICYPA September 3-4 a success! Hallow-
een Dance, 10/28/11 at United Methodist
Church, Mill Valley

H&I Liaison – Lynn D.

Questions from IFB last month: 1) "H&I
monthly financials too general." Financial
statement covers all of Northern Califor-
nia, or 42000 meetings per year. Annual
budget of about \$500K per year. 2) "How
many H&I meetings in SF receive litera-
ture and supplies?" About 65 H&I meet-
ings per week, literature provided to all.
3) "What are guidelines for rotation of
commitments for committee officers and
volunteers?" Terms for general committee
officers are two years, and may succeed
themselves for maximum of four years.
Finance committee members are two
years, can not succeed themselves. Re-
gional and area chairs and other officers
two years, succeed once, max four. Spirit
of rotation strictly observed in SF H&I
volunteers not bound by spirit of Rota-
tion, (same as 12 step and teleservice
volunteers). August contributions down

18% YTD, 25% in San Francisco. Request
from H&I is for treasurers to send in H&I
contributions every two months instead of
quarterly or bi-annually. H&I reps are up
to 54 in San Francisco, which is best way
to hold committee responsible by repre-
sentation from area groups

New Business

Request to have San Mateo Co. Meeting
Schedules available at Central Office in
San Francisco. Ray M.; is for Central Of-
fice providing meeting schedules for San
Mateo. Lives in the border area between
S.M. and S.F., (Brisbane), attends meet-
ings in both areas. Bruce K.; There was a
time when C.O. in S.F. represented all of
Northern California. Bruce K. proposes
that C.O. in San Francisco supply a cer-
tain number of schedules for San Mateo
Co. meetings. Maury to research cost.

Bylaws Committee, Michael P.

Will have final working draft of bylaws by
next IFB meeting. Thomas H. contributing
legal analysis and advice. Will send to
another lawyer to check California laws.
New version to be read at October and
November IFB meetings and voted on in
November.

***Meet the Meeting to return next
month!**

**Next IFB Meeting: Wednesday, Octo-
ber 5, 2011, 7—9pm, San Francisco.**

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 com-
mittee, or if you wish to receive more
information about a committee, please
email that committee at the address.

INTERGROUP OFFICERS:

CHAIR

Margaret J. chair@aasf.org

VICE CHAIR

Rich G. vicechair@aasf.org

TREASURER

Michelle C. treasurer@aasf.org

RECORDING SECRETARY

Thayer W. secretary@aasf.org

COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

CENTRAL OFFICE COMMITTEE

David S. coc@aasf.org

12th STEP COMMITTEE

Gloria E. 12thstep@aasf.org

ARCHIVES COMMITTEE

Michael P. archives@aasf.org

ORIENTATION COMMITTEE

Blu F. orientation@aasf.org

FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

Michelle A. fellowship@aasf.org

THE BUZZ

Li L. thebuzz@aasf.org

THE POINT

Charley D. thepoint@aasf.org

ACCESS COMMITTEE

Muriel P. access@aasf.org

TRUSTED SERVANTS

WORKSHOP COMMITTEE

Ted R. tsw@aasf.org

WEBSITE COMMITTEE

David S. website@aasf.org

PI/CPC COMMITTEE

Glen R. picpc@aasf.org

SF TELESERVICE COMMITTEE

Seth H. sfteleservice@aasf.org

aa group contributions

Fellowship Contributions	Aug. 11	YTD	Marin Contributions	Aug. 11	YTD	San Francisco Contributions	Aug. 11	YTD
ACYPAA		1674	Pathfinders Tu 12pm		171	330 Smokeless Su	13	22
Brisbane Breakfast Bunch	46	236	Primary Purpose W 830pm		151	330 Smokeless W	13	25
Contribution Box	107	464	Quilting Time MWF 530pm		280	515pm Smokeless M	12	12
Fellowship Group Contributions		77	Refugee Th 12pm	40	150	515pm Smokeless Sa	10	10
IFB	49	723	Reveille 5D 7am		99	515pm Smokeless Su		13
Fellowship Total	\$ 202	\$ 3174	Rise N Shine Sun 10am		263	515pm Smokeless W	17	36
			San Geronimo Valley Book Study F		127	6am Dry Dock 7D		150
Marin Contributions	Aug. 11	YTD	San Geronimo Valley M 8pm		140	6am Dry Dock F		53
12 & 12 Study Sa 815am		479	Sausalito 12 Step Study Group		386	6am Dry Dock Sa		81
Attitude Adjustment 7D 7am	228	1873	Sausalito Sober Sisters Th 330pm		229	6am Dry Dock Th	17	89
Awareness/Acceptance M 1030am		200	Serendipity Sa 11am	75	307	6am Dry Dock W		96
Bolinas Step Study W 8pm		71	Sisters In Sobriety Th 730pm (M)		90	7am As Bill Sees It Fri		101
Closed Women Step Study Tu 330pm		337	Six O'Clock Sunset Th 6pm		378	7am Grab Bag M 7am		195
Cover to Cover W 730pm		337	Sober & Serene F 7pm		243	7am Living Sober W 7am		14
Creekside New Growth Sun 7pm		83	Sober Sisters Wed 12pm		149	7am Smokeless Sa 7am	9	9
Crossroads Sun 12pm		450	Spiritual Testost. Sun Men's Stag		395	7am Smokeless Su 7am	150	150
Day At A Time 7D 630am		103	Steps to Freedom M 730pm	168	394	7am Speaker Discussion Th 7am		461
Downtown Mill Valley F 830pm		886	Steps To The Solution W 715pm		103	7am Step Discussion Tu 7am		109
East San Rafael Big Book	93	173	Stinson Beach Fellowship Th 8pm		150	830am Smokeless F 830am		203
Experience, Strength & Hope Sa 6pm		78	Sunday Express Sun 6pm		450	830am Smokeless Th 830am		20
Freedom Finders F 830pm		263	Sunday Night Corte Madera 8pm	273	273	830am Smokeless Tu 830am	214	382
Friday Night Book F 830pm		166	Sunlight of the Spirit Th 7pm		150	830am Smokeless W 830am	38	38
Girls Night Out W 815pm		82	T. G. I. Tuesday 6pm		78	830pm Smokeless W 830pm	7	7
Gratitude Tu 8pm		246	Terra Linda Group Th 830pm		250	A is for Alcohol Tu 6pm		200
Happy Destiny F 7pm		178	Terra Linda Thursday Men's Stag		45	A New Start F 830pm		300
Happy Hour (Marin) Th 6pm		78	The Barnyard Group Sa 4pm		53	A Step Beyond Th 6pm	73	299
Happy, Joyous & Free 5D 12pm		2500	There is a Solution Tu 6pm		133	A Vision for You (SF) Su 630pm		120
High & Dry W 12pm		150	Three Step Group Sa 530pm		200	AA As You Like It Tu 530pm		88
Intimate Feelings Sa 10am		154	Thursday Night Book Club Th 7pm		22	AA Step Study Su 6pm		23
Inverness Sunday Serenity Su 10am		113	Thursday Night Speaker Th 830pm	1098	1098	Acceptance Group M 530pm		60
Island Group Th 8pm		330	Tiburon Beginners & Closed Tu		700	Afro American Beginners Sat 8pm		524
Just Can't Wait 'til 8 M 630pm		125	Tiburon Women's Candlelight W 8pm		753	After Work Big Book M 6pm		42
Living in the Solution F 6pm		381	We, Us and Ours M 650pm		250	After Work M 6PM		160
Marin City Groups 5D 630pm		577	Wednesday Night Candlelight W 8pm		56	Agnostics & Freethinkers Su 630pm		72
Mill Valley 7D 7am		1453	Wed Night Speaker Disc W 7pm		22	Alumni W 830pm		302
Mill Valley Discussion W 830pm		189	Wednesday Sundowners W 6pm	200	200	Any Lengths Sat 930am		537
Monday Blues M 630pm		400	What's It All About F 12pm		450	Ariana Cafe Group M - F		100
Monday Night Madness M 6pm		150	Women's Big Book Tu 1030am		480	Artists & Writers F 630pm	1342	2395
Monday Night Stag (Tiburon) 8pm		1777	Women's Step Study Group M 12pm		75	As Bill Sees It Th 6pm		988
Monday Night Women's M 8pm		499	Working Dogs W 1205pm		500	As Bill Sees It Tu 1210pm		120
Morning Attitude Adjustment		90	Young People's Chopsticks Sa		44	Ass in a Bag Th 830pm		101
Nativity Monday Night BB M 8pm		300	Memorial Group Contribution		267	Be Still AA Su 12pm		611
Newcomers Step M 730pm		330	Marin Total	\$ 2176	\$ 27265	Beginners 12 x 12 F 7pm		300
Noon Hope F 12pm		152	San Francisco Contributions	Aug. 11	YTD	Beginners' Step Study Sat 630pm		158
Noon Small Room 5D 12pm		130	130 Smokeless M 130pm		9	Beginners Tu 630PM	20	20
Noon Tu 12pm		100	130 Smokeless Th 130pm	5	5	Beginner's Warmup W 6pm	92	139
North Marin Speaker Sun 12pm		170	330 Smokeless F	13	13	Bernal Big Book Sat 5pm		772
Novato Monday Stag M 8pm		15	330 Smokeless M	9	9	Bernal New Day 7D	500	2101
On Awakening 7D 530am		347				Big Book Basics F 8pm		427

San Francisco Contributions	Aug. 11	YTD	San Francisco Contributions	Aug. 11	YTD	San Francisco Contributions	Aug. 11	YTD
Big Book Study Su 1130am		236	High Noon Tuesday 1215pm		102	Saturday Easy Does It Sa 12pm		1003
Blue Book Special Su 11am		119	High Noon Wednesday 1215pm		25	Saturday Matinee Sa 2pm		40
Brokers Open Book Tu 130pm	68	225	Hilldwellers M 8pm		407	Saturday Night Regroup Sat 730pm	254	1108
By the Book Sa 10am		29	How Was Your Week? Sa 10am		151	Say Hey Group M, Tu, F 6pm		376
Came to Believe 830am M 830am		60	Huntington Square W 630pm	160	651	Second Chance Th 215pm		35
Came To Believe Su 830am		134	Join the Tribe Tu 7pm	565	901	Serenity House	150	1200
Came to Park Sat 7pm		180	K.I.S.S. M 6pm		114	Serenity Seekers M 730pm		380
Castro Discussion (Show Of Shows)		466	Keep Coming Back Sa 11am		684	Sesame Step Tu 730pm	28	28
Castro Monday Big Book M 830pm		48	Let It Be Now F 6pm		109	Shamrocks & Serenity M 730pm		347
Castro Nooners F 12pm		85	Light Steppers Su 7pm		60	Sinbar Su 830pm		127
Cocoanuts Su 9am	202	484	Like A Prayer Su 4pm		199	Sisters Circle Su 6pm	100	562
Code Blue Big Book Study W 7pm		178	Lincoln Park Sat 830pm		40	Sober at State MW 1210pm		250
Common Welfare Th 8pm		104	Live and Let Live Su 8pm		150	Sober Saturday Sa 830am		326
Cow Hollow Men's Group W 8pm		438	Living Proof Th 630pm		80	Sobriety & Beyond W 7pm		139
Creative Alcoholics M 630pm		195	Living Sober W 8pm		254	Sometimes Slowly Sa 11am		141
Dark Secrets F 10pm		19	Living Sober with HIV W 6pm		469	Sought to Improve Th 715pm		132
Design For Living - Big Book 5D	33	33	Lots Of Parking Su 6pm		20	SFPOA Th 7pm		371
Design for Living Sat 8am		218	Luke's Group W 7pm		124	Spirit of San Francisco		90
Diamond Heights Tu 830pm		92	Meeting Place Noon F 12pm		209	St. Francis Men's F 830pm	240	240
Dignitaries Sympathy W 815pm		180	Meeting Place Noon W 12pm		473	Step Talk Su 830am		335
Dry Dock Discussion M 830pm	13	24	Mid Week Sanity W 630pm		11	Steppin' Up Tu 630pm		430
Each Day a New Beginning F 7am		1765	Mid-Morning Support Su 1030am		874	Stonestown M 8pm		49
Each Day a New Beginning M 7am		1292	Midnight Meditation Sat 12am	60	129	Sunday Bookworms Sun 730pm	288	442
Each Day A New Beginning Su 8am		1339	Miracle (Way) Off 24th St W 730pm		41	Sunday Morning Gay Men's Stag	432	902
Each Day a New Beginning Th 7am		868	Mission Terrace W 8pm		124	Sunday Night Castro SD		5
Each Day a New Beginning Tu 7am	13	493	Monday Beginners M 8pm	77	523	Sunday Rap Sun 8pm		307
Each Day a New Beginning W 7am		1244	Monday Monday M 1215pm		164	Sunday Silence Su 730pm		152
Early Start F 6pm		1273	Moving Toward Serenity W 830pm		202	Sundown W 7pm		668
Easy Does It Tu 6pm		96	New Friday Big Book F 12pm	116	116	Sunset 11'ers Su		100
Embarcadero Group 5D 1210pm		1090	Newcomers Group Tu 7pm		20	Sunset 11'ers Tu		285
Epiphany Group Th 8pm		140	Newcomers Step M 730pm		360	Sunset 9'ers Sa		265
Eureka Step Tu 6pm		76	Newcomers Tu 8pm	351	469	Sunset 9'ers Su		181
Eureka Valley Topic M 6pm		213	No Reservation M 12pm		257	Sunset 9'ers Th	64	64
Excelsior "Scent" Free for All Sa 8pm		108	Noon Smokeless F 12pm	21	65	Sunset 9'ers Tu	30	110
Extreme Makeover M 730pm		51	Noon Smokeless M 12pm	50	69	Sunset Big Book Step Study Sa		74
Federal Speaker Su 12pm		174	Noon Smokeless Su 12pm		10	Sunset Early Morning W 7am		83
Firefighters & Friends Tu 10am		296	Noon Smokeless Th 12pm		8	Sunset Speaker Step Sun 730pm	250	250
Fireside Chat Group Tu 8pm		37	Noon Smokeless W 12pm	17	31	Ten Years After Su 6pm		1831
Fireside Chat Sa 9pm		103	Off Broadway Book Th 730pm		55	The Drive Thru W 1215pm	145	483
Franciscan Noon Discussion M		34	Once An Alcoholic Th 715pm	19	35	The Dry Dock Fellowship		119
Friday All Groups F 830pm		1323	One Liners Th 830pm		272	The Lads Fr 730pm		259
Friday at Five F 5pm	61	85	Parkside Th 830pm		397	The Leaky Cauldron Su 1030am	80	80
Friday Lunchtime Step F 12pm		223	Pax West M 12pm	543	1498	The Parent Trap 2 Wed. 430pm		27
Friday Night Women's Mtg F 630pm		42	Pax West Th 12pm	100	1044	The Pepper Group F 12pm		123
Friday Smokeless F 8pm	168	240	Potrero Hill 12 x 12 M 630pm		150	There is a Solution Tu 6pm		214
Gold Mine Group M 8pm		355	Progress Not Perfection Tu 830pm	118	183	They Don't Know Who We Are Sat	100	100
Goodlands Su 2pm		316	Raising the Bottom W 9pm		140	Thursday Downtown Th 630am		62
Haight Street Blues Tu 615pm	120	418	Reality Farm Th 830pm		367	Thursday Night Women's Th 630pm		426
Happy Hour Ladies Night F 530pm		103	Rebound W 830pm		60	Thursday Thumpers Th 7pm		100
High Noon Friday 1215pm	28	213	Refugee Th 12pm		60	Too Early Sat 8am	227	1276
High Noon Monday 1215pm		153	Rigorous Honesty Th 1205pm		90	Too Young Su 830pm	16	16
High Noon Saturday 1215pm	208	516	Saturday Afternoon Meditation 5pm		495	Trudgers Discussion Su 7pm		360
High Noon Sunday 1215p		101	Saturday Beginners Sat 6pm	673	1313	TSWC		26
High Noon Thursday 1215pm	54	440	Saturday Big Book Sa 2pm	11	21			

Continued on p. 18

profit and loss statement: July 2011

	July 11	Budget	Jan - July 11	Budget		July 11	Budget	Jan - July 11	Budget
Ordinary Income/Expense					Internet Expense	63	120	782	840
Income					Office Supplies	49	135	1102	1,545
Contributions from Groups	17401	18,000	88112	99,500	Paper Purchased	0	170	1923	1,710
Contributions from Individuals	1676	2,510	23934	17,570	Software Purchased	0	-	145	-
Gratitude Month	0	-	4128	10,400	Shipping	0	-	0	-
Sales - Bookstore	9509	9,530	65872	66,710	Printing	0	-	38	-
Cost of Books Sold	-7019	(6,747)	-49077	(47,229)	Equipment Lease	0	-	3189	3,154
Total Income	\$21,567	\$23,293	\$132,969	146,951	Repair & Maintenance	485	262	3270	1,932
Expense					Security System	118	-	236	236
Employee Expenses	11583	11,760	89233	89,124	Payroll Expenses	5	40	34	275
Professional Fees	38	50	2153	2,555	Telephone	237	250	1670	1,750
Postage	0	200	500	687	Phone Book Listings	87	87	606	606
Rent - Office	3664	4,664	28650	32,648	Travel	24	400	72	520
Rent - Other	0	75	450	525	Training	0	-	25	25
Access Expenses	0	675	360	4,725	Bad Checks	0	15	0	45
IFB Literature	0	50	83	220	Miscellaneous Expense	0	-	0	-
IFB Sponsored Events	0	20	49	140	Total Expense	\$16,449	\$19,008	\$137,616	\$147,512
PI/CPC	0	20	0	140	Net Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	\$5,118	\$4,285	-\$4,648	-\$561
Sunshine Club/12th Step	0	15	0	115	Interest Income	\$178	\$205	\$1,246	\$1,425
Archives Committee	83	-	571	1,000	Depreciation/Amortization Expense	-584	(378.00)	-4088	(2,646)
Filing/Fees	13	-	93	80	Net Surplus/(Deficit)	\$4,712	\$4,112	-\$7,489	-\$1,782
Insurance	0	-	2383	2,915					

Treasurer's Report

For the month of July, group contributions were \$599 under budget and individual contributions were \$834 under budget. Year-to-date, total contributions are \$5,024 lower than budget.

Bookstore sales were slightly under budget in July, and are \$838 (or 1.4%) under budget year-to-date.

Operating expenses for July were

\$2,559 under budget. Employee expenses are \$177 under budget due to wages, taxes and health benefits. Rent expense continues to be \$1,000 under budget due to the new lease terms. Total operating expenses year to date are 6.7% under budget.

We had a surplus of \$4,712 for July, compared to a budgeted surplus of \$4,112. Year-to-date net deficit has been reduced to \$7,489.

Unrestricted cash balance increased \$2,248 to \$23,817, which represents slightly more than one month of average operating expenses.

The trend of lower than budgeted income (group/individual contributions and bookstore sales) appears to have continued in July by \$1,454. Ongoing communication to groups on the meaning of self support continues to be important.

Group Contributions, continued from p. 17

San Francisco Contributions	Aug. 11	YTD	San Francisco Contributions	Aug. 11	YTD	San Francisco Contributions	Aug. 11	YTD
Tuesday Big Book Study Tu 6pm	58	128	Waterfront Sun 8pm		504	Women's 10 Years Plus Th 615pm		429
Tuesday Downtown Tu 8pm		14	We Care Tu 12pm		162	Women's Kitchen Table Tu 630pm		67
Tuesday Men's Pax Tu 12pm		509	Wed Morning Men's Meeting W 6am		100	Women's Meeting There is a Solution		234
Tuesday Night Step Tu 7pm		89	Wednesday Noon Steps W 12pm		37	Women's Promises F 7pm		794
Tuesday Women's Tu 630pm		15	Wharfrats Th 815pm		286	Work In Progress Sat 7pm		450
Tuesday's Daily Reflections Tu 7am	198	285	What It's Like Now M 6pm	300	300	YAHOO Step Sa 1130am		277
Valencia Smokefree F 6pm	66	448	Wits End Step Study Tu 8pm	214	322	San Francisco Total	\$ 9729	\$ 69780
Walk of Shame W 8pm	84	203	Women Living Sober Sa 10am		120	YTD	\$ 12106	\$ 100218

Learning the Language of A.A.

“Immersion” Programs Work Best

by Leah Z.

Shortly after getting sober a year ago, I started taking Spanish lessons. This is something I'd wanted to do for a long time, but never got around to it because I couldn't predict whether I'd be able to show up for class regularly and do the homework. I'd probably be too hung over, or I'd stop at the bar on the way “just for one” and never make it to class.

In sobriety, I have newfound confidence in my ability to show up, and I am pleased to be steadily learning a new language. Yet I've noticed that I'm much more capable in class some weeks than others.

Choosing to do the next right thing comes more naturally.

During class each student speaks about some personal topic, such as the past weekend's activities. Sometimes I'm flustered and have trouble forming a response, and other times the foreign words flow smoothly, intuitively. The difference is clearly due to the extent to which I “immerse” myself in the new language on a daily basis.

My best weeks are those when I do at least half an hour of the homework every day, listen to instructional tapes

during my commute, and watch Spanish-language movies on the weekend. But when I procrastinate, cram all my homework in at the last minute, and essentially do the bare minimum to get by, it shows.

In just the same way, my level of immersion in A.A. practice dictates whether the tools of the program are readily available to me in times of difficulty, or are beyond my reach. Here too I am at my best when I go to several meetings a week, accept opportunities to share and do service, make myself open and available to help other alcoholics, meditate on the Third Step prayer early and often throughout the day, pray both for my

close friends as well as those with whom I feel conflict, and keep in touch with my sponsor frequently. When my program is in my consciousness, I feel its principles within me and I act accordingly. Choosing to do the next right thing comes more naturally. And by the same token, when I am “too busy” for meetings or service, slack on step work, and put A.A. on the back burner, I don't have the tools at hand when I need them.



We've had a lot of change and stress at my job recently, and conflicts and time pressures are constant. On the days I've begun with a page in *Daily Reflections* and a brief meditation, I tend to be much better at looking for solutions and less apt to react defensively.

I've also gone through major upheaval on the home front this year – breaking off a relationship with my partner of 15 years. My increasing facility with the tools of the program has allowed me to take this long overdue action in my life, while becoming more at peace with the aspects I have little control over.

Consistent participation in A.A. is something I continue to strive toward. Happily, even in my relatively short time in the program, I've seen that the practice of A.A. is its own positive reinforcement!



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Or e-mail us at: thepoint@aasf.org

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