

the Point

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

from Chapter Five of the book, Alcoholics Anonymous

2013
3
March

A publication of the Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous

Intercounty Fellowship

of Alcoholics Anonymous

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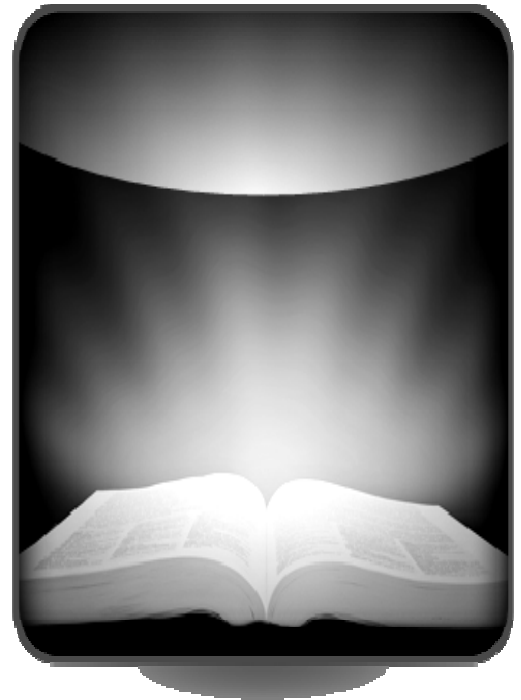
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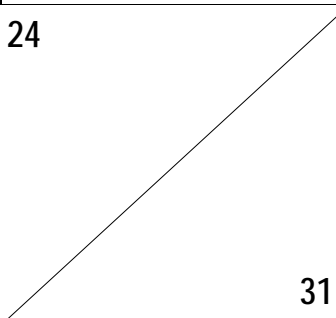
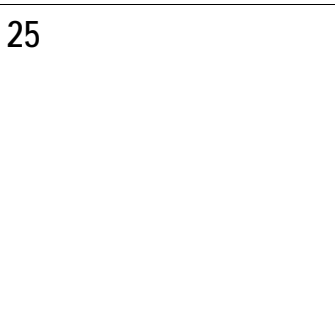
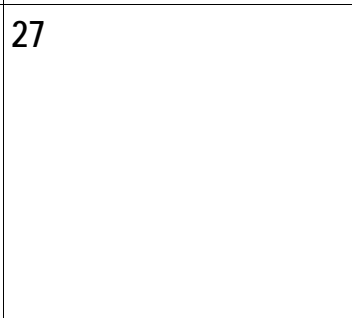
Confidence and Faith



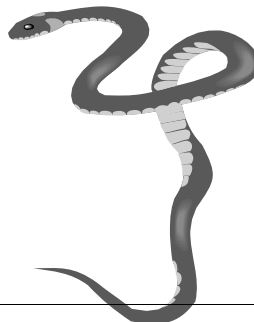
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The Point is published monthly to inform AA members about business and meeting affairs in the Intercounty Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous (San Francisco and Marin Counties). The Point's pages are open to participation by all AA members. Nothing published herein should be construed as a statement of AA, nor does publication constitute endorsement of AA as a whole, our Intergroup, the Central Office, or The Point Editorial Committee. Letters and articles to help carry the AA message are welcomed, subject to editorial review by The Point Committee.

March 2013

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
<p>Persons requiring reasonable accommodations at Intergroup meetings, Intergroup committee meetings or service events sponsored by the preceding entities, including ASL interpreters, assistive listening devices or print materials in alternative formats, should contact Central Office at (415) 674-1821 no less than five business days prior to the event.</p> <div>     </div>			
3	4 <u>FIRST MON</u> 12th Step Committee Central Office 6:30pm	5 <u>FIRST TUE</u> Access Committee Central Office 6pm	6 <u>FIRST WED</u> Intergroup Meeting 1187 Franklin St, SF Orientation 6pm Meeting 7pm
10	11 <u>SECOND MON</u> SF Public Information/Cooperation with the Professional Community (PI/CPC) Committee Speaker Workshop 6pm Central Office 7pm	12 <u>SECOND TUE</u> The Point Committee Central Office 5:30pm SF Bridging the Gap 1111 O'Farrell St 7:30pm Marin H&I 1360 Lincoln San Rafael 6:15pm SF General Service 1111 O'Farrell St 8pm	13 <u>SECOND WED</u> Marin Bridging the Gap 1360 Lincoln Ave San Rafael Alano Club 6:30pm
17 <u>THIRD SUN</u> Archives Committee Central Office 2pm Business Meeting followed by Work Day Golden Gate Young People in AA 1748 Market St SF Alano Club 2:30pm	18 <u>THIRD MON</u> SF Teleservice Central Office 6:30pm Marin General Service 9 Ross Valley Rd San Rafael 8pm	19	20
24 <div>  </div>	25 <div>  </div>	26 <u>FOURTH TUE</u> The Point Committee Central Office 5:30pm	27 <div>  </div>
	31		

THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2
7	8	9
14 <u>SECOND THU</u> Fellowship Committee Central Office 7pm	15	16 <u>THIRD SAT</u> SF H&I Mission Fellowship 2900 24th St, SF Orientation 11am Business Meeting 12pm
21 <u>THIRD THU</u> Trusted Servants Workshop Committee Central Office 6pm	22	23 <u>FOURTH SAT</u> CNCA Meeting 320 N McDowell Petaluma, CA 12:30pm
28	29	30



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I try hard to hold fast to the truth
that a full and thankful heart
cannot entertain great conceits.
The Language of the Heart, p. 271.



Meeting Changes

New Meetings:

Sun	8:00am	Inner Sunset	THE ORIGINAL 8 O'CLOCK, 1329 7th Ave / Irving (Book Study, Discussion)
Mon	6:00am	Inner Sunset	SUIT UP AND SHOW UP, Gratitude Center: 1320 7th Ave / Irving (Book Study)
Tue	6:00am	Inner Sunset	FROTHY EMOTIONAL APPEALS, Gratitude Center: 1320 7th Ave / Irving (Big Book Study)
Fri	8:55am	Inner Sunset	HEATED SUNSET 9'ERS, Gratitude Center: 1320 7th Ave / Irving (Step Study)
Fri	10:15am	Inner Sunset	IT TAKES A VILLAGE, Gratitude Center: 1320 7th Ave / Irving (Book Study, Kids Welcome)

Meeting Changes:

Sun	11:00am	Mission	FREETHINKERS STEP STUDY, 3543 18th St / Guerrero (Was at 1748 Market)
Sun	6:00pm	McLaren Park	RIVER OF LIFE AA, 1430 Sunnysdale Ave / Hahn (Was on Thursday)
Mon	3:00pm	Tenderloin	MONDAY TEA WITH BILL, Ariana Café: 842 Geary St / Hyde (Was Speaker/Discussion)
Tue	12:00pm	Pacific Heights	BASIC STRENGTH, Nu Outlook: 2205 Sutter St / Pierce (Was Tuesday Lunchtime Express)
Thu	9:00am	Inner Sunset	SUNSET 9'ERS, Gratitude Center: 1320 7th Ave / Irving (Was at 1329 7th Ave)
Thu	6:30pm	Inner Sunset	BEGINNER BIG BOOK STEP, Gratitude Center: 1320 7th Ave / Irving (Was at 1329 7th Ave)
Fri	7:30pm	Mission	FRIDAY FREETHINKERS, 3543 18th St / Guerrero (Was at 1748 Market)
Sat	11:00am	Mission	ATHEISTS, AGNOSTICS & OTHERS, 3543 18th St / Guerrero (Was at 1748 Market)

No Longer Meeting:

Mon	12:00pm	Marina	WOMEN'S GRAB BAG, Dry Dock: 2118 Greenwich St / Fillmore
Mon	2:00pm	Pt. Reyes Station	MONDAY AS BILL SEES IT, HHS Building: 6th St / A St
Fri	8:30pm	Parkmerced	FIRESIDE, 1011 Garfield St / Juniper Serra

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!***

PLAY AUDITIONS

“Our Experience Has Taught Us”
The Sensational History of our Twelve Traditions

FRIDAY, MARCH 22

6:00 - 9:00 PM

Drop-Ins Welcome!

Margaret Jenkins Dance Lab
301 8th Street #200 (at Folsom), San Francisco

To schedule an audition slot, or for more
information, email: play@aasf.org

For a list of roles to be cast, visit:
www.aasf.org/play



Please prepare a 1-2 minute memorized monologue;
from a play or film

OR ...

from one of the personal stories in the Big Book
(i.e. Bill's Story, Dr. Bob's Nightmare,
Women Suffer Too, Acceptance is the Key, etc...)

From the Editor

by Charley D.

Threes. History, mythology, popular culture all have a fascination with them. They can seem mystical, like the Christian Holy Trinity, silly, like the Stooges, or just ordinary, like a three-leaf clover that really wishes it were four. The third month of the year brings us Pi Day, a San Francisco original and every mathematician's favorite almost holiday, but also the perils and treachery of the Ides of March, and, of course, the joy of St. Patrick's Day, about which every A.A. seems to have a happy or harrowing story.

Is doing Step Three like conquering a fear of flying? Perhaps. Trusting in a Higher Power seems to Bette-B. B. like jumping off a cliff with hang-gliding gear on.

Tradition Three establishes a desire to stop drinking as A.A.'s only membership requirement. Jamie M. remembers the original formulation required an "honest" desire to stop drinking and asserts that, in this case, eschewing honesty better serves A.A.'s purpose. In a separate article he writes on greed, our "Sin of the Month," telling how he has learned and is learning to give more, demand less, and slowly beginning to understand the satisfaction it brings.

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.)

Company? A Crowd?

In our Twelfth Challenge for this month, see how Carol W. struggles to develop the same confidence in family members that she has had in her sponsors. CLB tells of her efforts to overcome fear in her life – fear brought brutally to life in the wake of the Newtown slayings.

Claire A. shows how doing service as a meeting secretary gave her a new vantage point on sobriety that turned into something magical.

Anonymous used to write under a more recognizable but still somewhat anonymous name. She (he?) has now changed to something completely anonymous and more in tune with recovery.

Our A.A. Prehistory feature relates how Akron became an early center for the Oxford Group, a fertile field from which A.A. itself subsequently would sprout.

This month brings us the first day of a new sprouting season. A time to renew, to grow, to awaken from winter's angst. In New England they say, "March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb." In many ways that sums up the A.A. journey. If life snarls at you now, we hope our offerings may bring you something of the soothing peace of springtime.



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.	James W.	Patrick M.
Amelia E.	Jane K.	Peg L.
Andrea C.	Janet B.	Pene P.
Andy Z.	Janet M.	Penelope C.
Ann W.	Jeanne C.	Philip B.
Anne C.	Jeff B.	Rich G.
Barbara L.	Jocelyn & Ralf Z.	Robert C.
Barbara M.	John M.	Robert W.
Bette B.	John V.	Sara D.
Blu F.	Karen C.	Sheila H.
Braden B.	Karen K.	Steve A.
Brian O.	Kathleen C.	Steve G.
Bruce K.	Kevin S.	Steve F.
Bruce S.	Kurt P.	Stephen S.
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Caroline A.	Lelan & Rich H.	Teddy W.
Cathy P.	Leo G.	Tim M.
Charles L.	Leo H.	Tom S.
Charles D.	Linda L.	Tony R.
Charlie O.	Lisa M.	Tracy F.
Chris L.	Lynn D.	
Chris S.	Lynne L.	Your
Chuck S.	Mabel T.	Name
CJ H.	Maria G.	Here!
Craig S.	Marit L.	
Dan B.	Mark O.	Or
Dan & Sherry T.	Martha S.	Here!
David J.	Mary C.	
David S.	Mary D.	Or
Denise H.	Mary L.	Here!
Dennis & Lucy O.	Maryellen O.	
Dianne E.	Mia M.	
Eric P.	Michael P.	
Erin S.	Michael Z.	
Evan K.	Michelle C.	
Fay K.	Mike M.	
Frederick D.	Nathaniel W.	
Gregory G.	Niels R.	
Herman B.	Paget V.	
Ian M.	Pat R.	

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!

Really Living

Alcoholism and Cancer

by Kathleen C.

Alcoholism and cancer are two deadly diseases I live with every day. I'm not alone. There are lots of us in A.A. with HIV, Hepatitis C, and other acute and chronic illnesses. I have learned from the Steps how to live sober with cancer, which, in my case, like alcoholism, seems to be a family disease. And when I say sober, I mean not just not drinking, but absolutely enjoying life and savoring every precious moment.

My father's father, a violent drunk, died of colon cancer in his early forties. His medical expenses bankrupted the family and Dad went to work right after high school, to help support his mother and two younger sisters.

After decades of drinking Jack Daniels and smoking unfiltered Pall Malls, Dad was diagnosed with lung cancer at age 62. He was really angry. He had just retired and thought the best part of his life was beginning. Instead it was ending. I was newly sober and visited him several times over the year and a half of his illness to make a living amends. One day we were sitting in the living room and I asked what I could do for him. He looked me in the eye and said, "Just be here."

A few months after he died, I got my own diagnosis – a suspicious lump on the roof of my mouth turned out to be malignant. Whether it was related to my drinking and smoking is unknown.

My first reaction was a mixture of fear of dying and leaving my five-year-old twin daughters without a mother, and anger – here I was sober and this was my reward. Thanks a

lot, God. My next reaction came out of nowhere – overwhelming gratitude for the richness of my life.

So I quit crying and accepted the care of my Higher Power, who went to work in the guise of surgeons and radiation oncologists to treat my disease. I have been in remission from that particular cancer for 24 of

I quit crying and accepted the care of my Higher Power.

the 26 years I have been sober. It is an unusual cell type that can come back even years from now, but I do the footwork, having checkups and tests. I look on this part of my life is a freebie, an extra, a gift.

Recently cancer popped up again, literally, on the side of my nose. It's just like alcoholism, doing push-ups in the parking lot. This was unrelated

to the mouth cancer, but was the third major skin cancer on my face. I had to have plastic surgery to repair the hole in the side of my nose after the cancer surgeon scooped out the tumor. While I was housebound for a month, friends from the fellowship of A.A. called, sent me cards and texts and emails, and even visited, bringing soup. The time flew by.

One friend asked how I was able to be so accepting of the situation – having cancer on my face, again, with yet another scar, from the top of my forehead to the tip of my nose. I told her, "My program just kicked in automatically." All those morning prayers and daily readings and meetings and phone calls and working the Steps with my sponsor and sponsees filled up my spiritual bank, to draw on when I needed it. The 12 Steps of A.A. teach me how to live sober, with whatever life hands me. And I absolutely insist on enjoying life!



How Service Keeps Me Sober and Fulfilled

by Claire A.

I'm about 18 months sober, and so far I have made coffee, folded pamphlets, served as treasurer, and filled the odd one-off meeting job. Lately, I am holding my first secretary position, and it has been eye opening for me. I have to admit that I wanted this job. I probably should have heeded some advice I heard early on: "If you want the job, it's not service." But even though I wanted this one, it still feels like service, and I have learned some unexpected lessons.

For example, at the close of this meeting, the secretary says (according to script), "And thank you for letting me serve as your secretary." I always thought how smug this sounded, placed where it was at the end of the meeting. Why, I wondered, didn't it come with the rest of the thank-yous? It seemed to beg for applause. I had no idea how much the speaker-meeting secretaries were doing behind the scenes. They were lining up speakers, arriving early, fielding questions, and dealing with speaker cancellations among other things. No, I was sure this was a gambit for applause. And even though I scorned the statement of thanks, I wanted that applause! Now, I am starting to be embarrassed by the applause.

This is because I humbly appreciate that I *do* thank the group for letting me be secretary. I thank the group for putting me in a central role where I get to meet a lot of new people. I thank the group for giving me a reason to reach out to other alcoholics to ask them to speak. I thank the group for trusting me with a big responsibility. The job gives me

a clear purpose, and a reason to show up and show up early for each meeting. It gives me a reason to go other meetings, stick my hand out and introduce myself, and meet many lovely people. It gives me a reason to call people and stay in touch. In short, it is a huge gift that keeps me sober.

*It's not magic, but it
sure does feel like it
sometimes.*

One part of the job is getting women to serve as speakers. Getting people to say "yes" is not, as I thought it might be, the hard part – most people, though nervous, want the chance. The hard part is attending enough meetings to find new women to speak, introducing myself and extending the invitation to speak, and then making sure they get to the meeting, making them comfortable and introducing them. Of course, all these things are explained and scripted. My job is to take action, and to

practice these skills. Another gift.

An unexpected challenge for me is sticking to the script. I'm an editor by trade, and worse, a perfectionist. There is great solace in putting that tendency aside and simply reciting what is before me. Reciting forces me to consider that what I'm reading may be the way it is for a good reason. Such is the case with the line where the secretary thanks the group. Where initially I took this as a self-centered grab for applause, I now realize it is a sincere expression of gratitude for a gift received.

So, service in the program provides me with practice at the very skills I need. It's not magic; ours is a program of action. As I act, I learn and practice. The more I act, the more fluid and functional I become. It's not magic, but it sure does feel like it sometimes.



Confidence and Faith



by Carol W.

"Can we have the same kind of confidence and faith in these people who have been infected and sometimes crippled by our own illness that we have in our sponsors?"

Reading this in context (last paragraph of page 112/top 113 in the 12x12), it appears that the "these people" Bill refers to, are our family members. Now, no matter how much sober time or life experience I have, there is some part of me that assumes that everything written in the A.A. literature must be true. If Bill asks a leading question, well, I as a good A.A. must say "yes." In this case, I feel myself tense up because I cannot say "yes" to his question if I am to be truly honest.

While I love my family, and while I have worked my rear end off the practice the principles of A.A. in my family life, I have never developed

the confidence and faith in my family members which I have with my sponsors.

The whole structure of sponsorship (at least as I've experienced it many decades after the 12X12 was written), is based on one recovering alcoholic working towards further recovery with another alkie. So the basis of the relationship is the literal desire to survive our disease of alcoholism. This is not a bond that I had with anyone in my family when I got sober. The alkie-to-alkie bond is part of my bond with one family member now, but we also have many other layers to our relationship. Those layers make our relationship much more complicated than any I have had with a sponsor.

My sponsors have been people with whom I can have real honesty and trust, because we don't carry the emotional load between us of decades of family dysfunction. We

are simply sitting together as albies in recovery, which makes unconditional love a possibility between us. With one exception, none of my family has a structure anything like A.A. – or even Alanon. The majority of them don't even participate in other socially or spiritually supportive groups, such as religious congregations. As a result, most of my family has similar behaviors to the ones they did before I got sober. After all, I am not the center of their universe; just because I get sober does not mean everyone else in my family will change their behavior.

One of my sponsors – an old timer even when I first met her – used to look at me and say "People are people." I understood her to mean that people, including my family, friends, co-workers, lovers, whomever, will have their own lives and their own behaviors. It is my job to accept them as they are, and to concentrate on working my own program.

That same sponsor would often remind me "Don't go to the hardware store for oranges." She was reminding me to keep my expectations in check, and to go to the right people for the right type of support.

That all said, I have learned to love my family better and more honestly in sobriety than I ever did before. I am free to do that when I remember to love them as they are, and not to expect more or different from them than they can give.





Carrying the Message Without the Mention

by Anonymous

It is a joyful moment when a personal hobby becomes a way to perform service in A.A. I have enjoyed writing for *The Point*, *The Grapevine* and for an unofficial daily blog for A.A. members. These opportunities allow me to express some of the passion I have for A.A., which I can't often do in live shares, because I can get a bit tongue-tied, distracted or rerouted. I'm also not much good on the telephone. I tend to repeatedly start speaking at the exact moment the other person starts speaking. Then we blurt out apologies at the same time. Again and again. It feels like I have some kind of incurable timing disorder. When I write, there is none of that awkwardness to worry about. If I drift off topic, I can edit my writing to get back on course before

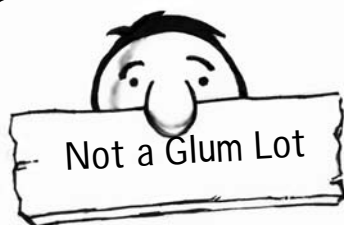
anyone even knows what happened. I sometimes wish I could communicate only in writing. People often misunderstand what I am saying when I speak, but this rarely happens when I write.

I have always published under my first name and last initial, followed by my city and state. I have told myself that I am being anonymous. The truth is, my first name has an unusual spelling, and there are probably only two of us in the nine-county Bay Area. When that is coupled with my last initial and the city where I live, you might as well put my photograph next to the article. But to be painfully honest, this has not been an accident or unavoidable circumstance. It has been the byproduct of a secret wish to be acknowledged and recognized, to develop some kind of recognizable brand in A.A. So starting now, there

is no more brand, banner, byline or badge for me when I write for the Fellowship. I am just another drunk who happens to be able to write well.

*If not for A.A., I
might be working
on a memoir in a pen-
itentiary library.*

If not for A.A., I might be working on a memoir in a penitentiary library. I will gladly give up my name, fame and claim to whatever God's grace has allowed me to produce. So if you see me walking by in my dark sunglasses, please do not waive. Please pretend you do not know me at all.



by Carol W.

One Good Turn

A man is in bed with his wife when he awakens to a rat-a-tat-tat on his front door. He rolls over and looks at his clock. It's half past three in the morning. "I'm not getting out of bed at this hour," he thinks, and rolls over. Then, a louder knock follows. "Aren't you going to answer that?" says his wife.

He drags himself out of bed and goes downstairs. He opens the door. A bleary eyed man stands in front of him. It doesn't take the homeowner long to realize the man is drunk. "Hi there," slurs the stranger, "Can you give me a push?" "No, get lost. It's half past three. I was in bed," says the man and slams the door.

He goes back up to bed and tells his wife what happened. She says, "Dave, that wasn't very nice of you. Remember that night we broke down in the pouring rain on the way to pick the kids up from the baby sitter and you had to knock on that man's house to get us started again? What would have

happened if he'd told us to get lost?" "But this guy was drunk," says the husband. "It doesn't matter," says the wife. "He needs our help and you should help him." So the husband gets out of bed again, gets dressed, and goes downstairs.

He opens the door, and not being able to see the stranger anywhere he shouts, "Hey, do you still want a push?" And he hears a voice cry out, "Yeah, please." So, still being unable to see the stranger he shouts, "Where are you?"

And the stranger replies, "I'm over here, on your swing."

Step Three: Hang Gliding

Leaping with faith

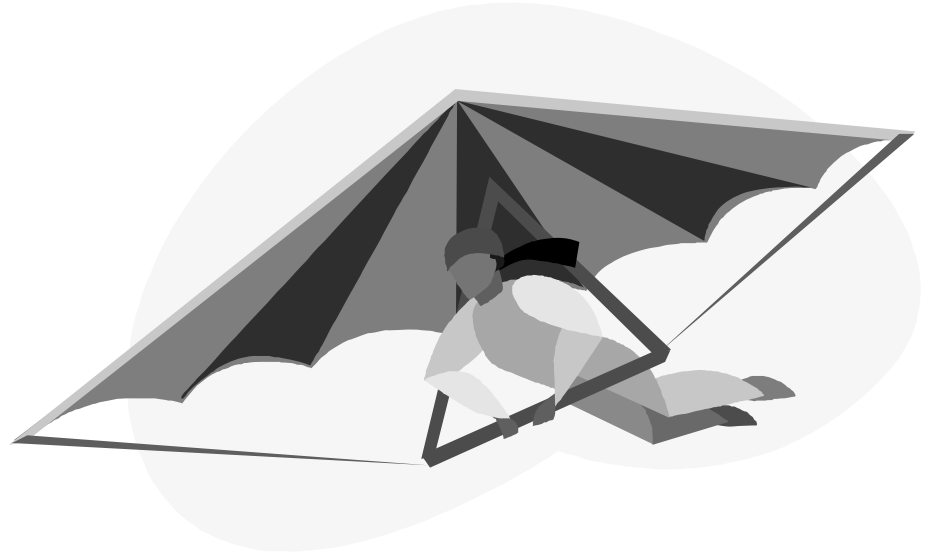
by Bette-B. B.

When I came into A.A. after twenty-four years of daily drinking, I was ready for a new way of life. My "treatment" was two to three meetings a day at "The Divine Dump" in San Francisco, a long-time meeting place in a neighborhood full of bars and funeral homes. The old-timers would point at these establishments and tell us, "If you don't like it here, try it out there."

For the first three months, I practiced the "ism"—I sponsored myself. But I did ask for help through the emotional storms of early sobriety from the people I saw every day at the meetings. The Steps that everyone spoke about, which hung crookedly on the wall, mystified me. My will had always been my higher power, way before I started to drink; drinking simply helped ease the pain of life not going my way.

I was also an agnostic and cynic. The idea of turning my will and my life over to something other than my own efforts at control was an action that I simply could not imagine. But I wanted this new way of life desperately, so I listened closely to what people had to say in meetings about their experience of coming to believe. Initially, I was repelled by those who talked about God, but they had a joy and a calm that I wanted.

An important part of my coming to believe was spending time at the ocean, where I could see a power greater than myself in action. Several times a week, I would go out to an abandoned WW II fort situated on a bluff overlooking the beach. It was an area for hang gliders, and I'd



always enjoyed watching them sail by as I walked along the cliffs and down to the beach. I'd always yearned for the freedom that flight represented. I even had thirty hours of flight logged in small, aerobatic planes before giving it up, as I did with many pursuits during my drinking. As part of my training, I'd learned that the impact of alcohol increases as one ascends into the air, so I usually drank before I flew, to latch on to that thrill.

One day out at the fort, as I was struggling with how to work the Third Step, I found myself watching the hang gliders as they got ready to launch themselves. They lumbered up to the take-off spot with this heavy equipment on their backs, and then simply stepped into space from this very small spit of sand on the edge of a cliff. This was an intermediate skills area, so everyone had a certain expertise with the principles of aerodynamics. They knew what to do when they left the

ground and moved into the air. A week before, however, a man had hesitated as he took off, and he'd fallen down the cliff and died, breaking his neck.

Hearing this story opened up the path to the Third Step for me. I had learned the principles of A.A. flight from Steps One and Two. I had seen how halfway measures could lead me out of the program to certain death. What I had to do was stand on the edge of the unknown, have faith in the Steps and my teachers in the meetings, and let go—step with both feet into this terrifying new realm of surrender, and trust that a power greater than myself, which I was only coming to understand, would carry me. If I held back, trying to keep one foot in the old realm, I'd fall out of the program. I had to abandon myself absolutely to the principles of the new dimension.

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Pre A.A. History:

How The Oxford Group Came To Akron

An installment of excerpts from the Pre-A.A. History booklet by Bob S.

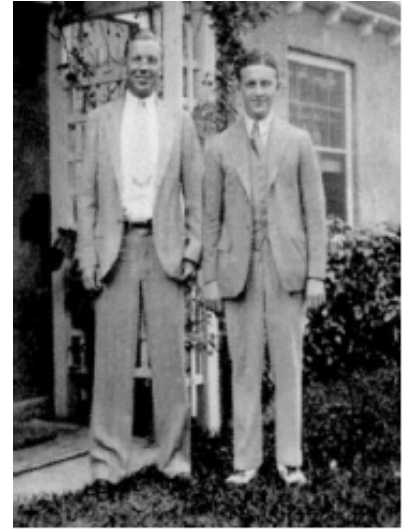
The spiritual program of Oxford Group had served as a magnet, of sorts, bringing Bill together with Dr. Bob, but this was just a beginning. It is interesting how the Groupers chose to be in Akron in the first place. Jim Newton was the catalyst for events leading to this unlikely choice of cities. In 1924, at the age of 20, Jim, with the help of his father, purchased 55 acres of raw land in Ft. Myers Florida, adjacent to the properties of inventor Thomas Edison and auto manufacturer Henry Ford. In time, Jim became like a second son to the Edison family.

Resultantly, Jim became associated with many famous and influential friends of the Edisons, such as President Hoover, neighbor Henry Ford, and manufacturer Harvey Firestone, Sr. In 1928 Harvey Firestone asked Newton to move to Akron, Ohio, to assume the position of "Secretary to the President" of the Firestone Tire Rubber Company. He accepted, moved to Akron, and was lodged in the Portage Country Club (where Bill Wilson was to be briefly lodged six years later). Shortly

thereafter he was placed in the position of "President of Firestone Realty." He was then informed that he was being groomed for the presidency of Firestone.

Jim was of course welcomed by the Firestone family, but became closer to Russell "Bud" Firestone. Bud had a very severe drinking problem and had been to several "dry out" institutions to no avail. At this time Jim had been an ardent Oxford Group member for many years and had known many of its movers and shakers, including the Reverend Sam Shoemaker. In effort to help Bud, they took a train to an Oxford Group gathering in Denver. Riding back home in a private car, Reverend Shoemaker helped Bud do "a surrender." His life changed immediately and his family was saved from a fifth-a-day drunkard.

Harvey Firestone, Sr. was a member of an Akron Episcopal Church, headed by the same Reverend Walter Tunks who Bill Wilson phoned in 1935. Impressed by what Sam Shoemaker of the Oxford Group had done for his son, he invited Oxford Group founder, Frank Buchman, to bring his group for a ten-day event at Akron's



Jim Newton and Bud Firestone

Mayflower Hotel. The Oxford Group departed on January 23, 1933, but left six of its members behind in effort to continue "House Parties" in the rubber capital of the world. In April of 1935 Oxford Group "House Parties" were started at T. Henry and Clarace Williams home at 676 Palisades Drive.

So that is, in brief, how Jim Newton paved the road for the Oxford Group to settle in Akron, Ohio.



A guy walks into a bar in Cork, Ireland, and asks the barman: "What's the quickest way to get to Dublin?" "Are you walking or

driving?" asks the barman. "Driving," says the man. "That's the quickest way," says the barman.



Greed

by Jamie M.

In sobriety, I'm still greedy, it's just that I now know it's a character defect, or as the essay in the 12X12 puts it, one of the seven deadly sins. I'm more likely to ask myself, "Is this my fair share, or more than my fair share, or do I really have a share at all?" The old self would not have asked these kinds of questions. I'm more likely to let others go first than I was. I am more likely to try to build up the virtue of generosity rather than to revel in the vice of greed. This is still an area where more growth is needed. The good news is, I was telling my family over the holidays that I'm a greedy selfish person, and they disagreed with me. I explained to them that I still *feel* greedy and selfish a lot of the time, but that I actively exert myself (at the best of times) to recognize these character defects and act contrary to my first reaction. Our program literature suggests that we have a

The word "enough" holds a certain element of mystery.

spiritual disease; medical literature suggests that we have a chronic disease, that is to say, a disease where the underlying condition is still there even when the disease is under control and symptoms are not *observable*.

Let's face it, to people like me, the

word "enough" holds a certain element of mystery— and that's the essence of my greed problem. That was one of the major roots of alcoholism and its spiritual components. Before I began to learn and try to practice the principles of the program, greed was, at some level, a chronic condition of fear— Is there enough? Will I get enough? *Can* I get enough? The only thing that lessened the fear was an orgy of consumption which was certainly not limited alcohol, though booze certainly had the place of honor. The nature of this fear was such that even at times when I was glutting myself, I had the inward state of a looter breaking into store fronts before the cops came— I needed to get all I could as quickly as I could, and I certainly didn't think any of it was mine. And plenty of times, it sure wasn't mine.

One of the gifts of sobriety, as far as greed is concerned, is that I now recognize that there actually are things that really are mine, things that are not undeserved and for which I'm not about to get caught, and which won't suddenly be taken away (or taken back). By the same token, because I feel

this way, it becomes easier to give. I am not just, in an emotional (or actual) sense, passing on stolen goods. I've actually had the experience that giving is blessed— although I still have a ways to go before I can live up to the spiritual truth that it is more blessed to give than to receive. And when greed becomes less, I can actually relax and enjoy gifts when they are given, which means that the gift is subjectively worth far more. Like the Big Book says in a couple of different places, this is work that can hardly be finished in our lifetime. But as with many things in the program, it is work that's worth doing, and very rewarding.



Spirituality: Taking positive action

In the face of fear and powerlessness

by CLB

Before Christmas, twenty young children, their teachers and school administrators, and a mother and young man all died at the hand of the latter mentioned young man. The young man allegedly had serious mental health problems and, in his final act of illness here on earth, used his mother's guns to end the lives of many human beings.

I am the mother of an adorable, charming two-year girl, a woman who has suffered from poor mental health, a pacifist and a sensitive recovering alcoholic. I believe that it is because I am the mother of a young child that I was deeply saddened by and angry about the killings in Newtown, Connecticut. Angry that, in a country I love, guns are so freely available. Angry that mental illness, although seemingly omnipresent in our lives, brings stigma and shame. Angry and so deeply saddened that those twenty lovely, fun, darling, simple, cherubic kids were no longer on the planet; unable to spend an otherwise normal holiday season with their families and loved ones. And, I was sad for their parents – so very sad for their parents.

I had not felt as upset about a national event since the attacks on the World Trade Center, and at that time I was actively engaged with my addictions. The afternoon of September eleventh I got high. It was one of the first actions that came to mind: “—k it; the world is totally unpredictable, I am going to get high.” On the afternoon of December fourteenth I did not get stoned. Instead of being destructive to myself or others, I chose to act

constructively. Indiscriminately – perhaps compulsively – I began to serve as an advocate for my beliefs. Several days later, still not feeling well and without anything tangible to wrap my mind and heart around, I bought a bouquet of flowers. While the florist prepared the bouquet, the purpose of which I disclosed, he and I shared a poignant moment of grief and communion. The bouquet was

*Instead of being
destructive to myself
or others, I chose to act
constructively.*

gorgeous, full of color and life. I brought it home and set up a makeshift altar. It was a place for me to lay my thoughts and prayers, see a physical manifestation of life that I assume those kids must have radiated, and take some time out of my life to honor theirs. I took positive action in the face of sadness and anger.

But what is anger if not fear? Before the New Year, it had not registered that I was also feeling fear. Sometime in January, I was home sitting in my bedroom, which faces our normally quiet street, playing with my daughter. Suddenly, we heard a rapid series of pops and my neighbor's car alarm. I was so afraid. I escorted my daughter into her room, nestled deep in our flat and away from the street. The sound had been fireworks apparently right under my window, although I never saw the person who lit them off.

When my daughter was an infant and I used to push her in a stroller on



walks in the city, I would become afraid that cars might jump the curb, or not stop when we used the crosswalk, and hit her. (Before sobriety, I virtually played in traffic.) At the time, the curb-jumping fear was totally new to me; I had never before felt a sense of fear over living with the risks inherent to traffic.

Recently, I connected these three incidents in my mind and realized the anger I felt over Newtown was my fear of being powerless. I am: powerless over unpredictable danger; powerless over whether or not my child will ever get hurt or worse; powerless over other people's intentions; and powerless over bad drivers and loud sounds and poor mental health and access to guns. Anger and fear would have been present in all the aforementioned situations had I been sober or not. I never question my higher power when it comes to personal responsibility. I believe a long time ago a higher power set the universe spinning and since then he or she has made miracles happen. But, today, here, now, individual people are responsible for their own actions. By the grace of my high power I am sober today. I get to actively work with my higher power on a solution which helps me work through and move past my sadness and take positive action to sooth my anger around, and fear of, being powerless.

Intergroup Meeting Summary—February 2013

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

A Is For Alcohol	Embarcadero Group	Living Sober With HIV	Saturday Weekend Warrior	Thursday Thumpers
Any Lengths	Extreme Makeover	Miracles (Way) Off 24th St.	Say Hey Group	Tiburon Haven
Artists & Writers	Friday Morning 12 Steppers	Monday Night Stag Tiburon	Sober Saturday	Too Early
Blue Book Special	Girls Night Out	Noon Smokeless	Step Talk	Women's Promises
Boys Night Out	Greenfield Newcomers	On Awakening Group	Sunday Night Castro Speaker Disc	
Come 'n Get It!	Haight Street Blues	Pax West	Sunday Rap	<i>Marin General Service</i>
Day At A Time	High Noon Mon	Queers, Crackpots & Fallen Women	Sunset Speaker Step	<i>Marin Teleservice</i>
Early Start	Keep Coming Back	Reality Farm	Thursday Night Speaker	<i>Marin H&I</i>

This is an unofficial summary of the February 2013 Intergroup meeting provided for convenience; it is not intended to be the completed approved minutes. For a complete copy of the minutes see "Intergroup" at www.aasf.org.

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

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

The meeting was held on Wed., Feb 6th, 2013 at 101 Donohue St, Marin City CA.

The meeting was started with a call to order and the Serenity Prayer. Baskets for rent and dinner were passed. The January minutes and the February agenda were approved.

Officer Reports

Board Chair Report, Margaret J.

Search for new special worker continues. Thanks to Carolyn and Ray for their help. The Board is revamping the Central Office employee handbook. Annual review process has begun for Central Office manager. We've put down a deposit on the theater space for Jackie B's play in late September. Saturday, Feb 9, the Board is hosting a committee chairs meeting. Thank you to you all IGRs. As of now, more than 10% of English speaking groups in SF have an Intergroup rep. Marin up from 6.9% to 8.9% Trusted servant registrations also increased. This means that people have been

making this announcement, which is great. 4% increase in number of registered trusted servants. 5% increase in meetings that had both trusted servants registered.

Treasurer's report, Michelle C. Review of yearly budget performance. December Gratitude contributions over budget \$1,620.35, for year, \$4,709.54. Group contributions \$2,011.80 over budget in Dec and \$556.57 for the year. Individual contributions \$6,289.14 over budget in Dec, \$1,641.23 for the year. Bookstore sales \$210.26 under budget in Dec, \$5,265.68 under budget for year. Bookstore sales may trend downward as literature becomes available online.

Central Office Manager's Report, Maury P. Important clarification: we are not trying to save money by not having the special worker in place or by not fulfilling ASL requests. These are circumstantial expense savings. Central Office is closed on President's Day. Please let people know. This info didn't make it into the Point. SF schedule has been updated and is now available.

Intergroup Committee Reports

Access Committee, Steve F. Former committee members have been supportive. Hoping to update a survey so we can better serve those who this committee focuses on. Our mission is to explore, develop and offer resources to make the A.A. message available to all who reach out for it. We hope to exceed our budget this year which would mean that more people were taking advantage of the services, more people in need are trying to get to meetings to hear the message.

Archives Committee, Michael P. Meets

3rd Sunday of the month, 2-4pm. Feb 17th Request all groups provide written copy of the "Meet the Meeting" presentations. Mission is to preserve the legacy of AA.

Fellowship Committee, Blu We meet the 2nd Thursday of every month at 6pm. Discussing production of Jackie B.'s new play. Auditions to be held March 22 at Margaret Jenkins Dance Lab, 301 8th Street #200 (at Folsom Street). Please take flyers and announce at meetings. For more info, email play@aasf.org.

Orientation, Blu We meet the 1st Wed of the month at 6pm for orientation.

SF PI/CPC, Rich G. Meet the 2nd Monday of month, 7pm at Central Office. In Jan delivered 5 DUI classes. Now holding speaker workshops monthly at 6pm before the business meeting. Please send anyone interested in speaking to DUI classes, groups of professionals like therapists, police officers, priests, etc.

SF Teleservice, Carolyn R. Teleservice answers the phones when Central Office is closed. Constantly looking for volunteers. We meet the 3rd Monday at 6:30.

The Point Committee, Charley Sin of the month feature begins. There are 2 articles about pride included. Huge increase in rate for mailing The Point.

Question to Intergroup – should we eliminate the print version of The Point? We are down to 2 members and we need more if we want The Point to continue. We meet the 2nd and 4th Tue of each month, 5:30pm

12th Step Committee, Alex 13 people signed up at last workshop. Meet the 1st Monday of each month, 6:30pm.

Trusted Servant Committee, Michael

Individual Contributions

to Central Office were made through February 15, 2013
honoring the following members:

IN MEMORIAM

Veronica McC. 30 years

ANNIVERSARIES

Wayne 17 years (High Noon), Eric 9 years (High Noon),

Derrick 4 years (High Noon), Gary 1 year (High Noon)

Alejandro 10 years (Living Sober with HIV)

Sara D. 19 years, Maury P. 24 years

P. The goal is to get the word out about the Traditions via workshops for secretaries and treasurers. Guide to Group Service almost ready to reprint.

Website Committee, Becca M. Scheduling challenges have prevented progress. We'll be looking at returning the committee to a monthly or bi-monthly structure.

Liaison Reports

Marin General Service, Rudy S. Jeff O., the Area 6 Alternate Delegate, came to meeting to help us be "un-organized". We have passed motion for one of the DCMs in Sub-district 5 to pay Alano club \$10 to rent room for their meetings. Discussion on prepping for agenda topics so GSRs can take group conscience. Thought we had extra money and were planning to give it to GSO and CNCA, but it turned out to be an accounting error and was actually only \$2k. We discussed whether to send some to Central Office but decided on national donations instead.

Marin Teleservice, Dan B. Need volunteers to answer phones and maintain 12 step list. Monthly meeting on the 4th Tuesday of month, 7:00 for orientation, at the Alano Club in Marin, 26 Feb.

H&I Liaison, Shannon New as liaison but will be better next time.

New Business

Outreach to Vets David G. Veteran's Coffee Break now on Th at 1pm. David is a vet and has received lots of support from AA and the VA and wants to give back. Vets need help and substance abuse is a big issue. Swords to Plowshares - there was a meeting listed there, but it

had gone dormant. Need to further investigate whether there are any needs we could answer for vets specifically, beyond meetings.

Suggestions included: partner with PI/CPC; add page with resources for vets on AASF.org; visit new vet housing on Otis (could be good place to bring meeting to); find out if national outreach already exists; put something in the Buzz and the Point directing folks to David; consider approaching Alanon about this to help with outreach.

David@gentryarts.com - drop him email with questions and suggestions.

Round Table: The Point Ask yourselves, what is the value of the hard copy at the meetings? Mike from the Point committee: currently only 2 committee members: a chair and secretary/layout person/contributor liaison/followup/proofreader/editor. This used to be a committee of 6-8 people. There may not be a point if we don't get help. All one would need is a love of reading and writing. Don't need a professional background to be on the committee. Just need to be able to show up and support. Committee members also speak to the fellowship about The Point to elevate awareness about it. Please follow up with poll at your meetings about usage and tie in the trusted servants registration as well.

Next Intergroup Meeting: Wed. March 6, 2013, 7pm, 1187 Franklin St. SF CA. Orientation is at 6pm, dinner is served at 6:30pm.

COMMITTEE CONTACTS

The following is a list of names and email addresses for our Intergroup Officers and many of the committees. Please email that committee at the address below if you are interested in doing service on a committee, or if you wish to receive more information.

BOARD OFFICERS:

CHAIR

Margaret J. chair@aasf.org

VICE CHAIR

Phil L. vicechair@aasf.org

TREASURER

Michelle C. treasurer@aasf.org

RECORDING SECRETARY

Rebecca M. secretary@aasf.org

COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

12th STEP COMMITTEE

Alex K. 12thstep@aasf.org

ARCHIVES COMMITTEE

Michael P. archives@aasf.org

ORIENTATION COMMITTEE

Blu F. orientation@aasf.org

FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

Blu F. fellowship@aasf.org

THE POINT

Charley D. thepoint@aasf.org

ACCESS COMMITTEE

Steve F. access@aasf.org

TRUSTED SERVANTS

WORKSHOP COMMITTEE

Michael P. tsw@aasf.org

WEBSITE COMMITTEE

website@aasf.org

PI/CPC COMMITTEE

Rich G. picpc@aasf.org

SF TELESERVICE COMMITTEE

Carolyn R. sfteleservice@aasf.org

aa group contributions

Fellowship Contributions Jan '13		SF Contributions Jan '13		SF Contributions Jan '13	
Brisbane Breakfast Bunch	28	6am Dry Dock Fri	65	Each Day a New Beginning F 7am	626
Contribution Box	53	Each Day a New Beginning M 7am	388	Hilldwellers M 8pm	255
Intergroup	115	Each Day a New Beginning W 7am	207	Design for Living Sat 8am	455
Fellowship Total	\$ 196.00	There is a Solution Tu 6pm	230	Like A Prayer Su 4pm	202
		Sunset 9'ers F	45	Park Presidio M 830pm	138
Marin Contributions Jan '13		830am Smokeless Th 830am	166	Cow Hollow Men's Group W 8pm	264
Morning After Sa 10am	200	No Reservations M 12pm	614	AA As You Like It Tu 530pm	200
Day At A Time 7D 630am	120	Meeting Place Noon F 12pm	150	A New Start F 830pm	150
Greenfield Newcomers Sun 7pm	335	The Pepper Group F 12pm	106	Sunday Night 3rd Step Group 5pm	274
We, Us and Ours M 650pm	200	Rigorous Honesty Th 1205pm	149	Saturday Night Regroup Sat 730pm	367
Rise N Shine Sun 10am	164	Sunset 9'ers Su	222	Saturday Afternoon Meditation Sat 5pm	222
Mill Valley 7D 7am	745	High Noon Sunday 1215p	476	Monday Men's Meeting M 8pm	120
Sunday Express Sun 6pm	100	YAHOO Step Sa 1130am	212	Waterfront Sun 8pm	100
On Awakening 7D 530am	858	Friday All Groups F 830pm	40	Waterfront Sun 8pm	117
Women's Big Book Tu 1030am	215	As Bill Sees It Th 6pm	380	Women's Kitchen Table Tu 630pm	172
Newcomers Step M 730pm	1070	Live and Let Live Su 8pm	15	Haight Street Blues Tu 615pm	205
Mill Valley Discussion W 830pm	113	Women's Came to Believe Sa 10am	63	Say Hey Group M-F 6pm	99
Serendipity Sa 11am	100	Living Sober with HIV W 6pm	101	Ten Years After Su 6pm	318
Attitude Adjustment 7D 7am	160	Blue Book Special Su 11am	192	Saturday Beginners Sat 6pm	440
Intimate Feelings Sa 10am	62	Lincoln Park Sat 830pm	7	Women's 10 Years Plus Th 615pm	557
Tuesday Chip Meeting Tu 830pm	120	Sunset 9'ers Sa	31	Afro American Beginners Sat 8pm	103
Saturday Women's Speaker Sa 6pm	273	Firefighters & Friends Tu 10am	136	6am Dry Dock Tu	150
Girls Night Out W 815pm	116	Wharfrats Th 815pm	126	Mid-Morning Support Su 1030am	292
Women's Lunch Bunch F 12pm	325	Buena Vista Breakfast Su 12pm	20	After Work M 6PM	26
Morning Attitude Adjustment MTuF 7am Sa 8	73	Gold Mine Group M 8pm	140	What It's Like Now M 6pm	120
As Bill Sees It M 2pm	14	Brothers in Arms M 8pm	54	The Lads Fr 730pm	71
Marin Total	\$5,361.71	Sober Saturday Sa 830am	110	830am Smokeless F 830am	228
		Sunset 11'ers Su	160	Friday Smokeless F 8pm	168
SF Contributions Jan '13		Each Day A New Beginning Su 8am	620	Miracle (Way) Off 24th St W 730pm	140
Meeting Place Noon W 12pm	245	Walk of Shame W 830pm	37	High Noon Friday 1215pm	31
Bernal New Day 7D	339	We Care Tu 12pm	124	Pax West M 12pm	788
Each Day a New Beginning Tu 7am	424	Friendly Circle Beginners Su 715pm	96	Tuesday Big Book Study Tu 6pm	72
Women's Promises F 7pm	180	Sundown W 7pm	363	Queers, Crackpots & Fallen Women	190
New Friday Big Book F 12pm	78	Closed Women's Step Study Tu 330pm	103	Wednesday Night Speaker Disc 7pm	25
Each Day a New Beginning Th 7am	300	Monday Beginners M 8pm	111	SF Total	\$15,768.44
Saturday Easy Does It Sa 12pm	362	They Don't Know Who We Are Sat 7pm	100	YTD	\$ 21,326

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Tradition Three

by Jamie M.

The forward to the First Edition of the Big Book states, “We are not an organization in the conventional sense of the word. The only requirement for membership is an honest desire to stop drinking” (emphasis added). Years later, when the short form of Tradition Three was adopted, it became “The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.” I always come back to long version and note the interesting point that the word “honest” disappeared from the requirement for membership. Given all the emphasis on honesty that we hear about in the A.A. program, how could this be?

Many of us were unsure about the whole quitting booze project on first attending A.A. meetings. Perhaps we were urged to go by family, or mandated to go by a judge. Maybe we were “just checking it out.” Many of us, including me, were not alcoholics when we first started out. If there were membership requirements – especially being an alcoholic – then I would have left. This saved me untold years of drinking and suffering. And I’m sure that’s true for many of us. Given how easily offended I was in my drinking days, had I seen the word honest I would have angrily demanded, “Who are you to judge me?” I would have been right, perhaps, but for the wrong reasons.

Another thought about how Tradition Three works and why the word honest may have disappeared: if someone is really powerless over alcohol, as we admit in the first step, then isn’t it possible to have a desire

to stop drinking, but not be able to stop? Isn’t that the operational definition of powerlessness? I’d like to think that the folks who accepted the Traditions had a truly spiritual meditation about what they were putting together. If I make a judgment about you not being honest in your desire to stop just because you drank, how spiritual is that? Am I not assuming that you (and by extension others) really do have control, that you really do have some power of stopping by your unassisted will – contrary to our shared experience and contrary to the principles of A.A.?

Many meetings I’ve attended say that “the Traditions are to the group what the Steps are to the individual.” While I agree that groups that don’t practice the Traditions are likely to go out of business, there’s the fact that the group is made up of individuals, and if we don’t practice the Traditions individually as well as collectively, we’re at risk of going out of business as sober individuals as well. Tradition Three is crucial in this. It reminds us where we’ve come from and where we are going in terms of our spiritual development.

When I arrived at my first A.A. meeting I was spiritually and morally a wreck – or I wouldn’t have been there. When I see someone who’s brand new, or who’s come back after further testing their powerlessness, I know they have a desire to stop drinking, or they wouldn’t be there. But I certainly don’t want to judge about how strong the desire is, or how honest it is, or anything else about it. And withholding judgment



is part of what keeps me sober. It helps me remember to “Judge not, lest you be judged.” No matter what happens, I’ll always be a collection of flaws and imperfections, with many targets for judgment. If I can forbear to judge others, it’s easier to ask for their forbearance.

As much as I like the simplicity of the short form, the long version of Tradition Three has another segment I like to keep in mind: “Nor ought A.A. membership ever depend on money or conformity.” I’ve been in meetings where someone trying to say something was shouted at because they failed to say their name, or to proclaim that they were an alcoholic. That’s not a requirement, folks; it’s an unspoken rule. We are bound by our tradition to not demand conformity. To me, the beauty of how the program is set up is that it’s self-correcting. You don’t have to do the Steps, buy the Higher Power thing, or anything else. But our experience as a group over the last 75+ years is that there’s some stuff you do or you’re not sober. We don’t need an enforcement mechanism, the disease provides that. Similarly, a group doesn’t have to follow the Traditions, but those that don’t tend to go out of business.

Profit and Loss Statement: December 2012

	Dec 12	Budget	Jan - Dec 12	Budget		Dec 12	Budget	Jan - Dec 12	Budget
Ordinary Income/Expense					Payroll Fees	7	8	99	96
Income					Phone Book Listings	91	87	1092	1038
Gratitude Month	9405	7785	17200	12490	Postage	75	185	1198	949
Group Contributions	11342	13354	151670	151113	Printing	0		910	600
Individual Contributions	11544	5255	41822	40181	Professional Fees	0		2000	3127
Newsletter Subscript.	0	15	144	385	Rent - Office	3963	3962	46036	46024
Sales - Bookstore	7616	7826	108394	113660	Rent - Other	180	90	1020	1020
Special Event Income	0		4431		Repair & Maintenance	392	280	3699	3450
Total Income	\$39,907	\$34,235	\$ 323,661	\$ 317,829	Security System	118	118	472	472
Cost of Goods Sold					Software Purchased	0		754	900
Cost of Books Sold	5360	5245	77462	74157	Sunshine Club/12th Step	0	7	50	62
Shipping	87	55	679	660	Telephone	227	200	3796	2902
Credit Card Processing	235	332	4180	4221	Training	0		163	500
Inventory Adjustments	136	-1240	466	-1823	Travel	0		1068	1200
Total COGS	\$ 5,818	\$ 4,392	\$ 82,787	\$ 77,215	Total Expense	\$15,097	\$20,120	\$ 225,967	\$ 236,499
Gross Profit	\$34,089	\$29,843	\$ 240,874	\$ 240,614	Net Ordinary Income	\$18,992	\$ 9,723	\$ 14,906	\$ 4,115
Expense					Other Income/Expense				
Access Expenses	0	708	2940	8500	Other Income				
Bank Fees	0		13	0	Bag Fees (SF ordinance)	3		8	
Employee Expenses	9815	12454	142022	149058	Interest Income	97	165	1365	1887
Equipment Lease	0	1600	5971	6600	Misc. Income	0		300	
Filing/Fees	10		203	165	Total Other Income	\$ 100	\$ 165	\$ 1,673	\$ 1,887
Insurance	0		2402	2383	Other Expense				
Intergroup Events	0		2679	1298	Depreciation Expense	300	514	3606	6168
Intergroup Literature	55	8	222	266	Total Other Expense	\$ 300	\$ 514	\$ 3,606	\$ 6,168
Internet Expense	93	108	1122	1299	Net Other Income	\$ (200)	\$ (349)	\$ (1,933)	\$ (4,281)
Office Supplies	69	105	2868	1663	Net Income	\$18,792	\$ 9,374	\$ 12,973	\$ (166)
Paper Purchased	0	200	3168	2927					

Treasurer's Report

In December Gratitude month contributions were \$1,620.35 over budget. For the year, they were \$4,709.54 over budget. Group contributions were \$2,011.80 under budget for the month of December and \$556.57 over budget for the year. Individual contributions were \$6,289.14 over budget for December and \$1,641.23 over budget for the year. Bookstore sales were \$210.26 under budget in December and \$5,265.68 under budget for the year.

Total Expenses for the month of December were \$5,022.93 under

budget due to primarily wage and salary savings as well as a timing difference for the equipment lease expense. For the year total expenses were \$10,531.54 under budget.

Our income for individual and group contributions closely matched our 2012 budgeted amount with gratitude month exceeding the annual budget. We also had \$4,431 in unbudgeted income from Intergroup Events (the 65th Anniversary Party and our Founders Day event). Bookstore Sales continue to be less than the budgeted amount for the year.

Our total expenses for the year were lower than the annual budget which was the primary reason why we ended the year with a surplus of \$12,973.29. The expenses that were under budget were Access Expenses (\$5,560), Employee Expenses (\$7,035) and Computer Consulting (\$1,336). The expense savings resulted from having fewer ASL requests than we budgeted for, not being fully staffed at Central Office for part of the year and a decreased need for computer consultation.

Concept III

by Andy T.

The first question new members ask about the A.A. way of life is rarely, "What is the General Service Conference Charter and how does Concept III help us to interpret it?"

Concept III, however, the Concept in which Bill Wilson emphasizes the "Right of Decision," is critical to the maintenance of A.A.'s nongovernmental management structure and to effective leadership throughout A.A.

Bill writes at the very end of his essay on Concept III, "Our entire A.A. program rests squarely upon the principle of mutual trust." In his estimation, the Right of Decision is the only practical way to provide leaders in A.A. the means to be effective.

Our world servants, in other words, should be given the discretion to decide when they should take action themselves and when they should consult and ask for direction.

Why? The Second Tradition puts it this way: "Our leaders are but trusted servants. They do not govern." While the groups hold the ultimate authority over A.A.'s world services, they have delegated to the conference the full power to conduct our daily affairs.

For example, an A.A. group is well within its authority to expect its GSR to carry its group conscience on a particular Agenda Topic with some precision to the area assemblies and to the area's delegate. And it is logical to hold the Delegate accountable to the area's conscience on this topic, say for example whether A.A. should develop literature on spirituality which includes the experiences of atheists, as the delegate participates in the annual Conference. There is the temptation to instruct the Delegate in exactly how he should vote on a particular item. But as Bill makes clear in his essay, such an "instructed Delegate" is not able to respond to his own conscience or to immediate events at a conference and is therefore no longer a trusted servant at all.

How is this Right of Decision practically applied in A.A.? Bill suggests the following:

First, on final decisions, Delegates should be able to vote "according to the best dictates of their own judgment and conscience at that time."

Second, the trustees of the General Service Board should be able to decide when they will act on their own and when they will defer to the



guidance of the conference.

Third, all corporations, committees and staff within the A.A. service structure should be empowered to decide on their own when they should act on their own and when to ask for guidance.

The groups should still expect their representatives to report back faithfully on their actions and the Right of Decision is not an excuse for leaders or committees to exceed their grasp.

This right can be seen at work on a daily basis in the working of a group's basic service commitments. For example, when the group's coffee maker is given the discretion to choose what kind of coffee to use and where to buy it.

Concept Three allows A.A. to function more smoothly without the encumbrance of excessive rules or over-management.

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Write to THE POINT! — The Point Committee values your input

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