



# Santa Clara County Monthly Intergroup Newsletter

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## May —Concept 5

"Throughout our world service structure, a traditional "Right of Appeal" ought to prevail, thus assuring us that majority opinion will be heard and that petitions for the redress of personal grievances will be carefully considered."

Under this concept, all minorities are encouraged to file minority reports whenever they feel a majority to be in considerable error. Even when the minority may be partially or entirely in error, they perform a valuable service by compelling a thorough debate on important issues. They are our chief protection against an uninformed, misinformed, hasty or angry majority

Do we appreciate the great extent to which AA tries to maintain the dignity of individual members and to safeguard everyone from potential excesses of majority rule? Do we practice that same regard for everyone in AA at our own, personal level?

Do we encourage the minority opinion, the "Right of Appeal", to be heard at our home group, district committee meetings, area assemblies and the Conference? What does our group accept as "substantial unanimity"?

Has our group experienced the "tyranny of the majority" or the "tyranny of the minority"?

Does our group understand the importance of all points of view being heard before a vote is taken?



**5PM, May 12, 1935**

### **Mother's Day**

Henrietta Sieberling introduces

Dr. Bob to Bill Wilson at the Gate Lodge.



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## Taking the Fifth

After not drinking alcohol for fifteen years I found myself facing the greatest challenge of my sobriety, taking the Fifth Step in Alcoholics Anonymous with a man I had to trust as my sponsor in order to continue my healing and recovery.

My Sponsor was a man who had eleven years in the program and held many responsible positions of leadership in the greater Santa Clara County AA fellowship. Action is his mantra, and taking the Fifth Step with him meant up until now, all the low hanging fruit of my character defects and dishonesty were taken. He suggested I rewrite my Fourth Step three times until he was satisfied I had got enough poison out on paper. I was angry and trusted no one and was not comforted by the fact that my Sponsor told me that my secrets were what would make me drink again, not dipping my sister's pigtail in the inkwell. No one knew my secrets and it was going to stay that way I thought. By the time I had finished the written portion of my Fourth, I could see many of my secrets in black and white on the page. But not the real one still locked in the guilt and shame locker of my alcoholic mind.

From all appearances I had completed the Fourth Step and thought I looked good. My Sponsor asked me if I was willing to "take the Fifth"? I told him I was but I knew inside I had a secret that didn't make my list that he was unaware of. He picked the time and place and I agreed to meet him. I felt like it was an appointment with destiny. Either I would tell this man my innermost secret, or take the chance of holding the secret and someday go back out drinking again.

We met in a secluded park overlooking the delta. It was a clear day and slight breeze took the heat off the moment. My vision was captured by the freedom of the white cranes and blue heron's flying in this aviary my Sponsor picked to meet. We chose a picnic table with the names of past visitors carved in the wood table top. I brought all my paperwork with me and rustled through them looking for a place to start.

"I know about all those". my Sponsor said. "Tell me about the ones that aren't on there".

How did he know? "I know you put a lot of effort into your Fourth Step, but my sense is there is still something not written there. You told me you were willing to go to any length to stay sober. Now is the time to prove it. And while you think about it, here are some of the things I told my sponsor when I was sitting in your seat."

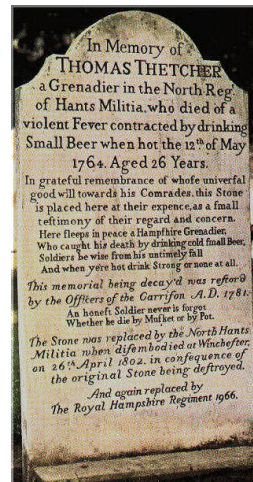
I was stunned. Not only was my Sponsor's intuition bang on, but he was revealing to me some of the most personal information I had ever heard. He was showing me how to do my Fifth. When he was done with his story, I told him my secret. I told him what I did sixteen years earlier that I thought about every day since I remembered it coming out of an alcoholic fog.

My Sponsor didn't scream at me or look at me like I was filthy. He listened and asked if that was all, like it was another day in this park. He even told me that what I said reminded him of another incident in his life. And he shared it with me. By the time I was finished I had completely purged myself of every guilt ridden shame based activity I had ever committed in my life. I was free like the birds flying around us that afternoon.

My relationship with my Sponsor has always been special since then. I will even go so far as to say that he is the first man I have ever trusted. We are with each other to this day, and I cherish his company and wisdom. I recently celebrated my twenty first year in sobriety and attribute this milestone to a man who showed me how to walk the talk and the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Chris S

Read Bill's story



## Tradition 5 – Each Group has but one primary purpose – to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

Excerpted from writing by Bill Wilson, Grapevine, April 1948

Tradition 5 – Each Group has but one primary purpose – to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

(As we read in the 12x12,) "Shoemaker, stick to thy last!". Trite, yes. But very true for us of AA. How well we need to heed the principle that it is better to do one thing supremely well than many things badly.

Because it has now become plain enough that only a recovered alcoholic can do much for a sick alcoholic, a tremendous responsibility has descended upon us all, an obligation so great that it amounts to a sacred trust. For to our kind, those who suffer alcoholism, recovery is a matter of life or death. So the Society of Alcoholics Anonymous cannot, it dare not, ever be diverted from its primary purpose.

May we reflect with ever deepening conviction, that we shall never be at our best except when we hew only to the primary spiritual aim of AA. That of carrying its message to the alcoholic who still suffers alcoholism.

### My personal inventory checklist (from the Grapevine):

1. Do I ever copy out by saying, "I'm not a group, so this or that Tradition doesn't apply to me"?
2. Am I willing to explain firmly to a newcomer the limitations of AA help, even if he gets mad at me for not giving him a loan?
3. Have I today imposed on any AA member for a special favor or consideration simply because I am a fellow alcoholic?

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## Fifth Step Experience

The first time I did a fifth step was with a very wonderful, gentle, and kind sponsor. After being guided by my sponsor on the fourth step on how to do it, and then getting it down on paper, I was scared to share my story with her or anyone. I think I was afraid of being judged. I felt ashamed of myself for what I had done. "How could anybody want to listen to this awful past of mine?" I thought.

My writing was disorganized. The 4th step took work, and I didn't want to do it, but I did it anyway. Sharing my 5th step with her I told her my story. To my surprise she sat quietly in my apartment and just listened for hours. She didn't run away, she didn't judge me, nor criticize me. She understood and talked to me about her experiences. I didn't feel so alone anymore, and it was such a relief to get all that stuff out. Our relationship ended, because of her busy schedule, and I wasn't able to finish all 12 steps with her.

My second time doing a 5th step was with a man. I don't recommend that or encourage it, but at that time it seemed to be what I needed. He was not gentle, but strict. We started the steps all over again from the beginning. He was very effective in communicating with me and told me to make sure that I leave nothing out no matter what it might be. There was a horrible secret I had kept inside of me for which I thought would never forgive myself nor would anyone else. The shame and the guilt were so bad I thought I could never share it with anyone. How could I do something like that? I explained to him why I couldn't share this, but he said I had to do it no matter what or this would end. So I did! Oh my goodness that was the hardest thing to do believe me, but he too did not judge me nor was he ashamed of me. He had compassion, and he shared with me some of his experiences. I found my underlying defect was that I think I will never be enough.

At the time sharing my 5th step with my first sponsor I thought I was being totally honest and thorough but more things came out. Through the second 5th Step I found out what motivated me to do all those crazy things in the first place. I got to the nature of all my character defects. It was so freeing to get that secret out and share it with someone else, and with God. That it is what I was told that if I share my story with another human being I am sharing it with God also. And you know what that is exactly what it felt like - free! I have done a 5th step quite a few times with my current sponsor at a deeper level in sobriety. As I dig deeper I find what character defects keep popping up and I am able to continue to work on them. And although, over the years in sobriety, I have not found it easy to really trust in a higher power, the more I work on myself the more faith I have that God will help me.

I have received many gifts in this program. I am now able to see God working in my sponsor, and with all the other people who have crossed my path.

When I let myself be vulnerable, am open to God's hand in my life, and admit my wrongs to my sponsor and to God, not only do I feel humble but connected.

Christina

## What In The World Is This About?

The other day I had lunch with my sponsor, after eating I felt sort of high, I thought there might have been alcohol in the salad dressing or something. I ask the waitress to ask the cook if there was. She came back with a "No, no alcohol in the dressing." I felt so relieved, yet puzzled. "Where was this high feeling coming from?"

I went about my day forgetting about the odd feeling. Later that week I felt it again, I was driving home and realized I had this huge smile, and I felt high, like I was in love or something. But there is no one I can attach that 'in love' feeling to. But I definitely felt a high. I quickly went over in my mind what I had to eat that day. Nothing I had eaten could have had alcohol or drugs in it.

Again, the feeling subsided enough for me to forget about it. It happened again a few more times that week. I got really nervous. And, well of course, I "disasterized" that in my head for quite some time...I began to think that something was terribly wrong with me, like maybe I was having a series of small strokes!

Then, suddenly, it just dawned on me. I was happy!

For the first time in I don't know how many years, I was truly happy! It's funny, but at the same time a little pathetic, I know. But I'm happy! (I guess I should have paid closer attention to that 'Feelings' poster in re-hab)

By no means is every area of my life is glowing with goodness, —I have a few huge life things going on: my 16 year old daughter is now living with her father and will not speak to me. I am still dealing with my father's death and his estate. Yet, I'm still happy. I'm happy with me. I'm happy with the way I'm living my life.

Most of the time, the unpleasant things in my life are things I can't do anything about. I can't make my daughter feel differently, that is up to her. I have great comfort in knowing she's safe, has a nice place to live, and is deeply loved by those around her. I can't change the way my brother behaves, that is his business. Luckily, he lives in another state.

The best thing I can do is take care of myself by going to meetings, working with my sponsor, talking and working with other alcoholics.

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## You Don't Have To Plant Weeds

When sponsees ask me why we need to keep going to meetings, I tell them it's "because you don't have to plant weeds".

About 20 years ago I rented a townhouse that had a small rose garden next to the little cement patio outside the back door. I was excited because the roses were just ready to bloom. I had never had the gift of a garden and I was looking forward to enjoying the entire experience. I bought gardening gloves and some small tools. I asked friends who were gardeners to give me some maintenance tips and dutifully watered, weeded and fed the bushes. I spent several sunny Saturday mornings weeding the little plot and was feeling very accomplished and almost like a *real* gardener.

At that time I was traveling a lot on business and returned from a week long trip to find my little garden was full of weeds! At first I was shocked and then I began to laugh. I realized that you don't have to *plant* weeds; you don't even have to nurture them! Then I thought about the negative thoughts that seem to appear from nowhere and how I need to be reminded to keep replacing them with positive, solution centered thoughts! I need to keep attending AA meetings so I don't wind up with a mind overgrown with weeds that tell me I could probably drink again. I need to keep weeding out resentments, expectations, opinions on outside issues, and other weeds that set me up to justify a drink.

### Bill Remembers:

Father Edward Dowling, a great Jesuit friend of ours, once said to me, "**Bill, it isn't what you people put into Alcoholics Anonymous that makes it so good - it's what you left out.**" (Transcribed from tape, Manhattan Group, 1955)

### Acceptance

We couldn't lick alcohol with our own remaining resources and so we accepted the fact that dependence upon a higher power (if only our AA group) could do this hitherto impossible job. The moment we were able to fully accept these facts, our release from the alcohol compulsion had begun.

Bill W., March 1962

### On Borrowed Time

May we never forget that we live by the grace of God -- on borrowed time; that anonymity is better than acclaim; that for us as a movement poverty is better than wealth. And may we reflect with ever deepening conviction, that we shall never be at our best except when we hew only to the primary spiritual aim of AA. That of carrying its message to the alcoholic who still suffers alcoholism.

Bill W., April 1948

### Q - Was the writing of the Big Book a difficult job?

**A** - As the chapters were done, we went to A.A. meetings in New York with the chapters in the rough. It wasn't like chicken-in-the-rough, the boys didn't eat those chapters up at all. I suddenly discovered that I was in a terrific whirlpool of arguments. I was just the umpire. I finally had to stipulate, "Well boys, over here we have the holy rollers who say we need all the good old-fashioned stuff in the book, and over here you tell me we've got to have a psychological book, and that never cured anybody, and they didn't do very much with us in the missions, so I guess you will have to leave me just to be the umpire. I'll scribble out some roughs here and show them to you and let's get the comments in." So we fought, bled and died our way through one chapter after another. We sent copies out to Akron and they were peddled around and there were terrific hassles about what should go in this book and what should not.

Meanwhile, we set drunks up to write their stories or we had newspaper people to write the stories for them to go in the back of the book. We had an idea that we'd have a text and then we'd have stories all about the drunks who were staying sober. (Transcribed from tape, Fort Worth, TX., 1954)

## Today is Tomorrow's Yesterday

Page 86 in the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous tells us that we should constructively review our day and it gives us a list of things to review. The list is long and it outlines those things that might make us harbor feelings that spawn resentments. It then recommends that we take action the next day with the help of God's direction and to use the brain that God gave us without indulging in our own self centered motives.

All this is well and good but difficult for me to keep in my brain all at one time. After all, years of drinking have diminished my intellectual capacity by killing off millions of brain cells. Hopefully the cells that are left are the good ones. In theory, the bad cells have been converted to good ones by a persistent pounding on the steps under the relentless direction of sponsors and friends. Then page 86 gives me the strategy for keeping me from growing new bad cells or at least weeding them out before they grow into full blown defects.

All this is too complicated for what is left of my brain so developing a simpler approach tends to at least give me a fighting chance. For me the simple approach is to make a list at the end of the day of what makes me feel bad. A small sheet of paper from a pocket spiral notepad keeps the process simple. If stuck on having no bad feelings, then the lists on page 86 can possibly trigger some points that got stuck in my denial. So, my feel bad list might go like this:

1. Did not pay my rent,
  2. Gave a guy the finger on the freeway, and of course,
  3. Attacked my sponsor by tell him/her that he/she is an idiot.
- Then the next morning, the list can be converted to a "to-do" list, right! My "to-do" list might look like this:
1. Write the darn rent check and deliver it to my landlord with a smile.
  2. Be polite to at least five people on the road, especially at intersections and with a sincere smile and happy wave.
  3. Call my sponsor and tell him/her how helpful they have been to me and how much their help has been to me. I might even take a shot expressing that I love them.

After spending all that pain and agony doing the steps over the years, doesn't it make sense to keep the street clean with a simple little piece of paper each night? The theory is that if this is done each day, then Today becomes Tomorrow's Yesterday; a yesterday that we improve, and likely not regret.

## Dr. Bob On Tolerance



During nine years in AA, I have observed that those who follow the Alcoholics Anonymous program with the greatest earnestness and zeal not only maintain sobriety but often acquire finer characteristics and attitudes as well. One of these is tolerance. Tolerance expresses itself in a variety of ways: in kindness and consideration toward the man or woman who is just beginning the march along the spiritual path; in the understanding of those who perhaps have been less fortunate in education advantages; and in sympathy toward those whose religious ideas may seem to be at great variance with our own.

I am reminded in this connection of the picture of a hub with its radiating spokes. We all start at the outer circumference and approach our destination by one of many routes. To say that one spoke is much better than all the other spokes is true only in the sense of its being best suited to you as an individual. Human nature is such that without some degree of tolerance, each one of us might be inclined to believe that we have found the best or perhaps the shortest spoke. Without some tolerance, we might tend to become a bit smug or superior - which, of course, is not helpful to the person we are trying to help and may be quite painful or obnoxious to others. No one of us wishes to do anything that might act as a deterrent to the advancement of another - and a patronizing attitude can readily slow up this process. Tolerance furnishes, as a by-product, a greater freedom from the tendency to cling to preconceived ideas and stubbornly adhered-to opinions. In other words, it often promotes an open-mindedness that is vastly important - is, in fact, a prerequisite to the successful termination of any line of search, whether it be scientific or spiritual. These, then, are a few of the reasons why an attempt to acquire tolerance should

(Continued from page 2)

4. Am I willing to 12<sup>th</sup> step the next newcomer without regard to who or what is in it for me?

5. Do I help my group in every way I can to fulfill our primary purpose?

6. Do I remember that AA old-timers, too, can be alcoholics who still suffer? Do I try both to help them and to learn from them?

(As we read in the 12x12, )“Shoemaker, stick to thy last!”.

Trite, yes. But very true for us of AA.. How well we need to heed the principle that it is better to do one thing supremely well than many things badly.

Because it has now become plain enough that only a recovered alcoholic can do much for a sick alcoholic, a tremendous responsibility has descended upon us all, an obligation so great that it amounts to a sacred trust. For to our kind, those who suffer alcoholism, recovery is a matter of life or death. So the Society of Alcoholics Anonymous cannot, it dare not, ever be diverted from its primary purpose.

## Traditions

For the first time I saw AA's anonymity for *what it really is*. It isn't just something to save us from alcoholic shame and stigma; its deeper purpose is actually to keep those fool egos of ours from running hog wild after money and public fame at AA's expense. It really means personal and group sacrifice for the benefit of all AA.

Right then I resolved to learn our Twelve Traditions by heart, just as I had learned the Twelve Steps.

If every AA did the same thing and really soaked up these principles we drunks could hang together forever.

Bill W., March 1967

c. 1985 AAWS, *Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age*, p. 43

With permission, Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc.

## Thought to Ponder . . .

The Steps are there to protect me from myself;  
the Traditions are there to protect AA from me.

**The Question/The Answer**

**Are You Done?**

- Destroyed Relationships?.....No
- Job Loss?..... No
- Car Wrecks.....No
- Despair.....No
- Suicide Attempts.....No
- Sick, Sick, Sick,.....No
- Tired, tired, tired,.....No
- Information.....No
- Education.....No
- Geographics.....No
- Grace..... **Yes**

**Ask Bill**

Q - Is Alcoholics Anonymous a new religion? A competitor of the Church?

A - If these misgivings had real substance, they would be serious indeed. But, Alcoholics Anonymous cannot in the least be regarded as a new religion. Our Twelve Steps have no theological content, except that which speaks of "God as we understand Him." This means that each individual AA member may define God according to whatever faith or creed he may have. Therefore there isn't the slightest interference with the religious views of any of our membership. The rest of the Twelve Steps define moral attitudes and helpful practices, all of them precisely Christian in character. Therefore, as far as the steps go, the steps are good Christianity, indeed they are good Catholicism, something which Catholic writers have affirmed more than once.

Neither does AA exert the slightest religious authority over its members. No one is compelled to believe anything. No one is compelled to meet membership conditions. No one is obliged to pay anything. Therefore we have no system of authority, spiritual or temporal, that is comparable to or in the least competitive with the Church. At the center of our society we have a Board of Trustees. This body is accountable yearly to a Conference of elected Delegates. These Delegates represent the conscience and desire of AA as regards functional or service matters. Our Tradition contains an emphatic injunction that these Trustees may never constitute themselves as a government - they are to merely provide certain services that enable AA as a whole to function. The same principles apply at our group and area level.

Dr. Bob, my co-partner, had his own religious views. For whatever they may be worth, I have my own. But both of us have gone heavily on the record to the effect that these personal views and preferences can never under any conditions be injected into the AA program as a working part of it. AA is a sort of spiritual kindergarten, but that is all. Never should it be called a religion. (The 'Blue Book', Vol.12, 1960)

A - Alcoholics Anonymous is not a religious organization; there is no dogma. The one theological proposition is a "Power greater than one's self." Even this concept is forced on no one. The newcomer merely immerses himself in our society and tries the program as best he can. Left alone, he will surely report the onset of a transforming experience, call it what he may. Observers once thought A.A. could only appeal to the religiously susceptible. Yet our membership includes a former member of the American Atheist Society and about 20,000 others almost as tough. The dying can become remarkably open-minded. Of course we speak little of conversion nowadays because so many people really dread being God-bitten. But conversion, as broadly described by James, does seem to be our basic process; all other devices are but the foundation. When one alcoholic works with another, he but consolidates and sustains that essential experience. (Amer. J. Psych., Vol. 106, 1949)

**Telephone Calls Received During April**

Daytime at Central Office -

Daytime 12 Step Calls—

Diverter Calls –

Groups contributing to Your Central Office make it possible to provide telephone service and coverage so that someone is always available to the caller in need. We also have a listing in the white and yellow pages of the phone books for all the cities in Santa Clara County. **WE THANK YOU!**

**SPEAKER MEETINGS**

Second Tradition Group

First Covenant Church

790 Coe Avenue ( Willow Glen section)

**MEETING CHANGES**

**Deleted—**

Road To Recovery, Alano East

1122 Fair Ave, Mon, Tues ,Wed ,Thurs ,Fri, 8:00 AM

Fair Avenue Fellowship — all 3:00PM meetings

Solutions For Today, Robin's Nest Wed. 6PM

Vietnamese, Asian American Center Fri 5PM

New Life, Korean Help Assoc. Sat 7 AM

Lakewood Group, Sunnyvale Fri. 8:15 PM

This Group has merged with "You Have A Choice Group" also meeting in Sunnyvale, Friday 8:15 PM , Fremont & Hollenbeck

**Moved—**

Palo Alto Men's Meeting Tuesday 8:00 PM

New Address: Grace Lutheran Church 3149 Waverly ,  
nearest cross street is Loma Linda

As We See The Solution, Thurs. 12:00 noon

New Address: Masonic Hall, 131 Main St. -Los Gatos

Eastside Step Study, moved to Alum Rock United Methodist Church

30 Kirk Ave. Sunday 8:30 AM

**Changed:**

Sandia Big Book Study, Wed. Sunnyvale, Time changed to 7:00 PM

**New:**

Spanish Speaking AA, Mid Peninsula Alano Club, Wednesday , 7:00 PM

Sweet Sobriety, Alano East, 1122 Fair Avenue, Sunday 2:00 PM



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It's working for me. The promises are being fulfilled, I have been promoted at work, I'm a Regional Field Trainer for Borders, I have a brand new car that is completely paid for! And best of all, I'm **HAPPY!**

I look back to 5 years ago, and I can remember being so very miserable. I was the biggest victim in the world. I had an Olympic sized pity-pot. I wanted every one to know exactly how much I deserved their pity, and why. I was so wrapped up in being miserable for so long, that I had a hard time identifying what happy was.

It's been a journey. A journey with lots of hills, turns, and a few gullies. But I've met some incredible people (in the rooms) along the way. Every last one of them has made a difference in my life in some way. Each of them has inspired me in a positive way.

Even the ones who have what I *don't* want.

I am truly and deeply grateful to all of them, to all of you.

Thank you.

TT

## "The Next Frontier: Emotional Sobriety" by Bill Wilson



I think that many oldsters who have put our AA "booze cure" to severe but successful tests still find they often lack emotional sobriety. Perhaps they will be the spearhead for the next major development in AA -- the development of much more real maturity and balance (which is to say, humility) in our relations with ourselves, with our fellows, and with God.

Those adolescent urges that so many of us have for top approval, perfect security, and perfect romance -- urges quite appropriate to age seventeen -- prove to be an impossible way of life when we are at age forty-seven or fifty-seven.

Since AA began, I've taken immense wallops in all these areas because of my failure to grow up, emotionally and spiritually. My God, how painful it is to keep demanding the impossible, and how very painful to discover finally, that all along we have had the cart before the horse! Then comes the final agony of seeing how awfully wrong we have been, but still finding ourselves unable to get off the emotional merry-go-round.

How to translate a right mental conviction into a right emotional result, and so into easy, happy, and good living -- well, that's not only the neurotic's problem, it's the problem of life itself for all of us who have got to the point of real willingness to hew to right principles in all our affairs.

In the first six months of my own sobriety, I worked hard with many alcoholics. Not a one responded. Yet this work kept me sober. It wasn't a question of those alcoholics giving me anything. My stability came out of trying to give, not out of demanding that I receive.

Thus I think it can work out with emotional sobriety. If we examine every disturbance we have, great or small, we will find at the root of it some unhealthy dependency and its consequent unhealthy demand. Let us, with God's help, continually surrender these hobbling demands. Then we can be set free to live and love; we may then be able to Twelfth Step ourselves and others into emotional sobriety.

Of course I haven't offered you a really new idea -- only a gimmick that has started to unhook several of my own "hexes" at depth. Nowadays my brain no longer races compulsively in either elation, grandiosity or depression. I have been given a quiet place in bright sunshine.



## Ask Auntie Alkie

Dear Auntie Alkie,

What is the difference between open and closed meetings?

Slightly Confused

Dear Slightly,

An open meeting is open to family, friends, the press, students, etc. A closed meeting is for alcoholics or people who think they have a problem with alcohol. In other words they are prospects for membership.

Dear Auntie Alkie,

Everyone keeps telling me to get a sponsor. Exactly how do I go about getting a sponsor, and why is that so important? I am going to meetings and paying attention and I am not drinking.

Shy Guy

Dear Shy,

Some meetings have sponsor coordinators who hook up people needing a sponsor with people willing to be sponsors. In that case you can fill out a slip, put it in the sponsor box and someone will call you within a day or two. You can also observe the members and if there is someone you admire or identify with you can ask that person to sponsor you. It's not rejection if they say "No". They may already be sponsoring several people. Also remember this is not a popularity contest! This is to save your life.

The reason it is important is twofold: One—it's important to have someone know you so you don't just fade away, and most importantly: this is a "We" program. We don't work the steps alone. If you don't work the steps you won't gain all the privileges of membership!

Dear Auntie Alkie:

Why are people always talking about money at meetings?

This is supposed to be a spiritual program.

Wondering in Campbell

Dear Wondering,

This is indeed a spiritual program. Unfortunately we live in a material world. While the message is free, carrying it often costs money! We pay rent on meeting spaces and for Central Office. We pay for literature and refreshments. We pay for meeting guides, telephone service and all the costs associated with supporting AA.

One of the privileges of being an AA member is that we "get" to contribute. **You may not contribute if you are not a member.** If AA has saved your life or given you a new one, what is that worth to you? I was taught that I should support the places where I am spiritually fed. AA is certainly the most important one!

If you can afford it, out a couple of extra dollars in the basket. If you think you can't afford it, do it anyway. God will not be out-given and

you will always be taken care of! We need always be self supporting through our own contributions. This is why AA meetings always pay rent even if they are offered free space to meet.

## Charming Is The Word For Alcoholics

By Fulton Oursler

Down at the very bottom of the social scale of AA society are the pariahs, the untouchables, and the outcasts, all known by one excoriating epithet-relatives. I am a relative I know my place. I am not complaining. But I hope no one minds if I venture the plaintive confession that there are times, oh, many, many, times when I wish I had been an alcoholic. By that I mean that I wish I were an AA. The reason is that I consider the AA people the most charming in the world.

Such is my considered opinion. As a journalist it has been my fortune to meet many of the people who are considered charming. I number among my friends stars, and lesser lights of stage and cinema; writers are my daily diet. I know the ladies and gentleman of both political parties; I have been entertained in the White House. I have broken bread with kings and ministers and ambassadors and I say after that catalog, which could be extended, that I would prefer an evening with my AA friends to any person or group of persons I have indicated.

I ask myself why I consider so charming these alcoholic caterpillars who have found their butterfly wings in Alcoholics Anonymous. There are more reasons than one, but I can name a few.

They are imaginative, and that helps to make them alcoholics. Some of them drank to flog their ambition on to greater efforts. Others guzzled only to black out unendurable demons that rose in their imagination. But when they have found their restoration, their imagination is responsive to new incantations, and their talk abounds with color and light, and that makes them charming companions too.

The AA people are what they are, and they were what they were, because they are sensitive, imaginative, possessed of a sense of humor and awareness of universal truth. They are sensitive, which means they are hurt easily, and that helped them to become alcoholics. But when they have found their restoration, they are still as sensitive as ever; responsive to beauty and to truth and eager about the intangible glories of this life. That makes them charming companions.

They are possessed with a sense of humor. Even in their cups they have been known to say damnably funny things. Often it was being forced to take seriously the little and mean things of life that make them seek escape in a bottle. But when they have found restoration, their sense of humor finds a blessed freedom, and they are able to reach a godlike state where they can laugh at themselves, the very height of self-conquest. Go to the meetings and listen to the laughter. At what are they laughing? At ghoulish memories over which weaker souls would cringe in useless remorse. And that makes them wonderful people to be with by candlelight.

And they are possessed of a sense of universal truth. That is often a new thing in their hearts. The fact that this at-one-meant with God's universe had never been awakened in them is sometimes the reason why they drank. The fact that it was at last awakened is almost always the reason why they were restored to the good and simple ways of life. Stand with them when the meeting is over, and listen while they say the "Our Father." They have found a power greater than themselves, which they

diligently serve. And that gives them a charm that never was elsewhere on land or sea. It makes you know that God, Himself, is really charming, because the AA people reflect His mercy and His forgiveness. *Source: Liberty Magazine 1940*

*Fulton Oursler was a well known author and playwright who was also senior editor of The Readers Digest when AA was getting started. In that position he ran several articles favorable to the fledgling organization. In 1951 he was elected as a non-alcoholic trustee for AA. Grapevine (1951) by Bill W. "Meet the Non-alcoholic Trustees" "Fulton Oursler—Senior Editor of the Readers Digest. Enjoys worldwide renown as an author and public relations expert. Thousands of AAs have read his "Greatest Story Ever Told". There is no more lovable and ardent AA fan than Fulton"*

## AA Grapevine April 1946

Bill Wilson

Nobody invented Alcoholics Anonymous. It grew. Trial and error has produced a rich experience. Little by little we have been adopting the lessons of that experience, first as policy and then as Tradition. That process still goes on and we hope it never stops. Should we ever harden too much, the letter might crush the spirit. We could victimize ourselves by petty rules and prohibitions; we could imagine that we had said the last word. We might even be asking alcoholics to accept our rigid ideas or stay away. We never stifle progress like that.

# Secretaries Please Read To Your Group!

Can you spare a few hours each month to take calls from people who really need our help? You would be a great fit for one of the **diverter** shifts. Call **Joyce H.** at **699-4489** or Central Office to volunteer.

From Intergroup Central Office

*Secretaries, please be sure you have given your address to Central Office so you will receive updates, notices, and the newsletter. Please make a note in your meeting book so the next secretary will follow up.*

**This is the only  
way we can  
communicate  
with AA members  
in Santa Clara  
County!**

The **Secretary's Workshop** is held the first Saturday of each month at Central Office—10:00 a.m. New or experienced, young or old, this is an excellent way to hone your skills and stay in touch with Central Office. Call for more information—374-8511.



Central Office is having a painting party in May. We are looking for all kinds of volunteers to help us. Pizza and fixin's and fun will abound. Come on your own, organize your group, bring your AA friends. Watch for date and time in the Newsletter or give us a call.

Central Office is in need of **12 Step volunteers**. 6 months sobriety required.

# May 2006

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

The Santa Clara County Monthly Intergroup Newsletter is published by the Santa Clara County Central Office of Alcoholics Anonymous. Opinions expressed are the writers', not those of Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole. Publication of any article does not imply endorsement by Alcoholics Anonymous of Santa Clara County Central Office, except when Conference-approved publications are quoted. Quotations from AA books and pamphlets and the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions are reprinted with permission of AA World Services, Inc.; quotations and cartoons from *The Grapevine* are reprinted with the permission of AA Grapevine, Inc.

Contributions from AA members are welcome and will be printed as space allows. Submissions can be sent via email or should be typed or neatly hand-written. The editors reserve the right to edit content for length, clarity, and relation to AA Traditions. All material, including announcements, should be

# SANTA CLARA COUNTY INTERGROUP COUNCIL

## MINUTES MONTHLY MEETING

May 3, 2006

- Xavier, Intergroup Chairperson, opened the meeting at 8:02pm, followed by A Moment of Silence, and the Serenity Prayer.
- Shirley read the short Definition of Intergroup.
- There were 50 people attending.
- Domingo read the Twelve Traditions.
- There were no corrections/additions to the agenda.
- There were no corrections to the previous month's minutes.
- Intergroup Council Treasurer's Report: Chuck G.

Beginning Balance:	4/05/06	\$41.51	Prudent Reserve:	\$90.00
Contributions:	4/05/06	\$61.00		
Refreshments:	4/05/06	\$10.00		
Rent is paid to:	7/01/06			
Balance:	5/03/06	\$92.51	Prudent Reserve:	\$90.00
- Announcements: None
- Birthdays: Christopher, 19yrs; Bruce, sober since 1983 (23 yrs;); Chuck, 24yrs; Domingo, 18 months

### Reports:

1. Intergroup Chair – Xavier
  - a. Visited the Caring & Sharing group, which meets on Tuesdays at 8:15pm, at Booksin and Curtner, in Willow Glen as part of the Outreach Committee's efforts.
  - b. Reminded everyone that the election for new officers is coming up in October.
2. Central Service Board – Mary Pat
  - a. Met last Thursday, and had a generalized discussion about employee reviews to take place during next two meetings.
  - b. Work continues on Policies and Procedures.
  - c. Discussing ways to effectively document board's discussions.
  - d. Generalized discussion about most advantageous way to manage funds. No decisions were made.
3. Central Office – Bruce
  - a. This month's newsletter was printed on the new Konica 920 copier. Meeting guides will be printed on it as well.
  - b. Profit & Loss statement: a little slower than last April. New larger expense item "employee HRA plan" is board approved health insurance premium reimbursement plan retroactive to January 1, 2006.
  - c. Balance Sheet: Bruce clarified the Prudent Reserve consists of 4 CDs plus the Capital Preservation Fund totaling approximately \$59k, which is about 5 1/3 months operating expenses. The board has established that a Prudent Reserve of 9 months is necessary. Funds in the Prudent Reserve were reduced to current amount to pay for the new copier.
  - d. Encouraged IG reps that receive more than one newsletter in the mail to take them to meetings to help with distribution.
  - e. Suggestions for names for the new newsletter are still being accepted.
  - f. Central Office has purchased a 5-year maintenance contract for the new copier that is at a terrific rate.
  - g. Paint Party: rescheduled from last weekend in May (Memorial Day Weekend) to June 3, at 8:30am. All who are planning to come are to call Bruce ahead of time to ensure there will be enough painting equipment and food.
  - h. The Outreach Committee is making a big difference. New IG reps are in attendance tonight, and new secretaries are being registered with IG.

4. PI/CPC – Francisco
  - a. Darcy is the new CPC Chair. The position of Vice-Chair is open.
  - b. Presentations were held at SJSU on April 10, and San Jose City College on April 25. Upcoming presentations are at Monroe and Calaveras High Schools on May 4, and De Anza College on May 10.
  - c. Literature budget proposal is not yet ready for consideration.
  - d. Letters sent to area high schools to set dates for future presentations.
  - e. PI monthly meeting and workshop were left off this month's newsletter calendar. Bruce will correct.
5. Twelfth Step Committee
  - a. Daytime – Bruce for Kevin: Two shifts are available in the office: both on Monday.
  - b. Nights & Weekends: Many shifts available.
6. Outreach Committee – Paul C
  - a. Very positive feedback from the work being done. Out of 93 meetings with which IG has lost contact, 73 have been accounted for.
  - b. Distributed invitations to IG reps to take to meetings that do not have IG reps. Suggested that we tell groups that IG meetings are run efficiently.
  - c. Women are needed on this committee to meet with women's groups. There is only one woman on this committee presently, and she cannot visit all the women's groups in Santa Clara County in a reasonable amount of time.
7. Newsletter Committee – No Report. Unanimous agreement that the new newsletter is TERRIFIC!
8. Other Service Committee Reports
  - Unity Day – Jerry R
    - Distributed last year's financial results. Unexpended funds were returned to contributors.
    - Explained how Unity Day is managed by individual groups voluntary efforts.
    - Dick S, from H&I, is Unity Day Chair for this year.
    - To participate this year, call Jerry at 408-505-1326, or Central Office.
  - NCCAA – Dennis
    - Next conference in Sacramento July 7-9. Good opportunity for new spouses to learn about AA.
  - H&I – Taneka
    - Many groups need help. Get the word out.
    - Announced that SCCYPAA is starting up again. Elections for all positions are scheduled for May 20, 6:30pm at the United Methodist Church in Los Gatos.
    - Reported that she will be retiring from the position. Karen G. volunteered to take over as H&I rep.
  - BTG – No Report
  - North County General Service – Brian K. reported that the Post Conference Assembly would be on May 20, at Agnew beginning at 9am. Conference delegates will report at 1pm.
  - South County General Service – Karen McG. Same report as North County.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - NONE

NEW BUSINESS - NONE

OPEN FORUM – NONE

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:03pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Alison S.

INTERGROUP CENTRAL OFFICE OF SANTA CLARA COUNTY, INC.

Profit & Loss

April 2006

	<u>Apr 06</u>	<u>Apr 05</u>	<u>Jan - Apr 06</u>
<b>Ordinary Income/Expense</b>			
<b>Income</b>			
3030 · Contributions-General	9,217.94	11,545.62	43,770.82
8010 · Literature Sales	5,049.03	5,536.67	24,316.74
8060 · Newsletter Subscriptions	25.00	0.00	475.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<u>14,291.97</u>	<u>17,082.29</u>	<u>68,562.56</u>
<b>Cost of Goods Sold</b>			
5000 · Cost of Goods Sold			
5100 · Cost of Inventory Sold (Excl. Mtg. Dir. after 6/1/06)	3,466.51	4,304.38	16,307.26
<b>Total 5000 · Cost of Goods Sold</b>	<u>3,466.51</u>	<u>4,304.38</u>	<u>16,307.26</u>
9040 · Literature Inv Adjustment	0.00	6.76	0.00
<b>Total COGS</b>	<u>3,466.51</u>	<u>4,311.14</u>	<u>16,307.26</u>
<b>Gross Profit</b>	10,825.46	12,771.15	52,255.30
<b>Expense</b>			
6010 · Alarm Service	177.00	168.00	354.00
6030 · Accounting and Legal Fee	594.37	681.44	4,243.46
6120 · Computer Expenses	474.00	0.00	748.00
6140 · Conferences - Office Manager	0.00	90.00	1,352.65
6160 · Copier Expense	0.00	0.00	66.49
6190 · Depreciation Expense	0.00	0.00	243.25
6230 · Insurance - General Liability	500.00	0.00	1,672.75
6240 · Employee HRA Plan	2,398.67	0.00	2,398.67
6245 · Internet Access Charges	19.95	19.95	79.80
6330 · Office Expense	826.81	97.70	1,956.69
6350 · Office Furnishings - Expense	0.00	32.60	62.87
6370 · Office Paper Supply	0.00	454.94	179.85
6380 · Payroll Taxes	520.39	470.17	2,420.90
6410 · Postage	0.00	324.00	732.11
6480 · Rent	2,217.25	2,153.90	8,805.65
6540 · Salaries - Office	5,837.54	5,280.38	24,239.86
6600 · Signing Services	200.00	160.00	850.00
7010 · Taxes and Licenses	0.00	0.00	60.00
7050 · Telephone	21.25	373.58	468.30
<b>Total Expense</b>	<u>13,787.23</u>	<u>10,306.66</u>	<u>50,935.30</u>
<b>Net Ordinary Income</b>	-2,961.77	2,464.49	1,320.00
<b>Other Income/Expense</b>			
<b>Other Income</b>			
8030 · Interest Income	176.52	158.07	794.25
<b>Total Other Income</b>	<u>176.52</u>	<u>158.07</u>	<u>794.25</u>
<b>Net Other Income</b>	<u>176.52</u>	<u>158.07</u>	<u>794.25</u>
<b>Net Income</b>	<u><u>-2,785.25</u></u>	<u><u>2,622.56</u></u>	<u><u>2,114.25</u></u>



INTERGROUP CENTRAL OFFICE OF SANTA CLARA COUNTY, INC.

Balance Sheet

As of April 30, 2006

	<u>Apr 30, 06</u>
<b>ASSETS</b>	
<b>Current Assets</b>	
<b>Checking/Savings</b>	
1010 · Petty Cash	225.00
1035 · Bank of America (Bank account)	26,342.47
1036 · Bank of America CD 5247 (10 mo CD @ 4.16%, 01/17/07)	12,202.54
1039 · Bank of America CD 5717 (12 mo. CD @ 3.73%, 1/23/07)	14,531.50
1040 · Bank of America CD 5718 (8 mo. CD @ 4.79%, 9/24/07)	14,546.12
1041 · Bank of America CD 5931 (18 mo. CD @ 3.39%, 2/28/07)	14,322.20
1042 · Capital Preservation Fund (Treas. fund currently @ 4.45%)	3,147.64
<b>Total Checking/Savings</b>	<u>85,317.47</u>
<b>Accounts Receivable</b>	
1110 · Accounts Rec - Group Deposits	35.59
<b>Total Accounts Receivable</b>	<u>35.59</u>
<b>Other Current Assets</b>	
1250 · Literature Inventory	15,665.75
1310 · Prepaid Insurance	125.00
<b>Total Other Current Assets</b>	<u>15,790.75</u>
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	101,143.81
<b>Fixed Assets</b>	
1630 · Office Equipment	16,962.19
1640 · Office Furnishings - Asset	2,197.84
1641 · Less Accumulated Depreciation	-13,855.00
1680 · Leasehold Improvements	300.00
1681 · Less Accumulated Amortization	-124.25
<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>	<u>5,480.78</u>
<b>Other Assets</b>	
1860 · Deposits	1,993.85
<b>Total Other Assets</b>	<u>1,993.85</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<u><u>108,618.44</u></u>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	
<b>Liabilities</b>	
<b>Current Liabilities</b>	
<b>Other Current Liabilities</b>	
2240 · Sales Tax Payable (Sales Tax Payable)	332.55
<b>Total Other Current Liabilities</b>	<u>332.55</u>
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<u>332.55</u>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	332.55
<b>Equity</b>	
2740 · Unrestricted Funds	95,777.91
3900 · Retained Earnings	10,393.73
Net Income	2,114.25
<b>Total Equity</b>	<u>108,285.89</u>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	<u><u>108,618.44</u></u>