



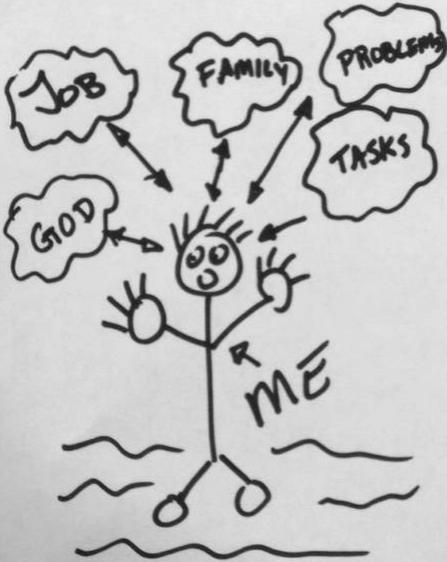
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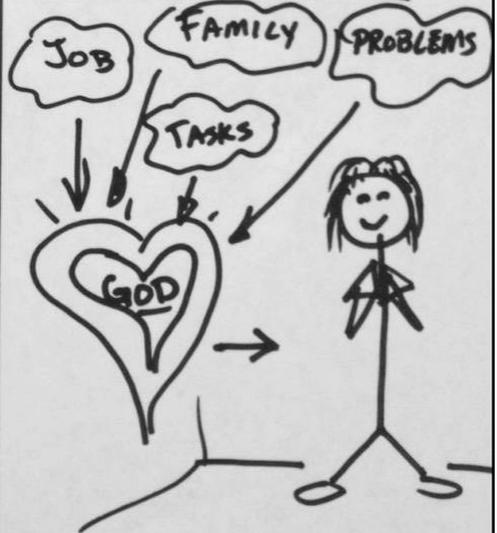
NO STEPS
I AM IN CHARGE

WRONG THINKING



STEP 3
GOD IS IN CHARGE

RIGHT THINKING



Submitted by Cris T.



Upcoming COIN Deadline

April 2016 Issue:
March 23rd

Topics: Step Four
Tradition Four
Fourth Step Principle
(Courage)

Please email all COIN submissions to coin@aaanjose.org.

The COIN Team

Editor: Stephanie L.
Assistant Editor: Jessica B.

Intergroup Central Office and Corporate Poverty



**INTERGROUP
CENTRAL OFFICE**
of Santa Clara County, Inc

AA is an exemplary, quality organization. Membership is a source of great pride for us, and rightly so. It deserves our financial support, and certainly needs it. Doesn't it seem, though, that we

sometimes give less love and attention to AA than we did to our booze? If you're like this writer, we gave booze most of our time and money and all of our dignity and respect, while creating havoc and chaos all around us. AA asks only for some of our time and some of our money; then it turns around and gives us the dignity, success, and self-respect that come with sobriety, not to mention all those other Promises.

Early in our history, and after some painful experiences, Alcoholics Anonymous adopted "Corporate Poverty" as a financial policy, and Central Office operates under that policy. But there are some misconceptions about just what "Corporate Poverty" means, and how it's practiced: First, we take no moneys from people or entities outside of AA; only members can contribute. Second, we accumulate only those funds that are required for adequate operating expenses plus a prudent reserve. Accumulating money beyond these needs for no stated purpose is to be avoided – no "perilous wealth."

Corporate Poverty does not require us to operate in squalor or to underpay our "special workers." To do so would be very much in opposition to AA's principles.

It has been our experience at Central Office that our total income has seen a general decline over the last four years, while our expenses have increased during the same period:

Year	Total Income	Year	Expenses
2015	\$223,210	2015	\$233,198
2014	\$227,883	2014	\$216,913
2013	\$214,821	2013	\$204,960
2012	\$222,864	2012	\$209,472

In 2015, the Central Office Board authorized the withdrawal of funds from our prudent reserve in order to meet operating expenses. As a result, our prudent reserve – normally at six months of annual expenses – is now at about four and a half months in reserve.

We do not have an emergency. However, please note that just over 50% of the groups in our Fellowship do not participate in the financial support of AA's services beyond the group. We certainly don't say this in condemnation of these groups. There are a number of legitimate reasons groups and meetings may be struggling with contributions. And group expenses come first, always. But if every group had been able to send in another \$36 for the year (\$3 per month), we would have met our budget. We have a shared responsibility for the financial stability of our Fellowship, and when shared, this is not a burdensome responsibility.

Some of our members contribute "over and above," and we'd very much like to thank those who contribute directly to Central Office – for their birthday, in memoriam, or just because. We rely on these contributions and we're very grateful.

We've all heard that a "buck in the basket" is no longer sufficient for the needs of our groups and services. This is true, and while some of us can afford no more, most of us can. How about a new slogan? Any ideas? We've heard "Double down with \$2, thrive with \$5." Got any others?

– Bruce K.

Step Three is Both Spiritual and Practical

It's time for us to explore Step Three in this, the third month of the year. I personally made it through Step Two by using the memory of my late grandfather as my sounding board. Having looked in the mirror and fully grasped that the guy looking back was NOT the ultimate power, I could honestly say that I needed a power greater than myself. And I was able to use Gramps as a proxy for my Higher Power. The logical question rapidly became how I could make that decision to turn either my will or my life over to the care of God when I wasn't quite certain that the God that I grew up with was indeed that power greater than myself.

My sponsor, however, was fully prepared for my skepticism. A religious man himself, he realized that I was not inclined toward religion. I was, however, a voracious reader. So he turned me on to a publication that was specifically written to address folks like me. That book, *Came to Believe*, was published in 1973 by the AA General Service Office. Bill W. saw a need to delineate between spirituality and religion and indeed planned to write the foreword of the book, but he passed in 1971 before he could do so. The book is a collection of 77 stories that describe the diversity of viewpoints regarding the idea of a Higher Power. My personal copy has 11 of the stories circled – ones that had special relevance to my own way of thinking. I remember vividly how one in particular caught my eye during my very first reading of the passage during my own Second and Third Steps. It can be found on page 114 and is called "A Practical Philosophy."

The author of this story recites a trick that he used, with a slight rephrasing of the Third Step in his initial working the

Steps. He reworded the Step to make it, "God as I don't understand him," and also exercised a substitution to make the Step "turn my will and my life over to the care of good." I ask that you re-read those two modifications again. As challenging as Step Three may be for many of us, it is almost trivial to admit that we don't understand God and that we want to do good. Frankly, if you don't want to do good, you would not have even cracked the Big Book or crossed the threshold of an AA meeting. Plus, it's probably not particularly difficult to admit that you don't grasp the meaning of the word "God."

Before those Big Book thumpers get angry with me, let me say that these modifications are only intended to be temporary. One cannot successfully "do" a Step by merely modifying it to meet his or her needs. The point is to think about spirituality differently. If you are not ready to embrace the concept of God and remain befuddled by the image of God as a judgmental white bearded fellow determining who makes it to Heaven and who doesn't, you can still progress through the steps and find your way to recovery. As the Big Book tells us on page 62, "we had to quit playing God. It didn't work." That is all that is meant by turning our will and our lives over to God. But if we get too hung up on the infamous "God-thing," it can needlessly stifle our progress.

In one of the many ironies that I have observed throughout my recovery journey, the way to accept a Higher Power is to stop trying to figure it out, and I believe that this word modification helps to do that. Once I determined that I wanted to do good and that I don't understand God,

I was able to actually think about what it really means to make this critical decision that the Third Step tells us we must. And that decision was a sudden one for me... following plenty of angst and struggle.

I can't remember the exact day that I made that decision, but I vividly remember the circumstances. Like many of us, I had stretched the relationship with my spouse to the breaking point. Not only had I suffered incomprehensible demoralization, but my actions had forced that upon her as well. She needed to heal, just as I needed to. One day, rather than fight the idea of divorce, I turned it over to my Higher Power. I determined that I could not control the outcome. Indeed, I had "made my bed," as they say. If I was forced to lie in it, so be it. I could not fault my wife if that was her decision. Imposing my will could do nothing but further hurt the situation.

I cannot begin to describe the relief that this realization brought. I was able to release the weight of the world from my

shoulders. Unburdening myself then allowed me to make a living amends and be the best husband, father, son, friend, boss, and co-worker I could be. I also learned that this was not an overtly religious concept, with angel's singing and organ music in the background. It was immensely practical. Making the decision to turn my will and my life over to the care of God as I understood him enabled me to better understand my concept of God and focus on the actions required to improve myself. I was able to thoroughly make the decision as it is prescribed in the Big Book and move on to Step Four.

In fact, when I told my sponsor that I had come to realize that I had no control over whether or not a divorce was in the cards for me, he smiled and told me that I had passed Step Three. At the time of this writing, that loving woman remains my wife. I'm certain that if I hadn't turned my will and my life over, that would not be the case.

—JD D.



Tradition Three: The Only Requirement for AA Membership Is a Desire to Stop Drinking

AA's Tradition Three has both a long version and a short one. Like any great and timeless document, it is open to individual interpretation. Some say the long version is more definitive as to just what defines a meeting. Others feel that it is an effort to maintain the purity of purpose of AA – namely, to work on the booze problem, not the coke or pill or food problem.

Whatever. To me, it is “keep it simple” at its best. My interpretation of the Third Tradition is what made it easier for me to be in the rooms and to keep coming back. There was no application, no screening committee, no quota of drinking stories, no breathalizers. Just show up with the desire to stop the drinking and, in time, the madness of the alcoholic mind.

Just as alcoholism is an equal opportunity disease, so is membership in the Fellowship.

Like most of us, I was “qualified” for AA membership long, long before I dragged myself into the rooms. But if I'd have had to be prescreened for admission or be required to fill out a form online to reserve a spot, there is little chance that I would have started the journey I did on August 16 of 2012. I was just too tired and too ashamed to put an application in anywhere. This program makes it mercifully easy to walk in the doors. And it's anonymous! I knew that I could attend any AA meeting I wanted to because I was tired of my emotional and psychological dependence on alcohol. I just had to show up. And show up again. One foot in front of another.

And because the only requirement for membership is that desire to stop drinking, we come from all kinds of places, with different experiences and different points of view. We look different on the outside but we have so much in common on the inside.

We are all alike and so diverse. I find that comforting. I learn from others because they are not like me. Or they are. It doesn't matter.

The Third Tradition is what keeps our Fellowship growing. Nothing stands in the way of a suffering alcoholic from walking in the doors of a meeting. No questions asked. No inventory taken. No dues or fees. Just a desire not to drink. Just for today.

– Liz F.

As a young woman who finally figured out that she had a problem with alcohol, after getting up the courage to attend my first AA meeting, I was happily surprised when I heard the Traditions read first. The Third Tradition said simply:

The only “*requirement*” for AA membership is the *desire* to stop drinking.

What a relief. A few days later, I went to my first speaker meeting. At the beginning, the secretary read a few things and then said, “I shall now read the preamble of Alcoholics Anonymous,” and the second sentence was the Third Tradition!

There it was. I was in a safe place.... AA was not allied with any “outside” people, places, or things, neither endorsed nor opposed any causes. And all I had to do was to *want* to stop drinking!

I heard that our membership spans from “jail to Yale, and those out on bail.” The *desire* to quit was simply the only requirement, our primary purpose being to help others achieve sobriety.

We are people, I learned, who might never meet each other outside the rooms, and yet our desire to stop drinking brings us together, and we end up sharing our experience, strength, and hope with each other.

We share our sorrows, our heartache, and our pain with a sponsor we have picked by looking for the similarities – someone who gives us hope, takes us through the Steps. With the group as a whole, when we chair... just giving hope to others. And it can start immediately – just put your hand out and say “welcome” to a newcomer.

Since we all have the same disease, the bottom line is that we are all alike in the rooms. A simple, lifesaving program... and the only “*requirement*” is the desire to stop drinking!

– Danette G.

My sponsor taught me that the Steps are the guidelines for us as individuals, and the Traditions are the guidelines for alcoholics in aggregate; that our design for living can be found in the 12 Steps, and the blueprint for the long-term survival of the fellowship as a whole can be found in the Twelve Traditions. Not a bad way to think about it. However, every single time I see those iconic white posters, Tradition Three triggers a different thought.

You see, when I first came to AA, I found it pretty easy to admit that I was an alcoholic. I was not a fan of the word “Powerless” in Step One, but getting up and admitting that I was an alcoholic was a no-brainer. My problem was that I didn’t care. When I sat in a dive bar at 6:30 a.m. with five other people and drank, I had no doubt in my mind that all six of us were alcoholics. Even as I realized that my life was unmanageable, I still didn’t particularly want to change. Like many of us, I came to AA to get my family off my back. I knew that I had to do something. The marriage counselor only worked to a point, and those pills for depression only made life more tolerable.

If I could just stop those trips to the hospital with a blood alcohol level off the charts, perhaps things would settle down.

For my first few weeks in the Kaiser CDRP program, the meaning of being part of AA did not register. However, that changed on a Saturday night in February of 2014.

My father came to visit from South Carolina and make sure his grandkids and daughter-in-law were doing okay. That is no exaggeration (although he did not disclose this fact until a year later). I felt the need to play host while he visited, and going out for drinks was not an option.

My only real option for entertainment was to bring him to a very prominent AA meeting that I had heard described as “part comedy show, part vaudeville, and full of laughs.” So I brought him to the huge Second Tradition speaker meeting on Saturday night. As I was describing the process and the little quirks of AA to him, I pointed out the two big, white posters. When I read the line, “The only requirement for AA membership is desire to stop drinking,” it dawned on me: I actually wanted to stop drinking. Not forever, mind you – just for a while. I didn’t even have a timeframe in mind. My dad actually asked me what would happen if I did have a drink. I told him that as long as I had that desire, they would welcome me back. In spite of not having to test that (yet), I have come to cherish that assurance. Ironically, AA is not necessarily a group of people who do not drink. It’s a group of people who want to stop drinking. Of course, most of us happen to not actually drink in addition to meeting that membership criterion defined by our desire to stop or stay stopped. That is the beauty of the program.

So, the next time you look up at Tradition Three, be thankful. We belong in AA because of our desire to stop drinking, and in turn, for the newcomer: There is a distinct possibility you actually will stop.

– JD D.

A Second Deadly Disease

Last August, while traveling to my daughter's college, I coughed and noticed a tiny speck of blood the size of a grain of rice. I called my advice nurse when I got home and was given an appointment first thing the next morning. After many tests and a lot of confusion, I was diagnosed with lung cancer. Lung cancer! I don't smoke. Never have.

At first, I was more shocked than upset. I have been in AA for 11 years and it has helped me through other crises – most notably losing my son to a drug overdose. This time, I have had to use everything in my tool box to save my sanity and my life. I did everything my doctors suggested, and a couple of them suggested yoga. A newcomer at my Sunday meeting mentioned that she went to yoga at the Y.

Reaching out to her helped me find the perfect class for me. I see other people from my AA meetings there. I get so much help from members of AA. My sponsor has been an endless source of support. She helped me find a lung cancer survivor in the program who had long-term sobriety. His advice was “not to be

afraid” and to trust that they (the doctors) would take good care of me. That was helpful to me, because “letting go and letting God” is not easy for me, and this stuff was way out of my control. Being told “not to be afraid” from someone who has been through the same thing helped me.

I don't socialize much in the program, but I do listen at meetings. So I asked for help, support and advice, anywhere I could. Asking for help is not an easy thing for me, but the program has taught me to ask for help when I need it. Nurses, doctors, surgeons, and other survivors in the program have all helped me feel a little less lost in this crazy time. Some of the chemo I have had to take is hard on the liver. I am grateful to have my 11 years clean to help my body tolerate my chemo. I just keep going to meetings just to share and get support.

I can say that I sleep pretty well with the help of a gratitude list that I write every night before bed. I fill a small book my daughter gave me with every good thing I am grateful for before bed. It often starts with good coffee in the



morning or my cozy robe. Modern medicine, my husband, and daughter are regulars on the list. AA meetings are often there, too. I really took to heart the idea of working on what I could do to help my situation. That Serenity Prayer is at work at last in my life.

Surgery last January was not easy. It was a seven-hour ordeal, but I had the best possible outcome. My surgeon was great and I was up in a chair the same day, and walking the next day. I was even out of the hospital a couple of days early. I did everything suggested and was off of serious pain meds in a day. I had a Tylenol drip, which I'll admit did feel a little wimpy at the time. With my epidural, though, it was just fine.

I have followed one of my sobriety friend's lead and thanked my hospital staff. I will bring more cookies again soon to the hospital staff. I brought an orchid to my surgeon and he wrote to thank me. I'm sure he is busy, but that he understands the value of gratitude, too.

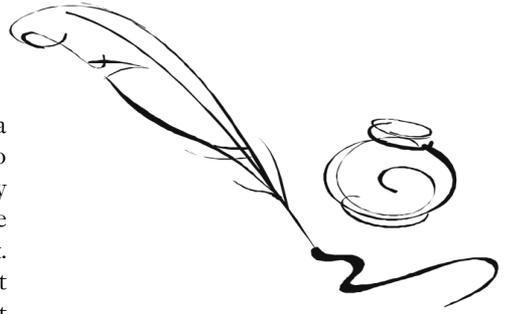
I have been fortunate. I get lots of tests, but they are all pretty good these days. I have read that gratitude and stress reduction are important to recovery – for cancer as well as alcoholism. I struggle with worries about the next scan, but I am starting to let go and let God.

– Betty C.

Poet's Corner: Passion

What will ignite the spark within? I see a lot of people who have tons of drive to accomplish their goals, but when they realize it's not going to be just a walk in the park, they give up before they even start. Learn to discover happiness. It's different for everyone. What your dream is is not going to be the same as the next person's. Discovering your motivation might be something brand new. It might be something you've worked on for years but that lost its luster along the way. So you might rediscover something that makes you passionate.

I've learned that pain does not have to be my only motivator. I don't have to wait until it's unbearable to make a change I know is inevitable. There is a light at the end of the tunnel, and it's clearer every step towards it. That motivates me. Hope motivates me. I can say to myself that I'm not where I want to be right now, but if I give up I will never get there. I could tell



you how I'm struggling in my life in many ways, but for me, giving up means not even getting out of bed. Giving up for me means being comfortable. It means pushing things under the rug and not facing my problems. It takes courage to change, and I respect anyone who strives for better in their life.

With every setback I endure, I learn something. So I know I need the courage to get up and go on one more day. It's easy to get overwhelmed, but if I tell myself "just one more," that I can do. Just one more step. Just one more day. Just one more try. One more chance. I know I can do that.

– Anonymous

A Member Reflects on His 15 Years of Recovery

February is always a period of reflection for me as my AA Birthday is February 18, 2001. I've always taken my chips and believe them to be fundamental to my recovery, and valuable signposts of the years of freedom and joy that I have experienced as a Step-taking alcoholic. However, I typically experience a brief period of discomfort and the need for more meetings and meditation just prior to my Birthday – and even more so when that date is more significant in either length or achievement.

I grew up on the high plains of Wyoming and enjoyed the rustic lifestyle of ranch life. I was adopted by a pair of hard-working Christians who didn't drink and made sure that my brother and I received a good Biblical education, coupled with a strong sense of commitment to their church. Being a good alcoholic – I rebelled and grew increasingly resentful of their God, rituals, and Bible studies and craved adventure outside of their church and community.

I was ecstatic to leave home for college, yet I felt consumed by the fear of failure and not being “good enough.” That emotional claustrophobia could only be removed by alcohol. I felt I'd finally arrived when I connected with a group of friends who were seemingly far more experienced, and were adventurous partiers interested in making a chemically-induced God connection.

Years passed and the old agonies just

got bigger and meaner, and the Rubik's Cube of a happy, free life became increasingly difficult to solve. The brief periods of joy that alcohol provided became more elusive as the physical and mental agonies increased. I received the news of a drinking buddy's suicide and returned home to attend his funeral. I meant to connect with old friends and family, only to later realize that I had a front-row seat to the wreckage alcoholism

had brought to that family. We buried my friend next to his father and grandfather – all three had died in their own way in the deep and cruel clutches of the disease of alcoholism – and the widows of all three of those men were in tears at his burial site.

During the flight back to San Francisco, I sat in a window seat,

transfixed by the mystery of the Hale Bopp comet escort in an incredibly clear sky. I stared and stared during that whole flight, and I believe that a spiritual seed was planted that night. Shortly after that flight, I found another friend's website that had links to AA. I discovered the first meeting that I would attend – a closed meeting of alcoholic men that had the temerity to call themselves “The Men's Honesty Group.”

I would continue to struggle, stagger, and fall deeper into the bottle until on one agonizing Saturday morning, I decided I would attend that AA meeting I had been drawn to, three years earlier. At that meeting, I felt like I had lost 100



emotional pounds after attempting to make my first honest admission in years: I am an alcoholic. The laughter and joy was palpable while these guys cursed and spoke of conscious contact with a power greater than themselves. I was amazed. Why hadn't I come here sooner??

I began to read the Big Book and was dumbstruck when I read Bill's story. On page 12, Ebby's words to Bill, "Why don't you change your concept of God," shook me to my core. I put down my last my drink when I received that first key to the happy, free, and wonderful life I have today. In the same reading, I had an almost "out of body" experience when I read page 14 – "Simple, but not easy. A

price had to be paid. It meant destruction of self-centeredness. I must turn in all things to the 'Father of Light' who presides over us all." I was immediately placed back in that window seat, watching the Hale Bopp comet.

15 years later, I have experienced that "peace that passeth all understanding," the comfortable, quiet calm that I'm not in charge and that a "Power greater than myself" can handle everything I had tried to drown with alcohol!

God bless you all and thank you for the amazing gift of sobriety and for a "design for living" that fills me with joy and purpose.

– Stephen M.



Concept 3: Let Us Know What You Decide

It seems like Bill W. was always working on something new. In 1956, only a year after the General Service structure was officially approved, he gave a talk at the General Service Conference containing the seeds of what we now call the 12 Concepts for World Service.

“So I now offer you four principles,” he said, “that might someday permeate all of AA’s services, principles which express tolerance, patience, and love of each other; principles which could do much to avert friction, indecision and power-driving.”

“These are not really new principles; unconsciously we have been making use of them right along. I simply propose to name them, and if you like them, their scope and application can, over coming years, be fully defined. Here are the words

for them: petition, appeal, participation and decision.”

These are the “Traditional Rights” laid out in Concepts 3, 4, and 5, which define how we vote, who gets to vote, and what we vote on – how we roll in General Service. In Concept 5, we strive for a clear majority on big issues, and listen carefully to minority voices. In Concept 4, we offer a vote to those who have a relevant responsibility.

And in Concept 3, having delegated responsibility and authority to our workers, we “trust our trusted servants.” In this Concept, Bill says that once they have a job description, “it should be the traditional right of all world service boards, committees, and executives to decide which problems they will dispose of themselves and upon which matters



they will report, consult, or ask specific directions.” In other words, they do not have to consult us on every issue. Bill goes on to clearly extend this same right to delegates, and many would say even to GSRs.

If this sounds dangerous, imagine the opposite – that all 65,000 groups must weigh in on every issue at every level, from pamphlets for the local jail to staffing and accounting in our New York corporations. It would bring all work to a halt, we’d be in business meetings every day, and we’d lose the magic that happens when a small group of informed AAs, who know we are counting on them, work through a difficult issue to reach a spiritual solution. So we really have no choice but to prepare and elect the best people we can (Concept 9), give them clear job descriptions (Concept 10), and trust and support them, offering guidance when asked (Concept 3).

Of course, the worker doesn’t have free rein. “This ‘Right of Decision’ should never be made an excuse for failure to render proper reports of all significant actions taken; it ought never be used as a reason for constantly exceeding a clearly defined authority, nor as an excuse for persistently failing to consult those who are entitled to be consulted before an important decision or action is taken.” And the group doesn’t get to abandon all responsibility; they must remain involved and may have to replace a servant who abuses their trust.

It’s worth noting two themes that often come up when discussing the Concepts. First, there are gray areas that can lead to difficult judgment calls and uncomfortable push-pull situations that require standing fast, or giving in, or asking someone who loves AA as much as you do to step down. As Bill says, “we must continuously balance the right relation between ultimate

authority and delegated responsibility.” And second, as suggested in Bill’s comment about “tolerance, patience, and love of each other,” considerable spiritual growth can be attained by applying the 12 Concepts in our service life, starting at the group level.

That said, here’s Concept Three: “To insure effective leadership, we should endow each element of AA – the Conference, the General Service Board and its service corporations, staffs, committees, and executives – with a traditional ‘Right of Decision.’”

– Jim F.



March 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 SOUTH COUNTY GENERAL SERVICE WORKSHOP: 7pm	2 INTERGROUP MEETING: 7:30pm Trinity Church, 3151 Union Ave., SJ OUTREACH MEETING: 6:30pm	3	4	5 SECRETARY'S WORKSHOP: 10am, Central Office
6 P/I/CPC WORKSHOP, 5:30pm, P/I/CPC MEETING: 6pm, Our Savior's Lutheran Church, 1224 N. Winchester Blvd. at Tulip, SC	7	8	9 NORTH COUNTY GENERAL SERVICE MTG: 7:30pm	10	11	12 Agenda Topics Workshop 12:30 Fair Ave. Alamo Club
	14	15 SOUTH COUNTY GENERAL SERVICE MEETING: 7pm	16	17	18	19 DIVERTE/12 th STEPPERS WORKSHOP: 10am, Central Office
20	21 BRIDGING THE GAP MEETING: 7pm	22 H&I COMMITTEE MEETING: 7pm 1980 E. Hamilton Ave., SJ	23	24	25	26 Chili Cook-off 12-3pm
27	28	29	30	31		

April 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 SECRETARY'S WORKSHOP: 10am, Central Office
3 P/CPC WORKSHOP, 5:30pm, P/CPC MEETING: 6pm, Our Savior's Lutheran Church, 1224 N. Winchester Blvd. at Tulip, SC	4	5 SOUTH COUNTY GENERAL SERVICE WORKSHOP: 7pm	6 INTERGROUP MEETING: 7:30pm Trinity Church, 3151 Union Ave., SJ OUTREACH MEETING: 6:30pm	7	8	9
10	11	12	13 NORTH COUNTY GENERAL SERVICE MTG: 7:30pm	14	15	16 DIVERSEN/12 th STEPPERS WORKSHOP: 10am, Central Office
17	18 BRIDGING THE GAP MEETING: 7pm	19 SOUTH COUNTY GENERAL SERVICE MEETING: 7pm	20	21	22	23
24	25	26 H&I COMMITTEE MEETING: 7pm 1980 E. Hamilton Ave., SJ	27	28	29	30

MEETING CHANGES

NEW

Keep Coming Back: Friday, 1pm, Conxion Community Center, 749 Story Rd., Suite 10, San Jose.

Keep Coming Back: Saturday, 1pm, Conxion Community Center, 749 Story Rd., Suite 10, San Jose.

ff the Top: Thursday, 8am, 14376 Saratoga Ave., (the old post office building), Saratoga.

Off the Top: Thursday, 8am, 14376 Saratoga Ave., (the old post office building), Saratoga.

Jaywalkers Literature Review: Wednesday, 6pm, Alano Club West, 1555 S. 7th Street, Building K, near Alma, San Jose.

Secular Step Takers: Thursday, 8pm, Cornerstone Fellowship Group, 1600 Dell Ave., (2nd floor), San Jose.

Sobriety First: Monday, noon, Conxion Community Center, 749 Story Rd., #10, San Jose.

University Beginners: Wednesday, 5pm, University of Santa Clara, 500 El Camino Real, Brannan Hall, Rm. 331 Santa Clara.

Women's Meeting: Sunday, 4:30pm, Serenity First Fellowship, 304 N. 6th St. at Julian (upstairs), San Jose.

CHANGED

Bowers Fellowship: Sunday, 11am, **moved temporarily to Machado Park**, 3360 Cabrillo between Lawrence and Calabazas.

Sunday Early Evening: Sunday, 7pm, **moved temporarily to Machado Park**, 3360 Cabrillo between Lawrence and Calabazas.

The Happiest Hour Group: Friday, 6pm, Alano Club West, 1555 S. 7th Street, Building K, near Alma, San Jose. **Changed its name to Old West meeting**

Third Tradition: First Christian Church, 80 S. 5th St., San Jose. **Changed from Mon, Tues, Wed @ 7am to Tues, Wed., Thurs. @ 11:30am.**

Desi's In Recovery: Saturday, 4pm, Covenant Presbyterian Church, 670 E. Meadow Dr., Palo Alto. **Mets in room #5.**

NO LONGER MEETING

The Seeker's Group: Thursday, 7:30pm, Fair Avenue Fellowship, 1122 Fair Ave. @ McLaughlin, San Jose.

Los Gatos Tuesday Night: Tuesday, 8pm, Faith Lutheran Church, 16548 Ferris & Spencer, rm. 14, Los Gatos.



February 2016 Statistics

Daytime Phone Calls to Central Office....300

Daytime 12-Step Calls.....5

(Evening 12-Step call information is not available.)

The Central Office website
receives an average of
8,000 hits each month!

I AM RESPONSIBLE...

WHEN ANYONE, ANYWHERE,

REACHES OUT FOR HELP,

I WANT THE HAND OF AA

ALWAYS TO BE THERE.

AND FOR THAT:

I AM RESPONSIBLE.

To all the members and groups who support us,

WE THANK YOU!

Birthday Contributions



Birthday Celebrant	Years	Contributions	Birthday
Russel M.	27	Anonymous	01/30/1989
Allegra R.	32	Allegra R. and Michael R	02/03/1984
Susan S.	11	Carol B.	02/09/2005
Rob B.	25	Angie B.	02/12/1991
Corvus M.	21	Aileen B.	02/12/1995
Frank M.	31	Frank M.	02/14/1985
Nancy S.	40	Aileen B.	02/17/1976
Dave H.	8	Dominic B.	02/28/2008



195 YEARS OF SOBRIETY!

If you would like to participate or honor a friend, please use the birthday forms at your meeting or at Central Office. Birthdays are listed in recognition of contributions made to Central Office on a member's behalf for a sobriety milestone, either by themselves or for a friend, and will be listed in this section unless requested otherwise.

In Memoriam

Johnny O. passed away on February 23, 2016, with 46 years of sobriety

Jim B. passed on February 11, 2016

Konrad B, sobriety date January 10, 1986

INTERGROUP MINUTES

February 3, 2016

- Carol B., Intergroup Chairperson, opened the meeting at 7:30pm followed by a Moment of Silence and the Serenity Prayer.
- Scott read the definition of Intergroup.
- Bonnie read the Twelve Traditions.
- Eleven new Intergroup reps:
 - Bill W., Forged from Adversity (The Dalles)
 - Pam, Women's Free To Be Me, Tuesday at 7:30pm
 - Rick, Cambrian Park Men's Group
 - Stephan, Underground Book Study, Sunday at 7:00pm
 - Bonnie, Third Steppers Book Study (Women's)
 - Spencer, Young at Heart
 - Colette, Spiritual Awakening, Tuesday at 7pm
 - Kristy, A Vision for You, Tuesday at 6:00pm
 - Scott, Higher Power Hour (Men's), Monday at 8:00pm
 - John L., Single Problem Study (Men's), Wednesday at 8:00pm
 - Erin, Los Altos Big Book Study
- **Visitors**
 - Nicholas
- **Birthdays**
 - Ariel, 8 years
 - Ben, 9 years
 - Barbara, 2 years
 - Collette, 4 years
 - Nicholas, 6 years
 - Jan, 3 years
- **7th Tradition**
- **Corrections or Additions to the Agenda** (none)
- **Corrections or Additions to the Previous Month's Minutes** (minutes approved as submitted)
- **Treasurer's Report, Joe** (next report will be in April)
 - 49 voting Intergroup Reps in attendance

Reports

Intergroup Chair, Carol B.

- Thank you Bradley for continuously making the coffee and to Ryan for being our clean-up person. Please try out the note-taking outline Robby created and give him any feedback you have. Please remember to queue up three people deep when we start the reports. And last, please limit your report to two-three minutes, and say "here's the takeaway" so everyone knows what you want to be reported back to the meetings.

Central Service Board, Laura

- At last month's meeting we discussed tax forms. Bruce provided a draft copy for a Central Office Administration Manual. This manual is being reviewed. We would like to get a Communications Committee going to help Josh with our website. All is running just fine.

Central Office, Bruce

- January is always an active month – closing the prior year, filing required reports and documents, and getting information to our CPA. We will be closing 2015 over \$12,000 in the red. We'll talk more about that another time. My focus presently is on finding cost-savings in the office.
- We have encountered difficulties as we register new groups and change the information on existing ones. Too often we don't have any contact person, so we are now requiring that a secretary be registered with us before we list the meeting. An IGR is strongly recommended, but not required, for all new groups.
- Joel has cast our Founders' Day play for this year, and we have secured the location at Willow Glen United Methodist Church. Please help get the word out about this play, being performed on the first and second weekends in June; it will be great fun and informative to boot. And Central Office fares well.

PI/CPC (no report)**12th Step Committee (no report)****Nights and Weekends Diverter Coordinator, Dominic**

- The diverter is our 24/7 outreach to connect those looking for sobriety and/or finding a Twelve Step committee member to work with them. The sobriety requirement is one year, with knowledge of the Steps and Traditions and participation in our local fellowship. We have three open shifts: the third Monday, 4:30-7pm, the fourth Thursday, 7-10pm, and the fourth Thursday, 10pm to 6am.
- Strongly encourage your group members to attend the Diverter Workshop on the third Saturday at 10am at Central Office or on the first Wednesday at 7pm before this meeting. Those who cannot attend either of those workshops can contact Dominic directly.

Outreach Committee, Susan P.

- The Outreach Committee is the good-will ambassador to meetings. We check to make sure meetings are still running and let meetings know about Intergroup and what is available to them. If you want to find out more about what we do, we meet at 6:30pm prior to the IG meeting in the same room.

The COIN, Stephanie L.

- Please get The COIN to meetings. People can subscribe and get it in their mail box and email. A full- color version is available on our website.
- The March issue deadline is February 17. The topics are Step Three, Tradition Three, and the Third Concept.

Website, Josh

- Not much this month on the site. I got a request from Bruce and took the native meeting guide app off the website. I met with Bruce and brainstormed ideas about ways to remove my name from the app. There is not a simple solution to this. The app is really not an Intergroup function, but it is going well. It has been downloaded about 4,000 times. One to four Intergroups are putting announcements about the app on their websites.

Activities Committee, Linda

- The Chili Cook-Off is March 26. Last year we were able to donate \$3,700 to Central Office. Eight groups are currently signed up and more calling to confirm taking part this year. Get flyers to your groups and share the information. This is a great newcomer event. We still have about 10 openings for groups that want to participate. The deadline to sign up is the beginning of March, and we can have up to 22 groups. Groups get \$75 to get them started on chili preparation expenses. All the cornbread is being donated. We would like donations of ice cream and root beer. This is an excellent one-day service opportunity.
- Linda has presale tickets, eight in a pack @ \$10 per ticket. Please talk to Linda about getting them.

Old/Ongoing Business

- In December, our webmaster briefed us on the web-based and native meeting apps available on our website and asked you to check out the apps and let your groups know about them. In January, you voted to remove the native meeting apps from our website while we continue discussing the ramifications of having native apps on the site.
- In her report, Laura mentioned forming a Communications Committee. The committee would work with Josh, who would be the committee chair.
- Mike of the Central Service Board commented that the native meeting apps are a good thing and wonderfully done. The Board's issue with the native apps involved anonymity issues and avoidance of future commercial involvement.
- Look at our website in the Technology area to see the type of skills Josh would welcome in our website development and maintenance. Josh has a vision of website improvements and taking us into the 21st century. A major concern is reaching young people effectively.

New Business (none)

Other Service Committee Reports

Unity Day 2016

- Carol announced that Greg C. has stepped up to be Intergroup's Unity Day liaison. Unity Day Committee meetings start March 3 at Harry's Hofbrau, 6:30pm on Saratoga Avenue.

NCCAA (no report)

Hospitals & Institutions, Jeff

- H&I meets the fourth Tuesday of every month, 7:00pm at 1980 Hamilton at Leigh, San Jose. We need a lot more people volunteering. Jails are asking for more meetings for both men and women. Mariposa has nine openings. We'll be going into Stanford Hospital soon. The H&I Orientation meeting starts at 6:30pm. This is a once-a-month commitment. We ask for a two-year commitment if you're going into jails.

Bridging The Gap, George

- BTG is the AA committee that helps people transition from treatment facilities and institutions back to the community. We contact volunteers who meet people and take them to meetings within 24 hours of their discharge, helping them get integrated into and situated in AA. We're

currently working with five facilities and just added a sixth facility at the Palo Alto VA's Foundations of Recovery.

- Working to bring a Bridging the Gap Forum to San Jose October 15 to enable all from Northern California to hear about Bridging the Gap.
- Our business meeting is the third Monday of every month, 7pm at 1980 Hamilton at Leigh.
- We have an open position for our liaison to Intergroup.
- We need an alternate Chair (one-year sobriety requirement).
- We need a men's phone follow-up phone coordinator (two-year sobriety requirement).
- Please take cards for joining the Bridging the Gap team to your meetings.

North County General Service, Marianne G.

- The General Service Conference has an agenda item to create a simple-English version of the Big Book. If your group wants to have input on this or other topics, your group can send a rep to the Agenda Topics Workshop March 12 at 12:30pm at the Fair Avenue Alano Club.

South County General Service (no report)

SCCYPAA (no report)

Sober & Free Conference, Robby

- The LGBT Sober & Free Conference is in its 31st year. Over 300 people attend from all over the world. This year's conference is April 22-24 at the Hyatt Place in San Jose. Sober and Free is a fun-filled weekend of sobriety sponsored by the LGBT committee. It provides meetings, workshops, and entertainment. Our website is <http://www.soberandfree.org>. Please get the word out, even if your group is not LGBT. LGBTs go to all meetings, not just meetings that are exclusively LGBT. Flyers will be available next month.

Open Forum

- The 7th Tradition collection this evening was \$114.
- Tamlyn asked if Josh could put together a sheet specifying all skills he needs so it can be distributed at meetings. Josh said he would post the info on our website: <http://www.aasanjose.org/technology>.

The meeting closed with the Responsibility Statement at 8:27pm.

LOCAL EVENTS

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| March 26 | Santa Clara County Intergroup Chili Cookoff, Lincoln Glen Church, 2700 Booksin Avenue, San Jose, 12-3 p.m. |
| April 22-24 | Sober & Free Conference, Hyatt Place San Jose/Downtown (soberandfree.org). |

CALIFORNIA EVENTS

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| June 9-12 | AA Desert Pow-Wow, Renaissance Indian Wells Resort & Spa, Indian Wells, CA 92210. |
|-----------|---|

INTERGROUP CENTRAL OFFICE OF SANTA CLARA COUNTY, INC.

Profit & Loss

February 2016

	Feb 16	Feb 15	Jan - Feb 16
Ordinary Income/Expense			
Income			
3030 · Contributions -General	16,884.56	9,016.83	37,437.69
3050 · Group Insurance (Group premium payments)	0.00	0.00	127.00
8010 · Literature Sales	4,599.25	4,145.18	8,431.63
8020 · Meeting Guide Sales	882.00	502.00	1,254.50
8060 · Newsletter	0.00	10.00	0.00
Total Income	22,365.81	13,674.01	47,250.82
Cost of Goods Sold			
5000 · Cost of Goods Sold			
5100 · Cost of Inventory Sold	3,750.67	3,276.22	6,911.30
5150 · Cost of Meeting Directories	930.26	0.00	1,039.26
Total 5000 · Cost of Goods Sold	4,680.93	3,276.22	7,950.56
Total COGS	4,680.93	3,276.22	7,950.56
Gross Profit	17,684.88	10,397.79	39,300.26
Expense			
6010 · Alarm Service	207.00	0.00	207.00
6025 · Central Office Events Expense	0.00	1,160.00	1,200.00
6030 · Accounting and Legal Fee	175.00	0.00	175.00
6070 · Bank Credit card charges (Credit card costs and fees)	37.50	75.82	99.99
6160 · Copier Expense	66.20	71.78	118.20
6225 · Insurance - Emp. Health Plan	483.95	0.00	967.90
6240 · Employee HRA Plan	1,518.84	1,539.42	2,120.44
6245 · Internet Access Charges	25.00	0.00	25.00
6320 · Newsletter Expense	50.02	0.00	105.19
6330 · Office Expense	428.39	28.99	535.12
6380 · Payroll Taxes	1,277.71	792.72	1,799.76
6410 · Postage	637.13	13.51	645.58
6480 · Rent	2,431.60	2,217.25	4,799.85
6510 · Repairs & Maintenance	0.00	0.00	137.29
6540 · Salaries - Office	11,944.50	7,429.11	16,206.00
6560 · Payroll Expenses	0.00	111.41	105.51
6600 · Signing Services	200.00	200.00	400.00
7050 · Telephone	169.48	161.77	338.96
9080 · Sales Tax (Sales tax paid on purchases)	0.00	0.00	-0.75
Total Expense	19,652.32	13,801.78	29,986.04
Net Ordinary Income	-1,967.44	-3,403.99	9,314.22
Other Income/Expense			
Other Income			
8030 · Interest Income	20.70	35.28	21.34
Total Other Income	20.70	35.28	21.34
Net Other Income	20.70	35.28	21.34
Net Income	-1,946.74	-3,368.71	9,335.56

INTERGROUP CENTRAL OFFICE OF SANTA CLARA COUNTY, INC.

Balance Sheet

As of February 29, 2016

	Feb 29, 16
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
1010 · Petty Cash	205.56
1020 · First Republic Bank (Checking account)	22,074.66
1021 · (PR) First Rep. Bank CD 0429 (12 Mo. CD @ .5%, 08/12/16)	17,686.20
1023 · (PR) First Rep. Bank CD 3228 (12 Mo. CD @ .35%, 02/05/16)	16,559.93
1027 · (PR) First Rep. Bank CD 7681 (3 Mo. CD @ .1%, 4/29/16)	15,087.32
1028 · (PR) First Rep. Bank CD 6955 (12 Mo. CD @ .35%, 04/30/16)	20,100.14
Total Checking/Savings	91,713.81
Accounts Receivable	
1110 · Accounts Rec - Group Deposits	-1,494.69
Total Accounts Receivable	-1,494.69
Other Current Assets	
1250 · Literature Inventory	19,993.69
1310 · Prepaid Insurance	2,832.97
13700 · Payroll Service Customer Asset (Payroll Service Customer Asset)	-384.65
1499 · Undeposited Funds	1,650.79
Total Other Current Assets	24,092.80
Total Current Assets	114,311.92
Fixed Assets	
1630 · Office Equipment	29,106.42
1640 · Office Furnishings - Asset	7,757.80
1641 · Less Accumulated Depreciation	-17,721.97
1680 · Leasehold Improvements	300.00
1681 · Less Accumulated Amortization	-300.00
Total Fixed Assets	19,142.25
Other Assets	
1860 · Deposits	1,993.85
Total Other Assets	1,993.85
TOTAL ASSETS	135,448.02
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Other Current Liabilities	
2100 · Payroll Liabilities (Payroll Liabilities)	-413.82
2240 · Sales Tax Payable (due quarterly)	791.79
2500 · Group Deposits for Literature (Group Literature Accounts)	18.53
2600 · Unity Day	1,212.31
Total Other Current Liabilities	1,608.81
Total Current Liabilities	1,608.81
Total Liabilities	1,608.81
Equity	
3900 · Unrestricted Funds	124,555.34
Net Income	9,283.87
Total Equity	133,839.21
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	135,448.02

INTERGROUP CENTRAL OFFICE OF SANTA CLARA COUNTY, INC.

Group Contributions

February 2016

	Feb 16	Jan - Feb 16
1 INV Fremont & Manet Group 70975	0.00	490.00
1 INV Gilroy Groups 70906	1,110.00	1,110.00
1 INV One Day at a Time 70903	704.83	2,729.17
1 INV Serenity Discussion 210 (Wed.)	214.90	214.90
1 INV Serenity First Fellowship 70902	455.00	455.00
1 INV South County Fellowship 70954	3,900.00	4,200.00
1 INV Spiritual Progress Group 70979	2,200.00	2,200.00
1010 Tuesday / Thursday	148.40	148.40
3rd Steppers Book Study (Wom) 610 (Thur.)	0.00	90.00
A Vision for You Women's 802 (Tues.)	0.00	160.00
Almaden Valley Discussion 30 (Sun.)	438.20	438.20
Basic Big Book 710 (Thur.)	0.00	14.00
Berryessa Group 527 (Wed.)	149.30	149.30
Big Book Men's Group (Men) 106 (Tues.)	0.00	140.00
Big Book Speakers Group 289 (Fri.)	200.90	200.90
Big Book Study MIpts 347 (Sat.)	0.00	98.00
Birthday Contribution 00951	192.00	864.00
Boiled Owls (Men's) 816 (Wed)	995.00	995.00
Bowers Fellowship 46 (Sun.)	0.00	1,233.60
Cambrian Saturday Night (Chips) 376 (Sat)	0.00	420.00
Character Defect Freedom 201 (Tues)	422.80	422.80
Chips and Dyps (Chips) 559 (Tues.)	266.00	266.00
Conscious Contact Mediation Grp LG 663	0.00	276.96
Desi's In Recovery (723)	0.00	128.87
Downtown Steppers (Men) 392 (Mon.)	144.63	144.63
Early Monday Night 68 (Mon.)	0.00	166.88
Early Tuesday Group 119 (Tues.)	0.00	227.45
Easier Way Group 290 (Fri.)	0.00	1,149.32
East Enders Group 720 (Thur.)	0.00	170.00
Evergreen Group 884 (Thur.)	70.00	70.00
Firing Line (The) 404 (Mon.)	0.00	842.15
Friday Friends 568 (Fri.)	0.00	50.00
G Cornerstone Fellowship Group 70908	0.00	50.00
G Fair Avenue Fellowship 70901	320.26	745.04
G Sunrisers Group/Dennys 70932	455.27	735.69
G Third Tradition Women's Gp, The 70979	274.31	303.45
G We Care Group 70934	560.00	560.00
Gay & Lesbian AA Big Book Disc146 (Tues.)	91.00	91.00
Gay & Lesbian Step & Trad GP 221 (Fri.)	0.00	70.00
Get Well Group 17 (Sun.)	261.38	261.38
Grace Group of AA 352 (Sat.)	0.00	700.00
Grateful Live Group 535 (Mon.)	266.00	266.00

INTERGROUP CENTRAL OFFICE OF SANTA CLARA COUNTY, INC.
Group Contributions (continued)
February 2016

	Feb 16	Jan - Feb 16
Happy Destiny (Women) 109 (Tues.)	0.00	618.10
Higher Power Hour (Men) 872 (Mon.)	0.00	1,365.00
HOW Group 71 (Mon.)	0.00	1,449.70
Intergroup Council 80909	0.00	300.00
Joy of Living PA 464 (Wed.)	266.00	266.00
Just For Today 238 PA (Thur.)	266.00	266.00
Lesbians Living the Promises 349 (Fri.)	59.08	128.52
Live and Let Live 85 (Mon.)	87.60	87.60
Living Solutions 728 (Fri.)	0.00	578.73
Los Altos Men's Group 59 (Mon.)	0.00	100.00
Los Gatos Big Book 664 (Mon.)	0.00	40.32
Men's 4th Step Group 320 (Fri.)	0.00	75.00
Men's Single Problem Study Gp 220 (Thur.)	0.00	580.96
Mountain View Group 350 (Sat.)	0.00	61.84
New Nooners 808 (Mon.)	0.00	55.00
Old West Meeting 697 (Fri)	0.00	116.00
Other Wednesday Nite, The (Men) 209 (Wed)	0.00	490.00
Personal 00911	12.50	112.50
Primary Purpose Beginners Big Book 864	0.00	57.43
Queer and Sober 671 (Sat.)	300.00	300.00
Second Tradition Group Spkr 721 (Sat.)	0.00	1,172.50
Serenity Speaker Meeting 533 (Sun.)	0.00	221.00
Single Problem Topic (Men's) 582 (Mon.)	0.00	690.90
Sisters Seeking Serenity 858 (Wed.)	0.00	334.00
South Valley Men's 845 (Thur.)	0.00	233.80
South Valley Women's Surrender 88 (Mon.)	0.00	119.00
Spiritual Awakening 813 (Tues.)	0.00	208.60
Spiritual Step Study 233 (Sun.)	0.00	722.10
Step Study (Women) LG 820 (Wed.)	0.00	205.80
Sunshine Group noon 243 (Thur.)	60.00	60.00
T.G.I.F. Speaker/Discussion 298 (Fri.)	266.00	266.00
Ten O'Clock High 890 (Tues.)	280.00	280.00
Think Tank (Men's) 361 (Sat.)	702.00	702.00
Tuesday Night Men's Mtg 525 (Tues.)	501.00	501.00
Tuesday Noon Step Study 556 (Tues)	0.00	280.00
Unknown	121.00	121.00
Veterans of Alcohol North 338 (Tues.)	0.00	100.00
Women Sharing the Solution 519 (Thur.)	123.20	123.20
TOTAL	13,840.18	24,048.09

March 2016

SWITCH | HITTERS

BECAUSE SOBRIETY DOESN'T HAVE TO BE A **DRAG**

**DRAG SHOW
& SPEAKER**



**MARCH 12
6:30 PM**

\$15 GENERAL ADMISSION | \$20 VIP SEATS

THE CENTER FOR SPIRITUAL LIVING

1195 Clark St. | San Jose, CA | 95125

Proceeds benefit the Sober & Free Conference
Visit soberandfree.org for more information

A change occurred to the story "Alcoholic Anonymous Number Three" of the Big Book between the 3rd Edition and 4th edition. What word was taken out on the first page of the story?

Be sure to pick up next month's COIN for the answer!

Get it right and get a free subscription!



Answer to last month's trivia question: Jill B. warden of San Quentin State Prison to commemorate the first prison meeting of AA held at San Quentin in 1941.

M A R C H 2 6 ^{T H}
2 0 1 6

S A T U R D A Y
1 2 - 3 : 0 0 P M

Santa Clara County Intergroup

Chili Cook-off

Lincoln Glen Church
2700 Booksin Ave
San Jose



For more information on how to
register your team or volunteer
Contact Linda [REDACTED] or
Ken M [REDACTED]

\$10 donation
suggested

Bring on the heat !

Bring your home group for the
annual Serenity Chili Cook-off

Sat, March 26th

12-3pm

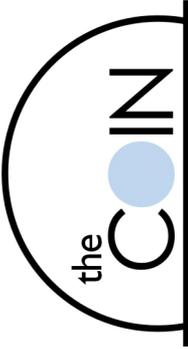
12-2PM Chili tasting and

Cornbread feast

2-3PM AA Speaker Meeting

Pack your sombrero and
see if your homegroup can
win the
bragging
rights!!!

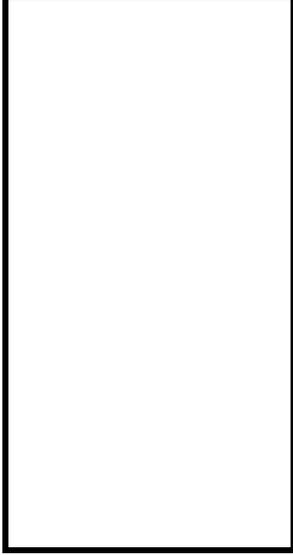




Intergroup Central Office

of Santa Clara County, Inc.
274 E. Hamilton Avenue, Suite D
Campbell, CA 95008

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