

In this September issue:
Step Nine, Tradition Nine,
and Justice

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COIN Schedule of Topics

Topics in this Issue

Step Nine

Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

Tradition Nine

A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.

Justice

The maintenance or administration of what is **just** especially by the impartial adjustment of conflicting claims.

Just: acting or being in conformity with what is upright or good.

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Please email all submissions to coin@asaanjose.org

Newsletter Issue Month	Submission Deadline	Step & Tradition	Virtue
January	12-20	1	Honesty
February	01-20	2	Hope
March	02-20	3	Faith
April	03-20	4	Courage
May	04-20	5	Integrity
June	05-20	6	Willingness
July	06-20	7	Humility
August	07-20	8	Love
September	08-20	9	Justice
October	09-20	10	Perseverance
November	10-20	11	Spiritual Awareness
December	11-20	12	Service

Resources

COIN – Central Office Intergroup Newsletter

<https://aasanjose.org/coin>

Financials/Minutes

<https://aasanjose.org/central-office-financials-and-intergroup-minutes>

Calendar of Events

<https://aasanjose.org/events>

Celebrating Sobriety Birthdays

<https://aasanjose.org/celebrating-birthdays>

Meeting Guide

<https://aasanjose.org/meetings>

Contributions

<https://aasanjose.org/contributions>

Intergroup Information & Orientation

<https://aasanjose.org/intergroup-orientation>

Service Opportunities

<https://aasanjose.org/service>

Central Office Information

<https://aasanjose.org/central-office>

COIN Editor: Geena Louise R.

Sunlight of the Spirit **Cover Art:** Elizabeth M.

Central Office Lead: Jody W.

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COIN is the Central Office Intergroup Newsletter. It is what the *A.A. Fact File* calls "*A.A. Literature Prepared by Local Groups.*" The opinions are those of the individual authors and may or may not be representative of A.A. as a whole.

Tradition of the Month

Tradition Nine

A.A. as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.

Long Form

Each A.A. group needs the least possible organization. Rotating leadership is the best. The small group may elect its secretary, the large group its rotating committee, and the groups of a large metropolitan area their central or intergroup committee, which often employs a full-time secretary.

The trustees of the General Service Board are, in effect, our A.A. General Service Committee. They are the custodians of our A.A. Tradition and the receivers of voluntary A.A. contributions by which we maintain our A.A. General Service Office at New York. They are authorized by the groups to handle our overall public relations and they guarantee the integrity of our principle newspaper, the A.A. Grapevine. All such representatives are to be guided in the spirit of service, for true leaders in A.A. are but trusted and experienced servants of the whole. They derive no real authority from their titles; they do not govern. Universal respect is the key to their usefulness.

Practice These Principles – Tradition Nine

1. Do I still try to boss things in A.A.?
2. Do I resist formal aspects of A.A. because I fear them as authoritative?
3. Am I mature enough to understand and use all elements of the A.A. program—even if no one makes me do so—with a sense of personal responsibility?
4. Do I exercise patience and humility in any A.A. job I take?
5. Am I aware of all those to whom I am responsible in any A.A. job?
6. Why doesn't every A.A. group need a constitution and bylaws?
7. Have I learned to step out of an A.A. job gracefully—and profit thereby—when the time comes?
8. What has rotation to do with anonymity? With humility?

These questions above were originally published in the A.A. Grapevine in conjunction with a series on the Twelve Traditions from November 1969 through September 1971.

Articles

Brief

Working Step Nine can free us from guilt, shame, or regret of our past, freeing us to live in the present. It can give us, or another person, hope for a better future.



"I think I'll look into that Athletic Association — they all seem so damn healthy and happy."

Appreciation of Tradition Nine

— Alyssa C.

Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.) as an organization is simple, one alcoholic bringing recovery to the next. In the spirit of service, our organizational bodies allow us to "... better carry our AA message to others; to make for ourselves a finer, greater Society, and, God willing, to assure Alcoholics Anonymous a long life and perfect unity" (Language of the Heart, pg. 89).

When I first came to A.A., I had difficulty understanding how an organization could have the presence and longevity A.A. has with the least possible organization. As I became more involved in service, the more I understood and I

became very passionate about the importance of achieving our primary purpose through service.

When I first moved to the desert, Central Office was the first place I went. I immediately felt more connected to my new community and picked up a service commitment to volunteer at the office. I could not be more grateful for this experience. Just as A.A. was there for me when I was given the gift of desperation to stop drinking, Central Office was there for me when I needed to get connected to a new city. The more I learned about the role of Central Office, the more involved I became and my love for A.A. deepened dramatically.



Through the spirit of service, a path to carrying the message cleared and I can help ensure that A.A. is there for the next alcoholic, just as it was for me. Through A.A. service, I have experienced a true fellowship develop around me that is united under our primary purpose and it has been the most fulfilling aspect of my life.

Faithful Disease

— Anonymous

I hate your meetings and your Higher Power. I hate anyone who works a program. To all who come in contact with me, I wish suffering and death.

Who am I, you ask? I am your faithful disease. I have seven strong and helpful attributes. In addition to being Cunning, Baffling and Powerful, I am also Progressive, Patient, Permanent and - above all - Faithful!! That is ME, aren't I wonderful? I have killed millions and am very pleased. I just love to catch you with the element of surprise. I love pretending I am your friend and lover. Haven't I given you comfort? Wasn't I there when you were lonely? When you wanted to die, did you not call on me? I was there for you, always ever so faithful. I love to

make you hurt and cry. For me, it is true glory when you can't feel anything at all. I will give you instant gratification, and all I ask of you is lifelong suffering. I've always been here for you. When things were going right in your life, you invited me to join in the celebration. When you said you didn't deserve these good things, I was the only one that agreed with you. Together, we were able to destroy all of these good things, especially family.



Yet, you people don't take me seriously at all. Instead, you take strokes, heart attacks, and even diabetes more seriously. Fools that you are, don't you know that without my help, these things would not be possible?

I am such a hated disease, and yet I never come uninvited. You choose to have me, and like so many, you have chosen me over serenity and peace. More than you hate me, I hate all who work and live a Twelve Step program. Your program, meetings and Higher Power weaken me, and I cannot function in the manner that I am accustomed. When you are working your program, I must lie patiently. You don't see me, but I am permanently here, growing bigger and stronger every day.

Don't LIVE and take your sobriety seriously, because I am taking you DEAD...serious.

Faithfully, Your Disease

Step Nine Gift

— Daria S

I believe that each Step has a gift for me. Throughout my sobriety as I worked the Steps and learned how to incorporate the principle of each Step into my life. I found I received a gift from each one.

The gift I received from each step was unique and especially what I needed most at that time. A spiritual awakening, a freedom of some kind, a new awareness,

shedding another piece of my armor and letting in a little more light. Maybe you could relate to some of my experiences, maybe yours, were completely different. This, I think, is the miracle of the Steps. The same Steps, yet each of us has our own personal experience with them.

Amends are not just about saying, “I am sorry.” How many times have I said that! I like Webster’s New World Dictionary definition of amends: *“Something given or done to make up for injury, loss etc. that one has caused.”*

After I had completed my Fifth Step, I thought I had done the hardest thing I would have to do in the program of Alcoholics Anonymous. Then I came to Steps 8 & 9. Yikes! I felt like everything was my fault. How could I ever climb this mountain? I reviewed my list with my sponsor. After some deletions and additions and lots of praying for willingness, I was ready to go into action. The gifts and miracles I had received so far, and the friendships and trust I had formed with my sponsor and others in the fellowship, gave me the courage to press on.

The Big Book ([Alcoholics Anonymous](#)) spends more time on Step Nine than on any other step. Several specific directions and scenarios are depicted. I found it helpful to reread that section before each attempt. I am reminded to be humble but not to grovel, to focus on my own errors and not on those I perceive were made by others. The book reminds me that all people may not be receptive, but not to be discouraged. Most of all it is stressed that we must not cause any harm in the process of making our amends.



The largest amends I felt I owed was to my family. I made direct amends to them when they were willing to listen. I told them of the wrongs I felt I had done to them, asked if there were anything I could do to make it right, and became the best sister and daughter I knew how to be. I understood that I had to let them be who they were and not what I expected them to be. I understood that my mother would never be the “mommy” I had always resented her for not being. The gift I received from that is a feeling of being a member of my family instead of a visitor.

I saw my mother in a different light. I came to understand her as a woman who had also survived much and I was able to honor her. When my mother passed away



last year I was truly grateful that I had completed Step 9 with her and that we had several years of a respectful peaceful relationship.

Step Nine is about cleaning house and healing. When I have caused “*injury or loss*” to someone I have also harmed myself. I have created guilt and fear, and alienated myself. So as I make the amends, I am also healed. The healing I experienced in those

relationships spills over into all my relationships. The gifts from working this step are many. Remember that this Step is on the threshold of the “*Promises*”. If you are new and wondering “what’s in this program for me?”, I suggest you grab a Big Book and go to the end of Step Nine and read the “*Promises*”. Many of them have come true for me. I thank God for the program of Alcoholics Anonymous and the many gifts and miracles I have received from working the Steps.

The Persons We Have Harmed It’s Time to Pay the Piper

— Rick R.

How many of us show up at the doors of *Alcoholics Anonymous* (A.A) ready to start exploring our past and all the issues that we have had with our fellow man? Not me! I came here with a rationalizing, alcoholic mind, and the last thing I intended to do was to go searching for more things to hate about myself.

The alcoholic within me was pointing the finger at others to minimize the appearance that I was at fault. My mind was constantly spinning yarns to have the right answers ready should anyone question why I did the things I did. In all my waking hours, I got no peace of mind unless I had something to drink in me. When that happened, it diminished the need to care about other people. In fact, it

immediately turned into drunken arrogance and often into verbal and physical confrontations. A life lived by those standards can only end in destruction. When we have the option to drink it away, we can put it off indefinitely, but eventually we will have to pay the piper.

Not everyone can repair all the damage they have done in the past to our families and friends. That is simply because some of them have moved on and may not be concerned about what our plans are. They do not see the need to be involved in the drama that the alcoholic is going through, especially with their memory of the failed good intentions of the past.

Until we have a history of changing our way of life and putting some time between us and that snapshot of our last drunken debacle, we cannot expect any recognition from them since they are not following us around every day recording our progress.

When it comes to making a list of all the persons we have harmed, the first thought that came to my mind was, how far do I go with this list. My thought on that is; what amount of peace of mind would I be satisfied with? The most obvious people are the ones



that are closest to us such as family, friends, employers. As I list those, I can spiral outward to the more remote people like relatives, friends from the past, and so on.

The last thing I hear questioned is who I owe amends to and again, the peace of mind issue sets the standard for who goes on the list. First off, if I have completely changed those old behaviors and have put them behind me, I have already mended my ways. All that is left to do is to acknowledge my past mistakes in the presence of the person receiving the amend.

I find it easy to level the playing field by simply asking the question: “Have you ever done something that you really regretted?” The answer usually goes: “Of

course, who hasn't?" Next, I say, "Can we talk?" You have just leveled the playing field.

You can do this with anyone that you feel uncomfortable about, when you hear their name mentioned. Eventually you will run out of people that are constantly renting room in your brain. In the rare occasion when a person responds to your effort to make things right in a negative way, they may have issues of their own that we are not aware of. You have done all you can, and you can put it behind you. All that free space in your head adds up to peace of mind and you have the rest of your life to complete it.

Perception

— Linda U.

"I hate my life," I thought to myself as I awakened. I was so angry that I woke up. I prayed again the night before to a God who I didn't know, or even knew existed. I prayed and pleaded that I wouldn't wake up.

My life sucked and if there was a God, it was a cruel God that laughed and mocked my pain. My life had become a series of obligations and reactions – just enough to get by and "maintain" a somewhat normal appearance.



Alcohol and other substances were no longer working to reduce the pain of living my useless life. I would be drunk and stoned and in a pathetic mass of tears. I was lonely, frustrated, angry, sad... lost. I knew a couple of people in A.A. and even went to a few meetings with "Him." "He"

was another obsession of mine, (besides the mind-altering substances) and He was trying to get sober. Eventually, I also learned that he was my "hostage." I was grateful that I didn't get called on to share at those meetings I attended with Him, since "I wasn't an alcoholic." I was just there to support him. When he broke up with me, I was devastated. Everything I did was for "Him." Being with Him, I drank less, you know, "for Him." I had no life, no identity, without Him. I drank

myself into sweet oblivion — You would drink too. Anyone would, right? So, I was truly alone, and my life was lonely, empty and painful. But also, nothing worked anymore to dull my pain. The excruciating pain I felt permeated every cell of my body. I wholeheartedly wanted to die. I knew I had a drinking problem, or just a life problem, but Alcoholic? Hmmm... I had serious doubts.

I had another friend, Joe, who was in A.A. and while I was in the weak spot of desperation, provided by my Higher Power, I called him to see if he could take me to a meeting. I had nothing left to lose and maybe I could find out some answers to my “life problems.” He took me to a meeting where I saw someone taking a token and sharing about feelings, really DEEP feelings that up until that moment, I thought were exclusive to me. I knew at that point, someone felt as I did. EXACTLY how I felt. When they asked for Newcomers, before I knew what happened, I stepped forward, said my name and added, “and I’m an alcoholic.” My knees felt weak, and I thought I would collapse, and I was completely dumbfounded as to how I made that statement aloud in such a crowded room of strangers. Fear of public speaking is REAL. Joe and I went out for coffee after the meeting, and I told him that I was stunned by my own admission in the meeting. He told me that he was stunned too... but grateful.

I had to learn how to do my Steps. The “God-thing” was hard for me to grasp, but fortunately it is a “God of my understanding,” so it could be anything that I could rely on and be in touch with at any

time. The important thing was to have an open-mind. They also told me to “act as if,” and I could also “borrow” someone else’s Higher Power if I didn’t have my own yet. Really?



Immediately I got a sponsor. She helped me find a Higher Power and also realize some of my issues, like codependence. The meeting where I met her was hard for me to attend, and I got another sponsor with whom I worked the 12 Steps. I did a 4th and 5th Step. This is really where “the rubber meets the road.” I completed the rest of the steps with that sponsor. My life started getting better – not like I won a lottery or anything immediately earth-shattering. I did realize that I wasn’t a victim. I learned that I was my own worst enemy – but, I could also be my own best friend.

Active GSO Motion: Our A.A. Group proposes that our new version of the Big Book Alcoholics Anonymous by the Women Ourselves become Conference Approved.

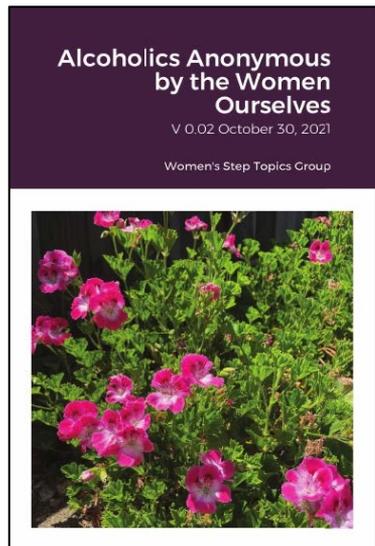
We would like your feedback. You can read it for free here:

<http://www.aaagnostics.org/aaw/aaw-book.pdf>

We found that certain A.A. suggestions are misleading for women, including self-forgetting, perfection, and more. We eliminated the word “moral” since there is a double standard.

“It was four whole years before A. A. brought permanent sobriety to even one alcoholic woman. But as the communication was perfected, mostly by the women themselves, the picture changed.”

— Bill W., Grapevine, Oct. 1959



Instructions for giving feedback are on the title page.

Women's Step Topics Meeting — Thursdays 7PM — Zoom

<https://aasanjose.org/meetings?meeting=womens-step-topics>

COIN Table of Articles

March 2022

1. Step 3 Work - From alcoholic and newcomer
2. Step 3 Decision
3. Conceded to My Innermost Self
4. To The Newcomer
5. A Spiritual Choice
6. Step 3: Came to Believe
7. Step Three: God as He May Express Himself

April 2022

1. Step Four Need Not be a Saga
2. Perspectives and Jokes
3. Step Four: Was I Ready?
4. Step Four Personal Inventory – One Woman’s List

May 2022

1. Step Five: A Clean Slate
2. Step Five Rewards
3. Peace of Mind and a Quiet Heart
4. Step Five - Admitted to God, to ourselves, ...

June 2022

1. Who Holds the Key to Willingness?
2. Hints for Newcomers (and Others)
3. 12-Step Clear-Cut Directions ... Are Not on the Wall
4. Step Six Experiences
5. Remembering the Start of Alcoholics Anonymous

July 2022

1. Notes on Step Seven
2. The 7th Step – The Humility Step
3. Pride – Humility – Shame
4. Step Seven Taught Me That Pride Can Work Both Ways

August 2022

1. The Winds to Soar
2. Step Eight Freedom
3. Practice! Practice! Practice!
4. Living in my True Identity
5. Just Make a List
6. Love, Empathy, and Compassion

Special Events

WANT TO HELP ANOTHER ALCOHOLIC?

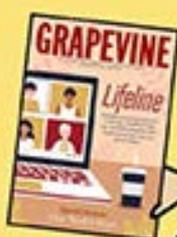
GRAPEVINE & LA VIÑA are Great Twelfth Step Tools!

Give a gift subscription to an alcoholic who needs it. Great for:

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2022
CARRY
THE
MESSAGE
PROJECT

REGISTER ONLINE
NOW!!

MBAR 2022

AA & ALANON CONFERENCE
{ SEPT 3 & 4 2022 }
{ SPEAKERS/FELLOWSHIP/ICE CREAM/DINNER/DANCE }
{ CON TODO ESPAÑOL }

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<http://montereybayarearoundup.org/>

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Sept. 16 - 18, 2022

**PACIFIC
REGIONAL
FORUM**

**Mariott Downtown @ City Creek
75 W Temple St., Salt Lake City, Utah**

RECOVERY ELEVATED

Writing for the COIN

Q: Who writes the COIN articles?

A: You do.

This is a publication forum for your personal stories celebrating sobriety and recovery. We welcome your stories, opinion pieces, learnings, questions, thoughts and ideas.

Q: What about sketches, photos, art and flyers?

A: Yes, please!

These are all welcomed and appreciated. We want to give A.A. members a chance to publish their original artwork and photos. We are not a glum lot and love humor, so please send in jokes and cartoons as well. We want the COIN to have a comprehensive listing of all upcoming events and flyers; email your event info as early as possible.

Q: What do I write about?

A: There are monthly newsletter topics that can be found in the COIN.

Each month's topic is Step X, the Principle behind Step X, and Tradition X, where X is the number of the month. January=1 and December=12. For example, January's topics are Step One, Honesty, and Tradition One. Stories about a month's holidays or historic events are also accepted. For example, articles pertaining to a new year/new start in January, relationships and romance in February, stories about the founding of A.A. in June, independence in July, gratitude and giving thanks in November, etc. can all be fitting subject matter.

Write your stories in the first person (using "I" statements). Share your sobriety experience, strength, and hope: the wisdom you've gleaned, the mistakes you've made, the fun, the troubles, and humor you've found in recovery.

If you hear something at a meeting that makes you see things in a different light, write about it. If you have stayed sober through a difficult experience, write about it. Help us teach and learn from each other. Most importantly, help carry the message of A.A.

Q: What are the submission deadlines?

A: Deadlines are published in each month's COIN.

If you miss the deadline, you may still send materials, but they may be saved for inclusion in a future COIN publication. Stories and art are published at the discretion of the COIN editor and the Central Office.

Q: What are the style guidelines?

A: We strive for consistency.

We accept writings from a variety of authors, then, edit them for style, length less than 900 words, correct spelling, fonts, and more. It is challenging to publish each issue in a timely manner. As editors, we do not change the message.

If you can follow some style guidelines, that would help us out a lot. Below is a non-exhaustive list of basic style guidelines.

1. Break all articles into several paragraphs, instead of one big paragraph.
2. Avoid long run-on sentences.
3. Use “A.A.” and not “AA”

Q: What about Quality?

A: Don’t worry about that.

There is nothing more powerful than one alcoholic speaking with and supporting another alcoholic. Indeed, most of us never trusted a professional about our drinking. How could they possibly know about our drinking? But I believe other alcoholics. We are amateurs by design. So never worry about whether what you write is good enough. Just speak from the heart with honesty.

Q: Anything else?

A: Yes.

Please keep the Twelve Traditions of A.A. in mind as you write. Take special care to respect other members’ anonymity. Have fun!

Send your submissions to: coin@asaanjose.org

Santa Clara County Central Office of A.A.

274 E. Hamilton Ave, Suite D

Campbell, CA 95008

**Open 6 days a week for in-person
book and literature sales, and more.**

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday 2:00 pm – 6:00 pm

Thursday, Friday, Saturday 10:00 am – 2:00 pm

Sunday: Closed



Details, Map, Calendar, Holiday Closings, and More:

<https://aasanjose.org/central-office>

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