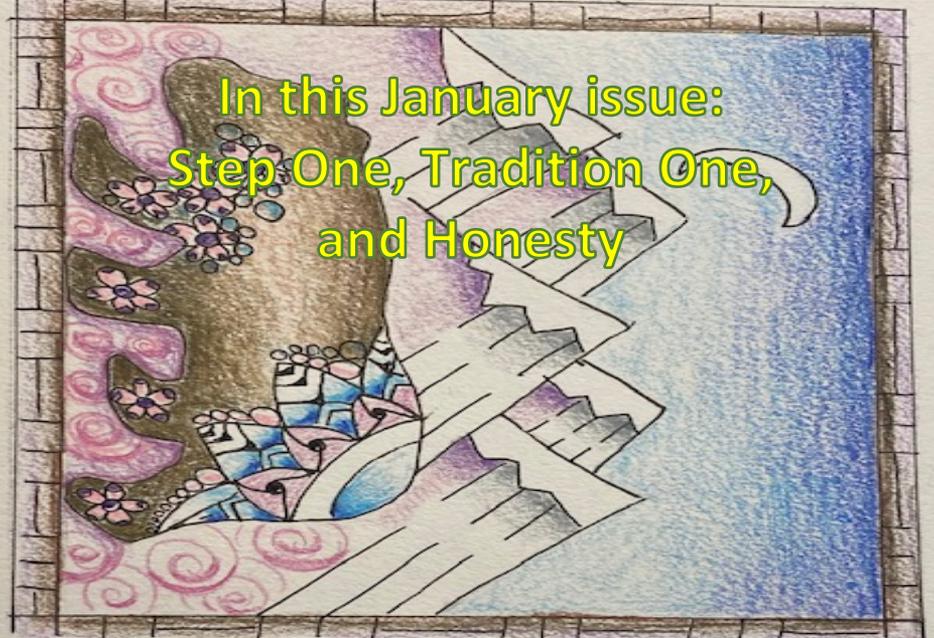


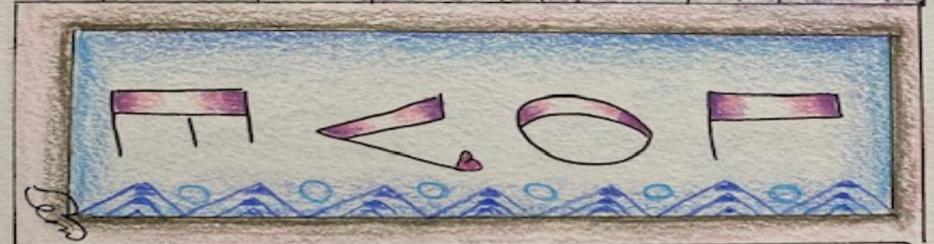


January 2023  
Volume 18 | Issue 1

A PUBLICATION OF THE INTERGROUP CENTRAL OFFICE OF SANTA CLARA COUNTY



In this January issue:  
Step One, Tradition One,  
and Honesty



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## Exciting Service Position

I'm Geena Louise, alcoholic and Editor of the COIN, the monthly Central Office Intergroup Newsletter.

My term as COIN Editor is ending. We need a volunteer to become the next editor. I've loved doing it, but rotating leadership is best. 2 year commitment, 2 year sobriety requirement.

I'm not a professional writer, which is unnecessary. You can optionally write a Letter from the Editor any month and publish your own articles. It's as much fun as it sounds.

Email to [coin@aasanjose.org](mailto:coin@aasanjose.org)



# COIN Schedule of Topics

## Step One

We admitted we were powerless over alcohol — that our lives had become unmanageable.

## Tradition One

Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.

## Honesty

Adherence to the facts, sincerity, fairness and straightforwardness of conduct, lack of deception.

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Please email all submissions to [coin@aasanjose.org](mailto:coin@aasanjose.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>

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

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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 One

Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.

## Long Form

Each member of Alcoholics Anonymous is but a small part of a great whole. A.A. must continue to live or most of us will surely die. Hence our common welfare comes first. But individual welfare follows close afterward.

## Practice These Principles – Tradition One

1. Am I in my group a healing, mending, integrating person, or am I divisive? What about gossip and taking other members' inventories?
2. Am I a peacemaker? Or do I, with pious preludes such as "just for the sake of discussion," plunge into argument?
3. Am I gentle with those who rub me the wrong way, or am I abrasive?
4. Do I make competitive A.A. remarks, such as comparing one group with another or contrasting A.A. in one place with A.A. in another?
5. Do I put down some A.A. activities as if I were superior for not participating in this or that aspect of A.A.?
6. Am I informed about A.A. as a whole? Do I support, in every way I can, A.A. as a whole, or just the parts I understand and approve of?
7. Am I as considerate of A.A. members as I want them to be of me?
8. Do I spout platitudes about love while indulging in and secretly justifying behavior that bristles with hostility?
9. Do I go to enough A.A. meetings or read enough A.A. literature to really keep in touch?
10. Do I share with A.A. all of me, the bad and the good, accepting as well as giving the help of fellowship?

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

## There Is a Solution

We of *Alcoholics Anonymous* know thousands of people with similarities in their stories. Many have recovered. They have solved the drink problem.

The tremendous fact for every one of us is that we have discovered a common solution. We have a way out on which we can absolutely agree, and upon which we can join in harmonious action. This is the great news we carry to those who suffer from alcoholism. An illness of this sort involves people around us in a way no other human sickness can. If a woman has cancer, everyone is sorry for her, and no one is angry or hurt. But not so with the alcoholic illness, for with it there goes annihilation of all the things worthwhile in life. It engulfs all



whose lives touch the sufferer's. It brings misunderstanding, fierce resentment, financial insecurity, disgusted friends and employers, warped lives of blameless children, and sad spouses, parents, and others.

## One Alcoholic to Another

Highly competent psychiatrists who have dealt with us have found it sometimes impossible to persuade an alcoholic to discuss her situation without reserve. Strangely enough, the spouse, parents, and intimate friends usually find us even more unapproachable than do the psychiatrist and the doctor.

But the ex-problem drinker who has found this solution, who is properly armed with facts about herself, can generally win the entire confidence of another alcoholic in a few hours. Until such an understanding is reached, little or nothing can be accomplished.

The conditions we have found to be most effective are: (1) that the woman who is making the approach has had the same difficulty; (2) that she obviously knows what she is talking about; (3) that her whole deportment shouts at the new prospect that she is a woman with a real answer; (4) that she has no attitude of Holier Than Thou, nothing whatsoever except the sincere desire to be helpful; and (5) that there are no fees to pay, no axes to grind, no people to please, and no lectures to be endured.

A.A is the pioneer of focused self-help groups. We don't need to try to get sober alone. In meetings, we share our fears, hopes, and feelings without judging ourselves or others. Each of us asks another woman to be our sobriety advisor, traditionally called our Sponsor. We work the Twelve Steps with her. We develop a network of sobriety sisters with whom we can socialize. We speak with our Sponsor and sobriety sisters regularly. If we get an urge to drink, we call one of them before we drink. We call women on our list until we reach someone live.



## Behaviors of Alcoholics

How many times people have said:

- *“I can take it or leave it. Why can't she?”*
- *“Why don't you drink like a lady or quit?”*
- *“That one can't handle her liquor.”*
- *“Why don't you try beer and wine? Lay off the hard stuff.”*
- *“Her willpower must be weak.”*
- *“She could stop if she wanted to.”*
- *“She's such a sweet girl, I would think she'd stop for his sake.”*
- *“The doctor told her that if she ever drank again it would kill her, but there she is all lit up again.”*

These are commonplace observations about drinkers that we hear all the time, based on a world of ignorance and misunderstanding. These expressions refer to people whose reactions are very different from ours.



Moderate drinkers have little trouble in giving up liquor entirely if they have a good reason. They can take it or leave it.

We also have a certain type of heavy social drinker. Her habit may be bad enough to gradually impair her physically and mentally. It may even cause her to die a few years before her time. If she develops a sufficiently strong reason to stop or moderate her drinking, such as ill health, falling in love, or a change of environment, she may be able to—even though she may find it difficult and troublesome and may even need medical attention.

But what about the real alcoholic? She may start off as a moderate drinker; she may or may not become a heavy social drinker; but at some stage of her drinking career, she begins to lose all control of her liquor consumption after she starts to drink.

Moderate drinkers have little trouble in giving up liquor entirely if they have a good reason. They can take it or leave it.

There is a solution! Almost none of us likes self-searching, leveling our pride, or confessing shortcomings that the recovery process requires to be successful. But we have seen that it really works in others. When we are approached by individuals who have solved the problem, there is nothing left for us but to pick up the simple kit of spiritual tools lying at our feet.

Our hope is that many desperate alcoholic people will see these pages. We believe it is only by fully disclosing themselves and their problems that they will be persuaded to say, *“Yes, I am one of you, too. I must have this thing.”*

## **Gratitude in Action Instead of Ingratitude in Reaction**

— Jennifer L.

First and foremost, I would like to communicate my gratitude for being alive, focused, coherent and engaged enough to write these words. My last written or



So, this is a good segue to remind myself and other people that we have many things to be thankful for. It's the 26th night of November 2022, two days after Thanksgiving Remembrance and the day after Black Friday Holiday shopping.

After pondering on this writing for nearly three weeks since finding the opportunity on the Alcoholics Anonymous online meetings, resources and event pages; I am finally putting it together. Better late than never, this I remember in gratitude and thankfulness.



May 2, 2009 is my sobriety and recovery birthday; and with 13 years and counting, God willing, I need these 12 A.A. steps and prayers more than ever. I truly mean this.

One thing is for certain, I am now the most authentic and honest with myself and everyone to the best of ability, due to the aforementioned, to say the least.

I can't afford to be dishonest. There is no gain in such behavior, this I know from karma and the old school words to live by "what comes around, goes around."

Alcoholics Anonymous Literature, Principles, Steps and Traditions teach this. I cap these words to emphasize in bold how very important this is to remember. A reminder for myself first of all. Practicing introspection and "*To thine own self be true*" as it is written on the A.A. coins. At its most realest simplicity.

Balancing gratitude maintenance with the good, bad, and indifferent is the goal. What do I want on my scale of deeds or on my conscious to remember. No haunting memories of regrets or what ifs. I want to live the remainder of my life with God guiding me to ultimate peace and prosperity.

Not all tangible but intangible, most of all. This is what words cannot describe but can only be felt. I pray for the same to and for all of you.

## Change Everything to Get Sober To Thine Own Self Be True

*To get sober, this individual needed to change much more than most people.*

I was a heavy drinker so that I could numb myself from my pain, fear of people, and anxiety. I joined *Alcoholics Anonymous* (A.A.) with a desire to stop drinking. But, for four years I relapsed every 4-6 months.

At home one morning, a friend called me to borrow a book. Before he arrived I noticed through the front window that my brother and sister were walking up to my home. They live in New York. Something was up.

I thought *This is an intervention*. 12 of my family and friends arrived and each read a one page letter to me.

The professional interventionist asked me if I was willing to go to a 30-day in-patient recovery program. I agreed and asked “*When will I start? Next week sometime?*” She said “*No. Right now, we will drive you over to the Camp Recovery Center.*” I asked “*What about my job?*” She added, “*Don’t worry. You are now on leave through the Family Leave Act.*”



So off I go for 30 days. It was good to be away from alcohol for a period of time. After I returned, I went to A.A. meetings, got a sponsor, and worked all the steps. But, I relapsed after 18 months.

I noticed a women’s recovery book. I bought it. While I read it, I thought *I am just like these women alcoholics*.

So I decided that I should abandon the men’s A.A. program and go to A.A. as a woman. I wanted to be female since I was 5 years old. But, I thought a sex change was only for the rich and famous.

*“I must give up what I am to become what I can be.”*

— Lao Tzu

At first, I only attended LGBT A.A. meetings. After a month I got a woman sponsor and worked all the steps with her. I got better at presenting



myself as a woman. After a couple of years, I started attending women’s meetings. At that point, I was able to pass as a woman. But, even after telling some of my sobriety sisters that I was a transwoman, they still accept me and support me as one of their own.

I was able to get 10 years of continuous sobriety as a woman. Why?

My endocrinologist taught me that, for each person, different parts of their bodies are more or less sensitive to various hormones. For me, my brain was less sensitive to testosterone, so my brain was wired female.

I think and drink as other alcoholic woman. That’s why reading the women’s recovery book was so valuable to me. I changed my sex to save my life.

*“To thine own self be true, ... and it must follow, thou cannot then be false to (anyone).”*

— William Shakespeare

With women’s self-critical tendencies, harsh language and a punishing God are less effective for women’s recovery than a nurturing approach and a loving, caring God. We eliminated the word “moral” since there is a double standard for that.



Women are often expected to care for others in the home and at work. As a result, we often don’t make self-care a priority and lose ourselves in daily life. Asking for what we need, setting limits, and saying no are not part of our vocabulary.

I recall one woman shared this: *“I was worried about my (1) son’s schoolwork, (2) husband’s job, and (3) father’s health. But I have to get less selfish about my problems and get into service for others.”* I silently noted that she just mentioned three people that were not her. Many women don’t recognize themselves, go overboard with service to others, and put themselves last. To get sober, we have to let go of that thinking.

When we are driven to drink, we give up our power of choice. Who we are with, how we behave, where we go, and how we think is decided by alcohol.



In relationships, I was a people pleaser; I would be submissive and say what others wanted to hear instead of my truth. I resented people when they used me as a doormat, but I was the one who wrote *Welcome* on my forehead.

I believed it is selfish to focus on myself at all. I felt I would be demanding too much when I asked for what we need, set limits, or said no. My relationships were unmanageable.

To admit something means to accept the truth, rather than denying it.

One cannot do the A.A. Program alone, nor one should have to. A.A. is a mutual support group. It is comforting to realize that alcoholics have similarities. We can help each other through difficulties and celebrate our successes. We can ask for help and receive it.

One of the Promises says, *“God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.”* Unsaid is that *“God will not do for us what we can do for ourselves.”*

— Geena Louise

*“He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep, to gain what he cannot lose.”*

— Jim Elliot

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# Special Events



# Sobriety by the Bay



Friday, January 27<sup>th</sup> - Sunday, January 29<sup>th</sup> 2023

Redemption Church; 105 Nortech Pkwy  
San Jose, California



REGISTER: [SobrietyByTheBay.org](http://SobrietyByTheBay.org)

\$30 before January 1<sup>st</sup> / \$35 after January 1<sup>st</sup>

## Friday 1/27

5:00 pm Set-up

7:00 pm Speaker

Michael J. Sacramento, CA  
(Multi-purpose Room)

## Saturday 1/28

8:00am Too Early Big Book  
(Main Sanctuary)

10:30 am Speaker

Tina A. Hollister, CA  
(Main Sanctuary)

2:00 pm 4th Step Workshop  
(Main Sanctuary)

7:00 pm Speaker  
Wayne B. Inglewood, CA  
(Main Sanctuary)

## Sunday 1/29

1:00 pm Speaker  
Art W. Santa Cruz, CA  
(Multi-purpose Room)

3:00 pm Business meeting  
(Multi-purpose Room)

Our mission statement is in accordance with the Fifth Tradition, which states,  
"Each group has but one primary purpose – to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers."

SANTA CLARA COUNTY INTERGROUP 2023 PRESENTS

15<sup>th</sup> Annual

# Chili Cook-off

DATE & TIME

Saturday, February 25th  
11:00 - 2:00 PM

LOCATION

Lincoln Glenn Church  
2700 Booksin Ave San Jose, CA



CONTESTANTS:

**BRING THE HEAT!**

TROPHY Winners & **BRAGGING**  
Rights! For the  
**Best Homegroup**  
**Chili Teams**  
1<sup>ST</sup>, 2<sup>ND</sup>, 3<sup>RD</sup> Place



ATTENDEES:

**YOU <sup>BE</sup> THE JUDGE!**

- Doors open at 11 AM
- Suggested donation \$10.
- Sample & vote for your favorite chili
- Enjoy cornbread, dessert, coffee
- Get to know your fellowship
- Fantastic AA speaker meeting

Register TODAY!!!!

Space is limited to the first twenty groups that register

Each group will receive \$75 for supplies

To register a chili team or volunteer contact: Gary M. or Central Office  
(408)889-1001

**SIGNUP TODAY!**

## 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 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: 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"
4. For each article, the first mention of "The Big Book" must state the full name of the book underlined as in Alcoholics Anonymous (The Big Book) or The Big Book (Alcoholics Anonymous). Same for 12 & 12.

**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@aasanjose.org](mailto:coin@aasanjose.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>

408 889-1001 • [aasanjose@comcast.net](mailto:aasanjose@comcast.net)