



THE FOURTH STEP:

Made a fearless and searching moral inventory of ourselves.

I have done a Fourth Step several different ways. I was told you can do a Fourth Step any way you want. I suppose this is true but the 3 thirty-day chips, two of which include five years in between, are a pretty good indicator of how well that worked for me. It was pointed out to me in this sobriety that before the "Big Book" there was no such thing as a Fourth Step. I must admit, this hurt my feelings as I like to think of myself as a pretty intelligent guy. So I took inventory straight out of the book. Luckily I was in a long-term MICD treatment center so I didn't have a bunch of well-meaning people in AA telling me I might get drunk if I took my inventory too soon.

Now what I can share with you is that I had messed around with the first three steps in and out of A.A. over the course of 6 years (mostly out) as an atheist. When I look back on things in reflection, I realized that the inventory I took removed the hate from my heart for the people in my life. I realized they didn't ruin my life. I had made decisions and took actions that bought the admission ticket to my own inescapable nightmare. The funny thing about that seemingly small event was that I started to have a "direct experience" with the Power that the book promised me I would have. There was no more arguing about whether God existed or what religion was right or any of that stuff from the debating society. This atheist had an experience with God after writing some stuff that a stupid old book called *Alcoholics Anonymous* told me to write. I have learned that if I have any problem in my life and I think you are to blame, if I will just write some inventory I will be happily wrong. I'm not always right anymore but in exchange I get to be happy, joyous, and free.

The Fear inventory made me angry. I wanted to be a tough guy and when people told me anger was a secondary emotion to fear that made me angry. I didn't want to look at the fact that I was a scared, little boy. I didn't want to see that the reason I carried guns on me at different times of my life was because my life was driven by fear. Either way, I wrote down the things that I knew in my heart to be true and what my sponsor said has proved to be true. If I have awareness of the fears inside of me, I have a chance of overcoming them through prayer. What I have no awareness of will overcome me. I saw that my life after my father's suicide was driven by a crippling fear of losing people. In an effort to not let people know what was going on inside of me, I acted like I didn't need you and then would be deeply hurt when you did leave. Now when I start doing that I can stop and pray, "God please remove this fear and direct my attention to what you would have me be."

As for the Sex inventory, I was not interested in writing down every person I had sex with and then beating myself up over it. I already knew I had screwed up Big Time in that department. Luckily for me, the "Big Book" asked me to take a look at my conduct first and then see who got harmed by that conduct. It would be arrogant of me to think I harmed every person I had sex with (although they were probably all disappointed). This process helped me to come up with a sane and sound ideal for my current sex life. It was also a relief to find out that the Program never said not to date in the first year, that it was well meaning advice from people in AA who passed it off as a part of the Program. To have no more guilt over dating someone in my first year was a welcomed relief.

So I guess to sum up my experience, I couldn't come to believe before the Fourth Step. I had too many things blocking me from God or a higher power if you wish. Had I not followed the directions of the "Big Book" to the best of my ability at 3 weeks sober and actually *did* a Fourth Step, I probably would have done what I always did, 1, 2, 3 and OUT! I thank God for putting some of those dreaded "Big Book Thumpers" in this atheist's life to show me the clear-cut directions for having a Spiritual Awakening. Not only has the obsession to drink been removed from me but I now have a relationship with that Power greater than myself, and a Way of Life that truly works!

— Dustin B., The Firing Line, St. Paul

St. Paul Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous®

Web Site: www.aastpaul.org

E-mail: lifeline@aastpaul.org

Fax: 651-290-0209

Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday — 9 AM to 6 PM; Tuesday: 9 AM to 8 PM

1600 University Avenue W. Suite 407 St. Paul MN 55104

The Twelve Traditions: Tradition Four

Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole.

As always, freedom bring responsibility. Because each group *is* autonomous, it's up to each group to avoid any action that might harm A.A. And there *have* been such actions - or this Tradition would be unnecessary. "Implicit throughout A.A.'s Traditions," Bill W. wrote, "is the confession that our Fellowship has its sins. We admit that we have character defects as a society and these defects threaten us continually."

In a way, the Fourth Tradition is like the Fourth Step: It suggests that the A.A. group should take honest inventory of itself, asking about each of its independently planned actions, "Would this break any Tradition?" Like the individual member who chooses to make the Steps his or her guide toward happy sobriety, the wise group recognizes that the Traditions are⁴ not hindering technicalities—they are proven guides toward the chief objective of all A.A. groups . . .

From the pamphlet, *The Twelve Traditions Illustrated*, reprinted with permission of A.A. World Services, Inc.

The Twelve Concepts: Concept Four

Throughout our Conference structure, we ought to maintain at all responsible levels a traditional "Right of Participation," taking care that each classification or group of our world servants shall be allowed a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge.

The principle of "Right of Participation" is built into the General Service Conference through the Conference Charter. Voting members include not only delegates, but also the trustees, and the directors and staff members of A.A. World Services (i.e., G.S.O.) and the A.A. Grapevine.

In the same way, the boards of these two operating entities include as voting members not only trustees, but also nontrustee directors and paid administrators and staff members.

[. . .]

. . . there is a spiritual reason for the "Right of Participation." All of us desire to belong. In A.A., no members are "second class." The "Right of Participation" therefore reinforces Tradition Two, that no member is placed in "ultimate authority" over another. We perform our service tasks better "when we are sure we belong — when our 'participation' assures us we are truly the 'trusted servants' described in Tradition Two."

-Reprinted from the pamphlet, *The Twelve Concepts for World Service Illustrated*, by permission of AA World Services, Inc.

2008 Steering Board

<u>Chair:</u>	Tom S.
<u>Alt. Chair:</u>	Mary Jo N.
<u>Secretary:</u>	Lesli D.
<u>Treasurer:</u>	Diane E.
<u>Members at Large 2008:</u>	Steve B. & Jeff H.
<u>Members at Large 2007:</u>	Lee B. & Lisa L.
<u>Advisor to the Board:</u>	Jeff T.
<u>Office Manager:</u>	Tom N.

Office Calls in February*

Meeting information	215
Inventory hours	27
12th step calls	28
Temporary sponsor	34
Speaker request	10
Special events	3
Outside issues	25
Info For Professionals	3
Administrative	164
Other	44
Total Calls	553
Daily average	19.07
Visitors	224

Call tally is for calls taken during office hours only and does not include calls taken during Night Owl shifts.

Saint Paul AA Intergroup Representatives' Meeting Minutes, February 19, 2008

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 (see attendees below)

The Primary Purpose of Intergroup was read by Lisa L

January minutes were approved & accepted.

Treasurer's Report. Diane E. A) January contributions above budget at \$6249; Sales were above budget at \$5920; Thanks to the 43 groups who contributed \$4,778 in January.

Office Report --Tom N. A) The Intergroup Office will be moving 1st of March due to Spruce Tree Center management expansion of another tenant. This will be a larger space for same price; Suite# and mailing address remain the same. We'll need some volunteers to help us move a few items. B) We are still accepting applications for Office part-time position left open by Matt Z on 2/1/08.

Website Report – (Jonathan ill). Night Owl site has updated content; we have 572 regular weekly meetings served by Intergroup office/website. Visit website (aastpaul.org) for more information.

Outreach Program – Lee B. A) Has acquired Outreach helpers for visits to our 572 weekly meetings in Intergroup. Tom S stated that tonight's attendance (36) speaks to the success of this Outreach Program.

Night Owl Report – Patty S. A) All is going well; there is one open shift (1st Mon 5:30-10p). B) We can still use more volunteers for backup. C) Reminder: Orientation is on the 3rd Sat of the month—RSVP's should be emailed (nightowl@aastpaul.org) 1 week in advance. If unable to attend, please contact night owl for 1-on-1 orientation training.

Intergroup Events.

Tradition Workshop March 1st. Lisa L, chair. Speakers lined up; Flyers distributed; Volunteer signup sheet passed. This year is Tradition 3.

The Board is finalizing dates/locations for remaining 2008 events; more to be revealed

Old Business:

By-Laws Committee: A) Marty and Tom S meeting w/lawyer 2/27/08 for review. B) Tom S informed reps that a previous member had caused a disruption at the earlier Board Meeting tonight, accusing Intergroup of changing By-laws without proper voting. To clarify: Our current By-Laws date back to 1964; were last amended in 1993. Our proposed By-Laws include all amendments voted on by Intergroup reps since 1964. C) Anyone interested in acquiring copy of current By-Laws can contact the Office. The proposed By-Laws will be available to members after lawyer review and Board approval. We intend to post these on the website. (www.aastpaul.org)

New Business (none)

Group Announcements or Concerns.

Many announcements of events – send flyers to webservant@aastpaul.org for posting.

LifeLine essay contributions can be 1 page in length; send to Tom N by 1st Wed. of month.

Concept Review (II) –Thanks, Joe! Great job! Patty S volunteered for March, Concept III.


Mock Rep Report. Thanks, Bill S for tonight's report! Christine volunteered for March.

Closed with the Responsibility Statement and Lord's Prayer.

Groups & Officers in Attendance:

Andy L-Uptown	Ed M-Main Idea Sat 8am	Lee B-Board At-Large	Tony C-Basic Text
Angela S-Midway	Greg M-OMD	Lesli D-Board Secretary	Rey H-Defogged Mens
Barb H-Highland #11	James L-3rd Edition	Lisa L-Board At-Large	Stephanie K-Como BB
Bill S- ?	Jan B-McAlester/Plymouth	Marty M-NoTimeLikePresent	Steve B-Board At-Large
Christine P-Mplwd AA	Jason K-West End	Matt H-OMD	Tom N.-Office Manager
Diane E-Board Treasurer	Jeff C-Summit Hill	Mickey M-West End	Tom O-St. Joseph WI
Don D-Sun St.Paul Spkr Mtg	Jeff T-Board Advisor	Mike M-Sun St.Paul Spkr Mtg	Tom S-Board Chair
Donald B-Main Idea Tues 8pm	Joe B-OMD	Patrick M-Applied Serenity101	Peggy B-Distr 19/Dakota Co/Rsmnt
Dustin B-Firing Line	Josh R-Applied Serenity101	Patty S-Night Owl Coordinator	

Next Meeting: 7:30 PM on Tuesday, March 18th

<p>7th Tradition Suggestions for Groups</p> <p>“Every group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.”</p> <p>Your group can make an informed decision regarding contributions with information from A.A. World Services. The information below is a suggestion taken from the pamphlet: “Self-Support: Where money and spirituality mix.”</p> <p>50% <u>St. Paul Intergroup</u> Spruce Tree Center 1600 University Ave. #407 St. Paul, MN 55104</p> <p>30% <u>General Service Office</u> P.O. Box 459 Grand Central Station New York, NY 10163</p> <p>10% <u>Southern MN Area 36</u> Area Assembly P.O. Box 2812 Mpls., MN 55402</p> <p>10% <u>District Committee</u></p> <p>Ramsey County: District 8, P.O. Box 2267 St. Paul, MN 55102</p> <p>Dakota County: District 19, P.O. Box 1466 Burnsville, MN 55337</p> <p>Washington County: District 15, P.O. Box 181 Lake Elmo, MN 55042</p> <p>SE Ramsey County: District 26, P.O. Box 75980 St. Paul, MN 55175</p>	<p>BE A NIGHT OWL !!</p> <p>Night Owls are often the first AA contact for the newcomer! A Night Owl shift is a once-a-month commitment to answer Intergroup phones after hours. Some shifts can be done in the office; all can be done from home. The commitment can be filled by an individual or a group. If you can help, call Matt at the office or go to our website: www.aastpaul.org</p>	<p>INTERGROUP INCOME FOR FEBRUARY</p> <p>Number Group Contributions: 30 Total Group Contributions: \$3,231 Number of Faithful Fivers: 15 Total from Faithful Fivers: \$115</p>
	<p><u>District Meetings</u></p> <p>District 8 (Ramsey Co.) Fairview Community Center 1910 Co. Rd B, Rm 203, Roseville 3rd Wed., 7:30 PM</p> <p>District 15 (Wash. Co.) Christ Lutheran Church 11194 N. 36th St., Lake Elmo 4th Mon., 7:00 PM</p> <p>District 19 (Dakota Co.) Rosemount Community Center 13885 South Robert Trail 2nd Wed., 7:00 PM</p> <p>District 26 (SE Ramsey Co.) 1099 Payne Ave. St. Paul 2nd Fri., 6:00 PM www.district26-area36.org</p>	<p>“Thanks!” to the groups that contributed in February:</p>
	<p>Thanks to all the terrific volunteers who helped in the Office during December!</p> <p>Andy B., Bill S., Bob P., Britt M., Carolyn, Donald B., Eliot K., Eric H., Frank D., Holli, Tracy, Jack Ro., Julie B., Mike, Taylor, Ryan, Rob, and Schell.</p> <p>Thanks to all the Night Owl volunteers and groups as well!</p> 	<p>Applied Serenity 101 As Bill Sees It – Stillwater Complete Defeat Group East Side Squad 6 Fourth Dimension Freedom from Bondage Fri. 12x12 By the Book Happy Hour Men's Group Highland Park Groups Hugo AA Club Maplewood Groups Mendota Sat 1030 Group Midway Club Monday 12 X 12 North Dale Group Outright Mental Defects Primary Purpose - Burnsville River Rats Roseville Centennial Group Sisters of Serenity St. Paul Park Groups Students of Life Summit Women's Group Third Tradition Northfield Uptown Club Vadnais Heights Groups Valley Creek Thurs Night We Care Counseling White Bear Lake Woodbury Wed. Noon Group</p>

The Lifeline: Purpose Statement

The Lifeline is a monthly newsletter of the St. Paul and Suburban Area Intergroup Association office of Alcoholics Anonymous. It is about, by, and for members of the A.A. Fellowship. Opinions expressed herein are not to be attributed to A.A. as a whole, nor does publication of any article imply endorsement by either A.A. or Intergroup. (Exception: Quotations from A.A. books or pamphlets are reprinted with permission from A.A. World Services, Inc.; The A.A. Preamble is reprinted with permission of A.A. Grapevine, Inc.) We welcome articles of opinion or descriptions of personal experience, which should be sent to Lifeline Editor, St. Paul Intergroup, 1600 University Avenue #407, St. Paul MN 55104. Materials or articles cannot be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope. Intergroup reserves the right to edit submissions for clarity, language, length and contents that may violate A.A.'s Traditions, etc. The deadline is the Wednesday before the third Tuesday of the month.

UPCOMING A.A. EVENTS!!

Aim for Ames—21st Annual

~Follow the Path~

Quality Inn & Suites, Ames, IA
Friday, 28 March 2008 – Sunday, 30 March 2008

By the Book 4th Step Workshop

Downtown Alano - St. Paul
520 Robert St. at 10th Ave.

Every Thursday, March 27th to April 24th, 6:30pm

25th Annual

Minneapolis Gratitude Night

Saturday, April 5th, 7:30pm
Minneapolis Convention Center
Rooms 200 A - J

Reflections 2008

The General Service Office: Past, Present & Future

Sunday, April 6th, 1:30 to 4:30pm
Valley of Peace Church, 4735 Bassett Creek Dr.
Golden Valley, MN 55422

Midway Club Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser

April 12th, Dinner 3 to 6 pm
Meeting at 7 pm
1161 Sherburne Ave.
Info: 651-428-3032

Fourteenth Annual

Sunlight of the Spirit Weekend

April 18 to 20th
Holiday Inn, Fairmont MN

St. Paul AA Intergroup

Spring Fling!!

Saturday, April 19th
Speaker Meeting, DJ Dance and More!
Lutheran Church of the Redeemer
285 N. Dale St., just south of I-94

May 23 - 25, 2008

Gopher State Round-up

Sheraton Bloomington Hotel
Bloomington, MN

www.gopherstateroundup.org



"Brother, can you spare a dime for a candy bar--to alleviate my craving for alcohol?"

What does the Big Book have to say about Chocolate?

"One of the many doctors who had the opportunity of reading this book in manuscript form told us that the use of sweets was often helpful, of course depending upon a doctor's advice. He thought all alcoholic should constantly have chocolate available for its quick energy value at times of fatigue. He added that occasionally in the night a vague craving arose which would be satisfied by candy. Many of us have noticed a tendency to eat sweets and have found this practice beneficial."

From page 133 - 134, reprinted by permission of AAWS, Inc.

Is your meeting represented at Intergroup?

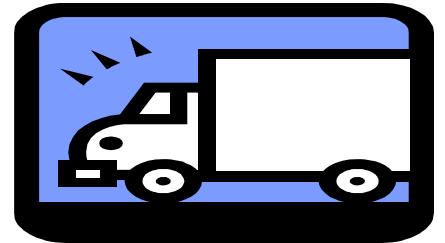
The April Representatives' meeting will be held April 15th, 7:30 pm,
at the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, 285 N. Dale St., St. Paul, 55103.
The church is located just south of I-94; from Dale turn west on Iglehart to park.

St. Paul Intergroup
Spruce Tree Center
1600 University Ave. W., Suite #407
St. Paul, MN 55104

Change Service Requested

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Please let us know if your address changes one month ahead of time. It saves us the cost of return postage and enables you to get each issue of the *Lifeline*. Our mailing permit does not provide for mail forwarding. Thank you!



St. Paul Intergroup Faithful Fiver Form

Faithful Fivers contribute five dollars to St. Paul Intergroup each month to enable us to continue to carry our life-saving message. Your contribution entitles you to a one-year subscription to the *Lifeline*. You may also contribute annually, quarterly, etc.

Name _____

Street _____

City, State, Zip _____

Please send this form and a check to:

St. Paul Intergroup, 1600 University Avenue W. #407, St. Paul MN 55104

I would like to receive the *Lifeline* every month by email, not postal mail. My email address is:

(please print clearly) _____