

The Lifeline



March, 2009

24 Hour Phone: 651-227-5502

Volume 44, Issue 3

STEP THREE: Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood him.*

Being 18 months sober I still feel like a newbie to AA, but this step is key to my daily recovery and I find that I have to practice it everyday to maintain that daily reprieve that the Big Book talks about. It's also an ACTION step. I try to begin each day on my knees saying the Third Step Prayer while visualizing a door opening in my heart:

"God I offer myself to you to build with me and do with me as you will. Relieve me of the bondage of self that I may better do your will. Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of thy power, thy love and thy way of life. May I do thy will always."

This prayer begins my day with the acknowledgement that I can't do it alone and that I don't have to do it alone – in fact, my self-sufficiency was and still is my main liability. Truth is, I really don't have a clue how to navigate Life. I have lots of past experiences and broken relationships that shore up that reality should I ever find myself conveniently forgetting. So I place my thoughts and actions each day under God's direction and guidance, and I trust (an action word) that my prayer is heard and that I will be guided and directed this day. To me Step Three is all about suiting up and showing up in my life each day as an active participant instead of a passive observer.

As the day progresses, so do I, attempting to fit myself into the day and not struggling to fit the day into my expectations. I'm coming to believe that God's way is much easier than my way and certainly the results are far superior. During the day I can pause when I feel overwhelmed, anxious, afraid, or when I find I'm gritting my teeth, and say the Serenity Prayer. I remind myself that the day is unfolding according to God's plan, not mine and I'll have everything I need. Then I focus my gaze and my thoughts to what's right in front of me that minute. Baby steps are the ticket here – Easy Does It, First Things First, Let Go and Let God! On a good day, I use every recovery tool I can lavishly and unabashedly until I'm on track again.

As I participate in my life this way, I begin to notice that God is very creative in how guidance and direction come to me. Sometimes it's through other people at meetings, on the phone, or just seeing my grandson's smile when he comes through the door to share his day with me. Sometimes it's a billboard that announces, "You can get better", a fortune cookie that says "you do not have to worry about your future", a book that falls open at just the "right" page with a message I need to read, or simply the sun breaking through the clouds at the right moment. I could go on but you know what I'm saying. We can all find these small nudges in our lives if we slow down long enough to really be aware of what's right in front of our noses.

Why, even the opportunity to write these thoughts on Step Three is an unexpected gift in my life today and helps me put into perspective the richness of my life. I am grateful for twenty-four hours, grateful for this life-saving and live-giving step, and grateful to God for the opportunity to share my thoughts with all of you. One more thing: When we let this step melt into our daily life, we become messengers and carriers of experience, strength and hope to each other. I am here today because of everyone who suited up and showed up in their daily lives by practicing Step 3 and were able to reach out a hand to me when I needed it. Let's hear it for 24 hours!

Thanks to Maya R., Office volunteer for this contribution!

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

Tradition Three

(Below is the "Long Form" of the Tradition, as found in the Big Book and *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*.)

Our membership ought to include all who suffer from alcoholism. Hence we may refuse none who wish to recover. Nor ought our membership ever depend upon money or conformity. Any two or three gathered for sobriety may call themselves a group in our program, provided that, as a group, they have no other affiliation.

Tradition Three defines the personal liberty of the AA member. It says, in effect, that any alcoholic can be an AA member the moment he says so. Neither can any of us deprive him of that membership, no matter what his behavior. Perhaps no other society has ever staked out such a broad expanse of liberty for the individual as this. Every AA newcomer feels at once that he is wanted and trusted and loved. How well we understand his needs; certainly we have had them ourselves. Seldom has any alcoholic taken unfair advantage of that unlimited charter for freedom. We took this decision for individual freedom years ago. We are glad that we did; there has never been any cause for regret.

— Bill W., Reprinted with permission of the A.A. Grapevine, November 1960.

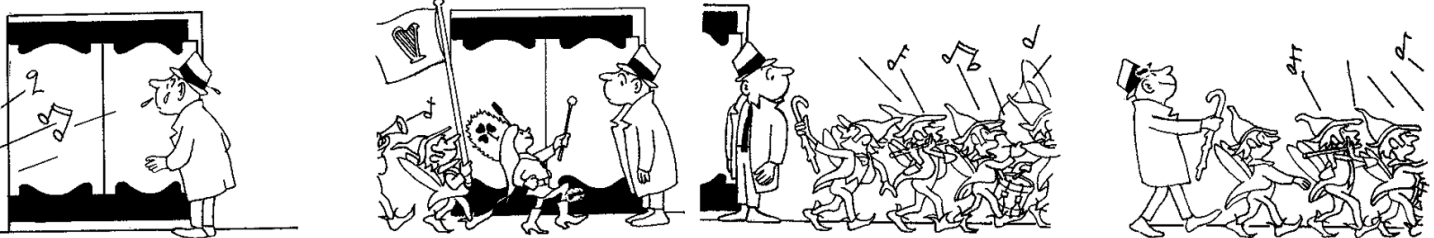
The Twelve Concepts: Concept Three

As a traditional means of creating and maintaining a clearly defined working relation between the groups, the Conference, the A.A. General Service Board and its several service corporations, staffs, committees and executives, and of thus insuring their effective leadership, it is here suggested that we endow each of these elements of world service with a traditional "Right of Decision."

The "Right of Decision" means that we choose Delegates, Group Service Representatives and other Trusted Servants whom we trust to make good decisions in the meetings where they represent us. Of course, whenever possible they will want to inform and consult with us whom they represent before decisions are made. Also, we should expect thorough reporting on actions taken, and make an effort to understand these.

It's a common misunderstanding in A.A. that our representatives are to be directly instructed by our groups or assemblies on how to vote. Instead, we are to choose some one we trust to make a good decision, once they've heard and considered all of the arguments for and against any question.

Summarized from *The A.A. Service Manual*, and the pamphlet, *The Twelve Concepts for World Service, Illustrated*.



Cartoon reprinted with permission of the AA Grapevine, Inc. March, 1979.

2009 Steering Board

<u>Chair:</u>	Mary Jo N.
<u>Alt. Chair:</u>	Julie M.
<u>Secretary:</u>	Jeff T.
<u>Treasurer:</u>	Michael K.
<u>Members at Large 2009:</u>	John D. & Jeff C.
<u>Members at Large 2008:</u>	Lisa L. & Mark K.
<u>Advisor to the Board:</u>	Tom S.
<u>Office Manager:</u>	Tom N.

Office Calls in January

Meeting information	198
Inventory/hours	42
12th step calls	15
Temporary sponsor	32
Speaker request	17
Special events	2
Outside issues	28
Info For Professionals	1
Administrative	153
Other	64
Total Calls	147
Daily average	20.1
Visitors	147

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

St. Paul AA Intergroup Representatives' Meeting Minutes, January 20, 2009

- I. Open with Serenity Prayer and Introductions.
- II. Read The Primary Purpose of Intergroup (Joe read)
- III. Approved last month's minutes.
- IV. Treasurer's Report – Michael K – contributions were ahead of budget for 2008
- V. Office Report -- Tom N.
 1. Office phones are busy
 2. GSO asking for video produced by AA members sober at 25 or younger
 3. Possible doing the video as a collaboration effort via Intergroup
 4. Large print literature coming next month
- VI. Website Report - Jonathan.
Online meeting directory reorganization in progress
Web traffic was down a little for the holidays, but went up overall for 2008
Get events and changes to office and web servant email addresses ASAP
- VII. Outreach Program – Jeff C
Defined as going to every meeting in the St. Paul directory to encourage participation, volunteers and contributions. Have visited 60 meetings so far, about 500 to go 612-386-6661.
Female volunteers are needed for the outreach efforts
- VIII. Night Owl Report – Patti M
One open shift, 1st Thurs of the month from 1730 – 2200
Orientation Feb 20th from 10 to noon
Possibly Jan 31 (Sat) 10 to noon
Need to check and make sure each volunteer has the updated Nightowl instructions
12th step list is current from 1. Intergroup office via phone or mail
Make sure to let Intergroup know about special/Holiday meetings
- IX. Intergroup Events.
New Year's Eve – (wrap-up)
Kudos to The Capital City Soul Tones for an excellent, high energy performance.
- X. Old Business.

By-Laws Committee report. Work in progress
- XI. New Business. None
- XII. Group Announcements or Concerns: None
- XIII. Concept Review (I) – **Val – done by Jennifer (Val's replacement)**
Volunteer for February, Concept II: ___Steve
Collective conscience for guidance of AA as a whole.
- XIV. Mock Rep Report: **Jes**
 - a. Volunteer for February report: ___Charlie
- XV. Close with the Responsibility Statement and Lord's Prayer.

**7th Tradition
Suggestions for Groups**

“Every group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.”

The Conference-approved pamphlet: “Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality mix” offers the following suggestion for the distribution of group funds “after group expenses” have been paid.

50% St. Paul Intergroup
Spruce Tree Center
1600 University Ave. #407
St. Paul, MN 55104

30% General Service Office
P.O. Box 459
Grand Central Station
New York, NY 10163

10% Southern MN Area 36
Area Assembly
P.O. Box 2812
Mpls., MN 55402

10% District Committee
Ramsley County:
District 8, P.O. Box 2267
St. Paul, MN 55102
Dakota County:
District 19, P.O. Box 1466
Burnsville, MN 55337
Washington County:
District 15, P.O. Box 181
Lake Elmo, MN 55042
SE Ramsey County:
District 26, P.O. Box 75980
St. Paul, MN 55175

BE A NIGHT OWL !!

Night Owls are often the first A.A. 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 the office or go to our website: www.aastpaul.org**

District Meetings

District 8 (Ramsey Co.)
Fairview Community Center
1910 Co. Rd B, Rm 203, Roseville
3rd Wed., 7:30 PM

District 15 (Wash. Co.)
Christ Lutheran Church
11194 N. 36th St., Lake Elmo
4th Mon., 7:00 PM

District 19 (Dakota Co.)
Rosemount Community Center
13885 South Robert Trail
2nd Wed., 7:00 PM

District 26 (SE Ramsey Co.)
1099 Payne Ave. St. Paul
2nd Fri., 6:00 PM

Thanks to all the terrific volunteers who helped in the Office during January!

Andrus, Andy, Bill S, Brian, Brian O., Charisma, Cheryl, Crysil, Dan, David A., David P., Emily, Eric, Eva, Frank D., Graham, Jaclyn, Jason, Jeannie, Jeff, Jeff, Jill, John D., Jon, Julianna, Katie, Lee, Maya, Meghan, Mia, Mike., Milly, Nate, Pam, Pat, Patrick, Paul T, Rick, Scott, Steve C, Susan, Tara, Tierney, Tom, Tom T.

Thanks to all the Night Owl volunteers and groups as well!



JANUARY CONTRIBUTIONS

Number of Group Contributors: 27
Total Group Contributions: \$2968
Number of Faithful Fivers: 16
Total from Faithful Fivers: \$195

“Thanks!” to the groups that contributed in January:

- Amigo's III**
- As Bill W. Sees It**
- Club 84 Groups**
- Day By Dei**
- Defogged Men's Group**
- Eagan Burnsville Savage Tues. BB**
- Forest Lake Alano**
- Highland Park Groups**
- Just for Today Women's Group**
- Live & Let Live Group**
- Midway Groups**
- Mon. AM Apple Valley Women's**
- North Hamline Group**
- Outright Mental Defectives**
- Primary Purpose Woodbury**
- Ridge Runners III**
- Rosemount Groups**
- Roseville Wednesday Night**
- Sat. AM White Bear Women's**
- St. Stephen's Tues Group**
- Summit Women's Group**
- Thurs. Night Lake Elmo Group**
- Uptown Groups**
- Wednesday Stillwater Step**
- Weekend Jumpstart II**
- White Bear 96 Group**
- White Bear Lake Group**

The Lifeline: Purpose Statement

The Lifeline is the 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.) 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 content that might violate A.A.'s Traditions, etc. The deadline is the 13th of the preceding month (i.e., submit a Tenth Step essay by the ninth month, September).

UPCOMING A.A. EVENTS!!

**Embers in the Fire
Women's AA Retreat**
Northern Pines Assembly Grounds
Park Rapids, MN

March 6th — 8th

**District 15 - Washington County
Spring Service Celebration**
Christ Lutheran Church - Fellowship Hall
Lake Elmo, MN

Saturday, March 7, 11:30 to 3PM

Aim for Ames Roundup
March 27 – 29

Quality Inn - Ames, Iowa
www.aimforames.org

**Greater Minneapolis Intergroup
Gratitude Night**

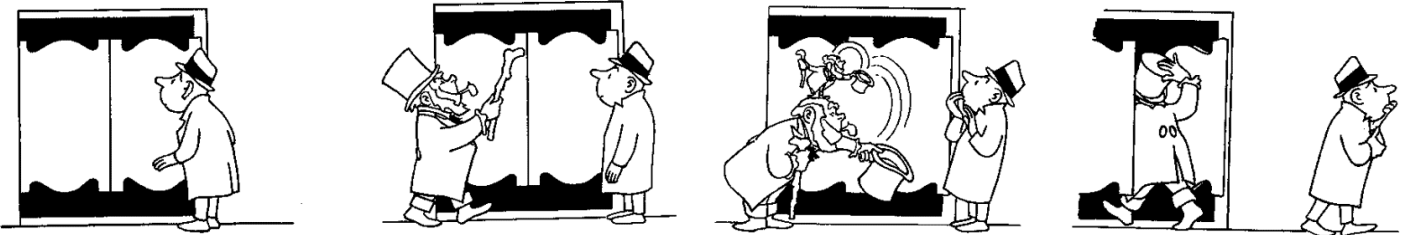
Saturday, April 4, 6:30pm
Minneapolis Convention Center

The Fifteenth Annual
Sunlight of the Spirit Weekend
Holiday Inn - Fairmont, Minnesota

April 17 - 19

**St. Paul Intergroup
Spring Dinner and Dance**
Saturday, April 25

Lutheran Church of the Redeemer
285 N. Dale St., St. Paul



Cartoon reprinted with permission of the A.A. Grapevine, Inc. March, 1968.

Dear Bill W,

St. Patrick's Day is coming again. It's a big deal with my friends and family. Once they get going, they're going to want me to drink with them. I don't want to drink, but at the same time I don't want to be a wet blanket for anyone else who's celebrating. How can I handle times like this?

— An Anonymous Drunk

“Let your friends know they are not to change their habits on your account. At a proper time and place explain to all your friends why alcohol disagrees with you. If you do this thoroughly, few people will ask you to drink. While you were drinking, you were withdrawing from life little by little. Now you are getting back into the social life of this world. Don't start to withdraw again just because your friends drink liquor.”

Alcoholics Anonymous, p. 102, reprinted by permission of A.A. World Services, Inc.

Is your meeting represented at Intergroup?

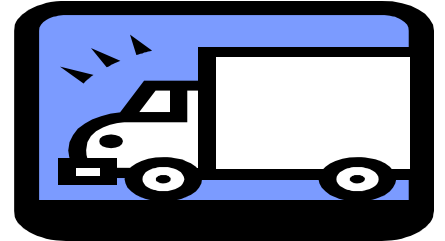
The March Representatives' meeting will be held March 17th, 7:30 pm,
at the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, 285 N. Dale St., St. Paul, 55103.
The church is located just south of I-94; from Dale turn west on Iglehart to park.

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

Change Service Requested

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
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Permit No. 7451

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) _____