

# The Lifeline



May, 2011

24 Hour Phone: 651-227-5502

Volume 47, Issue 5

## Step Five: Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

This step held me back from writing the Fourth Step for some time, but finally my sponsor set a time frame, and there was no turning back. I had already written all those people that had "harmed" me, but now I was told to look at my part.

Interestingly enough, I had set up all the things that had been done "to me." We started easy with my anger/rage on the highways. I would leave for a 10:00 am meeting at 9:50 am, with a thirty minute drive ahead of me. Is it any wonder that the "blue haired old ladies" lined up in front of me to slow me down and not allow me to make my meeting on time?!

I went on to share about stealing. Taking things that did not belong to me that I liked, as simple as pens sitting on a desk. It was explained that my fear of not having enough, or of not getting my share, would continue that habit, unless I allowed that I only needed what I had, and that I always had what I needed.

We moved on to the children, and my wonderment that they were not only ambivalent to me, but insisted to their Mother that if she took me back – they were leaving. That sounded farfetched at first, but it seems they had been in contact with family friends in another state who had told the four of them that if it ever got too bad, to get on the bus get out of the troubled area. It seems that doing some coaching of little league teams (of course while tipping a few before and after), had not really endeared me to them – and did not make me a candidate for Father of the Year.

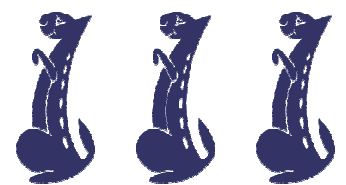
The end came when I explained to my sponsor that I had made all kinds of promises to myself, repeatedly, that I would not commit adultery anymore. I had been able to rationalize my carousing with the thought that I was married to the "wrong" woman. That had I not been married to "her", I would certainly be married to the other "her". These promises were not made to others, but were promises that I made to myself. Even at that, I could not keep them, as drink would find me in the bar, searching again and again. The full truth came to me from my sponsor who had the same experience as I'd had. He said that I would continue to seek others, because I had not found "love". There was no love at home, as I had alienated any that might have been at one time.

My Fifth Step was dotted with all these experiences of my bringing most of my troubles on myself. The Big Book talks about Fear threading through our lives, and I found that was part of every area of my life. I did not have enough, I did not have any, I was not going to get, and on and on. The Step did free me, but only as I was willing to change my life style. The easiest was not driving angry on the road. All I had to learn was that 8:00 pm meetings start at 7:15 pm with the set up, and that got me to turn around my bad habit of leaving with little time left for arriving at the appointed time. On and on it went by trying to be the best father, husband, brother, son, etc., that I could be, and not expecting plaudits for doing the right thing.

Tom McM., Osseo Big Book



The Thirty-eighth Annual  
**Gopher State Round-up**  
May 27 - 29th  
Sheraton, Bloomington  
[www.gopherstateroundup.org](http://www.gopherstateroundup.org)



**St. Paul Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous®**

Web Site: [www.aastpaul.org](http://www.aastpaul.org)

E-mail: [lifeline@aastpaul.org](mailto:lifeline@aastpaul.org)

Fax: 651-290-0209

Office Hours: Monday through Friday — 9 AM to 6 PM; Saturday 9 AM to 1 PM

1600 University Avenue W. Suite 214 St. Paul MN 55104

**TRADITION FIVE: Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.**

This sounded like the newcomer to me, after a period of time in A.A.; however, it really is any alcoholic that still suffers. There have been many times in sobriety that I have been the sufferer – and the things that saved me – were habits. My sponsor had me call every day during that first year—to my good fortune. Many of you must have heard that “it” will get better if one does not drink and goes to meetings. That is what I heard, but fifty-two days into this fellowship, my vice president flew into town and fired me. My habit of calling my sponsor, lead me to the phone and to give him a piece of mind about this getting better deal. He said go to a meeting and don't drink. He was there, and three fourths of that stag group had also been fired just before, or shortly after sobriety. We visited after the meeting, and determined that I should start that Fourth Step to clear away the wreckage of my past, as this firing was the consequence of my actions while drinking. He also told me to get another job.

Started on that job, and here comes the deputy sheriff wanting part of the first pay check for support/alimony as my family was divorcing me. Habit again pulled me to phone “that” crazy man who had appointed himself as my sponsor. I was ready to run as I usually do in times of trouble. Again, he simply said to not drink and go to a meeting. Utter confusion for me, as I believed that jobs and wives had something to do with money and sex. That same stag group had better than 95% that had been through divorce. The best part of the evening was sitting on the fender of the car in the parking lot with this sponsor, and him saying the one thing that kept me from running again.

His statement was simple and to the point – maybe now you will stay here to get you better. There is nothing we can do about “them”, but you will get better. All of my later “disasters” became much simpler as I only had to remember those words – just maybe *you* will get better.

Tom McM., Osseo Big Book

**Concept Five: Throughout our structure, a traditional “Right of Appeal” ought to prevail, so that minority opinion will be heard and personal grievances receive careful consideration.**

This was a concept foreign to me. If I was the minority voice, the simple answer was to pick up my bat/ball and go home. They either played my way or no way.

Now I have to listen to someone that voted against me, in some cases, 95 *yes* votes to 5 *no* votes – and they want to be heard. What a concept! Early in sobriety, I encountered a past delegate who had been at the Conference in 1966 when the question was to change the proportion of non-alcoholic A Trustees and alcoholic B Trustees on the General Service Board so that the alcoholics had the majority. The early count was to keep the A Trustees in the majority, but the delegates were left to sleep on the proposal. My friend was not able to sleep, and rather than disturb his wife, he decided to walk the hall. There he ran into many of his fellow delegates, doing the same, wandering the halls in search of an answer. The next morning, the vote was completely reversed and we now have B Trustees in the majority.

He taught me that the first knee jerk reaction is not always the best and correct one. The other side of this concept is that I no longer take my bat/ball and go home. The fellowship has taught me to pitch in and do it your way, because your way might not work, and having been a part of the whole by doing my best to make your way work, you would be more likely to go back to my proposal.

I particularly have to listen to those I don't like. Often I hear what I am to hear, but only from someone that is not closest and dearest to my heart. There are several other cautions in this concept, those of the loudest and majority being allowed to push through their way. This right of appeal applies to all levels of service, not just the Board.

Tom McM., Osseo Big Book

**2011 Steering Board**

<b><u>Chair:</u></b>	<b>John D.</b>
<b><u>Alt. Chair:</u></b>	<b>Denise A.</b>
<b><u>Secretary:</u></b>	<b>Don N.</b>
<b><u>Treasurer:</u></b>	<b>Darrell B.</b>
<b><u>Alt. Treasurer</u></b>	<b>Cedar H.</b>
<b><u>Members at Large 2012:</u></b>	<b>Chris S. &amp; Wanda B.</b>
<b><u>Members at Large 2011:</u></b>	<b>Jes N. &amp; Charlie S.</b>
<b><u>Advisor to the Board:</u></b>	<b>Julie M.</b>
<b><u>Office Manager:</u></b>	<b>Tom N.</b>

**Office Calls in March\***

Meeting information	203
Inventory/hours	28
12th Step calls	12
Temporary sponsor	20
Speaker request	7
Special events	0
Outside issues	37
Info for professionals	0
Administrative	143
Other	80
<b>Total Calls</b>	<b>530</b>
<b>Daily average</b>	<b>23.04</b>
Visitors	264

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

**St. Paul Area Intergroup Representatives' Meeting Minutes, March 15, 2011**

- I. Opened with the Serenity Prayer and Introductions. Scott presented Intergroup's Primary Purpose.
- II. Last month's Minutes approved.
- III. Treasurer's Report – Group donations down by 50%. The 2011 Budget will be available on the website and will be presented next month. Questions can be sent to [treasurer@aastpaul.org](mailto:treasurer@aastpaul.org).
- IV. The Office Report – Service opportunities available, including a new program at Regions Hospital; call the Office for details.
- V. Website Report – Groups are encouraged to contact Jonathan ([webservant@aastpaul.org](mailto:webservant@aastpaul.org)) or the Office for AA-related events so they can be added to the website. Guidelines available on the site.
- VI. Outreach Program – Contact Roxi (chairperson) or the Office if interested.
- VII. Night Owl Report – Contact Leslie (coordinator) or the Office for current openings.
- VIII. Intergroup/District 8 Liaison report provided by Doug M. and Tom S.
- IX. Upcoming Intergroup events:
  - TGIS – April 30<sup>th</sup> @ Recovery Church – Spaghetti Dinner @ 5:30PM, Open Speaker Meeting @ 7PM, Dance 9-11PM Call 651-227-5502 for more information
  - Intergroup Open House — June date, to be announced
  - Ice Cream Social – August 6<sup>th</sup> @ 5PM – Recovery Church
- X. Old Business:
  - 2011 Budget will be made available on the website and will be presented next month.
- XI. Grapevine Report – Harry Volunteer for April: Rhonda
- XII. Concept Review (Concept III) – Chris Volunteer for April (Concept IV) – Charlie
- XIII. Mock Rep Report – Scott Volunteer for April: Sue
- XIV. Closed with the Responsibility Statement.

Attendance:

Terrie, Back to Basics Burnsville	Sue, Como Park Big Book	Jeff, Downtown Alano Club	Rebecca, Fireside Women's BB	John, Happy, Joyous & Free
John, Highland BB Sunday Night	Harry, Main Idea	Adrienne, Maplewood Alano	Camille, Mendota Sat 10:30AM	Jenni, New Brighton BB
Scott, Northwestern Alano	Tom, Senior Recovery	Toni, Students Of Life	Scott, Third Edition BB Study	Nicole, Uptown Group
Mark, Problems & Solutions	John, Chairperson	Denise, Alternate Chair	Darrell, Treasurer	Cedar, Alternate Treasurer
Tom, Office Manager	Don, Secretary	Julie, Advisor	Jes, Member @ Large 2011	Chris, Member @ Large 2012
Wanda B, Member @ Large 2012				

### 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 suggestions for the distribution of group funds after group expenses have been paid:

**50% St. Paul Intergroup**  
Spruce Tree Center  
1600 University Ave. #214  
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**  
Ramsey 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](http://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  
[www.district26-area36.org](http://www.district26-area36.org)

#### **Thanks to all the super volunteers who helped in the Office during March!**

Tyler, Mike F., Robin, Henry, Jack, Barb, Violet, Mike S, Frank, Shane, Erik, Lynn, Phil, Greg, Will, Ty, Anthony, Debbs, Mary, Burt, Rich, Dan, Paul, Jordan, Sean, Lynn, Gary, Gabe, Cynthia, Crissy, Matt, Bill P, Karl and Mark.

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



### MARCH CONTRIBUTIONS

Number of Group Contributors: 37  
Total Group Contributions: \$3366  
Number of Faithful Fivers: 20  
Total from Faithful Fivers: \$415

#### **Thanks to the groups that contributed in March!**

11st Step Moonroof Group  
Baffled Lot - Lake Elmo  
Burnsville - Back to Basics  
Cerenity Group Thursday 10AM  
Como Park BB  
Cottage Grove  
Dakota Alano Saturday AM  
Dakota Alano Thurs 1145 AM  
Dakota Alano Wed AM Roosters  
Eagan Burnsville Savage - Sat Speaker  
Fireside Women's BB Group  
Forest Lake Alano  
Grovers' Thursday Night  
Highland Park Groups  
Island Lake Group  
Maplewood Groups  
Midway Club  
North Branch Community Groups  
North Branch Thursday Night  
Outright Mental Defectives  
Pocketing Our Pride  
Ridge Runners II Sat 830 AM  
Rosemount Groups  
Roseville Group Sun 6PM  
St. Croix Alano Mon. 930am  
St. Croix Alano Thurs. 10am  
St. Croix Alano Tues AM  
Stillwater Morning Groups  
Third Edition Group  
This Simple Program  
Uptown Club  
Valley Creek Monday  
Valley Creek Thurs Night  
Weekend Jumpstart II  
White Bear Lake  
Woodbury Wed. Noon 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!!

## Area 36 Committee Meetings

Best Western Hotel, North Mankato  
 May 14th, 9:30am to 5pm  
[www.area36.org](http://www.area36.org)

## Gopher State Roundup XXXVIII

Friday, May 27—Sunday, May 29  
 Sheraton Bloomington  
[www.gopherstateroundup.org](http://www.gopherstateroundup.org)

## Camel Club Reunion

Saturday, June 11th  
 Speaker Meeting, raffle, pot luck!!  
 Richard Walton Park  
 1584 Haley Ave, Oakdale

## Twin Cities GLBT Roundup

June 10—12  
 Doubletree Park Place  
 Minneapolis  
[www.twincitiesroundup.com](http://www.twincitiesroundup.com)

## 11th Annual Midwest Motorcycle A.A. Convention

June 24—26th  
 Pearl City, IL  
[www.MMAAC.org](http://www.MMAAC.org)

## Southern Minnesota Area 36 Area Assembly

July 9th, 9am to 5pm  
 St. John's Lutheran Church  
 Northfield, MN

### Dear Bill W.,

I've been sober for two years now and I've worked all Twelve Steps. I have a sponsor and I do service work. I know this is self-pity, but I've been in a rough spot now for several months and it seems unfair — I do everything I'm told but I'm not always happy.

— An Anonymous Drunk

"I don't think happiness or unhappiness is the point. How do we meet the problems we face? How do we best learn from them and transmit what we have learned to others, if they would receive the knowledge?"

[...]

When pain comes, we are expected to learn from it willingly, and help others to learn. When happiness comes, we accept it as a gift, and thank God for it."

From *As Bill Sees It*, p. 306, reprinted with permission of AA World Services, Inc.



"I thought we were supposed to carry the MESSAGE!"

(Cartoon reprinted by permission of *The A.A. Grapevine, Inc.*)

## Is your meeting represented at Intergroup?

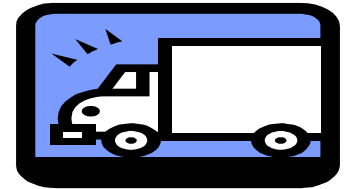
The May Representatives' meeting will be held Tuesday the 17th at 7:30 pm, at the Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 436 Roy St. N, St. Paul, 55104. The church is just south of the Spruce Tree Centre, across the street from the Intergroup office.

St. Paul Intergroup  
Spruce Tree Center  
1600 University Ave. W. Ste. 214  
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 \$5.00 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., Ste. 214, 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) \_\_\_\_\_