

The Lifeline



January 2014

24 Hour Phone: 651-227-5502

Volume 50, Issue 1

Step One: We admitted we were powerless over alcohol - that our lives had become unmanageable.

"Lack of power, that was our dilemma" (pg. 45). In the beginning, this was a statement I was unwilling to accept or admit. My ego was in charge and no one could tell me that I was powerless over anything, especially a bottle. But, my view soon changed when I came to realize that it was not necessarily the alcohol and drugs that I was powerless over, but more the way my mind obsessed over them and the way my body reacted to them once in my system.

My diseased mind constantly justified, wrote permission slips for, and rationalized my relationship with alcohol, and once consumed, I wanted more. No buzz, no drunk, no high was ever good enough. The continuous search for a feeling I once felt was in control and no amount of self-will was going to conquer this obsession and allergy. "Men and women drink essentially because they like the effect produced by alcohol" (pg. xxviii). Drinking was fun.....for a while. But somewhere along the way the fun stopped and consumption became maintenance and a necessity for daily survival. To this day I do not remember that last time I had "fun" using.

It certainly was not recently, for the past several years were filled with the destruction of relationships with family and friends, career and financial struggles, health and hygiene decay, and the loss of any sense of self-worth. My life was completely unmanageable. But these consequences are all the end result of being unable to manage my own life. The unmanageably actually started long before the things of importance were gone. Normal people go to the mailbox more than once a month, and when they do, they open their mail and then respond to it. Normal people shower daily and "go to sleep" at night as opposed to "passing out." Normal people don't plan their days off from work around blackouts and recuperation.

So I can't manage my own life and I have no power over anything, now what? I found a sense of relief and hope in the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous, and more specifically, Bill's story. Here was a man who had the same things I had to live for and almost lost everything simply due to a powerless and unmanageable life. "No words can tell of the loneliness and despair I found in that bitter morass of self-pity...I had met my match. I had been overwhelmed. Alcohol was my master" (pg. 8). Bill's description of "me" was accurate and I needed a way out. I needed a solution that would not only lift my obsession, but would change my entire outlook upon life as well.

The program of Alcoholics Anonymous provided the answer. I admitted my powerlessness and began to take suggestions. I became humble and teachable. Being of service to others, prayer, and meditation are now daily practices. Each day I take steps to make my life more manageable and to show up different in people's lives. The acceptance of the first step is the cornerstone of this new way of living. The willingness to go to any length to obtain sobriety has done much more than take away the desire to drink, it has placed in my life a program that has granted me happiness, peace of mind, serenity, and the greatest gift of all, a continuously growing relationship with a God of my understanding.

So, "lack of power, that was our dilemma?" Thankfully, today, "God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves." (pg. 84).

-Jeff K. (with Adam P), Intergroup Office Volunteers

(pages cited from *Alcoholics Anonymous—4th Edition*, reprinted with permission of A.A.W.S., Inc.)

Tradition One: Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depend upon A.A. unity.

"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."

Our whole A.A. program is securely founded on the principle of humility--that is to say, perspective. Which implies, among other things, that we relate ourselves rightly to God and to our fellows; that we each see ourselves as we really are--"a small part of a great whole." Seeing our fellows thus, we shall enjoy group harmony. That is why A.A. Tradition can confidently state, "Our common welfare comes first."

"Does this mean," some will ask, "that in A.A. the individual doesn't count too much? Is he to be swallowed up, dominated by the group?" No, it doesn't seem to work out that way. Perhaps there is no society on earth more solicitous of personal welfare, more careful to grant the individual the greatest possible liberty of belief and action. Alcoholics Anonymous has no "musts." Few A.A. groups impose penalties on anyone for non-conformity. We do suggest, but we don't discipline. Instead, compliance or non-compliance with any principle of A.A. is a matter for the conscience of the individual; he is the judge of his own conduct. Those words of old time, "Judge not," we observe most literally.

"But," some will argue, "if A.A. has no authority to govern its individual members or groups, how shall it ever be sure that the common welfare does come first? How is it possible to be governed without a government? If everyone can do as he pleases, how can you have aught but anarchy?"

(continued on page two)

St. Paul Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous®

Web Site: www.aastpaul.org

E-mail: 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 One (continued)

The answer seems to be that we A.A.s cannot really do as we please, though there is no constituted human authority to restrain us. Actually, our common welfare is protected by powerful safeguards. The moment any action seriously threatens the common welfare, group opinion mobilizes to remind us; our conscience begins to complain. If one persists, he may become so disturbed as to get drunk; alcohol gives him a beating. Group opinion shows him that he is off the beam, his own conscience tells him that he is dead wrong, and, if he goes too far, Barleycorn brings him real conviction.

So it is we learn that in matters deeply affecting the group as a whole, "our common welfare comes first." Rebellion ceases and cooperation begins because it must; we have disciplined ourselves.

Eventually, of course, we cooperate because we really wish to; we see that without substantial unity there can be no A.A., and that without A.A. there can be little lasting recovery for anyone. We gladly set aside personal ambitions whenever these might harm A.A. We humbly confess that we are but "a small part of a great whole."

- Bill W.—Editorial on the First Tradition, *The Grapevine*, December 1947

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

Notes From your Board...

I'd like to share one of my favorite quotes. It always reminds me that we are truly children of God. We are *Miracles!!!!* Merry Christmas and a New Year full of joy and serenity.

"Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, 'Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous?' Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small does not serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine, as children do. We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's not just in some of us; it's in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others." — Marianne Williamson, (*Often attributed to Nelson Mandela in his 1994 Inaugural address in South Africa.*)

Jan T., Member at Large

Notes From your Central Office...

I hope you've noticed that our Step One article in this issue was written by two of our office volunteers. Another volunteer has already told us she plans to take up the pen and try her hand at it as well.

We're grateful for these submission, and it gets us thinking about the Lifeline in general. We have lots of old Lifelines in our office from back in the '70's and '80's, and have looked through them occasionally for historical information and sometimes for an inspiration.

The Lifeline was quite a different publication in those days. Most of the contents were newsy items submitted by groups and clubs. These groups had "reporters" who would regularly send items into the Intergroup office to be printed in the Lifeline. They might be announcing an upcoming open speaker meeting, but more often the short articles were description of the events that had already occurred. They might include the speaker's name and a short description of their remarks, a list of those who received pins at the meeting, and sometimes even the raffle and door prized awarded. Other times a group would describe the outreach they do at places like the workhouse. And, sadly too often, a group might report the passing of one of their members.

We invite you and your group to consider sending us your news, or submitting a longer article on a Step, Tradition or AA-related topic of your choosing. We'll be happy to print what we can.

Thanks, St. Paul Area A.A.!

<u>2014 Steering Board</u>		<u>Office Calls in November 2013</u>	
<u>Chair:</u>	Christa W.	Meeting information	123
<u>Alt. Chair:</u>	Tim B.	Inventory/hours	17
<u>Secretary:</u>	Michelle M.	12th Step calls	7
<u>Treasurer:</u>	CJ M.	Temporary sponsor	23
<u>Alt. Treasurer</u>	Kelly B.	Speaker request	22
<u>Members at Large 2014:</u>	Tiffany B. & Jan T.	Special events	1
<u>Members at Large 2015:</u>	Hillary B. & Paul T.	Outside issues	15
<u>Advisor to the Board:</u>	Jean O.	Info for professionals	4
		Administrative	69
		Other	61
		Total Calls	342
		Daily average	17.1
		Visitors	216

UPCOMING A.A. EVENTS!!

<p>17th Annual WACYPAA Western Area Conference of Young People in Alcoholics Anonymous “Sunlight at Last” Sheraton Denver Downtown Thursday, January 2nd - Sunday, January 5th 2014 www.wacypaa17.org</p>	<p>32nd Annual Recovery, Unity & Service Conference “Living In The Heart of A.A.” American Hotel & Conference Center 240 Stadium Rd., Mankato, MN 56001 Friday, January 3rd - Sunday, January 5th 2014 www.area36.org</p>
<p>12th Annual Wild Rice Roundup “Lose Your Winter Blues” Shooting Star Hotel & Event Center Mahnomon, MN Friday, January 11th - Sunday, January 13th www.wildriceroundup.com</p>	<p>Trudging the Road to Happy Destiny 2014 Men’s Retreat Horseshoe Bay Resort Leech Lake, MN Friday, January 24th—Sunday, January 26th www.trhdretreat.org</p>
<p>Study & Action Group Lake Elmo Weekend Session Christ Lutheran church 11194 North 36th St., Lake Elmo, MN Friday, January 24th - Sunday, January 26th www.Into-Action.com</p>	<p>6th Annual Embers in the Fire Women’s Retreat “Living the Steps” Northern Pines United Methodist 20033 Country Rd 1, Park Rapids, MN 56470 Friday, March 14th—Sunday, March 16 Contact: Pam D. 763-433-5287</p>
<p><u>Group and Area News</u></p> <p>New Location: <i>Grupo Nuevo Amanecer</i> has moved to 878 Smith Avenue, St. Paul 55107 for all their meetings: everyday, Monday—Sunday at 7:30 PM. They have also added a new meeting on Mondays at 11:00 AM, in Spanish and based on readings from <i>Reflexiones Diarias</i>.</p> <p>New Time: <i>Pocketing our Pride</i> (Sundays at Como Pavilion) is changing it's meeting time. The meeting will be held at 11:00 instead of 12:00 beginning January 5th.</p> <p>New Group: <i>The Friendship AA</i> group started meeting Tuesdays 7:00PM at the Hope Evangelical Free Church (Basement - Room 1255), Oakdale, 55128. the group hosts a Closed, Step, Mixed, & All-ages meeting.</p>	<p><u>Fourth Step & Big Book Workshops</u></p> <p>By The Book 4th Step Workshop Wednesdays, ~6:30PM - 7:45PM ~ 2218 1st Ave, Minneapolis, MN 55404 For more info: www.aabythebook.org</p> <p><u>Your News?</u></p> <p>We invite you to share your AA news here! Please send your items to lifeline@aastpaul.org. We look forward to hearing from you.</p>



Looking for a Service Opportunity? Become a St. Paul Intergroup Night Owl!



Upcoming Night Owl Orientations:
Saturday, January 18th, February 15th & March 15th, 2014
10:00 AM - 11:00 AM

St. Paul Intergroup Office
 1600 University Ave. W.—Ste. #214
 To RSVP please call: 651-227-5502 (Please call by 4PM the Friday before to RSVP)

St. Paul Area Intergroup Representatives' Meeting Minutes November 19th, 2013

I. Opened with the Serenity Prayer, Introductions, and the reading of the Primary Purpose of Intergroup.

II. Last month's Minutes were unanimously approved.

III. Treasurer's Report – Jim G. briefly reports that October was a three-paycheck month in which we also made a sales tax payment, resulting in expenses above budget for the month, but still well below budget for the year. Questions/concerns can be sent to Jim G. at treasurer@aastpaul.org. Also, the Board distributed the board-approved proposed budget for 2014 (available on the website), which reflects flat sales projections and declining contributions, reflecting trends. Pay special attention to the "Remarks" column to the far right of the spreadsheet for more information. The Board requests that the Reps take this information back to the member Groups for discussion and evaluation. We will have a detailed discussion prior to a vote during our December meeting.

IV. The Office Report – Frank N. reports tremendous interest in the 75th Edition Big Book and encourages those interested in pre-ordering a copy to contact the Office and sign up. Frank recently attended the national Intergroup Conference and came back grateful for the support of the Groups. Several Night Owl shifts are available. Office staff is available to help you create a flyer for your AA-related event, just call.

V. Upcoming Intergroup Events:

Gratitude Night, November 23 (Christa, Chair): Flyer and more information available online. The meeting starts at 7 pm at the Recovery Church (Plato & State Streets in St. Paul).

Founder's Day, Nov. 29 – Dec. 1: Contact Tim B. (timburham52@msn.com) or Frank in the Office to talk about volunteer opportunities to co-host the suite if your group would like to get involved.

New Year's Eve, Dec. 31 (Jean, Chair). Festivities, including Bill C. the speaker, will start at 7. Volunteers are needed to lead the marathon meetings. Contact Jean (chair@aastpaul.org) to assist.

VI. Old Business: None.

**** All other "regular" business was suspended to allow time to complete the Board elections. ****

VII. New Business: Elections

Bill C., Paul T., and Tim B. were nominated as Alternate Chair. Tim was elected.

Kelly B., James C., and Bill C. were nominated as Alternate Treasurer. Kelly B. was elected.

Michele was nominated and elected as Secretary.

Paul T., Steve N., Hillary and James C. were nominated as Members-At-Large. Paul T. was elected.

Hillary and James C. were nominated as Members-At-Large. Hillary was elected.

VIII. Group Announcements:

West End Club on W. 7th will host a Thanksgiving turkey dinner at 2 pm (with football)!

IX. No suggestions for next month's agenda.

X. Closed with the Responsibility Statement.

ATTENDANCE:

Jean O., Board Chair	Christa, Alternate Chair	Cedar H., Secretary	Jim B., Treasurer	CJ M., Alternate Treasurer	Denise A., Board Advisor
Tim B., Member at Large	Jan T., Member at Large	Tiffany B., Mem- ber at Large	Jonathan L., Webservant	Karen B., Back to Basics – Savage MN	Chad O., Como Park BB
Paul T., Cottage Grove	Scott L., District 8	Nancy T., District 15	Hillary B., Hole in the Donut	Dan K., Main Idea	Shana R., Mid- way Club
Michele M., New Brighton BB	Luke F., OMD	Sharon O., Pocketing Our Pride	Joe C., Rose- mount Groups	Steve H., St. Paul Speaker Mtg	.Don D., Third Edition BB
Joe S., 12x12 by the Book	Mary K., Uptown Club	Kelly B.	Frank N., Office Manager		

January MEETING: Tuesday the 21st 2014 (7:30 PM)

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

436 Roy Street North, St. Paul, MN 55104

**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 131523
St. Paul, MN 55113

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

NOVEMBER CONTRIBUTIONS

Number of Group Contributors: 39
Total Group Contributions: \$4667
Number of Faithful Fivers: 17
Total from Faithful Fivers: \$3870

Thank You!

District Meetings

District 8 (Ramsey Co.)

Fairview Community Center
1910 Co. Rd B, Rm 108, 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.)

Grace Lutheran Church
1730 Old Hudson Rd, St. Paul
2nd Sun., 7:00PM
www.district26-area36.org

**Thanks to all the super
volunteers who helped in the
Office during November**

Adam P., Bob P., Burt K.,
Carol R., Carrisa A., Chandler D.,
Charlie A., Chris W.,
Desiree H., Frank D., Greg K.
Gordon F., Henry O.,
Jarred B., Jeff K., Jim C.,
Karl G., Ken Z., Kristia O.,
Laura S., Melissa M.,
Mike B., Mike O., Ratta C.,
Ron K., Steve W., Suzanne B.,
Tracey, Trevor V., Ty K.

**Thanks to all
the NightOwl
volunteers and
groups as well!**



**Thanks to the groups that
contributed in November
2013**

- Apple Valley Daily Reflections
- Basic Text Women's Group
- Cawfee Talk group
- Cliffhangers I Thursday PM
- Dakota Alano Friday 6 PM
- Dakota Alano Thurs 1145 AM
- Dakota Alano Thursday 530 PM
- Downtown Alano Club
- Eagan Burnsville Savage - Sat Speaker
- Episcopal Home group
- Fireside Women's BB Group
- Forest Lake Alano
- Friday Night Women's in W. St. Paul
- Hastings Club
- Hazelwood AA
- Highland Park Groups
- Hugo Group
- Inver Grove Heights Club 84
- Lakeville Hope Community
- Lakeville Wed. Beginners Group
- Lit Up Group
- Live and Let Live
- Look to This Day
- Mahtomedi Tuesday Step
- Maplewood Groups
- Midway Club
- Our Friends Place Alano
- Roseville Centennial Group
- Saturday Morning Serenity Group
- Shoreview 12 x 12
- Silver Lake AA Men's Group
- St. Croix Alano
- Stillwater Morning Groups
- Summit Hill
- Third Tradition Northfield
- Tuesday AM Group-Burnsville
- Uptown Club
- We Think Not
- White Bear Lake

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 groups and 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. We welcome articles on a Step, Tradition or Concept, or descriptions of personal experience. Please email your article to Lifeline@aastpaul.org, or send it by regular mail to Lifeline Editor, St. Paul Intergroup, 1600 University Avenue #214, St. Paul MN 55104. Materials or articles mailed to us 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.

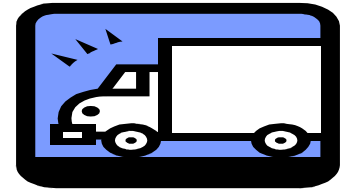


St. Paul Intergroup
Spruce Tree Center
1600 University Ave. W. Ste. 214
St. Paul, MN 55104

Change Service Requested

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Twin Cities MN
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* - Enrollment Form

Faithful Fivers graciously contribute \$5.00 or more to St. Paul Intergroup each month to enable us to continue to carry A.A.'s vital message of Hope and Recovery to all who need and want it. Your contribution entitles you to a one-year subscription to *The Lifeline*. Contributions may be made annually, bi-annually, quarterly or monthly.

~Yes! Please enroll me as a *Faithful Fiver* !

1. Contact information:

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ ZIP _____
Phone Number _____
Email _____

2. Amount & Frequency:

Amount: \$ _____
Frequency: (check only one)
 Monthly Quarterly Bi-Annually Annually
Start on ____/____/____
 Please send my receipt to my email address
 Please send my receipt to my home/postal address
 Please send my **Lifeline** to my **email** address instead

3. Choose a Payment Method:

Credit Card/Debit Card*
 Visa MasterCard
Card # _____/_____/_____/_____
Expiration Date: ____/_____
Name on Card _____

Signature _____

*I authorize St. Paul Intergroup to automatically bill my account as specified (monthly, quarterly, etc.). I understand that I am free to cancel this authorization at any time by contacting Intergroup.

Check - Please make payable to:

Saint Paul Intergroup
1600 University Ave W. - Suite 214
Saint Paul, MN 55104