



Step Four: Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

Rocks, Stones and Pebbles; My Conscience would never let me rest

Coming to Alcoholics Anonymous from a pit of despair was the best decision I have ever made. My life up to that point was in shambles and I was desperate enough to seek outside help. Understanding the part that alcohol played in my life, up to that point, was difficult but I knew that if I didn't get a grip on reality, I was going to self destruct and the progression of the problem was like going ninety miles an hour down that dead end street.

Hope was established immediately as I was introduced to the possibility that I could be restored to a life that was free of the mental torment that I had been experiencing since childhood. The answers to all of my problems came in the form of a Profound Change of Perception concerning how I perceived myself. With very little discipline or structure in my upbringing, I was insecure and afraid that I would never meet up with the standards of my peers and as the results of that way of thinking, I developed a dis-honest and selfish lifestyle which eventually caught up with me in the form of a guilty conscience. My drinking solved that problem for a time but when the tolerance for alcohol wore off, I found myself back in that pit of despair. When I looked in the mirror, I hated what I saw and I could no longer drink it away. Like everyone else, when introduced to the program, I first had to stop the (emotional) bleeding by dealing with the current issues that I had been neglecting such as: pay the rent, pay the traffic ticket, clear the beer cans off my dresser..... Then I could give the steps of the program the attention they would need if I wanted the relief that they promised. Without even being aware of it, the process had begun. With a new attitude of willingness, and attending as many meetings as I could, I was already getting rid of many of the obvious habits of dis-honesty, neglect, irresponsibility, and the like.

Next, I was faced with my biggest challenge which came in the form of The Wreck-age of the Past that many refer to as a Sack of Rocks. If we ever want to be free of the guilt and the shame CAUSED BY the regrettable memories that we have been harbor-ing, in our conscience, we will have to address these issues when we become strong enough. My sack contained a few Rocks that were obvious, a handful of Stones, and abundance of, less threatening, pebbles that were not that obvious to me at the time. Addressing steps 4, 5, 8, and 9 concerning these issues became my greatest challenge and my first instinct was to skip over the most embarrassing memories. That idea, I think, is common in many of us, when first faced with reparation process. I gave it my best shot at first but left out a few of the Rocks due to my ego, but my conscience would never let me rest. Later, when, as the result of the progress I had made in the program, I became stronger and had the determination to revisit those more glaring issues and clean the slate. Had I not done that, I believe the rest of the program would have been a shallow façade and I would never have attained the peace of mind that I enjoy today.

The Stones were the things that got most of the attention as I did the steps initially. As I became stronger, I took that leap of faith and tackled the Rocks. After cleaning up those issues, the rest of the program became easy. No more denial and much more peace of mind. So I'm finished, Right? Not so fast Huckleberry! Now I become aware of the less threatening pebbles in the form of the selfish motives in my day to day decision making which I will gladly correct, one pebble at a time as I become aware of them and it is a joy to rid myself of the things that used to plague me and today, life is good.

- Rick R., Arizona

(Reprinted from *No Booze News*, April 2018, East Valley Intergroup, Mesa, AZ.)

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

Tradition 4 of the 12 traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous states that the freedom individual groups have carries with it the admonition to protect the fellowship as a whole. This means that meeting formats can vary from group to group, but it also cautions against straying too far from the usual program.

Tradition 4 Grants AA Group Freedom with Responsibility to the Whole

Each 12-step group has complete freedom to decide for itself the program content of its meetings and the topics that will be discussed. The group can decide if the meeting will be open or closed and when and where the meeting will be held. Each group can decide to change its meeting format and has complete authority to spend its funds as needed.

The group can also decide how it wishes to begin and end its meetings. Some groups close with a prayer, while others have a moment of silence. In all of these matters, each group has total freedom. It is entirely up to the membership of that individual group.

But the second part of this tradition reminds each group that it has a responsibility also to the worldwide fellowship and other groups. By adhering to the traditions and principals of its program, each group can assure that it will not stray too far away from the program's basic tenets.

Limits to Freedom Granted By the Fourth Tradition

The autonomy provided in Tradition 4 does not mean an individual group has the authority to re-word the steps or traditions or to create its own literature. Nor should groups introduce, discuss, or sell outside literature at their meeting places.

Many a meeting has gotten away from the look and feel of its primary purpose by using non-conference-approved literature, showing videos of popular self-help speakers, or allowing treatment professionals to speak at open meetings on the latest therapy techniques.

There is a saying that there is no right or wrong way to hold a meeting, but the group can cease carrying the message if it strays too far from its traditions and concepts. Other than that, groups have complete freedom to design their programs to the needs of their members, which can result in a wide variety of formats.

How Group Autonomy Creates Different Environments

One AA member described what it was like when encountering groups that did things differently. He says that when he first came into AA, he learned how it went in his little group, and as he went to other groups in neighboring towns, he would think, "They don't do their meetings right," simply because they weren't the same as the first group he went to.

Today these little things that used to bother him make him realize that they're what makes all these groups unique and different. He looks forward to the different meetings now because they're unique in their own rights. As long as the guidelines of the program are followed and the basic message is there for everyone, the autonomy of each group is one more example of why Alcoholics Anonymous works.

- Buddy T.

Thoughts From Your Board

I am grateful today for having had experience with the three legacies of AA: Unity, Recovery, and Service. The last one I neglected the longest.

When I washed up on the shore of sobriety, Unity within our fellowship was my first blessing. I wasn't working the steps of Recovery with the desperation of drowning men, but I was in the middle of the herd. Which was enough to keep me in the game at the time. I also had no concept of service.

After realizing that the personality change sufficient to bring about recovery from my alcoholism wasn't going to come from just going to meetings (and a not-so-subtle nudge from my sponsor), I eventually made tangible progress working steps. In other words I finally did my 4th. It felt good, I felt like I was officially a part of something. I kept the momentum going and as a result of working the steps, had a spiritual experience. Recovery had become a cornerstone of my life.

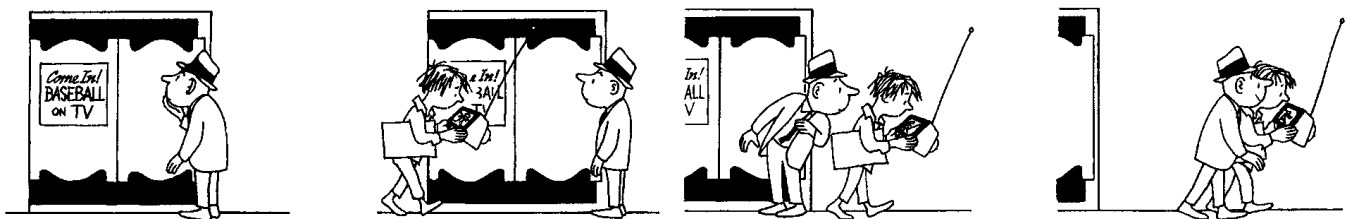
Eventually as a result of being involved, some opportunities to be of service were dropped in my lap. One service opportunity led to another, most recently culminating in the great privilege to serve on our Intergroup's board.

My enthusiasm and dedication to the fellowship and even recovery has naturally ebbed and flowed to some extent. Through some of my less-enthused times (brutal winter), organized Service commitments have miraculously kept me near the middle of the action when my instinct otherwise told me to hibernate. Service has been invaluable to the sustainability of my recovery.

I share this because I used to consider "Service" as the third and somewhat optional legacy of recovery. Now I recognize that each side of the triangle is essential. I encourage you to come to our Intergroup meetings each month and attend the events.

Also check out the flyer for the upcoming Spring Fling, it's new look for the event this year looks like it's going to be a blast. I hope to see you there!

- Rob C., 2019 Board Chair



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The Lifeline: Purpose Statement

The Lifeline is the monthly newsletter of the St. Paul and Suburban Area Intergroup, Incorporated. 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, in addition to descriptions of personal experience. We also welcome cartoons and drawings expressing the wry side of our A.A. experience.

Please email your article to lifeline@aastpaul.org, or send it by regular mail to Lifeline Editor, St. Paul Intergroup, 608 Seventh Street West, St. Paul MN 55102. 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's
annual
SPRING FLING!



Saturday

Lutheran Church of the Redeemer

April 27th

4:30pm

Dinner and Carnival

7:00pm

Speaker Meeting

Rick B.

from 2218- Squad 77

285 North Dale Street
(just south of 94)
Saint Paul, MN 55101

Admission: \$5
for dinner and 5
game tickets

Featuring...
-Bingo
-Cake Walk
-Carnival Games
-50/50 Raffle

**Open Event &
Speaker**

Kids welcome!



For more information call 651-227-5502



ASL available upon request.
Please contact Intergroup staff by
March 22nd: 651-227-5502 or
Lifeline@aastpaul.org

Announcements & Updates

HOOTS!

WANTED: One New Night Owl Committee volunteer

The Night Owl Committee members take turns carrying the back-up Phone for one week at a time. We help out if a volunteer has a problem and we also make the reminder calls.

Requirements:

- >1 year sobriety
- >Answer the back-up phone during your rotation
- >Experience with Night Owl
- >2 year commitment

Thank you!

Frank N.
Night Owl Committee Coordinator

Night Owl Tidbit: Do you have an interesting Night Owl story you want to share? Send an e-mail to nightowl@aastpaul.org!



My sponsor says the good thing about procrastination is that you always have something planned for tomorrow.

(Clara T. Cartoon reprinted with permission, Copyright © The AA Grapevine, Inc.)

Group and Area News

Meeting Change: beginning April 1st, the *Third Edition Big Book Study Group* will start their meeting at 7:00PM, rather than 7:30PM. The group host a Closed, Mixed, All-Ages Big Book meeting at the Jehovah Lutheran Church, 1566 Thomas Ave. (corner of Snelling and Thomas) in St. Paul.

Meeting Ending: The last meeting of the *Seriously Sober People* will be held April 17th at the Oakdale Library, 101 Heron Ave. N.

Virtual—Telephone Meeting: CrossTalk Group +1-712-415-0200

Every Sunday—Thursday 11PM (Midnight on East Coast) This is a free telephone call-in AA meeting recognized by both GSO and the Loaners International Homer Directory.

Volunteers Needed!

Gopher State Roundup XLV will be held over Memorial Day weekend (May 24-26) at the Double Tree Bloomington. It take a incredible amount of work to make it the exciting spiritual weekend that it is. If you would like to become part of making it all happen, Sign-up electronically at gopherstateroundup.org.

Service opportunities include: Greeters, Ushers, Tickets, Registration, Chair "Room to Grow," Staff the Information Booth, Security, and Al-Anon.



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

Upcoming Night Owl Orientations:
Saturday, Apr 20th, May 18th, Jun 15th

Every Third Saturday from 10:00 -11:00 AM

St. Paul Intergroup Office

608 Seventh Street West - St. Paul, MN 55102

To RSVP please call: 651-227-5502



St. Paul Area Intergroup Representatives' Meeting Minutes, February 19th 7:30pm

1. Opened with the Serenity Prayer, introductions, and read the Primary Purpose of Intergroup.
2. Last month minutes reviewed, motioned by John K and seconded by Mike C, motion approved.
3. Treasurer's Report, Justin D – Total Contributions: Up, Christmas contributions processed in Jan Expenses: N/A Total Income and the Net Income: January's numbers more flat.
4. Office Report, Dennis B – New sobriety birthday cards (some featuring cats and dogs!) and bookmarks. Expanding the Lifeline by 4 pages, including crossword puzzles, word searches and more plus more articles from local AA members (word limit 500 words or 1 page). *Please email lifeline@aastpaul.org for further information.*
5. Night Owl Report, Frank N – Good month—trained in 5 new night owls (3 from Rule 62). There are 4 regular monthly shifts available: 1st Wed 10pm-6pm, 3rd Sat 10pm-9am, 5th Mon 10pm-6am, 5th Tues 10pm-6am. *Please contact Frank N at NightOwl@aastpaul.org or leave a message at the Intergroup Office.*
6. Website Report, Sergey – Down 1 meeting from last month. Any AA related events may send flyers, or if speaker meetings want to add speakers to their info on intergroup website via email. *Contact Jonathan & Sergey at webservant@aastpaul.org.*
7. Outreach Program, Jimmy D – Carolyn M stepped down after 2 years. If there are any updates to your meeting email Jimmy. *Please contact outreach@aastpaul.org.*
8. Update from the Board, Rob C – N/A
9. Liaison Reports: District 8: Mike C – Passed budget with 1 dissenting vote. In need of new chairs for 3 committees, including Finance, Outreach and DUI. Adhoc committee formed for translation of AA materials and literature into the Karen language. District 15: Jennifer—Spring Fellowship Workshop and potluck taking place March 30th from 11:30am-2:30pm at Christ Lutheran Church in Lake Elmo. In need of new chairs for committees. District 19: – N/A
10. Intergroup Events: a. Recap—N/A
b. Upcoming—Spring Fling (Lindsey D & Rachel P)—Board approval for ditching dance this year for carnival theme entertainment, dinner at 4:30pm and speaker at 7pm(Rick B from 2218-Squad 77). At Lutheran Church of the Redeemer (285 N Dale St, St. Paul). Open
11. Old Business: N/A
12. New Business: N/A
13. Group AA Announcements: a. Main Idea Sobriety Recognition—2nd Friday 7:30-9PM located @ 499 Wacouta St., St. Paul
b. Maplewood Alano Potluck, Sobriety Recognition & Speaker Meeting—3rd Saturday 6:30PM @ 1955 Prosperity Rd.
c. OMD Potluck, Sobriety Recognition & Speaker Meeting—1st Friday 7PM @ 550 W 7th St., St. Paul. Speaker TBD
d. West End Potluck, Sobriety Recognition & Speaker Meeting—4th Friday 7pm
14. Suggestions for next month's agenda: Can send an email to secretary@aastpaul.org with suggestions. Also, suggested an update from the board for next month regarding the lease agreement for St. Paul Intergroup office. To be presented with more information at March meeting.
15. Grapevine Report, Robin; Volunteer for March, Andrew
16. Concept X review, Andrew; Volunteer for Concept XI for March, John
17. Mock Rep Report, Peter; Volunteer for March, Rachel
18. Closed with the Responsibility Statement

Meetings Represented: District 8: District 15; Basic Text, St. Paul; Como Park Big Book, Roseville; Defogged Mens Group, St. Paul; The Firing Line, Roseville; Hole In The Doughnut, Roseville; Lakeview AA, Maplewood; Main Idea, St. Paul; Maplewood Alano Groups, Maplewood; No Time Like the Present; Roseville; One More Was Added..., St. Paul; Outright Mental Defects, St. Paul; Rule 62 Step & Tradition, St. Paul; Summit Hill, St. Paul; Third Edition, St. Paul; Uptown, St. Paul; We Can, St. Paul; West End, St. Paul.

<u>2019 Steering Board:</u>		<u>Office Calls/Visitors—February 2019</u>	
Chair:	Rob C.	Meeting information	70
Alternate Chair:	Linsey D.	Inventory/hours/location	27
Secretary:	Rachel P.	12th Step calls	5
Treasurer:	Justin D.	Temporary sponsor	11
Alternate Treasurer:	Mark J.	Speaker request	21
Members-at-Large 2019:	C.J. M. & Vance O.	Staff & Other Calls	132
Members-at-Large 2020:	Mike C.	Total Calls	266
Advisor to the Board:	Lesli D.	Average Calls/Day	13.3
Manager	Dennis B.	Total Visitors	203

APRIL 2019 REPS' MEETING: Tuesday, April 19th @ 7:30 PM
 SAINT STANISLAUS CHURCH (Church Basement)
 398 West Superior Street; St. Paul, MN 55102

**7th Tradition
Suggestions for Groups**

“Every A.A. 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
608 Seventh Street West
St. Paul, MN 55102

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

FEBRUARY CONTRIBUTIONS

Number of Group Contributors	30
Total Group Contributions:	\$4011
Number of Faithful Fivers:	26
Total from Faithful Fivers:	\$405



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
Rosemount
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 Groups
that contributed in February**

- 11 W. Bernard Group
- 3R's Group
- Anoka Day By Day
- Apple Valley Mon. AM Women's Mtg.
- Basic Text
- Burnsville - Primary Purpose
- Children of Chaos Plus
- CRC Friends of Bill W.
- Dakota Alano THUR 1145AM
- Dakota Alano WED 8PM
- Gloria Dei AA
- Happy Hour Men's Meeting
- Highland Park Groups
- Holy Redeemer Parish AA Group
- Little Canada AA
- Maplewood Groups
- No Time Like the Present
- North Dale Group
- OMD
- Saturday Morning Serenity Group
- Scandia Big Book
- Shivering Denizens
- Shoreview 12 x 12
- SOS - Sharing Our Sobriety - Afton
- Stepsisters of Northfield Group
- Summit Hill
- Third Tradition Northfield
- We Care Groups
- White Bear SAT AM Women's Group
- Women's 12 & 12 Monday

Thanks to all of the FANTASTIC Office Volunteers who helped in February:

- Brian L., Burck S., Caleb A., Charlie B., Chris H.,
- Cody D., Dan K., David D., Debbie L.,
- Dan K., Don S., Elizabeth B., Erik H-L.,
- Frank D., Jeff K., Jimmy D., Jodie H.,
- Kathy P., Linnea H., Marc B., Melanie G.,
- Michelle R., Pete S., Steve L., Tara G.

Thanks to our AWESOME Night Owls too!



“Our Collective Conscience – Yes, It Matters”

Between February 15th to the start of the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous (GSC), AA members are strongly encouraged to participate in the decision-making process that is taking place leading up to the GSC that will be held in NYC in May. This year, seventy-five items have been placed on the agenda with a wide range of issues that have been determined to be vital discussion points that require the entire fellowship's thoughts and perspectives.

The agenda didn't magically materialize on February 15th by “New York”. Instead, the fellowship submitted the majority of the items in preceding months – ever since the GSC in 2018 ended. Some items may also come from the affiliate corporate boards (AAWS and AAGV), the General Service Board, or members within those entities. The fellowship submitted items through December 15, 2018. At the January General Service Board meeting all submitted items were considered, and ultimately, the GSB set the agenda. Some items are not placed on the agenda for various reasons, but most do make it to the Conference agenda if they aren't automatically adopted. Within two weeks of this meeting, a tremendous amount of background information for each selected item is compiled, and on February 15th, the agenda and background information is delivered to the fellowship in English, with French and Spanish translations following early in March.

Fortunately, you don't have to go far to do your part and be engaged in considering the items on this year's agenda. The service structure has been expressly designed for just this time of year to facilitate easy and effective communications on AA's future. Every single group in AA can and should have a general service representative (GSR). This person, selected by the group itself with no other influences, has a couple places to go to “carry the message” of the groups concerns and ideas to make AA more effective in fulfilling its primary purpose.

The GSR – or any AA member – may opt to start discussing the agenda and background information at their group. Other options also exist, too. For example, the entire West Central Region of Alcoholics Anonymous provides a forum of presentations and discussion on the agenda. This provides a wide-ranging perspective of how any particular agenda item, if implemented, would affect AA from Wyoming to Iowa. Area 36 gathers together for a day to discuss the agenda. Here, among fellow group members, friends and fellow trusted servants, in-depth discussion takes place, allowing for a very effective way to see how AA services can be enhanced to help carrying the message. This is where a living example of Tradition Two takes place:

2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority — a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.

But most importantly, discussion is needed at the group. This is where heartbeat of AA pulses closest to the surface and characterizes the current state of AA. This is the top of the “service triangle” and where the ultimate responsibility resides, as Concept I clearly spells out:

1. The final responsibility and ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.

To create this “collective conscience” something has to happen: it has to be created, shared and then collected. To create it, the group has to consider and draw conclusions, providing those conclusions to their representative. Next, the service structure, so well architected by Bill Wilson, provides a unified multi-step process down the AA service structure. GSRs, now armed with the knowledge and direction of their group conscience, visit with other GSRs at their district to share and learn about how other groups view what's best for AA. Even more versed in conference agenda items, all AA members, through their elected representative, provide their collective group conscience at their area business meeting which is designated for the discussion of GSC agenda items.

But this delegated right also has a unique aspect to it: the GSRs have the responsibility to express at the area meeting their group's conscience based on not only what they learned at their home group

(Continued page 2)

“Our Collective Conscience – Yes, It Matters”

but also at their district and even at their region regarding the best possible decision regarding a GSC agenda item. Of course, first it is wise to express their group's conscience, so everyone has that knowledge, but once again, collecting all the group's beliefs and ideas and allowing God's grace to direct their thinking will allow for the best possible decision.

While at this area meeting covering the GSC agenda items, GSRs are there for the express purpose of sharing their group's collective conscience. This process provides the area delegate with the opportunity to become fully informed about how the area that they represent feels about each conference agenda item. It is probable that there is no single “answer”, no “correct” solution to any given agenda item. Regardless, the delegate, listening closely, will become informed, so going forward to the General Service Conference, a sound understanding of their area's views on what is best for AA will take place.

This process takes place in a short time span – normally in the month of March and the first portion of April. It's a chance that shouldn't be missed. To be part of a spiritual process that listens to each and every voice regardless of how many concur or how many disagree. The minority voice and opinion has just as much volume as the majority – something quite unique to our fellowship. AA cherishes and values the individual's voice, but ultimately, the anonymous nature of everyone's voice blends through divine alchemy to create the mix of decisions that guide AA's future.

Yes, it matters that you and your group are part of the process. It is an experience you must not miss!

Yours in Service,

- Tom A.

WCR Trustee, AAWS Director

General Service Board Secretary

Contributor's Corner

Surrender is that moment when we realize and acknowledge to our innermost selves that we cannot stop drinking. That the option to “not drink” has been removed. That will power and desire to stop drinking have no effect to change our behavior. We may use different internal and external words like “I need help” or “I cannot do this anymore” or “I'm through living in this hell.” Before surrender, our life was one of attempts to manage and control our drinking and everything else. These efforts were futile. But it may take us many years to realize the reality of that statement.

Negative consequences were usually rationalized away or ignored, so that we could shift our attention to our “go to,” — alcohol. It seemed to be the answer to every situation in our lives: Anxiety, sadness, relief, joy, celebration, depression. The mental preoccupation with alcohol can only be understood by an alcoholic.

In the back of our mind was always the thought “do I have enough alcohol on hand for today,” or, “when can I take my next drink,” or, “I need more.” We seemed to rush to get to the reward; the next drink. Surrender is our moment of release from the powerful hold alcohol has on us. It is a moment of sanity and humility.

Eventually, we realize we do not have the answer to our lives. That our best efforts have left us broken, ashamed, humiliated, and defeated. Now, it is exactly in this moment that we are released and begin to feel the freedom from alcohol. We begin to learn how to live a completely new life. We “let go” and “let God.” Gradually, surrender becomes a daily practice. Many of us start the day with the Third Step Prayer. We learn to pause when agitated; to stop our automatic response to a situation; relax and find our soul's integrity. We look for opportunities to serve others in and outside of AA.

Our life has a new meaning. This is the gift of sobriety.

-Rose B.

Area 36 Delegate's Report

Greetings Lifeline readers!! My name is Missy P. and I just rotated in as your new Southern Minnesota Delegate Panel 69 in January. I will be representing you at the General Service Conference in New York May 18th through May 25th. I have been in and/or around General Service since getting sober in 1997. My home group is the Third Tradition Group in Northfield, Mn. It has been my home group since becoming sober. It is there where I first worked the 12 Steps with a sponsor and was taught how to live the Principles and Traditions in my life in and outside of AA Meetings. It is also where I learned how important General Service is as part of the Three Legacies. Being GSR for the Third Tradition Group was where I started to learn the Concepts and how to work them in my role as GSR. The first Conference I attended was the January Service Conference (known now as the Recovery, Unity and Service Conference) in Rochester in 1998. It is still one of my favorite Conferences to attend. It is where I can learn how other members of A.A. put the principles into action in their own lives! What a great way to get to know other members of other groups. That way I can attend AA in so many other meetings in Southern Minnesota and find familiar faces! That is one of the gifts that General Service has given me, friendships that are truly long lasting and true. One of the important things the Third Tradition Group also taught me was that having a voice in the District, Area and at the General Service Conference was not only a right but a responsibility as members of Alcoholics Anonymous. So, Thursday March 14th we will be looking through the Agenda Items that will be discussed in New York. From there we will send our GSR (General Service Representative) to the Area Assembly/Delegate's Workshop to share our Groups Conscience in regards to those items. I hope to see all of you there. After attending the General Service Conference in New York it will be my privilege to attend all of the Districts to give my Delegate's Report to tell all of you how I carried your conscience to the Conference. I look forward to serving you and meeting you on our journey together!!

Yours in Service,
Missy Patterson
Area 36 Delegate Panel 69

District 8 Report

Greetings! My name is Sue M. and I am currently serving as your DCM (District Committee Member) for District 8 which is most of Ramsey County except for a small piece in the southeast corner. The district meeting is on the third Wednesday of the month at 7:30 pm, held in Room 108 of the Fairview Community Center on County Road B between Cleveland and Fairview Avenues. Everyone is welcome; you do not need to be a GSR (General Service Representative) to attend.

I have a group of very enthusiastic Committee Chairs who are starting to understand their responsibilities and will soon be putting ideas into action. We plan on doing some workshops and providing literature to various places that are looking for it.

We have formed an Ad Hoc committee which is starting the process of translating our literature into the Karen language. We have reached out to GSO for some directions on how the process works and are now contacting other areas which have larger populations who speak the Karen language.

District 8 also is home to the ASL (Green Can Plan) Coordinator. The responsibilities of this job include collecting the contributions from the P.O. Box, depositing them in the bank, paying the invoices for the interpreters and tracking the contributions and invoices in a spreadsheet. The current coordinator has been doing it for a couple of years, so we are looking for someone who is willing to take on this commitment. Please contact me at: dist8@area36.org if you are interested.

There are many ways of doing service work to help the still suffering alcoholic and I believe that District 8 will be committed to that purpose. If you would like to be a part of that, please come to our district meeting and get involved.

Thank you for letting me be of service,
- Sue M., District 8 DCM

Contributor's Corner

A young boy commented on why he believed his kite was "still up there," although a thick fog had blocked it from view. He explained: "*I can feel the tug.*"

Like this little boy, I also could not understand God by calculating. I tried, but what I couldn't figure out is that I **couldn't** figure it out. Yet I maintained an ongoing search for a logical understanding—*then I can know!* Here is the sequence of a recent exploration:

The Big Bang propelled protons (energy) through space about thirteen billion years ago. They were without mass as they dashed through the milder vibrations of Hicks

Field, which vibrates everywhere in space. But when they collided into special areas

of extremely high Hicks Field vibrations, these protons developed mass (a very high

vibration). This mass somehow caused particles of electrons and neutrons to surround (whirl around) the proton.

This caused the birth of atoms. The mass of these atoms clinging together, in different forms, became molecules. We consider molecules as matter. Perhaps this is how energy becomes matter, like my kitchen table or you! So, this solves the **chemistry** portion of my quest to understand God! Next—

Four Billion years ago, producing self-replicating organisms called amoebas. These evolved into higher forms of life such as fish, apes and homo sapiens. This solves the problem of **biology**. Well, sort of. - the homo sapiens started to form cultures about seventy thousand years ago—from then till now is what we call **history**.

But understanding all this leaves me in the dark. Did God create this process? Or did or did it spring out of nothingness? Where is the logical evidence of God? A mystery indeed! If I can't understand, how can I know? Someone said: "*The more I understand God, the less I know God.*"

But here's how: The Big Book tells of a Great Reality deep within (p. 55). Quite often while deep in prayer and/or meditation I begin to feel the tug—like the little boy with the kite I begin to develop faith. Faith can take me places totally denied to logic. The Big Book says if we are even willing to believe (faith), we begin to get results. I asked God to keep me sober from my first meeting on and I haven't had to drink since. I believe God is above and beyond all human understanding, yet there exists in me a deeper inner **knowing** that is beyond my understanding. "*It works—it really does*" (p. 88). ~ Bob S.

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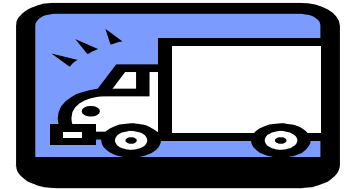


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