



## STEP SIX: Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

### Maybe Unwilling, But Ready

(Reprinted from November 1966 issue of *The Grapevine*, Vol. 23, #6 with permission of The A.A. Grapevine, Inc.)

The Sixth Step makes no sense at all except in the light of the preceding two Steps--Four and Five. Facing our load of psychic garbage and getting it out in the open is not an end in itself. It could be so only for one who enjoyed looking at his own filth. Rather, it is a means to the end of getting rid of enough of that garbage to enable us to endure sobriety in our worst moments and to derive progressively deeper joy from it at all other times.

If, as the Big Book says, "alcohol was but a symptom," and the root of the trouble is to be found in character defects such as selfishness, dishonesty and resentment, it follows that the issue is the removal of these defects. Two questions present themselves here: first, who does the removing, and, second, just how far do we have to go with the Step--obviously all sober people in AA are not perfect people.

The answer to the first question is a shocker to some people because, according to the Sixth Step, God is to be the one who does the removing of character defects. I have heard some strong arguments against this point. A friend of mine with twenty years of sobriety insists, "God didn't remove my character defects--I did!" Naturally, this man is welcome to his opinion; if it works for him, fine. But the point is that it is *not* the opinion of the first 100 people who recovered in the Fellowship. Their opinion is clearly and strongly stated in the Sixth Step, and it is *not* that I remove my own defects alone, and it is *not* that God helps me to remove my defects. It is that *God* removes my defects.

What the Step requires of me is readiness. Readiness and willingness are often confused in talking about this Step, and they are not the same. My AA sponsor often uses a comparison which I find useful in clarifying my thinking here. I may hate hospitals and be scared to death of the idea of surgery. But if my appendix is about to rupture, when the ambulance comes by, I get in and go. I don't want to go; I am unwilling to go; but I *am* ready. The Sixth Step works like that. It is possible to be ready to have these defects removed at many times when it is impossible to be willing.

Even readiness is a difficulty with some of the defects--usually the ones which are the most dangerous. For example, how many of us have had the attitude: God, you can take away all of my defects, but leave my love life to me; or, you can take away all of my defects, but I still have to lie in business to succeed. The way to handle such difficulties is not to justify them but to acknowledge them as blocks to taking the Sixth Step and ask God for strength to become ready in these areas.

As to the question of how far do we go with the Sixth Step, in view of the fact that this is a program of spiritual growth rather than spiritual perfection, two words in the Step hold the key. They are "entirely" and "all." My experience with the Step has been that as long as I was pretty much ready to have God remove most of my defects, nothing happened. When I became *entirely* ready to have Him remove *all* of them, things changed in my life for the better. I did *not* become perfect. But I *did* get enough relief to enable me to get sober and stay sober. I think that, as much as any other single Step, the Sixth Step taken on a thoroughgoing and continuing basis makes the difference between just staying dry and getting the strength to sustain a happy and meaningful sobriety.

— T. P., Jr. Hankins, New York

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St. Paul Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous®

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## **The Twelve Traditions: Tradition Six**

**An A.A. group ought never endorse, finance or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.**

We can say quite emphatically that neither AA as a whole nor any AA group ought to enter any other activity than straight AA. Groups, we cannot endorse, finance, or form any alliance with any other cause, however good; we cannot link the AA name to other enterprises in the alcohol field to the extent that the public gets the impression we have abandoned our sole aim. We must discourage our members and our friends in these fields from stressing the AA name in their publicity or appeals for funds. To act otherwise will certainly imperil our unity, and to maintain our unity is surely our greatest obligation—to our brother alcoholics and the public at large. Experience, we think, has already made these principles self-evident.

— A.A. Co-Founder Bill W., reprinted from *Language of the Heart*, pg. 44 with permission of A.A. Grapevine, Inc.

## **The Twelve Concepts: Concept Six**

**On behalf of A.A. as a whole, our General Service Conference has the principal responsibility for the maintenance of our world services, and it traditionally has the final decision respecting large matters of general policy and finance. But the Conference also recognizes that the chief initiative and the active responsibility in most of these matters should be exercised primarily by the Trustee members of the Conference when they act among themselves as the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous.**

Concept VI lays out the balance of responsibility between the General Service Conference as a whole and the General Service Board—the Trustees. Because the General Service Conference is made up of over 100 voting members, most of them volunteers, it is too big to handle the number of decisions that must be made each year for A.A. as a whole, and sometimes research and special knowledge are needed for some decisions. It is necessary to delegate some responsibility.

Our *Twelve Concepts\** book explains, "Just as the A.A. groups find themselves unable to act decisively respecting world service affairs unless they delegate a great amount of active authority and responsibility to their Conference, so must the Conference in turn delegate a liberal administrative authority to the General Service Board."

The role of the Trustees is described briefly in the *Twelve Concepts for World Service Illustrated\** pamphlet:

The trustees are also responsible for A.A.'s public information activities. They are the guardians of the Twelve Traditions. They are responsible for carrying the A.A. message to other countries around the world. They are A.A.'s "bankers," overseeing the financial operations and investing A.A.'s substantial Reserve Fund.

An early example of this kind of decision was in 1958 when the General Service Conference voted to remove the word "honest" from the A.A. Preamble. The General Service Board ratified the decision. You can see the original wording of the Preamble in the Foreword to the First Edition of the Big Book\*:

We are not an organization in the conventional sense of the word. There are no fees or dues whatsoever. The only requirement for membership is an honest desire to stop drinking.

— David K., *Beyond Jitters*

\*Quotes reprinted by permission of AA World Services, Inc.

### **2008 Steering Board**

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

### **Office Calls in April\***

Meeting information	214
Inventory/hours	40
12th step calls	19
Temporary sponsor	29
Speaker request	9
Special events	7
Outside issues	22
Info For Professionals	7
Administrative	106
Other	49
<b>Total Calls</b>	<b>502</b>
<b>Daily average</b>	<b>22.8</b>
Visitors	275

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

## Saint Paul AA Intergroup Representatives' Meeting Minutes, April 15, 2008

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 (see 24 attendees below)

The Primary Purpose of Intergroup was read by Patty S

March minutes were approved and accepted. (These are also available at [www.aastpaul.org](http://www.aastpaul.org) website)

Treasurer's Report. Diane E. A) March contributions \$3576; Sales \$5677—above budget for the year. Thanks to the 28 groups who contributed this month.

Office Report -- Tom N. A) Volunteers are needed—please take pink sheets to your groups. B) Part-time office position is open due to new hire resignation; applications are being taken and are available on website. C) Service opportunity available for an AA member who has Microsoft Access experience to help with speaker-appointment-setting program. Contact office manager.

Website Report – Jonathan. A) Has a volunteer to help with website; B) Please remember that postings are for AA events only—we do not post “non-AA” events (i.e.; fundraising dinners, bike rides, etc). C) Website report details are available on-line.

Outreach Program – No report.

Night Owl Report – Patty S. A) Handouts given out of many open shifts available, along with ‘Night Owl party’ guidelines; B) We need more people for backup .. had several missed shifts last month; C) Night Owl service opportunity reflects our Primary Purpose—please ensure we’re there to help the suffering alcoholic; D) Orientations are 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturdays or by appointment.

### Intergroup Events.

Spring Fling, April 19<sup>th</sup> – Come one, come all! Spaghetti Dinner + Alanon & AA Speakers + Dancing.

- Intergroup Open House will be held Saturday, June 21<sup>st</sup>; More details next month.

Old Business. A) By-Laws Committee – No report; still awaiting edits and legal review.

New Business. A) Next month’s meeting will include a Delegate’s Report from our Area Delegate, Scott A., who will be attending the annual General Service Conference in New York late April. Therefore, we will have a shortened agenda with Scott speaking at 8 PM for approx ½ hour.

Group Announcements or Concerns. None.

Concept Review (IV) – Thanks, Suzanne, for a great presentation.

Mock Rep Report -- Lesli D. gave a brief history & example of why we do the Mock Rep Report. (to inform our groups of highlights of the meeting, upcoming events, etc... keeping it brief)  
Closed with the Responsibility Statement and Lord’s Prayer.

### **Attendance**

Anthony C-New Brighton Sun AM	Don D-Sun St.Paul Spkr Mtg	Jeff T-Board Advisor	Lesli D-Board Secretary
Betsy-Happy, Joyous & Free	Ed M-Main Idea Sat AM	Joe B-OMD	Lisa L-Board At-Large
Chad D-Defogged Men’s	Garth M-Defogged Men’s	Jonathan-Web Servant	Mary Jo N-Board Alt Chair
Charlie S-NTPL	Jan B-McAlester/Plymouth	Judy H-none	Matt R-Rosemount AA
Diane E-Treasurer	Jeff C-Summit Hill	Julie M-Basic Txt	Suzanne-Mendota 10:30
Tom C - Shoreview 12x12	Tom N - Office Manager	Tom S - Board Chair	Walter - Como BB

*Next Meeting: Tuesday, May 20<sup>th</sup>. Same place, same time (7:30 PM) Delegate Report at 8 PM*

<p><b>7th Tradition Suggestions for Groups</b></p> <p>“Every group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.”</p> <p>Your group can make an informed decision regarding contributions with information from A.A. World Services. The information below is a suggestion taken from the Conference-approved pamphlet: “Self-Support: Where money and spirituality mix.”</p> <p><b>50% <u>St. Paul Intergroup</u></b>                  Spruce Tree Center                  1600 University Ave. #407                  St. Paul, MN 55104</p> <p><b>30% <u>General Service Office</u></b>                  P.O. Box 459                  Grand Central Station                  New York, NY 10163</p> <p><b>10% <u>Southern MN Area 36</u></b>                  Area Assembly                  P.O. Box 2812                  Mpls., MN 55402</p> <p><b>10% <u>District Committee</u></b></p> <p>Ramsey County:                  District 8, P.O. Box 2267                  St. Paul, MN 55102</p> <p>Dakota County:                  District 19, P.O. Box 1466                  Burnsville, MN 55337</p> <p>Washington County:                  District 15, P.O. Box 181                  Lake Elmo, MN 55042</p> <p>SE Ramsey County:                  District 26, P.O. Box 75980                  St. Paul, MN 55175</p>	<p><b><i>BE A NIGHT OWL !!</i></b></p> <p>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. <b>If you can help, call the office or go to our website: <a href="http://www.aastpaul.org">www.aastpaul.org</a></b></p> <p><b><u>District Meetings</u></b></p> <p><b>District 8 (Ramsey Co.)</b>                  Fairview Community Center                  1910 Co. Rd B, Rm 203, Roseville                  3rd Wed., 7:30 PM</p> <p><b>District 15 (Wash. Co.)</b>                  Christ Lutheran Church                  11194 N. 36th St., Lake Elmo                  4th Mon., 7:00 PM</p> <p><b>District 19 (Dakota Co.)</b>                  Rosemount Community Center                  13885 South Robert Trail                  2nd Wed., 7:00 PM</p> <p><b>District 26 (SE Ramsey Co.)</b>                  1099 Payne Ave. St. Paul                  2nd Fri., 6:00 PM  <a href="http://www.district26-area36.org">www.district26-area36.org</a></p> <p><b>Thanks to all the terrific volunteers who helped in the Office during April!</b></p> <p>Andy, Andy B., Anthony, Bill S., Brit M., Cara, Carolyn, Chris C., David K., Derrick, Dustin S., Eliot, Frank D., Gretchen, Holli, Jack, Jack R., Jackie, Jacque H., Jerry, Julie, Markien, Matt B., Mike B., Nick, Rebecca, Rob, Robin, Schell, Victor S.</p> <p>Thanks to all the Night Owl volunteers and groups as well!</p> 	<p><b>INTERGROUP INCOME FOR APRIL</b></p> <p>Number of Group Contributions: 38                  Total Group Contributions: \$4,307.75                  Number of Faithful Fivers: 18                  Total from Faithful Fivers: \$410.00</p> <p><b><i>“Thanks!” to the groups that contributed in April:</i></b></p> <p>As Bill W. Sees It                  Bayport Saturday 8 AM Serenity                  Burnsville Eagan Savage Sun PM                  Club 84 Groups                  Cottage Grove Groups                  Dakota Alano Sunday 8 PM                  Dakota Alano Wed. Roosters                  Defogged Men's Group                  Forest Lake Tues Men's                  Happy Hour Little Canada                  Happy Joyous &amp; Free                  Hastings Groups                  Highland Park Groups                  Just for Today Women's group                  Maplewood Groups                  Mendota Sat 10:30 Group                  Midway Groups                  Mon. AM Apple Valley Women's Group                  New Brighton Groups                  North Dale Group                  Observing Recovery Victoriously Group                  Outright Mental Defectives                  P.O.P.                  Primary Purpose Woodbury                  Ridge Runners II Group                  Roseville Wednesday Night Group                  Senior Chemical Dependency                  Shoreview Big Book Plus                  Short Stories Group                  South Suburban Groups                  St. Joseph Hudson Group                  The Firing Line Group                  Third Tradition Northfield                  Thurs. Night Lake Elmo Group                  Weekend Jumpstart II                  White Bear Groups</p>
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**The Lifeline: Purpose Statement**

*The Lifeline* is a monthly newsletter of the St. Paul and Suburban Area Intergroup Association office of Alcoholics Anonymous. It is about, by, and for members of the A.A. Fellowship. Opinions expressed herein are not to be attributed to A.A. as a whole, nor does publication of any article imply endorsement by either A.A. or Intergroup. (Exception: Quotations from A.A. books or pamphlets are reprinted with permission from A.A. World Services, Inc.; The A.A. Preamble is reprinted with permission of A.A. Grapevine, Inc.) We welcome articles of opinion or descriptions of personal experience, which should be sent to Lifeline Editor, St. Paul Intergroup, 1600 University Avenue #407, St. Paul MN 55104. Materials or articles cannot be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope. Intergroup reserves the right to edit submissions for clarity, language, length and contents that may violate A.A.'s Traditions, etc. The deadline is the 13th of the preceding month (i.e., submit a Tenth Step essay by the ninth month, September.)

# UPCOMING A.A. EVENTS!!

## Celebrating 40 Years of Service, 1968-2008 Minneapolis Intergroup

Saturday, June 14th, 12:30-4:30pm  
Union Congregational Church  
3700 Alabama Ave, St. Louis Park, 55416

## Twin Cities LGBT Roundup

June 13th, 14th & 15th  
Van Cleve Recreation Center  
901 15th Ave. SE, Minneapolis  
www.twincitiesroundup.com

## Midwest Motorcycle AA Convention

June 20th—22nd  
Emerald Acres Campground  
Pearl City, Illinois  
www.MMAAC.org

## St. Paul Intergroup Open House !!

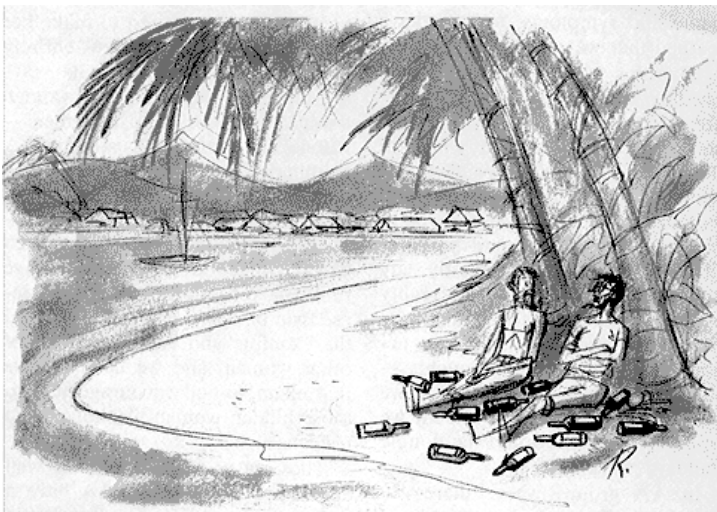
Saturday, June 21st, 11am to 3pm  
Spruce Tree Centre  
1600 University Ave. #407  
University at Snelling, St. Paul  
See the new office! Learn what Intergroup does!

## Area 36 Assembly

Saturday, 28 June 2008, 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM  
Best Western Victorian Inn, Hutchinson, MN  
More Info: [www.area36.org](http://www.area36.org)

## Hiawathaland Get-Together

August 29—31st  
Kahler Grand Hotel, Rochester, MN  
[h-land.org](http://h-land.org)



*"... after I got fed up with the Westchester groups, I tried a group in Manhattan until they turned out to be a bunch of phonies. Then I moved to Jersey and gave a Hoboken group a chance. After they failed to shape up, I tried groups in Missouri, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Nevada, California..."*

Cartoon reprinted from the A.A. Grapevine by permission.

## Dear Bill W.,

I feel I have some serious issues to face, but the people at the meetings are laughing like it's all a big joke. What gives?

— An Anonymous Drunk

"We have been speaking to you of serious, sometimes tragic things. We have been dealing with alcohol in its worst aspect. But we aren't a glum lot. If newcomers could see no joy or fun in our existence, they wouldn't want it. We absolutely insist on enjoying life."

From the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, p. 132.

## Is your meeting represented at Intergroup?

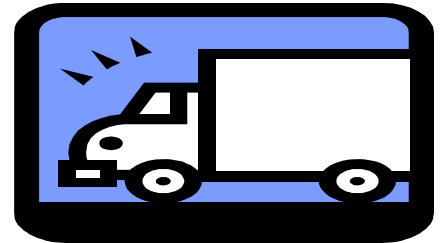
The May Representatives' meeting will be held June 17th, 7:30 pm,  
at the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, 285 N. Dale St., St. Paul, 55103.  
The church is located just south of I-94; from Dale turn west on Iglehart to park.

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

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



## St. Paul Intergroup Faithful Fiver Form

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

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**Please send this form and a check to:**

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

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

(please print clearly) \_\_\_\_\_