



**STEP ONE:** We admitted we were powerless over alcohol  
-- that our lives had become unmanageable.

Wow! Coming into AA was like déjà vu, all over again. Here were some rules/guidelines to follow, and then everything would fall into place, and I would be home again - in the Big Bed.

It would be hard to enumerate the number of times that I heard something akin to, I took the first three steps as I walked in the doors of AA, or I took the first three steps, prior to my coming to AA, otherwise, I would not have entered those doors. It was easy to believe that as truth, because I wanted to believe something as simple as that. Those types of phrases were echoed throughout the halls of AA, many times during my first few months. So I journeyed through the steps, as fast as I could, conquering them as I had other text books during my school and business years. After all, that was another phrase heard in meetings, the Big Book is a text, not a story book.

Confident that I was on the right path (and perhaps I was since I did not drink), I attended 9-10 meetings a week, because my employer had benevolently given me a sixty day, paid, leave of absence. There seemed to be a rush of new men that wanted what I had - really - and we were tripping onto or along the Road of Happy Destiny.

My moment of clarity about the surrender to Step One, came at about eleven months sober. First, I had gotten fired from that job as my actions had created havoc, and shortly after that, the wife/family divorced me. The action was taken when the four children said, "If you take him back, we are leaving."

I had acquired this new position and was progressing quite well, and in fact wrote a program that was accepted by this Texas company for nationwide use. I was to be honored in another city by the company president with an award and monies.

I was traveling from the office to my apartment to pack and catch the airplane. While driving alone, I mused that I could have a drink in that new city, since no one would know there. A voice (again, alone in the car) said, "but you will know." Looking around that small two-door car revealed that I was truly alone, and yet someone/something had said those words. It caused me to reflect that my life had changed in the past eleven months. Even though I had gotten fired by that employer of 16 years, and divorced from that wife of 19 years, my life was better.

I had acquired friends that were calling me on a regular basis just to visit. I had a new, better paying position that was infinitely more appealing than the former job and I was on the right side of happy, joyous and free. All of that considered, I noted that the one constant was no alcohol use in the past eleven months. Right then, in the car, I decided that alcohol and I did not mix, and that whether I was alcoholic, dipso maniac, or a plain drunk, it would be best if I never drank again.

To me, that was the beginning of my step work. But that is another story.

Tom McM.  
Big Book Study  
Squad Seven

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

**TRADITION ONE: Our common welfare should come first;  
personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.**

My drinking days were filled with divisive behavior. We did it my way, or I took my bat and ball and went home. Those times that I was out voted in a project, would get the very worst of my ability to make it succeed. Never, never realizing that by giving my all, that should the project not work, others would be prone to come to my choice since I had given my best to make the other choice good. On the other hand, if the project did succeed than my peers would be more open to my suggestions in the future. They would know me as a “team” member, not a “me” member.

The early days in A.A. proved difficult for me because of this habit that had been engrained for many years. It was pointed out to me by my sponsor and others than there was no “I” in Step One - the word was “We.” Gradually it came to me that had I been able to combat these predicaments, than I would not have needed A.A. Since I was not able to do this alone, than We must be the answer.

My opinion has a great deal of value to me, but the group is to be the basis of decisions, not one person. Simplicity in the program has been the watch word. And here in the group, it is never “I,” it is always “We.”

— Tom McM.

**CONCEPT ONE: The final responsibility and the ultimate authority for  
A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscious  
of our whole Fellowship.**

This concept has reference to Tradition Two, in that the group conscience in its unanimity will reflect thoughtful processing. Following the guidelines by listening to minority voices and allowing for all (not just the loudest) to discuss, will lend itself to open mindedness.

It is important than during any selection process for A.A. to be driven by principles and not personalities. This process is difficult for me, since my motives were self-serving, i.e. “Help me, and I will help you.” That type of thinking must be eliminated by the process of the preceding Twelve Steps.

The entire process of this concept is just that, no *one* in charge, the basis is that the Group and A.A. should hang together, lest one would hang alone.

— Thanks to Tom McM. for this contribution!

**2010 Steering Board**

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**Office Calls in November\***

Meeting information	147
Inventory/hours	32
12th Step calls	12
Temporary sponsor	35
Speaker request	25
Special events	8
Outside issues	51
Info for professionals	3
Administrative	164
Other	71
<b>Total Calls</b>	<b>558</b>
<b>Daily average</b>	<b>26.6</b>
Visitors	217

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

# UPCOMING A.A. EVENTS!!

**30th Annual Area 36  
Recovery, Unity & Service Conference**  
Best Western, 1111 Range Street  
North Mankato, MN  
**January 21—23**

Trudging the Road to Happy Destiny  
**2011 MEN'S RETREAT**  
January 28 to 30  
Horseshoe Bay Resort on Leech Lake  
[www.trhdretreat.org](http://www.trhdretreat.org)

**Ninth Annual  
Wild Rice Round-up  
January 21 - 23, 2011**  
Shooting Star Hotel & Casino, Mahnomen, MN  
[www.wildriceroundup.com](http://www.wildriceroundup.com)

47th Annual International Women's Conference  
"The Language of the Heart Will be Spoken Here"  
Anchorage, Alaska  
February 10 - 14, 2011  
<http://www.internationalwomensconference.org/>

**Southern Minnesota Area 36  
Trusted Servant Leadership Training  
Saturday, February 19, 2011**  
Peace Lutheran Church  
400 Franklin St. SW, Hutchinson, MN

**2011 West Central Region  
A.A. Service Conference  
March 4 - 6, 2011**  
Nisswa, Minnesota  
See [www.area36.org](http://www.area36.org)



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## Is your meeting represented at Intergroup?

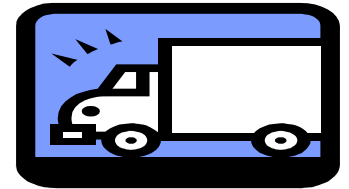
The January Representatives' meeting will be held Tuesday the 18th at 7:30 pm, at the Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 436 Roy St. N, St. Paul, 55104. The church is just south of the Spruce Tree Centre, across the street from the Intergroup office.

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

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