

The Lifeline



January 2016

24 Hour Phone: 651-227-5502

Volume 52, Issue 1

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

Pretty much everyone knows what's on page 417 in the Big Book. The paragraph on Acceptance (and the rest of that story) provide marvelous guidance on how I might live successfully without alcohol. But I've always liked the paragraph that precedes it for the approach to the First Step stated in it. What it says has always seemed to me the real key.

"At. Last, acceptance proved to be the key to my drinking problem...I was finally able to say, 'Okay, God. It is true that I—of all people, strange as it may seem, and even though I didn't give my permission—really, really am an alcoholic of sorts. And it's all right with me. Now, what am I going to do about it?'"

Whether you call it acceptance or surrender, either way it can be like magic. I'm an alcoholic, now what am I going to do about it? The longer that I've been able to remain sober thru the program of AA, the more I have come to believe that "now what?" is the most important question I've ever faced.

In my earlier, half-hearted and ultimately unsuccessful stabs at sobriety, if I ever bothered to ask myself "now what?" (and I probably didn't), the only answer I felt I needed was Don't Drink. And that's really just a negative answer. To not do something—especially something I really wanted badly to do—was for me just a negative way of continuing to live in the problem. Without further action, I was doomed to drink again, and I did.

"Doing something about it" meant more that just not doing something. It meant taking positive action and in the thick mental haze of early sobriety, it wasn't too clear what action that was. But my fellow AA's had suggestions based on their experience in sobriety, I was beaten down enough to listen and even try a few. In spite of myself, I began living in the answer.

Anonymous, St. Paul

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

Ships sailing together in a convoy must fulfill three basic requirements: They must be seaworthy; they must maintain the course and speed of the convoy, avoiding collisions with each other and with the ships of other convoys; they must have a common destination.

If you are still with me, I am visualizing the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous as a fleet of ships sailing in convoy, and the Twelve Traditions as a "sailor's manual" for a safe and successful voyage. Some of our Traditions are concerned with the structure and functioning—the seaworthiness—of the individual AA group. Some are safeguards against collision with other AA groups and with the public. And the Fifth Tradition charts our destination: service to the alcoholic who still suffers.

Most of us were first exposed to the Traditions at the group level. I had the good fortune to join a Traditions-minded group; and after a few days, when the alcoholic fog had lifted a bit, I began to take an interest in the group itself—how it functioned, who "ran" it, and so forth.

Almost immediately I found tangible evidence of the Traditions at work. I noticed a significant de-emphasis of special, individual interests, and a tendency to measure group decisions by their effect upon the welfare of the entire group. I observed that there were no potentates, that group officers were rotated frequently, and that they apparently derived what little authority they had from a powerful unseen force called the "group conscience." I learned that anybody who wants to stop drinking can join up—no entrance examinations, no credit reports, no initiation fee. Somewhat to my surprise, I discovered that the group paid its own way and was therefore free from outside pressures, answerable only to its members. As I continued to stay sober and was given the privilege of carrying the message of recovery to other alcoholics, I learned for myself the reason why the members of my group performed this service, not for pay, but in gratitude for their own sobriety.

It was and is a good group, a happy group, because its members are Traditions-minded and there are no bleeding deacons. Strong and lasting friendships are formed within the group; newcomers walk through the doors of its meeting place, like what they feel, and remain to stay sober; guest speakers and out-of-town visitors go away from its meetings with a warm glow in their hearts. The group has grown, it has prospered. It is a seaworthy vessel in the convoy...

I have come to believe that if we remain united in service, this will become a voyage upon which you and I and countless others who will join us can journey, with humility and gratitude, toward another kind of unity—with the Source of our sobriety.

-Jim K., Los Angeles, CA

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St. Paul Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous®

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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

Notes From your Board...

I've heard the analogy that recovery is a roaring campfire in the woods; it is warm, comforting, and safe. Beyond the fire, lurking in the woods, are the wolves of addiction: resentment, fear, worldly clamors, etc. So, stay near the fire.

When I was new to the program of AA, my sponsor "suggested" that I go to Intergroup and answer phones for the office. I'm not sure what compelled me to go through with it and not try to think up an excuse to get out of it, like, I'm too busy or something but I did it. I went through the training and did a few shifts. I thought this was fine at the time but was a little resistive about doing this too often. I was, after all, sober. I was really, truly, absolutely, honest to God, 100%, not making it up this time, not drinking, and I was going to meetings and liking it. Did I mention I was not drinking? So I wasn't so sure I needed to do all this "extra credit work" for AA. This was a whole new life for me and I had *stuff* I'd missed out on and needed to get done, so seriously, let's not get carried away with all this service stuff.

In my experience in the program I've had several sponsors. I didn't plan it that way but that's *my* experience in the program. Several of them have *suggested* that I get a home group and get a service commitment there, so, being a fearful people pleaser, when I heard about service commitments at groups I raised my hand wanting to a) be recognized as something special and b) looking for a way to belong. In my drinking I would often say yes to things if it seemed like what you wanted to hear and with every intention of doing, would fail to show up or I'd show up drunk. Looking back, I did this very, very often. I had once heard a speaker say that one of the most spiritual things you can do is, "be where you say you're going to be when you say you're going to be there". This is stuck in my mind and I'll have to say one of the biggest changes for me has been just that, if I say I'm going to do something, the chances are very good that I'll at least attempt it.

It turns out for me that doing all this service work is as much part of my program as anything else. I'm drawn to meetings that have lots of service commitments. My service work on the Intergroup Board is just making coffee and setting up chairs in a different format. I won't bore you with a list of all the service work I've done but let's just say, it's pretty impressive, *wink wink*. Service work is another tool in my sobriety tool kit, making coffee, setting up chairs or literature, answering phones, anything to get me out of self for a little while, to think of others, to quit thinking about myself, my problems, my life and make a little more room for God to get in there and heal me. Being of service keeps me in the middle of AA and I get to feel that sense of belonging that we all need. Service work helps me stay close to that roaring fire called recovery and reminds me not to stray too far away. I go to meetings and I've seen what happens to those who stop going to meetings. I realize I'm not any better at this sobriety thing than they are so I stay close to the fire, the warmth, the safety, because it's clear to me what the alternative is, because I'm an alcoholic.

Joe W., Treasurer

Notes From your Central Office...

The A. A. Unity our First Tradition addresses has been given a new challenge here in the St. Paul area recently. The closure of the Downtown Alano following their roof collapse in November displaced dozens of weekly AA meetings, and has been felt throughout our Fellowship in this area. Building repairs are still expected to take quite some time to complete. The club was insured, and is seeking a temporary space to house all of its groups until the building can re-open but as we write this in mid-December none has yet been found.

The Main Idea group has found a temporary location where they now hold 21 weekly meetings, but their time is limited there and they may need to pull up stakes again soon. Some other meetings have, so far, been held at residences of group members.

We are indebted to our Webservant for promptly posting updates on our website and online directory about this, and hope you will continue to be as up-to-date on this as can be. Meanwhile, please remember the Club and it's many group member in your prayers.

- Thanks, St. Paul Area AA!

<u>2016 Steering Board</u>		<u>Office Calls in November 2015</u>	
<u>Chair:</u>	Sandy K.	Meeting information	120
<u>Alt. Chair:</u>	Jenny S.	Inventory/hours	33
<u>Secretary:</u>	Scott L.	12th Step calls	6
<u>Treasurer:</u>	Joe W.	Temporary sponsor	15
<u>Alt. Treasurer</u>	Matt R.	Speaker request	30
<u>Members at Large 2016:</u>	Jestine M. & Mike C.	Special events	2
<u>Members at Large 2017:</u>	Catherine K. & J.D.	Outside issues	13
<u>Advisor to the Board:</u>	Tim B.	Info for professionals	2
<u>Office Manager:</u>	Frank N.	Administrative	75
		Other	39
		Total Calls	334
		Daily average	16.7
		Visitors	231

UPCOMING A.A. EVENTS!!

<p>Southern Minnesota Area 36 Recovery, Unity & Service Conference <i>Our Spiritual Way Of Life</i> DoubleTree—Park Place St. Louis Park, MN Friday, January 15th - Sunday 17th, 2016 For more info: www.area36.org</p>	<p>14th Annual Wild Rice Roundup “Lose Your Winter Blues” Shooting Star Hotel & Event Center Mahnomon, MN Friday, January 8th - Sunday, January 10th, 2015 www.wildriceroundup.com</p>
<p>WICYPAA XXIII “A New Freedom” Madison Marriot West Middleton, WI Friday, January 8th—Sunday, January 10th www.WICYPAA.org</p>	<p>Southern Minnesota Area 36 Area Committee Meetings Best Western North Mankato, MN Saturday, February 20th - 9:30 AM - 5:30PM For more Info: www.area36.org</p>
<p>Trudging the Road to Happy Destiny 2016 Men’s Retreat Horseshoe Bay Resort Leech Lake, MN Friday, January 29th - Sunday, January 31st www.trhdretreat.org</p>	<p>Minneapolis Intergroup 33rd Annual Gratitude Night Minneapolis Convention Center Saturday, February 27th, 6:30PM - Midnight www.aaminneapolis.org</p>
<p>The DOWNTOWN ALANO <i>New Temporary Location</i> <i>Beginning Sunday, January 3rd</i> <i>All regularly schedule meetings resume</i> 220 South Robert Street (corner of Plato & Robert) St. Paul, MN 55107</p>	<p>MAIN IDEA <i>will be moving to a new temporary location</i> <i>beginning Thursday, December 31st</i> The First Baptist Church of St. Paul 499 Wacouta Street (9th & Wacouta) Saint Paul, MN 55101</p>
<p><u>Group and Area News</u></p> <p>New Group: The <i>Soberfish</i> AA group has begun a step meeting on Sundays at 10 am at the Canvas Health building at 7066 Stillwater Blvd. N. in Oakdale.</p> <p>New Meeting: A new Big Book meeting is occurring at the Fellowship Club, 680 Stewart Ave., in St. Paul on Mondays at 8 pm.</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 16th, February 20th, & March 18th
10:00 AM - 11:00 AM**

St. Paul Intergroup Office
1600 University Ave. W. - Suite #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 17th, 2015

Opened with the Serenity Prayer, introductions, and Sergey read the Primary Purpose of Intergroup.

Minutes from last month were reviewed and approved, John motioned and Matt seconded.

Treasurer's Report, John M gave the treasurer's report. Bank account total is \$22,270 and prudent reserve is \$45,006. Total contributions are down. Overall, net income of \$2,217. Contact John M at treasurer@aastpaul.org

The Office Report, on 11/11 part of the Downtown Alano club's roof collapsed. 60 weekly meetings were displaced. Timeline for repairs forthcoming. Some Main Idea meetings being held at the Assumption Church. 40 groups and 21 individual Faithful Fivers contributed to St. Paul Intergroup. Email Lifeline humor section content to lifeline@aastpaul.org. Contact Frank N at manager@aastpaul.org

The Website Report, 687 meetings/280 groups, down 2 meeting/3 groups. Need volunteers for website programming. Need meeting directory field verifiers. Welcome to Sergey, new backup web servant. Service opportunities and Night Owl opportunities are on the website. See website for guidelines on posting events. Contact Jonathan at webservant@aastpaul.org

Outreach Program, need volunteers to visit meetings never visited. Contact Jistine M at outreach@aastpaul.org

Update from the Board, Sandy K, upcoming Gratitude Night.

Night Owl Report, Leslie D, reminder to Groups to let Office or Leslie know of coordinator changes, Night Owl Orientation is every third Sa at 10 a.m. in the Office. See website for open shifts. Contact Leslie D at nightowl@aastpaul.org or Frank N at manager@aastpaul.org

Liaison Reports, none tonight due to board elections

Upcoming Intergroup Events, Gratitude Night, Sa 11/21, Mt. Zion Church, speakers Pat N and 1-year speaker, Founder's Day Weekend, 11/27-29, DoubleTree in St. Louis Park, New Year's Eve, Th 12/31, 7pm speaker Pat B; 9pm-12am dance, band Ramshackle Charmers, Recovery Church

Old Business, 2016 budget presented by John M, to be voted on in Dec, Night Owl policy on 12 Step calls, Board to follow-up in Dec.

New Business, Board Elections, Bruce and Keith officiated, the following people were elected: Alt. Chair, Jenny S; Alt. Treasurer, Matt R; Secretary, Scott L; Member at Large, Catherine K; and Member at Large, James D. Welcome new members and thank you to all the outgoing members for your dedication and service.

Group AA Announcements, Alfred shared that some Main Idea mtgs in old limestone bldg. behind the church. Shawn shared that Maplewood Alano has monthly Sa Night Live meeting 11/21 with food and speaker.

Suggestions for next months's agenda, Terry H notes Night Owl policy on callers under age 18.

Grapevine Report, none tonight due to board elections, volunteer for Dec, Jistine M

Concept XI, none tonight due to board elections, volunteer for Dec, Paul T

Mock Rep Report, none tonight due to board elections, volunteer for Dec, Shawn

Closed with the Responsibility Statement

ATTENDANCE:

Tim B., Board Chair	Sandy K., Alt. Chair	Scott L., Secretary	John M., Treasurer	Joe W., Alt. Treasurer	Hillary B., Member at Large
Paul T., Member at Large	Mike C., Member at Large	Jistine M., Member at Large	Christa w., Board Advisor	Frank N., Office Manager	Jonathan L, Webservant
Jill J., Como Park BB	Mike C., Defogged Men	Dan R., District 19	Catherine K., Fireside Women's Grp.	John K., Gratitude in Action	Chris P., Happy, Joyous & Free
Mugsy A., Hole in the Doughnut	Debbie H., Look To This Day	Alfred K., Main Idea	David S., Main Idea	Shawn Y., Maplewood Groups	James D., New Brighton Big Book
Kalene M., Pocketing Our Pride	Paul W., OMD	Kaleen M., Pocketing Our Pride	Kyle H., Problem & Solution	Matt R., Rule 62	Meghan K., Students of Life
Jenn B., Summit Hill	Michael C., Uptown Groups				

**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: 38
Total Group Contributions: \$3551
Number of Faithful Fivers: 23
Total from Faithful Fivers: \$486

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

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

Bob B., Brian V., Burt K.,
Deborah L., Frank D.,
Henry O., Haley T., Hilary J.,
Jason S., Jessica W., Jim C.,
Johni B., Jon H.,
Mike B., Nancy D.,
Nicole L., Steve H.,
Steve W., Suzanne B., Ty

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



**Thanks to the groups that
contributed in November
2015**

- 12x12 By the Book
- A Way Out
- Amigos III
- Anoka Day By Day
- Apple Valley Daily Reflections
- Basic Text
- Cannon Falls Group
- Como Park BB
- Dakota Alano Monday 6 PM BB
- Dakota Alano Wed AM Roosters
- Eagan Burnsville Savage Groups
- Fairmount Group
- Fellowship Friday Group
- First Things First
- Forest Lake Alano
- Happy Joyous and Free
- Happy Joyous and Free II
- Hastings Club
- Highland Park Groups
- Hole in the Donut Group
- Hudson Alano Society
- January 6th Group- Roseville
- Lakeville Hope Community
- Little Canada Happy Hour
- Look to This Day
- Mahtomedi Tuesday Step
- Meeting of the Waters
- MNYPAA
- No Time Like The Present
- Roseville Centennial Group
- Ship Of Fools Group
- Sons of Serenity
- Summit Hill
- Third Tradition Northfield
- This Simple Program
- Uptown Club
- White Bear Wed AM Women's
- Women's 12 x 12 Study Monday

The Lifeline: Purpose Statement

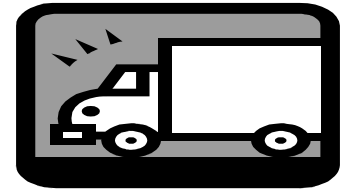
The Lifeline is the monthly newsletter of the St. Paul and Suburban Area Intergroup Association office of Alcoholics Anonymous. It is about, by, and for groups and members of the A.A. Fellowship. Opinions expressed herein are not to be attributed to A.A. as a whole, nor does publication of any article 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

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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* - Enrollment Form

Faithful Fivers graciously contribute \$5.00 or more to St. Paul Intergroup each month to enable us to continue to carry our 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