



STEP 2

“Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.”

Embracing the Second Step: A Journey of Willingness, Trust, and Sobriety

For me, the second step: “Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity” is vital to a strong foundation in recovery. I got started with the second step by understanding one simple thing; the belief, faith of God, capital G, Christian, Jewish, Islamic, or otherwise, is not necessary. To say we put down any religious affiliation with this, “AA is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution”. A common misunderstanding of the word God, Power greater than, Higher Power, these words are simply not affiliated. Now onto the importance. Faith, trust, reliance, synonyms of these words, this step simply does not state. This is vital to step two. We are not required to believe yet. Not required to have faith, not even required to accept God. There is no need for shape, sound, idea, or ideals. In other words “become willing, to become willing, that there may be something or someone out there, that

is greater than I.” Secondly, “Possibly that thing could help me, in sobriety, in recovery, in my life - in some kind of way.”. When I got sober, that translation is how I lived this second step. I did not know whether this Power above would do anything for me. What I did know and feel was a complete relief, and reprieve from alcohol. I no longer felt I was holding myself on a leash from the drink; as the BB states “The problem was removed entirely.” Through the first step I had accepted that I had zero control over my drinking, both the first drink and all drinks after the first. I needed that part to be fully complete before I could work step two. Through painful, miserable, trial and error, trying to control my drinking never worked no matter how badly I wanted to stop, and one way or another no matter how much help I received I always ended up drunk. Then how could I ever stop drinking, and what kept me sober these couple weeks leading to step two? Surely it could not have been myself, so maybe there is something greater than myself helping me out, simple as that. So, if there’s anything at all I can do to save myself, or be saved from the drink, I might as well at least try to rely on this Higher Power. If He’s even there, or listening. He’s gotten me this far. As much as I hated to admit it, this Higher power was my last hope, and he showed up keeping me from the bottle.

The Lifeline is the monthly newsletter of the St. Paul and Suburban Area Intergroup, Inc. 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 St. Paul Intergroup. We welcome articles on a Step, Tradition or Concept, in addition to descriptions of personal experience. We also welcome original cartoons and drawings expressing the wry side of A.A. experience.

Please email your article to Lifeline@aastpaul.org or send it by regular mail to Lifeline Editor, St. Paul Intergroup, 33 Wentworth Ave E, Suite 355, W. St. Paul, MN 55118-3431. 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.

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TRADITION 2

«For our group purpose there is but one authority - a loving god as they may express themselves in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern.»

Tradition Two: Surrendering to the Group Conscience

Tradition two asks us to turn the authority of our group purpose over to a higher power, paralleling the personal surrender I made with my will and my life in step three. It is this surrender that allows us to participate in a spiritual and democratic process to serve a greater purpose and help the still suffering alcoholic. If we place the authority of the group in the hands of a higher power, we prevent the personalization of AA and deny ego from becoming our leader. But how does this practically work? How does a higher power serve as the authority of the group? Tradition two tells us it happens in the group conscience “when alcoholics gather and share openly on the issues at hand, we allow a power greater than ourselves to overcome personal opinions and carry on as the group believes is best.” This means for a group to have any authority, the group must first determine what that conscience is. In the homegroups I have been a part of, this has been done in many different ways, but the examples that stick out to me are business meetings, group inventories, and elections.

First, by holding business meetings, sometimes called “group conscience meetings,” we discuss business needed to keep the group running - hold elections for service positions, find volunteers for service commitments, pay bills, and distribute splits. Sometimes, the topics can be more controversial - moving meeting locations, changing the meeting script, or enforcing a timer. My first homegroup would discuss issues at length and followed Robert’s Rules of Order to maintain decorum. Our discussion on introducing a timer stretched over 3 months of 2 hour long business meetings! As a newcomer, it seemed arduous, even pointless to carry on this discussion. But my sponsor and other “elder statesmen” of the group explained the importance of finding the group conscience. We would not vote so long as new points were brought up and the “call to question” did not pass. Once discussion was depleted and the motion voted on, we would open the floor to “minority opinion” giving those voting in the minority the opportunity to speak and allow anyone in the majority to change their

This passage paints a nice picture for my step two: “Just after Skywalker fails to get his X-wing fighter out of the swamp using the Force, Yoda takes over, lifts it out and sets it on the beach. Skywalker is dumb-founded. He says, “I don’t believe it.” And Yoda says. “That’s why you fail.” (The Dark Night of Recovery - Conversations from the Bottom of the Bottle). This is a man named Bob, You know, Lawyer Bob speaking to Tyler (Who assigned him this movie), about what he learned about Step Two from watching the Empire Strikes Back. His findings seriously blew my mind, and entirely changed my outlook on what the second step looked like for me. Not only that, I can learn these valuable recovery lessons and be present and spiritual doing anything at all. Hell I could watch my favorite series on Netflix and gain some perspective, not to say I’ll hold onto the perspective though. The gist here is simple. I must, must, must, believe before I can even think to expect to see any change, and even then belief without action won’t do me much good. As the Big Book says “Faith without works is dead.” I know It’s really nerdy with all the quoting, but our shared collective of wisdom and knowledge is what keeps us keeping each other sane. So take what you can and leave the rest for later. The Big Book also said that but I’m taking it for myself. Au revoir!

- Milo CE

St. Paul

One More Was Added to the Fellowship

vote. This process takes time and ensures nothing in AA happens quickly. But it also ensures that every voice has an opportunity to speak and have equal value in the group. It is through this discussion that we as a group can put aside our personal opinions and listen to others. If everyone in a group practices this open mindset, we arrive at the group conscience - our "ultimate authority." I have since participated in many of these lengthy discussions - at the group, district, and area levels. I am still amazed that through fiery voices, timid voices, and sorrow full voices, I can hear something bigger than ourselves guiding us as we come to a resolution that reflects all of us. This may sound overly optimistic to those new in the program - of course those who voted against a motion are going to feel hurt and angry when it passes. And yes, this may be true - I have found myself in that position many times - but personally I find it easier to accept when I see the careful process the group went through to reach a final decision and I can rest easier if I believe the group conscience carries louder than my own voice.

Tradition two begins, "For our group purpose." What is our group purpose? Can one group's purpose be different from another? This is where, for me, the group inventory process comes in. For larger guidance on a group's purpose or when the group seems overly divided on issues, inventory is a process we are all familiar with to help sort the good from the bad and find the truth about ourselves. The pamphlet "The AA Group - where it all begins" outlines 13 questions a group can ask itself in an inventory process. My homegroups have generally set a day aside from our regular meeting and business meeting for homegroup members to discuss these questions. Because this discourse does not involve any specific motions, it allows group members to speak openly about what the purpose of the group should be, and how well we are serving that purpose. We look at how we are falling short and what could be done to correct it. Some groups participate in inventory annually. Just as in my personal recovery, I have found value in having regular inventory to reevaluate group principles and spark action within a group - leading to many motions in the months after.

Finally, Tradition two states, "Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern." What does it mean to be a trusted servant? Elections are an important aspect of any democratic process. Within a group, we often hold elections for our officers - general service representatives (GSRs), secretary, treasurer, chairperson, etc. There is much to be said about this topic, such as the "spirit of rotation", third legacy procedure, and other topics you can read about in the AA Service Manual. However, Bill W. chose to focus on a different aspect of

leadership in the "Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions". Bill W. brings up the transitory phase every group goes through; where a new group is started by a small number of people, maybe even one person, and it grows. With new homegroup members, there are new opinions, personalities, and values. This can be a difficult position for the founder(s) of a group; as the group begins to change, a leader may try to control or arrest the growth of the group conscience - Bill W. calls these "bleeding deacons". They may rotate from position to position, remaining as an officer to maintain a sense of authority. This resistance to tradition two's "ultimate authority" (the group conscience) can lead to hurt people and a dwindling group. Usually, the founder(s) will realize, step back, and allow the group conscience to grow, recognizing it is only the ego that wishes to control. Surrendering to a place of respect rather than authority, a group founder can be a helpful voice in times of divide and here they themselves grow into an "elder statesmen." A few things I have learned through others in service: When I hold a position as a trusted servant, I try only to help the group find its conscience - through business meeting discussions, group inventories, and elections. Though I may have opinions I wish to be heard, I remember my opinion holds the same value as every individual. When I vote, I vote last - as to not influence the vote through some assumed authority. When I represent the group at a lower level - district, area - I don't vote my opinion on floor items, I vote as I believe my group would. Some of these simple things I have heard help me set aside my ego and act as a trusted servant. I have had the opportunity to move many times in recovery and experience service in several homegroups. Everywhere I show up, I find groups working together to serve their purpose - to help the still suffering alcoholic.

- Scott S

St. Paul

One More Was Added to The Fellowship

Service Work: The Heartbeat of AA

Why Service Matters in AA?

Service is the lifeblood of Alcoholics Anonymous. It's not just about giving back; it's about keeping the fellowship alive, supporting each other in sobriety, and fostering a sense of community.

Connectivity & Fellowship

Service work is the glue that binds our large community together. By actively participating in service roles, you contribute to the unity and strength of AA. It's a chance to form lasting connections with others who understand the journey to sobriety.

Keep the Miracle Alive

Service work is the heartbeat of AA, ensuring the continuation of the miracle of recovery. When we actively engage in service, we help others stay sober, and in turn, it reinforces our own commitment to a life of recovery.

GSRs Wanted!

Our district needs Group Service Representatives (GSRs) from meetings like yours. Be the voice of your group at the district level and play a crucial role in decision-making processes.

Open Chairs & Positions

There are open positions waiting to be filled. Your skills and commitment are needed to keep our meetings running smoothly.

Meeting Info

- Find your district and times on the Area 36 webpage at area36.org.
- St. Paul Intergroup Board and Reps Meeting: every 3rd Tuesday at 7:30 PM.

Get Involved!

Whether you're a newcomer or a seasoned member, there's a service role for you. Step up, be a part of the solution, and keep AA vibrant and strong.

For more information about how to be of service in AA General Service, speak with your sponsor or visit the area36.org webpage, or reach out to intergroup and the volunteers and staff will be happy to direct you to ways to be of service to Alcoholics Anonymous.

THOUGHTS FROM THE BOARD

Service, Unity, And Recovery

Service, unity, and recovery. I've always liked to view these as the three legs of a tripod when it comes to my recovery. Holding me up on solid ground to better see the bigger picture. Each one of them has impacted my recovery in significant ways at different times of my life. Each one of them pulling me back into the program and reminding me why I am here.

Unity was the first thing that was prominent in my recovery. Coming to the rooms, feeling alone, and having nobody, I quickly found a fellowship. People that were like-minded, who shared the same experiences as me. We all came from different backgrounds, but we shared the same disease. They had shown me what it was like to have fun and really just how to live without alcohol. They reassured me that I wasn't alone in this. They were the first reason I kept coming back.

In that fellowship of people, I found somebody that I admired for their demeanor, where they were at in life and for how they spoke of the steps. I asked that person to be my sponsor. Which brings me to recovery. Having gotten to work the steps multiple times, I continue to

learn more about myself and things that I get to work on. My sponsor helped me through the first 164 pages of the big book and now I have that privilege of working with others as well. Eight years ago, I knew nothing of myself, and I was lost. Today I find myself still lost some days, but I've been given the tools to find serenity in that.

The days that I feel most lost, I've learned that I get to look towards being of service as a way to get out of my own head. Being of service has looked different to me at different stages of my recovery throughout the years. In the beginning it looked like bringing friends to meetings, refilling the coffee, picking up after a meeting, sharing in meetings and showing up to events. Recently, I found a need to get out of my comfort zone and that brings me too Intergroup. Being on the board is all new to me but that's what makes it so exciting to me and I look forward to seeing what I can bring to the board.

Service, unity, and recovery. Like a tripod, they each hold me up with the same strength putting me closer to my higher power. Without me sowing into each, I surely will fall.

- Ricky G.

Alternate Board Chair



SAVE

**AREA 36 &
DISTRICT 15
JOINT
GRAPEVINE
WORKSHOP**

MARCH 16,
2024

THE

DATE

**CHRIST LUTHERAN
CHURCH LAKE ELMO**

11194 36th St N
Lake Elmo, MN 55042

SELF-SUPPORT 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

33 Wentworth Ave E.
Suite 355
West St. Paul, MN 55118-3431

30% General Service Office

P.O. Box 2407
James A Farley Station
New York, NY 10116-2407

10% Southern MN Area 36

Southern Minnesota Area Assembly
P.O. Box 2812
Mpls., MN 55402-0812

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

WAYS TO FINANCIALLY SUPPORT INTERGROUP

1. VIA SQUARE

Use the camera on your phone to scan this QR code to be redirected to the SPI contribution webpage :



2. VIA CHECK

You are always welcome to stop by during business hours, or mail a personal or AA group check to the office at:

Saint Paul Intergroup
33 Wentworth Ave E, Ste 355
West St. Paul, MN
55118-3431

AREA 36 PINK CAN PLAN

THE PINK CAN PLAN COLLECTS FUNDS TO PURCHASE AA LITERATURE FOR ALCOHOLICS IN CORRECTIONS FACILITIES IN SOUTHERN MINNESOTA.

MAIL CONTRIBUTIONS TO:

**PINK CAN PLAN
PO BOX 41633
PLYMOUTH MN 55441-0633**

Friends in Recovery

CLEAN AND SOBER FUN FOR THE RECOVERING FAMILY
friendsinrecovery.org Twin Cities Minnesota



Annual Banquet



Saturday, February 17th, 2024

Gathering starts at 6:30pm - Fellowship
Dinner is at 7:00pm - Buffet Dinner.
Speaker is, Travis W., at 8:00pm

First Lutheran Church
463 Maria Ave, St Paul, MN 55106

Advanced Tickets required.

Cost is \$35.00 Per Person.
Contact Steve or Barb for tickets.

snasteven@aol.com
barb.madigan@yahoo.com
friendsinrecovery2@gmail.com

DISTRICT SERVICE MEETINGS

2024 INTERGROUP BOARD OF DIRECTORS

District 8 (Ramsey Co.)

Fairview Community Center
1910 Cty. Rd B West, Rm 108
Roseville
3rd Wed., 7:00 PM
Email: dist8@area36.org (for Zoom info)

District 15 (Washington Co.)

Christ Lutheran Church
11194 N. 36th St.
Lake Elmo
4th Mon., 7:00 PM
Email: dist15@area36.org (for Zoom info)

District 19 (Dakota Co.)

Rosemount Community Center
13885 South Robert Trail
Rosemount
2nd Wed., 7:00 PM
dist19@area36.org
Email: dist19@area36.org (for Zoom info)



LOOKING FOR A SERVICE OPPORTUNITY?

Become a St. Paul Intergroup Night Owl

If you are interested - Contact:
Nightowl@aastpaul.org
to schedule training.

St. Paul Intergroup Office
33 Wentworth Ave E, Suite 355
West St. Paul, MN 55118-3431
To RSVP - please call 651-227-5502

Advisor to the Board: Elliot W.

Board Chair: Kelly K.

Alt. Board Chair: Ricky G.

Treasurer: Devin R.

Alt. Treasurer: Brittani G.

Secretary: Alex S.

Members at Large:

Mary U.

John K.

Brandon H.

Office Manager: Frank N.

Webservant: Jonathan L.

Night Owl Coordinator: Lesli D.

GREEN CAN PLAN

**PLEASE HELP PROVIDE AN ASL
INTERPRETER AT AN AA MEETING IN
DISTRICT 8**



CHECKS CAN BE SENT TO

ASL FUND

PO BOX 131831

ROSEVILLE, MN 55113-0020

OR

CONTRIBUTE ELECTRONICALLY

VENMO @ASLFund-DistrictEight

Contact District 8 ASL Fund Coordinator

HOOTS!

THANK YOU, OWLS! A big thanks to all of our Night Owls for their service to Intergroup and the still suffering alcoholic!

Need a service opportunity?

a) Take a regular shift. As of 1/1/24, there are 4 Open shifts available on a monthly basis:

- Third Tuesday, 5:30 PM — 10:00 PM
- Fourth Tuesday, 5:30 PM — 10:00 PM
- Fourth Friday, 10:00 PM — Saturday 9:00 AM
- Fifth Friday, 5:30 PM — 10:00 PM

Requirements:

- * 1 year sobriety
- * Night Owl Orientation (offered monthly)

b) Night Owl Committee volunteers. We currently have 5 people on the committee and would love to add more in the spirit of rotation.

- The Night Owl Committee members take turns carrying the back-up phone for one week at a time. We help out if volunteers have issues and we also make the reminder calls/texts daily.
- Time commitment is approximately 10-15 min/day.
- Requirements:
- 1 year sobriety
- Answer the back-up phone during your rotation
- Experience with Night Owl
- 2 yr commitment

If interested in either of these, please send an email to nightowl@aastpaul.org

Thank you!

Night Owl Committee Members: Lesli D, Rachel P, Cheryl B, Steve B, and Paul C.

St. Paul & Suburban Area Intergroup, Inc.

@SPIntergroup

Fell Free To Vist our
online store at :

aaspi.company.site



venmo

You can also donate on
our website directly at:

www.aastpaul.org

Office Frank D.
Volunteers Jenna L.
 Adam
 Bernie Jake
 David D.
 Shaun L. Thanks to you all!
 Jane H.
 Lynn E. And Thanks to our many Night Owl volunteers as well.
 Hoot Hoot!

THE FOLLOWING GROUPS, MEMBERS AND FAITHFUL FIVER MEMBERS MADE

THE SERVICE OF INTERGROUP POSSIBLE LAST MONTH:

- 39 A.A. Groups contributed - \$6,356.45
- 44 Faithful Fivers contributed - \$12,136.75
- Total Contributions - \$18,493.20

Farmington Groups
 Clay City AA
 Hope Church - Monday AA
 Grovers Thursday Night
 Third Edition Group
 Stillwater Rivertown BB Group Sun
 Pages of Wisdom
 Fuente De Vida group
 11 W. Bernard Group
 Little Canada AA
 Maplewood Groups
 Ringmaster's Group
 Uptown Group
 This Simple Program
 Midway Club
 Summit Hill
 Hillside Friday Night AA
 Saturday Morning Womens Group
 North Dale Group
 Happy Joyous and Free - Mahtomedi

Shoreview 12 x 12
 Forest Lake Alano
 Monday Night BB - River Falls
 Most Important Thing Group--Roseville
 Rivertown Big Book - Hastings
 CRC Friends of Bill W.
 Wednesday Night Men's 12 x 12
 Burnsville - Primary Purpose
 Elements Group
 Hugo Group
 It's Seven Somewhere
 Defogged Men's Group
 Lake Elmo Thurs Night Group
 Downtown Alano Squad 50
 The Alano Club of Rosemount MN
 Forest Lake Alano
 No Time Like the Present

*Thank You So
Very Much!*



Meeting
Info Calls

35



12th Step
Calls

2



Speakers
Calls

1



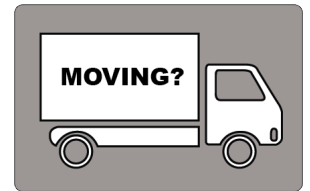
Office
Calls
46

St. Paul & Suburban Area Intergroup
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Suite 355
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Please let us know a month in advance if your address changes. 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 **Individual Contribution** Enrollment Form

Your Intergroup strives to be self-supporting, and with your personal support we can 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. Please consider becoming one of our *Faithful Fivers* (\$5.00/month), *Terrific Tennes* (\$10.00/month), or *Fantastic Fifteeners* \$15.00/month).

1. Contact Information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: ____ ZIP: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

2. Amount & Frequency:

Amount \$ _____

Frequency: (check one)

Monthly Quarterly Bi-Annually Annually

Start on: ____/____/____

Faithful Fiver (\$5.00/month)

Terrific Tenner (\$10.00/month)

Fantastic Fifteener (\$15.00/month)

3. Choose a Payment Method:

Credit Card/Debit

Visa MasterCard AMEX Discover

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
33 Wentworth Ave E, Suite 355
West St. Paul, MN 55118-3431