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Promise Four

We will know peace.

Recovery

Step Four

"Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves."

How instincts can exceed their proper function. Step Four is an effort to discover our liabilities. Basic problem of extremes in instinctive drives. Misguided moral inventory can result in guilt, grandiosity, or blaming others. Assets can be noted with liabilities. Self-justification is dangerous. Willingness to take inventory brings light and new confidence. Step Four is beginning of lifetime practice. Common symptoms of emotional insecurity are worry, anger, self-pity, and depression. Inventory reviews relationships. Importance of thoroughness.

Unity Tradition Four

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

Every group manages its affairs as it pleases, except when A.A. as a whole is threatened. Is such liberty dangerous? The group, like the individual, must eventually conform to principles that guarantee survival. Two storm signals - a group ought not do anything which would injure A.A. as a whole, nor affiliate itself with outside interests. An example: the "A.A. Center" that didn't work.

Service

Concept Four

At all responsible levels, we ought to maintain a traditional "Right of Participation," allowing a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge.

Things to Do Instead of Step 4:

Grapevine, April 2011

Here I am: I have six years of sobriety, I've done all the Steps, I call my sponsor on a regular basis, I go to meetings, I have a home group and I reach out to newcomers. My problem is that I have a huge resentment against someone. Well, it isn't entirely accurate to say I have a resentment, because the reality is that I have a list of resentments that's about five pages long.

I'd like to tell you all the reasons that justify my anger against the guy, but I'll save that for my sponsor. In my defense, I worked for him for four years.

The fact that I'm writing this instead of finishing my Fourth Step is not lost on me. There is an indefinite amount of other very important things I need to do as well: change my sheets, file my bank statements, develop a roll of film, watch television.

I don't remember my first Fourth Step being nearly as torturous. I was still in my first ninety days of sobriety, I think. My then sponsor and I were reading the Big Book together and, when we got to page 65, she told me to follow the example and start writing down my resentments. I hadn't heard any horror stories about the difficulty of the Fourth Step yet, about people getting drunk when they put it off. I couldn't figure out how writing down my resentments would constitute a fearless and thorough moral inventory, but I was willing to do it anyway. I hadn't known the great relief I'd feel after doing the Fifth Step with my sponsor, even if she had to help me figure out what most of my own wrongs were. My first taste of serenity followed.

Holding onto resentments steals my serenity every time. However, I sometimes still don't see them developing—I frequently exert an uncanny ability to decide I'm just thinking about something rather than admit it's a resentment.

My first sponsor used to say, "Don't think," and that's some of the best advice I've ever heard in AA.

Here's one way to find out you have a huge resentment against somebody: See the guy at church. Ouch.

Dealing with resentments is not an easy task and I'm learning that it's much easier to do a daily Tenth Step. That way, I'm promptly admitting my wrongs and not putting my sobriety at risk, leaking negativity onto people I actually like, not to mention taking up my sponsor's valuable time for yet another Fifth Step.

I know finishing this Fourth will be worth it. It always is. There are other gifts, beside the relief that comes with no longer carrying such a heavy load. The Steps that follow have actually removed some of my more glaring character defects, allowing me to be a better friend, worker, sister and daughter.

Needless to say, I trudge the road of happy destiny, rather slowly sometimes. Doing the next right thing means finishing this Fourth Step—and being willing to admit my wrongs so I can get my serenity back! - Ariel M., Tucson, AR

Many Ways to Do It Grapevine, April 2020

A member shares his experience with the concept of autonomy

When I was drinking, I had this idea that the word "autonomous" meant something like proud, isolated and alone. I considered myself autonomous and I had this picture of myself as being a person outside the crowd, someone who everyone was

maybe frightened of but definitely impressed by.

Meanwhile, I was passing out in crowded places and, upon waking up, trying to figure out how to get out before anyone found out I had wet the furniture I passed out on. There were times I had to be helped up before I choked on my own vomit. I was isolated, yes, and as alone as I could get, and a lot of the time I was treated like a threat to myself because I was.

When I came to AA, I hoped I was wrong about what autonomous meant, just like I'd been wrong about everything else. And thank God, I was.

The definition of the word autonomous that jumps out at me right now is "not subject to control from the outside." That definition fit the AA members I met even before I came into the program. They were free, in the sense of not being in trouble with someone like I always was. They carried their freedom on the inside while functioning as happy, responsible people in society. I could see that freedom in their eyes.

At my first home group—the Here's H.O.W. group in Carbondale, Illinois—the autonomy there hit me beautifully. Nobody monitored our meeting to see if we were doing things right. Nobody treated our meeting like a personal AA franchise, checking to see that we displayed the logo prominently. Nobody shared reports about our meetings with the "home office." Our group didn't look anything like any organization I'd ever tried to join. Again, the freedom I saw in the people there touched me. A sense of peace came into me when I walked into our meeting room.

Since those very early days—thanks to the Third Step—a lot of great life changes have taken me to many different places and different AA meetings. And Tradition Four has helped me tremendously along the way to do what an old-timer friend once suggested: Be open to how people at a new meeting are staying sober. That "committee" that lives up in my head will often start making a list of things "they" are doing "wrong." But then, as the meeting goes on, I slowly become one of the "we" and those delightful differences help me see what we all share. I get to experience the same thing, no matter where I go to meetings—alcoholism, and sobriety through the Twelve Steps.

Recently, I counted up all the AA meetings I've gotten to attend. I believe I've been to meetings in 22 states in the U.S. and four different countries. Throughout my travels, I've kept on getting this gift that I could never give myself: an open mind. It's because the Twelve Steps give me an open heart.

Maybe I have gotten more autonomy because of all those different meetings I've been able to attend, along with the grace to accept other people's autonomy. Caring without controlling, that's what I've been shown at all those meetings, in one way or another. That's something I can share at my current home group, at other meetings and outside of them too. - Chad P., Mt. Vernon, IN



Quite an impression

Grapevine, May 2017

Many of us have a shameful family event we never want to remember—or forget.

This one roared

It was referred to as the infamous "leopard-print outfit" party. A perfect summer day out on eastern Long Island, where my family gathered for a reunion. We were three sets of cousins—"kissin' cousins" as we liked to refer to ourselves—and we all grew up together, our parents being WWII veterans who had kids all at the same time.

We spent summer vacations together, swimming, hiking, boating and exploring the woods on my cousin's property on eastern Long Island. We always had so much fun as kids, but as young adults, at least for those of us who drank, the fun turned into a problem.

On this occasion, the fun was about to start as I walked into the family reunion dressed in my leopard-print outfit. The only problem was that I was an alcoholic and would drink myself into such a stupor that by early afternoon I was passed out on some couch while the party went on for the rest of the day.

I had arrived at the cousin's compound in the morning, alone. I have no idea why I got there so early. The two family houses were on the same property and behind them was a gigantic field where the cousins needed help putting up volley ball nets, beverage and food tables and game booths.

I don't remember much of the day but I must have made quite the impression during my grand entrance in the leopard-print outfit. I was so uncomfortable in my own skin in those days that I couldn't talk to anyone without three or four drinks in me. I would tell tall tales about myself—the great person that I was—and make them up as I went along. I was most likely hungover from the night before. I was living in upstate New York in an "artist" community. I was the wild flower-child, hippie, bohemian of the family and reveled in my notoriety. I was also a physical and emotional basket case, barely employable. My life was spiraling out of control.

By the time my father, sister and grandmother arrived, I was three sheets to the wind and I avoided them. Whenever we did have contact, I said little in order to hide my current state of affairs. I did not have much contact with my family back then, other than to ask for money. I was always broke.

The day was hot and humid and I was getting more and more uncomfortable in my leopard-print outfit. I remember looking around and feeling so desperately alone amidst the crowd. Everyone was laughing, playing sports and games, having a great time. I couldn't relate to anyone. I got myself another drink.

The last thing I remember is twirling around the party like a banshee. I stumbled and fell a few times but I got up and started in again. People laughed and gawked. Then I suddenly got the sense that it wasn't funny anymore. Perhaps I caught a glimpse of my father or someone looking at me like I was a freak show. So I staggered into the house and passed out on the nearest flat surface. I was not seen or heard from again for the duration of the party. I never made the group picture.

When I came to the next day, I felt like my head was going to explode. I vomited repeatedly into the toilet. But the hangover wasn't the worst of it. It was facing my family with the shame, the guilt, the self-loathing. I couldn't bear it. Getting drunk and making a spectacle of myself was common practice, but for my family to have witnessed my behavior was completely mortifying.

So I hid. The family members who spent the night had breakfast together but I stayed

in bed with the covers over my head. They played games and laughed and joked around for hours. I could hear them down the hall. Tears streamed down my face. I felt so ashamed. I snuck out without saying goodbye to anyone and made the long, lonely drive back upstate. I was sick and shaking and crying the whole way. I was still wearing my leopard-print outfit.

About two years after this debacle, I finally got sober. I believed everything the AA program said. I believed all of you because alcohol had reduced me to a horrible wreck. As they say, I was bankrupt in every area and willing to listen. Today, I know that was a gift. That desperation, that willingness to go to any lengths, was the flimsy thread that enabled me to latch onto the program of AA.

I went to meetings constantly and followed most of the suggestions. I devoured the literature and attended Step meetings religiously. I got a sponsor and went on annual retreats to enrich my spirituality. The foundation I built back then sustains me to this day, but whenever I heard one of the Promises from the Big Book—"We will not regret the past, nor wish to shut the door on it"—I got a sickening feeling in my gut. I did not want to admit that I regretted the past and wanted to shut the door on it forever. I could not understand how such humiliating, demoralizing and destructive behavior could be turned into something positive in my sober life, even though I was familiar with the AA slogan, "We're as sick as our secrets."

Sure, I shared at meetings about certain alcoholic episodes, maybe the ridiculous and funny ones. But the incident of the leopard-print outfit and many other dark and shameful events of my past I kept hidden because they were just too painful to remember. Why would I want to recall some of the most awful times of my life? So what do they mean by this Promise anyway?

Then a funny thing started happening. I experienced a succession of strange, coincidental, incredible epiphanies directly related to my painful past. These epiphanies forced me to face the sick, self-destructive person I was all those years ago. Were these "encounters" just coincidences or was I being given an opportunity for healing?

By working the Steps—particularly the Fourth and Fifth Steps—I was able to face my past and come out the other side with love, peace and acceptance. I realized that it is OK to regret some of my past, as long as I know and accept that I was a sick person, not a bad one. I had a disease that was literally killing me. I needed to forgive myself for the damage I did to myself through my drinking. I needed to open that door, look and feel the feelings of that sick alcoholic I had been. I needed to love and embrace her.

That's where this incredible program really kicked in. By forgiving myself, I was free of the shame and guilt. And I got an unexpected bonus from the Fourth and Fifth Steps. I found that I could love and accept myself, painful past and all. I gained a new self-respect. My faith in a loving God grew stronger. And with God's help, I could become a member of my family again. Another bonus was that by sharing my experience, it was possible to help others struggling with similar issues.

My family recently got together for a reunion of sorts—a cousin's 60th birthday at a local baseball stadium. We had an uproariously good time. I looked around, thinking of those no longer with us: my dad, my uncles, Grandma. Among us that night were our spouses, children and grandchildren. Though we all look and feel a wee bit older, we still love to laugh and joke around. Instead of a leopard-print outfit, I wore a happy birthday T-shirt.

That night I went to bed sober, and in the morning my husband and I went to an AA meeting with my cousin and met some wonderful people. My other cousin is dying because his liver is failing due to his drinking. He refuses to go to AA meetings. He

told me he still misses drinking. There but for the grace of God go I.

As all of us cousins gathered for a group picture, I was overwhelmed with gratitude and love. I am alive and sober. And that's the greatest gift of all.

Today, I am employable, productive and creative. I am able to love and be loved. I am sober more than 32 years and have a wonderful life, despite all the ups and downs we go through in sobriety. I'm a woman of dignity and honor.

There are still times when I cringe and wish I could shut the door and never visit certain episodes of my past ever again. Whenever the door to the past does open, I am keenly aware of the miracle of sobriety.

To this day, my family likes to kid me about that infamous leopard-print outfit. There are pictures somewhere attesting to it. I just kind of roll my eyes and chuckle when I see them. "Yeah, I was pretty wild back then."

- Moira B. Pearl River NY



Get Real

Grapevine, July 2008

Stepping out of fantasy and into life

Recovering alcoholics almost never talk about sex in meetings. I like to attend meetings based on the Big Book or the "Twelve and Twelve." Because these books discuss sex, the topic eventually comes up. Usually a few joking comments are made and then the discussion moves on to something more comfortable. That is unfortunate, because one of the hallmarks of those suffering from alcoholism is the difficulty we have in forming relationships, at least until our spiritual recovery is well underway.

A few years back, I had a huge awakening on this subject. It came, oddly enough, while I was sitting with a rifle on my lap in the deer woods. I wasn't exactly meditating or praying, but I was being quiet and attuned to God manifested in the nature around me. I wasn't purposefully taking my inventory, but I was thinking critically about my relationship with a coworker, which had bordered on something more than flirtation until I got upset with myself for coming that close to infidelity, and backed off.

My mind drifted back through the various relationships I'd had over the years. Twice, I had actually gotten to know and love my partner as the human being she was. A handful of other relationships were sexual. But most were like the one with my coworker - flirtations with women who were married or seeing someone. By now, I was many years into recovery and had several years of Al-Anon under my belt as well, so I had learned what a real intimate relationship could be. I was in one. Yet I was still semi-seriously flirting. Why?

I'd learned, in AA, that patterns are significant. That day, as I sat in the stillness of the woods, the pattern stretched right back to high school. Seeing it as a continuous whole, and with that degree of clarity, was a spiritual event. It reminded me of another spiritual experience, years before, when I honestly saw the full downward arc of my drinking.

Ever since my teen years, there had always been a "she." She was always beautiful and unavailable. I had known that for years and had repeatedly blamed my bad luck for falling in love with the wrong girl. But that day in the woods, I understood something else: my "bad luck" was just the way I wanted it to be. My "falling in love" was never about a real relationship with a real person. It was never even about sex, though physical attraction was always an element, because sex inevitably involves an encounter with a real person. No, it was all about me. It was all about the world between my ears and the stories I told myself as I created that world.

My lifelong sex problem, I realized, was nothing more than an elaborate ruse, and the object of the deception was me. I repeatedly, and unconsciously, chose unreal relationships over real ones. I chose them because they could be perfect and effortless. Risking nothing, I gained nothing, but in my fantasy world it would always be wonderful tomorrow. And even when in AA I had learned to take the risk of being real, the world of make-believe still had a strong pull. Like many alcoholics, when faced with a choice between reality and fantasy, I instinctively choose fantasy every time.

Even when married or seeing someone, I seldom closed the door on a possible "flirtationship." If I found a willing player, I blamed it on circumstances. "I can't help being attracted to her," I'd say. But it was my decision to open the door in the first place.

Back when drinking was still good, after a few beers it seemed like all my dreams were on the verge of coming true. My drinking comrades were the best of all possible friends, the pretty girl on the other side of the room smiled at me, any day now someone would realize how amazingly talented I was and offer me the perfect job. In that happy state, I'd drink myself into oblivion and get up the next morning eager to do it all over again.

Eventually, of course, my world built on bottles came crashing down. But the perfect fantasy world never lost its hold on me. I simply changed my construction materials from alcohol and women to just women. Make-believe is what got me high, whether it was fueled by alcohol or not.

One of the great things about working the program is that when you see a character defect for what it really is, it loses much of its power. It's like seeing the Wizard of Oz behind the curtain. And so I saw the truth about my relationships with women and, just like seeing the truth about my relationship with booze, I could never lie to myself again. Today, the door to fantasy relationships stays shut, and on the rare occasion that I am tempted to open it, I say a quick prayer and remind myself that it is all an empty lie, and the temptation passes.

Amazingly enough, a few weeks after that hunting trip, my wife found that she was pregnant, after years of unsuccessful attempts. Maybe it was just a coincidence, but I think God was waiting until I was ready to be a committed dad. Today I am reliably, steadily, dependably there for my wife and our beautiful young son. My heart is all the way in it. And though reality often has its bumps and bruises, it nourishes and fulfills. And I am grateful for the ability and the willingness to live in it.

- Anonymous



NEWCOMER'S CORNER Why I threw the pie



Grapevine, April 2010

A Fourth Step list reveals reasons for past bad behavior

FROM the day I attended my first AA meeting I knew that the key to my survival was that I had to change, both attitudes and actions.

My original home group's format was a three-week rotation of Step, Tradition and discussion. Keeping in mind that I needed to change, I started working on the Fourth Step. I wrote my inventory with absolutely no fear; this was going to be an investigation of my behavior that would be used to keep me from repeating my pattern of being just "between drinks."

Being Catholic, I understood the benefit of confessing my sins, so I started a laundry list of bad attitudes and bad actions. Among these was the definite example of a really bad attitude and somewhat messy action--I'd thrown a pie in my brother-in-law's face. Thinking that examples like this were all that was necessary to complete the Fourth Step, I felt that I was making remarkable progress and was all ready to take my Fifth Step.

But before I announced to my sponsor that I was ready to sit down and tell her my list of "sins," I had one of those "light bulb" moments. The Fifth Step wasn't confession as I used to do it: confess, be absolved and then feel free to do it again. This was the time to analyze the "why" of the action. It's not that I threw the pie; it's, why did I throw the pie? Utilizing the honesty I was learning day by day, I saw clearly that I had thrown the pie because I resented my brother-in-law. He knew an alcoholic when he saw one, and I was so busy keeping it a secret that I feared he would share his opinion with the whole family (as if they didn't know). Having this fear and resentment only brought on tremendous self-pity: "Oh, poor me, why do I have to put up with this miserable individual?" Resentment, fear and self-pity: these were "the exact nature" of my wrongs. Finally understanding the purpose of this Step allowed me to review everything on the list and examine the motive behind each action or attitude.

I had heard that if I didn't take the Fourth and Fifth Steps I could get drunk again. Now I understood; if I didn't take those Steps, I'd never get that personality change necessary for recovery.

- Carol K., Sarasota, FL

With courage

Grapevine, April 2009

Reprinted from the April 1991 Grapevine

I remember feeling afraid as a kid and thinking that I was a coward--that the mere presence of fear in my life made me a coward. I did not know that one of the definitions of courage was the ability to do the right thing in spite of fear. One particular word in the Fourth Step that I had difficulty with, therefore, was the word "fearless." "Fearless" does not necessarily imply the absence of fear. Fearless means "with courage."

What stops many of us from doing the Fourth Step is fear and pride, and that is certainly what stopped me. In addition, I wanted to be sure I did it perfectly. I didn't know that perfectionism is a character defect; it is in itself an imperfection.

I believe that if I had not tackled the inventory when I did, the guilt could very likely have killed me; and it wouldn't have been God who was punishing me either. I would

have done the job myself. We are not punished for our sins, we are punished by our sins.

In looking over the inventory with the aid of my sponsor I saw that I had uncovered a lot of fear and resentment. I believe that resentment destroys cells within my body. I learned in a biology class that body cells are constantly dying off and being replenished. What the class did not teach was that under negative conditions such as fear, anger, jealousy, hatred, and resentment the cells die at a much more rapid rate than when we are feeling love.

My Fourth Step also showed me that I had an acid tongue--committing murder by character assassination. In my recovery I am sometimes able to pause before speaking long enough to ask three questions: "Is it true?" "Is it kind?" "Is it necessary?" I could reduce all three to one question: "Before I say it--would I want it said to me?"

Prior to the Steps I had isolated myself from God and man. People are lonely because they build walls instead of bridges.

Many, many times while jogging I have repeated over and over, "I am beautiful, capable, and lovable." I needed this repetition in order to improve my self-image.

- Ed H., Brentwood, NY

The Cops Took My Fourth Step List!

Grapevine, April 2009

I had three weeks to go until I'd be off parole, when my wife and I were stopped by several sheriff's deputies. We had just left our apartment and were on our way to an AA meeting. Since I was still subject to search and seizure (meaning my person, car, or residence could be searched at any time), I was immediately handcuffed (in front of my landlord) and escorted back to our apartment. We sat on the couch while they conducted a thorough search of the apartment.

Being handcuffed was not a new experience for me--although you never really get used to "jail jewelry"--but what was new was the feeling I had. I was calm because I knew I had done absolutely nothing wrong. For the first time while dealing with law enforcement, I had no idea what the trouble was. Of course, I was concerned. The way the parole system works in California is this: If a parolee has contact with the police, even if charges are not filed, the parole board can, and often does, revoke parole. I also was worried about my wife's reaction. She is someone whom I had met in church. Having the cops rifle through her personal belongings while her husband was cuffed on the couch was a new and scary experience for her. And we had just learned the week before that she was pregnant with our first child.

When the deputies had completed their search and found nothing illegal, they uncuffed me and explained what the deal was. I had met a guy months before and given him my phone number. He went to the same church I did and knew a preacher I'd known years ago. Also, he went to AA meetings and was looking for a job. I gave my phone number out to a lot of guys who asked for help. Well, this guy turned out to be into some really bad things, and when they arrested him, there was the name and phone number of a parolee in his wallet. The funny thing was that the only thing the deputies took from our apartment was a blue notebook containing my Fourth Step list. I couldn't figure out why they took it. I guess the resentment part could look like a list of people I was planning vengeance on, but that was all I could come up with. What I did know was that I wanted it back. Many people burn or otherwise destroy their Fourth Step lists, which probably has great symbolic meaning (letting go of the

past), but I wanted to keep mine. That way I could show it to sponsees as an actual physical example of what a moral inventory can look like. I eventually did get it back from my parole officer, who, had she not been out of town, would not have allowed the situation to go down the way it did. I was not resentful at being humiliated in front of my wife and landlord. Humiliation to me was no biggie. Now, humbling myself--admitting I'm wrong and swallowing my pride--that is difficult. The deputies were just doing their job. If I were in their shoes and had the same information, I would have done the same thing.

What I got out of the experience was confirmation that I was living my life as a productive citizen and not as a criminal. I also got a good story to share at an AA meeting, which I immediately did once it was all over.

- Tony W., Fairfield, CA

Should we say it?

Grapevine, March 2019

A member who loves the Lord's Prayer wonders if AA is the place to use it While I appreciate the Fourth Tradition, which states, "Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole," I believe that it's important that we use Conference-approved literature in meetings.

If the group conscience decides that it is acceptable for one member to read non-AA literature, then it has to be OK for the next member, and so on. This raises a big question about who would determine what material is acceptable. Before we know it, people would be reading scripture, treatment-center pamphlets, even astrology. I've seen this firsthand. Outside material can become a mess that puts our unity at risk.

I say, keep it simple. We have Conference-approved literature for a reason. If the literature is approved, then great, let's use it. If it is not approved, then we have a responsibility to shut it down, exclude it from meetings, with no exceptions.

But if that's the case...then what about the Lord's Prayer?

In my personal opinion, the Lord's Prayer is a great prayer. I say it at church and have been doing so my entire life. After completing a very in-depth Eleventh Step, I have found an even deeper appreciation for the Lord's Prayer. However, this program teaches me to put principles before personality. As much as I personally appreciate the prayer, it is not Conference-approved. Anyone who understands what our Traditions are all about has to see that this prayer has no place inside the rooms of AA, especially today.

When the phrase, "We are people who normally would not mix," was written in the late 1930s, it referred to a Fellowship composed largely of men (and a few women) with similar ethnic, economic and religious backgrounds. Like so many of AA's basic texts, those words have proven to be far more visionary than the founding members might ever have imagined.

As the message of recovery reached larger numbers of people, it has also touched the lives of a vastly greater variety of suffering alcoholics. The age, gender, race and culture of AA members have widened and deepened to encompass virtually everyone the first members could have hoped to reach. AA is not only in the U.S. and Canada. In the past 80 years, this program has expanded to more than 180 countries worldwide and the literature has been translated into more than 100 languages.

In the 4th edition of the Big Book, it says that while "our literature has preserved the integrity of the AA message, sweeping changes in society as a whole are reflected in

new customs and practices within the Fellowship." It further states that, "those having religious affiliations will find here nothing disturbing to their beliefs or ceremonies."

And while our common welfare comes first, we also need to "be quick to see where religious people are right. Make use of what they offer." As my friend Sam puts it, the Lord's Prayer is one of those things offered by religious people. "I don't care if the devil himself wrote it," he says. "It helps me connect with my Higher Power and that's all that matters." Well said, Sam.

As I said above, I use the prayer often, just not at group level in an AA meeting. To me, use of the prayer goes against our spiritual principles as I understand them. As we all know, outside help is very much encouraged in AA. Our book tells us that if we already are religious folk, to try to get involved even deeper with that religion. However, the reason it's called "outside help" is because we try to keep it outside of the meetings rooms to protect our singleness of purpose and to avoid jeopardizing our unity.

I don't believe in watered-down AA. I would never even dream of changing a single thing about this perfect program, nor a single word of our literature. After all, it's the foundation of my entire life. However, the Lord's Prayer is simply not part of our literature. In the past 80 years, we have created and adopted many wonderful prayers into our literature. The Lord's Prayer is not one of them.

After interviewing more than 30 old-timers and going through our archives for weeks to study our history, I have come to the understanding that in the very beginning, when Dr. Bob, Bill W. and God first started forming this thing, we didn't have any of our own prayers or literature. We had the Bible and the established customs of the Oxford Group. That's where the practice of closing the meeting with the Lord's Prayer may have begun. We later decided to part ways and cut all ties with the Oxford Group, partly because it was a Christian fellowship and because we need to be all-inclusive.

Regardless of how we view this topic, we all want the same thing. That is what makes this program so beautiful. Our concern is always for the newcomer and our primary purpose: to stay sober and help other alcoholics achieve sobriety.

- Carrie B., Bend OR

PO Box 1980

Grapevine, March 2019

When prayer is a problem

Some thoughts on saying or not saying prayers of whatever religion in AA meetings:

Group conscience and the group autonomy described in the Fourth Tradition are important and powerful principles, which have contributed greatly to the success of the AA Fellowship. If a group conscience is to say the Lord's Prayer or some other prayer, it obviously does not affect other groups or AA as a whole, since there are atheist groups, agnostic groups, and, of course, groups whose members are from religious backgrounds other than Christian.

When I find myself in an atheist group or a group saying a prayer in a religion other than my own, I pray that I will be able to feel only respect and love for the people of that group and their right and need to express their beliefs and faith.

- Robert B., Surry, VA

Tradition Four

Grapevine, August 1952

Each group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole.

AUTONOMY is a ten-dollar word. But in relation to us, it means very simply that every AA group can manage its affairs exactly as it pleases, except when AA as a whole is threatened. Comes now the same question raised in Tradition One. Isn't such liberty foolishly dangerous?

Over the years every conceivable deviation from our Twelve Steps and Traditions has been tried. That was sure to be, since we are so largely a band of ego-driven individualists. Children of chaos, we have defiantly played with every brand of fire, only to emerge unharmed and, we think, wiser. These very deviations created a vast process of trial and error which, under the grace of God, has brought us to where we stand today.

When AA's Traditions were first published in 1945, we had become sure that an AA group could stand almost any amount of battering. We saw that the group, exactly like the individual, must eventually conform to whatever tested principles would guarantee survival. We had discovered that there was perfect safety in the process of trial and error. So confident of this had we become that the original statement of AA tradition carried this significant sentence: "Any two or three alcoholics gathered together for sobriety may call themselves an AA group provided that as a group they have no other affiliation."

This meant, of course, that we had been given the courage to declare each AA group an individual entity, strictly reliant on its own conscience as a guide to action. In charting this enormous expanse of freedom we found it necessary to post only two storm signals. A group ought not do anything which would greatly injure AA as a whole, nor ought it affiliate itself with anything or anybody else. There would be real danger should we commence to call some groups "wet," others "dry," still others "Republican" or "Communist," and yet others "Catholic" or "Protestant." The AA group would have to stick to its course or be hopelessly lost. Sobriety had to be its sole objective. In all other respects there was perfect freedom of will and action. Every group had the right to be wrong.

When AA was still young, lots of eager groups were forming. In a town we'll call Middleton, a real crackerjack had started up. The townspeople were hot as firecrackers about it. Star-gazing, the elders dreamed of innovations. They figured the town needed a great big alcoholic center, a kind of pilot plant AA groups could duplicate everywhere. Beginning on the ground floor there would be a club; in the second story they would sober up drunks and hand them currency for their back debts; the third deck would house an educational project. . .quite noncontroversial, of course. In imagination the gleaming center was to go up several stories more, but three would do for a start. This would all take a lot of money. . .other people's money. Believe it or not, wealthy townsfolk bought the idea.

There were, though, a few conservative dissenters among the alcoholics. They wrote the Foundation, AA's headquarters in New York, wanting to know about this sort of streamlining. They understood that the elders, just to nail things down good, were about to apply to the Foundation for a charter. These few were disturbed and skeptical.

Of course there was a promoter in the deal. . .a super-promoter. By his eloquence he

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allayed all fears, despite advice from the Foundation that it could issue no charter, and that ventures which mixed an AA group up with medication and education had come to sticky ends elsewhere. To make things safer, the promoter organized three corporations and became president of them all. Freshly painted, the new center shone. The warmth of it all spread through the town. Soon things began to hum. To insure foolproof, continuous operation, 61 rules and regulations were adopted.

But alas, this bright scene was not long in darkening. Confusion replaced serenity. It was found that some drunks yearned for education, but doubted if they were alcoholics. The personality defects of others could be cured maybe with a loan. Some were club-minded, but it was just a question of taking care of the lonely heart. Sometimes the swarming applicants would go for all three floors. Some would start at the top and come through to the bottom, becoming club members, others started in the club, pitched a binge, were hospitalized, then graduated to education on the third floor. It was a beehive of activity, all right, but unlike a beehive, it was confusion compounded. An AA group, as such, simply couldn't handle this sort of a project. All too late that was discovered. Then came the inevitable explosion. . .something like that day the boiler burst in Wombley's Clapboard Factory. A chill choke-damp of fear and frustration fell over the group.

When that lifted, a wonderful thing had happened. The head promoter wrote the Foundation office. He said he wished he'd paid some attention to AA experience. Then he did something else that was to become an AA classic. It all went on a little card about golf-score size. The cover read: "Middleton Group No. One. Rule No. 62." Once the card was unfolded, a single pungent sentence leaped to the eye: "Don't take yourself too damn seriously."

Thus it was that under Tradition Four an AA group had exercised its right to be wrong. Moreover, it had performed a great service for Alcoholics Anonymous, because it had been humbly willing to apply the lessons it learned. It had picked itself up with a laugh and gone on to better things. Even the chief architect, standing in the ruins of his dream, could laugh at himself. . .and that is the very acme of humility.

- Bill W.

TRADITION FOUR

Grapevine, December 1958

TRUE freedom is not doing what we want, but doing as we ought. There is no government in Alcoholics Anonymous, no rules or regulations. Each group may do as its members wish; they are autonomous. But to live in true freedom they ought to take every care that their actions do not interfere with other groups or contravene AA principles lest we lose our freedom. Our freedom only lives by our willingness to give to others that same right.

- R.M., Toronto, Ontario



Back from the Brink

Last Saturday, I went with a friend to a meeting outside my home group area, and I spoke up in my usual, sometimes obnoxiously, forthright manner. Many in the room appreciated my typically non-conforming take on the subject, and some did not. Those responded with what amounted to very thinly veiled cross talk. Neither the subject, nor the cross talk is important. What is important is the subsequent progression of my internal and external responses to this exchange. Initially, I was completely calm and unruffled. In the car on the drive home, my friend "came to my defense", and was actually the only one of the two of us who was upset.

It seems that many of the speakers I've heard lately have been repeating the theme of resentments, and the habit I clearly recognized of continuing to engage in arguments which were over and done with decades ago. I used to pace from one end of the house to the other declaring my righteousness and the "other's" sanctimonious, *self*-righteous sense of entitlement. (Yeah, it's a well worn script.) In the car on our way home, I described this pattern of behavior to my friend, and observed that I really hadn't engaged in it for the last several months. What a relief to have stopped arguing with people who were, in many cases, long since dead and gone. Phew!

I dropped my friend off, and arrived home in a contented, need I say slightly *smug* frame of mind that I had left that behavior in my past. I parked the car in the garage, walked the dog, cleaned up some odds and ends in the kitchen sink, all in a contented state of self approval. Then I went up the stairs to my old pacing grounds, and the minute I cleared the last step. . I started in on a rage against that B!#@#h, and all the other old B!#@#hes from my past. I caught myself almost immediately, but I couldn't stop myself for several minutes. But, I *did* stop myself, watched a little television, went to bed, and got on with my life.

Four days later it hit me. This really terrifying transition from completely unruffled into a towering rage was completely seamless. And I was reminded, yet again, that I'm just a whisker's breath away from taking another drink, and that that transition will be just as seamless. I won't even know when it's happening. That's a reality I will always have to live with, whether I like it or not. This time I was able to pull myself back from the brink, and for that I am grateful for the work I've done in the program, AA's fourth step in particular.

I really didn't do a "conventional" fourth step. I didn't sit down deliberately to write it out. It wasn't until very recently that I could trust the process of writing anything down. But, during my four years of grad school, I wrote papers in which I unwittingly put myself into print for my teachers and mentors in a very personal way. I reread those psych papers some twenty years after I'd written them, and there were two things that really stood out.

First, in my early sobriety, I wrote about events and feelings I have long since forgotten. I think the writing of those events had been instrumental in letting go of them. More than that, I had written about *why* I had created so much damage. And once I had understood the "why" behind my behavior, I was *willing* and *able* take responsibility for it. That is, for me, one of the true gifts of the Fourth Step. It cleared the way forward.

The second thing that struck me was that I had *survived*. I had survived the failures of others, and the harm I had created through repeated self-betrayal. And my survival had required competence, courage, and perseverance on my part, along with a heavy dose of luck, support from others, and grace from the powers that be. I came into AA broken, but not beyond mending. However, it's not a one and done process. I need to maintain my sobriety on a daily basis. And, trust me, Guys. The writing really helps. More importantly, it really helps to know I'm not alone.

Endless Vistas

Whenever I feel overwhelmed by the chaos all around me, I retire into the fantasy world of dragons and their riders, despite a healthy fear of heights. Zip lining and bungee jumping? No way. But riding a dragon into battle at atmospheric heights and heart pounding speeds? *Pfft!* And I'd like to admit that I've been buried in dragon sagas for the last couple of months. Sometimes that's just how I cope.

I mention this, because I have found inspiration from some of the unlikeliest sources, including dragon sagas. Last weekend, I ran across the following: "It always seems that no matter how far we have come, we still have so much farther to go." Think about it for a minute. How often, in AA, have I felt like this about "how I'm working my program"? Sometimes it just feels like I keep coming back to the same old habits and patterns of self-sabotage. The other night in my home group, I confessed to learning, at this late stage of life, how to ask for help. I'd had a wonderful experience with four terrific women who walked me through a contract negotiation process I'd been stumped over at the start, and I was just bubbling with excitement over the process. One of our younger members shared that she'd written a "note to self - don't wait until I'm Lynne's age to ask for help." Yup - here I am at 79, still learning that asking for help can be giving a gift instead of unloading a burden.

So, I can totally relate to the frustration we often feel about the (sometimes) snail's pace of our growth in sobriety. I can remember going into early sessions with my therapist, sometimes feeling that something had "clicked", and other times feeling life was just a repeat struggle with the same old demons. She reminded me that when I'm struggling, that's when I'm working my hardest. The easy times were the reward for surviving the struggle.

It's helpful for me to remember this when life throws one of its many curves. We are constantly reminding ourselves that we cannot control the people, places, and things in our lives. We can only control our response, and the shape of our response can make all the difference. Accepting that I'm not completely evolved *yet* gives me room, and permission, to continue growing. How I see myself at these low points can make a difference in whether or not I'm able to move forward.

Take one - I haven't learned anything. Or at least, not enough. I'm completely to blame for my struggles, and life would be different and *easier* if only I worked my program *harder*. I'll *never* get this right, so I might just as well give up. The more I hurry, the behinder I get. Shoulders slump, heavy sigh, then go to bed.

Take Two - I've learned a great deal, and yet my potential for growth is unlimited. My vision for the future keeps on growing in breadth and depth. The possibilities are far beyond my expectations. Of *course* there's still a lot left to learn. There's a reason we insist on "progress not perfection".

Why do I get excited when I find sources for inspiration outside of AA Conference Approved Literature? I find it very comforting to know that we AA's are not the only ones struggling with life's lessons. When we strip away all the AA specific language, what we are left with is "the human condition" - that life has its ups and downs, its sidewinders and all-arounders for everyone. We AA's don't have a monopoly on poor judgment, bad choices, past errors, or shame, guilt, and regret. Our problems are not unique to AA's or other addicts, they are universal. What we do have is a special program, a special commonality, and a special community in which we support one another in surviving and thriving in the face of this human condition.

Another insight, this one from K-drama - "helping others is comfort to the soul". I had to be almost 73 before I truly understood that lesson. This understanding wasn't even on the horizon when I started this journey, but it is now an integral part of how I understand my place in the world. It did take time, but it did come to me. Where to next?

- Lynne R., Pershing Fellowship, 2025

TWELVE STEPS CHECKLIST

"Alcoholics Anonymous Twelve Steps are a group of principles, spiritual in their nature, which, if practiced as a way of life, can expel the obsession to drink and enable the sufferer to become happily and usefully whole."

p.15 Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions

We hope this checklist will help the individual to become more aware of the personality changes that take place in our personal growth.

Step Four

Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves

- 1. What are the areas of my life at which I refuse to look? How do I recognize my basic problems?
- 2. Why do I need to list my assets as well as liabilities?
- 3. In what ways have I been honest and thorough about resentments? Do I understand that this is a lifetime process?
- 4. Where has fear generated character defects in my life? What fears am I willing to face now?
- 5. What actions do I take if I still burn with guilt because of my behavior?6. When and where have my finances, gambling or spending been out of control?
- 6. Am I still hiding these defects in the recesses of my mind?
- 7. How am I trying to change conditions to suit me?
- 8. How have my twisted relationships with others caused my inability to form a true and meaningful partnership with another human being? What is the importance of looking at the unhappiness I've caused others and myself?
- 9. Have I carefully reviewed my sex conduct? What do I do when sex is trouble-some?

TRADITIONS CHECKLIST

These questions were originally published in the AA Grapevine. While they were originally intended primarily for individual use, many AA groups have since used them as a basis for wider discussion.

Tradition Four

Each group should be autonomous except in matters

affecting other groups or AA as a whole.

- 1. Do I insist that there are only a few right ways of doing things in AA?
- 2. Does my group always consider the welfare of the rest of AA? Of nearby groups? Of Loners in Alaska? Of Internationalists miles from port? Of a group in Rome or El Salvador?
- 3. Do I put down other members' behavior when it is different from mine, or do I learn from it?
- 4. Do I always bear in mind that, to those outsiders who know I am in AA, I may to some extent represent our entire beloved Fellowship?
- 5. Am I willing to help a newcomer go to any lengths—his lengths, not mine—to stay sober?
- 6. Do I share my knowledge of AA tools with other members who may not have heard of them?



THANK YOU FOR CARRYING THE MESSAGE

-

Birthday Gratitude Club

Name	Sobriety Date	Years	Name	Sobriety Date	Years
Nancy K.	5.24.72	52	Marla M.	9.11.96	28
Sharon R.	8.28.79	46	Cheryl H.	4.25.97	28
June S.	4.13.80	46	Janice J.	1.20.99	26
Daniel R.	2.2.81	44	Candi G.	6.20.99	25
Christine S.	2.21.81	44	Howard H.	2.14.01	24
Mary M.	7.22.81	43	Janice B.	8.29.02	24
Lauretta G.	?.?.81	43	Mari P.	6.24.03	22
Linda C.	1.31.83	42	Tony L.	7.18.03	21
John P.	6.1.85	39	Douglas S.	11.10.03	21
Lyndy W.	7.25.85	39	Monica P.	12.1.03	21
John W.	7.20.85	39	Fred C.	10.31.05	19
Ojay O.	11.18.85	39	Rafael A.	8.2.06	18
Jenise C.	1.1.86	39	Keith H.	9.13.06	18
Arnold V.	4.8.86	39	Phil G. AJ B.	1.21.07 10.20.07	18 17
Arch B.	3.7.87	38	Tina L.	11.26.09	15
G. Archer B.	3.7.87	38	Janice G.	10.26.10	13
Sue B.	4.25.87	38	Bob A.	3.31.11	14
Sue P.	11.29.87	37	Taylor E.	1.24.13	12
Lynne R.	2.22.88	37	Pat K.	12.9.14	10
Laurie S.	5.??.88	36	Kathy W.	1.11.15	10
Mona A.	2.4.89	36	Crystal L.	3.30.15	10
Joy H.	6.2.90	34	Dezeria F.	8.18.17	7
Jeff K.	2.16.92	33	James M.	7.20.23	1
Betty P.	3.8.93	32	Juilles IVI.	1.20.23	1

JOIN THE K.I.T. BIRTHDAY GRATITUDE CLUB

□ NEW	□ RENEW	Date:
First Na	ne	Last Initial
Sobriety	Date:	, years & counting

Suggested Contribution: \$1.00 per year sober.

Make checks payable to: **DCO or Delta Central Office**Drop off, or Mail to: Delta Central Office
1525 N. El Dorado Street Stockton, CA 95204

You can PayPal your payment to: <u>deltacentral312@gmail.com</u>

APRIL 2025 Group Birthdays

KEK5
34 years
31 years
17 years
17 years
12 years
4 years
2 years
1 year

BILINGUAL

GROUP							
Rick A.	35 years						
Chris M.	35 years						
Wanda S.	35 years						
Danny M.	33 years						
Celina V.	32 years						
Javier H.	30 years						
Harriet J.	28 years						
Kevin L.	27 years						
Stephanie J.	27 years						
Mark W.	27 years						
Thomas J.	23 years						
Maria M.	15 years						
Daniel F.	15 years						
Cheryl G.	12 years						
Floyd M.	6 years						
Santiago L.	4 years						
Crystal H.	1 year						

MAPLE SOUARE

1417 21 1010 7	JOHNE
Amber	20 years
Ryan M.	17 years
Erik B.	7 years
Matt E.	6 years
Jill	3 years
Edgar	3 years

GROU	
Mary Jo Z.	49 years
Sarah Z.	38 years
Steve V.	37 years
Sandy M.	37 years
Christine S.	36 years
Leslie S.	36 years
Judy G.	36 years
Rick A.	35 years
Cammie T.	17 years
Lindsey M.	17 years
Christine C.	13 years
Bill G.	11 years
Jaime V.	10 years
Robert J. H.	10 years
Michael P.	9 years
Monika V.	9 years
Jennilee	8 years
Mary D.	7 years
Anthony	7 years
Greg L.	6 years
Alfonso G.	6 years
Tarisha D.	6 years
Eloy G.	5 years
Kristen W.	1 year
Ariyana C.	1 year

years	
years	
70040	

Group



May 2025

Years Years Years

Years Years Years

Years Years Years Years Years

Years Years

Years Years Years

Years

Years

Want to see your Group's Birthdays in our newsletter?	
Send them to us! The <u>Best</u> way to make sure we get them is by e-mail: deltacentral312 @gmail.com	
Please, send next month's list by the 15th of this month	

January: Rainbow Fellowship February: Maple Square March: Recovery Central

for next month's

Newsletter!

April: Delta Central Office May: Big Bookers

June: Lodi Solutions July: SANJYPAA August: Tracy Fellowship September: Back To Basics

October: Pershing Fellowship

APRIL 2025 WORD PUZZLE

Out of The Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous

K	Ι	E	S	C	M	E	E	D	E	O	W	N	E	D	R	R
Ι	U	\mathbf{C}	I	O	R	N	P	U	R	P	O	S	E	R	0	Н
N	L	I	F	E	T	I	M	E	V	I	S	U	L	\mathbf{C}	N	I
D	R	T	\mathbf{M}	E	A	H	F	P	T	E	\mathbf{C}	N	0	L	E	Y
N	O	I	T	\mathbf{A}	Z	I	L	A	N	0	I	T	A	R	T	I
E	\mathbf{C}	I	T	C	A	R	P	H	E	N	L	R	\mathbf{C}	S	D	O
S	R	T	V	S	U	I	G	F	M	A	O	R	E	S	U	E
S	T	P	A	P	\mathbf{C}	U	H	E	A	M	H	N	D	R	U	T
N	Y	E	U	I	O	E	S	A	R	0	O	A	S	E	E	U
R	T	R	T	R	\mathbf{H}	\mathbf{G}	R	R	E	H	\mathbf{C}	E	T	L	N	N
U	\mathbf{C}	R	O	I	W	A	L	L	P	I	L	V	B	L	I	P
M	A	H	N	T	F	S	I	E	M	\mathbf{V}	A	A	O	L	R	L
P	T	R	O	U	N	S	R	S	\mathbf{E}	\mathbf{A}	R	\mathbf{C}	H	I	N	G
C	Y	O	\mathbf{M}	A	T	E	I	S	T	U	K	E	M	S	\mathbf{C}	M
P	S	U	O	L	B	M	\mathbf{V}	B	\mathbf{C}	E	T	A	O	A	T	E
M	N	N	U	0	E	R	O	N	D	Y	R	A	E	W	M	L
E	Н	S	S	M	P	S	Ι	C	I	Y	Η	R	I	K	A	O

ALCOHOLIC
AUTONOMOUS
FEARLESS
HONESTY
INCLUSIVE
INCURABLE
INVENTORY
KINDNESS
LIFETIME

LIST
MESSAGE
MORAL
OURSELVES
OWNED
PARTICIPATION
PRACTICE
PRIMARY
PURPOSE

RATIONALIZATION
SEARCHING
SOBER
SPIRITUAL
TEMPERAMENT
THOROUGHNESS
UNLOCKED
VOICE
WEARY

APRIL 2025 CALENDAR

Sun	Mon	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thurs	Fri	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5 SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE 31 E. Vine St. Stockton 7:30-9:00 pm (See Flyer)
6	7	P.I.C.P.C. BEGINNER'S SERIES 7 PM 860-3627-3183 PW: picpc	ADVISORY Committee 7 PM 859-6783-4300 PW: delta	10	11	12 P.I.C.P.C 9AM-11AM 861 8890 4562: PW: PICPC
13	14	P.I.C.P.C. BEGINNER'S SERIES 7 PM 860-3627-3183 PW: picpc	16 DELTA INTERGROUP 7 PM 831-9927-9187 PW: delta 1151 W. Robinhood Dr., B3 Stockton	17	18	19
20	21	22 P.I.C.P.C. BEGINNER'S SERIES 7 PM 860-3627-3183 PW: picpc	23 GSR DISTRICT 37 7 PM 385-0821-680 PW: 666098 1151 W. Robinhood Dr., B3	24	25	26 H & I 10:15 AM 833 5105 7501 PW: Area82H&I 1151 W. Robinhood Dr., B3 Stockton
27	28	P.I.C.P.C. BEGINNER'S SERIES 7 PM 860-3627-3183 PW: picpc	30 Ad Hoc BYLAWS COMMITTEE 7 PM 871-9272-9017 PW: BYLAWS			



Delta Intergroup Written Financial Report March 12, 2025

Here is a summary of Income and Expenses for SNL March 1, 2025

INCOME		EXPENSES	
7th Tradition	\$ 381.05	Rent	\$ 85.00
50/50 Drawing	\$ 308.00	Coffee/Supplies/Tickets	\$ 14.94 (est.)
Concessions	\$ 56.00	50/50 Drawing Prize	\$ 154.00
Literature Sales	\$ 230.34	Cost of Sales	\$ 160.65
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 975.39	Square Fees	\$ 3.31
NET GAIN	\$ 557.49	TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 417.90

BANK BALANCES 02/28/25

GENERAL ACCOUNT	\$ 1,714.23
LITERATURE ACCOUNT	\$ 2,211.87
SPECIAL EVENTS	\$ 3,438.35
SAVINGS	\$ 7,000.55
CERTIFICATE OF DEPOSIT	\$ 5,472.52
COMBINED TOTAL	\$ 19,837.52

This is a \$402.41 decrease from last month's balance of \$20,239.93. We spent \$3,181.81 on inventory including the \$877.00 FTB 4th quarter payment which cleared the bank in February. Our inventory sales is about average for the month, and our contributions were slightly higher than in recent months.

Inventory Sales	\$ 3,017.53
Contributions	\$ 2,008.88
Fundraising from SNL (February)	\$ 305.50
Savings Interest	\$ 00.55
Total	\$ 5,332.46

INVENTORY: INVENTORY: We have sold a total of 330 Plain Language BB's and we have 90 in stock. We currently have 85 BB's on the shelf and 40 more in back stock. I think the run on PLBB's is over for now, so I dp not plan to order any more in the near future. I've added a new Big Book Study Guide to our inventory. I'm scrambling to keep up with the demand for chips, and I will be placing a Hazelden order this month, as well.

As always, thanks for listening,

Lynne

Contribution Options:

SQUARE: Just reminding everyone that we can now accept contributions from groups and individuals using our Square point-of-sale app for credit/debit cards.

PayPal Account: You can also send contributions through PayPal using our <u>deltacentral312@gmail.com</u> email account. Both of these digital contribution tools are working smoothly.

Venmo: You and your groups can now Venmo donations to @Delta-Central

Cash App: You and your groups can now Cash App contributions to \$Delta Central



Delta Intergroup of A.A. Income/Expense Report February 2025

INCOME							EXPENSES						
Account	1	ebruary 2024	F	ebruary 2025	Yea	r To Date 2025	Account		bruary 2024	Fe	ebruary 2025	Yea	r To Date 2025
GENERAL FUND							GENERAL	FUN	D				
From Saturday Night Live		\$ 264.60	5	349.50	\$	669.50	Rent	S	1,690.00	\$	1,829.00	S	3,585.00
From 7th Tradition	1	\$ 1,466.47	5	1,659.48	\$	2,693.68	Insurance (Annual in May)	S	233.30			\$	
From Mid-Summer Picnic					\$		Instant Ink					\$	-
From New Year's Day					\$	376.10	Tracfone Service	S	22.07	\$	20.74	S	42.48
					\$		Digital Space (Web Domain)	S	15.20	S	16.42	S	32.84
					\$	•	Copy Machine Rental	\$	279.22	\$	279.22	S	558.44
					\$	-	Copy Maintenance (Quarterly)					\$	-
					\$	(5)	Comeast Internet/Phone	S	207.06	\$	232.08	S	454.86
					\$	150	Zoom(Annual June 20)	S	12.99			\$	-
					\$	-	Office Manager Stipend	S	450.00	\$	300.00	S	750.00
					\$	-	PI/CPC Pamphlets (Est.)					\$	-
					\$	i a r	Office Supplies					\$	-
					\$	-	Stamps (Taxes Cert. Mail) Stamps	S	34.00			S	9.68
					\$		Tax/Registration Fees/Bank					S	50.00
					\$		Financial Consultant Tax Prep.)	S	475.00			\$	
					\$	U.	BTG Postal Box					S	-
					\$	-	Stockton Alarm Permit					\$	
					S	-				\vdash		S	
					S	-	New Computer (incl. Software)			-		S	
	\vdash				S	-		_				S	
	\vdash				-	55%	Ring Alarm Monitoring (Annual)			_		-	
	L				\$		Website Security Certificate (Annual)			_		\$	•
					\$	-						\$	-
			_				Square Fees (Contributions)			\$	1.06	S	1.06
TOTAL INCOME		\$ 1,731.07	\$	2,008.98	\$	3,739.28	TOTAL EXPENSES	S	3,418.84		2,678.52	S	5,484.36
LITERATURE ACCOUNT							LITER	ATU	RE ACC	OUN	T		
From General Sales	\$	2,497.63	\$	2,879.56	\$	5,685.77	Literature	S	2,759.15	\$	2,592.16	S	3,999.86
From Saturday Night Live	\$	212.61	\$	137.87	\$	484.17	Medallions			S	181.95	S	181.95
From New Year's Day					\$	-	Special Medallions	\$	698.10	\$	327.98	S	657.83
From Mid-Year Picnic					\$	-	Postage (Mailing Literature)	S	9.32	S	5.38	S	11.43
Jackson Women's Conf.					\$	(5)	Franchise Tax board					S	735.00
					\$	e=0	Bank Fees					\$	-
					\$		Accessories					\$	
					\$	-						\$	-
							Square Fees	S	62.59	S	* 52.00	S	136.97
Total Income	\$	2,710.24	\$	3,017.43	\$	6,169.94	Total Expenses	\$	3,529.16	\$	3,159.47	5	5,723.04
SPECIAL EVENTS ACCOUNT	VT						SPECIAL	EV	ENTSAC	cot	JNT		
Saturday Night Live	\$	196.00	s	305.50	\$	474.50	SNL Rent (Quart'ly Jan/Apr/Jul/Oct)					S	85.00
Mid-Year Event Fundraising					\$	-	Special Events Supplies			S	146.59	S	186.90
Mid-Year Event Ticket Sales	\vdash				S		Mid Year Outdoor Event			-		\$	
					\$	-	New Year's Day (Rent)					S	500.00
Mid-Year Picnic	\vdash				S	1,000,00	- , ,			-			
New Year's Day Brunch					3	1,898.00	SNL Supplies					S	35.49
			_				Square Fees					\$	-
Total Income	\$	196.00	\$	305.50	\$	2,372.50	Total Expenses	\$	-	\$	146.59	S	807.39
SAVINGS ACCOUNT								ING	SACCOL	NT			
Interest	\$	0.48	\$	0.55	\$	1.25	Bank Fees					\$	-
Total Income	\$	0.48	\$	0.55	\$	1.25	Total Expenses	\$				\$	
CERTIFICATE OF DEPOSI	IT							\$	2	S	-	\$	
Interest			\$	-	\$	53.00	Bank Fees	\$	27	L		\$	-
Total Income	\$	-	S	-	\$	53.00	Total Expenses	\$	-				
Total Combined Income	\$	4,637.79	\$	5,332.46	\$	11,851.80	Total Combined Expenses	\$	6,948.00	\$	5,984.58	\$	12,014.79



Delta Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous Central Office Contributions Report January 2025-December 2025 Monthly Log of Donations

Fellowship	Febr	uary '25	YTD
11th Step Meeting & Yoga			\$ -
Al-Anon			\$ -
Anonymous Estate			\$ -
Anonymous Individual	\$	90.00	\$ 160.00
Babes in Recovery			\$ -
Back to Basics	\$	50.00	\$ 50.00
Big Bookers	\$	30.00	\$ 112.00
Bilingual Group			\$ -
Birthday Gratitude	\$	37.00	\$ 37.00
Business Persons Lunch			\$ -
Central Foothill Conference			\$ -
Coffee Break			\$ - 1
Copper Group			\$ -
DCO Blue Can	\$	22.00	\$ 55.00
DCO Business Meeting	\$	26.00	\$ 77.00
District 30	\$	300.00	\$ 300.00
District 33			
District 37	\$	20.00	\$ 40.00
Don't Drink Today			\$ -
El Grupo Refugio			\$ -
End of the Line			\$ -
Escalon Grapevine			\$ -
Exodus Men's Group			\$ -
Fremont Fellowship			\$ -
Galt Fellowship	\$	50.00	\$ 50.00
Galt Garden Club			\$ -
Ground Zero			\$ -
Grupo Sinceridad			\$ -
Hand in Hand			\$ -
H and I	\$	17.00	\$ 32.00
Jackson Women's Conf			\$ -
KISS			\$ -
Last Chance House			\$ -
Last Stand			\$ -
Lathrop			\$ -
Living Sober			\$ -
Lodi Lite			\$ 14.96
Lodi Primary Purpose			\$ _

TOTAL YEAR-TO-DATE

Fellowship	Feb	ruary '25	YTD
Lodi Solutions	\$	309.00	\$ 309.00
Manteca Fellowship			\$ -
Maple Square	\$	129.26	\$ 276.71
Mokelumne Hill			\$ -
Morada Fellowship			\$
Murphys Group			\$ 1.00
MurphysWomen's Group			\$ 50.75
Northside Fellowship			\$ -
P.I./C.P.C.			\$ -
P.I./C.P.C Modesto			\$ -
Pershing Fellowship	\$	72.43	\$ 90.49
Pine Grove			\$ -
Porter Group	\$	15.47	\$ 57.28
Primary Purpose (Stockton)			\$ 400.00
Railroad Flat			\$ 12
Rainbow Fellowship			\$ 10
Recovery Central	\$	376.28	\$ 376.28
Ripon Group			\$ -
Ripon Not All Here Yet			\$ -
River Pines Monday			\$ -
S.I.S. (Sisters in Sobriety)			\$ -
Saturday Night Live	\$	349.50	\$ 670.50
Sisters in Sobriety Murphys			\$ -
Soul Sisters			\$ -
Surrender to Win			\$ -
Sutter Creek Men's Group			\$ -
Third Legacy Meeting			\$ 1-1
Tickets			\$
Tracy Fellowship	\$	85.04	\$ 292.13
Valley Sober Living			\$
Valley Springs Fellowship			\$ 122.18
Valley Springs ODAAT			\$ -
Way Out Fellowship			\$
West Point AA	\$	30.00	\$ 45.00
Yosemite Newcomers			\$ -
Valley Springs ODAAT			\$ -
Special Events			\$ 120.00
Total This Month	\$	2,008.98	



Delta Central Office Office Manager's Report March 12, 2025

SCHEDULES: Sandi L. and Steve N. continue to do a great job keeping both the printed and website schedules up to date.

SCHEDULE CHANGES: Please address all requests for changes to the schedule directly to the webmaster at meetings@aadelta.org. Sending these requests to the Central Office only results in delays since the Central Office does not maintain the schedules and is otherwise inundated with emails of all sorts. Please remember that schedule changes should be requested by a group's IGR, GSR, or General Secretary only. Also, please be aware that Delta Intergroup can only make changes to our schedule, and that the changes to the Meeting Guide App are not controlled by us. Those changes usually follow our website by 24-48 hours, but they have sometimes taken longer.

NEWSLETTER: Both versions posted this Monday.

FLYERS: Please send your flyers in the form of a PDF or JPEG by the 15th of the month prior to your event. When everything comes in the last week, I can't keep up. A reminder that all events flyers must identify the event as an AA event, either through spelling out Alcoholics Anonymous, using the AA abbreviation, or the AA circle/triangle logo. This has been our policy for several years, and lately has been frequently ignored. Also, if you want your event flyer in the newsletter, please "save as" an image file (JPEG, GIF, or PNG) and submit it in that format and not as a PDF or Word Document. With up to 15 flyers a month, converting them all takes a lot of time. Thanks.

<u>SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE/UNITY DAY</u>: SNL will be hosted by Delta Central Office in April. Our speaker will be Richie B. from West Los Angeles. Please distribute the attached flyer and let people know. More to follow from Gary T.

UPCOMING DUE DATE - INSURANCE RENEWAL: I am proposing that we change our Insurance broker, and Maple Square's Treasurer will give me the name of their broker. We should do this since Maple Square's broker carries the same insurance carrier as ours, USLI, and our broker last year held onto our payment long enough that the carrier threatened to cancel our account.

HELPLINE MANUAL: No updates that I know of.

SERVICE POSITION OPENING: Please distribute the flyer and help us recruit a new TREASURER and ASSISTANT OFFICE MANAGER..

That's all for now.

Lynne

24 25

3,739.28



DELTA INTERGROUP OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

Open Service Position Treasurer

Qualifications

A recommended minimum 5 years continuous sobriety, and preferred 1 year of Intergroup experience.

The Treasurer shall be elected for a term of 2 years, and shall serve in office for no more than two full terms. The treasurer shall assist in an advisory capacity to the succeeding treasurer for a minimum of six months.

Responsibilities

The Treasurer is responsible for accounting for all receipts and expenditures and shall maintain Intergroup's accounting system in accordance with good accounting practices.

The Treasurer shall submit monthly detailed reports of income and expenses to the Board of Directors and to the Delegates, including a list of monthly and year-to-date contributions from member groups.

The Treasurer shall annually provide the outside accountant with all the necessary information to file Federal, State, and Registry of Charitable Trust income tax returns..

The treasurer shall ensure that the Central Office files and pays quarterly Sales Tax returns in a timely manner.

Interested?

For more information, or to express your interest, please attend the next Delta Intergroup Meeting on Wednesday, April 9, 2025 at 7:00 pm
1151 W. Robinhood Dr. Ste B3, Stockton

or Zoom ID: 831-9927-9187 Pw: delta



DELTA INTERGROUP OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

Open Service Position Assistant Office Manager

Qualifications

A recommended minimum 5 years continuous sobriety, and prior experience in a Central Office service structure.

Responsibilities

The Assistant Office Manager shall become familiar with all duties of the Office Manager position as outlined below.

Account for all monies received by the Central Office.

Make deposits, maintain stock of literature and other inventory, guide volunteers, oversee a monthly newsletter, report DCO activities at regular BoD and Intergroup meetings, manage agreements with outside vendors.

Interested?

For more information, or to express your interest, please attend the next Delta Intergroup Meeting on Wednesday, April 9, 2025 at 7:00 pm
1151 W. Robinhood Dr. Ste B3, Stockton or

Zoom ID: 831-9927-9187 Pw: delta



From W. Los Angeles Meeting Starts at 8:00 pm

First Presbyterian Church 31 E. Vine Street, Stockton 95203

Parking is off Center Street behind the Church

COFFEE, SODAS, FINGER FOODS, SNACKS

PRIMARY PURPO

7545 Murray Drive, Unit 3, Stockton



SPEAKER MEETING

Saturday, April 12, 2025 @ 6:00 pm Tom S., 36 years Maple Square

Potluck Starts @ 5:00 pm



Saturday, April 26, 2025 @ 6:00 pm (Doors open @5:00 pm)





43rd Annual Woman to Woman Conference April 11, 12, 13th 2025

Wyndham Hotel

5321 Date Ave., Sacramento, CA 95841 916-338-5800

Room Rates \$139.00 plus tax Cut off date is March 25th 2025

MAIN SPEAKERS

Friday 8 pm Deborah C. Laguna Beach CA Saturday Al-Anon 10 am Andrea C. Amarillo, TX Saturday Jeanette M. Sacramento, CA 1 pm Saturday 8 pm Kristina W. Fairfax, CA Sunday Goleta, CA 10 am Allison C.

Registration: Valerie C. 916-847-4673 Conference Chair: Cyndi G. 916-968-3212

Raffle Donations: Chair: Christina S. 916-600-8696 Send COMPLETED registration form and a check payable to:

NCWW - PO BOX 2008, Fair Oaks, CA 95628 NO. LATER THAN March 21, 2025

IMPOF	RTANT: Pre-order T-shirts are a	vailab	le on t	he web	site or be	low and mu	st be ordered	by March 21, 2025
NAME:			А	DDRESS	6:			
	Non Refundable \$35.00 Pre-l	ation_		I wo	ould like to a	lonate \$	for the	
			Sc	holarsh	ip Fund			
	Pre-Order T Shirts:S						XXXL@\$	15.00 each
Satu	rday Banquet 82.00: A Ta	ste of	Calif	ornia: .	Salad, Ti	ri Tip. Salm	ion, Vegeta	bles, Mushroom
		F	Raviol	li, Choo	colate Co	ake		
	TOTAL INCLUDING BANQU	JET A	ND T	-SHIRT	5\$			
	ALL BANQUET AND PRE-F	REGIS	TRATI	ON M	UST BE F	RECEIVED E	BY MARCH 2	21, 2025
	Regretta	bly, N	о сні	LDREN	ARE AL	LOWED AT	THIS EVEN	T
		Ś	40.00	Reaist	ration a	t the door		
	If you would like to voluntee							-709-4925
	If you would li	ke to k	e of S	ervice a	t next ye	ar'sConferen	ce,	
	I'm attending as a Member	of AA_		I'm a	ttending	as a Membe	r of Al-Anon_	
			1					

If you are in need of a scholarship, please submit a request in wring, in advance. Scholarship covers registration only and requires a 2 hour service commitment Limited times will be availablee.



Pershing Fellowship

1049 Rivara Road, Stockton

Speaker Meeting

Linda N. W/27 years from Back To Basics



Saturday, Arpil 19, 2025 6 pm Speaker Hybrid / Zoom ID: 167 811 008, Password 12345



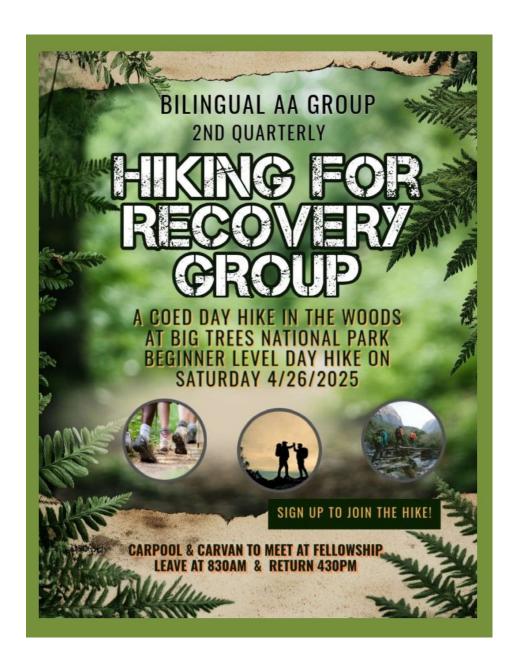
Big Bookers April 25th Birthday Speaker Meeting AA



440 E Kettleman Lane Lodi
Bobby from Modesto

Join us for an evening of birthday celebration









Join Us For Our Monthly <u>LIVE</u>, IN PERSON Birthday Celebration

Speaker Meeting

Saturday, May 3, 2025

Our Host Group Is Big Bookers

Speaker:

Brenda, Fruitvale Meeting From Lincoln, CA

> Doors Open at 7:30 pm Meeting Starts at 8:00 pm

First Presbyterian Church 31 E. Vine Street, Stockton 95203

Parking is off Center Street behind the Church

We will be serving Coffee, Snacks, Water, and Soft Drinks.

In-Town Speaker Meeting Big Bookers May 9, 2025 at 7 PM Speaker: Casey





440 E Kettleman Lane Lodi, California



Big Bookers Birthday Night Speaker Meeting

A Fellowship of the Spirit



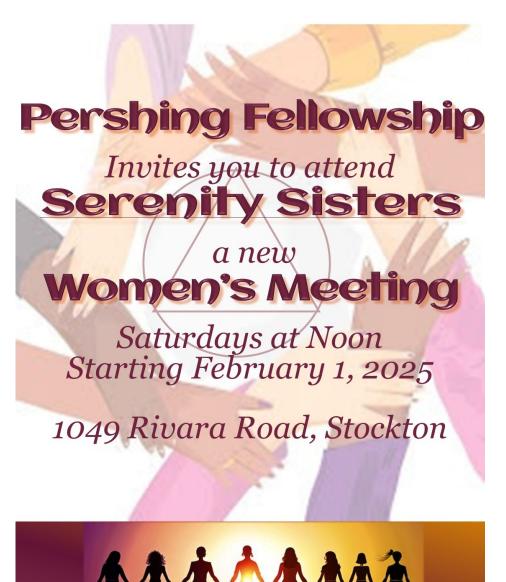
Friday, May 23th at 7:00 p.m.

Sharon L from Modesto

Join us for an evening of birthday celebration 440 E Kettleman Lane, Lodi, CA







Pershing Fellowship

44th ANNIVERSARY Celebration



Friday, May 30th, 2025
5:00 pm - Doors Oren
6:00 pm - Dinner
Dinner Tickets - \$25.00
7:00 pm - Speaker
50/50 Drawing

Lincoln Presidy teriam Church 900 Douglas Road, Stockton More Info: Contact: Molly B. (209) 601-8220 or Raquel V. (832) 364-3858



FELLOWSHIP BURGERS & HOT DOGS

MEMBERS BRING POTLUCK DISHES

SATURDAY JUNE 7TH

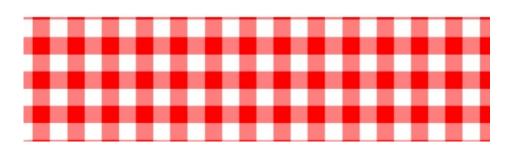
From 11am until 3pm

FOOD SERVED 1:15 PM

50/50 RAFFLE 2PM







SNL in May will be hosted by Big Bookers The Speaker will be Brenda from the Fruitvale Meeting in Lincoln CA.

Delta Intergroup is in need of a Treasurer and Assistant Office Manager Interested?

See the flyers on pp. 26-27
Please join the Intergroup Meeting Wednesday, May14, 7:00 pm at the
Central Office or on Zoom

ODD'N'ENDS

"Nothing in the world is more dangerous than sincere ignorance and conscientious stupidity." - Martin Luther King, Jr.

"Science is not only compatible with spirituality; it is a profound source of spirituality. When we recognize our place in an immensity of light-years and in the passage of ages, when we grasp the intricacy, beauty, and subtlety of life, then that soaring feeling, that sense of elation and humility combined, is surely spiritual. - Carl Sagan

"Character - the willingness to accept responsibility for one's own life - is the source from which self-respect springs." - Joan Didion

"Gratitude therefore takes nothing for granted, is never unresponsive, is constantly awakening to new wonder and to praise of the goodness of God. For the grateful person knows that God is good, not by hearsay but by experience. And that is what makes all the difference." - Edward Stone

"Reckless. Insatiable. Deceptive. Clingy. Vain. Dismissive. Trivial. Violent. Tactless. Controlling, Impractical. Fearful. Think of one example in your past where you exhibited each of these traits. Whatever memory comes to your mind will usually provide you with a clear illustration. Know that you have the capacity to exhibit all defects." - Alexandra Katehakis

"To progress is always to begin always to begin again"

- Martin Luther

"Live a good life. If there are gods and they are just, then they will not care how devout you have been, but will welcome you based on the virtues you have lived by. If there are gods, but unjust, then you should not want to worship them. If there are no gods, then you will be gone, but will have lived a noble life that will live on in the memories of your loved ones. I am not afraid." - Marcus Aurelius

"If the concept of God has any validity or any use, it can only be to make us larger, freer, and more loving. If God cannot do this, then it is time we got rid of Him."

- James Baldwin

Man does not weave this web of life. He is merely a strand of it. Whatever he does to the web, he does to himself. - Chief Seattle

"Nothing will stop you being creative more effectively than the fear of making a mistake." - John Cleese

"For a long time it had seemed to me that life was about to begin - real-life. But there was always some obstacle in the way. Something to be got through first, some unfinished business, time still to be served, a debt to be paid. Then life would begin. At last it dawned on me that these obstacles were my life." - Fr. Alfred D'Souza

"No change in circumstances can repair a defect of character."

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

A.A. HUMOR









It's all a matter of







The purpose of Delta Intergroup is to facilitate and support Unity among the members, groups, and fellowships in San Joaquin and neighboring Counties.

Delta Intergroup's Central Office furthers this goal of Unity by providing services to the groups which they cannot provide to their members.

We sell AA approved and related recovery literature, and provide printed and online meeting schedules and information. We support the P.I./C.P.C. Committee by providing meeting space and pamphlet materials for distribution to the Institutions it serves. We sponsor a monthly area-wide "Birthday" celebration, and special events throughout the year.

Let Us Know What's on Your Minds and In Your Hearts

As you may have noticed, members from our Area have been sending us articles, memes, haikus and inspirational thoughts. And I believe our newsletter is far better because of these contributions.

So, we have now demonstrated that there are a lot of our members who have something important to say. So, **please** continue to share your thoughts, jokes, stories, and experiences with us. We want this to be a newsletter that showcases <u>all</u> the many voices in our community. And I know there are a lot of us out there.

Send us your literary and artistic contributions at deltacentral312@gmail.com
We want to hear from you!

