

July 2020

24-Hour Phone 651.227.5502

Volume 56 Issue 7

# **STEP SEVEN**

My Creator, I am now willing that You should have all of me, good and bad. I pray that You now remove from me every single defect of character which stands in the way of my usefulness to You and my fellows. Grant me strength, as I go out from here, to do Your bidding.

### Trust God, Clean House, and Help Others

When I came to AA thirty-three years ago, we had many meetings with the topic, "Trust God, clean house, and help others." I am glad today that I attended so many of those meetings. First, I could not trust my parents, because of domestic violence, alcoholism, and mental illness. They were not trustworthy. Subsequently, I did not know how to trust God, as I grew up feeling like I was not worthy enough. This became a huge jump for me; if you cannot trust your parents, how do you trust an invisible spirit of love? I learned that love hurt.

However, I found early in sobriety that turning my life over to a higher power would be an improvement from the trauma and drama at home. That something would care for me was new and actually felt good. That God would take care of me, is the best gift I have ever received. I only had to get through the hell in which I was living.

There was one problem; I would have to have faith. In church, I had never heard the word faith and did not know what it meant. How do I rely on something, when nobody was ever there for me in the past? With one of my first sponsees, I decided to try the way of faith, trusting that God would help get her into treatment. With 10% faith, I felt good about the plan, but she did not go into treatment. Next time I tried more faith, and it felt better and the results were a little better. I finally got it that I was to have 100% faith to get the best results from God. My lack of faith had stopped the best outcome.

Cleaning house brought me a new perception. As I was a good cleaner for my spotless house, I got out the vacuum to do the cleaning. Learning that this was actually an inner house cleaning brought new understanding that I had no idea what was going on within me. I was terrified of the fourth step, as I never told anyone what had happened in my home. However, the relief I felt and the improvement in my life showed me that this was helpful.

Since then, I continue to do thorough house cleaning, as the more I release to God and replace with love and grace, my life has blossomed into heaven on Earth. I do not want to continue in my childish or adolescent reactions to fear. That was brought on by the pain and anguish. I have to work in a mature way and give up my selfish, self-centered survival instincts. My sponsor said growing up is not for sissies.

Then came the "help others." I had helped others as a people pleaser, overachieving to look good, and out of obligation. How do you help others without any rewards, expectations, or potential gain? My sponsor encouraged me to do service work. I was there without any benefit to me. That was difficult for me, as I did not know how to contribute. I showed up to clean ashtrays, make coffee, and chair meetings.

Step Seven: *continued from page 2* 

### The Lifeline: Purpose Statement

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, 608 Seventh Street West, St. Paul, MN 55102. Materials or articles mailed to us cannot be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope. Intergroup reserves the right to edit submissions for clarity, language, length, and content that might violate A.A.'s Traditions, etc.

St. Paul & Suburban Area Intergroup, Inc.608 Seventh Street West. - St. Paul, MN 55102Website: www.aastpaul.orge-mail: lifeline@aastpaul.orgFax: 651-290-0209Office Hours: Monday through Friday – 9 AM to 6 PM; Saturday 9 AM to 1 PM

Again, my sponser told me, I had to give it away to keep it. Therefore, I kept applying the program. I graduated to sponsoring, being on the committees for conventions, and being a speaker at conferences. I continue to do service work, such as writing this article. My continuing to sponsor keeps me on my toes. I have learned over the years what spirituality is really about. Now, each day, I practice, "Trust God, clean house, and help others." My life feels like grace. Applying this daily creates a life I never knew existed and never thought possible for me. I learned a new way of living from this slogan. I am happy, joyous, and free from my ego and its insanity. AA really works!

> Marilyn R. Reprinted from the Portland, OR Intergroup Newsletter

# TRADITION Seven

Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

The previous tradition pointed in the direction of the three things that provide distraction and destruction for many an organization. It focused on the 'desires' that underlie many attempts at the kind of power driving Bill W mentions elsewhere in the Traditions.

But Tradition Seven zeros in on one thing only – our attitude about money. As one old-timer who spoke at many conventions, used to say, "My problem was just that I was always under-financed! ". The real question, however, is 'under-financed' for what?

Did you know that Bill W. owed roughly \$600,000 (in today's dollars) when he got sober? And over the course of years he had several well-to-do AA members offer to pay off his debt—but he declined those generous offers. He knew that the real cost would be much higher than those dollars. There might be favors asked, or perhaps he would come to think about something differently just because he had accepted the generous offers. He apparently wanted to be clear-thinking and unencumbered by any sense of obligation or need to hold a certain viewpoint about something. For the curious—it was paid off long before he died.

He had certainly been at the right place and time to learn this valuable lesson in his days on Wall Street. Where better to learn how money can change the course of an organization in a way that has a deadening affect on it. So, when he penned this Tradition—it wasn't just theory, it was real experience that went into it.

Recently another application of this Tradition was experienced. Due to the closing of offices and reduced sales of literature, both AA's General Service Office and the St. Paul AA Intergroup and their respective Boards considered filing for the money that was offered by the U.S. government to help keep businesses afloat. Both entities were in need of those funds. It was even possible that the funds would not have to be repaid, creating a windfall of revenue for the entities.

In both cases, the Boards carefully deliberated and made the same final decision—to draw the needed funds from their Reserve Funds. Funds which provide a measure of security for both entities. But it really came down to what the Seventh Tradition is all about—faith! Faith that a Higher Power will provide our members what is necessary, and that in turn they will do the same for the entities they wish to keep operating.

This reminds us of a meeting that was held at the old 411 Main building many years ago-circa 1987. Area 36 was discussing how large their Reserve Fund should be. There were those who wanted it to be the cost of operating for 1 year. And there were those who thought a couple of months were sufficient. As the discussion began to wind down, the DCM from District 8 rose to the microphone. He was more on the side of prudence than he would be in the side of extravagance. His words were simple, direct and ever so correct. He said, "Our members are our Prudent Reserve!" By that he meant that we could count on our members to provide what was necessary, when it was necessary. It seems we may be about to learn the truth or fallacy of that statement.





We had lacked the perspective to see that character building and spiritual values had to come first... page 71 12x12 Step 7. One of the beautiful tenets of Step 7 is humility. Humility like courage is one of those things that shows you lack it when you brag about it.

When I came here to Elmwood, one of the requests

I had of my HP was that I would be allowed to be of maximum ser- vice. That request has led to some of the most powerful and humbling experiences of my life. Being here has given me, in so many ways, a new and beautiful perspective on life. I have, by the grace of God,

had the opportunity to be of service in a way that I never thought possible and the gifts from my Higher Power warm my heart in what can be a very cold place.

In the last four months, I have started 32 guys on the steps. I have been blessed to watch men who had real trauma; things like extensive ugly childhood abuse gunshots, stabbings, and general violence as part of their stories get sober and work the steps. The perspective I came here with was my life, my childhood had abuse and was hard. I have come to deeply believe that my parents not only did the best they could, they did it with love. ALL, I mean ALL, of the wreckage that befell my life I caused.

With this new perspective I get to see how even in the midst of the copious amounts of drugs, alcohol and violence in this place there are people who want a better life. I get to set aside my prejudices, my arrogance and one moment at a time be of service. It is through this place that I have learned why service is so important and beautiful.

One of the many ways I feel the presence of God is watching men I get to work with carry the message to other men. It is shocking and a testament to HP working in here. The meetings we have are not

Being here has given me, in so many ways, a new and beautiful perspective on life.

meetings where a slip is signed or where a judge, P.O. or cop cares you attend. We don't have a bunch of readings and we have a ton of crosstalk, but we all get to see ourselves grow and we get to help each other. This is humbling.

However, the service that God has allowed me to do which is the most humbling thing I've ever done is tutor guys who are trying to get their GED. Watching guys from the ages of 19 to 56 humble themselves and say they need help (really big deal in jail especially from a violent gang base around) with reading, math and science is humbling. Sitting with a guy for eight days straight going over factoring problems, him feeling hopeless, yet he won't quit is so touching. Seeing the look in his eyes when he gets it and him asking for more homework is beyond touching.

> One of the guys I have been tutoring is 24 and reads at a 10-year old level. His is in the GED class. I have been blessed to watch his reading comprehension increase and to watch him do math. When he started, he said I'm too stupid to ever get this. One month

later he is reading better and doing math and has been passing his practice tests.

I used to be such a secret arrogant ass about intelligence, that some people just couldn't and wouldn't get it, that they were destined to lives of mediocrity. I now get to see the ugliness of my beliefs and hope one day my HP can forgive me for having them.

So, what does this have to do with character building and spirituality? I don't have a freaking clue! I have learned that I get much closer to my HP when I give back to my fellow brothers freely—as help was so freely given to me. My parents gave me a very good education and I have always used it. Before I got sober, I used my intellect in selfish destructive ways. Now I have an opportunity to be of service and to give back what was so feely given.

I am so grateful AA taught me how to be of service and that I get to.

- Rahul A, M2A Elmwood Santa Clara Intergroup Newsletter

# MY EGO CAN WHIP YOUR EGO Let your conscience be your guide

I've haven't had too many problems with places or things. My problems have always been with the people in those places and the ones that owned those things. It's always been THOSE OTHER PEOPLE. When I first entered AA, I learned that one of the symptoms of alcoholism was our inability to form a true partnership with another human being. I could be your partner as long as you were willing to see it my way. Most of the people I knew got tired of me and pulled away. I had to explain why they deserted me, so I went about pointing out all of their faults while ratio- nalizing (making a socially acceptable excuse for a socially unacceptable behavior) my own behavior. I never felt good about myself after behaving that way, but I couldn't face the idea of admitting that I was the problem.

One evening, I was talking to a friend of mine about this topic and he said: "all forms of criticism and character assignation stem from low self esteem". I heard another person say "there are two ways to get the tallest building in town, 1. Build the tallest building or 2. Tear all the other buildings down". The low self esteem comment stopped me in my tracks. I knew I had



#### MEETINGS MAY BE VIRTUAL, BUT INTERGROUPS BILLS STILL COME BY U.S. MAIL!

Don't forget to contribute at:

- The website under the 'Unity' menu item
- Using Sqaure Cash on your phone @ cash.app/\$spintergroup
- Send a check
- Join the Faithful Fivers Club

We are still self-supporting through the contributions of our members and groups!

to restrain my tongue if I was ever going to overcome the insecurity inside of me. I was going to have to rely on my own merits if I was ever going to have a healthy self image.

All people are conditioned to protect themselves and often they overreact and do and say things that cause others to react in kind. This can do damage to any relationship, and sometimes can destroy a friendship. I am in the program of Alcoholics Anonymous to heal myself so it's my responsibility to cut off my own escape and take the initiative to deal with my side of the action whether the other person cooperates or not. If I want to--- have the best possible relationship with every

human being I know--- (12x12 steps 8) it's up to me and I had to stop judging people by their surface behavior, look deeper and try to understand how they are conditioned to behave the way they do. This gives me the strength to be empathetic and not aggravate the situation. We all make mistakes and today I don't let my EGO compound problem. When the I let myself get into a confrontation with another person who has problems like I do, all I am saying is," I'LL BET MY EGO CAN WHIP YOUR EGO".

It's a long and slow process, and it requires constant attention on my part. I try to give everyone amnesty. I apply

the golden rule in every situation. I use the ST. Francis prayer for inspiration. I refuse to pile on when another person is a little off his/her game. If I find that that person is still willing to cross my boundaries and cause me grief, I can remove myself and detach without condemning the other person as I withdraw. I don't discuss his faults to others when he's not present. (No gossip)

And most of all, I must be satisfied with delayed gratification. It may take years before anyone appreciates the changes that I have made, and when they do, it makes it even more gratifying. Today I am nobody's adversary; I nobody's victim; and I am nobody's perpetrator. I know that my ego doesn't like the way I live today, but my conscience gets the final say.

Rick R. Reprinted from Brooklyn Intergroup

occupation

ylecomforts

ION

eaac

# **OUR NEW HOME**



Our Space



Copier/Project Area

> **Literature Displays Volunteer Project** Area

**Point Of Sale** Area & Staff Work Area





# **INTERGROUP 2020 EVENTS**

**OPEN HOUSE - TO BE DECIDED** July 25, 2020 - Hosts: Rachel P. & Andrew LaB.

**ICE CREAM SOCIAL - REDEEMER CHURCH** September 12, 2020 - Hosts: Jeremiah W. & Mark J.

**GRATITUDE NIGHT - REDEEMER CHURCH** November 21, 2020 - Hosts: Rachel P. & Jimmy D.

FOUNDERS DAY HOSPITALITY ROOM - BLOOMINGTON November 27-29, 2020 - Hosts: Andrew LaB. & Tom O.

**NEW YEARS EVE - REDEEMER CHURCH** December 31, 2020 - Hosts: Lindsey D. & Jimmy D.

#### LOOKING FOR A SERVICE OPPORTUNITY?

Become a St.Paul Intergroup Night Owl Upcoming Night Owl Orientations: Saturday, May 16th, June 20th, July 18th Third Saturday from 10:00 - 11:00 AM

St. Paul Intergroup Office 608 7th St. West St. Paul. MN 55102 To RSVP - please call 651-227-5502

Visits

6,131



Calls

3



Temp Sponsor Requests 11





Owl Calls Unknown





St. Paul Intergroup has launched an online store for your convenience and to help us navigate through the difficulties at hand. You can purchase all the items we normally carry through the store (we are adding items every day until we have everything there). To access the store, you can go to the Intergroup website and navigate to "Recovery/Merchandise" and there is a link that will take you to the store. Or you can go there directly by typing "aaspi. ecwid.com" into vour browser. Eniov vour shopping! You can also contribute on the website at: "Unity/Contribute"



THE FOLLOWING GROUPS, MEMBERS AND FAITHFUL FIVER MEMBERS MADE THE ABOVE SERVICES POSSIBLE:

- · Amazing Grace Group
- · Back to Basics Group Mpls
- Bright Promises AA
- · Cliffhangers Thursday Group
- · Day by Dei
- · Gloria Dei AA
- Highland Park Groups
- Lakeview Group
- Mendota 1030 AA Group North Dale Group
- · Roseville Wed Night Grp
- Rule 62 Step & Tradition
- Sat Morning Serenity Grp
- · Sisters of Serenity

- This Simple Program Group
- Uptown Club
- White Bear Sat AM Women's Grp

#### THANK YOU !!!!

Many groups and individuals were very generous in this past month, contributing more than their usual amount in order to help Intergroup survive the downturn in sales revenue due to being closed. We are most grateful to all who did so.

- 18 A.A. Groups contributed \$3,327
- 8 Gratitude Contributions totaled \$966
- 23 Faithful Fivers contributed \$1,700
  - 16 Digital Store Revenue for \$1,615!

### THANK YOU!!



# ACCEPTANCE

Thever once prayed for acceptance in my previous life, which could be called the Era of BS (Before Sobriety). Now I pray for every acceptance day when I say the Serenity Prayer. Life goes a lot smoother when I go with the flow and not try to direct and control every Someone I situation. know who has been on this path for a while likes to say that his Higher Power speaks through other people. That insight really helps me with acceptance. When I consider that the person telling me to do something, go

somewhere, or change my plans for the day, may actually be giving me a

message from my Higher Power, it is easier to accept things not going my way all the time. Listening to others and following instructions often leads to better results than doing things my way. I guess acceptance for me means acting like the world does not revolve around me.

Another aspect of acceptance for me is taking the good as well as the bad in life. You would think it would be harder to accept adversity than prosperity, but not for this alcoholic. I have a self-destructive streak that can't stand success. I'm like the alcoholic dad in the Will Ferrell movie Talledega Nights, if you remember that character--Ricky Bobby's dad can't stand things going well during a meal at Friday's with the kids and has to pick a fight with the waitress. So accepting good times as well as bad is part of my struggle. I feel like I don't deserve the good things sobriety has brought, the Promises starting to come true. I rebel against any situation not totally of my own making. The only situations totally of my own making were the times when

I was drunk in a ditch, stretched out in a jail cell, and broke in every possible way. Any halfway decent situation in my life involved the work and involvement of others, including and especially my Higher Power. But because I want to be master of my universe, I would rather live in a cave of my own making than in the sunlight of the spirit, where I can't take any real credit for the way things are.

> Ultimately, I see acceptance as an aspect of humility. I am not in control. I have been made weak by the passage of wasted time in my Era of BS. Any strength I have is not of my own making. And the best I can do is use that strength to align my will with that of my Higher Power. I don't know where the river flows, I can't control the waves and turns and rapids, all I can do is keep rowing, forget about the destination, and enjoy the journey!

> > Tim P, Mysterious Home Group Reprinted from the Akron Intergroup News



**Phones:** Lydia, Chris, Jimmy, Frank, Neilla, Caleb, David, Steve & Marc

**Moving:** CJ, Lindsey, Nate, Kelly, Alyssa, Pat, Paul, Marc, Dan, Janess, George, Tom, Susie, James, Peter, Mark, Nick & Drew

Retraín Your

Braín

# Self-Support Suggestions for Groups

"Every A.A. group ought to be fully selfsupporting, 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 608 Seventh Street West St. Paul, MN 55102

30% General Service Office P.O. Box 459 Grand Central Station New York, NY 10163

10% Southern MN Area 36 Area Assembly P.O. Box 2812 Mpls., MN 55402

10% District Committee Ramsey County: District 8, P.O. Box 131523 St. Paul, MN 55113

Dakota County: District 19, P.O. Box 1466 Burnsville, MN 55337

Washington County: District 15, P.O. Box 181 Lake Elmo, MN 55042

SE Ramsey County: District 26, P.O. Box 75980 St. Paul, MN 55175



Please check the website for the current listing of Night Owl shift openings, under 'Service/Night Owl Program' menu item.

# 2020 Intergroup Board of Directors

Advisor to the Board Rob C. Lindsev D. Chairperson Alternate Chairperson Rachel P. Secretary Paul W. Treasurer Mark J. Alternate Treasurer Lisa L. 2020 Member-At-Large Jimmy D. 2020 Member-At-Large John K. 2021 Member-At-Large Jeremiah W. 2021 Member-At-Large Andrew LaB. Dennis B. Manager





St. Paul Intergroup is in need of volunteers to answer the phones during business hours (9 am-6 pm) Monday through Friday, as well as assisting with the mailing of the Lifeline and stocking of literature. Shifts are available from 9:00 AM-Noon, Noon-3:00 PM, and 3:00 PM - 5:30 PM. Call to schedule training.

Thanks to our wonderful volunteers and Night Owls who sacrifice their time to lend a helping hand to the still suffering alcoholics!!!

> David D., Frank D., Harry D., Laurie P., Jimmy D., Rachel D.,

- 1. Opened with the Serenity Prayer, introductions, and read the Primary Purpose of Intergroup.
- 2. Last month minutes reviewed, motioned Tom W. and seconded by John K, motion approved.
- 3. Treasurer's Report, Mark J Contributions higher than expected, may need to tap into the prudent reserve in the net month or two if numbers continue to decline. Please see treasurer's report for further information
- 4. Office Report, Dennis Office reopened with Covid measures in place. Moving to new office at end of month, contact office if you are able to assist in the move. Please email lifeline@aastpaul.org for further information.
- 5. Night Owl Report Emails about open shifts will be sent as needed Please contact Frank N at NightOwl@ aastpaul.org or leave a message at the Intergroup Office.
- 6. Website Report, Jonathan L 21 meetings are meeting in person with social distancing Contact Jonathan & Sergey at w ebservant@aastpaul.org.
- 7. Outreach Program, Jimmy D Groups should give contact info to the office to facilitate communication. Please contact o utreach@aastpaul.org.
- 8. Update from the Board, Rachel P Thank you Dennis for all of the hard work in organizing our move.
- 9. (A) Liaison Reports: District 8:– None given.
  - (B) District 15: Jennifer G Meeting by Zoom, the Spring workshop is cancelled and in it's place a \$400 contribution will be given to SPI.
  - (C) District 19: None given
- 10. Intergroup Events:
- a. Recap On hiatus during Covid
- 11. Old Business:
- 12. New Business: Alt Treasurer election per bylaw, Lisa was nominated by Lindsey, 2nd by Nancy and passed. Congrats Lisa!
- 13. Group AA Announcements: Venmo for ASL fund @ASLFund-districteight
- 14. Suggestions for next month's agenda:
- 15. Grapevine Report, ; Volunteer for June, Nancy F.
- 16. Concept review IV Dan Volunteer for Concept V for June: Melena
- 17. Mock Rep Report, Tom Volunteer for June, Nancy F.
- 18. Closed with the Responsibility Statement Attendance:

Next Meeting: June 16th 2020 7:30pm Zoom Meeting



TO:	Members of the General Service Conference
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FROM:	Julio Espaillat, 2020 International Convention Coordinator
	Email: 2020ic@aa.org

SUBJECT: 2020 International Convention Virtual Site - Coming Soon!

### Dear friends,

As most of you are aware, in the spring the decision was made to cancel the 2020 International Convention due to the COVID-19 pandemic. While this was a difficult decision, and a disappointing outcome for those planning to attend, we are confident it was the most appropriate action to ensure the health and safety of our members. There is good news, however, as we now have an opportunity to bring together many of the special components that make International Conventions memorable — by utilizing a virtual platform. For this purpose, we are planning a 2020 International Convention digital site. Throughout the month of July, the 2020 International Convention will come alive online to provide a new experience that includes A.A. speakers; a digital "Carrying the Message Pavilion"; sharing from nonalcoholic friends of A.A. and special guests linked to our history; a presentation of the 40 millionth Big Book; a new Archives video on the history of A.A.; an AA Grapevine video created for the Convention, and more.

The virtual experience will also help us reaffirm the International Convention's goals, which include rededicating ourselves to the primary purpose of A.A.; sharing the success and growth of the A.A. program around the globe; and letting the world know that A.A. is alive, flourishing and available as a community resource internationally.

We will be up and running on aa.org by July 1, 2020, to coincide as closely as possible with the original Convention date, and the site will be available throughout the entire month of July. Please stay tuned for updates on aa.org.





St. Paul & Suburban Area Intergroup 608 7th Street W. Saint Paul, MN 55102-3010

Change Service Requested



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



## St. Paul Intergroup 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 Tenners (\$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:

Visa AmerCard Amer 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 608 7th Street W. Saint Paul, MN 55102-3010