



Carry the Message July, 2009

The Huron Valley Area Intergroup Newsletter

Serving the Recovery Community since 1979

Step Seven

Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

Tradition Seven Long Form

The A.A. groups themselves ought to be fully supported by the voluntary contributions of their own members. We think that each group should soon achieve this ideal; that any public solicitation of funds using the name of *Alcoholics Anonymous* is highly dangerous, whether by groups, clubs, hospitals, or other outside agencies; that acceptance of large gifts from any source, or of contributions carrying any obligation whatever, is unwise. Then too, we view with much concern those A.A. treasuries which continue, beyond prudent reserves, to accumulate funds for no stated A.A. purpose. Experience has often warned us that nothing can so surely destroy our spiritual heritage as futile disputes over property, money, and authority.

Traditions Checklist from the A.A. Grapevine

1. Honestly now, do I do all I can to help AA (my group, my central office,

my GSO) remain self-supporting?

Could I put a little more into the basket on behalf of the new guy who can't afford it yet? How generous was I when tanked in a barroom?

2. Should the Grapevine sell advertising space to book publishers and drug companies, so it could make a big profit and become a bigger magazine, in full color, at a cheaper price per copy?

3. If GSO runs short of funds some year, wouldn't it be okay to let the government subsidize AA groups in hospitals and prisons?

4. Is it more important to get a big AA collection from a few people, or a smaller collection in which more members participate?

5. Is a group treasurer's report unimportant AA business? How does the treasurer feel about it?

6. How important in my recovery is the feeling of self-respect, rather than the feeling of being always under obligation for charity received?

Our AA Experience Has Taught Us That...

AA Grapevine vol 2 Number 11

—Bill W.
April 1946

Nobody invented Alcoholics Anonymous. It grew. Trial and error has produced a rich experience. Little by little we have been adopting the lessons of that experience, first as policy and then as tradition. That process

still goes on and we hope it never stops. Should we ever harden too much the letter might crush the spirit. We could victimize ourselves by petty rules and prohibitions; we could imagine that we had said the last word. We might even be asking alcoholics to accept our rigid ideas or stay away. May we never stifle progress like that!

Yet the lessons of our experience count for a great deal --a very great deal, we are each convinced. The first written record of A.A. experience was the book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*. It was addressed to the heart of our foremost problem --release from the alcohol obsession. It contained personal experiences of drinking and recovery and a statement of those divine but ancient principles which have brought us a miraculous regeneration. Since publication of *Alcoholics Anonymous* in 1939 we have grown from 100 to 24,000 members. Seven years have passed; seven years of vast experience with our next greatest undertaking --the problem of living and working together. This is today our main concern. If we can succeed in this adventure --and keep succeeding --then, and only then, will our future be secure.

Since personal calamity holds us in bondage no more, our most challenging concern has become the future of Alcoholics Anonymous; how to preserve among us A.A.s such a powerful unity that neither weakness of persons nor the strain and strife of these troubled times can harm our common cause. We know that *Alcoholics Anonymous* must continue to live. Else, save few exceptions, we and our brother alcoholics throughout the world will surely resume the hopeless journey to oblivion.

Almost any A.A. can tell you what our group problems are. Fundamentally they have to do with our relations, one with the other, and with the world outside. They involve relations of the A.A. to his group,

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HVAI Contributions

(Continued from page 1)

Huron Valley Area Intergroup could not exist without the support of our many Groups and generous contributions from individual members. We rely on your contributions to keep our doors open to the still suffering alcoholics, and those who care for them. We wish to thank the following contributors:

We would like to thank District 04 for the generous contribution toward the expenses for the AA in Washtenaw County Service and Anniversary Celebration.

Ann Arbor:

**Wednesday at Westside
Came to Believe
Stadium Big Book Group
Spiritual Solution
Steps Group**

Ypsilanti:

**Heard it From the Grapevine
Weekend By the Book**

Saline:

**Lifesavers
The Barn**

Dexter:

Women of Substance

the relation of his group to Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole, and the place of Alcoholics Anonymous in that troubled sea called Modern Society, where all of humankind must presently shipwreck or find haven. Terribly relevant is the problem of our basic structure and our attitude toward those ever pressing questions of leadership, money and authority. The future may well depend on how we feel and act about things that are controversial and how we regard our public relations. Our final destiny will surely hang upon what we presently decide to do with these danger-fraught issues!

Now comes the crux of our discussion. It is this: Have we yet acquired sufficient experience to state clear-cut policies on these, our chief concerns? Can we now declare general principles which could grow into vital traditions --traditions sustained in the heart of each A.A. by his own deep conviction and by the common consent of his fellows? That is the question. Though full answer to all our perplexities may never be found, I'm sure we have come at last to a vantage point whence we can discern the main outlines of a body of tradition; which, God willing, can stand as an effective guard against all the ravages of time and circumstance.

Acting upon the persistent urge of old A.A. friends, and upon the conviction that general agreement and consent between our members is now possible, I shall venture to place in words these suggestions for *An Alcoholics Anonymous Tradition of Relations --Twelve Points to Assure Our Future:*

Our A.A. Experience Has Taught Us That:

1. Each member of Alcoholics Anonymous is but a small part of a great whole. A.A. must continue to live or most of us will surely die. Hence our common welfare comes first. But individual welfare follows close afterward.
2. For our Group purpose there is but one ultimate authority--a loving God as He may express Himself in our Group conscience.
3. Our membership ought to include all who suffer alcoholism. Hence we may refuse none who wish to recover. Nor ought A.A. membership ever depend upon money or conformity. Any two or three alcoholics gathered together for sobriety may call themselves an A.A. Group.
4. With respect to its own affairs, each A.A. Group should be responsible to no other authority than its own conscience. But when its plans concern the welfare of neighboring groups also, those groups ought to be consulted. And no group, regional committee or individual should ever take any action that might greatly affect A.A. as a whole without conferring with the Trustees of The Alcoholic Foundation. On such issues our common welfare is paramount.
5. Each Alcoholics Anonymous Group ought to be a spiritual entity *having but one primary purpose* --that of carrying its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.
6. Problems of money, property and authority may easily divert us from our

(Continued on page 3)

Meeting Updates

Our meeting updates are now available online at www.hvai.org. and on page 4 of this newsletter.

New to the HVAI website is a searchable meeting directory! Check it out, let us know what you think, and help us to spread the word. You can search by day, time, location, and type of meeting to name a few options.

The Spring 2009 meeting directory is now available. Get one at a local meeting or stop into the HVAI office at 31 South Huron Street, Ypsilanti MI.

Send Your Voluntary 7th Tradition Contributions To:

**Huron Valley Area Intergroup
31 South Huron Street
Ypsilanti, MI 48197**

**District 4
Washtenaw County Treasurer
Box 971502
Ypsilanti, MI 48197**

**Central Michigan Intra-Area 32
C.M.I.A. Area 32 Treasurer
10351 Timber Ridge Drive
Milan, MI 48160**

**AA World Service
Grand Central Station
P.O. Box 459
New York, NY 10164-0423**

Upcoming Events

July 24th-26th: *Michigan State Convention:* Ramada Plaza at the Northfield Troy, 5500 Crooks Road, Troy,
August 1st: West Branch 12 Step Club's 2nd Annual "Back roads Boogie" Poker Run starting point: 236 South First Street, West branch: 9a Registration \$15. at the door. Camping. Friends of Bill W. Picnic on Sat. the 2nd. Info: tomsteve1987@yahoo.com or kuitcherbitchen@aol.co
August 2nd: 1st. Sun. of every even month Central MI CMIA32.org ...Conference Service Structure Meeting:
August 4th: Tues. 6pm King of Kings Church: Our Delegate will give a report on the General Service Conference in New York
August 5th: Wed.. 7:30pm A Vision for You, Zion Lutheran Church: Our Delegate will give a report on the General Service Conference in New York
August 15th: Huron Valley Area Intergroup Business Meeting (HVAI): 2 doors south of the HVAI office at S.O.S. Admin. 101 S. Huron St. (use side door)
August 17th: District 4 Meeting, Calvary Methodist Church, 1415 Miller St, Ann Arbor, 48103.
August 21st-23rd: Volunteers needed; Ypsi. Heritage Festival Public Information Booth v_knoke@hotmail.com

(Continued from page 2)

primary spiritual aim. We think, therefore, that any considerable property of genuine use to A.A. should be separately incorporated and managed, thus dividing the material from the spiritual. An A.A. Group, as such, should never go into business. Secondary aids to A.A., such as clubs or hospitals which require much property or administration, ought to be set apart, that if necessary, they can be freely discarded by the Groups. The management of these special facilities should be the sole responsibility of those people, whether A.A.s or not, who financially support them. For our clubs, we prefer A.A. managers. But hospitals, as well as other places of recuperation, ought to be well outside A.A. --and medically supervised. An A.A. Group may cooperate with anyone, but should bind itself to no one.

7. The A.A. Groups themselves ought to be fully supported by the voluntary contributions of their own members. We think that each Group should soon achieve this ideal; that any public solicitation of funds using the name of Alcoholics Anonymous is highly dangerous; that acceptance of large gifts from any source or of contributions carrying any obligation whatever, is usually unwise. Then, too, we view with much concern those

A.A. treasuries which continue, beyond prudent reserves, to accumulate funds for no stated A.A. purpose. Experience has often warned us that nothing can so surely destroy our spiritual heritage as futile disputes over property, money, and authority.

8. Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever non-professional. We define professionalism as the occupation of counseling alcoholics for fees or hire. But we may employ alcoholics where they are going to perform those full time services for which we might otherwise have to engage non-alcoholics. Such special services may be well recompensed. But personal "12th Step" work is never to be paid for.

9. Each A.A. Group needs the least possible organization. Rotating leadership is usually the best. The small group may elect its secretary, the large group its rotating committee, and the groups of a large metropolitan area their central committee, which often employs a full time secretary. The trustees of The Alcoholic Foundation are, in effect, our General Service Committee. They are the custodians of our A.A. tradition and the receivers of voluntary A.A. contributions by which they maintain A.A. General Headquarters and our General Secretary at New York. They are authorized by the groups to handle our overall public relations and they guarantee the integrity of our principal pub-

lication, *The A.A. Grapevine*. All such representatives are to be guided in the spirit of service, for true leaders in A.A. are but trusted and experienced servants of the whole. They derive no real authority from their titles. Universal respect is the key to their usefulness.

10. No A.A. group or member should ever, *in such a way as to implicate A.A.*, express any opinion on outside controversial issues --particularly those of politics, alcohol reform or sectarian religion. The Alcoholics Anonymous groups oppose no one. Concerning such matters they can express no views whate

11. Our relations with the outside world should be characterized by modesty and anonymity. We think A.A. ought to avoid sensational advertising. Our public relations should be guided by the principle of attraction rather than promotion. There is never need to praise ourselves. We feel it better to let our friends recommend us.

12. And finally, we of Alcoholics Anonymous believe that the principle of anonymity has an immense spiritual significance. It reminds us that we are to place principles before personalities; that we are actually to practice a truly humble modesty. This to the end that our great blessings may never spoil us; that we shall forever live in thankful contemplation of Him who presides over us all.

May it be urged that while these principles have been stated in rather positive language they are still only suggestions for our future. We of Alcoholics Anonymous have never enthusiastically responded to any assumption of personal authority. Perhaps it is well for A.A. that this is true. So I offer these suggestions neither as one man's dictum nor as a creed of any kind, but rather as a first attempt to portray that group ideal toward which we have assuredly been led by a Higher Power these ten years past. .

Special Needs Committee

A.A meeting accessibility needed for people with limited mobility. Also for people who cannot attend regular meeting, such as those who are hospitalized, home-bound, or Hospice care.

Also will need volunteers to be able to take A.A meetings to people who cannot get to one.

Contact: specialneeds@hvai.org

Messages Phone: (734)482-5700

The Twelve Rewards of Our 12 Step Program

-By Ann C.

Ann C. wrote this "a number of years before the 1985 International Convention in Montreal, Canada where she set it to tape at the Oldtimers Meeting.

She wrote it to show the contrast that can take place in any of our lives if we will try to follow the AA principles.

We can all have Hope, instead of desperation;

Faith, instead of despair;

Courage, instead of fear;

Peace of Mind, instead of confusion;

Self-respect, instead of self-contempt;

Self-confidence, instead of helplessness;

The respect of others, instead of their pity and contempt;

A clean conscience, instead of a sense of guilt;

Real friendships, instead of loneliness;

A clean pattern of life, instead of a purposeless existence, instead of their doubts and fears;

And the freedom of a happy life, instead of the bondage of an alcoholic obsession.

All this and more through AA, are we grateful enough? Gratitude will continue

On the Seventh Tradition

-Bill W

The AA Grapevine Vol 5 No. 1 June, 1948

Our growth continuing, the combined income of Alcoholics Anonymous members will soon reach the astounding total of \$250,000,000, a quarter of billion dollars yearly. This is the direct result of A.A. membership. Sober we now have it, drunk we would not.

By contrast, our overall A.A. expenses are trifling.

For instance, the A.A. General Office now costs us \$1.50 per member a year. As a fact, the New York office asks the groups for this sum twice a year because not all of them contribute. Even so, the sum per member is exceedingly small. If an A.A. happens to live in a large metropolitan center where an intergroup office is absolutely essential to handle heavy inquiries and hospital arrangements he contributes (or probably should contribute) about \$5.00 annually. To pay the rent of his own group meeting place, and maybe coffee

and doughnuts, he might drop \$25.00 a year in the hat. Or, if he belongs to a club it could be \$50.00. In case he takes *The A.A. Grapevine* he squanders an extra \$2.50!

So, the A.A. member who really meets his group responsibilities finds himself liable for about \$5.00 a month on the average. Yet his own personal income may be anywhere between \$200. and \$2,000. a month--the direct result of *not* drinking.

"But", some will contend, "our friends want to give us money to furnish that new club house. We are a new small group. Most of us are still pretty broke. What then"?

I am sure that myriads of the A.A. voices would now answer the new group saying, "Yes, we know just how you feel. We once solicited money ourselves. We even solicited publicly. We thought we could do a lot of good with other peoples' money. But we found that kind of money too hot to handle. It aroused unbelievable controversy. It simply wasn't worth it. Besides, it set a precedent which has tempted many people to use the valuable name of Alcoholics Anonymous for other than A.A. purposes. While there may be little harm in a small friendly loan which your group really means to repay, we really beg you to think hard before you ask the most willing friend to make a large donation. You can, and you soon will, pay your own way. For each of you these overhead expenses will never amount to more than the price of one bottle of good whiskey a month. You will be everlastingly thankful if you pay this small obligation yourselves.

When reflecting on these things, why should not each of us tell himself, "Yes, we A.A.s were once a burden on everybody. We were 'takers.' Now that we are sober, and by the Grace of God have become responsible citizens of the world, why shouldn't we now about face and become 'thankful givers'! Yes, it is high time we did!"