



# Carry the Message

# August, 2007

The Huron Valley Area Intergroup Newsletter

Serving the Recovery Community since 1979

## Upcoming Events

### August 5, 2007 (1st Sunday):

#### **CMIA Area 32 Meeting**

Thunder Bay Recreation Center  
701 Woodward Avenue, Alpena MI  
Doors Open at 9:00 am for Coffee and  
doughnuts. Info: [www.cmia32.org](http://www.cmia32.org)

### August 11, 2007:

#### **District 2 presents: Sponsorship & Traditions workshop**

240 West Euclid & Sheldon, off Cooper  
St. exit, Jackson MI. Open at 9:30 PM

### August 16, 2007 (3rd Thursday):

#### **District 8 Meeting**

St. Paul's Episcopal Church  
200 St. Paul Street, Brighton

### August 17-19, 2007 (Fri-Sun):

#### **Ypsilanti Heritage Festival, AA & Al-Anon Information Booth**

Ypsilanti

### August 18, 2007 (3rd Saturday): 4

#### **PM HVAI Board meeting**

SOS building, south of the HVAI Office  
Ypsilanti

### August 20, 2007 (3rd Monday): 7 PM

#### **District 4 Meeting**

Ann Arbor Community Center  
625 N. Main Street, Ann Arbor

### August 23, 2007:

#### **Ride for Recovery, benefit for Home of New Vision Recovery Program**

### August 30-Sept 2, 2007 (Thurs-Sun):

#### **Labor Day International Conference of Young People in AA**

Los Angeles California  
[www.49thICYPAA.org](http://www.49thICYPAA.org)

### September 14-15, 2007 (Fri-Sat):

#### **Workshops (Sponsorship and Back to Basics) presented by Wally P.**

Dawn Farm barn  
6633 Stony Creek Rd, Ypsilanti

### September 16, 2007 (Sun):

#### **Workshops (Back to Basics and more) presented by Wally P.**

Westland Mall

## Area Meeting Updates

### Portage Lake New meeting:

Wednesdays at 8:00 p.m.  
Christian House of Prayer  
9949 McGregor Rd.

#### **Open, Discussion**

### Ann Arbor meeting starting:

Mondays at 7:30 p.m.  
Seeking location

### **Young Peoples, Discussion**

Contact Sean O. for information  
734.837.7187

### Ann Arbor meetings moving:

Saturdays at 1 p.m. New Beginnings

#### **Closed, Discussion**

Sundays now at 2 p.m. Second Chance

#### **Closed, Discussion**

Both from Rachel Upjohn Center at UM  
to Calvary Presbyterian Church, 2727  
Fernwood, corner of Norwood between  
Platt & Carpenter

### Ypsilanti meeting new website:

Saturdays at 8:30 p.m.

Saturday Nite at St. Joe's  
download open talks here:

<http://web.mac.com/markola/iWeb/satnightstjoe/Welcome.html>

Thank You for your recent  
contributions to the HVAI!

Ann Arbor Fri.. 7:30 p.m. Spiritual Solution Group

Ypsilanti Wed. 7 p.m. Survivors Group

Ypsilanti Wed. 11 a.m. Work The Steps or Die Group

Ypsilanti Fri. noon Starting Over Group

Dexter Thur. We Are Not Saints Group

Ypsilanti Tue .8 p.m. Attitude Adjustment Group

Ann Arbor Thur. 7:30 p.m. Fruits of Recovery Group

Milan Milan Mon. Night Group

Ann Arbor 9:30 a.m. Wed. Westside Group

Ypsilanti Sun. 10 a.m. Unity Group

Chelsea Tue.. & Wed. Thy Not MY Will Group

Whittaker Sat. 8:30 a.m. St. Joe's Group

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  
P. O. Box 283  
Saline, Mi 48176**

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

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## Love

### The Next Frontier: Emotional Sobriety

Bill W.

January, 1958

I think that many oldsters who have put out AA “booze cure” to severe but successful tests still find they often lack emotional sobriety. Perhaps they will be the spearhead for the next major development in AA — the development of much more real maturity and balance (which is to say, humility) in our relations with ourselves, with our fellows, and with God.

Those adolescent urges that so many of us have for top approval, perfect security, and perfect romance — urges quite appropriate to age seventeen — prove to be an impossible way of life when we are at age forty-seven or fifty-seven.

Since AA began, I’ve taken immense wallops in all these areas because of my failure to grow up, emotionally and spiritually. My God, how painful it is to keep demanding the impossible, and how painful to discover finally, that all along we have had the cart before the horse! Then comes the final agony of seeing how awfully wrong we have been, but still finding ourselves unable to get off the emotional merry-go-round.

How to translate a right mental conviction into a right emotional result, and so into easy, happy, and good living — well, that’s not only the neurotic’s problem, it’s the problem of life itself for all of us who have got to the point of real willingness to hew to right principles in all our affairs.

Even then, as we hew away, peace and joy may still elude us. That’s the place so many of us AA oldsters have come to. And it’s a hell of a spot, literally. How shall our unconscious — from which so

many of our fears, compulsions, and phony aspirations still stream — be brought into line with what we actually believe, know, and want! How to convince our dumb, raging, and hidden “Mr. Hyde” becomes our main task.

I’ve recently come to believe that this can be achieved. I believe so because I begin to see many benighted ones — folks like you and me — commencing to get results. Last autumn, depression, having no really rational cause at all, almost took me to the cleaners. I began to be scared that I was in for another long chronic spell. Considering the grief I’ve had with depressions, it wasn’t a bright prospect.

I kept asking myself, “Why can’t the Twelve Steps work to release depression?” “By the hour, I stared at the St. Francis Prayer...” “It’s better to comfort than to be the comforted.” Here was the formula, all right. But why didn’t it work?

Suddenly I realized what the matter was. My basic flaw had always been dependence — almost absolute dependence — on people or circumstances to supply me with prestige, security, and the like. Failing to get these things according to my perfectionist dreams and specifications, I had fought for them. And when defeat came, so did my depression.

There wasn’t a chance of making the outgoing love of St. Francis a workable and joyous way of life until these fatal and almost absolute dependencies were cut away.

Because I had over the years undergone a little spiritual development, the *absolute* quality of these frightful dependencies had never before been so starkly revealed. Reinforced by what grace I could secure in prayer, I found I had to exert every ounce of will and action to cut off these faulty emotional dependencies upon people, upon AA, indeed, upon any set of circumstances whatsoever. Then only could I be free to love as Francis had.

Emotional and instinctual satisfactions, I saw, were really the extra dividends of having love, offering love, and expressing a love appropriate to each relation of life.

Plainly, I could not avail myself of God’s love until I was able to offer it back to him by loving others as he would have me. And I couldn’t possibly do that so long as I was victimized by false dependencies.

For my dependency meant demand — a demand for the possession and control of the people and the conditions surrounding me.

While those words “absolute dependency” may look like a gimmick, they were the ones that helped to trigger my release into my present degree of stability and quietness of mind, qualities which I am now trying to consolidate by offering love to others regardless of the return to me.

This seems to be the primary healing circuit: an outgoing love of God’s creation and his people, by means of which we avail ourselves of his love for us. It is most clear that the real current can’t flow until our paralyzing dependencies are broken, and broken at depth. Only then can we possibly have a glimmer of what adult love really is.

Spiritual calculus, you say? Not a bit of it. Watch any AA of six months working with a new Twelfth Step case. If the case says “To the devil with you,” the Twelfth Stepper only smiles and turns to another case. He doesn’t feel frustrated or rejected. If his next case responds, and in turn starts to give love and attention to other alcoholics, yet gives none back to him, the sponsor is happy about it anyway. He still doesn’t feel rejected; instead he rejoices that his one-time prospect is sober and happy. And if his next following case turns out in later time to be his best friend (or romance), then the sponsor is most joyful. But he well knows that his happiness is a by-product — the extra dividend of giving without any demand for a return.

The really stabilizing thing for him was

having and offering love to that strange drunk on his doorstep. That was Francis at work, powerful and practical, minus dependency and minus demand.

In the first six months of my own sobriety, I worked hard with many alcoholics. Not a one responded. Yet this work kept me sober. It wasn't a question of those alcoholics giving me anything. My stability came out of trying to give, not out of demanding that I receive.

Thus I think it can work out with emotional sobriety. If we examine every disturbance we have, great or small, we will find at the root of it some unhealthy dependency and its consequent unhealthy demand. Let us, with God's help, continually surrender these hobbling demands. Then we can be set free to live and love; we may then be able to Twelfth Step ourselves and others into emotional sobriety.

Of course I haven't offered you a really new idea — only a gimmick that has started to unhook several of my own "hexes" at depth. Nowadays my brain no longer races compulsively in either elation, grandiosity, or depression. I have been given a quiet place in the bright sunshine.

from *The Best of Bill* © the AA Grapevine, Inc.

## It's Rotation Time at G.S.O.

When Service That Goes Around  
Comes Around

As it does every two years like clockwork, there is a changing of the guard at the General Service Office as the 11 A.A. staff members relinquish assignments that most of them have grown to love. They're not saying goodbye, just au revoir, because in a few more two year time frames, chances are they'll rotate round again to the same posts, seeing firsthand that everything old is a

challenge again.

Is rotation easy? No, say those who have done it. Is it essential to the A.A. way of life? Yes, says the collective voice of A.A. experience. Rotation is frequently referred to as "anonymity in action" because it is one vital way we have of avoiding power, prestige and personal recognition from distorting our best intentions. Also, since the process of rotation in almost all service positions — from the group level to the board of trustees — limits the length of individual service, it does away with popularity contests, "ever reminding us to place principles above personalities" in the spirit of Tradition Twelve.

The first reported use of rotation as "an A.A. tool" came from Dorothy, the wife of Clarence S., who had founded the first AA group in Cleveland, Ohio. In an October 1939 letter to the Fellowship's first (nonalcoholic) secretary, Ruth Hock, Dorothy reported, "Our committee of 7 is really functioning—5 men, 2 women, and they appoint leaders, discuss tendencies, fellowship and stuff..One man and one woman drop off each month and are replaced by seniority."

Rotation came to the G.S.O staff a dozen years later, in September 1951. Before it was implemented, the staff members, then numbering six, were asked for their input. Eve M. suggested that rotation would do away with a competitiveness that she felt was out of keeping with the A.A. spirit. Ann MacF. noted that, among other things, it would provide an equal chance for each staff member to contribute and utilize as fully as possible the experience of each person. Some years later another staff member, Beth K., a familiar presence at G.S.O. from 1959-63, said rotation "so that if anything happened to one person, the office could continue to function efficiently. It wouldn't fold up if somebody got drunk! The more each of us knew about the different assignments, the better."

Bill himself describes the events leading

to rotation at G.S.O in article No. 3 of Concept XI (the A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service, page 58;59) "We once had the conventional system of one highly paid staff member with assistants at much lower pay. Hers had been the principal voice in hiring them. Quite unconsciously, I'm certain, she engaged people who she felt would not be competitive with her. Meanwhile she kept a tight rein on all the important business of the place. A prodigy of wonderful work was done. But suddenly she collapsed, and shortly afterwards on the her assistants did the same. We were left with only one partly trained assistant who knew anything whatever about the total operation.... Thereafter we installed the principle of rotation in a considerably larger staff."

Bill often shared anecdotes about the perils to A.A. posed by "bleeding deacons" who want always to be in charge — and seldom missed the opportunity to poke fun at himself. "Surely I can make these assertions (about the importance of rotation) with the greatest of confidence," he wrote in a January 1947 Grapevine article. "For in my own turn I, too, have tried a hand at governing A.A. Each time I have strenuously tried it I have been shouted down; — so loudly, in fact, that on several occasions it looked as though I was due for swift and certain excommunication." (*The Language of the Heart*, page 41)

At G.S.O. every staff assignment has necessarily expanded in scope with the rapid growth of the Fellowship. Since 1968 membership in the U.S. and Canada has tripled, with the greatest numerical increase occurring since 1980. Yet comparatively few staff and clerical positions have been added to handle the extra workload (not counting the inexhaustible, non-rotating computer system). Since 1951, the rotating staff members have come to number eleven. Approximately 80 employees work at the office, which coordinates the overall work for the Fellowship, shares its collective experience in recovery from alcoholism and serves as the main center for the

distribution of A.A. literature worldwide.

from Box 459 Vol. 53 No. 4 August-September 2007  
© The General Service Office of A.A.

### Destinations

Anonymous

Albany, Australia

Only Twelve Steps. In a day when we are exposed to fantastic statistics, a mere dozen doesn't seem to rate much. But what is involved in the Twelve Steps makes a great difference.

I can remember how thrilled my wife and I were when we saw each of our twins take the first step at eleven months. Soon, it was two steps, then three, then four, and in no time at all there was no way of counting the steps they had taken. They were free — free to go on and on.

That first step is very important, whether it is the first step of a beloved child learning to walk — or the First Step, taken by a man on his way to a new life. Looking into my little ones' faces, I can see the same qualities that we need for the Twelve Steps of A. A.: daring, to stake everything on the attempt; a sense of direction, to be followed with no reservation; determination, to make it all the way. Destination: a full life, a free life, a serene life.

from *Came to Believe* © The A.A. Grapevine, Inc

*But life among Alcoholics Anonymous is more than attending gatherings and visiting hospitals. Cleaning up old scrapes, helping to settle family differences, explaining the disinherited son to his irate parents, lending money and securing jobs for each other, when justified - these are everyday occurrences.*

Page 161 *Alcoholics Anonymous*

### District 4 Financial Statement

**Editor's Note:** At the July District 4 meeting, GSR's voted to publish the District's financial information in this newsletter on a monthly basis.

June 16, 2007 — July 15, 2007

<b>Beginning Balance:</b>	\$1336.53
<b>Income:</b>	
7th Tradition, June	14.00
<b>Subtotal:</b>	\$1350.53
<b>Expenses:</b>	
Rent:	20.00
Corrections literature	100.00
District 4 Workshop	186.70
Sign Language Interpreter	20.00
Website	50.00
<b>Closing Balance:</b>	\$973.83
<b>Solvent Treasury:</b>	250.00
<b>Petty Cash:</b>	25.00
<b>Total Assets:</b>	\$1248.83

### HVAI Survey

**Dear AA Group or AA Member:** Each AA Group is a member of the Intergroup and a recipient of our services. Your responses to the following survey questions are vital to the continuous improvement of HVAI's service to you and the still suffering alcoholic. Please mail, drop off, or give completed responses to your group's Intergroup Representative. Your input will be compiled and the results summarized here and online.

- 1) Have you personally used a Service provided by the Intergroup?**  
Always Sometimes Never N/A
- 2) Does the Intergroup office respond promptly to your requests?**  
Always Sometimes Never N/A
- 3) Does HVAI respectfully represent all AA groups in Washtenaw County?**

- Always Sometimes Never N/A
- 4) Is non-conference approved literature valuable to you?**  
Always Sometimes Never N/A
- 5) Does your group use literature developed for Special Needs people (i.e. Braille, Sign Language, Large Print, Audio Tapes, etc)**  
Always Sometimes Never N/A
- 6) Do you find Welcome Packets helpful?**  
Always Sometimes Never N/A
- 7) Does your group have regular Group Conscience meetings?**  
Always Sometimes Never N/A
- 8) Does your Group Conscience make service contributions?**  
Always Sometimes Never N/A
- 9) Does your group use a formula to determine the contributions distribution?**  
Always Sometimes Never N/A
- 10) Does your group follow the suggested distribution of excess funds? (i.e. 10% District / 10% Area / 30% GSO / 50% Intergroup)**  
Always Sometimes Never N/A

- RATING SYSTEM:**
- 1- HELPFUL
  - 2- N/A or No Opinion
  - 3- NOT HELPFUL
- Below please rate the helpfulness of the following services:**
- Help Line Service \_\_\_\_\_
  - Office Phone Services \_\_\_\_\_
  - Website Meeting List \_\_\_\_\_
  - Meeting Directory (Printed) \_\_\_\_\_
  - Public Info. Booths & Events \_\_\_\_\_
  - Literature Availability \_\_\_\_\_
  - Newsletter \_\_\_\_\_
  - Treatment Center Outreach \_\_\_\_\_
  - Corrections Facilities Outreach \_\_\_\_\_
  - Office, Accessibility & Location \_\_\_\_\_

**COMMENTS WELCOME:**

Your contribution to HVAI supports: The local AA Service Center, the Help Line, the Web and Printed Meeting Directories, a source for Conference-Approved Literature and Anniversary Tokens, AA Outreach to the area Professionals,