



Carry the Message August, 2009

The Huron Valley Area Intergroup Newsletter

Serving the Recovery Community since 1979

Step Eight

Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.

Tradition Eight Long Form

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 services for which we may otherwise have to engage non-alcoholics. Such special services may be well recompensed. But our usual A.A. "12th Step" work is never to be paid for.

Traditions Checklist from the A.A. Grapevine

1. Is my own behavior accurately described by the Traditions? If not, what needs changing?
2. When I chafe about any particular Tradition, do I realize how it affects others?
3. Do I sometimes try to get some reward—even if not money—for my personal AA efforts?
4. Do I try to sound in AA like an ex-

pert on alcoholism? On recovery? On medicine? On sociology? On AA itself? On psychology? On spiritual matters? Or, heaven help me, even on humility?

5. Do I make an effort to understand what AA employees do? What workers in other alcoholism agencies do? Can I distinguish clearly among them?

6. In my own AA life, have I any experiences which illustrate the wisdom of this Tradition?

7. Have I paid enough attention to the book Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions? To the pamphlet AA Tradition—How It Developed?

What Does A.A. General Service Conference Say About...

P-16 The AA Group...Where it All Begins

What is an A.A. Group?

As the long form of Tradition Three clearly states, "Our membership ought to include all who suffer from

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, provided that, as a group, they have no other affiliation."

Further clarification of an A.A. group may be found in the *Twelve Concepts for World Service*, Concept Twelve, Warranty Six:

- no penalties to be inflicted for nonconformity to A.A. principles;
- no fees or dues to be levied—voluntary contributions only;
- no member to be expelled from A.A.—membership always to be the choice of the individual;
- each A.A. group to conduct its internal affairs as it wishes—it be-

Sponsor/Sponsee Celebration

Saturday October 10th, 2009 11am-2pm Peace Neighborhood Center
1111 N. Maple Rd., Ann Arbor

Discover an adjustable wrench to fit every nut! Enjoy Fellowship on our road to recovery!

Admission is \$5: Tickets are available in advance or pay at the door. (Our workshops are self supporting; costs of this event are paid through the low admission fee. No baskets will be passed. Please keep in mind Tradition 7.)

Pizza and pop will be available at a reasonable price

Sponsored by our Huron Valley Area Intergroup

Open to all 12 step fellowships

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HVAI Contributions

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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.

Anonymous

Ann Arbor:

**TGIM Group
A Vision for You Group
Saturday Morning Men's
Monday Stadium 12&12
Flin Flam Breakfast Group
OS Group**

Ypsilanti:

**Attitude Adjustment Group
Spiritual Awakening Group
New Directions Group**

Saline:

Monday 12&12 Group

Chelsea:

Chelsea Arbor & OARC

Manchester:

Fri & Sun Manchester Group

ing merely requested to abstain from acts that might injure A.A. as a whole; and finally

- that any group of alcoholics gathered together for sobriety may call themselves an A.A. group provided that, as a group, they have no other purpose or affiliation.

Some A.A.s come together as specialized A.A. groups—for men, women, young people, doctors, gays and others. If the members are all alcoholics, and if they open the door to all alcoholics who seek help, regardless of profession, gender or other distinction, and meet all the other aspects defining an A.A. group, they may call themselves an A.A. group.

How Do You Become an A.A. Group Member?

"The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking." (Tradition Three) Thus, group

membership requires no formal application. Just as we are members of A.A. if we say we are, so are we

members of a group if we say we are.

The A.A. Home Group

Traditionally, most A.A. members through the years have found it important to belong to one group which they call their "Home Group." This is the group where they accept service responsibilities and try to sustain friendships. And although all A.A. members are usually welcome at all groups and feel at home at any of these meetings, the concept of the "Home Group" has still remained the strongest bond between the A.A. member and the Fellowship.

With membership comes the right to vote upon issues that might affect the group and might also affect A.A. as a whole—a process that forms the very cornerstone of A.A.'s service structure. As with all group-conscience matters, each A.A. member has one vote; and this, ideally, is voiced through the home group.

Over the years, the very essence of A.A. strength has remained with

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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

August 15th, 2009: *Huron Valley Area Intergroup Business Meeting (HVAI): (every 3rd Sat.)* 2 doors south of the HVAI office at S.O.S. Admin. 101 S. Huron St. (use side door)

August 21st-23rd, 2009: Volunteers needed for the Ypsilanti Heritage Festival Public Information Booth
Info: linda@hvai.org, or v_knoke@hotmail.com

August 17th, 2009: *District 4 (3rd Monday each month) Conference Service Structure Meeting*, Calvary Methodist Church, 1415 Miller St., Ann Arbor, 48103.

September 5th- 6th, 2009: *Native American Indian General Service Office of AA Conference* in Lakeside, Ca Info: visit www.naigso-aa.org

September 13th, 2009: *36th Dawn Farm Anniversary Jamboree* 1-6pm Info: www.dawnfarm.org/jamboree.html , event coordination: Nancy T 485-8725

September 19th, 2009: *Huron Valley Area Intergroup Business Meeting (HVAI): (every 3rd Sat.)* 2 doors south of the HVAI office at S.O.S. Admin. 101 S. Huron St. (use side door),

September 21st, 2009: *District 4 (3rd Monday each month) Conference Service Structure Meeting*, Calvary Methodist Church, 1415 Miller St., Ann Arbor, 48103.

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our home group, which, for many members, becomes our extended family. Once isolated by our drinking, we find in the home group a solid, continuing support system, friends and, very often, a sponsor. We also learn firsthand, through the group's workings, how to place "principles before personalities" in the interest of carrying the A.A. message.

Talking about her own group, a member says: "Part of my commitment is to show up at my homegroup meetings, greet newcomers at the door, and be available to them—not only for them but for me. My fellow group members are the people who know me, listen to me, and steer me straight when I am off in left field. They give me their experience, strength and A.A. love,

enabling me to 'pass it on' to the alcoholic who still suffers."

Principles Before Personalities

Tradition Two: For our group purpose, there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.

The Principle of Rotation

Traditionally, rotation ensures that group tasks, like nearly everything else in A.A., are passed around for all to share. Many groups have alternates to each trusted servant who can step into the service positions if needed.

To step out of an A.A. office you love can be hard. If you have been doing a good job, if you honestly don't see anyone else around willing, qualified, or with the time to do it, and if your friends agree, it's es-

pecially tough. But it can be a real step forward in growth—a step into the humility that is, for some people, the spiritual essence of anonymity. Among other things, anonymity in the Fellowship means that we forgo personal prestige for any A.A. work we do to help alcoholics. And, in the spirit of Tradition Twelve, it ever reminds us "to place principles before personalities."

Many outgoing service position holders find it rewarding to take time to share their experience with the incoming person. Rotation helps to bring us spiritual rewards far more enduring than any fame.

With no A.A. "status" at stake, we needn't compete for titles or praise—we have complete freedom to serve as we are needed.

What is an Informed A.A. Group

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Conscience?

The group conscience is the collective conscience of the group membership and thus represents substantial unanimity on an issue before definitive action is taken.

This is achieved by the group members through the sharing of full information, individual points of view, and the practice of A.A. principles. To be fully informed requires a willingness to listen to minority opinions with an open mind.

On sensitive issues, the group works slowly—discouraging formal motions until a clear sense of its collective view emerges. Placing principles before personalities, the membership is wary of dominant opinions. Its voice is heard when a well-informed group arrives at a decision. The result rests on more than a "yes" or "no" count—precisely because it is the spiritual expression of the group conscience. The term "informed group conscience" implies that pertinent information has been studied and all views have been heard before the group votes.

A.A. Group Inventory

Many groups periodically hold a "group inventory meeting" to evaluate how well they are fulfilling their primary purpose: to

help alcoholics recover through A.A.'s suggested Twelve Steps of recovery. Some groups take inventory by examining our Twelve Traditions, one at a time, to determine how well they are living up to these principles.

The following questions, compiled from A.A. shared experience, may be useful in arriving at an informed group conscience. Groups will probably wish to add questions of their own:

1. What is the basic purpose of our group?
2. What more can our group do to carry the message?
3. Is our group attracting alcoholics from different backgrounds? Are we seeing a good cross-section of our community, including those with special needs?
4. Do new members stick with us, or does the turnover seem excessive? If so, why? What can we as a group do to retain members?
5. Do we emphasize the importance of sponsorship? How effectively? How can we do it better?
6. Are we careful to preserve the anonymity of our group members and other A.A.s outside the meeting rooms? Do we also leave what they share at meetings behind?
7. Does our group emphasize to all members the value of keeping up with the kitchen, set-up, cleanup and other housekeeping chores that are essential for our Twelfth Step

efforts?

8. Are all members given the opportunity to speak at meetings and to participate in other group activities?

9. Mindful that holding office is a great responsibility not to be viewed as the outcome of a popularity contest, are we choosing our officers with care?

10. Are we doing all we can to provide an attractive and accessible meeting place?

11. Does our group do its fair share toward participating in the purpose of A.A.—as it relates to our Three Legacies of Recovery, Unity, and Service?

12. What has our group done lately to bring the A.A. message to the attention of professionals in the community—the physicians, clergy, court officials, educators, and others who are often the first to see alcoholics in need of help?

13. How is our group fulfilling its responsibility to the Seventh Tradition?

Does your Group have an Intergroup Rep?

The Huron Valley Area Intergroup Board and Steering Committees strongly encourage all groups to elect an Intergroup Representative to attend the monthly Intergroup meetings and help us make decisions that will help us to help the groups carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers.