



Carry the Message November 2007

The Huron Valley Area Intergroup Newsletter

Serving the Recovery Community since 1979

Upcoming Events

November 3, 2007 Corrections Volunteer Orientation Men and Women needed to carry the message behind the walls. Washtenaw County Jail: Sheriff Admin. Conference Room

November 4, 2007 (1st Sun): Area 32
CMA meeting hosted by District 12

Potter Community School
2500 N. Averill
Flint, Michigan

doors Open at 9:00 am for Coffee and doughnuts. Info: www.cmia32.org
For GSRs and DCMs, all are welcome.

November 4, 2007: 7th Annual Woman to Woman's Luncheon, In the Spirit of Love info: www.detroitw2w.org

Nov. 9-11, 2007: 15th annual Buckeye round Up "Spirit of the Universe" in Cincinnati, Ohio Info: Liz (513) 272-6903 or George (513) 25-2616 or e-mail buckeyeroundup@hotmail.com

November 15, 2007 (3rd Thursday):

District 8 Meeting

St. Paul's Episcopal Church
200 St. Paul Street, Brighton
www.aalivcomi.org

November 17, 2007 (3rd Saturday):

HVAI Board meeting 4 PM

101 S. Huron St, Ypsi
www.hvai.org

For Intergroup reps, all are welcome.

November 17, 2007: Sponsor-Tips

Women's Discussion Group 12 noon-1:15pm 2nd Sat.s Each Month Classic Cup Café, 4389 Jackson Road
glanger1@comcast.net or weber@gmail.com

November 19, 2007 (3rd Monday):

District 4 Meeting 7 PM

Ann Arbor Community Center, lower level
625 N. Main Street, Ann Arbor
For GSRs and DCMs, all are welcome.

November 23-25th, 2007: 29th Michigan Convention of Young People in AA, MCYPAA East Lansing, MI Info: Chug (517) 572-5617 or Chris (616) 308-8226

You can help HVAI Sponsor Holiday Alkathons at Washtenaw Alano Club

- Make a reservations & arrangements for your Sponsoring Group
- provide: rent (\$15) to HVAI (paid to the Washtenaw Alano Club after the event),
- provide at least 2-people for a meeting, collects basket money for each meeting time slot they sponsor, and clean up the area rented before the next group takes over

Area Meeting Updates

NEW: Sunday 9 a.m. Fathers in AA Recovery Flim Flam Restaurant, Plymouth & Nixon, **Ann Arbor**

Another Move & Time Change: Sunday 2 p.m.: New Beginnings Calvary Presbyterian

2727 Fernwood, **Ann Arbor**

NEW: Monday, 7:30 p.m., By the Way, Carrot Way Community Center Dhu Varren between Nixon & Pontiac Trail, **Ann Arbor**

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Thank You for your recent contributions to the HVAI!

Ann Arbor: Fr. King of Kings (Good Shepherd), Tue. Working With Others, Sat. Sober Now, Fri. Spiritual Solution, Wed. Came To Believe, District 4 for Help and Web

Belleville: Thur. 12 Step, Tue. Keeping it Simple, Mon. Open Speaker

Dexter: Thur. Women of Substance

Ypsilanti: Sun. 10 a.m. Unity, Mon-Fri Clean & Sober on Park, Sat. Weekend By the Book

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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NEW: Tuesday, 9:30 a.m. Sunshine

Group, Moved to Rachel Upjohn Center, U of M. E MEDICAL Center on Plymouth Rd & Earhart 12/8, **Ann Arbor**

NEW: Saturday, 12 noon, Saturday Step LightHouse, 2755 Carpenter Rd, **Ann Arbor**

Another Move and new Name: Saturday, 1 p.m. New Beginnings Moved To: Calvary Presbyterian, 2727 Fernwood, **Ann Arbor**

NEW place and time: Tuesday, 9 a.m. Sunshine Group, Chelsea Hospital Behavioral Health Bldg 775 S. Main, **Chelsea**

NEW place and time: Friday, 9 a.m.: Second Chance Group, Chelsea Hospital Behavioral Health Bldg, 775 S. Main, **Chelsea**

NEW: Friday, 7:30 p.m. Woman's Book Study, Chelsea Community Hospital 775 S. Main, Dining Room 2, **Chelsea**

NEW: Thursday, 6:30 p.m. Women of Substance, 12/12, United Methodist, 7643 Huron River, **Dexter**

NEW: Wednesday, 8 p.m. House of Miracles Christian House of Prayer, 9949 McGregor Rd., 1/2 Mile N. of the Trading Post, **Pinckney**

NEW TIME: Thursday 7:30 p.m., Last Chance Group, Local 892 UAW, Corner of Maple & Woodland, **Saline**

NEW: Wednesday, 6:30 p.m., Northfield Place, Northfield Place Center, 8633 Main Street, **Whitmore Lake**

NEW LOCATION: Friday, 8 p.m., Basic Young Peoples, E. M. U. Student Center off Oakwood, Room 302, **Ypsilanti**

Take Step Eleven

One Man's View

Step 11: Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

WHEN IT COMES TO THE PRACTICE of AA's Step Eleven--"Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out"--I'm sure I am still very much in the beginner's class; I'm almost a case of arrested development.

Around me I see many people who make a far better job of relating themselves to God than I do. Certainly it mustn't be said I haven't made any progress at all over the years; I simply confess that I haven't made the progress that I might have made, my opportunities being what they have been, and still are.

My twenty-fourth AA anniversary is just ahead; I haven't had a drink in all this time. In fact, I've scarcely been tempted at all. This is some evidence that I must have taken and ever since maintained Step One: "We admitted we were powerless over alcohol, that our lives had become unmanageable." Step One was easy for me.

Then, at the very beginning, I was fortunate enough to receive a tremendous spiritual awakening and was instantly "made conscious of the presence of God" and "restored to sanity"--at least so far as alcohol is concerned. Therefore I've had no difficulty with AA's Step Two because, in my case, its content was an outright gift. Step Four and Step Five, dealing with self-survey and confession of one's defects, have not been overly difficult, either.

Of course, my self-analysis has frequently been faulty. Sometimes I've failed to share my defects with the right people; at other times, I've confessed their defects, rather than my own; and at still other times, my confession of defects has been more in the nature of loud complaints about my circumstances and my problems.

Nevertheless, I think I've usually been able to make a fairly thorough and searching job of finding and admitting my personal defects. So far as I know, there isn't at this moment a single defect or current problem of mine which hasn't been discussed with my close advisers. Yet this pretty well-ventilated condition is nothing for self-congratulation. Long ago I was lucky enough to see that I'd have to keep up my self-analysis or else blow my top completely. Though driven by stark necessity, this continuous self-revelation--to myself and to others--was rough medicine to take. But years of repetition has made this job far easier. Step Nine, making restitution for harms done, has fallen into much the same bracket.

In Step Twelve--carrying the AA message to others--I've found little else than great joy. We alkie are folks of action and I'm no exception. When action pays off as it does in AA, it's small wonder that Step Twelve is the most popular and, for most of us, the easiest one of all.

This little sketch of my own "pilgrim's progress" is offered to illustrate where I, and maybe lots of other AAs, have still been missing something of top importance. Through lack of disciplined attention and sometimes through lack of the right kind of faith, many of us keep ourselves year after year in the rather easy spiritual kindergarten I've just described. But almost inevitably we become dissatisfied; we have to admit we have hit an uncomfortable and maybe a very painful sticking point.

Twelfth-Stepping, talking at meetings, recitals of drinking histories, confession of

our defects and what progress we have made with them no longer provide us with the released and the abundant life. Our lack of growth is often revealed by an unexpected calamity or a big emotional upset. Perhaps we hit the financial jackpot and are surprised that this solves almost nothing; that we are still bored and miserable, notwithstanding.

As we usually don't get drunk on these occasions, our bright-eyed friends tell us how well we are doing.

But inside, we know better. We know we aren't doing well enough. We still can't handle life, as life is. There must be a serious flaw somewhere in our spiritual practice and development.

What then, is it?

The chances are better than even that we shall locate our trouble in our misunderstanding or neglect of AA's Step Eleven--prayer, meditation and the guidance of God. The other Steps can keep most of us sober and somehow functioning. But Step Eleven can keep us growing, if we try hard and work at it continually. If we expend even five percent of the time on Step Eleven that we habitually (and rightly) lavish on Step Twelve, the results can be wonderfully far-reaching. That is an almost uniform experience of those who constantly practice Step Eleven.

In this article, I'd like to develop Step Eleven further--for the benefit of the complete doubter, the unlucky one who can't believe it has any real merit at all.

In lots of instances I think that people find their first great obstacle in the phrase "God as we understand Him." The doubter is apt to say, "On the face of it, nobody can understand God. I half believe that there is a First Cause, a Something, and maybe a Somebody. But I can't get any further than this. I think people are kidding themselves when they say they can. Even if there were a Somebody, why should he bother with little me, when, in making the Cosmos run,

he already has plenty to do? As for those folks who claim that God tells them where to drill for oil, or when to brush their teeth--well, they just make me tired."

Our friend is clearly one who believes in some kind of God--"God as he understands Him." But he doesn't believe any bigger concept or better feeling about God to be possible. So he looks upon meditation, prayer and guidance as the means of a self-delusion. Now what can our hard-pressed friend do about this?

Well, he can strenuously try meditation, prayer and guidance, just as an experiment. He can address himself to whatever God he thinks there is. Or, if he thinks there is none, he can admit--just for experimental purposes--that he might be wrong. This is all-important. As soon as he is able to take this attitude, it means that he has stopped playing God himself; his mind has opened. Like any good scientist in his laboratory, our friend can assume a theory and can make an experiment. He can pray to a "higher power" that may exist and may be willing to help and guide him. He keeps on experimenting--in this case, praying--for a long time. Again he tries to behave like the scientist, an experimenter who is never supposed to give up so long as there is a vestige of any chance of success.

As he goes along with his process of prayer, he begins to add up the results. If he persists, he will almost surely find more serenity, more tolerance, less fear and less anger. He will acquire a quiet courage, the kind that doesn't strain him. He can look at so-called failure and success for what they really are. Problems and calamity will begin to mean instruction, instead of destruction. He will feel freer and saner. The idea that he may have been hypnotizing himself by auto-suggestion will become laughable. His sense of purpose and of direction will increase. His tensions and anxieties will commence to fade. His physical health is likely to improve. Wonderful and unaccountable things will start to happen. Twisted relations in his family and on the

outside will unaccountably improve.

Even if few of these things happen, he will still find himself in possession of great gifts. When he has to deal with hard circumstances he can face them and accept them. He can now accept himself and the world around him. He can do this because he now accepts a God who is All--and who loves all. When he now says, "Our Father who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name," our friend deeply and humbly means it. When in good meditation and thus freed from the clamors of the world, he knows that he is in God's hands; that his own destiny is really secure, here and hereafter.

A great theologian once declared, "The chief critics of prayer are those who have never really tried it enough." That's good advice; good advice I'm trying to take ever more seriously for myself. Many AAs have long been striving for a better conscious contact with God and I trust that many more of us will presently join with that wise company.

I've just finished re-reading the chapter on Step Eleven in our book, "Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions." This was written almost five years ago. I was astonished when I realized how little time I had actually been giving to my own elementary advice on meditation, prayer and guidance--practices that I had so earnestly recommended to everybody else!

In this lack of attention I probably have plenty of company. But I do know that this is a neglect that can cause us to miss the finest experiences of life, a neglect that can seriously slacken the growth that God hopes we may achieve right here on earth; here in this great day at school, this very first of our Father's Many Mansions.

Bill W.

June, 1958

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Perhaps there is a better way - we think so. For we are now on a different basis; the basis of trusting and relying upon God. We trust infinite God rather than our finite selves. We are in the world to play the role He assigns.

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Alcoholics Anonymous

District 4 Corner

The HVAI provides this space as a courtesy to District 4 in the spirit of cooperation in carrying the message. Please direct all questions and comments to your Home Group GSR or DCM

District 4 Finances

District 4 News

September 1, 2007 — September 30, 2007

Beginning Balance:	\$689.43
Income:	
7th Tradition and Group Contributions	260.00
Total Income:	<u>\$260.00</u>
Subtotal	949.43
Expenses:	
Rent:	20.00
Corrections literature	100.00
Treasurers Expense	32.48
Website	21.00
New Group Starter Packs	107.30
Total Expenses:	\$280.78
Closing Balance:	\$668.65
Solvent Treasury:	250.00
Petty Cash:	<u>25.00</u>
Total Assets:	\$943.65

Thanks to the following groups for your recent contributions to District 4:

2nd Chance Group
Attitude Adjustment Group
Attitude Adjustment Group
Hamburg Wednesday Night Group
Saline Saturday Sunrise Group
Sober Now Group

The District 4 Corrections Committee became self-supporting this month because of your generous contributions to the Jail Pails. Because of this, we were able to forgo the subsidy from the District which will help offset some of the increased District costs this month. Thanks to everyone who donated!

A new Alternate Secretary was elected. Congratulations to Phil C..

Nominations for District 4 committee chairs will take place at the November 2007 meeting with elections to be held at the December 2007 meeting. District 4 officer positions will be open for nomination the following year. All commitments are 2 years in length.

There are also open District Committee Member (DCM) positions. A DCM is an essential link between the GSRs in a district and the area's delegate to the General Service Office. The job is one of two-way communication. The DCM gets reports from the group level and passes them on to the area delegate. Qualifications include: 1) a background in service work including service as a GSR; 2) enough sobriety to be eligible for election as delegate (4-5 years); and 3) the time and energy to serve the district well. (A.A. Service Manual, 1989-90 edition, pp. S51-57). Nominations at the November District 4 meeting, Elections in December.

On Living the 12th Step

Hello my name is Tabitha B. I am an alcoholic. I have been asked to share how 12th step work through supporting those in treatment centers has helped in my recovery.

I started offering rides to woman in a local treatment center when I was about seven months sober. I was really nervous about the whole experience. I didn't know the rules and wanted to know them before I began my service. However, I found that everything just fell into order as I began to offer rides to meetings or give support visits.

Committing to taking a person to a meeting got me to a meeting. Sharing our stories on the rides or during the support visits gave me a chance to relate to others on personal level and see where my addiction could go if I went back out (if I hadn't already hit that level). It has allowed me to share how recovery had changed my life, offering hope to my fellow alcoholic and reminding me of the gifts I have been given. It was an awesome way to begin to feel part of the promises, "No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others. That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear..." And, it continues be a part of the promises on many different levels.

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, Treatment Facilities, local Correctional Facilities and the General Public.