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### Step 1 - We admitted we were powerless over alcohol, that our lives had become unmanageable.

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I had to answer the simple questions: 'Am I powerless over alcohol and has my life become unmanageable?'

I sensed that if I answered yes I might be expected to do something to remedy the situation. So I answered "No"; thereby relieving myself of any corrective action and providing myself with an excuse to continue to drink. In those days it was easier to lie to myself than it is today.

As my life became even more unmanageable I had to face the surrender alternatives. I could either surrender to the evidence at hand or I could continue to lie to myself and continue to drink, surrendering to whatever a drinker's life held in store for me.

The first step didn't ask me to admit to being an alcoholic, nor did it suggest that I must quit drinking - it simply asked me to admit to the evidence, to link my troubles to my drinking - so I did and I became a potential member of A.A.

Thank God the first step didn't ask me to accept these realities. The first step simply asked me to stop lying to myself. Maybe that was the first of many spiritual awakenings that have continued in my life over all the years of my application of these graceful steps. ★

Step 1 was a tremendous struggle for me. I took this step backwards. Unmanageability I had no problem seeing - everyone in my life that was important to me pulled away. My parents gave up trying to help me, my grandparents, my boyfriend, my sister. Being unemployable, I couldn't get up in the morning without having 2 to 4 stiff drinks. I also could not eat anything without having liquor in my system. Car accidents, that fear of impending doom, not being able to answer the phone or door, totally isolating myself. Even though I was very sick I could see the unmanageability. I really fought the powerlessness. When I heard that word it made me feel like I was a weak person. I kept trying to control, changing drinks, drinking at different times. Finally, there came a point I believe God allowed me to see myself and my life exactly how it was. I was totally disgusted with my life and myself. I believe that at that point I surrendered totally and admitted my powerlessness. It was finally in total defeat that I achieved strength. Also the "We" in the beginning of the step meant that I didn't have to do it alone. With God's and A.A.'s help I could do it. ★

How could I be powerless over alcohol when alcohol has been a part of my life since childhood. As a three-year old, my family would wake me from a sound sleep to recite poetry to their guests in exchange for a shot glass of beer. Powerless - I don't think so. I just enjoyed drinking and the euphoria that arrived along with the second or third drink. The blackouts were just a part of the whole picture and besides, there was always someone around who could recreate the day or evening for me. It wasn't unusual to have a vodka in my lemonade or iced tea at a family picnic so that my husband and children wouldn't notice how much I was drinking.

Thirty years of this kind of denial were very hard to chip through. It took the death of both my parents, the suicide of my youngest brother and the pain in the eyes of my daughters to enable me to realize that not only was I powerless over alcohol, but my life became **TOTALLY** unmanageable. Here was a diagnosed diabetic drinking daily. It never occurred to me that it was unusual to give up lunch for two or three martinis. After all, the caloric value was the same. The daily drinking went on for several years before I even acknowledged that I drank daily to myself or anyone else. One day after a particularly lengthy bout with alcohol and tranquilizers, I looked in my youngest daughter's eyes and saw there someone I didn't know. She asked why I did some of the self-destructive things I had done and I replied, "Because I'm an alcoholic!" Once said, it was impossible for me not to try to do something to stop what I thought of as a suicidal behavior. So - knowing some recovering alcoholics, I began attending meetings and very soon realized that I was powerless and my life was unmanageable but there was hope for me in the program of Alcoholics Anonymous. ★

The first step is a gift I received by the grace of God in a moment of clarity while naturally incapable of clear thinking.

The last five years of my drinking can only be described as sick. In fact, I know that I was drunk (under the influence of alcohol to one degree or another the whole time. The mental sickness that made me unaware that I craved a drink; drinking had become such an integral part of life that I took the first drink without any thought.

The first breakthrough was on a Monday morning in December. My drinking had progressed to oblivion type and this was what I did not want. Having lost that battle again, after convincing myself on Sunday that it would not happen this time, I woke up full of remorse and self-loathing. The next moment the thought of Alcoholics Anonymous came into my head. If there had been any reading or hearing about A.A. before that, I have no memory of it.

Using somewhat devious means, I located the Shaker Monday meeting and showed up the following week. Although anxious I liked the meeting very much, especially the warm welcome and the enthusiasm. They had something I wanted.

In the next two and half months I was "around A.A.," going to different meetings from week to week, not allowing anyone to get too close to me.

When the reality of how much trouble I had brought on and my plan was not working to change that fact, I decided that somehow being able to drink properly would make things all right. The first drink, actually the first sip, brought the realization that alcohol has nothing for me but trouble and misery.

Being an alcoholic I continued to drink that night until feeling so alone and miserable, I gave it up and went home. Ten days later I accepted two glasses of wine that I did not want, afraid of what my host would think if I declined.

The next morning I had a tremendous urge to drink -the first I recognized as such. I asked God, in desperation to help me. That urge left me and has not returned with any real power since that moment.

The first move was to get a sponsor and join his home group. I did not know whether or not I would stay sober, whether or not I would enjoy it and thought I would be friendless. I knew that I had to do what my sponsor and the other men I respected told me, long enough to find out whether A.A. would work for me. By God's grace I had become willing to make the commitment to stay sober so that I could, after nine months of having put Alcoholics Anonymous first, admit and accept that I was powerless over alcohol.

With God and my fellow A.A.'s, I am able to do what I could not do by myself. ★

**-NOTE-**

The family of Warren Chisholm, Sr., is seeking copies of tape records of leads, Hospital Talks, etc. If you have a copy or can make a copy, please call the District Office.

Thank You

I knew I was an alcoholic, but I didn't want to be.

Alcoholism is so final

There is no cure.

Surely no alcoholic could stay dry as long as I did before I discovered A.A.

But I was a hermit and I was insane in my cozy little haven, shut away from the world. If I didn't belong in A.A. I belonged in a mental hospital.

Two days before my first meeting, I sat at my kitchen table and truly realized I could get help. I cried all afternoon. A fifty pound weight had been lifted from my shoulders and the relief was enormous.

Maybe I didn't want to be an alcoholic, but I wanted to be in Alcoholics Anonymous.

It felt so good.

I made a twelve step discussion group my home group.

That first year I must have requested Step One 34 times.

I went on to work the other steps but I always came back to Step One because I knew I hadn't accepted my disease.

I began to realize that I was not so unique. Many women don't drink for more than 5 years. I had been out there for 23. I learned that how much or how long I drank really didn't matter. I was just like the rest of my fellow sufferers. If I was really honest with myself, I'd known for years that I couldn't control my drinking, or my behavior when I was drunk.

At one point I told them I'd punch the next person who told me: "Don't Drink" and "Go To Meetings!"

They said it anyway.

I soon realized there was no escape from my alcoholism, so I threw myself into the program and worked it furiously.

My emotional pain went away but I wasn't OK.

I knew I hadn't thoroughly worked Step One because I still had occasional craving for alcohol. All I could do about it was use the tools I had learned in the program to control the obsession.

On my knees every morning I asked my Higher Power to keep me sober.

One day I ran into a traffic jam and I decided to stop at a bar and have a few drinks until the traffic had cleared. This was insanity but I was powerless. My Higher Power kept me out of trouble. It was election day and all the bars were closed. By the time I got home the urge was gone.

I heard many people say in leads that they had lost the compulsion to drink. Why hadn't I?

Maybe I wasn't ready to let go of it.

Meanwhile I kept requesting Step One at my home group. Sometimes I did it for newcomers. Sometimes they didn't come back.

But I remained sober.

One night I said in my lead that I hadn't lost the compulsion to drink and a young man came up to me after the meeting. He told me that his sponsor suggested he pray to have the obsession removed.

How simple.

I was finally ready to work Step One. I was truly powerless because absolutely the only way for me to get rid of the compulsion to drink was to ask God to remove it.

And he did.

My home group members look at me in tolerant irritation today when I request Step One for newcomers. I want to give back all that Alcoholics Anonymous has given to me and I may have to keep trying for the rest of my life.

I'm alcoholic and that's OK because I have A.A. ★

I got so sick and tired of trying to cover up lies, hide bottles, get rid of bottles, doing things the way I wanted them done, only to find out that my way didn't work, wouldn't work or couldn't work. Trying to stay one step ahead of my family, who by this time, knew I had a problem with the "almighty bottle"! The challenge of getting bottles in and out of the house was now a very difficult chore.

During my active drinking life, my mother tried to get me to understand all the sayings in the A.A. program. She was and still is in the program. Naturally, I was all denial - fought them all the way. They made no sense; i.e., I had already accepted the fact that I loved to drink. What on earth would I ever do without BOOZE in my life. No fun, no friends, no etc.... And what the hell was serenity and what did wisdom have to do with anything?

On my last drunk, I sat in a "really nice restaurant" around 8:30 p.m. to have "a" drink to congratulate myself on a job well done. "Five minutes" later I found myself waking up in my car, a couple of miles from the "really nice restaurant": I looked at my watch and was horrified to find it was 4:30 a.m.

I checked into a nearby motel, because, this time, I knew I wasn't welcome at home. I remember sitting on the edge of the bed and asking myself why I did that all the time... got myself into trouble all the time. I remember saying out loud "I quit"; "I can't go on like this anymore." "That's all I can take." "What do I do now?"

Thinking back, my thought was to go to that "really nice restaurant"; to pat myself on the back with "1" drink. Viola! Clarity! It was the first drink! If I hadn't had that "1" drink, I wouldn't be where I was now. Suddenly everything my mother had tried to tell me made absolute sense. I was totally powerless over alcohol. One drink and I was off and running. I said, again, out loud, "Oh my God, please help me do what I know I have to do." God gave my thoughts clarity so I could see for myself what my problem was.

I brought myself out of that drunk, feeling like a sloth, sleeping, drinking a little, sleeping some more, drinking, sleeping. My decision had been made for me by God, because I had finally surrendered and let him take over. In time, God decided I was fit to deal with my problem and brought my sister to me. She had no idea where I was, but in his infinite wisdom had brought her to me.

She encouraged me to call home and tell my mother and my kids I was OK and that I had finally decided to get help from the only place I knew I would get what I needed... God and A.A.

There was no way I could run my life any longer. I was totally incapable and had made a complete mess of it.

That was the greatest day of my life...which was only just beginning. ★

I believe I knew of my drinking problem long before the admission. Denial. My ability to correctly assess the problem was alcohol impaired.

Acceptance. Anything in my conscious mind is only an opinion. I had to put the alcoholism mental factor in my subconscious mind as a fact of my life. I pray and work daily on this aspect of my alcoholism. Simple but not always easy. ★

Working Step One is a must for me and the beginning of my knowing that I do not have to work this program alone.

Step One is the delusion that I could depend upon alcohol to provide me with the means for obtaining absolute peace and joy outside of me.

Alcohol provided the means for obtaining the illusion that I could solve all my problems and depend upon conditions in life to provide me with the tools I needed to manage my life. ★

The first step, for me, is the foundation of my sobriety. If I don't fully accept that I am powerless over alcohol, and my life is unmanageable, I am bound to drink again. I knew long before I came into A.A. that alcohol had beaten me; my life was certainly a mess. But when I came into the program, and admitted I was powerless, I had to take responsibility for my recovery, and make a commitment to myself and A.A. That was when I truly believe I accepted the first step. As I go about the business of life, I must remember that I am an alcoholic first and foremost, and that there are certain things I must do to maintain the quality of my life. I must keep in mind that I am powerless over alcohol, and that my life could easily become unmanageable again if I lose sight of that fact. ★

Like most of us, it was obvious to everyone else close to me that I had a problem with alcohol and that my life was unmanageable. If everyone in my life would only do things the way I told them - everything would have worked out just fine, I thought. I can control this stuff if I just try harder. . .

However, when my Higher Power finally graced me with this program, my thoughts were decidedly different. Alcohol had left nothing in my life except Fear, NO - TERROR!! It was then obvious, even to me, that my life was unmanageable. Nothing worked. No matter how I tried to control it, it always won!!

Powerless over alcohol - you bet I am! That's a fact which I can never forget. Should I choose to do so, the result will be destruction for this alcoholic.

Now, after some years, the First Step is joyous to me. The admission that I'm, powerless, and that my life is unmanageable has given me just the Freedom to seek out who I really am; and to accept it. That's the real gift. ★

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IT WILL HELP YOU AND IT WILL HELP US



**CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
ST. MALACHI CENTER**

2416 Superior Viaduct • 8:00 p.m. Tuesday, January 2, 1990

**PLEASE ATTEND**

*Your group may be represented by you or a member assigned to be your group representative. Let us take an active part in these important meetings to uphold OUR—*

**UNITY IN FELLOWSHIP**

Roy R., Moderator

Elvia A., Secretary

Published monthly by the Cleveland Central Committee of A.A., a non-profit fellowship dedicated to service. Address all letters to Central Bulletin, 940 Rockefeller Building, 614 Superior Avenue, N.W., Cleveland, Ohio 44113. District Office (216) 241-7387  
Harry D., Founder and Editor 1892-1968

**CENTRAL COMMITTEE**

**PURPOSE**

Because better understanding is the key to Friendship;  
Because the public act of any group or individual involves our entire Fellowship;  
Because we must continually take inventory of ourselves as individuals and as groups;

**The A.A. Central Committee has these purposes:**

To bring together representatives of all groups for discussions of policy and practice; to create high standards; to guard against exploitation or commercialization; to insure our humility as groups and individuals.  
To protect unity of thought and purpose through the Central Bulletin, the Area-wide Meetings, and such other activities as seem consistent.  
To maintain standards through the sponsoring of a Hospital Committee and such other committees as are necessary to carry on this work.  
To serve as a clearing house for ideas.  
The **Object** of the Central Committee is **SERVICE**.

**MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE**

**DECEMBER 5, 1989**

ST. MALACHI'S CENTER

8:00 p.m.

The meeting was opened by Moderator, Roy R., leading members present in the Serenity Prayer. Vice Moderator, John J., read the Purpose of the Central Committee and The Twelve Traditions of A.A. The roll call showed that 44 members were present, representing 42 groups.

Minutes of the November meeting were read and approved.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Financial Committee:** See below

**Action Committee:** Rudy W. reported the meetings are well attended.

**Central Bulletin:** Terry W. announced there will be a meeting of the Central Bulletin Sub-Committee next month 1 hour before the regular meeting for anyone interested in the Central Bulletin

**Hospital Committees**

**Brecksville:** Don E. reported there are 5 meetings a week. They are listed in the meeting schedule book and it's readability.

**NEW BUSINESS:** There was a long discussion regarding the meeting schedule book.

**Two new groups were announced:**

**Women Helping Women,** St Alexis Hospital, 5163 Broadway, 5th floor. Sunday's at 7:00 p.m., open, women only.

**Nordonia Men's Discussion,** Macedonia Fire Station, Comm. Room, 9683 Valley View Rd. Macedonia, OH, Tuesday, January 2, 1990, at 8:00 p.m., closed, men, (TEMPORARILY ON HOLD)

An election for Vice-Moderator was held, the names of John C. and James P. were placed in nomination, through a show of hands, James P., won. The Committee thanked outgoing Moderator Roy R., for a job well done.

Our incoming Moderator will be moving out of state the first of the year, and asked for a volunteer from the west side to replace him. (An election will be held.)

**N.E. Ohio General Service:** Delegate, Mary B., invited all members to the 15th Annual Northeast Ohio Mini-Conference, March 23-25, 1990 at the Holiday Inn, 7230 Engle Road, Middleburg Heights, OH.

43 speakers were supplied by the District office to Non A.A. Groups for the months of January through November 1989.

There being no further business, the meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Elvira A., Secretary

Central Committee Financial Report		Nov. 1989
BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD		\$1,213.50
Rent for 11/7/89 Meeting	25.00	
Bank Charge	7.44	(32.44)
NEW BALANCE		\$1,181.06

Central Bulletin Account		Nov. 1989
BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD		\$70'
Total Deposits		148.00
Printing of Central Bulletin	188.00	
Mailing	64.18	(252.18)
NEW BALANCE		\$599.33



## A.A. Yesterday, Today - And Always

When I was new in A.A. in 1959, there were 15 or so groups within 20 minutes of my home in Cleveland Heights. A large meeting would have 30 to 35, mostly men, although my home group, Fairmount Tuesday, had several women members. Very few were less than forty years old.

In those days treatment consisted of detoxification and immersion in Alcoholics Anonymous, reinforced by A.A. visitors day and night at Rosary Hall, Serenity Hall and St. Thomas in Akron. Length of stay was five days; cost, \$75.00. There were also "drying out joints" in and around Cleveland - all very knowledgeable of A.A. and genuinely striving to launch sick men and women into the program.

Although change has been a landmark since its founding, the period commencing about 1975 has been quite dramatic and challenging. The problems faced by the groups and A.A. as a whole were too real to be denied. At the risk of over-simplification, I will cite some significant developments which, in my opinion, brought on these challenges.

First, the federal government began to provide millions of dollars in each State for the treatment of alcoholism. This attracted Health Care Professionals, many of whom had not been interested in treating alcoholics previously. At the same time, other professionals and hospitals became aware that there are profits to be made in such treatment. Also, promotions involving sports, political and media celebrities lessened the social stigma of alcoholism. Large advertising expenditures by local and national treatment centers dramatically increased the number of men and women, and, for the first time adolescents, in treatment. These treatment centers plus the courts and the schools, "dumped" tremendous numbers of people into A.A., often with little, if any, knowledge or understanding of what A.A. is and how it works. Significantly, increasingly large numbers of these newcomers were ages 16 to 35, addicted to both drugs and alcohol and had the mistaken notion that treatment had provided a solid foundation in the Twelve Steps.

The problems and divisions this produced among individual members and within various groups is well known to most of you. Despite persistent efforts my home group was always overwhelmed by the problems resulting from the above changes. I finally found it

necessary, in the interest of serenity, sanity and sobriety, to move on to a new home group.

Having stepped back to get a better view, some very valuable lessons have been learned (some re-learned) by myself (and others). As expected, my former group is doing very well. New groups are forming to meet our needs. There are more groups within twenty minutes of Chagrin Falls than there were in the Heights and Lakewood in 1960. It takes about a month for a new meeting to have 75 to 100 attending. Many essentials in A.A. remain intact: the Big Book, Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. It is still true that if you are not comfortable with one group, there are others where you will feel at home. The language of the heart is spoken where you seek it.

I want to stress, however, the new developments within our fellowship during the past fifteen years. Most groups have been able to preserve the spirit and traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous. Many Twelve Step, Big Book study meetings and "back-to-basic" discussion meetings have formed in groups throughout our area. There are eleven meetings at noon each weekday in downtown Cleveland, including lead, twelve step lead, twelve step discussion, closed discussion and big book study. There are numerous morning, noon, afternoon and late night meetings throughout Northeast Ohio.

It seems to me that sponsorship is stronger today than it has been at any time since the early years of A.A. Men and women in their 20's and 30's, most of whom are dual addicted alcoholics are very active and have been sober long enough to sponsor their peers and younger people who are alcoholic with whom they identify. Many of those who have been active and carrying the message for some time are now trusted servants helping all of us to regain stability in A.A. In fact, what seemed to be instability has begun to emerge as challenges which we are working through, not without some stumbling, toward a new harmony and usefulness in striving to practice the spiritual principles passed on to us.

After all, once we take the third step our lives are in the care of God, as we understand Him. I am convinced that Alcoholics Anonymous remains in the care of the God who brought it into being and continues to guide us, as long as we strive to stay in tune with His will -one day at a time.

Tim C.

## STEP TWO:- Came to believe that a Power Greater

Some of us have been given the great privilege of being introduced to the Alcoholic Anonymous way of life. The basis upon which we build is composed of the Cardinal Principles of Unselfishness, Honesty, Purity and Love and we advance through applying these Cardinal Principles and the Twelve Steps to all the affairs of our life. We will notice that we go into A.A. through the admission of defeat as far as our alcohol problem is concerned, but A.A. comes into you through the daily application of this simple sincere way of life. When A.A. gets into you, no longer will you resort to your old thoughts and actions we were so prone to use before and during our drinking career. We become honest with ourselves and our fellow men, we become unselfish realizing that "I myself am nothing". We become pure of thought and deed. Now we are ready to love our fellow men as God loved us. When we get A.A. in us we live above the thought of stealing, conniving, scheming, immoral acts of our past life and we are nobly worthy of peace of mind. Stop and think friends.

**Are you in A.A. or is A.A. in you? ★**

Norman W. Young of Ohio (1946)

This was probably the toughest step for me to do. For thirty plus years there was nobody greater than me. My alcoholic ego would not allow it. And as my life crumbled before me, and as my alcoholism progressed, it never entered my mind to turn to God. Sure I'd heard of him, but he wasn't for me. In my sick mind at the time, even God was beneath me. But after I got into so much trouble and failed in A.A. many times, and I had no one to turn to (I'm a slow learner with a huge alcoholic ego), I slowly started to realize my way didn't work. In fact deep down inside me I knew it was going to kill me. I'll never forget sitting in the back seat of a police car after one of my many speeding accidents and had just coned my way into a DWI ticket, when I realized-who am I kidding, the next accident is going to kill me. I looked up and out through the back window of the police car into the snow storm and said - God, if you're up there and are for real, I BEG for your help because I knew I was living on borrowed time. I could always con anybody but for the first time I knew I wouldn't keep kidding myself. So this is the first time I can ever remember humbling myself and admitting that someone is above me and asking Him for help.

I've been sober 4½ years and am thankful every day for that brief moment of time where I put my alcoholic ego on the back burner and looked out and up through the back window of that police car for I surely found a Best Friend who has never let me down. ★

Doug D.

### CAME TO BELIEVE

I knew for many years that I was powerless over alcohol. Many people including my wife and ex-boss told me I was an alcoholic. Even my buddy drinkers in the local bar said I was an alcoholic. I traveled for a living. My boss and I worked the sales conventions in Chicago and Miami. They were three and four day binges for most conventioners, or it seemed to me! They often served Bloody Marys for breakfast. The joke was there were two kinds of drinkers: the ones who would get very red in the face after two days and nights of boozing and those who would get ghastly white. I got red faced. My boss would get ghastly white. We would joke over being alcoholic. I admitted that I was alcoholic but could not do anything about it. Once I started I could not stop. I was into a week long drinking binge. Then I could stop. I didn't know why. I did not question. Finally, the last two years it was continuous drinking daily until I was carried away to a rehab hospital. There in the hospital basement I found Alcoholics Anonymous..An A.A. meeting..I accepted right away that I am an alcoholic.

What I did not accept was that my life was unmanageable. I was still out to run the show! I blamed me and everybody else for loss of marriage and home. And my drinking boss for loss of job and career. I would not admit that I needed help. I thought that every A.A. was in the fog but me. I became Mr. A.A.! Chairman, Secretary, GSR, etc. Trying to be important and still running the show or trying to. After my divorce, I lived with my sister. She asked me to leave as I would not accept her rules in her home. I went to a halfway house in downtown Cleveland. Where I finally got the message: I did need people. I did need help. I had to conform to society or they would put me away. I could not control myself or others. I learned I had to lower my ego by accepting a hp - Higher Power. A power greater than myself! God Bless! ★

Believing in a Power Greater than myself is what carries me through these days. Knowing that my life is in God's hands has relieved many of the insane thoughts and actions that I had built my life around. I honestly feel that acceptance is the biggest part of the Second Step that I need to practice. Once I accepted my alcoholism, I freed myself of the burden of self will and was then able to move on in my program. As I grow in my sobriety, I grow with God.

The Second Step of Alcoholics Anonymous gives me the ability to open myself to God and the endless gifts of sobriety. This Step gives me the strength when I feel like the world is falling down around me. When I step back and take a look at myself, I see the person I have always wanted to be and I thank God for allowing me to be free. ★

# than ourselves could restore us to sanity

## Came - Came To - Came To Believe

You hear all kinds of personal problems of other A.A.'s, including those problems in A.A.. Some people gossip about others and some gossip about their sponsors.

You see some laugh, while others cry. You see some come in madder than ever and you see them leave with a smile. You see some come in with real low self-esteem and others who know it all, or think they do.

You hear criticism of others and you see those who can't take it. You see and hear those who joke around and those who are just too serious for life, in general. You see those who put on a front, only to see them falter.

You hear those who try and blow your mind and those who rarely succeed. You see those who want to open up, but are afraid of saying some things that will harm or hurt others.

Then you hear of those who speak of their Higher Power and those who have not found one yet. Those who can talk A.A. and those who can only try. You hear those who can put others down but can't be put down themselves. Those who come in for a hand-out and those who refuse to give it.

Then you have those who come in and crab, but aren't willing to do anything to change them. You get opinions from people who care and those who could care less. But, you take it in stride and listen because that's what you're here for.

Like many members of Alcoholics Anonymous, sobriety was not the first time that I contemplated the existence of a God. I was brought up in a church and if one phrase could describe my early religious training, it would be "For the wages are death" Romans. And "sin": to repressive Southern Baptists, including everything from dancing and wearing blue jeans to drinking alcoholic beverages. Obviously, I was doomed from the first time I got drunk at age 14, to the last time, 3 years ago, when I ended up in a jail cell. For most of my life I was sure God had a lightning bolt with my name on it just waiting for the right moment to strike. The first glimmer of a personal Higher Power came to me upon the birth of my son. I was completely unprepared and overwhelmed by the intensity of my feelings for this tiny creature that thrust himself into my life. Somewhere in those first few weeks it came to me that the love I felt for him came from somewhere other than my human and limited capacity.

For the first time I knew in my heart that I was connected to

There are those who come in for a hot cup of coffee and a friendly conversation. But, you hear conversations that drift from a job; to life; to their A.A. experiences. Soon you are talking to two or more people who have joined in on the conversation, but that's o.k., because we all belong together, in this room.

People talk of the past as well as the present, and we all ended up living our lives the same way. **"One Day at a Time!"** We all gave our lives "over to the care of God as we understand Him!"

Then someone comes in and is upset with the way they are being treated. Then at that particular moment, need more help coping with life than others. The loving people of A.A. are now and always will be there for those that need us, and our warm hugs and our love.

There are those who preach and those who don't, but those that do have to "practice it in all their affairs,, and those that don't preach need to be the ears of this establishment.

As the meeting ends, the sounds of A.A. grow silent, only waiting for the next one or more individuals to come in and share their ambitions, hopes, tradedies and strengths with one another.

And perhaps when you arrive home, you sit and think about how your day went and you thank God for helping you stay sober - one more day. ★

Gail F.

a life force that dwelt both within and beyond my earthly experience. At this time, I put together the idea of God and the feeling of love and knew that as I loved my baby, so God loved me.

My early sobriety was a turbulent process that included recognizing just how insane my life had become. It occurred to me that the other Mom's in my neighborhood probably didn't sneak out to a bar at night after their families were asleep. Others probably didn't take hits off of a bong with their morning coffee in order to cope with the demands of child rearing. And surely, sane people didn't wonder at times which was worse: the horrible inability to remember quite how the previous night had ended, or the horror of realizing exactly what I had done. . . again. The second step came together for me the day I integrated the ideas that God loved me, and that my life was crazy. I knew then, like I had never known anything before, that God was available to me and willing to provide a better life for me than that which I could ever provide for myself.\*

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 Harry D., Founder and Editor 1892-1968

**CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
 ST. MALACHI CENTER**

2416 Superior Viaduct • 8:00 p.m. Tuesday, February 6, 1990

**PLEASE ATTEND**

Your group may be represented by you or a member assigned to be your group representative. let us take an active part in these important meetings to uphold **OUR**—

**UNITY IN FELLOWSHIP**

Mike F., Moderator

Elvira A., Secretary

**CENTRAL COMMITTEE**

**PURPOSE**

Because better understanding is the key to Friendship;  
 Because the public act of any group or individual involves our entire Fellowship;  
 Because we must continually take inventory of ourselves as individuals and as groups;

**The A.A. Central Committee has these purposes:**

To bring together representatives of all groups for discussions of policy and practice; to create high standards; to guard against exploitation or commercialization; to insure our humility as groups and individuals.

To protect unity of thought and purpose through the Central Bulletin, the Area-wide Meetings, and such other activities as seem consistent.

To maintain standards through the sponsoring of a Hospital Committee and such other committees as are necessary to carry on this work.

To serve as a clearing house for ideas.

The **Object** of the Central Committee is **SERVICE**.

**MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE**

**JANUARY 2, 1990**

ST. MALACHI'S CENTER

8:00 p.m.

The meeting was opened by Moderator, John J., leading members present in the Serenity Prayer. Vice Moderator, James P., read the purpose of the Central Committee and The Twelve Traditions of A.A. The roll call showed that 37 members were present, representing 36 groups.

Minutes of the December meeting were read and approved.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Financial Committee:** See below

**Action Committee:** John C., nothing to report.

**Central Bulletin:** Terry W., nothing to report.

**Brecksville:** Don E., the meetings are well attended by the patients, there are 5 meetings a week, and they need support from the outside community.

**OLD BUSINESS:** as reported in last months minutes, our newly elected moderator will be moving out of state January 22, a new moderator from the west side would be needed, Don E. nominated Mike F., as no other name was placed in nomination, Mike F., won unanimously.

A group information form will be sent to all A.A. groups for current information, new secretaries, new locations, time, disbandments, etc,

The **Action Committee** will look into the feasibility of printing a small quantity of meeting schedule books with large print for the visually impaired.

**NEW BUSINESS:** a new group was announced, H.U.L.P., Holy Cross Church, E, 200th St. & Lakeshore Boulevard, Euclid, Ohio, Friday at 7:00 p.m., it's a non-smoking discussion group.

**N.E. Ohio General Service:** Mary B., delegate thanked the A.A. for the tremendous response to the B.B. questionnaire and passed out flyers to the Mini Conference.

45 speakers were supplied by the District office to Non A.A. Groups for the months of January through December 1989.

There being no further business, the meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Elvira A., Secretary

**Central Committee Financial Report**

**Dec. 1989**

**Central Bulletin Financial Report**

**Dec. 1989**

BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD		\$1,181.06
Sale of Literature-Who Me	320.00	
Rent for 12/5/89 Meeting	25.00	
Printing 4000 Who Me Pamphlets	148.08	173.08
NEW BALANCE		\$1,327.98

BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD		\$599.00
Total Deposits	132.00	
Printing of Central Bulletin	188.00	
Mailing of Central Bulletin	58.88	(246.88)
NEW BALANCE		\$484.45





## THE WASHINGTONIANS

Alcoholics Anonymous was only ten years old when Bill W., AA's co-founder, wrote: "Those who read the July (1945) Grapevine were startled, then sobered by the account which it carried of the Washingtonian movement. It was hard for us to believe that 100 years ago the newspapers of this country were carrying enthusiastic accounts about 100,000 alcoholics who were helping each other to stay sober; that today the influence of this good work has so completely disappeared that few of us have ever heard of it. . . ."

"May we always be willing to learn from experience!" Bill cautioned.

Founded by six drunks in 1840, the Washingtonians had grown in membership to hundreds of thousands in a short twelve years, and then destroyed themselves as an organization and dropped out of sight. By 1852, all that remained of their spectacular power as a method of treatment was the Home for the Fallen in Boston. In a talk on the Traditions shortly before his death, Bill said that the Washingtonians had done things "which were very natural to do, but which had turned out to be utterly destructive. And it was this spectacle of the past, brought before us as our Traditions were evolving, that confirmed that we were probably very much on the right track in this matter of no public controversy; in this question of paying our own bills; in this question of not becoming involved in other enterprises, and so on down the line. And above all, it confirmed the great protective guide of our anonymity Tradition!"

Later in the book *Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age*, Bill wrote: "In many respects the Washingtonians were akin to A.A. . . . Had they stuck to their one goal, they might have found

the full answer. Instead, the Washingtonians permitted politicians and reformers, both alcoholic and non-alcoholic, to use the society for their own purposes. . . . Within a very few years they had completely lost their effectiveness in helping alcoholics, and the society collapsed.

"The lesson to be learned from the Washingtonians was not overlooked by Alcoholics Anonymous. As we surveyed the wreck of the movement, early A.A. members resolved to keep our society out of public controversy!' And to a friend Bill wrote, "I wish every A.A. could indelibly burn the history of the Washingtonians into his memory. It is an outstanding example of how, and how not, we ought to conduct ourselves. In a sense, Alcoholics Anonymous has never had a problem seriously threatening our overall unity. Yet I notice that some A.A.'s are complacent enough to suppose we never shall."

Bill also recalled the fate of the Washingtonians before 1,500 A.A.'s gathered at the annual banquet in New York City on November 7, 1945. "In short, the Washingtonians went out to settle the world's affairs before they had learned to manage themselves. They had no capacity for minding their own business. . . . The negatives within them overthrow the positives!"

"That won't happen here," Bill urged in closing, "If we remember, publicly and privately, our own simple principles of honesty, tolerance, and humility, and we live only by the grace of God."

Traditions! Words to remember! Thanks, Bill. Thank you Washingtonians.

D.D., Ogden, Utah. July 1976  
Best of Grapevine  
with permission A.A. Grapevine, Inc.

## Our Twelve Rewards

When I first read the twelve promises in my Big Book, I didn't notice them. There was so much to learn and they slipped by me. My curiosity was piqued when old-timers kept talking about the promises. The second time I read them I was confused. Weren't peace, serenity and happiness all the same feeling? I'd had little enough of any of them for a long time. What was the difference between selfish things and self-seeking? How would I know which baffling situations God would handle for me and which ones He wanted me to use my intuition on? Would I get rich, or would I only lose my fear of being broke.

I asked these questions at my favorite discussion group, but nobody had any guaranteed answers

"How do I achieve the promises?"

"You don't, you work the steps and they happen."

"Yes, but. . ."

"Keep coming back, it gets better."

I wanted what they had. Part of me believed I could get it, and part of me felt I didn't deserve it. I tried to forget about the promises for awhile and concentrated on working the steps.

But they haunted me.

Every time I heard someone mention those pesky promises, I felt a wistful longing. "It" hadn't happened yet.

It took me a whole year to work the first 3 steps, but one day I realized that my intense emotional pain was gone.

I knew peace.

This terrified me so I did the logical thing and missed a week and a half of meetings. I no longer needed their program, I could now do it on my own. But luckily my Higher Power was now making decisions for me; my sponsor called and requested my presence. I felt like a naughty schoolgirl, and I felt needed.

When I did my 4th and 5th steps, I opened the door to my past. My remorse and shame were replaced by serenity. I soon saw how my experience could benefit others. I knew that working with newcomers would keep **me** sober, so I began to lead and sponsor.

I was enjoying myself. Not only self-seeking had slipped away, but in hearing other people's problems I had lost my overwhelming self-pity. I had asked God to remove it and He replaced it with happiness.

As I made amends, I began to be genuinely interested in other people and learned to recognize those who were in the kind of pain that I'd been in. The more I learned about others, the less I was afraid of them. I was not so unique, they were all just struggling, like me.

This gave me new freedom. I could go to any meeting, shake hands, and look right at people. Some of them even smiled. I also gained the freedom of choices. I don't drift from crisis to crisis in confusion anymore. Today my intuitive inner voice guides me in the right direction.

Financial insecurity was my biggest problem. I was unemployable when I first started Alcoholics Anonymous, I was full of anger and resentment. I hit a financial bottom when I had been in the program for over 2 years. I lost a job with \$20.00 in my bank account.

Instead of being overwhelmed and paralyzed by fear, I went to more meetings, worked harder at my program and received much support and encouragement from my fellow **A.A.'s**. They all said I'd get a better job for twice as much money. I didn't believe them, but that's exactly what happened. I did the footwork and my Higher Power carried me beyond my fondest dreams.

In the new job I recently received a big raise. They told me that the whole attitude in our office had changed since I'd begun working there. I didn't tell them that the credit should go to the program of Alcoholics Anonymous.

All of the promises have come true for me. I waited my whole life for this to happen and it now seems more natural than the way I was living before. I've discovered the rewards of the program of Alcoholics Anonymous.

---

### The International Conference of Young People in A.A. has taken place annually for 32 years.

In order for this conference to come to Northeast Ohio, a group of sober members of A.A. have formed the first bid committee in almost 20 years. We feel a strong need for the international message to come here, and for the Cleveland message to be carried worldwide.

On April 12 - 16 a group of us are going to Montreal, Canada to bid for Cleveland. Join us in spirit or in person.

### We need your support

**The only requirement is a desire to get active and carry the message**  
**There is no minimum sobriety requirement • There is no maximum age requirement**

Our open committee meetings are held on the first and third Sundays of the month at Stella Maris  
(1320 Washington) at 5:00 and all other Sundays at Club 24 at 5:00, everyone is welcome.

**For more information call or write:**

**I.C.Y.P.A.A. Bid Committee • P.O. Box 14413 • Cleveland, Ohio 44114**

### HELP

As an A.A. member, I am requesting your help in obtaining information from the membership.

There seems to be much concern from individual members regarding the radio broadcast of meetings which parallel those of A.A. In my opinion, these programs do not follow the guideline suggested by Central Committee or general Service Office. The opening does include a disclaimer which acknowledges the lack of sanction by Alcoholics Anonymous, then follows immediately with the A.A. creed, how it works and the Twelve Steps. The ensuing "Leads" often refer to God and organized religion, contain specific examples of drinking behavior and frequently encourages listeners to "Go to A.A.". When the speaker closes, the audience comments in much the same manner.

Our guidelines suggest either an informational format similar to the Central Office Speakers Bureau which would include facts about A.A. and/or an individual member giving first name only and stating membership in a 12 Step program.

Could you please assist by polling the fellowship for their opinions on the broadcast. WHK 1420 AM airs the program every other Sunday at 9:00 am and recently WMMS 100.7 FM has included the same format on Sundays as part of their public service announcements.

Please forward your comments through the district office.

Yours in Love and Fellowship

Sharon B.

General Service Public Information Office

I had been sober 15 months in A.A. without too many cravings. I could admit that my drinking had gotten me into many jams but admitting I couldn't manage my life was a different story. (I was raised in a proud Italian family where I was taught never to be defeated or admit it.) Then I met a lady at an A.A. dance who was to become my sponsor. She started taking me to discussion meetings and 12 Step help groups - something I hadn't gone to yet. I started learning about the steps and what they could do for me. After a couple of months, I started on Step One. It was difficult to admit to complete physical, mental and spiritual defeat. But I was beginning to understand that if I didn't, these steps would not work for me. I had reached the point where I was willing to do anything to make things better. Everyone has their bottom and I had hit mine. Finally feeling totally defeated and left with no resources, I was ready to accept that I didn't know how to run the show. Then I did Step One. It's something I have to repeat constantly so I don't forget the pain. Don't suffer longer than you have to - it only gets worse.

(WE) Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God - as we *understood Him*.

They don't print the "WE" in front of each step, but it's certainly there through inference. Without the sense of belonging built into each of the 12 Steps there would be little chance of completion. Alone, I've had a history of failure - with the help of sponsors, home group, and friends in A.A. - little was beyond reach - including getting back to God (& good).

It also seems almost a gift that the founders suggested the Third Step be taken with another human being. The sense of serious seeking demands a guide or - as the book states, a "spiritual advisor". I'm here to tell you that I am in constant need of advice, and specifically advice dealing with God, perhaps the most difficult relationship I've ever been in.

I took this step after about two years in the program, with a spiritual advisor and never took it back. Oh, I whined a lot - "I turn it over, but then I take it back." But that's just BS. I've been afraid, been uncertain - even angry at how life seems to be working out. . . .

**But I never said to God - I've changed my mind.**

Terry W.

I recently received a letter from God via my sponsor - which reads as follows:

Dear Ruth;

You are not totally, irrevocably responsible for everything and everyone -that's my job. I won't be needing any help today -

Love God

When I know that the quality of my sobriety depends on my ability to put my life and my will into God's hands, I become willing.

Surviving a life threatening illness after 13 years of sobriety (now 15), meant I had to work Step Three a lot of the day and came to know that this business of my living or not was in His hands. The doctors say I had little or no chance and maybe a miracle. Probably I'm just an example.

Removing the bondage of self and letting go and letting God pays off in a grateful life-ONE **DAY AT A TIME**.

### HELP WANTED — EDITOR

Work with the Central Committee and the District Office in publishing the Central Bulletin, (The oldest publication in the program of A.A.). Takes about ¾ hours each month. Must supply own suit of armor & pencil. No money, but the payback is great. Contact the District Office - Terry W.

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Harry D., Founder and Editor 18924968

## CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING ST. MALACHI CENTER

2416 Superior Viaduct • 8:00 p.m. Tuesday, March 6, 1990

### PLEASE ATTEND

Your group may be represented by you or a member assigned to be your group representative. Let us take an active part in these important meetings to uphold *OUR*—

#### UNITY IN FELLOWSHIP

Mike F., Moderator

Elvira A., Secretary

## CENTRAL COMMITTEE

### PURPOSE

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To maintain standards through the sponsoring of a Hospital Committee and such other committees as are necessary to carry on this work.

To serve as a clearing house for ideas.

The **OBJECT** of the Central Committee is **SERVICE**.

## MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

**FEBRUARY 6, 1990**

ST. MALACHI'S CENTER

8:00 p.m.

The meeting was opened by Moderator, Mike F., leading members present in the Serenity Prayer. Vice Moderator, James P., read the purpose of the Central Committee. The roll call showed that 65 members were present, representing 61 groups.

Minutes of the January meeting were read and approved.

### COMMITTEE REPORTS:

**Financial Committee:** See below

**Action Committee:** John C., reported the group information forms were sent to all A.A. groups.

**Central Bulletin:** Terry W., reported the next meeting for anyone concerned with the Central Bulletin will be next month at 7:00 pm, here at St Malachi's Center. Also beginning in May he will be out of town for six months, if there is anyone interested in editing the Central Bulletin for that period of time or permanently, contact the Central Office or report at the next meeting of the Central Bulletin.

**Brecksville:** Don E., announced there are 5 meetings a week, the meetings are well attended by the patients and the outside A.A. community. A question was asked, "are visitors allowed to visit the detox ward?". The answer was vague, but you can visit with the patient at the A.A. meeting.

**East Side Veteran:** Lucretia W., reported no new business.

**Rosary Hall:** Glenn reported Rosary Hall needs speakers and visitors.

**OLD BUSINESS:** none.

**NEW BUSINESS:** there were four new groups announced: Mentor Big Book Study, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 7643 Lakeshore Boulevard, Mentor, Ohio, Monday 8:00-9:00; Tri Sobriety, Tri C Cuyahoga Community College, 11000 Pleasant Valley, Green Room of Theater, Parma, Ohio, Thursday 12:00-1:00 pm; 12 Step Study, People Getting Serious, Lutheran Church of the Covenant, 19000 Libby Road, Maple Heights, Ohio, Friday 8:00 pm; and Step Study West, Stella Maris Bingo Hall, 7105 Lorain Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio, Wednesday 8:00 pm. These are all open meetings.

Sharon B. polled the members regarding the A.A. meetings being conducted by some radio stations. After a lengthy discussion, the matter was tabled for 2 months to allow members to seek guidance from their home group.

IN MEMORIAM: James Corron passed away January 17, 1990. He was a 17 year member of Euclid Non-Smoking.

Jim Reed passed away in Texas before Christmas. He established the section for alcoholics at BayView Hospital.

David C., asked the blessing and help of this committee in bringing the International Conference of Young People to Northeast Ohio, the open meetings are held on the first and third Sunday of the month at Stella Maris, 1320 Washington St. at 5:00 pm.

ANNIVERSARIES: Solidarity's 34th Anniversary, April 8, 1990, 4450 Cedar Ave. Phyllis Wheatley-1st floor, Doors Open 2:00 pm, guest speaker—John B. Robinson-Wednesday Men Discussion, Dinner after Lead, cakes and pies appreciated, 50-50 drawing, door prizes

**N.E. Ohio General Service:** Mary B., delegate again asked all A.A. members to attend the 15th Annual Northeast Ohio Mini-Conference, March 23-25, 1990, Holiday Inn, 7230 Engle Rd., Middleburgh Heights, Ohio.

1 speaker was supplied by the District office to Non A.A. Groups for the month of January 1990.

There being no further business, the meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Elvira A., Secretary

Central Committee Financial Report		Jan. 1990
BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD		\$1,327.98
Sale of Literature-Four <i>Absolutes</i>	336.00	
Rent for 1/2/90 Meeting	25.00	
Printing of 1200 Four <i>Absolutes</i>	266.43	
Bank Service Charge	1.43	292.86
NEW BALANCE		\$1,371.12

Central Bulletin Financial Report		Jan. 1990
BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD		\$484.00
Total Deposits		75.50
Printing of Central Bulletin	201.00	
Mailing of Central Bulletin	65.77	(266.77)
NEW BALANCE		\$293.18



## SINGLENESSE OF PURPOSE

It means we just do one thing in Alcoholics Anonymous, our society carries only one message, that we are alcoholics and we collectively only know about one subject, the devastation of and recovery from alcoholism. It is the one thread that binds us together, and the one thing each of us has in common.

We in the service structure and many others who are dedicated to Alcoholics Anonymous have spent the last two years studying and talking about "Singleness of Purpose". Many felt that Alcoholics Anonymous was in serious trouble due to many problems other than alcohol appearing in our meetings. There has been a conscious effort to deal with these other problems throughout the A.A. world, and many of us feel that we have made great progress in our efforts for "Singleness of Purpose": We have also carried the message of our "Singleness of Purpose" to many outside entities, treatment centers, courts, half-way and three-quarterway houses, religious, medical, public information and business programs, all reaching the suffering alcoholics. We have now informed and will continue to inform these agencies what Alcoholics Anonymous can and can't do.

Our big Book (Alcoholics Anonymous), our Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, our history book (A.A. Comes of Age), all our literature tells us: "Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share our experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism."

Some of the most powerful statements we have appear in the long form of Tradition One: "Each member of Alcoholics Anonymous is but a small part of the great whole. A.A. must continue to live or most of us will surely die. Hence our common welfare must come first."

Our first Tradition tells us that we must stay together, united, or we will dissolve. We also have 11 other Traditions that show us, through experience, what we must do in order to accomplish that goal of unity allowing recovery. We are shown that our membership is open to all who suffer from one thing - alcoholism. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. We cannot refuse anyone who wishes to recover, no matter who they are or where they come from, as long as they have a desire to stop drinking. Tradition Five tells us the sole purpose of an A.A. group is to carry the message of recovery to the alcoholic who still suffers. Other Traditions relate to us the things we need to watch for so we don't get diverted from that one purpose, things of money, property, prestige, authority, controversy, sensational advertising, and personalities. All of our Traditions have

come to us through past experiences of those who have gone before us and who have experienced the price of what happens when these principles are not respected, the chaos, heartbreak and confusion that results when the guidelines are not followed. The Steps, Traditions, and Concepts must be respected if we are to live successfully and happily in our personal lives and in our group experience.

We in A.A. today are most fortunate to have much experience to draw from regarding our one purpose, not only our own experience but the experience of other histories to look at and examine. Histories of other movements that have tried to sober up the hopeless alcoholic, histories of the Washingtonians and the Oxford Groups. Our founders were able to look at their workable principles and their failures and weaknesses so that we can safeguard ourselves. (See last month's Central Bulletin.)

In light of the Washingtonian experience, the position of Alcoholics Anonymous stands in decided and hopeful contrast. In adhering to a "Singleness of Purpose", A.A. avoids the greatest handicap which the Washingtonian Movement had.

In the 1920's another movement came into existence - The Oxford Groups. Its object was to work to further democracy by stressing moral and spiritual values. Its aim was to change the motives of men and nations and so create a sound basis for social, racial and international justice. The Oxford Group leader in America was Sam Shoemaker. This is where all of our central characters of Alcoholics Anonymous were to come together.

Before the forming of Alcoholics Anonymous, members of the Oxford Group were Roland, who carried the message to Ebby, who in turn carried the message to Bill W. In Akron, a member of the Oxford Groups was Henrietta Seiberling. Henrietta was the one who connected Bill and Dr. Bob in May of 1935.

Many good ideas came from the Oxford Groups - the weaknesses were basically the same as found in the Washingtonian Movement. Meetings were devoted to talks by members on sin, surrender, quiet times, Bible studies, the four absolutes, guidance, and the rationale of intelligent witness.

The Oxford Groups were not particularly successful with sobering up alcoholics due to all the outside influences and controversies, and in 1939 Bill and Dr. Bob made a break with the movement. The reasons for the split were:

1. Bill and Dr. Bob felt that alcoholics had trouble

with the aggressive evangelism of the Oxford Movement.

2. The founder of the Oxford Groups came out in support and praise of Adolf Hitler.
3. The Catholic Church forbade Catholics from joining other religious groups, and of the many early members, about 50% were Catholic.
4. The Oxford Group also stressed that conversion be pinned down to specific time, place and emotional condition, not allowing for the slow educational spiritual experience or awakening.
5. Dr. Bob and Bill's very strong feelings drawn to "Singleness of Purpose" ■ that participants could differ on theology and politics on an individual level and participate in these areas as citizens, but the group could not be threatened as long as they stuck only to one a purpose.

The Oxford Group was renamed Moral **Re-Armament** and is still operating in Los Angeles.

In Alcoholics Anonymous, our Traditions implore each of us to take care against committing A.A. to the fires of reform, politics, religions and dissension of any kind as seen in the histories of the Washingtonian and Oxford experiences ■ and implore each of us to stick to the one thing that we know and the one common experience we all share!

In the beginning, all sorts of people and organizations wanted us to "take stands": "deliver opinions": "fight evils" and join the multi-purpose causes ■ our founders knew that if we ever embarked upon such a course, it would certainly be our finish.

Through the years, we have survived the movies and TV scripts that portray us, sometimes accurately, sometimes not. A.A. spokespersons expounding on our program ■ famous personalities and politicians, breaking anonymity and talking about A.A. publicly, sometimes correctly, sometimes not. Books written for personal benefit of those who have needed, for whatever reasons, to exploit the program of Alcoholics Anonymous and favorable and unfavorable articles about A.A. As of this day, Alcoholics Anonymous has never been divided by a major controversial issue. Our fellowship has never taken sides, criticized or defended ourselves publicly on anything. All history affords us the spectacle of striving nations and groups finally torn asunder because they were diverted from their primary purpose.

We conceive the survival and spread of Alcoholics Anonymous to be something of greater importance than any weight we could collectively throw back of other causes. Recovery from alcoholism is life itself to us, and we wish to preserve in full strength our means of survival.

Our own history-that of Alcoholics Anonymous ■ proves over and over again that "Sobriety, freedom from alcohol through the teaching and practice of the 12 Steps, is the sole purpose of an A.A. group. Groups have repeatedly tried other activities, and they have always failed. We must confine our membership to alcoholics and we must confine our A.A. groups to a single purpose. If we don't stick to these principles, we shall collapse. And if we collapse, we cannot help anyone." (Bill W.)

Some of the problems we have seen in the past few

years ■ and solutions are as follows:

1. Treatment facilities-The majority of treatment facilities, including hospitals, have combined all addictive disorders together, claiming no difference in the problems of alcohol, drugs other than alcohol, and eating disorders. The facilities are bringing all their patients, no matter what their problem was, to A.A. meetings. This activity began to cause many problems for our A.A. groups ■ problems of singleness of purpose, space, finances, quantities of patients causing the number of new people to outweigh those with sobriety. Solutions began when many service people and groups in the spirit of cooperation talked with treatment center officials regarding our singleness of purpose and our other group struggles. In most cases there was cooperation from the facilities and as a result of our efforts, patients are now being taken to N.A. and O.A. meetings-and meetings of similar nature have been started in treatment facilities.

Similar problems have been taken care of regarding halfway and three-quarterway houses ■ where they now have their own recovery programs plus mandatory attendance to A.A. meetings. We have found that most residents of these programs have misinformation about identification and A.A.

We discovered that many of our A.A. members working in the field of alcoholism were not aware of our Traditions ■ some barely sober themselves, could not help uphold our Traditions because they did not know what our Traditions are. The statistics show that approximately 85% of our members that work in the field of alcoholism drink again. Most of us feel with the exerted effort these past two years in trying to educate the fellowship on "Singleness of Purpose" we have managed to inform many of our members working in the field.

2. The Court Systems -Judges and penal officials, knowing of the success of A.A. ■ and also now realizing that alcoholism is a disease ■ began to "sentence" drunk driving offenders to mandatory A.A. meetings. In some areas, this meant as many as hundreds of offenders being deposited in A.A. meetings ■ creating problems of numbers, expenses and singleness of purpose. Just because a person had a drunk driving offense did not necessarily mean he was an alcoholic. Our very important principle of attraction seemed absent when mandatory was mentioned. Alternate plans have been designed to help this situation plus enable those members who are particularly interested in these forms of the 12th Step work, an opportunity to contribute and participate on a voluntary basis. A.A. Information Meetings have been very successful wherever they are carried out correctly.

G.S.O. has recommended that if the Group Conscience is in agreement-that we should cooperate in signing court cards. In some areas where this problem has gotten out of hand, group members refuse to sign cards until courts cooperated by setting up Information Meetings where A.A. does contribute ■ telling our stories and giving our information about A.A.

Some groups have folded due to a multi-purpose problem. The alcoholics became outnumbered and the primary purpose was lost in the activity of problems other than alcohol.

Following are some of the solutions we have found that worked. They have been discussed at length in Singleness of Purpose workshops from the small town group to G.S.O.!

1. Read one or more of the following at the beginning of an A.A. meeting: Preamble of Alcoholics Anonymous, the Twelve Traditions, the Primary Purpose Card, all members state our primary purpose. The Primary Purpose card was born out of frustration of members needing something concrete from the overall consciousness of A.A. as a whole. It is a Service Piece and is available upon request from G.S.O. for the asking for those who feel they would like to use it.
2. Try to have strong chairpersons/discussion leaders who establish and adhere to a policy of how to respond to our problems. Have information available on other 12 Step programs - names and telephone numbers to contact.
3. Hold Closed Discussion Meetings - for alcoholics only. Most agree it is better to avoid embarrassing an individual by speaking to him/her privately, remembering a spirit of understanding should accompany firmness.
4. Keep lines of communication open with court officials, treatment centers, Employee Assistance Programs, always informing them what A.A. can and cannot do. Strong PI/CPC committees and temporary sponsorship are helpful.
5. At workshops and meetings, emphasis should be on our entire program - RECOVERY/UNITY/SERVICE. Reading and dissemination of Conference Approved Literature is helpful.
6. Stress Home Group Membership. The home group is where we have a sense of belonging and a growing knowledge of how the program works -and where the understanding of service begins.
7. A group that periodically takes an inventory is generally a strong Singleness of Purpose Group.
8. Carry the message of SINGLENES OF PURPOSE through your sponsorship.
9. Take on the responsibility of being informed as to what our Traditions are about. The story is told in all our literature. READ IT! BECOME A RESPONSIBLE SOBER MEMBER. BE A PART OF THE SOLUTION RATHER THAN PART OF THE PROBLEM.
10. Be aware of the following quotes from other 12 Step Programs and their position on singleness of purpose - it is as strong a stand as that of A.A.:

FROM THE TRUSTEES OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS: "One of A.A.'s greatest strengths is its single **mind- ed** focus on one thing only. By limiting its primary purpose to carry the message to ALCOHOLICS, avoiding all other activities, A.A. has done that SUPREMEY WELL - and they have paved the way for Narcotics Anonymous by freely giving us their steps. The simple fact is that both Fellowships have a Sixth Tradition for a purpose - to keep

from being diverted from our primary purpose."

FROM THE TRUSTEES OF COCAINE ANONYMOUS: "We at CA look for guidance from A.A. and learn from its experience. As we look to A.A. for guidance, we feel separate because each fellowship has a unique primary purpose. Both of us have an enormous amount of work to do and each time someone recovers, we help each other."

FROM THE TRUSTEES OF OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS: "A.A.'s willingness to share fully what it has to recognize the necessity of hewing to a singleness of purpose has opened the way to recovery for all of us."

FROM THE FELLOWSHIP OF AL-ANON: 'Al-Anon is so focused on their primary purpose that in their service structure on trusted servants, starting with their GR (comparable to our G.S.R.) you cannot serve if you are a member of another 12 Step Fellowship."

FROM A.A. COMES OF AGE: "We think we should do one thing well rather than many things to which we are not called. Our society gathers in unity around this concept. The very life of our fellowship requires its preservation. Together we have found a substantial remedy for a terrible malady. As a fellowship we know that we must not be diverted. It is our experience as alcoholics that makes us of unique value on our sector of the total alcoholic front. We can approach sufferers as no one else can. Therefore, the strongest kind of moral and ethical compulsion is upon us to do this and nothing more. We shall direct our energies where they count most. Most emphatically, then, A.A. has but one single purpose: To carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers. This is our basic objective, our real reason for existence - our only reason for existence!!!"

Reference Materials: (1) A.A. COMES OF AGE; (2) Newsletter for Professional Men and Women "ABOUT A.A."; (3) "PROBLEMS OTHER THAN ALCOHOL": p 35, Conference Approved; (4) 38th General Service Conference Workshop; (5) "The Washingtonian Movement": by Milton A. Maxwell, PhD.

Note: All of the above material is the work of Bill W. and general Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous.

by Buddy H. , New Albany, MS

## A.A. Preamble

Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.

The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for A.A. membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions.

A.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution;

does not wish to engage in any controversy, neither endorses or opposes any causes. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.



**CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
ST. MALACHI CENTER**

2416 Superior Viaduct • 8:00 p.m. Tuesday, April 3, 1990

**PLEASE ATTEND**

*Your group may be represented by you or a member assigned to be your group representative. Let us take an active part in these important meetings to uphold OUF—*

**UNITY IN FELLOWSHIP**

Mike F., Moderator

Elvira A., Secretary

Published monthly by the Cleveland Central Committee of A.A., a non-profit fellowship dedicated to service. Address all letters to Central Bulletin, 940 Rockefeller Building, 614 Superior Avenue, NW, Cleveland, Ohio 44113. District Office (216) 241-7387  
Harry D., Founder and Editor 1892-1968

**CENTRAL COMMITTEE**

**PURPOSE**

- Because better understanding is the key to Friendship;
- Because the public act of any group or individual involves our entire Fellowship;
- Because we must continually take inventory of ourselves as individuals and as groups;

**The A.A. Central Committee has these purposes:**

To bring together representatives of all groups for discussions of policy and practice; to create high standards; to guard against exploitation or commercialization; to insure our humility as groups and individuals.

To protect unity of thought and purpose through the Central Bulletin, the Area-wide Meetings, and such other activities as seem consistent.

To maintain standards through the sponsoring of a Hospital Committee and such other committees as are necessary to carry on this work.

To serve as a clearing house for ideas.

The **OBJECT** of the Central Committee is **SERVICE**.

**MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE**

**MARCH 6, 1990**

ST. MALACHI'S CENTER

8:00 p.m.

The meeting was opened by Moderator, Mike F., leading members present in the Serenity Prayer. Vice Moderator, James P., read the purpose of the Central Committee and the Twelve Traditions of A.A.. The roll call showed that 59 members were present, representing 49 groups. Minutes of the February meeting were read and approved.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Financial Committee:** See below

**Action Committee:** Nothing to report.

**Central Bulletin:** Terry W., reported that Bob McK. and Mike B. volunteered to edit the Central Bulletin for 6 months.

**Brecksville:** Don E., representative, reiterated the five meetings a week at Brecksville. The meetings are well attended by patients and outside A.A. members, with the exception of the Sunday meeting which could use more outside participation.

**Rosary Hall:** Glenn R., representative, reported the Monday, 7:00 p.m. meeting needs more support

**OLD BUSINESS:** a question was asked at last months meeting, are visitors allowed to visit the detox ward at Brecksville VA. hospital? Claude G. investigated and the answer is no.

Sharon B., thanked the people that helped her in her investigation of the radio station that broadcast A.A. meetings on the air.

**NEW BUSINESS:** here is a list of new meetings that was brought before the committee for it's blessing: Sober for Serenity, Perry Plant Training Center, 10 Center Road, Perry, Ohio, Monday's 12:00 noon; First Step Recovery, Kaiser Hospital, 2475 MLK Dr., Cleveland, Ohio, Thursday's at 8:00 p.m.; Perfectly Clear, 12 Step Discussion, Club 24, 1635 Lee Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, Wednesday's at 6:00 p.m. it's a closed meeting; Bay Early Discussion, Bay Presbyterian Church, 25415 Lake Road, Bay Village, Ohio, Monday's at 6:45 a.m., non-smoking, closed mixed. There is a new meeting starting at Grace Hospital, as yet unnamed, more information later, also a conference was announced, no information at this time.

Doug D. volunteered to serve on the action committee.

Moderator, Mike F. will be the Central Committee's liaison between General Service and the Central Committee.

**N.E. Ohio General Service:** Delegate, Mary B., explained her role as the delegate to General Service, and reminded everybody to come to the Mini-Conference March 23-25.

8 speakers were supplied by the District office to Non A.A. Groups for the months of January and February 1990.

There being no further business, the meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Elvira A., Secretary

**Central Committee Financial Report**

Feb. 1990

BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD		\$1,371.12
Rent for 2/6/90 Meeting	25.00	
Printing of 1980 Misunderstanding	216.41	
Printing of 4000 Who Me	152.52	
Bank Service Charge	1.03	(394.96)
<b>NEW BALANCE</b>		<b>\$976.16</b>

**Central Bulletin Financial Report**

Feb. 1990

BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD		\$29.00
Total Deposits	502.50	
Printing of Central Bulletin	201.00	
		301.50
<b>NEW BALANCE</b>		<b>\$594.68</b>





## IDENTIFICATION IS 'THE ESSENCE OF OUR COMMON BOND'

"My name is Rosemary P., and I am an alcoholic.' That's a simple introduction. And powerful. It tells you who and what I am, instantly. It immediately connects me to you if you, too, are an alcoholic.

Speaking at the June 1989 Northeast Regional Forum in Portland, Maine, Rosemary called identification "the very essence of *our common bond*" and expressed concern that "the way we traditionally introduce ourselves at meetings has changed so much, the word 'alcoholic' often is omitted entirely."

The 'delegate (Panel 39) for Central New York pointed to a new group of introductions heard around A.A.-from "I'm cross-addicted" and "I'm chemically dependent" to "I'm a recovering person." She said that she is "always tempted to respond, 'You're a cross-addicted what?' 'You're a chemically dependent what?' And Whom or what are you recovering from?" " Her frustration mounts, she added, "because I need to know that you're at the meeting for the same reason that I'm there-for ongoing recovery from the disease of alcoholism."

Rosemary further believes that the breakdown in the way we identify ourselves "puts a serious strain on our unity and singleness of purpose. When I say at an A.A. function that 'I'm a drug addict and an alcoholic' or 'I'm a cross-addicted alcoholic,' I am telling you that I'm a special kind of alky-my case of alcoholism is different from yours! I add an extra dimension to my disease—one that, because of our singleness of purpose, should not be addressed at an A.A. meeting. I have just cut our common bond in half and, more importantly, have diluted my own purpose for being there."

In her area, Rosemary noted, "it was thought that after a person was around A.A. for a while, all the other descriptive words would fall away and we would hear, 'I am an alcoholic.' But this has not happened. We see people sober in A.A. for two, three, four years and more—still clinging to the treatment jargon they were first taught. They have not made the transition."

What we need to do, Rosemary suggests, is to separate our issues and take them separately to the programs designed to address them: Narcotics Anonymous for drug

addiction; Overeaters Anonymous for addiction to food, and so on. When participating in these various meetings, she feels, "we should identify ourselves accordingly.

It has been suggested, she said, "that we approach treatment facilities and, in the spirit of cooperation and concern for the newcomer, ask that they instruct their patients on how to separate their addictions rather than group them together under the label of addictive **personalities**—using the catchall phrase we hear so often, that 'a drug is a drug is a drug! "

The idea of seeking outside cooperation is all very well, Rosemary observed, "but I wonder if the real answer doesn't lie squarely within our own Fellowship. Isn't it the responsibility of each of us to keep our program intact, to pass it on to the newcomer as it was given to us? Importantly, can we do this with patient explanation, tolerance toward differences—and more patient explanation? I believe we can, through committed sponsorship, strong home groups and active service. That way, our new members will learn how to be a part of A.A., not a fragment of it."

Most of us, Rosemary concluded, "have heard it said that if A.A. is ever destroyed, it will be destroyed from within. In my opinion, apathy, cloaked often in the guise of 'live and let live,' is one of our greatest enemies. But the destructive force is not those members who introduce themselves as 'cross-addicted alcoholic+it is the attitude of those members who sit back and say, 'So **what!** ' "

*from Box 459, Feb-Mar., 1990 issue*

*Reprinted with permission, AA World Service, Inc.*

## A Declaration of Unity

**This we owe to A.A.'s future:**

**To keep our common welfare first;**

**To keep our fellowship united.**

**For on A.A. unity depend our lives,**

**And the lives of those to come.**

## GROUP ANNIVERSARIES

To share your group's celebration with other members of our fellowship, send a note with time, date and special instructions 60 **days** prior to the event:

### Community Sunday - 9th Anniversary

Sunday, June 3, 1990  
3557 Washington Boulevard at Thayne  
Lead at 7:30 p.m. A light supper follows  
No food donations please

## IN MEMORIAM

Our deepest sympathy to the family and friends of these deceased members of our fellowship:

**NORMAN I? HON** - 26 years of sobriety, member of the Jerry Winans Group, passed away March 25, 1990.

**AL. MILCZEWSKI (Mills)** - 10 years sobriety, member of Seven Hills Sobriety, Passed away March 31, 1990.

**JAMES CORRON** - a 17 year member of Euclid Non-Smoking, passed away January 17, 1990.

**JIM REED-passed** away in Texas before Christmas. He established the section for alcoholics at **BayView** Hospital.

### THINGS WE CANNOT CHANGE

## letter to the Editor

I think last month's Central Bulletin on "Singleness of Purpose" was the best one I've read since I've been in A.A., and I hope everyone in A.A. read and understood it. We have to stand together in order to stay together. This is the only thing we have to hold onto. United we stand, divided we fall. Thank You.

signed, In love with A.A.

### Step 5:

## Admitted to God, to Ourselves, and to Another Human Being the Exact Nature of our Wrongs.

Four members wrote articles for this step:

"Rarely have we seen a person fail who has thoroughly followed our path!' Having heard this many times, I came to believe it - **a promise and a mission**. I would not fail if I took certain steps. This idea was the beginning of the courage I would need to be willing to tell my secrets. I had guarded my awful secrets for years, sure that if you knew the truth about me...? These fears kept me alienated from God, myself, and others in a prison of pride, isolation and self-loathing.

And more promises from the Big Book (Alcoholics Anonymous, page 75), "Once we have taken this step, withholding nothing, we are delighted. We can look the world in the eye. We can be alone in perfect peace and ease. Our fears fall from us. We begin to feel the nearness of our creator."

Suddenly I understood the wisdom of the 5th step. Rather than being an experience of humiliating exposure, it was one of reconciliation in which I could again connect with God, myself and my fellows.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

I felt deep relief, sharing the nature of my wrongs with an out-of-town old-timer. I could see that I seemed to be boring him, or at least not upsetting him. That was understandable, because I was boring me. Those awful truths that held so much pain and power when I was writing them, lost their potency during my relating them.

The 12 & 12 (Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, page 62) states "This feeling of being at one with God and man, this emerging from isolation through the open and honest sharing of our terrible burden of guilt, brings us to a resting place where we may prepare ourselves for the following Steps toward a full and meaningful sobriety."

I was prepared because the old-timer had me bring my Big Book with me. At the end of this step, he had me read page 75. I did as suggested there, and within two hours, completed steps 6 & 7.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Here we go again. Must we keep surrendering with further action? Didn't we admit enough in working the first step? We are all masters at procrastination. In sharing the exact nature of our wrongs, we again discover that we are not unique (deflation of self) but that we have certain patterns of self which caused our malady. We are then told to go home and review what we have done for an hour.

Here we go again. Must we keep surrendering with further action.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

From time to time I am asked to hear a Fifth Step. Therefore, obviously I have heard more Fifth Steps than I have personally taken. It is always a humbling experience each time I hear another person's Fifth Step. It is like being invited into "someone else's church"! They are trusting me with their most inner self, and I feel compelled to receive that trust tenderly and delicately, as well as in absolute confidence. I carefully listen and acknowledge what is said, without moralizing or even offering advice. As I listen and watch the other person grow from the experience, I also become a beneficiary, because I cannot hear another person's Fifth Step without examining my soul as well!

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

We want **your** article on the steps! Articles must be received one month prior to the issue month. Step 6 articles must be received by May 1, Step 7 by June 1, etc.

## BACK TO BASICS

### A.A. Membership

At the last Central Committee meeting, a member asked that we run an article defining membership in A.A.. **‘What an Order.’** This explanation may not be universally popular; however, it is, to the best of our knowledge, correct:

As the Preamble to the A.A. *Grapevine* (sometimes erroneously called a “creed” at some **eastside** groups) explains, we are a fellowship who share a common problem—alcoholism. You must have a **drinking problem** to be an A.A. member. Other addictions or obsessions don’t count. They neither qualify you for A.A. membership nor deny it to you. The pamphlet **“Problems Other Than Alcohol”** explains this in detail.

Is this all I need for membership? No. You must also have the **desire to stop drinking**. That’s our Third Tradition. Its long form states in part, “Our membership ought to include all who suffer from alcoholism, hence we may refuse none who wish to recover.” Twelve Steps and *Twelve Traditions* on page 139 states, **“A.A. is really saying to every serious drinker, ‘You are an A.A. member, if you say so.’”**

Doesn’t attendance at A.A. meetings, or residence at a treatment or halfway house make you a member. No. One member was fond of stating that “You can sit in your garage as long as you want. You won’t become a Chevrolet.” Membership comes **only** by having a drinking problem and wanting to stop.

Does this mean that I can take other “mood altering” chemicals? Only if they are prescribed by a physician and taken **as** prescribed. A.A. does not play doctor; however, we suggest **that** you get a second opinion, having your medication reviewed by a physician who has experience with alcoholism. The pamphlet **“The A.A. Member-Medications and Other Drugs”** discusses this in detail.

Bob

### A.A. Unity

Bill W. mentioned that the only way A.A. will cease to exist is from within (Fellowship Self-Will Run Riot). Sound familiar? The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. If a person does not have a problem with alcohol, why then are A.A. Groups (or are they A.A. Groups?) going out of their way to change rather than to direct a non-alcoholic to the proper Twelve Step program. Why don’t we get back to basics, practice all these principles in all our affairs, and place principles before personalities.

A.A. was born in Northeast Ohio. We were reborn (page 63, Big Book) in the same way. Are we removing ourselves from our primary purpose?

Mike

## ANONYMITY

Alcoholism has no respect for anyone in particular. We as recovering alcoholics come from different backgrounds, races, religions, etc. Early on we were taught that anonymity is a form of respect for each and every one of us. We were taught the importance of it and how breaking it can affect each of us. I as a recovering member earn my livelihood by working close to the public each day. I don’t have an important title • I am not a doctor or corporate head • **but I do deserve the right to anonymity** like every member of Alcoholics Anonymous. I am asking as a member that when you visit my workplace that you remember the right to anonymity and respect me as a person who has respect for myself. I do not deserve to have a fellow member shout out, “Have you been going to meetings lately?” In my place of work or anywhere else for that matter, I do not deserve to have a fellow member visit my workplace and announce to the world my personal affairs. Enough is enough! I am not describing our new members. Unfortunately, this is the behavior I am witnessing of members who have been around long enough to know better.

Many of you do not realize how you are affecting others when you break anonymity. A persons job could be jeopardized or a person’s relationship. This not only angers but saddens me. Please **stop assuming** that this behavior is acceptable. Please start respecting fellow members,

*signed, Job in jeopardy*

## TRADITIONS CHECKLIST

*These questions were originally published in the A.A. Grapevine in conjunction with a series on the Twelve Traditions that began in November 1969 and ran through September 1971. While they were originally intended primarily for individual use, many A.A. groups have since used them as a basis for wider discussion.*

**Tradition Five: Each group has but one primary purpose • to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.**

1. Do I ever cop out by saying, “I’m not a group, so this or that Tradition doesn’t apply to me”?
2. Am I willing to explain firmly to a newcomer the *limitations* of A.A. help, even if he gets mad at me for not giving him a loan?
3. Have I today imposed on any A.A. member for a special favor or consideration simply because I am a fellow alcoholic?
4. Am I willing to twelfth-step the next newcomer without regard to who or what is in it for me?
- 5 Do I help my group in every way I can to fulfill our primary purpose?
6. Do I remember that A.A. old-timers, too, can be alcoholics who still suffer? Do I try to help them and to learn from them?

**A.A. CENTRAL BULLETIN**  
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**IT WILL HELP YOU AND IT WILL HELP US**



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 Harry D., Founder and Editor 1892-1968

**CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**ST. MALACHI CENTER**  
 2416 Superior Viaduct • 8:00 pm. Tuesday, May 1, 1990  
**PLEASE ATTEND**

Your group may be represented *by you* or a *member* assigned to be your group representative. Let us *take an* active part *in* these important meetings to uphold *OUR—*

**UNITY IN FELLOWSHIP**  
 Mike F., Moderator Elvira A., Secretary

**CENTRAL COMMITTEE**

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To maintain standards through the sponsoring of a Hospital Committee and such other committees as are necessary to carry on this work.

To serve as a clearing house for ideas.

The **OBJECT** of the Central Committee is **SERVICE**.

**MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE**

**APRIL 3, 1990**

ST. MALACHI'S CENTER

8:00 p.m.

The meeting was opened by Moderator, Mike F., leading members present in the Serenity Prayer. Vice Moderator, James P., read the purpose of the Central Committee and the Twelve Traditions of A.A.. The roll call showed that 34 members were present.

Minutes of the March meeting were read and approved.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Financial Committee:** See below

**Action Committee:** No report.

**Central Bulletin:** Bob McK. asked that all articles for the Central Bulletin be in by the 1st of the month-the May issue will contain articles on the Fifth Step, send in your articles of 150 words or less.

The next meeting for those concerned with the Central Bulletin will be May 1st at 7:00 p.m., one hour before the next Central Committee meeting, here at St Malachi's Center.

**Brecksville:** Don E., gave the time of the meetings at Brecksville and stated all outside visitors are welcome.

**OLD BUSINESS:** After a lengthy discussion the matter of the radio station broadcasting A.A. meetings was tabled indefinitely.

As reported in last months minutes, the new meeting at Grace Hospital was unnamed. The name of the meeting is: Monday Nite Hope.

**NEW BUSINESS:** It was brought before the Committee that a number of A.A. groups are breaking the Sixth Tradition in financing an outside enterprise, it was turned over to the Action Committee.

There being no further business, the meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Central Committee Financial Report			March 1990
BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD			\$976.16
Sale of Literature-Who Me, Mis- understandings & Four Absolutes		2,235.64	
Rent for 3/6/90 Meeting	25.00		
Bank Service Charge	6.94		
Check Order	32.60		
Printing of 4,013 Four Absolutes & 4,950 Who Me	973.90	(1,038.44)	\$1,197.20
<b>NEW BALANCE</b>			<b>\$2,173.36</b>

Central Bulletin Financial Report			March 1990
BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD			\$594.68
Total Deposits		252.00	
Mailing of February Central Bulletin	59.22		
Mailing of March Central Bulletin	55.61		
Printing of Central Bulletin	201.00	(315.83)	(63.83)
<b>NEW BALANCE</b>			<b>\$530.85</b>



## HOW TO NURSE YOUR DEPRESSIONS

*Depression is high on the list of favorite topics at any discussion meeting. Usually we talk long and loud about how to get out of a depression. But R.D. from Indian Rocks Beach, Florida-writing in the November, 1971 "Grapevine"—had a different point of view:*

During my five years in A.A., I've noticed a steady dwindling in the number and intensity and duration of my **depressions**. I've welcomed this slow fading, and so have my friends. The surprising thing about depressions is that when they happen alcoholics often tend to nurse them to keep them alive. I know I did. If I continue to stay sober-and I hope to, with **A.A.'s** help-the day may come when I'm almost completely free of these mental binges. So, before I forget the many tricks of how to care for and feed a depression, I'd like to list some of them, just for the record. If anyone out there wants to keep a depression going, just try these helpful hints. Or, if you'd like to snap out of it, **try the opposite** of what follows:

1. Just **sit there**. Inaction prolongs a depression by **preventing** you from thinking about anything except yourself. It permits you to concentrate on your inadequacies, past failures, and lack of friends, on the injustices done to you, and on the general shabbiness of life.
2. **Avoid A.A. Meetings**. By eliminating attendance at A.A. meetings you will reduce your chances of running in to anyone who might understand your depression, listen to you, ask for your help, or kick you in the pants. You will also avoid hearing any A.A. Slogans, or advice that could help you get rid of your depression.
3. **Do not telephone fellow A.A. members**. Phone conversations are often fatal to depressions. They permit you to pour your feelings into the mouthpiece, and to receive the other person's feelings through the earpiece. This is known as a healthy exchange of ideas. Such tradeoffs play havoc with even the strongest depression.
4. **Do not pray**. The act of praying is an admission of at least a small degree of humility and willingness to accept the help of a higher power. Such flexibility and open-mindedness are the mortal enemies of a depression, and usually destroy it.
5. **Run away by yourself**. Jump into your car and drive to an isolated area where no one knows you or expects you to act like an adult. Don't tell your spouse or your friends where you are going or even that you're leaving. This will cause them to worry, thus adding to

your guilt, and length of your depression. I especially recommend November trips to Ocean City, New Jersey—the scene of my finest depressions. All that cold wind and deserted beach, wonderful!

6. **Think about drinking**. Do not actually drink, because this could kill you, or at least bring you into contact with the human race. Either way, your depression would come to an end, and this is not what you want; however, thinking about drinking, and how much fun you used to have, will cause you further gloom, and thus pump new morbidity into your depression.
  7. **Miss a couple of meals**. Hunger is to depression as fertilizer is to a weed—makes it thrive and blossom. While you're starving, steer clear of hot showers, a fresh change of clothing, a walk in the spring air or anything else that might lift your spirits. If you're a man, go an extra day without shaving. If you're a woman, let your hair get dirty. With depressions, every little bit of grime and misery helps.
  8. **Postpone making apologies or other forms of amends**. Many depressions stem from a guilty conscience. If you start running around patching things up with people, you're likely to blow your depression sky high. So be careful. Just keep reminding yourself what a louse the other guy is, and how much he deserved what you did to him.
  9. **Avoid reading the Big Book, the 12 & 12, or any other writings that might dispel your "stinking thinking"!** Instead, buy a newspaper and bone up on Vietnam, the drug scene, pollution and other jollies.
  - 10 **Above all, don't permit any chinks in your armor**. Examples: smiling or saying hello to people, giving another motorist the right of way, sending a birthday card to your invalid aunt, being pleasant to your secretary, or surrendering your subway seat to any woman less than 8 months pregnant. Acts of kindness and simple decency can spell curtains for your depression.
- To sum up:** Avoid A.A. meetings, A.A. people, A.A. literature. Stay alone, hungry and uncomfortable. Don't pray. Think about booze. And be as mean and petty as you can. With the help of these simple measures, you can stretch a **one-day** depression into a week-long dry drunk. So there you are, my former world, and welcome to it!  
*transcribed from the A.A. Grapevine Classic Tape #3, and printed with their permission.*

## GROUP ANNIVERSARIES

To share your group's celebration with other members of our fellowship, send a note with time, date and special instructions 60 **days** prior to the event:

**No Anniversary notices were sent in.**

### But for the Grace of God. . .

The Warrensville Crossroads Group is asking for your support to help them carry the message to inmates at the Cleveland House of Correction. While the group itself is fully self-supporting, they need literature, or monies to purchase literature, to best carry our message to the still-suffering alcoholic. The inmates are not allowed to have money, therefore they cannot purchase Big Books or other basic recovery materials themselves.

Carrying the message to these alcoholics is not just the Warrensville Crossroads Group's responsibility, but rather the responsibility of all the groups. The Central Office has a fund for purchase of literature for this purpose. Any group or individual that wishes to help may send a donation earmarked for correctional facilities to the Central Office.

Your presence is also welcome. Here's one individual's experience attending these meetings:

"Why should we attend workhouse meetings? Attending the Thursday evening group for several months helped me grow in several ways. To keep it (sobriety), we must give it away. I felt thankful that I was able to enjoy the serenity my higher power and A.A. had given me. What a gift! I gave out my home phone number many times. Three ex-inmates have called me. The last to call found my name and phone number in the Big Book that he was given. He entered the program and is still sober today!"

"Why attend workhouse meetings? The answer comes from within!"

Three groups meet at the Cleveland House of Correction:

**Shining Bright**, Monday, 7:00 pm, women only

**Workhouse Monday**, Monday, 7:00 pm men only

**Warrensville Crossroads**, Thursday, 7:30 pm, men only

All three are closed meetings. Enter off Harvard just east of Northfield. Go to the far back building with a large parking lot in front. For further information contact the Central Office at 241-7387.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## I am responsible. . .

**When anyone, anywhere,  
reaches out for help, I want  
the hand of A.A. always to be there.  
And for that, I am responsible.**

A.A.®

## Step 6: Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

Here we go again, why must we keep surrendering and take further action? What do you mean "Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character"? These defects have been with us all our lives! Do you mean that we have to show willingness again? On page 76 of the Big Book it explains to us (simply) about this willingness. Keep in mind that we are known for making mountains out of mole hills. Who me? Follow directions? Oh well! Why must we keep procrastinating? Here we go again...

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I was at the beginning of step 4, and reading this step. It scared me stiff! Fear, naturally was a prominent four-letter word in my eventual 4th step. "Entirely" and "all" • what demanding words! Anyway, without defects of character, would I have any character at all? How could I ever do this step?

The answer was to handle the step at hand. When I finished my fifth step, and saw these defects for what they really were—impediments to my growth—then, and only then, was I **entirely** ready to have them **all** taken away.

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To deal with "defects of character"; we must consider each word separately. No one is disturbed by the normal "character" of an infant: self-centeredness, egotism, temper tantrums, demanding instant gratification (pride, anger, etc. develop later in childhood). If such characteristics still dominate and typify our lives at 15, 30, or 50, then the excesses of these normal characteristics have become **defects** of character. Some pride, anger, sexuality, etc. are absolutely necessary, but too much of any of them constitute a measure of the defectiveness of that characteristic.

Most alcoholics have come to rely on their defects of character as defense mechanisms against dealing realistically and effectively with the realities of life. 'Were entirely ready..!' implies (**requires**) complete willingness to have faith in God, and to **trust** him to guide and protect you as you start your own sober life in the real world, without these hurtful and self-defeating defense mechanisms.

The sixth step is simply an idealistic statement of our complete willingness to trust in God, rather than our own self-will as we progress in sobriety. As with all the "growth steps" it is a measure of our willingness and faith.

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**Question:** How many Higher Powers does it take to change a light bulb?

**Answer:** It only takes one; however, the light bulb must be entirely ready to **be** changed!

## YOUNG PEOPLE

*Young*, as the Young People in A.A. groups define it, is a state of mind rather than a state of body. All A.A. members who are young at heart and have room for growth are welcome at their affairs. One of the members reported on ICYPAA:

"Thank you Cleveland!

"Twenty-five A.A. members traveled by car to Montreal, Canada for the 34th International Conference of Young People in A.A. (ICYPAA) this last April. As you have probably heard, Cleveland has a committee to bring the conference here for the first time in twenty years.

"Although we were not awarded this conference for 1991 (San Francisco, which had been trying for several years, got the bid), all of your continued support and comments have given us the drive to continue the bid for the following year.

"Our experience in Montreal can barely be described in words. Our hearts were so full on our return that we had no choice but to continue our efforts to bring it home for all of us here in Cleveland.

"At this point our committee consists of about 20 members, ranging in age from 16-37 and in sobriety from 4 months to 10 years. If you'd like to get active, our meetings are held at Stella Maris on the first and third Sundays of each month at 5:00 pm.

"For further information:

Write: ICYPAA	or call:
P.O. Box 14413	Dave C., 861-5111 or
Cleveland, OH 44114	Regis S., 371-0823

"Again, thank you for all your support last year and we look forward to seeing many of you at our upcoming round-ups, alkathons, roller parties, etc.

"Love ya, lots & lots & lots,

The ICYPAA Bid Committee

The International Convention of all of A.A., which is held every five years, was last here in 1950 and is not coming back! Cleveland simply cannot accommodate the 50,000 people who attend it. If we are to have a major gathering here, it will be a group such as ICYPAA.

If you ask our old-timers, you will find that a lot of them are, or were, avid attendees of our various conferences and conventions. They claim that it's educational, it's exciting, it's fellowship • that it gives us an opportunity to share our experience, strength, and hope beyond our immediate neighborhoods.

Congratulations to the ICYPAA bid committee for their major effort to bring a large conference here where Clevelanders can more easily afford to attend it.

## BACK TO BASICS

In my third year of sobriety I find myself in somewhat of a complacent space. From previous experience of being in this mode of thought, I know that the only way to get myself out of the muck of feeling isolated, stuck, and confused is to return to the basic principles of this program...Don't drink, go to meetings, pray and live just one day at a time. Recognizing that recovery and life is a process and not an event, I have learned that going back to what works is not a step backwards but simply a way for me to rebuild the foundation to deal with my current issues. Getting caught in the mindless trap of analyzing everything only takes me further away from obtaining acceptance and peace of mind. The healthier option in my recovery has always been to be willing and open to new ideas and suggestions from people who struggle with the same disease that I do. That, however, becomes difficult to do if I'm not present to hear and see what others have to offer. Spending time with others in recovery is essential to getting me unstuck. It worked when I first got sober so there is no logical reason to think that it still isn't the solution to my current situation. It all boils down to a daily commitment, not a promise, because God knows I've made plenty of those to no avail. Commitment, however, is something different...it's the difference between going through the motions and earnestly seeking to do God's will one day at a time. Commitment, to me, marks the distinction between being sober and really living in sobriety in all aspects of my life. The answer suddenly becomes obvious...let go and let God.

★★★★★

## TRADITIONS CHECKLIST

*These questions were originally published in the A.A. Grapevine.*

Tradition Six: An A.A. group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.

1. Should my fellow group members and I go out to raise money to endow several A.A. beds in our local hospital?
2. Is it good for a group to lease a small building?
3. Are all the officers and members of our local club for AA's familiar with "Guidelines on Clubs" (which is available free from GSO)?
4. Should the secretary of our group serve on the mayor's committee on alcoholism.
5. Some alcoholics will stay around A.A. only if we have a TV and card room. If this is what is required to carry the message to them, should we have these facilities.

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## CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING ST. MALACHI CENTER

2416 Superior Viaduct • 8:00 p.m. Tuesday, June 5, 1990

**PLEASE ATTEND**

Your group may be represented by you or a member assigned to be your group representative. Let us take an active part in these important meetings to uphold our—

**UNITY IN FELLOWSHIP**

Mike F., Moderator

Elvira A., Secretary

Published monthly by the Cleveland Central Committee of A.A., a non-profit fellowship dedicated to service. Address all letters to Central Bulletin, 940 Rockefeller Building, 614 Superior Avenue, N.W., Cleveland, Ohio 44113. District Office (216) 241-7387  
Harry D., Founder and Editor 18924968

## CENTRAL COMMITTEE

### PURPOSE

Because better understanding is the key to Friendship;  
Because the public act of any group or individual involves our entire Fellowship;  
Because we must continually take inventory of ourselves as individuals and as groups;

### The A.A. Central Committee has these purposes:

To bring together representatives of all groups for discussions of policy and practice; to create high standards; to guard against exploitation or commercialization; to insure our humility as groups and individuals.  
To protect unity of thought and purpose through the Central Bulletin, the Area-wide Meetings, and such other activities as seem consistent.  
To maintain standards through the sponsoring of a Hospital Committee and such other committees as are necessary to carry on this work.  
To serve as a clearing house for ideas.  
The **OBJECT** of the Central Committee is **SERVICE**.

## MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

May 1, 1990

ST. MALACHI'S CENTER

8:00 p.m. —

The meeting was opened by Moderator, Mike F., leading members present in the Serenity Prayer. Vice Moderator, James P., read the purpose of the Central Committee and the Twelve Traditions of A.A. The roll call showed that 28 members were present.

Minutes of the April meeting were read and approved.

### COMMITTEE REPORTS:

**Financial Committee:** Due to staff vacations, this month's financial report was not ready at this time.

**Action Committee:** John C. reported that the group that allegedly made donations to an outside enterprise, in violation of the Sixth Tradition, denied having done so.

**Central Bulletin:** Bob McK. reported that he and Mike were available to meet with anyone who wished to discuss the newsletter, one hour before this meeting, and would continue doing this every other month, as has been the practice. The next meeting will be July 3rd. at 6:00 pm. We are seeking articles (50-150 words) on the steps. Step 7 articles should be sent so as to be received by June 1st.

**Hospital Committee:** No Reports. (Don E. who normally reports on Brecksville has been hospitalized due to a heart condition.)

**OLD BUSINESS:** None.

**NEW BUSINESS:** New groups announced and sanctioned were:

Wednesday Summit Smokeless Group

**Lakewood** United Methodist Church

15700 Detroit Avenue

Wednesday, 10:00 am, open, mixed, non-smoking

Falls Friday Discussion

Falls Community Church

7853 Columbia Road

Friday, closed, mixed

Brunswick Men's

12-Step Recovery Club

1480 Pearl Road

Wednesday, 8:00 pm, open, mens

Altered Attitudes

**Westlake** Christian Church

25800 Hilliard Road

Saturday, 8:00 pm, open, mixed

A representative of AGAPE weekend asked to know what the objections were to the weekend. Claude G. thanked him for coming to meet with us about it and explained that our objection was not to the weekend per se, but rather to the use of the A.A. registered symbol on the flyers of a conference that did not have General Service approval.

John B. announced that our delegate is at the General Service Conference in New York, and will have a lot to tell us at the General Service meeting in Mantua on Sunday May. 20th.

Mike F. related that he's researching the history of the Central Committee.

There being no further business, the meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.





## A MEMBER REFLECTS ON THE SEVENTH TRADITION

For each individual member, the full scope of A.A.'s Seventh Tradition often hits home as the consequence of seemingly unrelated happenings. Writing to the General Service Office, Arthur G., manager of the Emerald Valley Intergroup in Eugene, Oregon, relates how he came to fully appreciate A.A. co-founder Bill W.'s oft-repeated observation that "there is a place in the Fellowship where spirituality and money can mix. . . in the hat!"

Several years ago, Arthur flew to Chicago. He had been there only once before - January 23, 1953, when he had what he hopes was his last drink - and his emotions were in high drive. "The first thing I did," he says, "was to visit the hotel lobby where I had caused such a ruckus. I stood there a moment, remembering, whispered a quiet Thank you, God," and left!"

Still keyed up, Arthur went on to the Museum of Art. Approaching the ticket booth, he saw a sign that read, "Adults, \$4.50," and realized that, in his excitement, he had left his wallet in the rental car he was driving.

Explaining his situation to the admissions person, he asked, "May I send a check?" She smiled, asking, "How much money do you have?" He carefully placed a nickel, a dime and two pennies on the counter. "The women briskly picked up a penny and pushed the remaining 16 cents back to me," Arthur recounts, "and I'll never forget what she said: You see, you don't have to pay \$4.50, but **we want everyone to know that we are worth something!**" Then she handed me a ticket."

This experience took on added meaning recently, in an unexpected way, at the adolescent lock-up care unit where Arthur leads some of the closed weekly meetings, and where he has sponsored four young clients aged 11 to 16.

One evening he was with them at a meeting, re-

joining in their year-long sobriety in A.A., when it came time to pass the basket. "My four miracles were sitting by themselves in the back row," he relates, "I turned to give them the basket and, almost in rhythm, they all waved it off. I was crushed.

"After the meeting, I gathered them around me. 'Don't you like A.A.!' I asked. 'We love it,' they chorused. Then why didn't you put something in the basket?' I persisted. 'We don't have a dollar,' they replied. I pointed to the sodas they were sipping and said gently, You don't have to put in a dollar, but **don't you think you might put in something?**"

"Nothing more was said and a week went by. Eager to make my point, I arrived at the next meeting with four quarters - but before I could hand over the change, my little spousees smilingly thrust out hands full of dimes, nickels and pennies. They've been 'putting in something' ever since!"

Looking back, Arthur says, "My lessons are many and well-learned. It seems to me that self-support means putting something, anything, in the basket. It sets a pattern for the newcomers, who often don't know that self-support is a vital part of our A.A. heritage; that just as every recovering alcoholic needs emotional support and love, A.A. itself needs to be financially self-supporting through its own contributions!"

"Of course," he adds, "the person who can't give anything is always welcomed and helped at A.A. meetings. But, as the admissions person at the art museum said, we want everyone to know that we **are worth something**. As past experience has shown, this attitude results in added respect for the Fellowship - and that, in turn, can attract more suffering alcoholics to our program of recovery!"

Reprinted from Box 459, April/May 1990,  
with permission

## GROUP ANNIVERSARIES

To share your group's celebration with other members of our fellowship, send a note with time, date and special instructions 60 **days** prior to the event:

**No Anniversary notices were sent in.**

## IN MEMORIAM

Our deepest sympathy to the family and friends of these deceased members of our fellowship:

**John Whitlow** • 12 year member of the Straight Ahead Group, pasased away May 20, 1990

## THINGS WE CANNOT CHANGE

## OCYPAA

On July 26-28 the 11th annual Ohio Conference of Young People in Alcoholics Anonymous, (OYPAA) will take place at the Middleburg Heights Holiday Inn. The OYPAA would like to thank all of you for supporting our events and remind you to register for the conference. If you need room information, please call the Holiday Inn at (216) **243-4040**. For conference information call: Jack H. at (216) 251-0761, Alan W. at (216) **256-0130**, Kevin R. at (216) 247-6526 or Jim W at (216) 333-7303. We are expecting a large turnout from around Ohio and the surrounding states, so come and experience this shared sobriety.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## The John Wayne Syndrome

When I was a pm-teen and teenager, I was conditioned by my parents, my school, my church, but mostly by the movies. Each Saturday we went to the movies for ten cents. We were sent to the movies for the Saturday matinee. It was five hours of conditioning that alcohol meant fun and good times. Alcohol was the symbol of success. Everybody who was rich and successful drank fancy drinks from elegant Nite Clubs and Lounges. Every big business executive had a built-in bar- every mansion also. Everybody constantly drank alcohol: the symbol of having arrived.

There were the hard drinking pictures with Errol Flynn. The sophisticated pictures with Joan Crawford sipping martinis. But the biggest influence of all was John Wayne and all the John Wayne cowboy moving picture shows.

John Wayne the lonesome cowboy rides out from the west. He hits town and heads for the bar. The bartender sets up a full bottle of whiskey and a glass. John Wayne stands alone, drinks alone at the bar. The lonesome cowboy!! Don't need nobody or nothing. He gets into a fistfight as he kills the bottle • one drink at a time. In the morning he goes to the gunfight at the OK corral. He kills his opponent. Then he must leave town. He shakes hands with his girl • kisses his horse-and rides into the sunset!! Song: "I'm just a lonesome cowboy from the western range. . ."

Today I am in A.A. I have learned that alcohol does not bring me success, but failure. Not happiness but misery, I don't need alcohol anymore. I need you and other **A.A.'s** • plus the Grace of God • to keep me sober and in serenity.

an Ann Arbor, Michigan member

## Step 7: Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

In Step 6, we dealt with becoming "entirely ready to venture forth into a new and sober life without the crippling dependence, not only on alcohol, but the growth-inhibiting reliance on the excesses (defects) of otherwise normal human characteristics.

Some members seem not to notice, while others are disturbed by, the fact that Step 7 seems not to deal with defects of character, but with the removal of our "shortcomings"! Once we understand the meaning of "defects of character" in Step 6, then Step 7 becomes quite simple. The second sentence in the seventh step prayer (Big Book, page 76, paragraph 2) is quite specific. In speaking directly to God, you say, "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!** Thus a shortcoming is simply those excesses of normal characteristics which interfere with your new way of life as a **good A.A. member**. As with other growth steps, it is simply a measure of our willingness and faith in A.A. and God.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Isn't it enough that I prayed for willingness in Step 6. Why do you want me to do the 7th step prayer and rid myself of defects of character that might stand in the way of you and others? What do you expect next, **A MIRACLE?** I sure can use some strength to "Pass it on". Oh well, here we go again. Why must we keep surrendering with further action? Faith without works is dead.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## TRADITIONS CHECKLIST

*These questions were originally published in the A.A. Grapevine in conjunction with a series on the Twelve Traditions that began in November 1969 and ran through September 1971. While they were originally intended primarily for individual use, many A.A. groups have since used them as a basis for wider discussion.*

**Tradition Seven: Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.**

1. Honestly now, do I do all I can to help A.A. (my group, my central office, my **GSO**) remain self-supporting? Could I put a little more in the basket on behalf of the new guy who can't afford it **yet?** How generous was I when tanked in the bar room.
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 A.A. groups in hospitals and prisons?
4. Is it more important to get a big A.A. collection from a few people, or a smaller collection in which more members participate?
5. Is a group's treasurer's report unimportant A.A. 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?

From the Editors

## THE PRICE OF POTATOES

'What's that got to do with the price of potatoes!': my grandfather often asked. What he meant was how is what you are saying relevant or important. I'll mention how the price of potatoes is relevant to the seventh tradition in a moment. First let me write about basket contributions.

A man I'm currently sponsoring first "visited" A.A. in 1961. He said that some people, then, put a quarter in the basket, many others 50 cents, and a few "high rollers" a dollar. (usually with a bit of a flourish). By 1975, most folks were putting in a full dollar. Still today, the normal basket contribution remains a dollar, but today's dollar buys few potatoes.

For that same high roller to put the equivalent of that 1961 dollar in the basket, he now needs to toss in \$4.27. For most of us to match the one-dollar donations of most 1975 A.A. members, we need to put \$2.31 in the hat today. That's what's happened to the price of potatoes, as well as the price of most other items.

When we get enough in our baskets, we have enough to pay our landlords a fair rental, keep our literature racks stocked, and support our vital services - in other words, to be **fully self-supporting through our own contributions.**

Having recently realized what inflation has done to my dollar donation, I've often given more. Is anyone willing to join me?

(Source: Consumer Price Index, CPI-U, "all items")

Bob



## NE OHIO GENEROSITY

Last year Northeast Ohio groups gave nearly \$30,000 to General Service. This works out to \$1.29 for every A.A. member in our area. This is an increase of 15 cents (13%) over last year. This year 33.2% of our groups participated - versus 31.1% last year. We seem to be making progress towards full participation. That's good news.

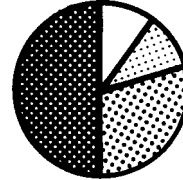
The bad news is that it isn't enough. GSO spent **\$4,914,082** serving groups last year, but only received **\$4,059,111** from them. This is a shortfall of **\$859,971** in "group services"! To overcome this, they would have needed an additional 88 cents per person.

The average donation throughout GSO is \$3.63 per capita, making NE Ohio's average donation of \$1.29 seem paltry by comparison. NE Ohio ranks **91st** among the 91 U.S. and Canada areas in per capita donations to GSO.

One reason for this is that we are **91st** also in the percentage

of groups contributing anything at all to GSO -the average is 56.2% vs. our 32.2%. I know that one reason for this is that it's somewhat hard to find out where to send it.

The primary suggested plan for group contributions has changed. Instead of the 60-30-10 plan (which last appeared in the May 1987 issue of the Central Bulletin) the primary plan (as suggested by the General Service Conference in the pamphlet "Self-Supporting Through our own Contributions '9 is now the 50-30-10-10 plan. It works like this:



- 50% to central office
- 30% to G.S.O.
- 10% to area committee
- 10% to district

"First take care of basic group expenses (rent, refreshments, A.A. literature and a prudent reserve "emergency fund.") A group I attend figured that their worst emergency would be replacing the coffee pot and set their reserve accordingly.

A Cleveland area group could then take the remainder and send one-half (50%) to:

Cleveland District Office  
940 Rockefeller Building  
614 Superior Avenue, N.W.  
Cleveland, Ohio 44113

30% to:

General Fund  
General Service Office  
PO. Box 459, Grand Central Station  
New York, NY 10163

10% to:

Northeast Ohio General Service  
**c/o Al J., Treasurer**  
21795 North Lane  
**Oakwood Village, Ohio 44146**

and the final 10% to:

your District Committee Member (DCM)  
If you don't know how to reach your DCM, contact:  
Mel R.  
440 Richmond Park #301C  
Richmond heights, Ohio 44143  
Home: (216) 461-1387

Dispensing group funds is, of course, up to each individual group's conscience; however, when I put money in an A.A. basket I like to think that I'm supporting A.A. activities here and worldwide.

Bob

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**IT WILL HELP YOU AND IT WILL HELP US**



Published monthly by the Cleveland Central Committee of A.A., a non-profit fellowship dedicated to service. Address all letters to Central Bulletin, 940 Rockefeller Building, 614 Superior Avenue, N.W., Cleveland, Ohio 44113. District Office (216) 241-7387  
 Harry D., Founder and Editor 18924968

**CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
 ST. MALACHI CENTER**

2416 Superior viaduct • 8:00 p.m. Tuesday, July 3, 1990

**PLEASE ATTEND**

Your group may be represented by you or a member assigned to be your group representative. *Let us take an active part in these important meetings to **uphold** our—*

**UNITY IN FELLOWSHIP**

Mike F., Moderator

Elvira A., Secretary

**CENTRAL COMMITTEE**

**PURPOSE**

Because better understanding is the key to Friendship;  
 Because the public act of any group or individual involves our entire Fellowship;  
 Because we must continually take inventory of ourselves as individuals and as groups;

**The A.A. Central Committee has these purposes:**

To bring together representatives of all groups for discussions of policy and practice; to create high standards; to guard against exploitation or commercialization; to insure our humility as groups and individuals.

To protect unity of thought and purpose through the Central Bulletin, the Area-wide Meetings, and such other activities as seem consistent.

To maintain standards through the sponsoring of a Hospital Committee and such other committees as are necessary to carry on this work.

To serve as a clearing house for ideas.

The **OBJECT** of the Central Committee is **SERVICE**.

**MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE**

**June 5 1990**

ST. MALACHI'S CENTER

8:00 p.m.

The meeting was opened by Moderator, Mike F., leading members present in the Serenity Prayer. Vice Moderator, James P., read the purpose of the Central Committee and the Twelve Traditions of A.A. The roll call showed that 52 members were present.

Minutes of the May meeting were read and approved. Financial report: see below.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Action Committee:** No report.

**Central Bulletin:** Bob **McK.**, there will be a Central Bulletin meeting one hour before the regular meeting for anyone wishing to discuss the Bulletin. We are seeking articles on the steps or any A.A. topic you want to write about, next month being the 7th month we are going to hit the 7th Tradition: Every A.A. group ought to be fully self supporting declining outside contributions.

**Rosary Hall:** Glenn R., reported daytime volunteers and sponsors are needed at Rosary also the Monday A.A. meeting needs outside support.

**OLD BUSINESS:** None.

**NEW BUSINESS:** Two new groups were announced: Lakewood Young People Big Book, 17513 Detroit, Lakewood, Ohio, more information needed. S.O.B.E.R. Lead & Discussion, Southgate Fellowship Room, 20571 Southgate Park Blvd., Maple Heights, Ohio, Friday 10:30 a.m. The Mustard Seed groups have moved to: Spectrum Entertainment Center, 17100 Miles, Cleveland, Ohio—days and time are the same.

The Monday Get Straight Group has been disbanded. The Bellaire Garden group has been reestablished, and the disbanded Iceburg group is now the Hope Is Found Here group. After a lengthy discussion about the article in last months Central Bulletin, "But for the Grace of Cod"; a motion was made and carried that, no solicitation for money be published in the Central Bulletin for a specific, identified, institution, group or facility or operations, only in a general way such as "the workhouse could use contributions of Big Books", not a facility wants money to buy Big Books.

**N.E. Ohio General Service:** Delegate, Mary B., invited all to the General Service Open House, Sunday June 24, 1990 at 2:00 p.m. also the 34th annual Ohio State Conference in August.

38 Speakers were supplied by the District **Offic** to Non A.A. Groups for months of January thru May 1990.

There **being** no further business, the meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Central Committee Financial Report		May 1990	Central Bulletin Financial Report		May 1990
BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD		\$2,169.07	BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD		\$448
Rent for 4/3/90 Meeting	\$25.00		Total Deposits	237.00	
Rent for 5/1/90 Meeting	25.00	(50.00)	Mailing of May		
NEW BALANCE		\$2,119.07	Central Bulletin	58.13	
			Printing of May Central Bulletin	201.00	(259.13)
			NEW BALANCE		\$426.22



What is the function of an intergroup/central office? Why were these established? The answers to such questions can be partially resolved by the Declaration of Responsibility adopted at the International Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous in 1965: "I am responsible. When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there. And for that: I am responsible."

Many years prior to the adoption of this declaration, alcoholics in separate, autonomous AA groups saw a need for a central or intergroup organization to coordinate the activities of AA groups scattered throughout the city. If some "most important person" needed AA, how could they reach it? A central office with a telephone fulfilled that need. Too, within the stated aims of the Fellowship, a central/intergroup office could serve as a clearinghouse of information for functions of common interest to all alcoholics, such as: time and location of meetings, types of meetings, accessibility, phone numbers, etc.

What goes into setting up an intergroup/central office? Several things are necessary: a telephone, office space, some person (preferably with a sense of humor) to answer the telephone, and financial backing. This presupposes the existence of enough AA groups that want or need such an office — and therefore can be cajoled, shamed, or wheedled into supporting it. Never mind the details: desks, chairs, lamps supplies, calendars, and ashtrays can come later.

In order to get a telephone installed, compliance with the demands of the local telephone company is necessary, such as a deposit and some assurance of financial responsibility. So you have to find some responsible alcoholics; they not only have to have money, but must also be willing to part with some of it.

The experience of others is also most appreciated when formally organizing your central office. Groups will consult the General Service Office in New York and also

secure copies of bylaws and constitutions from other cities which already have established central offices. These serve as guidelines for a local organizational structure.

Office space? You need to decide on the amount of rent you can afford in relationship to your needs, and then try to make the office as accessible as you can to all the groups involved. This necessitates compromise.

Staffing? Will you get a volunteer to answer the telephones from nine to five, Monday through Friday? Not likely. A salaried person needs to be hired to answer the telephones. Reluctance to taking on such a responsibility can be overcome, especially when you tell them that AA is just teeming with volunteers who will be only too glad to help answer the telephones and go on twelfth-step calls at a drop of a hat. A sense of humor is required, especially when the staff person finds that AA volunteers can create all sorts of "legitimate" excuses when presented with an opportunity to do service work.

It is the central office's responsibility to make sure the telephones are answered, so a trusted servant has to suggest, wheedle, and finally, if necessary, take up the cudgel to convince a volunteer alky that what they wanted to do all along for the good of their program was to answer the telephones that particular evening. On the other hand, the nightwatch volunteers rely upon the twelfth-step volunteers to respond to any calls for help. Sometimes the nightwatch personnel get dejected because their potential twelfth-stepper is in the hot tub and cannot be disturbed, or is hiccupping and decidedly not in the program at the present time, or is babysitting and cannot make a call, or ate too much supper that evening, etc., etc. Thus, there is a selfevident need to continually revise the twelfth-step call list.

As your intergroup expands, the groups might decide that they want to stock the central office with literature. A question arises: Shall they just carry Conference-approved literature? But some groups insist upon cigarette lighters, sobriety chips, the "Twenty-Four Hours a Day" meditation book published by Hazelden, and (lately) bumper stickers. This opens the door to other non-Conference-approved literature, and squabbling ensues. To lay down the guidelines: Conference-approved literature is just that-AA literature that has gone through the General Service Conference Structure.

*(continued on next page)*

## GROUP ANNIVERSARIES

To share your group's celebration with other members of our fellowship, send a note with time, date and special instructions 60 **days** prior to the event:

### Harbor light Friends of Detox

Will be celebrating the Five Year Anniversary  
September 19th, 1990 at 7:00 p.m.

Lead: Ed S.

## AA, May We Help You?

(continued from first page)

(Not all literature developed by the GSO is Conference-approved and the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous, was not Conference approved in 1939, since no Conference even existed then.) But the term "Conference-approved-literature" does not imply that the Conference disapproves of all material published by other sources on AA and alcoholism. For example, central office and intergroups print pamphlets, booklets and newsletters that qualify as 'AA literature!' Still, some alkies sniff the air with disdain when such "literature" is mentioned. But once the guidelines are accepted, groups can go on to settle more important questions: i.e., how much should the central office charge for AA material? Is it too odious to make a profit off of alcoholics? Isn't this akin to selling your birthright for a mess of pottage? Should alcoholics pay a "sin tax" and be charged more for non-Conference-approved material? Some gadflies point out that if the groups supported their central office, the question of profits would never arise, but nobody listens to them. So the inevitable happens; the central office purchases a cash register, hires a larger staff and, in order to be financially self-supporting, buys cheap and sells dear.

Despite all the questions and problems that arise with the establishment of central offices, they still continue to fulfill the most essential function of answering the calls for help and steering **newcomers** to meetings. Intergroups furnish alcoholics a chance to do twelfth-step work and, within the alcoholics' own guidelines for fair play — the Twelve Traditions — continue to try to improve their services necessary to meet the Declaration of Responsibility.

Anonymous, Houston TX.

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## Step Eight: Make a list of all persons we had harmed, and become willing to make amends to them all.

There are four key words that face us in this step — list, harmed, *willing* and amends. We should already have such a list — we made it when we took inventory. Rereading **chapters V and VI** may disclose to us additional names for our list. Webster defines harm as "physical or **moral** injury; **hurt; damage!**" Examining our past, a clever conscience may reveal persons whom we harmed, but previously we thought theirs was deserved, that they hurt us far more than we harmed them. To quote briefly from page 67, 'The inventory was **ours, not the other man's!**

As we consider steps eight and nine, on page 76, note the reference to **willingness**. "**If we haven't the will to do this** (repair the damage done in the past) we **ask** (pray) **for it until it comes.**" Do not, however, use this statement as an excuse to postpone making amends indefinitely.

**Amends** may include a range of action from a simple apology to financial restitution. Saying "I'm sorry will not erase a debt, pardon a crime, or relieve others of the crippling effects of neurotic or psychotic behavior to which we have contributed heavily. This latter situation can sometimes be helped only by our continuing to live in such a way as to be a positive power of example of spiritual living.

Quoting again from page 83... There may be some wrongs we can never fully right. . . If we are painstaking about this phase of our development, we will be amazed before we are halfway through. We are going to know a new freedom . . . Thus, we should begin to enjoy the benefits of the twelve promises at this point in our growth.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Why must we keep surrendering and take further action? What is this step **8?** Another tricky two-patter? I already have a list from step 4. (Gotcha) Do you really expect me to become willing to make amends to people who caused me more harm than I caused them? What do you expect me to do? Live and Let Live? I'll have to pray on this one! Faith without works is dead!

## Third AA Step . . .

Made a decision to turn our will over to the care of God as WE understood Him . . .

Many newtimers have said to me: "I cannot get the God part of the Program!" . . . The **oldtime** saying is "Fake It Until You Make It" . . . The typical alkie coming into the Program has rejected everything: his God, his family, his job, and finally himself/herself. AA restores faith and hope!! . . . GTT . . . Give Time Time!!

There are those who take God's will literally . . . I translate it simply to mean I am not God!! . . . Stop playing God . . . Stop trying to run the show . . . I cannot control people, place, or things!! . . . I used to be very intolerant of those who thought God was talking to them: God was directing them: God was controlling their lives . . . I now go by the AA saying: "Live and Let Live!" If it works for them, it is OK!!

I was brought up with the teachings of the Old Testament and the New Testament teachings . . . The Old Testament of the Ten Commandments. Thou Shalt Not, Thou Shalt Not, etc... A punishing and **judging** God . . . And the New Testament teachings of Love and Forgiveness . . . The teachings of rewards for good deeds and good behavior with Heaven as the final payoff . . . or Hell!!

Today I have a God of my understanding . . . He is a spiritual God . . . He is not a punishing God or a God that gives me little rewards . . . The gimme prayers are still with me, I confess. But I have Free Will. I am now sober and I am responsible!!

My God is perfection . . . And I am an imperfect person who can fail . . . And when my body dies, my mind or what some call the Soul will be united with the perfection of God and I will be complete in serenity.

From the District Office

**“How It Works”**

“Rarely have we seen a person fail who has thoroughly followed our path.”

This familiar quotation is very applicable to the workings of the volunteers that come to the Central Office. At the end of July, we will have completed one full year of the weekend volunteer answering service that has been such a huge success and helped so many. It has been an even greater contribution to the fellowship, i.e. the experience of spending a weekend here that results in such elation and the feeling of a Higher Power working is one of those experiences that is indescribable unless you have actually taken part. The fellowship has gained so much from all of you who have generously given up a portion of your weekend and/or holiday to be here to receive a call for help. What is even more rewarding is to observe how that bit of generosity catches on like wildfire, from person to person and group to group. Since our initial trial period of 90 days that began in August of 1989, the phones have been “manned” almost every weekend without solicitation from the office. Groups call in to say, “We want to cover Christmas Day or New Year’s in addition to the weekend. How your gratitude shows, you certainly have not forgotten what holidays were like prior to coming into the fellowship!

You also have not forgotten that the office needs your financial support as well as your volunteering. The 1990 Fund Drive has received pledges to date of \$156,546.06 of which \$92,412.20 has been paid to date. It is this type of generosity that allowed the volunteer answering service to become reality. Without your help, the equipment and services of this office would not be possible.

And that is “How It Works,” by example, caring and sharing, one day at a time, you help make it work. Thanks to all of you for participating and keep up the GOOD WORK!

Shirley H.

**TRADITIONS CHECKLIST**

These questions were originally published in the A.A. Grapevine in conjunction with a series on the Twelve Traditions that began in November 1969 and ran through September 1971. While they were originally intended primarily for individual use, many A.A. groups have since used them as a basis for wider discussion.

**Tradition Eight: Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.**

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 expert 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 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*?

**A.A. Meetings on Computers**

The Compuserve computer network has A.A. discussion meetings each Sunday and Wednesday at 9:30 pm. To attend, “go goodhealth” and enter conference room 2. Compuserve access kits are available through most computer dealers; however, it’s neither free, nor even cheap, to connect to this network.

Computer enthusiasts may also be interested to know that there is a computer bulletin board for A.A. members on the Cleveland FreeNet, a free access, no cost community bulletin board system located at Case Western Reserve University. Called “The Alcoholics Anonymous/Al-Anon SIG” (Special Interest Group), it is one of the wide variety of electronic bulletin boards hosted by the FreeNet. The A.A./Al-Anon boards are moderated by an eleven-year member of A.A. who is also a member of Al-Anon. Two other Al-Anon members assist.

To Access the board via modem, dial (216) 368-3888 and link up with the Cleveland FreeNet. The A.A./Al-Anon SIG is located under the “Community Center” heading (or type “go aa” at the FreeNet prompt.)

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CENTRAL BULLETIN



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Harry D., Founder and Editor 18924968

## CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING ST. MALACHI CENTER

2416 Superior Viaduct • 8:00 p.m. Tuesday, August 7, 1990

PLEASE ATTEND

Your group *may* be represented by you or a member assigned to be your group representative. Let us take *an active part* in these important meetings to uphold *OUR—*

UNITY IN FELLOWSHIP

Mike F., Moderator

Elvira A., Secretary

### CENTRAL COMMITTEE

#### PURPOSE

Because better understanding is the key to Friendship;  
Because the public act of any group or individual involves our entire Fellowship;  
Because we must continually take inventory of ourselves as individuals and as groups;

The A.A. Central Committee has these purposes:

To bring together representatives of all groups for discussions of policy and practice; to create high standards; to guard against exploitation or commercialization; to insure our humility as groups and individuals.

To protect unity of thought and purpose through the Central Bulletin, the Area-wide Meetings, and such other activities as seem consistent.

To maintain standards through the sponsoring of a Hospital Committee and such other committees as are necessary to carry on this work.

To serve as a clearing house for ideas.

The OBJECT of the Central Committee is SERVICE.

### MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

July 3, 1990

ST. MALACHI'S CENTER

8:00 p.m.

The meeting was opened by Moderator, Mike F., leading members present in the Serenity Prayer. Vice Moderator, James P., read the purpose of the Central Committee and the Twelve Traditions of A.A. The roll call showed that 24 members were present, representing 20 groups.

Minutes of the June meeting were read and approved. Financial report: see below.

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Action Committee: No report.

Central Bulletin: Mike B. reported that no one else attended the newsletter committee meeting held just prior to this meeting. He needs articles on Step 9 and/or back-to-basics for the next issue.

Hospital Committee: A Rosary Hall representative suggested that outside visitors should call before coming, to assure that the patients will be available.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS: New groups announced and sanctioned were:

Faith, Hope, and Love  
Cleveland Medical Center

2475 Martin Luther King Drive  
Tuesday, 8:15 pm, open discussion

Last Call  
Club 24  
1635 Lee Road, Cleveland Hts.,  
Sunday, 10 pm, open lead, limited smoking

We discussed signed of court or other attendance slips at length. THE consensus is that rules about signing papers are entirely up to the individual group consciences of the A.A. groups involved

Other items discussed were speaking at non-A.A. meetings, and meetings on computers.

41 speakers were supplied by the District Office to Non-A.A. Groups for the months of January through June 1990.

N.E. Ohio General Service: Mike F. shared his enjoyment of the open house.

There being not further business, the meeting adjourned.

Central Committee Financial Report		June 1990
BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD		\$2,119.07
Sale of Literature - Four Absolutes	\$1,136.80	
Rent for 6/5/90 Meeting	\$25.00	
Printing of 4,060 Four Absolutes	\$796.93 (\$821.93)	\$314.87
<b>NEW BALANCE</b>		<b>\$2,433.94</b>

Central Bulletin Financial Report		June 1990
BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD		\$426.22
Total Deposits	\$152.00	
Printing of June		
Central Bulletin	\$201.00	
Mailing of June Central Bulletin	\$57.80 (258.80)	(106.80)
<b>NEW BALANCE</b>		<b>\$319.42</b>





## Twelve Keys to Harmony

The Twelve Steps deal with relationships - my relationship with alcohol, my relationship with God, my relationship with my fellow men, and my relationship with myself - an all important aspect of living that used to be extremely troublesome to me. The Twelve Steps do not, however, explicitly deal with my future relationships with other people. This is where the Twelve Traditions come in for me, and I would like to share with you my application of the principles behind the Twelve Traditions in my home life.

In the Big Book an AA member is described as an example of "self-will run riot!" I thought: if the Twelve Traditions could make a collection of self-will-run-riot types function together, then maybe their principles could make my family function together. If the Twelve Traditions could make me fit into an Alcoholic Anonymous group, then maybe their principles could make me fit into my family group.

At that time my family consisted of my wife, myself, and our three children aged six, four, and two. Today our family is thirteen years older, and they are the loveliest and lovingest family imaginable, thanks to the Twelve Traditions. Our home is a harmonious home indeed.

We have harmony because our common welfare comes first. Personal security depends upon family unity.

We have harmony because no one among us tries to dominate anyone else or the family as a whole - for our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority, a loving God as he may express himself through our group conscience at regular family business meetings.

At these business meetings each family member has one vote, but we two "old-timers" - parents - have two. Why so? In the beginning my Al-Anon wife and I feared being outvoted by our kids, so we decided to "safeguard the family" by allowing ourselves an extra vote each. In the thirteen years we have needed to cast our "old-timer-votes" only twice, and that was right at the beginning.

We have harmony because the only requirement for membership in our family is that you have our surname - no favoritism, no love of the professional kind, no black sheep allowed.

We have harmony because our family is autonomous excepting in matters affecting other families of our community as a whole. We do not, repeat not, keep up with the Joneses. Neither do we neglect something just because the Joneses are neglecting it. We simply consider everything on merit: one can often learn from the Joneses' successes and failures.

We have harmony because our primary purpose is to provide security to family members who need it - social security, financial security, physical security and, above all, emotional security.

We have harmony because we make sure that outside enterprises - drugs, alcohol, gambling, long periods of work away from home - do not divert us from our primary purpose of providing security to family members who need it.

We have harmony because we try not to make a nuisance of our family in the community around us, by borrowing articles or money off our neighbors. You see, we think we ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

We have harmony because we remain nonprofessional: there is no life long "table setter" or life long "dog droppings picker upper" or "trash-bag remover" in our family. We practice the principle of rotation in our family, as we practice it in our AA group.

We have harmony because our family as such tries to be as "unorganized as possible. We let there be

*(Continued on the next page)*

## GROUP ANNIVERSARIES

To share your group's celebration with other members of our fellowship, send a note with time, date and special instructions 60 **days** prior to the event:

### The Friendship Group • 30th Anniversary

Monday, September **10th**, 1990 at 8:00 p.m.  
Boulevard Presbyterian Church  
24600 Lakeshore, Euclid, OH  
lead: Joe F. from Akron, OH  
candlelight sobriety service  
food • fellowship • prizes

### Footprints • 19th Anniversary

Sunday, September 30, 1990  
St Philip Church  
8215 St Clair Avenue  
open 2:00 p.m./dinner 3:00 p.m./lead 4:00 p.m.

### New Hope • 1st Anniversary

Saturday, September 29, 1990  
open 2:00 p.m./dinner 3:00 p.m./lead 4:00 p.m.  
speaker: Bobby M.  
Holy Family Church  
3845 E. 131st Street

## IN MEMORIAM

Our deepest sympathy to the family and friends of these deceased members of our fellowship:

**Raymond R. Broucek**, a 5 year member of **lakewood** Friday, died August 5, 1990

**John Garben**, 44 years sober, a member of the Angle Group, passed on August 7, 1990

**Richard Syrone**, 6 years sober, member of the Superior group, deceased July 25, 1990

## THINGS WE CANNOT CHANGE

### Twelve Keys to Harmony *(continued)*

space in our togetherness. Each member can do his or her thing as long as it does not interfere with our common welfare, i.e., our feeling of family security.

We have harmony because we have no opinions on outside issues. We try not to slander, so that we cannot become embroiled in feuds and arguments with others, be they neighbors or relatives.

We have harmony because we do not brag about ourselves as a family or a family member to outsiders. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion. Our achievements as individuals are not open for discussion, hence we do not bore other people, create jealousy, foster envy, etc. Moreover we never play off family members against one another. (Herman, why can't you be like your sister Freja, or your brother **Wienand**?)

We have harmony because we put principles before personalities: anyone can say anything to anyone, remembering that he or she is not the ultimate authority, remembering that our primary purpose is to provide security, above all emotional security. to one another.

We have harmony because we practice the principles of the Twelve Traditions in all our family affairs.

*John C. Stellenbosch, South Africa  
from July 1990 A.A. Grapevine with permission*

★★★★★

## Step Nine: Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

From my experience, I'd suggest that if you don't **have** a sponsor at the time you are starting this step, GET **ONE**. Doing some amends can have significant repercussions which, while not as mortally dangerous as **NOT** doing amends, can affect you for some time to come. This is particularly true of amends which include telling others of situations of which they are not already aware, such as money you stole from them. Your sponsor can caution you about this and add that while you are not an "other" as mentioned in the step, your families are. Their permission should be obtained before you involve them in the results.

In my case, my sponsor helped me to be really sure that I'd become ready to make the amends, as Step 8 said, before I jumped in. He also kept pointing out that those "12 Promises" I liked so much, came only after some amends were made.

No amend of mine turned out the way I expected it to, nor did any turn out bad. The direct result is that there is no longer anyone whom I fear meeting on the street.

★★★★★

Here We Go Again. Why must we keep surrendering and take further action? Didn't we do a thorough enough **housecleaning** doing Step 4 and Step 5? We keep telling you that we are willing, isn't that enough? Do you really expect us to make amends to those people, places, and things without harming them or others?

Weren't they responsible for our **Fears, Resentments, and Sexual Conduct**?

What are they trying to do to us?

You already ruined our drinking and gave us a conscience • isn't that enough?

You'll probably tell us next that **our lives are none of our business!** In other words, you want us to put the God of Our Understanding **First**, others **Second**, and ourselves **Last**. Our **Real Purpose** is to fit ourselves to be of maximum service to God and the people about us. Page 77 of the Big Book, **Patience, Tolerance, Kindliness and love** as mentioned on page 83 of the Big Book is a meditation and action daily learning experience. "**Faith Without Works Is Dead!**"

★★★★★

## I am responsible. . .

When anyone, anywhere reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. always to be there. And for that: I am responsible.

### Acceptance

by Dr. Paul O.

... And acceptance is the answer to all my problems today. When I am disturbed, it is because I find some person, place, thing or situation - some fact of my life - unacceptable to me, and I can find no serenity until I accept that person, place, thing or situation as being exactly the way it is supposed to be at this moment. Nothing, absolutely nothing happens in God's world by mistake. Until I could accept my alcoholism, I could not stay sober; unless I accept life completely on life's terms, I cannot be happy. I need to concentrate not so much on what needs to be changed in the world as on what needs to be changed in me and in my attitudes.

From the Big Book - reprinted with permission

by Bill W.

It is always worthwhile to consider how grossly that good word "acceptance" can be misused. It can be warped to justify nearly every brand of weakness, nonsense and folly. For instance, we can "accept" worldly success pridefully as something wholly of our own making. We can also "accept" illness and death as certain evidence of a hostile and godless universe. With these twistings of acceptance, we A.A.'s have had vast experience. Hence, we constantly try to remind ourselves that these perversions of acceptance are just gimmicks for excuse making - a losing game at which we are, the world's champions.

From MIRUS (Minneapolis Recovery Unity Service)

by Reinheld Niebuhr

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.

Living one day at a time, accepting hardships as the pathway to peace, taking as He did this world as it is, not as I would have it.

Trusting that He will make all things right if I surrender to His will, that I may be reasonably happy an this life and supremely happy with Him, forever, in the next.

### REJECTIONS by an Ann Arbor member

I, like most alcoholics, experienced rejection in my disease of alcoholism. First, I rejected my God, my higher power. I played God thinking I could control people places and things. I thought I did not need other people and their opinions or their business meetings. Things went well for years with this rejecting attitude until the economy went bad with takeovers and mergers. I was forced out and could not accept. I blamed me and went into uncontrolled drinking of alcohol

With the onset of heavy drinking my friends rejected me.

### TRADITIONS CHECKLIST

These questions were originally published in the A.A. Grapevine in conjunction with a series on the Twelve Traditions that began in November 1969 and ran through September 1971. While they were originally intended primarily for individual use, many A.A. groups have since used them as a basis for wider discussion.

**Tradition Nine: AA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.**

1. Do I still try to boss things in AA?
2. Do I resist formal aspects of AA because I fear them as authoritative?
3. Am I mature enough to understand and use all elements of the AA program — even if no one makes me do so -with a sense of personal responsibility?
4. Do I exercise patience and humility in any AA job I take?
5. Am I aware of all those to whom I am responsible in any AA job?
6. Why doesn't every AA group need a constitution and bylaws?
7. Have I learned to step out of an AA job gracefully -and profit thereby — when the time comes?
8. What has rotation to do with anonymity? With humility?

I rejected them and sought alkie that drank like me. I traveled and sought out motels that had "one free with one". . so I could have an extra drink in front of me. I would drink into a stupor.

Then my family rejected me. I had abused verbally and used my wife as a cover up for many years. She learned not to play the alkie game of enabling. She finally gave up and divorced me. saying "I can't take it anymore."

My children rejected me. They would not bring their friends to my home when I was there on weekends as they knew I would be drunk by afternoon.

Then, as my disease progressed, I rejected myself. I was full of guilt over my wild behavior. I had lost my sales career and my sales job. Everybody rejected me. I became a loner. Where I once was assertive, I became isolated and alone. I then rejected me and considered suicide. . fortunately I was rescued and brought into recovery in AA.

I came to believe. My faith was restored along with my hope. It is over 10 years since my last drink. Advice! Don't drink and go to meetings. . .God Bless

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CENTRAL



BULLETIN

Published monthly by the Cleveland Central Committee of A.A., a non-profit fellowship dedicated to service. Address all letters to Central Bulletin, 940 Rockefeller Building, 614 Superior Avenue, N.W., Cleveland, Ohio 44113. District Office (216) 241-7387  
Harry D., Founder and Editor 18924968

## CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING ST. MALACHI CENTER

2416 Superior Viaduct • 8:00 pm. Tuesday, September 4, 1990

PLEASE ATTEND

Your *group* may be represented by you or a member assigned to be your *group* representative. Let us take an *active part* in these important meetings to *uphold our—*

UNITY IN FELLOWSHIP

Mike F., Moderator

Elvira A., Secretary

### CENTRAL COMMITTEE

#### PURPOSE

Because better understanding is the key to Friendship;

Because the public act of any group or individual involves our entire Fellowship;

Because we must continually take inventory of ourselves as individuals and as groups;

The A.A. Central Committee has these purposes:

To bring together representatives of all groups for discussions of policy and practice; to create high standards; to guard against exploitation or commercialization; to insure our humility as groups and individuals.

To protect unity of thought and purpose through the Central Bulletin, the Area-wide Meetings, and such other activities as seem consistent.

To maintain standards through the sponsoring of a Hospital Committee and such other committees as are necessary to carry on this work.

To serve as a clearing house for ideas.

The **OBJECT** of the Central Committee is **SERVICE**.

### MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

August 7, 1990

#### ST MALACHI'S CENTER

8:00 p.m.

The meeting was opened by Moderator, Mike F., leading members present in the Serenity Prayer and reading the Purpose of the Central Committee and the Twelve Traditions of A.A. The roll call showed that 22 members were present, representing 22 groups.

Minutes of the June meeting were read and approved. Financial report: see below.

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Central Bulletin: Mike B. reported that next month at 7:00 p.m. there will be a meeting for anyone interested in the Central Bulletin. Please attend. Also we could use articles on Step Ten, Tradition Ten or Back to Basics.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

#### NEW BUSINESS: New groups announced and sanctioned:

Southgate Brown Bag/Mini lead/no comments

Southgate Fellowship Room, 20571 Southgate Park Blvd.

Maple Heights, OH -Tuesday 12:15 p.m.

Brunswick Big Book Study

12 Step Recovery Club - 1480 Pearl Road

Brunswick, OH -Thursday 8:00 p.m.

It was brought to the attention of the Committee that some secretaries are signing the meeting books for court/probation ordered people.

N.E. Ohio General Service: delegate, Mary B., thanked all who attended the International Conference held in Seattle, WA and extended a special thanks to Elvira for her participation by chairing the meeting on "Newcomers Problems"!

The next Northeast Ohio General Service Workshop will be Sunday, August 19th, at 2:00 p.m. St Joseph's Church, Mantua, OH.

42 Speakers were supplied by the District Office to Non A.A. Groups for the months of January through July 1990.

There being no further business, the meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer

Central Committee Financial Report		July 1990
BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD		\$2,433.94
Sale of Literature - Who Me	\$400.00	
Rent for 7/3/90 Meeting	\$25.00	
Printing of 5,000 Who Me	\$190.65	(\$215.65) \$184.35
<b>NEW BALANCE</b>		<b>\$2,618.29</b>

Central Bulletin Financial Report		July 1990
BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD		\$319.42
Total Deposits		\$136.00
Printing of July <i>Central Bulletin</i>	\$201.00	
Mailing of July Central Bulletin	\$56.62	(257.62) (121.62)
<b>NEW BALANCE</b>		<b>\$197.80</b>



## G—O—S—S—I—P

How'd it start? Well, I know where and when it started. It started in the Tri-State Canadian Assembly at Chautauqua Lake, NY this August. I know also what triggered it. Last year the Chautauqua Institute raised our rental to levels comparable to that charged other groups (as **A.A.'s** who practice the tradition of self support, we would of course not have it any other way). The rest is conjecture. Perhaps someone said "they're making it very expensive to meet here": and perhaps that became "they're making it prohibitively expensive to meet here"! At any rate the rumor became "they're trying to get rid of us! That's the way I heard it and, I confess, passed it on. The rumor so pervaded the conference that our director found it necessary to address the assembly to tell us that this was 'absolutely not true'!

Our co-founder, Dr. Bob, said in his last address to the fellowship, "...**guard** that erring member the tongue. and if we must use it, use it with kindness and consideration and tolerance!" Gossip has been a continuing problem in A.A. throughout its history. The first volume of this publication (48 years ago) had it as its first topical article.

My co-editor, Mike, has suggested this topic several times, but I wasn't that interested then. Now, after my involvement in some gossip, plus reading it in our archives, I am. This is timely because "Gossip": as a topic, relates well to both Step 10 and Tradition 10.

I can't improve on the early articles, so here they are as originally written:

Bob

*From our November 1942 issue*

Gossip is one of the cardinal sins. It is not a single act, like murder, that stops one's life and falls back to punish the offender. It is the breath of the Devil, soiling every ear it touches. It is the most deadly of poisons. It blights many lives, it smites the innocent and the guilty.

An old Italian legend tells the following:

In the old days, a peasant confessed to a priest that he had slandered an innocent man. The priest said to him, "For your penance do this now: Take a bag of chicken down. Go to every yard in town and drop one bit of down in each garden. Do not miss one yard. When you have finished return to me!"

The sinner believed his punishment was light. With his bag of down he made the circuit of the village and carefully dropped one soft feather into each garden. Then he returned to the priest, saying: "I have done my penance!"

"No, my **son,**" replied the abbe. You will not have done your penance until you take this bag, go again on your rounds, collect every feather you have dropped, and bring it here to me!"

The gossip protested that it would be impossible: he could not find the bits of down in a lifetime; many

of them had blown far away.

"So it is with gossip," replied the priest. "It is easily dropped. But never again, no matter how hard you try, can you gather back the words you have so thoughtlessly scattered!"

*"Create in me a clean heart, O Lord!"*

*From our March 1943 issue*

The average person's conception of the four major attributes of A.A. - Love, Honesty, Unselfishness and Purity - is rather limited, and the necessity of checking one-self constantly is apparent **particularly** when self-satisfaction appears.

Gossip, be it just ordinary apparently harmless gossip, or vindictive and malicious, has been a habit which seems inborn in everyone. This sounds like a strong statement, but the writer believes an honest self-analysis will be alarmingly accusative.

There is a peculiar perversity of the human heart which sometimes makes us wish that the very worst is true. We hear the slander of a careless tongue, the gossip of an idle mind, and sieze upon the cruel revelation with relish and delight. We believe the worst because we hope the worst is true. We are prone to question the motives of those that are doing

*(Continued on Page 2)*

## GROUP ANNIVERSARIES

To share your group's celebration with other members of our fellowship, send a note with time, date and special instructions 60 days prior to the event:

No anniversaries to report

## IN MEMORIAM

Our deepest sympathy to the family and friends of these deceased members of our fellowship:

**Johan Cornelius ("Corny") Voorhees**, 44 years sober, passed away in Columbus on July 5, 1990. A former **Clevelander**, Corny was noted for translating the Big Book in the Netherlands

## THINGS WE CANNOT CHANGE

## G-O-S-S-I-P

(Continued from Page 1)

good and impute selfish motives to their zeal.

Love, or charity, as we should practice it in our new-found way of life discourages and certainly does not peddle hurtful rumors emanating from idle tongues. True love for the person whose name is being bandied about ■ regardless of person ■ should stop those rumors in their tracks. We should train ourselves ■ and it means real discipline ■ to find an excuse for the "neighbor": be ready to defend him, speak well of him, and put the best possible construction on his motives.

Even though our faith and loyalty is besieged again and again and even though the worst is *true*, if we will follow the true conception of A.A. basic principles we should still do the neighbor in helping him overcome his difficulty with the spirit of brotherly love ever-present.

Certainly there shouldn't be any delight in the quiet whispers which are aimed like poisoned darts at their good names.

So stop those rumors as they come. Practice true charity and love by refusing to believe the gossip that comes to your ears! Think of the opportunity we have to truly help our "neighbor" by refusing to be a medium to spread gossip, and instead, being a medium to kill it at its source,

## Step Ten: Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

"...we aren't a glum lot. If newcomers could see no joy or fun in our existence, they **wouldn't** want it. We absolutely insist on enjoying life. We try not to indulge in cynicism over the state of nations, nor do we carry the world's troubles on our shoulders."

*Alcoholics Anonymous*, pg. 132

When our house is in order, we can wear the world like a loose garment. Stripped from the guilt and remorse that cloak-ed our drinking years, we are free to take our proper roles in the universe. But this condition requires maintenance. We should stop and ask ourselves, "Are we having fun yet?" If we find answering that question difficult and painful, perhaps we're taking ourselves too seriously - we can't admit that we've strayed from the spiritual path. The pain we experience is our higher power's way to get our attention, drawing us to take stock of our performance. The slight time and effort of a spot-check inventory and required amends pays large dividends of joy.

Why must we keep surrendering and take further action? Do you really expect us to clean house everyday? Who do you think we are, Mighty Maids? And then you expect us to keep admitting that we are not perfect! What are you trying to do to us? Are you trying to help us learn how to live sober? Love and tolerance of others is our code (Big Book, pg. 84). We are not cured of Alcoholism. What we really have is a daily reprieve contingent on that maintenance of our spiritual condition. Thy will (not mine) be done (Big Book, pg. 85). The *Big Book even* explains to us what we have been receiving and from whom we have received it (*Big Book*, pg. 85). Next you will probably tell us that we are acquiring a sixth sense. Is it Existing Spiritual Presence? Oh well, here we go again! Faith without works is dead

★★★★★

NOTE!

NOTE!

**Advisory Committee Meeting**  
**Thursday, October 25th, 8:00 p.m.**  
**Old Stone Church**

## Just For Today

just for today I will try to live through this day only, and not tackle my whole life problem at once. I can due something for twelve hours that would appall me if I felt that I had to keep it up for a lifetime.

Just for today I will be happy. This assumes to be true what Abraham Lincoln said, that "Most folks are as happy as they make their minds to be."

Just for today I will adjust myself to what is, and not try to adjust everything to my own desires. I will take my "luck" as it comes, and fit myself into it.

Just for today I will try to strengthen my mind. I will study. I will learn something useful, I will not be a mental loafer. I will read something that requires effort, thought and concentration.

Just for today I will exercise my soul in three ways; I will do somebody a good turn, and not get found out; if anybody

knows of it, it will not count. I will do at least two things I don't want to do -just for exercise. I will not show anyone that my feelings are hurt, but today i will not show it.

Just for today I will be agreeable. I will look as well as I can, dress becomingly, act courteously, criticize not one bit, not find fault with anything, and not try to improve or regulate anybody except myself.

Just for today I will have a program. I may not follow it exactly, but I will have it. I will save myself from two pests: hurry and indecision.

Just for today I will have a quiet half hour all by myself and relax. During this half hour, sometime, I will try to get a better perspective of my life.

Just for today I will be unafraid. Especially I will not be afraid to enjoy what is beautiful, and to believe that as I give to the world, so the world will give to me.

**Alcoholics Anonymous has but one purpose: To help the sick alcoholic recover if he wishes.**

**Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on any controversial subject, nor does it oppose anyone.**

**Daily Reprieve**  
**We are not cured of alcoholism. What we really have is a daily reprieve contingent on the maintenance of our spiritual condition**

**Concept Ten**

Concept Ten: Every service responsibility should be matched by an equal service authority—the scope of such authority to be always well-defined by tradition, by resolution, by specific job description, or by appropriate charters and bylaws.

In the practice of this concept we must remember that we are trusted servants. We have been selected to represent our fellows. We are expected to act as our peers expect us to act, but we are reminded that we have the authority to take independent action when new or more compelling facts are presented. We have the authority to change our minds, but we have the responsibility to abide by the group conscience. Our authority should not override our responsibility, and our responsibility should not limit our authority.

We must live our lives as we understand that our Higher Power wants us to live. We should try to do our jobs to the best of our ability • not taking over, but not failing to do what needs to be done. Speaking for no one but ourselves. And being relied to be a trusted and competent servant. Doing our -best always for the best reward ever -later.

*From Agua Fria Intergroup Newsletter  
Peoria, AZ*

DAILY MORAL INVENTORY	
LIABILITIES	ASSETS
Watch for •	Strive for -
Self Pity .....	Self-Forgetfulness
Self Justification .....	Humility
Self Importance .....	Modesty
Self Condemnation .....	Valuation
Dishonesty .....	Honesty
Impatience .....	Patience
Hate .....	LOVE
Resentment .....	Forgiveness
False Pride .....	Simplicity
Jealousy .....	Trust
Envy .....	Generosity
Laziness .....	Activity
Procrastination .....	Promptness
Insincerity .....	Straightforwardness
Negative Thinking .....	Positive Thinking
Vulgar, Immoral .....	High-Minded, Spiritual
Fear .....	Courage
Trashy Thinking .....	Thinking
Critizing .....	Look for the Good
Eliminate the Negatives	Accentuate the Positive

**TRADITIONS CHECKLIST**

*These questions were originally published in the A.A. Grapevine in conjunction with a series on the Twelve Traditions that began in November 1969 and ran through September 1971. While they were originally intended primarily for individual use, many A.A. groups have since used them as a basis for wider discussion.*

**Tradition Ten: Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the AA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.**

1. Do I ever give the impression that there **is** an 'AA opinion' on Antabuse? Tranquilizers? Doctors? Psychiatrists? Churches? Hospitals? jails? Alcohol? The federal or state government? Legalizing marijuana? Vitamins? Al-Anon? **Alteen?**
2. Can I honestly share my own personal experience concerning any of those without giving the impression I am stating the "AA opinion"?
3. What in AA history gave rise to our Tenth Tradition?
4. Have I had a similar experience in my own AA life?
5. What would AA be without this Tradition? Where would I be?
6. Do I breach this or any of its supporting Traditions in subtle, perhaps unconscious, ways?
7. How can I manifest the spirit of this Tradition in my personal life outside AA? Inside AA?

**Growth by the Tenth Step**

**In the years ahead A.A. will, of course, make mistakes. Experience has taught us that we need have no fear of doing this, providing that we always remain willing to admit our faults and to correct them promptly. Our growth as individuals has depended upon this healthy process of trial and error. So will our growth as a fellowship. Let us always remember that any society of men and women that cannot freely correct its own faults must surely fall into decay if not into collapse. Such is the universal penalty for the failure to go ON growing. Just as each A.A. must continue to take his moral inventory and act upon it, so must our whole society if we are to survive and if we are to serve usefully and well.**

*from A.A. Comes of Age  
with permission A.A. World Service*

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**CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
ST. MALACHI CENTER**

2416 Superior Viaduct • 8:00 p.m. Tuesday, October 2, 1990

**PLEASE ATTEND**

Your group may be represented by you or a member assigned to be your group representative. *Let us take an active part in these important meetings to uphold our—*

**Mike F., Moderator**

**UNITY IN FELLOWSHIP**

**Elvira A., Secretary**

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Harry D., Founder and Editor 1892-1968

**CENTRAL COMMITTEE**

**PURPOSE**

Because better understanding is the key to Friendship;  
Because the public act of any group or individual involves our entire Fellowship;  
Because we must continually take inventory of ourselves as individuals and as groups;

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To protect unity of thought and purpose through the Central Bulletin, the Area-wide Meetings, and such other activities as seem consistent.

To maintain standards through the sponsoring of a Hospital Committee and such other committees as are necessary to carry on this work.

To serve as a clearing house for ideas.

The **OBJECT** of the Central Committee is **SERVICE**.

**MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE**

**September 4, 1990**

ST MALACHI'S CENTER

8:00 p.m.

The meeting was opened by Moderator, Mike F., leading members present in the Serenity Prayer. Vice Moderator, James P., read the purpose of the Central Committee and the Twelve Traditions of A.A.

The roll call showed that 25 members were present, representing 23 groups.

Minutes of the August meeting were read and approved. Financial report: see below.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Central Bulletin:** Bob McK., reported that his and Mike B's., six months as editor of the Central Bulletin are over and they expect to hear from Terry W. soon to resume as editor, and asked for articles on the eleventh step.

**OLD BUSINESS:** None.

**NEW BUSINESS:** The St Albans group located at First babist Church, 3630 Fairmount Boulevard, Cleveland Heights, OH, have added a beginners meeting Saturdays at 7:30 P.M.

New groups announced and sanctioned:

Back to Basics, St Thomas Evangelical Lutheran Church, 9509 Lake Avenue; Beginners meeting at 8:00 PM., regular meeting at 8:30 PM. on Friday.

Lee Harvard Stag, 17621 Harvard Avenue, Cleveland, OH Sunday's at 11:00 A.M.

It was brought to the attention of this Committee that a flyer sent to some A.A. groups asking A.A. members to attend a meeting is in violation of our Traditions, a motion was made and seconded, that the Action Committee look into this.

**N.E. Ohio General Service:** delegate, Mary B., thanked all members who attended the August workshop, the next G.S.R. Third Legacy meeting will be September 16th.

43 Speakers were supplied by the District Office to Non A.A. Groups for the months of January through August 1990.

There being not further business, the meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

<b>Central Committee Financial Report</b>	<b>August 1990</b>	<b>Central Bulletin Financial Report</b>	<b>August 1990</b>
BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD	\$2,618.29	BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD	\$19.
Rent for 8/7/90 Meeting \$25.00		Total Deposits	\$509.00
Transfer Funds to Central Bulletin \$400.00	425.00	Printing of Aug. <b>Central Bulletin \$201.00</b>	
NEW BALANCE	\$2,193.29	Mailing of Aug. <b>Central Bulletin \$56.62 (257.62) (251.38)</b>	
		NEW BALANCE	\$449.18





## NOVEMBER IS 'TRADITIONS MONTH'

*As the Pamphlet "The AA Group" explains, November is Traditions Month. We could find no better simple explanation of the traditions than Joan A's article in the December 1989 "Akron Intergroup News"*

Unity is our second Legacy of Service, and for Unity we have Twelve Traditions. These Traditions are important to each of us. Yes, they are written for AA as a whole but that is you and me and you and you and finally all of us. I will go quickly through the Traditions as I see them from where I am at this time.

Our common welfare should come first. We keep the doors of the group open as long as it is reaching the alcoholic who still suffers. If an active alcoholic is being a bit too active and is disrupting the meeting he is ushered out and the meeting goes on. Of course we invite the alcoholic back when he is in a better mood.

In the group **ULTIMATE AUTHORITY** is expressed during the business meeting after discussion and vote. Decisions are not made by a few strong willed individuals but by a true majority. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern. This means we choose people we trust and then we trust them. We let them do their job (within the job description) with as little interference as possible. The group chooses Intergroup and General Service **REPRESENTATIVES**, not messengers.

We have only one requirement for AA membership and that is a desire to stop drinking. Race, religion, age, sex, profession, economic class, other problems make no difference as long as we wish to stop **DRINKING**. Obviously we can still drink milk, coffee, tea and water. Our name **(ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS)** clearly indicates what we quit drinking.

Each group is autonomous (can do its own thing) as long as it follows the Twelve Traditions and doesn't affect other groups in the area or AA as a whole. My group can be open or closed, lead or discussion, serve doughnuts or cake or neither and as long as it reaches the alcoholic who still suffers - its OK. When a group breaks the Traditions, any one of them for whatever purpose, AA as a whole and all of its parts are weakened.

The primary purpose of each group is to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers. That's it!! The group does not have to strive to be the biggest or the richest or the most intellectual, it simply carries the

message (shares the experience, strength and hope) with the still suffering alcoholic.

Our relationship with related facilities and outside enterprises is one of cooperation **NOT** affiliation. Related facilities are the clubs and hospitals, foundations etc. **We** do not endorse or finance any causes or organizations. We do not lend our name.

Each group should be fully self supporting. We take no money from outside sources and that means that it's up to me (the alcoholic) to put my hand in my pocket and give what I can so that the doors stay open for all of us.

AA is nonprofessional - there is no counseling, medical advice or detoxification - we simply share our experience, strength and hope with each other. We do employ special workers for the Intergroup offices and the General Service office. This is necessary because the volume of work would be too much for volunteers.

A certain amount of organization is needed to prevent utter chaos. Trusted servants are chosen to sit on Boards and Committees. These groups are directly responsible to those they serve.

As a fellowship, we have NO opinion on outside issues. We stick to our primary purpose and stay out of public controversy.

We do not promote at the public level, we attract. Anonymity is maintained at the level of press, radio and films. In a meeting or among my family and friends, I am not anonymous. Anonymity was never meant for the meetings.

Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions. It is about sacrifice of time, money, power and self for the good of the group. It is about moving over and giving someone else a chance. It is about putting principles before personalities, no matter how irritating that personality may be. Think, what is the principle in this case? We must learn to disagree agreeably.

I left a lot out and that's OK because you need to read them and discuss them and come to your own conclusions.

## GROUP ANNIVERSARIES

To share your group's celebration with other members of our fellowship, send a note with time, date and special instructions 60 **days** prior to the event:

### Traditions Discussion Group • 1st Anniversary

Thursday, November 1, 1990 • 8:00 p.m.  
1635 Lee Road (Club 24)  
Cleveland Heights, Ohio

### Lakewood Friday Group • 15th Anniversary

Friday, November 23, 1990 • 8:30 p.m.  
Parkwood United Church of Christ  
13714 Madison Avenue • Lakewood, Ohio

### Youngstown Area Intergroup

#### Fall Gratitude Banquet

Friday, November 30, 1990

#### Mahoning Country Club

Speaker - Clancy I. from California

7:00 p.m. Dinner • 8:00 p.m. Speaker followed by dance  
Donation \$11.00

for tickets or information - contact Intergroup Office  
(216) 783-5000

## Gratitude Sunday

### An Open A.A. Meeting

Sunday, November 18th, 2:00 p.m.

First United Methodist Church

48 Church Street, Hubbard, OH 44425

### A panel of "Okftimers" will speak

Take I-80 east to Exit 234A, Hubbard. Turn right onto Rts. 62 & 7 South. Take this 4 traffic lights to the center of Hubbard. Stay in the center lane. Don't turn when 62 & 7 turn right, rather go straight onto Rt. 616 (a small plaza will be on your left). Turn right onto the first street (Church St.) and take it about ½ block to the church. There's plenty of parking behind and beside the church in the police parking lot and behind the 1st Christian Church.

Please bring a covered **dish to share**.

## IN MEMORIAM

Our deepest sympathy to the family and friends of these deceased members of our fellowship:

**BOB EDWARDS**, 41 years sober, passed away in late September. He was a member of the Shepard of the Ridge Group in North Ridgeville.

**FRANK J. McCARTHY**, 20 years sober, passed away September 8, 1990. "Any group he attended was home."

### THINGS WE CANNOT CHANGE

## From the District Office • Am I Improving?

Periodically throughout the 365 days, our daily meditation readings suggest that we ask ourselves some searching questions concerning our A.A. program. Our program should involve a continuous striving for improvement, there can be no long resting period. We must try to work at it all the time, we must keep in mind that it is a program **not** to be measured

in years. We must check up on ourselves periodically. Just how good an A.A. am I?

Am I attending meetings regularly? What does regularly mean? Perhaps one or two meetings a week. And what happens if there is a conflict or you are unable to make those one or two meetings? Then we are down to zero. . .

Am I doing my share of the load, or do I say "let some of the newer people do it, I've been doing it for twenty years." When there is something to be done, do I volunteer or do I stand back and let others volunteer, ready to criticize and let them know when they've made a mistake?

Do I speak at meetings when asked, no matter how nervous I am? Or do I avoid sharing my story on the pretense that I have nothing new to offer and that I'm not a good speaker anyhow? Do you know how many requests we get for speakers at **non-A.A.** functions? The schools, colleges, churches, and communities in general have asked for speakers. We have need for speakers for MADD on a monthly basis, speakers at Notre Dame College classes, particularly for the alcoholic who came into the program after age 50 or close to retirement age. Lawyer's Associations, law enforcement agencies, and community health fairs, etc. all ask for speakers. If you can volunteer 20-30 minutes occasionally, please call the office.

Do I accept each opportunity to do a twelfth-step work as a challenge, or do I say "I'm too busy today?" Or is it "I'm just going out the door": or if the call is for a lady, "We don't have any ladies in our group" or "I don't know any **ladies**."

Do I give freely of my time and money? Do I take the time to drop a card to a sick A.A. or visit one in the hospital? Do I put money in the basket to pay the rent, buy coffee and literature? Am I trying to spread A.A. wherever I go, or is it all over when I leave the meetings? Conversely, do I spend all my time at A.A. activities and leave the family to do "family things?"

Is my daily life a demonstration of A.A. Principles? Do I treat my employer, fellow employees, family and daily contacts with the same warmth and concern that I exhibit at A.A. meetings? Or is it just an "exhibit" and the minute I'm out the door, I cut people off on the highway, shove and push in the stores in order to get finished quickly?

Am I a good A.A., or do I need to work a little harder? These questions seem to be popping out a lot this past year, perhaps there's a message that we're supposed to be getting.

Are you aware that there are approximately half a dozen residents at the Franklin Plaza Nursing Home? One of our groups generously supplies some literature for them. Can you help get a meeting started?

Do you know of an infirm member who doesn't get out much or get to meetings regularly? How about the member who has a sick child or spouse that can't be left alone? Maybe they could use a visit or phone call. How about the member or spouse of a member who has just lost their mate? Have we remembered to include them on our list?

These activities can certainly mean a great deal to the suffering alcoholic. "Suffering alcoholics" are not just the ones in the meetings or the ones still "out there." Sometimes they are the ones who have been overlooked, forgotten and can't get out. What nursing homes are in your area? Are any of their residents recovering alcoholics? Can I attempt to find out and give a few minutes to help them? Just how good an A.A. am I?

Shirley H.

**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.**

Sold American! Only 200 words in the 12 Steps and this one step has 32 of them. I love this step because it not only told me to pray but why to pray and how to pray. It's very specific.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Here we go again! Why must we keep surrendering and take further action.

just a minute; Just a minute here! You told us to take a personal inventory in Step 10 and now you actually expect us to review our day, stop talking and just listen? (Big Book pg. 86) Do you mean that part of our daily meditation is Meditation?

Self, Self, Self, Self. What are you trying to do? Deflate our Ego's? We'll have to pray on that one! (Big Book Pg. 87)

You "Keep Coming Back" with "Thy will be done"! Do you really think that we are undisciplined? (Big Book pg. 87)

Is there a real purpose (Big Book pg. 77) to all these steps? There is action and more action. Faith is more than our greatest gift! Sharing with others is our greatest responsibility!

"Faith without works is dead!

Oh well, here we go again!

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Slovenian AA's**

A recent visitor to the Cleveland Area has contacted the Central Office to learn more about A.A. He is from Yugoslavia, and they were not allowed to have A.A. groups in the past. He is looking for live contacts to share their experience, strength and hope with the Slovenian people. They would be willing to accept Slovenian people from Cleveland to live in their homes to teach them about the A.A. way of life. Perhaps later the Slovenians could come here and experience it first hand. He is anxious to be contacted in his homeland.

Contact:

Paul  
% Klub Zdravljenih  
Alkoholikov  
Bohoriceva 4  
61000 Ljubljana - Yugoslavia

(Transportation to Yugoslavia would be at your expense)

**The Informed Group Conscience**

How are meetings effectively conducted? How can our home group avoid controversy? What are the time-tested ways which have worked for years? Those of us who are relatively new do not have all the answers. We have group conscience meetings where decisions are made which affect the A.A. meeting.

This is where we could use the input from people who have numerous years of experience. The members who have knowledge of following the Traditions can offer valuable suggestions. The group conscience could enjoy a fuller range of information. Sound decisions could be more confidently reached.

May you old timers continue to share your experience, strength and hope at meetings.

**TRADITIONS CHECKLIST**

*These questions were originally published in the A.A. Grapevine in conjunction with a series on the Twelve Traditions that began in November 1969 and ran through September 1977. While they were originally intended primarily for individual use, many A.A. groups have since used them as a basis for wider discussion.*

**Tradition Eleven: Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.**

1. Do I sometimes promote A.A. so fanatically that I make it seem unattractive?
2. Am I always careful to keep the confidences reposed in me as an A.A. member?
3. Am I careful about throwing A.A. names around?
4. Am I ashamed of being a recovered or recovering, alcoholic?
5. What would A.A. be like if we were not guided by the ideas in Tradition Eleven? Where would I be?
6. Is my A.A. sobriety attractive enough that a sick drunk would want such a quality for himself?

**- H E L P W A N T E D -**

Work with the Central Committee and the District Office in publishing the Central Bulletin. (The oldest publication in the program of A.A.). Takes only a few hours each month. Must supply OWN suit of armor & pencil. No money, but the payback is great.

Come to the newsletter meeting - one hour before the next Central Committee meeting at the same location.

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**IT WILL HELP YOU AND IT WILL HELP US**



**CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
ST. MALACHI CENTER**

2416 Superior Viaduct • 8:00 p.m. Tuesday, November 6, 1990

**PLEASE ATTEND**

Your group may be represented by you or a member assigned to be your group representative. Let us take an active part in these important meetings to uphold our—

**UNITY IN FELLOWSHIP**

Mike F., Moderator

Elvira A., Secretary

Published monthly by the Cleveland Central Committee of A.A., a non-profit fellowship dedicated to service. Address all letters to Central Bulletin, 940 Rockefeller Building, 614 Superior Avenue, NW, Cleveland, Ohio 44113. District Office (216) 241.7387

Harry D., Founder and Editor 18924968

**CENTRAL COMMITTEE**

**PURPOSE**

Because better understanding is the key to Friendship;  
Because the public act of any group or individual involves our entire Fellowship;  
Because we must continually take inventory of ourselves as individuals and as groups;

**The A.A. Central Committee has these purposes:**

To bring together representatives of all groups for discussions of policy and practice; to create high standards; to guard against exploitation or commercialization; to insure our humility as groups and individuals.

To protect unity of thought and purpose through the Central Bulletin, the Area-wide Meetings, and such other activities as seem consistent.

To maintain standards through the sponsoring of a Hospital Committee and such other committees as are necessary to carry on this work.

To serve as a clearing house for ideas.

The **OBJECT** of the Central Committee is **SERVICE**.

**MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE**

**October 2, 1990**

ST. MALACHI'S CENTER

8:00 p.m.

The meeting was opened by Moderator, Mike F., leading members present in the Serenity Prayer. He read the purpose of the Central Committee and the Twelve Traditions of A.A.

The roll call showed that 39 members were present, representing 34 groups.

Minutes of the September meeting were read and approved. Financial report: see below.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Central Bulletin:** Bob McK., reported he had gotten in touch with Terry W. and that Terry would be moving out of town, therefore a want ad for a new editor will be run. There will be a meeting one hour before the regular meeting next month for anyone interested in the Central Bulletin. Mike B. stepped down as co-editor, Robert V. will take his place.

November is Traditions month, so we will be running articles on the Twelve Traditions.

**OLD BUSINESS:** None.

**NEW BUSINESS:** There was a discussion regarding whether holding a memorial service with/instead of an A.A. meeting is a tradition break. Through a show of hands it was a consensus of the Committee that a memorial could be held before or after an A.A. meeting.

A representative of the Akron Bar Association asked permission to reprint "Who Me" in their newsletter. They are doing an article on alcoholism in the legal profession. After much discussion permission was granted.

The Committee granted permission to print a wallet card of the Four Absolutes, Honesty, Unselfishness, Love and Purity on one side and on the back side, "Is it true or false?"; "Is it right or wrong. ?"; "How will it affect the other person &"; "Is it beautiful or ugly?" It will be the sole property of the Central Committee also.

**N.E. Ohio General Service:** delegate, Mary B., invited all members to come to G.S. meeting October 21st in Mantua, Ohio, St. Joseph Church, Rt. 44 and Pioneer Trail, an election of officers will be held, come and be a part of it.

45 Speakers were supplied by the District Office to Non A.A. Groups for the months of January through September 1990.

There being not further business, the meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer

**Central Committee Financial Report September 1990**

BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD		\$2,193.29
Rent for 9/4/90 Meeting	\$25.00	25.00
NEW BALANCE		\$2,168.29

**Central Bulletin Financial Report**

**September 1990**

BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD		\$445
Total Deposits		\$180.00
Printing of Sept. Central Bulletin	\$201.00	
Mailing of Sept. Central Bulletin	\$54.43	(255.43)
NEW BALANCE		\$373.75



Published by  
Cleveland Central Committee of A.A.  
940 Rockefeller Building  
614 Superior Avenue, N.W.  
Cleveland, Ohio 44113  
216-241-7387

## Twelve Tips on Keeping Your Holiday Season Sober and Joyous

Holiday parties without liquid spirits may still seem a dreary prospect to new A.A.'s. But many of us have enjoyed the happiest holidays of our lives sober — an idea we would never have dreamed of, wanted, or believed possible when drinking. Here are some tips for having an all-round ball without a drop of alcohol.



1 Line up extra A.A. activities for the holiday season. Arrange to take newcomers to meetings, answer the phones at a clubhouse or central office, speak, help with the dishes, or visit the alcoholic ward at a hospital.



2 Be host to A.A. friends, especially newcomers. If you don't have a place where you can throw a formal party, take one person to a diner and spring for the coffee.



3 Keep your A.A. telephone list with you all the time. If a drinking urge or panic comes — postpone everything else until you have called an A.A.

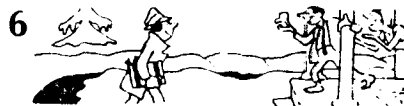


4 Find about the special holiday parties, meetings, or other celebrations given

by groups in your area, and go. If you are timid, take someone newer than you are.



5 Skip any drinking occasion you are worried about. Remember how clever you were at excuses when drinking? Now put the talent to good use. No office party is as important as saving your life.



6 If you have to go to a drinking party and can't take an A.A. with you, keep some candy handy.



7 Don't think you have to stay late. Plan in advance an "important date" you have to keep.



8 Go to church. Any church.



9 Don't sit around brooding. Catch up on those books, museums, walks, and letters.



10 Don't start now getting worked up about all those holiday temptations. Remember — "one day at a time!"



11 Enjoy the true beauty of holiday love and joy. Maybe you cannot give material gifts — but this year, you can give love.



12 "Having had a . . . "No need to spell out the Twelfth Step here, since you already know it.

from Box 459, *Holiday 1987*, Reprinted with permission of AA World Service, Inc.

## GROUP ANNIVERSARIES

To share your group's celebration with other members of our fellowship, send a note with time, date and special instructions 60 **days** prior to the event:

### **New Way of Life • 17th Anniversary**

Sunday, December 2, 1990

St Henry's Church Hall • 18200 Harvard Avenue  
Doors Open 2:00 p.m. • Food 3:00 p.m. • Lead 4:00 p.m.

### **Willoughby Group • 49th Anniversary**

(Oldest active group in Lake County)

Monday, December 3, 1990 • 8:30 p.m.

### **North Olmsted Group • 30th Anniversary**

Wednesday, December 5, 1990 • 8:30 p.m.

North Olmsted United Methodist Church  
4600 Dover Center Road

Lead • Art H., Ashland, OH

(Bill W. was his sponsor)

open, mixed, handicap accessible

## IN MEMORIAM

Our deepest sympathy to the family and friends of these deceased members of our fellowship:

**BILL MARSHALL**, a 16 year member of the Solidarity Group, died October 14, 1990

**IMOGENE ZAYD**, 20 year member of the Laurel Group, past secretary of the Cleveland District office, passed away October 16, 1990.

## THINGS WE CANNOT CHANGE

### A VERY SPECIAL LADY

Early in the morning of Tuesday October 16, 1990, one of our finest members of Alcoholics Anonymous departed from this life on earth. Imogene Zayd, age 66, with nearly 20 years of continuous sobriety went to her final reward. From the time that her sobriety started on January 10, 1971, she was a loyal and dedicated member of the Laurel Group. Early on, she began volunteering at the A.A. Cleveland District office. The service she performed was so outstanding that she was soon asked to accept full-time employment. When the late Dick Perez retired in June 1981, she succeeded him immediately as the Secretary of the office, and carried out these duties with distinction until her retirement in March 1989.

Imogene had a noteworthy characteristic: she had a concern for the total well being of A.A. She attended the monthly meetings of the Central Committee regularly, and provided input as needed without seeming to be bossy or officious. Likewise, she gave support to Northeast Ohio General Service with the same humble attitude. Truly, she took to heart A.A.'s first tradition: "Our common welfare should come first; individual recovery depends upon A.A. unity." She was responsive to the Office Operating Committee, and was immensely helpful to the quarterly meetings of the Office Advisory Committee. This woman was small of stature, but she had a queen-size heart, and she was not afflicted with tunnel vision.

The last several years of Imogene's life were not easy. Her husband underwent major surgery and she gave him the loving support which he needed without neglecting

her responsibilities at the office. Later, she took a disastrous fall that shattered a hip completely. It had to be replaced with a prosthesis. She did some work at home for a while, then gradually resumed her regimen of service at the office. She had not been retired for very long when she learned that she had a malignancy which was to end her mortal life. Through all this she never wimpered, maintaining her resolute faith and setting a standard of personal recovery which will be difficult for others to emulate.

Our heart goes out to her husband, children and grandchildren and any other survivors not mentioned, Au Revoir, imogene. God bless you

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

From Ralph W. (our Ann Arbor, MI contributor)

I do think that if you publish one of my articles, you should credit my name - Ralph W.

We are to be anonymous at the media level. And we are to try to be humble. But I don't believe in total anonymity - I believe in recognition! I realize Cleveland A.A.'s big problem with not using full names! In Cleveland A.A.-1980-they used to boo me when I said "My name is Ralph W."

"How can you contact an A.A. for help if you don't know his name?"

Answer, you collect A.A. phone numbers.

from the editors: Our real concern, Ralph, was *the Twelfth Tradition's "Principles before personalities"* rather than *the "Persona/ anonymity" of Tradition II*. We *have* decided to change this *policy*. Thanks for *enclosing* quote expressing *Dr. Bob's feelings* about anonymity.

"As far as anonymity was concerned, we knew what we were. It wasn't only A.A., but our social life. All of our lives seemed to be spent together. We took people home with us to dry out. The Cleveland group had the names, addresses, and phone numbers of all the members" said Warren. "In fact, I remember Dr. Bob saying, 'If I got up and gave my name as Dr. Bob S., people who needed help would have a hard time getting in touch with me.' "

Warren recalled, "He (Dr. Bob) said there were two ways to break the anonymity Tradition: (1) by giving your name at the public level of press or radio; (2) by being so anonymous that you can't be reached by other drunks."

In an article in the February 1969 Grapevine, D.S. of San Mateo, California, wrote that Dr. Bob commented on the Eleventh Tradition as follows:

Since the Tradition on anonymity designates the exact level where the line should be held, it must be obvious to everyone who can read and understand the English language that to maintain anonymity at any other level is definitely a violation of this Tradition.

"The A.A. who hides his identity from his fellow A.A. by using only a given name violates the Tradition just as much as the A.A. who permits his name to appear in the press in connection with matters pertaining to A.A.

"The former is maintaining his anonymity *above* the level of press, radio, and films, and the latter is maintaining his anonymity *below* the level of press, radio, and films - whereas the Tradition states that we should maintain our anonymity *at* the level of press, radio, and films."

(Continued on Page 3)

(Continued from Page 2)

Ernie G. of Toledo, commenting on what he saw to be increase in anonymity within A.A. today as compared with the old days, said, "I made a lead over to Jackson (Michigan) one night, and everybody's coming up to me and saying, 'I'm Joe,' 'I'm Pete.'" Then one of the guys said, 'Safe journey home. If you get into any trouble, give me a buzz.' Later I said to the fellow who was with me, 'You know, suppose we did get into trouble on the way home. How would we tell anyone in A.A.? We don't know anyone's last name.' They get so doggone carried away with this anonymity that it gets to be a joke. I had a book (evidently, one of the small address books compiled by early members or their wives) with the first hundred names • first and last • telephone numbers, and where they lived."

from Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimers  
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★ ★ ★ ★ ★

### TRADITIONS CHECKLIST

These questions were originally published in the A.A. Grapevine in conjunction with a series on the Twelve Traditions that began in November 1969 and ran through September 1971. While they were originally intended primarily for individual use, many A.A. groups have since used them as a basis for wider discussion.

#### Tradition Twelve: Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

1. Why is it a good idea for me to place the common welfare of all A.A. members before individual welfare? What would happen to me if A.A. as a whole disappeared?
2. When I do not trust A.A.'s current servants, who do I wish had the authority to straighten them out?
3. In my opinions of and remarks about other A.A.'s, am I implying membership requirements other than a desire to stay sober?
4. Do I ever try to get a certain A.A. group to conform to my standards, not its own?
5. Have I a personal responsibility in helping an A.A. group fulfill its primary purpose? What is my part?
6. Does my personal behavior reflect the Sixth Tradition — or belie it?

(Continued on Page 4)

#### Step 12: Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

This is a truly easy step. It starts by telling us why we did the other 11 steps-to arrive at a spiritual awakening. "Well, that's exactly what this book is all about. Its main object is to enable you to find a Power greater than yourself which will solve your problem." (Alcoholics Anonymous, pg. 45).

Next it tells us to whom we carry the message—alcoholics. We need not relate to all people with all problems, but just people with our common problem.

And the message need not get through. We are just asked to try to carry it. Of course it's great if the person we're talking to stays sober and gets active, but if we've honestly tried to carry the message, we're successful at step 12 even if they're not successful at step 1.

Finally this "try" is true of "practicing these principles" also. I start each day intending to do that. Some days I'm more successful than others. "We are not born saints. We claim spiritual progress rather than spiritual perfection

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

#### Here We Go Again

Why must we keep surrendering and take further action?

Who says this spiritual awakening has to happen?

Isn't it enough that we are all sober and living a better way of life!

You say carry the message. How will working with others benefit us? (Big Book pg. 100) Is it the joy of living?

Do you also suggest that if we (practice these principles in all our affairs) do this ONE DAY AT A TIME (everyday) that there is a vision for us? (Big Book pg. 164)

Next, you'll probably expect us to do steps 10, 11, and 12 everyday!

Oh Well, here we go again,

**Faith Without Works Is Dead!**

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(Continued from Page 3)

7. Do I do all I can to support A.A. financially? When is the last time I anonymously gave away a Grapevine subscription? (or a Central Bulletin subscription — Ed.)
8. Do I complain about certain A.A.'s behavior — especially if they are paid to work for A.A.? Who made me so smart?
9. Do I fulfill all A.A. responsibilities in such a way as to please privately even my own conscience) Really?
10. Do my utterances always reflect the Tenth Tradition, or do I give A.A. critics real ammunition?
11. Should I keep my A.A. membership secret, or reveal it in private conversation when that may help another alcoholic (and therefore me)? Is my brand of A.A. so attractive that other drunks want it?
12. What is the real importance of *me* among more than a million A.A.'s?

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

### YESTERDAY-TODAY-TOMORROW

There are two days in every week about which we should not worry, two days which should be kept free from fear and apprehension.

One of **these days is YESTERDAY** with its mistakes and cares, its faults and blunders, its aches and pains. **YESTERDAY** has passed forever beyond our control.

All the money in the world cannot bring back **YESTERDAY**. We cannot undo a single act we performed; we cannot erase a single word we said . . . **YESTERDAY is gone.**

The other day **we** should not **worry** about **TOMORROW** with its possible **adversaries**, its burdens, its false promise and poor performance. **TOMORROW** is also beyond our immediate control.

**TOMORROW'S sun will rise, either in splendor or behind a mask of clouds - but it will rise. Until it does, we have no stake in TOMORROW for it is yet unborn.**

This **leaves** only one day . . . **TODAY**. Any man can fight the battle of just one day. It is only when you **and I add the burdens of those two awful eternities . . . YESTERDAY AND TOMORROW THAT WE BREAK DOWN.**

It is not the experience of **TODAY** that **drives** men mad - it is remorse and bitterness for something which happened **YESTERDAY and the dread of what TOMORROW MAY BRING**

**LET US THEREFORE,  
LIVE BUT ONE DAY AT A TIME**

## Peace on Earth

"Peace on Earth, good will toward men" is what the greeting cards often say. A friend of mine, a college Latin professor, assures me that this is a bad translation. First of all, he said, the Latin word that we translate as "men" is more properly translated as "persons"! Latin had gender-free constructs long before the women's liberation movement appeared. Secondly, the "peace" is conditional on the "good will". The whole phrase is more properly translated as *Peace on earth to those of good will.*

This "conditional peace" is no stranger to the recovered alcoholic. The Big Book (pg. 83-84), in reference to working Step 9, states "If we are painstaking about this phase of our development, we will be amazed before we are half way through. We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness. We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it. We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace."

Want peace in your life? Obtaining it is simple. just work the steps. Go **get it!**

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## Financing Related Facilities

Some members of the Central Committee asked us to comment on Tradition 6: 'An A.A. group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise.'

Note first that this tradition does not distinguish related facilities from outside enterprises. A group that donates group funds to a treatment facility or a club violates this tradition just as much as a group that gives to the American Cancer Society or General Motors, for example.

When we put money in the A.A. basket, we expect it to be used for A.A. purposes. Other organizations have other means of support. Our only support comes from A.A. groups and members (Tradition 7).

Of course as individuals we may and do support other things. This is all well and good. But as A.A. groups, we must support our service facilities. We do not let other organizations support us with their funds, and we ought not support them with ours.

## Literature

New literature items available through the Central Office include:

*Daily Reflections* (the A.A. meditation book that was just completed).

*Alcoholics Anonymous* (our Big Book) in a large print format and also in Braille, both for the vision impaired.

The *four Absolutes* wallet cards

*H.A.L.T.* wallet cards

Come visit the literature display room at the Central Office.



CENTRAL BULLETIN



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 Harry D., Founder and Editor 18921968

CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
 ST. MALACHI CENTER

2416 Superior Viaduct • 8:00 p.m. Tuesday, November 6, 1990

PLEASE ATTEND

Your group may be represented by you or a member assigned to be your group representative. Let us take an active part in these important meetings to uphold OUR—

UNITY IN FELLOWSHIP

Mike F., Moderator

Elvira A., Secretary

CENTRAL COMMITTEE

PURPOSE

Because better understanding is the key to Friendship;  
 Because the public act of any group or individual involves our entire Fellowship;  
 Because we must continually take inventory of ourselves as individuals and as groups;

The A.A. Central Committee has these purposes:

To bring together representatives of all groups for discussions of policy and practice; to create high standards; to guard against exploitation or commercialization; to insure our humility as groups and individuals.  
 To protect unity of thought and purpose through the Central Bulletin, the Area-wide Meetings, and such other activities as seem consistent.  
 To maintain standards through the sponsoring of a Hospital Committee and such other committees as are necessary to carry on this work.  
 To serve as a clearing house for ideas.  
 The OBJECT of the Central Committee is SERVICE.

MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

November 6, 1990

ST. MALACHI'S CENTER

8:00 p.m.

The meeting was opened by Moderator, Mike F., leading members present in the Serenity Prayer. Vice Moderator, James P., read the purpose of the Central Committee.

The roll call showed that 33 members were present, representing 32 groups.

Minutes of the October meeting were read and approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Financial Committee: see below.

Action Committee: no report.

Central Bulletin: Bob McK., reported that John B., will be a co-editor of the Central Bulletin along with Robert V. and himself. The central bulletins that are mailed to all secretaries should be taken to the groups and made available to the members, the purpose is to generate new subscriptions, which are badly needed. Some groups raffle the Central Bulletin subscription as a prize.

To save time and cost the Central Bulletin will be mailed in a self-mailer. Also, unless anonymity is requested, the source of articles in the Central Bulletin will be used

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS: New groups announced and sanctioned:

**Women Survivors Closed Discussion**  
 Jayne Mazzarella Center  
 2891 E. 116th Street, Cleveland, OH  
 Friday 7:00 p.m., Closed Women

**Dawn Patrol**  
 Bay Village Presbyterian Church  
 25415 Lake Ave., Bay Village, OH  
 Friday 6:45 a.m., Non-smoking

**Winds of Change**  
 Mt. Zion Congregational Church  
 10723 Magnolia Dr. Cleveland, OH  
 Wed. 7:00 p.m. Closed Women

**Search For Serenity**  
 Pioneer Presbyterian Church  
 35100 Solon Rd., Solon, Ohio  
 Wed. 8:00 p.m. Closed Women (H. A.)

**Saturday Mid Morning**  
 Southgate Fellowship Room  
 20571 Southgate Park Blvd.  
 Maple Hts., OH, 10:00 a.m.

**Women Reaching Out**  
 Southgate Fellowship Room  
 20571 Southgate Park Blvd.  
 Maple Hts. OH Tues. 7:00 p.m. (C.W.)

**N.E. Ohio General Service Elections:** 1991-1992 delegate, Bert H., alternate delegate, Al J., representative to Central Committee John B.

47 Speakers were supplied by the District Office to Non A.A. Groups for the months of January through October 1990. There being not further business, the meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Central Committee Financial Report

October 1990

Central Bulletin Financial Report

October 1990

BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD		\$2,168.29
Sale of Literature-Who Me	\$346.80	
Rent for 10/2/90 Meeting	\$25.00	
Printing of 4,335 Who Me	165.30	(190.30)
NEW BALANCE		\$2,324.79

BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD		\$373.75
Total Deposits	\$185.00	
Printing of Oct. Central Bulletin	\$201.00	
Mailing of Oct. Central Bulletin	\$50.40	(251.40)
NEW BALANCE		\$307.35