THE FOURTH STEP:
Made a fearless and searching moral inventory of ourselves.

I have done a Fourth Step several different ways. I was told you can do a Fourth Step any way you want. I suppose this is true but the 3 thirty-day chips, two of which include five years in between, are a pretty good indicator of how well that worked for me. It was pointed out to me in this sobriety that before the “Big Book” there was no such thing as a Fourth Step. I must admit, this hurt my feelings as I like to think of myself as a pretty intelligent guy. So I took inventory straight out of the book. Luckily I was in a long-term MICA treatment center so I didn’t have a bunch of well-meaning people in AA telling me I might get drunk if I took my inventory too soon.

Now what I can share with you is that I had messed around with the first three steps in and out of A.A. over the course of 6 years (mostly out) as an atheist. When I look back on things in reflection, I realized that the inventory I took removed the hate from my heart for the people in my life. I realized they didn’t ruin my life. I had made decisions and took actions that bought the admission ticket to my own inescapable nightmare. The funny thing about that seemingly small event was that I started to have a “direct experience” with the Power that the book promised me I would have. There was no more arguing about whether God existed or what religion was right or any of that stuff from the debating society. This atheist had an experience with God after writing some stuff that a stupid old book called Alcoholics Anonymous told me to write. I have learned that if I have any problem in my life and I think you are to blame, if I will just write some inventory I will be happily wrong. I’m not always right anymore but in exchange I get to be happy, joyous, and free.

The Fear inventory made me angry. I wanted to be a tough guy and when people told me anger was a secondary emotion to fear that made me angry. I didn’t want to look at the fact that I was a scared, little boy. I didn’t want to see that the reason I carried guns on me at different times of my life was because my life was driven by fear. Either way, I wrote down the things that I knew in my heart to be true and what my sponsor said has proved to be true. If I have awareness of the fears inside of me, I have a chance of overcoming them through prayer. What I have no awareness of will overcome me. I saw that my life after my father’s suicide was driven by a crippling fear of losing people. In an effort to not let people know what was going on inside of me, I acted like I didn’t need you and then would be deeply hurt when you did leave. Now when I start doing that I can stop and pray, “God please remove this fear and direct my attention to what you would have me be.”

As for the Sex inventory, I was not interested in writing down every person I had sex with and then beating myself up over it. I already knew I had screwed up Big Time in that department. Luckily for me, the “Big Book” asked me to take a look at my conduct first and then see who got harmed by that conduct. It would be arrogant of me to think I harmed every person I had sex with (although they were probably all disappointed). This process helped me to come up with a sane and sound ideal for my current sex life. It was also a relief to find out that the Program never said not to date in the first year, that it was well meaning advice from people in AA who passed it off as a part of the Program. To have no more guilt over dating someone in my first year was a welcomed relief.

So I guess to sum up my experience, I couldn’t come to believe before the Fourth Step. I had too many things blocking me from God or a higher power if you wish. Had I not followed the directions of the “Big Book” to the best of my ability at 3 weeks sober and actually did a Fourth Step, I probably would have done what I always did, 1, 2, 3 and OUT! I thank God for putting some of those dreaded “Big Book Thumpers” in this atheist’s life to show me the clear-cut directions for having a Spiritual Awakening. Not only has the obsession to drink been removed from me but I now have a relationship with that Power greater than myself, and a Way of Life that truly works!

— Dustin B., The Firing Line, St. Paul
The Twelve Traditions: Tradition Four

Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole.

As always, freedom bring responsibility. Because each group is autonomous, it's up to each group to avoid any action that might harm A.A. And there have been such actions - or this Tradition would be unnecessary. "Implicit throughout A.A.'s Traditions," Bill W. wrote, "is the confession that our Fellowship has its sins. We admit that we have character defects as a society and these defects threaten us continually."

In a way, the Fourth Tradition is like the Fourth Step: It suggests that the A.A. group should take honest inventory of itself, asking about each of its independently planned actions, “Would this break any Tradition?” Like the individual member who chooses to make the Steps his or her guide toward happy sobriety, the wise group recognizes that the Traditions are not hindering technicalities—they are proven guides toward the chief objective of all A.A. groups . . .

From the pamphlet, The Twelve Traditions Illustrated, reprinted with permission of A.A. World Services, Inc.

The Twelve Concepts: Concept Four

Throughout our Conference structure, we ought to maintain at all responsible levels a traditional “Right of Participation,” taking care that each classification or group of our world servants shall be allowed a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge.

The principle of “Right of Participation” is built into the General Service Conference through the Conference Charter. Voting members include not only delegates, but also the trustees, and the directors and staff members of A.A. World Services (i.e., G.S.O.) and the A.A. Grapevine.

In the same way, the boards of these two operating entities include as voting members not only trustees, but also nontrustee directors and paid administrators and staff members.

[ . . . ]

. . . there is a spiritual reason for the “Right of Participation.” All of us desire to belong. In A.A., no members are “second class.” The “Right of Participation” therefore reinforces Tradition Two, that no member is placed in “ultimate authority” over another. We perform our service tasks better “when we are sure we belong — when our ‘participation’ assures us we are truly the ‘trusted servants’ described in Tradition Two.”

-Reprinted from the pamphlet, The Twelve Concepts for World Service Illustrated, by permission of AA World Services, Inc.

2008 Steering Board

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chair</td>
<td>Tom S.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alt. Chair</td>
<td>Mary Jo N.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Lesli D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Diane E.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members at Large 2008</td>
<td>Steve B. &amp; Jeff H.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Members at Large 2007</td>
<td>Lee B. &amp; Lisa L.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advisor to the Board</td>
<td>Jeff T.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Manager</td>
<td>Tom N.</td>
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Office Calls in February*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Count</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meeting information</td>
<td>215</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inventory hours</td>
<td>27</td>
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<tr>
<td>12th step calls</td>
<td>28</td>
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<tr>
<td>Temporary sponsor</td>
<td>34</td>
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<tr>
<td>Speaker request</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Special events</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>Outside issues</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Info For Professionals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administrative</td>
<td>164</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>44</td>
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<td>Total Calls</td>
<td>553</td>
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<td>Daily average</td>
<td>19.07</td>
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<tr>
<td>Visitors</td>
<td>224</td>
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*Call tally is for calls taken during office hours only and does not include calls taken during Night Owl shifts.
Saint Paul AA Intergroup Representatives’ Meeting Minutes, February 19, 2008

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 (see attendees below)

The Primary Purpose of Intergroup was read by Lisa L

January minutes were approved & accepted.

Treasurer’s Report. Diane E.  A) January contributions above budget at $6249; Sales were above budget at $5920; Thanks to the 43 groups who contributed $4,778 in January.

Office Report --Tom N.  A) The Intergroup Office will be moving 1st of March due to Spruce Tree Center management expansion of another tenant. This will be a larger space for same price; Suite# and mailing address remain the same. We’ll need some volunteers to help us move a few items. B) We are still accepting applications for Office part-time position left open by Matt Z on 2/1/08.

Website Report – (Jonathan ill). Night Owl site has updated content; we have 572 regular weekly meetings served by Intergroup office/website. Visit website (aastpaul.org) for more information.

Outreach Program – Lee B.  A) Has acquired Outreach helpers for visits to our 572 weekly meetings in Intergroup. Tom S stated that tonight’s attendance (36) speaks to the success of this Outreach Program.

Night Owl Report – Patty S.  A) All is going well; there is one open shift (1st Mon 5:30-10p). B) We can still use more volunteers for backup. C) Reminder: Orientation is on the 3rd Sat of the month—RSVP’s should be emailed (nightowl@aastpaul.org) 1 week in advance. If unable to attend, please contact night owl for 1-on-1 orientation training.

Intergroup Events.

Tradition Workshop March 1st. Lisa L, chair. Speakers lined up; Flyers distributed; Volunteer signup sheet passed. This year is Tradition 3.

The Board is finalizing dates(locations for remaining 2008 events; more to be revealed

Old Business:

By-Laws Committee: A) Marty and Tom S meeting w/lawyer 2/27/08 for review. B) Tom S informed reps that a previous member had caused a disruption at the earlier Board Meeting tonight, accusing Intergroup of changing By-laws without proper voting. To clarify: Our current By-Laws date back to 1964; were last amended in 1993. Our proposed By-Laws include all amendments voted on by Intergroup reps since 1964. C) Anyone interested in acquiring copy of current By-Laws can contact the Office. The proposed By-Laws will be available to members after lawyer review and Board approval. We intend to post these on the website. (www.aastpaul.org)

New Business (none)

Group Announcements or Concerns.

Many announcements of events – send flyers to webservant@aastpaul.org for posting.

LifeLine essay contributions can be 1 page in length; send to Tom N by 1st Wed. of month.

Concept Review (II) –Thanks, Joe! Great job! Patty S volunteered for March, Concept III.


Closed with the Responsibility Statement and Lord’s Prayer.

Groups & Officers in Attendance:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Andy L-Uptown</th>
<th>Ed M-Main Idea Sat 8am</th>
<th>Lee B-Board At-Large</th>
<th>Tony C-Basic Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Angela S-Midway</td>
<td>Greg M-OMD</td>
<td>Lesli D-Board Secretary</td>
<td>Rey H-Defogged Mens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barb H-Highland #11</td>
<td>James L-3rd Edition</td>
<td>Lisa L-Board At-Large</td>
<td>Stephanie K-Como BB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill S- ?</td>
<td>Jan B-McAlester/Plymouth</td>
<td>Marty M-NoTimeLikePresent</td>
<td>Steve B-Board At-Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christine P-Mplwd AA</td>
<td>Jason K-West End</td>
<td>Matt H-OMD</td>
<td>Tom N-Office Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diane E-Board Treasurer</td>
<td>Jeff C-Summit Hill</td>
<td>Mickey M-West End</td>
<td>Tom O-St. Joseph WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don D-Sun St.Paul Spkr Mtg</td>
<td>Jeff T-Board Advisor</td>
<td>Mike M-Sun St.Paul Spkr Mtg</td>
<td>Tom S-Board Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donald B-Main Idea Tues 8pm</td>
<td>Joe B-OMD</td>
<td>Patrick M-Applied Serenity101</td>
<td>Peggy B-Distr 19/Dakota</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dustin B-Firing Line</td>
<td>Josh R-Applied Serenity101</td>
<td>Patty S-Night Owl Coordinator</td>
<td>Co/Rsmnt</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Next Meeting: 7:30 PM on Tuesday, March 18th
7th Tradition
Suggestions for Groups

“Every group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.”

Your group can make an informed decision regarding contributions with information from A.A. World Services. The information below is a suggestion taken from the pamphlet: “Self-Support: Where money and spirituality mix.”

50% St. Paul Intergroup
Spruce Tree Center
1600 University Ave. #407
St. Paul, MN 55104

30% General Service Office
P.O. Box 459
Grand Central Station
New York, NY 10163

10% Southern MN Area 36
Area Assembly
P.O. Box 2812
Mpls., MN 55402

10% District Committee
Ramsey County:
District 8, P.O. Box 2267
St. Paul, MN 55102

Dakota County:
District 19, P.O. Box 1466
Burnsville, MN 55337

Washington County:
District 15, P.O. Box 181
Lake Elmo, MN 55042

SE Ramsey County:
District 26, P.O. Box 75980
St. Paul, MN 55175

BE A NIGHT OWL II
Night Owls are often the first AA contact for the newcomer! A Night Owl shift is a once-a-month commitment to answer Intergroup phones after hours. Some shifts can be done in the office; all can be done from home. The commitment can be filled by an individual or a group. If you can help, call Matt at the office or go to our website: www.aastpaul.org

District Meetings
District 8 (Ramsey Co.)
Fairview Community Center
1910 Co. Rd B, Rm 203, Roseville
3rd Wed., 7:30 PM

District 15 (Wash. Co.)
Christ Lutheran Church
11194 N. 36th St., Lake Elmo
4th Mon., 7:00 PM

District 19 (Dakota Co.)
Rosemount Community Center
13885 South Robert Trail
2nd Wed., 7:00 PM

District 26 (SE Ramsey Co.)
1099 Payne Ave. St. Paul
2nd Fri., 6:00 PM

www.district26-area36.org

“Thanks!” to the groups that contributed in February:

Applied Serenity 101
As Bill Sees It – Stillwater
Complete Defeat Group
East Side Squad 6
Fourth Dimension
Freedom from Bondage
Fri. 12x12 By the Book
Happy Hour Men’s Group
Highland Park Groups
Hugo AA Club
Maplewood Groups
Mendota Sat 1030 Group
Midway Club
Monday 12 X 12
North Dale Group
Outright Mental Defects
Primary Purpose - Burnsville
River Rats
Roseville Centennial Group
Sisters of Serenity
St. Paul Park Groups
Students of Life
Summit Women’s Group
Third Tradition Northfield
Uptown Club
Vadnais Heights Groups
Valley Creek Thurs Night
We Care Counseling
White Bear Lake
Woodbury Wed. Noon Group

The Lifeline: Purpose Statement

The Lifeline is a monthly newsletter of the St. Paul and Suburban Area Intergroup Association office of Alcoholics Anonymous. It is about, by, and for members of the A.A. Fellowship. Opinions expressed herein are not to be attributed to A.A. as a whole, nor does publication of any article imply endorsement by either A.A. or Intergroup. (Exception: Quotations from A.A. books or pamphlets are reprinted with permission from A.A. World Services, Inc.; The A.A. Preamble is reprinted with permission of A.A. Grapevine, Inc.) We welcome articles of opinion or descriptions of personal experience, which should be sent to Lifeline Editor, St. Paul Intergroup, 1600 University Avenue #407, St. Paul MN 55104. Materials or articles cannot be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope. Intergroup reserves the right to edit submissions for clarity, language, length and contents that may violate A.A.’s Traditions, etc. The deadline is the Wednesday before the third Tuesday of the month.
### UPCOMING A.A. EVENTS!!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aim for Ames—21st Annual</strong>&lt;br&gt;<del>Follow the Path</del></td>
<td>Quality Inn &amp; Suites, Ames, IA&lt;br&gt;Friday, 28 March 2008 – Sunday, 30 March 2008</td>
<td><strong>By the Book 4th Step Workshop</strong>&lt;br&gt;Downtown Alano - St. Paul&lt;br&gt;520 Robert St. at 10th Ave.&lt;br&gt;Every Thursday, March 27th to April 24th, 6:30pm</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>25th Annual Minneapolis Gratitude Night</strong>&lt;br&gt;Saturday, April 5th, 7:30pm</td>
<td>Minneapolis Convention Center&lt;br&gt;Rooms 200 A - J</td>
<td><strong>Reflections 2008</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>The General Service Office:</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Past, Present &amp; Future</strong>&lt;br&gt;Sunday, April 6th, 1:30 to 4:30pm&lt;br&gt;Valley of Peace Church, 4735 Bassett Creek Dr.&lt;br&gt;Golden Valley, MN 55422</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Midway Club Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser</strong>&lt;br&gt;April 12th, Dinner 3 to 6 pm</td>
<td>Meeting at 7 pm&lt;br&gt;1161 Sherburne Ave.&lt;br&gt;Info: 651-428-3032</td>
<td><strong>Fourteenth Annual Sunlight of the Spirit Weekend</strong>&lt;br&gt;April 18 to 20th</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>St. Paul AA Intergroup Spring Fling!!</strong>&lt;br&gt;Saturday, April 19th</td>
<td>Speaker Meeting, DJ Dance and More!&lt;br&gt;Lutheran Church of the Redeemer&lt;br&gt;285 N. Dale St., just south of I-94</td>
<td><strong>May 23 - 25, 2008</strong></td>
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### Is your meeting represented at Intergroup?

The April Representatives’ meeting will be held April 15th, 7:30 pm, at the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, 285 N. Dale St., St. Paul, 55103. The church is located just south of I-94; from Dale turn west on Iglehart to park.
Please let us know if your address changes one month ahead of time. It saves us the cost of return postage and enables you to get each issue of the Lifeline. Our mailing permit does not provide for mail forwarding. Thank you!

St. Paul Intergroup Faithful Fiver Form

Faithful Fivers contribute five dollars to St. Paul Intergroup each month to enable us to continue to carry our life-saving message. Your contribution entitles you to a one-year subscription to the Lifeline. You may also contribute annually, quarterly, etc.

Name ______________________________________
Street ______________________________________
City, State, Zip ________________________________

Please send this form and a check to:
St. Paul Intergroup, 1600 University Avenue W. #407, St. Paul MN 55104

☐ I would like to receive the Lifeline every month by email, not postal mail. My email address is:

(please print clearly) ____________________________________________