



STEP FIVE

Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

TRADITION FIVE (*LONG FORM*)

Each AA group ought to be a spiritual entity having but one primary purpose--that of carrying its message to the alcoholic who still suffers

REFLECTIONS ON STEP AND TRADITION 5

I got sober on a Tuesday evening in June of 2016. I took my seat at a mens' meeting in South Saint Paul just in time for introductions. I had no time to ponder or rationalize, and when it was my turn I said, "I'm Jim and I am an alcoholic." I felt a palpable weight lifted. I sat and listened to men share their stories, all of which included some flavor of fighting, fighting alcohol, people, places, or things, and I knew in my heart they were speaking their truth. I still had the taste of the IPA from happy hour on my breath, and I had a hard time making eye contact, but I allowed myself to be seen.

After 3 weeks of meetings, attempting

to do 90 meetings in 90 days, I met my sponsor, Mike, and he began working the steps with me. He asked me what I was sourcing for power, asked if I liked the result that I was getting by staying sober moment by moment, and getting to meetings. He made it simple for me. He had me doing Steps 1 and 2 and 3 each day. I wore out the Serenity Prayer. He gave me the instructions for Step 4 as laid out in the Big Book and turned me loose to write.

I began with my earliest resentments, who I was resentful at, the cause, which of my instincts were involved, and my part. It was plain to me that I was the common denominator, the common link, and that I was the source of my own suffering. My resentments, dishonesty, fears, my victim mentality, my self-righteousness, etc., were how I had wronged the people I loved and cared about, the people I worked for and with, and the complete strangers I encountered. I could see the exact nature of how I wronged others.

Mike had me write out my fifth step and I had my first insight into how

The Lifeline is the monthly newsletter of the St. Paul and Suburban Area Intergroup, Inc. It is about, by, and for groups and 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 St. Paul Intergroup. We welcome articles on a Step, Tradition or Concept, in addition to descriptions of personal experience. We also welcome original cartoons and drawings expressing the wry side of A.A. experience.

Please email your article to Lifeline@aastpaul.org or send it by regular mail to Lifeline Editor, St. Paul Intergroup, 33 Wentworth Ave E, Suite 355, W. St. Paul, MN 55118-3431. Materials or articles mailed to us cannot be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope. Intergroup reserves the right to edit submissions for clarity, language, length, and content that might violate A.A.'s Traditions, etc.

St. Paul & Suburban Area Intergroup, Inc.

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Fax: 651-290-0209

Office Hours: Monday through Friday – 9:30 AM to 5:30 PM; Closed weekends and holidays

PLEASE POST ON BULLETIN BOARD

"Sunlight of the Spirit"



GOPHER STATE
ROUNDUP XLVIII
May 26th, 27th & 28th
2023



Activities and Accommodations:

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel
Highway 100 & 494 • Bloomington, MN

MEETINGS • SPEAKERS • FELLOWSHIP • HOSPITALITY ROOMS • A.A. FILMS

REGISTRATION – \$30.00 Contribution (Ages 13 & Over)

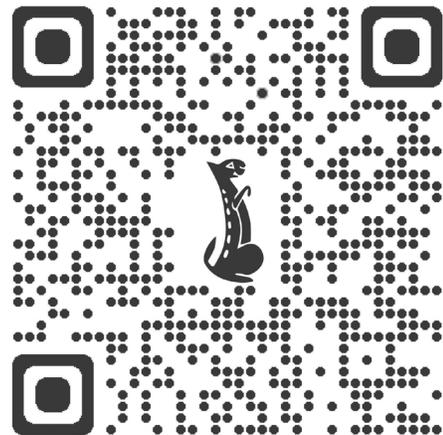
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or directly with DoubleTree by Hilton at
800-222-8733.

Mention Gopher State Roundup for a
special rate.

Gopher State Roundup is a special A.A.
conference with Al-Anon participation.
Gopher State Roundup is self-supporting.



dishonest I had been with myself and others, and how harmful this was to me. I had believed in my heart that I was an "open book," a what you see is what you get version of me--honest Jim. In reading and sharing my written inventory and 5th step with Mike I could see myself, maybe, for the first time. I could see how unhappy I had been in my first marriage that ended after nearly 11 years. I could see that there were things that I wanted for myself that I was afraid to ask for, so I sought manipulative and dishonest ways of getting these needs met. And, in behaving this way, I was always stepping on toes.

In doing this work I got the immediate promise of the 5th Step. In honestly looking at myself, and my wrongs, and admitting these to another human being, I was able to look myself, my sponsor and the world in the eye. I held nothing back and, gratefully, I haven't had a drink since that Tuesday night in June of 2016. Furthermore, I continue to use this step in my life. As I walk this recovery path new things bubble up that I hadn't considered on my first pass. Working our program helps loosen the grip of denial and other unhelpful coping strategies to reveal new things to share with my sponsor and other sober friends....

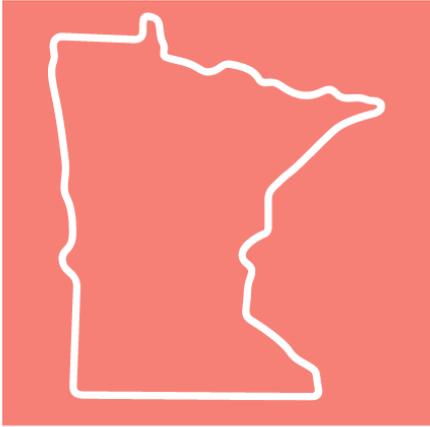
And, the confessional aspect of this step has been a blessing. I call sober friends or my sponsor to tell on myself --about what I am going through, about my still obsessive thinking, and about how I have behaved that is troublesome. The results are that I have people that tell me that my reactions

are human or a little off-the-beam or share an insight or perspective that is always helpful. And, that thing that had so much energy in my head, loses much of its power.

This leads me to a brief reflection on Tradition 5 which reminds us that our primary purpose is to carry our message to others still suffering. I have chosen to focus on the long form of the tradition which states: "Each Alcoholics Anonymous group ought to be a spiritual entity having but one primary purpose - that of carrying its message to the alcoholic who still suffers."

That first meeting I attended in South Saint Paul, and each meeting that I have attended along my journey in our fellowship has been a spiritual entity. I've attended meetings in Massachusetts, New York, Puerto Rico, and have had a felt experience that is indescribably wonderful. Each meeting is a sacred space where people with a desire to stop drinking can come and be safe and are seen and if they choose, can be heard. And, what is spoken is a language of the heart - people sharing their experience, strength and hope that others may benefit, and all receive the gifts that come from confession and the 12 steps and a uniquely personal relationship to a power greater than ourselves.

Jim B. , Saint Paul MN



RULE 62 STEP & TRADITION MEETING

9TH ANNIVERSARY POTLUCK HYBRID MEETING

**6:00PM
POTLUCK**

**7:00PM
OPEN
SPEAKER
MEETING**

**SPEAKER:
DOUG M.
(BETTER
THAN GOLD)**



**JUN
24**

**CALVARY
LUTHERAN CHURCH**
341 Hamline Avenue South
Saint Paul, MN 55105

ZOOM MEETING ID
392 424 726

***FRIENDS
AND FAMILY
OF AA
WELCOME TO
ATTEND!**

TRADITION FIVE

Each group has but one primary purpose--to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers

PRIMARY PURPOSE

I love my home group. I'm not trying to say it's the best in the world, because my hope is that everyone feels that way about their own home group. But for me, ours is the best.

Our group started in 1998, and our name is Primary Purpose. I feel it truly depicts us and what we are about. Tradition Five long form reminds me that "each Alcoholics Anonymous group ought to be a spiritual entity..." and I truly feel we are.

I arrive at my home group an hour before the meeting starts. The room has already been set up and the crew has gone to dinner. There's usually about five or so minutes when I'm there by myself, and I sit and feel the spirit before the "entity" starts and our members begin to trickle in. That's when the place comes alive. I listen to the glad tidings and the laughter. I can smell the coffee. I see the smiles of the regulars and the scared faces of our new friends as they enter.

Tradition Five goes on to say, a "... group has but one primary purpose--to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers." What is my group's message? I know what my message is, but my group's?

Well the first thing is...Our group is accessible for members using wheelchairs. We post signs so people will know where we're located. We have at least two greeters at our door to welcome people. We have a nice literature area, which includes Grapevine and La Viña and other

AA literature. We also have CDs of past speakers and birthday cards for members to sign. We also have a table with AA pamphlets and flyers of upcoming events. At the front of the room are the three window shades: Steps, Traditions and Concepts. We have lots of coffee and donuts, plenty of comfy seats and a spirit in the room that's alive.

If you happen to sit down before our meeting starts, be advised you will continually be approached and welcomed. You might even be invited to meet others.

The meeting starts promptly at 8 p.m. and we all take our seats. We appreciate the quiet respect shown during the readings and our speakers.

During our announcements you'll hear how to get involved with Hospitals & Institutions service. We offer help with getting a sponsor, literature or service commitments. We also announce annual AA birthdays, as well as reports on Grapevine, La Viña, General Service and intergroup. We wrap up at 9:15 with a prayer. Fellowship continues until around 10. Our group's message is one of recovery, unity and service in action. I think I'll keep coming back.

Try this: The next time you visit your home group, pretend you're a newcomer or a visitor. Ask yourself... What do you see, feel, hear? Is your group contributing to that spiritual entity? It's a lifeline for many. May that lifeline be strong.

Debbie D. | Concord., CA.

Reprinted from the AAGrapevine,
April 2019

THOUGHTS FROM THE BOARD

Topic: Our Primary Purpose

We hear time and time again that our primary purpose in Alcoholics Anonymous is to help the alcoholic who still suffers, but what exactly does that mean and to what lengths are we supposed to go to in order to ensure that that happens? The biggest question I had whenever I heard this early on in my sobriety was: WHY?

I hope sharing some of my personal experience will be able to help answer some of these questions. After the first few months of what I like to call “grace period” at the beginning of my sobriety where I was solely focused on getting through the next 24 hours I came to the sobering conclusion that I was a very selfish, self-seeking, and self-centered individual. My years of alcohol and drug use resulted in me becoming very jaded to the very idea that other people had emotions and feelings, I was still stuck in the cycle of protecting and serving the most important thing in the world to me, ME. I’m told in the Big Book that, “Above everything, we alcoholics must be rid of this selfishness. We must, or it kills us!” (Pg 62, Alcoholics Anonymous). How was I to change something that seemed so utterly ingrained in my being? The Big Book continues with “God makes that possible. And there often seems no way of entirely getting rid of self without His aid.” I had to strengthen my relationship with God and do his work well. What better way of doing that than the tried-and-true method this program presents, the 12 steps?

After my initial months of selfish sobriety, I was on my way to an experience that still brings tears to my eyes: I had gone through the steps very quickly with my

sponsor, the way the founders intended, and I was taking other men through the steps the same way my sponsor took me through them. The selfishness that I thought I was doomed to live in for eternity slowly started melting away and I began to gain more interest in helping others than I had in protecting my ego. The coolest part of all of this work with others was that my interest in it grew exponentially, it became something that fueled my spiritual progression, and I didn’t want to lose that. Helping others recover from the same seemingly hopeless condition I believed myself to be doomed to, coupled with a strong growing connection with God, became the foundation of my entire life.

The lengths that I was willing to go to in order to help the alcoholic who was still suffering began to stretch at this time, the feeling of being obligated to do these things turned into a feeling of having an opportunity to do so. I found myself answering the phone late at night, driving to seedy motels to pick people up and drop them off at detox, consoling the men I sponsor during my workday, taking any opportunity I could to speak at treatment centers and detoxes, and the wildest thing about all of it, none of it felt like work. There is an insurmountable sense of joy I receive from being able to help those that need it. That joy of being selfless started to overtake my seemingly untouchable sense of selfishness.

The wonderful thing about this program is the idea of practicing these principals in all of our affairs, meaning work, relationships, friendships, family, etc.

(Continued on page 11)

I got to start working on showing up as a selfless individual in my dating life, in my

SELF-SUPPORT SUGGESTIONS FOR GROUPS

“Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.” The Conference-approved pamphlet: “Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix” offers the following suggestions for the distribution of group funds after group expenses have been paid:

50% St. Paul Intergroup

33 Wentworth Ave E.
Suite 355
West St. Paul, MN 55118-3431

30% General Service Office

P.O. Box 2407
James A Farley Station
New York, NY 10116-2407

10% Southern MN Area 36

Southern Minnesota Area Assembly
P.O. Box 2812
Mpls., MN 55402-0812

10% District Committee

Ramsey County:

District 8, P.O. Box 131523
St. Paul, MN 55113

Dakota County:

District 19, P.O. Box 1466
Burnsville, MN 55337

Washington County:

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

WAYS TO FINANCIALLY SUPPORT INTERGROUP

1. VIA SQUARE

Use the camera on your phone to scan this QR code to be redirected to the SPI contribution webpage



<https://square.link/u/jlF6dLuj>

2. VIA CASHAPP

Contribute to SPI via CashApp
~ \$spintergroup

Please add SPI to your favorites and consider making regular contributions each time you make 7th Tradition contributions to other groups.

3. VIA CHECK

You are always welcome to stop by during business hours, or mail a personal or AA group check to the office at:

Saint Paul Intergroup
33 Wentworth Ave E, Ste 355
West St. Paul, MN
55118-3431

**Minnetonka Big Book Study Group
of
Alcoholics Anonymous**

presents its

**29th Annual Serenity Breakfast
Sunday May 21, 2023**

at the Minnetonka Community Center
14600 Minnetonka Blvd ~ Minnetonka, MN 55345



**Guest AA Speaker
Bob D. from Las Vegas, NV**



Speaker will be ASL interpreted

**Breakfast: 8:00 am to 10:25 am
Speaker Meeting: 10:30 am to Noon**

**Only \$15.00 in advance ~ \$18.00 at the door
(Speaker only = Seventh Tradition)**

Map and directions on the back of this flyer

DISTRICT SERVICE MEETINGS

2023 INTERGROUP BOARD OF DIRECTORS

District 8 (Ramsey Co.)
 Fairview Community Center
 1910 Cty. Rd B West, Rm 108
 Roseville
 3rd Wed., 7:00 PM
 Email: dist8@area36.org (for Zoom info)

District 15 (Wash. Co.)
 Christ Lutheran Church
 11194 N. 36th St.
 Lake Elmo
 4th Mon., 7:00 PM
 Email: dist15@area36.org (for Zoom info)

District 19 (Dakota Co.)
 Rosemount Community Center
 13885 South Robert Trail
 Rosemount
 2nd Wed., 7:00 PM
 dist19@area36.org
 Email: dist19@area36.org (for Zoom info)

Advisor to the Board
 Chairperson Eliot W.
 Alternate Chairperson
 Secretary Kelly K.
 Treasurer Bill C.
 Alternate Treasurer
 2023 Member-At-Large Tom W.
 2023 Member-At-Large Angie T.
 2024 Member-At-Large Janice K.
 2024 Member-At-Large Mary U.
 Office Manager Noah L-C
 Web Servant (non voting) Jonathan L.
 Night Owl Coordinator (non voting) Rachel P.

SPECIAL SKILLS NEEDED

THE SAINT PAUL INTERGROUP OFFICE

is interested in expanding our volunteer base to include people skilled in the following:

- graphic design
- office administration
- retail sales
- human resources/training
- event coordination
- communications



LOOKING FOR A SERVICE OPPORTUNITY?

Become a St. Paul Intergroup Night Owl

If you are interested - Contact:
 Nightowl@aastpaul.org
 to schedule training.

St. Paul Intergroup Office
 33 Wentworth Ave E, Suite 355
 West St. Paul, MN 55118-3431
 To RSVP - please call 651-227-5502

For more information or to volunteer your time, please email manager@aastpaul.org or call the office at 651-227-5502

NEED A BOOK?

St. Paul Intergroup is a great resource for all AA literature, from our basic text, Alcoholics Anonymous (a.k.a. Big Book), to all sorts of AA literature and pamphlets.

Intergroup also sells medallions, book covers, and other recovery-related items.



Stop in or shop online!
aaspi.company.site

Intergroup Online Store

BE OF SERVICE

Much of the work at St. Paul Intergroup is supported by volunteers, including 24-hour phone answering through Night Owl and outreach to member groups. We can even connect you to other service opportunities in the Twin Cities.

Whether answering the phone, helping to fulfill online orders, or helping to host events, Intergroup can help you help other alcoholics through a variety of 12 Step work.

St. Paul Intergroup exists through AA member 7th Tradition support.

CashApp: *\$spintergroup*

Shop in person:
33 Wentworth Ave E, Ste 355
West St Paul, MN 55118
(651) 227-5502



FIND A MEETING

The St. Paul Intergroup website has an interactive listing of all AA meetings within the servicing area. No matter the day of the week, or the time of day, find the support you need.

www.aastpaul.org

Intergroup Meeting Directory



ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

St. Paul Intergroup is here to help with recovery support.

Call anytime—our phones are answered 24/7.

Our staff, volunteers, or the website can assist you and your family in finding AA resources to help.

651-227-5502

BUY ITEMS THROUGH INTERGROUP!

Purchasing AA recovery items through Intergroup helps sustain our recovery support in the community.

friendships, at my job, and with my family. My life started to slowly become less about me and more about others, which looking back on it in hindsight, is a complete miracle.

There undoubtedly has been many ebbs and flows in my experience with being selfless, there are still many situations in life that I think of myself first and others second, it probably happens every day, but fortunately with the help of God and the program of Alcoholics Anonymous the selfish thoughts are fleeting and usually quickly replaced with selfless action. This is even something I have struggled with during my time on the Board of Intergroup, forgetting what the primary purpose is and thinking in black and white when it comes to getting motions passed and policies instated. The wild thing is that the spark and drive to help others comes back so quickly and so strongly whenever I do find myself getting into the "business" mentality when doing intergroup work, all I have to do is instinctually think of the "why" behind

my actions and it all comes flooding back.

I find my life to be filled with constant blessings now and am forever grateful for all the trials and tribulations I've had the opportunity to endure. I'd like to leave y'all with my favorite line in the first 164 pages, "Cling to the thought that, in God's hands, the dark past is the greatest possession you have - the key to life and happiness for others. With it you can avert death and misery for them." (pg 124) The primary purpose of Alcoholics Anonymous gave my life more meaning and worth than I could have ever imagined, it makes me grateful for all of the pain, and it fills me with excitement and hope of who I may meet tomorrow or the next day, for, who knows, they may very well be looking for the spiritual solution we have to offer.

Eliot Wood, Chair to the Board of Intergroup



12th Step Calls

6



Office Calls

160



Meeting Info Calls

71



Speakers Calls

5



Literature Purchased

303 Books

THE FOLLOWING GROUPS, MEMBERS AND FAITHFUL FIVER MEMBERS MADE THE ABOVE SERVICES POSSIBLE:

- 11 W. Bernard Group
- Apple Valley Monday AM Women's Mtg.
- Area 36
- Coffee Shop group
- District 19
- Friends in Recovery
- Gratitude in Action
- Grovers Thursday Night
- Happy Joyous and Free - Mahtomedi
- Highland Park Groups
- Maplewood Groups
- Midway Club
- No Time Like the Present
- North Dale Group
- Pages of Wisdom
- Rosemount Groups
- Saturday Morning Womens Group
- Summit Hill
- Third Tradition Northfield
- Thursday Night Big Book - Nfld
- Tuesday Night Friends
- Una Luz en el Camino
- Uptown Group
- Wednesday Night Men's 12 x 12
- Woodbury Wed. Noon Group

-
-
- 25 A.A. Groups contributed \$ 3,165
 - 20 Faithful Fivers contributed \$ 383
 - 17 Digital Contributions \$1164
-
-

Thank You So Very Much!

St. Paul & Suburban Area Intergroup
33 Wentworth Ave E
Suite 355
West St. Paul, MN 55118-3431

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*Please let us know a month in advance if your address changes. 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 **Individual Contribution** Enrollment Form

Your Intergroup strives to be self-supporting, and with your personal support we can continue to carry our vital message of Hope and Recovery to all who need and want it. Your contribution entitles you to a one-year subscription to the Lifeline. Contributions may be made annually, bi-annually, quarterly, or monthly. Please consider becoming one of our *Faithful Fivers* (\$5.00/month), *Terrific Tennes* (\$10.00/month), or *Fantastic Fifteeners* & \$15.00/month).

1. Contact Information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: ____ ZIP: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

2. Amount & Frequency:

Amount \$ _____

Frequency: (check one)

Monthly Quarterly Bi-Annually Annually

Start on: ____/____/____

Faithful Fiver (\$5.00/month)

Terrific Tenner (\$10.00/month)

Fantastic Fifteener (\$15.00/month)

3. Choose a Payment Method:

Credit Card/Debit

Visa MasterCard AMEX Discover

Card # ____/____/____/____

Expiration Date: ____/____

Name on Card: _____

Signature: _____

**I authorize St. Paul Intergroup to automatically bill my account as specified (monthly, quarterly, etc). I understand that I am free to cancel this authorization at any time by contacting Intergroup.*

Check - Please make payable to:

Saint Paul Intergroup
33 Wentworth Ave E, Suite 355
West St. Paul, MN 55118-3431