# The Lifeline 

September, 2006

## STEP NINE: Made direct amends to such people whenever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

Step 9 is a rewarding step for us in the sense that it clears our conscience. We attempt this step with a lot of mixed emotions. We ask ourselves: " Is this going to be a worth-while experience asking our friends and family for forgiveness?

Then when we actually complete an amend, we are usually surprised with the reaction we receive. As it says in Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions (page 85): "This atmosphere of approval and praise is apt to be so exhilarating as to put us off balance by creating an insatiable appetite for more of the same." We should be prepared for any reaction that we receive some times, there's an inner peace we feel after the amend. One of our members, Tom S., had this ninth step experience: "When I began Step 9, I referred first to Step 4; then, followed up with my eighth step to complete an honest ninth step. I first felt I should categorize my amends from worst to first. Then I realized everyone should be treated the same. I just wanted all my amends to be sincere and from the heart. My hardest amend was to my deceased father Leo S., who died with thirty-six years of sobriety. I went to his grave site and placed my 2 -year medallion between the grass and the tombstone. I then got down on my knees and prayed the Lord's Prayer. Soon after, I received a peaceful and overwhelming feeling that I was forgiven."

Sometimes we feel really good about ourselves after a positive amend. Just remember what it says in Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions "After taking this preliminary trial at making amends, we may enjoy such a sense of relief that we conclude our work is finished. We will want to rest on our laurels."

In other words, keep going on with the steps. Remember our motto: "One day at a time". Taken even further- an hour or a minute at a time, but we must keep making the amends owed to people. Try to stay positive; be prepared for any reaction and stay in the moment.


St. Paul Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous®

## The Twelve Concepts: Concept IX

CONCEPT IX: Good service leaders, together with sound and appropriate methods of choosing them, are at all levels indispensable for our future functioning and safety. The primary world service leadership once exercised by the founders of AA must necessarily be assumed my the Trustees of the General service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous.

No society can function well without able leadership in all its levels, and A.A. can be no exception. It must be said, though, that we A.A.'s sometimes cherish the thought that we can do without much personal leadership at all. We are apt to warp the traditional idea of "principles before personalities" around to such a point that there would be no "personality" in leadership whatever. This would imply rather faceless automatons trying to please everybody, regardless.

At other times we are quite as apt to demand that A.A.'s leaders must necessarily be people of the most sterling judgment, morals, and inspirations; big doers, prime examples of all, and practically infallible.

Real leadership, of course, has to function in between these entirely imaginary poles of hoped for excellence. In A.A. certainly no leader is faceless, and neither is any leader perfect. Fortunately our Society is blessed with any amount of real leadership - the active people of today and the potential leaders of tomorrow as each new generation of able members swarms in. We have only to seek these folks out and trust them to serve us.
--Reprinted from Twelve Concepts for World Service, p. 38-39, with permission from AA World Services Inc.

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

When Tradition Nine was first written, it said that 'Alcoholic Anonymous needs the least possible organization.' In years since then, we have changed our minds about that. Today, we are able to say with assurance that Alcoholics Anonymous - AA as a whole - should never be organized at all. Then, in seeming contradiction, we proceed to create special service boards and committees which in themselves are organized. ("Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions," p. 172. Reprinted with permission from AA World Services Inc.)

As the Twelve Steps correlate and complement each other, so do the Twelve Traditions and some more directly. My belief is that Traditions 6, 7 and 8 lead into Tradition 9, which, of course, automatically leads to Tradition 10.

With organizations, bosses decree punishments for misdeeds and mistakes. As a fellowship, we hand out forgiveness and understanding. Organizations have leaders over leaders answering to vice-presidents answering to a president who reports all to a CEO, and so on up to the shadowy councils. In the fellowship, trusted servants answer only to their higher power - their true belief.
A.A. members have great suffering and great love as disciplinarians and that's more than enough.

Alcoholics Anonymous is not an organization but we are a fellowship. A family of brothers and sisters that truly and unconditionally care for and love one another in their own individually way. This is a pact more binding than any official contract and one I can abide by.

I praise each and every one of you.

## Your trusted servant, Brigham

This Tradition, as much as Tradition Eight, sets forth the purpose of our Intergroup and the way it should be run:
It is clear now that we ought never to name boards to govern us, but it is equally clear that we shall always need to authorize workers to serve us. It is the difference between the spirit of vested authority and the spirit of service, two concepts which are sometimes poles apart. It is in this spirit of service that we elect the AA group's informal rotating committee, the Intergroup association for the area, and the General Service Conferences of Alcoholics Anonymous for A.A. as a whole ... the aim of our services is to bring sobriety within reach of all who want it. ("Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions," p. 173-174. Reprinted with permission from AA World Services Inc.)

Tom N., Intergroup Office manager.

|  | 2006 Steering Board |
| :--- | :--- |
| Chair: |  |
| Marty M. |  |
| Alt. Chair: | Jeff T. |
| Secretary: | Eric H. |
| Treasurer: | Mary Jo N. |
| Members at Large 2006: | Alfred K. and Roxi S. |
| Members at Large 2005: | Tom S. and Patty M. |
| Advisor to the Board: | Renee B. |
| Office Manager: | Tom N. |


| Meeting information | 200 |
| :--- | ---: |
| Inventory hours | 11 |
| 12th step calls | 30 |
| Temporary sponsor | 31 |
| Speaker request | 16 |
| Special events | 4 |
| Outside issues | 39 |
| Administrative | 69 |
| Other | 59 |
| Total Calls | $\mathbf{4 5 9}$ |
| Daily average | $\mathbf{2 1 . 9}$ |
| Visitors | 107 |

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## St Paul AA Intergroup Minutes from July 18, 2006 Main Body Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 7:30; the primary purpose of Intergroup was read.
In attendance: Roxi S, John F, Julie S, Tom N, Mary Jo N, Paul T, Jonathan, Barb B, Suzanne B, Jeff T, Marty M, John K, David A, Tom A, Charlie S, Lisa L, Diane E, Karen V, Alfred K, Barb D, Jim L, Renee B, Kim T, Jamie L, Charlie M, Greg M, Julie M, Eric H.

The June minutes were approved.
Treasurer's Report: Mary Jo presented the treasurer's report for July. Group contributions for the month are slightly greater than budget. However, YTD they are still less than budget. Overall, for the month we were $\$ 100$ over budget and even if we disregard our special contribution, we are ahead of budget for the year.
The Office Report: Tom delivered the office report for July. We have a new part time employee, Julie S. helping in the main office. Special recognition was given to our volunteers who have been very helpful during the interim. We have purchased a new photocopier to publish materials in-office. Part of it is missing but will be received within one week.
Website Report: Jonathan presented the July website report. June was a slow month, as usual. We now post 550 meetings in our directory and have been updating the directory as needed.
Outreach: Alfred presented the July Outreach report. Four new volunteers signed up to help. Alfred has decided to change from business meetings to open speaker meetings where he can address more people. Charlie M, Val L, Mary J, and Roxi S are all onboard with Outreach.
Night Owl Report: Dianne presented the May night owl report. She has a few open shifts, which is great, since just a year earlier there were MANY open shifts. She also handed out new packets which are very clear and easy to understand for anyone new to night owl.

## Upcoming Events:

Old Timers' Recognition \& Ice Cream Social - Tom S. Saturday September 162 PM—We will add a count-up to highlight the old-timers present.
Fall Workshop - Renee B. Tues, October 3 7PM-We still require one female speaker for a $4^{\text {th }}$ step talk.
Gratitude Night - Jeff T Saturday November 18, 7:30 PM—A male speaker with one year is still needed.
New Years' Eve - Marty M. December 31-We are looking for a DJ for the event.
Old Business:
Open House - Roxi S. Saturday June 24, 11am to 3 pm . There was low turnout but the event was good. It will likely be added as an annual event.
Spring Fling 2007 A consensus is being taken as to how next year's event will be planned. Intergroup used to hold a catered dinner, but as interest waned, the cost became less manageable. In order to rent a dinner hall and have it catered, we would need to charge $\$ 25+$ per person, something a lot of people aren't willing to do. The final vote was to keep the event the way it is now, forgetting the old dinner format.
Non Conference Literature is something people have been asking for. Our office has many loyal supporters, many of whom would like to support us by purchasing non-conference books and tapes. There are no hard and fast rules for handling this and about half of Intergroup offices do carry these texts. Tradition six would steer us away from this, as would our many supporters who are against it. This event will be decided upon at the September 19 Main body meeting. All groups are prompted to return with a "yes" or "no" answer. Much discussion was had.

## New Business:

## Group Announcements

Alfred K presented concept VII
Barb B volunteered to present concept VIII in August
Suzanne presented the July 18 mock rep report
David volunteered to present the August mock rep report
Closed with the Responsibility Statement and the Lord's Prayer.

## Notes from your Office Manager: Further Reflections on Our Literature by Tom N.

Since May of this year, our Intergroup board and representatives have been discussing the question of adding nonConference Approved literature for sale in our office. Several members and a few groups had asked us about carrying items such as the Twenty-Four Hours a Day book, or recordings of our meetings. Policies on carrying non-AA material vary widely from one office to another, and some members have wished that our office carried a wider selection. Then, one group brought this up formally at the Intergroup Representatives' meeting. This question was last addressed by the St. Paul Intergroup board in 1992. At that time, the decision was made to stop carrying non-A.A. material and limit the office to materials published by A.A. World Services or the Grapevine, medallions, and a Gopher State Tape Library catalogue for special orders. Addressing this question is made more difficult because there is no specific recommendation for Intergroups and Central Offices from our General Service Office, nor from the recommendations of the General Service Conference. This decision is left up to each office to make. Our current board has asked the groups that support St. Paul Intergroup to reflect on the issue, and to vote at the Intergroup Representative's meeting held Tuesday, September 19th.

Below we have printed some information that should be helpful to members and groups in considering this issue. While many groups have benefited from discussing this question and reflecting on our Traditions, other groups have learned that their knowledge of how to conduct a "group conscience" process is a little fuzzy. Our past treasurer, Carolyn B., has suggested the following article to help groups understand what an "informed group conscience" really means. Following on the next page are excerpts from the General Service Office guidelines for Intergroups/Central Offices, and those for Literature Committees.

## In A.A.'s "Benign Anarchy" Informed Group Conscience Is Our Ultimate Authority

From Box 459, News \& Notes From the General Service Office of A.A. VOL 35, NO 1, FEB/MARCH 1989
Co-founder Bill W. liked to call A.A. a "benign anarchy," and for good reason. A.A. is a spiritual movement, and as Tradition Two clearly states, our sole authority "is a loving God as He may express Himself in the group conscience." But what exactly is the group conscience? How does it differ from a group opinion or a majority vote? And what is the best way to get there?

It is generally agreed that the group conscience strives for unanimity through enlightenment, spirituality and adherence to our Steps, Traditions and Concepts. On sensitive issues, the group works slowly - discouraging formal motions until a clear sense of its collective view emerges. Placing principles before personalities, the group is wary of dominant opinions. Its voice is heard when a well-informed group arrives at a decision. The result rests on more than a "yes" or "no" count - precisely because it is the spiritual expression of the group conscience.

The late Dean K., who served a term as delegate, California/Northern Interior, and then managed the Seattle Central Office for a time, said that there are two ways to arrive at a group conscience: "The competitive way permits the person with the loudest voice to push his idea across, take a vote and come up with a majority decision. This is not informed group conscience. In the cooperative way, group members come together in mutual trust to arrive at a group decision, not one individual's personal triumph .

Dean's formula for a cooperative and informed group conscience calls for facts (or presentations) on both sides of a question. "The meeting is not thrown open for general discussion," he stressed. "This would allow the more vocal members to set the debate. It is suggested that the chairperson call on each member in turn, allowing two minutes for each to speak. No member should speak a second time until all have had their turns; this gives even the quietest person an equal chance. The chairperson expresses his or her opinions only after all the others have spoken."
"It is important," Dean noted, "that the minority voice always be heard; but it should be born in mind that while the minority voice sometime is right, it is just as often wrong. Unless the minority voice is decidedly persuasive, it should be considered in its proper light - as a minority voice. To permit the minority always to influence the majority is to permit the tail to wag the dog."

Beyond the group level, the A.A. General Service Conference has the responsibility of acting as the collective group conscience of the Fellowship. About the closest thing to a collective voice that A.A. has, the Conference produces statements on important matters of policy that affect A.A. as a whole; approves the choice of some trustee nominees for the General Service Board and directly elects others. But neither the Conference nor the board can dictate to any A.A. group or member.

Not always understood, group conscience as expressed in Tradition Two is a powerful spiritual concept that makes it possible for people of diverse backgrounds and temperament to rise above personal ambition and unite in our common purpose: to stay sober and extend the hand of A.A. to the alcoholic who still suffers.

## Excerpts from the A.A. General Service Office Guidelines, Related to Intergroup Literature Sales <br> FROM "A.A. GUIDELINES: CENTRAL OR INTERGROUP OFFICES"

Suggested methods of financing a central office: 2) Sale of Literature.
Many service offices publish their own meeting lists; others also produce introductory pamphlets explaining A.A. These can be sold at a slight profit to help defray office expenses. It is also possible to buy books from G.S.O. for resale at the retail price, the profit going to support the central office. The Conference-approved literature catalog describes various discounts.

## FROM "A.A. GUIDELINES: LITERATURE COMMITTEES" Some General Service Conference Literature Committee Advisory Actions

It was recommended that:
1968: Conference-approved literature and G.S.O. Guidelines be displayed and distributed at assembly meetings. 1969: One group member be chosen to be solely responsible for the distribution of Conference-approved literature and its display.

1971: The delegates assume responsibility for informing A.A.s of all available Conference-approved literature, and that the updated spring and fall literature order blanks which are mailed with Box 4-5-9 be reviewed al district and assembly meetings.

1972: It be suggested that when a local A.A. facility (central office, intergroup, group, etc.) sells non-Conferenceapproved literature, it be clearly designated as such.

1977: It was suggested that A.A. groups be discouraged from selling literature not distributed by the General Service Office and the Grapevine.

1986: In an effort to strengthen our network of literature representatives to ensure that A.A. literature is available at meetings, as well as catalog order forms for books and cassettes that individuals are likely to want, it is suggested that groups appoint literature coordinators.

The spirit of the 1977 Conference action regarding group literature displays be reaffirmed, and recommended the suggestion that A.A. groups be encouraged to display or sell only literature published and distributed by the General Service Office, the A.A. Grapevine and other A.A. entities.

## From the G.S.O. pamphlet, "Conference-Approved Literature"

Not All "A.A. Literature" is Conference-Approved
Central Offices and intergroups do write and distribute pamphlets or booklets that are not Conference-approved. If such pieces meet the needs of the local membership, they may be legitimately classified as "A.A. literature." There is no conflict between A.A. World Services, Inc. (A.A.W.S. - publishers of Conference-approved literature), and central offices or intergroups - rather, they complement each other. The Conference does not disapprove of such material.

Manager's note: From the material above, we can see that this question about when and where non-A.A. material is appropriate is an old one. If the General Service Office or the General Service Conference had concluded to suggest that intergroups and central offices carry only Conference-Approved material, this is where we would find that suggestion. This decision is left up to each individual office, and the groups that support that office. This is why the informed group conscience decision is so important: past A.A. experience has not resulted in any clear suggestion, and so we must reflect on our Traditions, our Primary Purpose and the Unity of A.A. in St. Paul, and act accordingly.

## 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: "SelfSupport: Where money and spirituality mix."

50\% St. Paul Intergroup<br>Spruce Tree Center<br>1600 University Ave. \#407<br>St. Paul, MN 55104<br>30 \% General Service Office<br>P.O. Box 459<br>Grand Central Station<br>New York, NY 10163<br>10\% Southern MN Area 36<br>Area Assembly<br>P.O. Box 2812<br>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

Intergroup Income for July
Total Group Contributions: \$2134.97
Number Groups Contributing: 32
Number of Faithful Fivers: 12
Total from Faithful Fivers: $\$ 250.00$

## 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 all the terrific volunteers who helped in the Intergroup Office during July!

A.J., Bob, Brigham M., Chrissy, Christen, Donald B., Ed, Eliot, Gil J., Jack R., Jennifer, Jim H., Kevin, Larry T., Mark, Matt, Mike, Mike A., Miranda, Paul, Rosemary, Roxi, Sara M.,
 Stephanie, Tiki, and Val.

Thanks to all the Night Owl volunteers and groups as well!

## "Thanks!" to the groups that contributed in July:

11 W Bernard Groups
12 \& 12 By The Book
Back To Basics Big Book
Basic Text Women's Group
Burnsville Eagan Savage Tues. BB Day By Dei
Eastside Groups Farmington Groups
Friday Night Apple Valley Group Grover's Group
Happy Hour Group
Highland Park Groups
Holy Trinity Group
Lindstrom Groups
Maplewood Groups
Merriam Park Groups Midway Groups
North Hamline Group
Northwestern Alano Groups
Roseville Wed Night Group
Shoreview Big Book Plus
Spiritual Traditions Group
Thank God It's Friday
Third Tradition Group
Thurs. Night Lake Elmo group
Unity Service Recovery in Eagan Uptown Groups
Valley Creek Monday Group
WBL Redeemer Group
Weekend Jumpstart II
West End Alano Groups
White Bear Lake Area Groups
BE A NIGHT OWL !
A Night Owl shift is a once-a-month commitment to answer phones during the hours that Intergroup is closed. 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. Taking on a Night Owl commitment means that when still suffering alcoholics call AA for help, they find another alcoholic at the other end of the line. When you or your group sign up to take a shift, you are trained in how to respond to calls and given all of the needed materials. If you can help, please call Julie at the office or you can go to our website at www.aastpaul.org .

## 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 2nd of the preceding month.

## UPCOMING EVENTS!!

| St. Paul AA Intergroup |
| :---: |
| Old-Timers' Recognition |
| Ice Cream Social |
| Saturday, September 16th, 2006, 2PM |
| Lutheran Church of the Redeemer |
| 285 North Dale St., St. Paul, MN 55103 |
| Southern Minnesota Area 36 |
| GSR \& Trusted Servant Leadership School |

Saturday, November 4th, 2006
St. John's Lutheran Church, 500 3rd St. West
Northfield, Minnesota 55057

St. Paul AA Intergroup FALL WORKSHOP: STEP FOUR

Tuesday October 3, 7:00 PM Lutheran Church of the Redeemer 285 N. Dale St. (Dale \& Iglehart)

Founder's Day Weekend, 2006
November 24-26.
Doubletree Park Place Hotel
St. Louis Park, MN www.FoundersDayMN.org

The 18th Annual
Hiawathaland Get-Together
October 20, 21, \& 22, 2006
Holiday Inn, Austin, MN
Registration forms at Intergroup office.

# St. Paul AA 

New Year's Eve Celebration!
December 31st, 2006
Location to be announced-mark your calendar!

## Is your meeting represented at Intergroup?

The September Representatives' meeting will be held September 19, 7:30 pm, at the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, 285 N. Dale St., St. Paul, 55103.

## Thoughts from a Past Intergroup Treasurer on the Question of Non-conference Approved Literature.

The question of non-approved literature is as simple as our primary purpose and main principles: "To stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety" - abstain from drinking.

There is no doubt that books grant insight to our recovery, no less or no more than if we shared our thoughts at our meeting tables. The true issue would be, does the book reflect our basic principles? Truth, honesty, abstaining from alcohol use and spirituality? Do these books help serve our primary purpose?

Indeed, the first book we would like a newcomer to read is our Big Book! However, most of the other books deal with continuing sobriety, recovery to spirituality and dealing with life, based upon our principles!

It was for this reason that back in the late 1970s and through the late 80s, our St. Paul Intergroup did stock and sell a variety of products and books, that we felt served not only our members but the general public as well. If memory serves me correct, our gross income was approximately $\$ 70,000$ by the mid- 80 's.

We, of course, made money on the non-approved items, which allowed us to sell all our approved literature at cost! As a result of having expanded our products, so did our service as well as the membership to our Intergroup and the number of people that would come daily to visit the office.

The Central Office is a clearing house for all the groups within its area. It is a source or resource that provides information and services not only to the AA member, but to all groups and to the non-member or the general public as well. This office does what a normal AA group can not do or perhaps would not do!

If we truly believe or understand our primary purpose, then we would make available the items that support our mission. This does not or will not compromise our traditions or our principles; in fact, it validates them!

Sincerely,
Paul M.
Past treasurer

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St. Paul Intergroup
Spruce Tree Centre
1600 University Ave. W., Suite #407
Change Service Requested


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!

\(\qquad\)

Street \(\qquad\)

City, State, Zip

\section*{Please send this form and a check to:}

St. Paul Intergroup, 1600 University Avenue W. \#407, St. Paul MN 55104```


[^0]:    *Call tally is for calls taken during office hours only and does not include

