

The Lifeline



August, 2008

24 Hour Phone: 651-227-5502

Volume 43, Issue 8

STEP EIGHT: Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.

THE YEARS THAT THE LOCUST HATH EATEN

Neither our literature nor the most enlightened of old-timers can fully explain or define the meaning of “forgiveness,” the powerful concept at the heart of the Eighth Step. Like everything else in our spiritual program of Alcoholics Anonymous, forgiveness has entered my life through my heart and not my mind. In my first year of sobriety I listened with a kind of puzzled yearning to meetings where it was being discussed. To this day, I find Eighth Step meetings particularly poignant. The men and women in my regular Friday night Step meeting are so simple and direct when they speak of how they have hurt others and how in almost all cases, relationships have healed. There’s no room for posturing as we speak up about our recklessness, self-centeredness, dishonesty, lost or soured marriages and families, and violence of various kinds. . . . Individual pain and guilt has been alchemized into something very grand that makes us collectively well. As a group we are at our most human in those Eighth Step evenings. And we seem to be held most closely by the Higher Power.

My own drinking days were all mixed in with my marriage to a man who, when I met him, was only recently married to another of his several wives. I was young, scared, and thirsty; I can see now that I never would have fallen for him if I hadn’t been an alcoholic and if I hadn’t liked the way he fixed my glass of Scotch. The wife before me was a very nice person who worked in the same office as I did. As I got involved with her husband, I didn’t stop to think about the pain I was causing her. I ducked into a doorway if I saw her coming down the hall. I had the worm of conscience, I’m sure of it, but I stilled it with another drink. After he and I had lived and drunk together for some years, he left me in turn for someone else. In a karmic way I felt just how the wife before me had suffered because now I suffered the same myself. She wasn’t alcoholic; in the years of my own marriage she had absorbed the blow and moved on with her life. But for years after I was alone again, I got stuck in whiskey-soaked self-pity, tormented by an obsessive hatred of that man. This almost killed me; it made me hit my bottom, and I am eternally grateful to him for that.

I can see this story now, but for the first few years of my sobriety I was in an awful fog. I had smart feet, though. I was going to meetings, getting active, sponsoring and being sponsored — *doing* the right things. . . . I did a Fourth and Fifth Step, and still I kept on getting upset. My skin was very thin, and I was tormented by the “bondage of self.” I got mad at people in AA all the time. . . . The idea that for us alcoholics there can be no such thing as a “justifiable resentment” is a concept that has come home to me as slowly and through as much painful experience as the concept of forgiveness, its twin. “Where other people are concerned, we have to drop the word ‘blame’ from our speech and thought,” it says in the “Twelve and Twelve.” I was still at sea and ill at ease in my relations with other people when an old timer, hearing me share, asked me whether I had got round to making my Eighth Step list.

Glad that there was an action that might relieve me of my discomfort, I dug out my index card of “cringes” — people who, for a variety of reasons, I would feel embarrassed to see again. Then I transferred some of the still-smoldering resentments from my Fourth Step. Since I had taken that inventory, I had run into my ex-husband on the street, after many years without a glimpse. Something told me to give him a hug, and I’m glad I did because he died not long after that. I put the name of the ex-wife on my list, as well. But it took several years for me to become willing to make amends to her. We had gone on working in the same office without speaking to each other. I was walking down the hallway one day, carrying my briefcase, which contained my Eighth Step list. . . . I had been asked to lead a meeting on the topic later that day, and I wanted to take the list along. I noticed that the woman’s office door was open. I stepped over the threshold as if pushed from behind by an invisible hand. I told her I was sorry for the pain I had caused her; she was gentle and more than generous to me. . . .

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**St. Paul Intergroup Ice Cream Social
and Old-timers’ Recognition!!!**
Saturday, September 20th, 1 to 4PM
Lutheran Church of the Redeemer
285 N. Dale St., St. Paul, 55103



St. Paul Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous®

Web Site: www.aastpaul.org

E-mail: lifeline@aastpaul.org

Fax: 651-290-0209

Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday — 9 AM to 6 PM; Tuesday: 9 AM to 8 PM

1600 University Avenue W. Suite 407 St. Paul MN 55104

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I went off to lead my meeting, and I spoke about that encounter. One of my friends was sitting nearby; she was nearing the end of a pregnancy and her belly was enormous. Soon she and her AA husband would be blessed with the arrival of a baby boy. Sitting next to her was another friend – a man who had gotten very thin. I was shocked to see him, for I could see that he had started to die of AIDS; in a month we would be taking meetings to his hospital bed. I felt privileged to be at the meeting, to be alive, to be a sober member of Alcoholics Anonymous. At the end, I held the hands of these two friends as the group stood saying the Serenity Prayer. In my bones, I felt the promise of the Step: That it is the beginning of the end of isolation from our fellows and from God. As for that ex-wife, I am happy to count her among my friends today. The other night, she came over to my house. I cooked a nice dinner for a group of us; we laughed a lot.

Reprinted from *'The Best of the Grapevine'* pages 208 - 212 with permission of The A.A. Grapevine, Inc

TRADITION EIGHT:

Alcoholic Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.

“Our Twelfth Step is never to be paid for, but those who labor in service for us are worthy of their hire.”

— *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, p. 171.

Throughout the world AA's are twelfth-stepping with thousands of new prospects a month. Between one and two thousand of these stick on our first presentation; past experience shows that most of the remainder will come back to us later on. Almost entirely unorganized, and completely nonprofessional, this mighty spiritual current is now flowing from alcoholics who are well to those who are sick. One alcoholic talking to another; that's all. (. . .)

But what about those who serve us full time in other capacities — are cooks, caretakers, and paid Intergroup secretaries “AA professionals”?

Because our thinking about these people is still unclear, we often feel and act as though they were such. The impression of professionalism subtly attaches to them, so we frequently hear they are “making money out of AA” or that they are “professionalizing” AA. Seemingly, if they do take our AA dollars they don't quite belong with us AAs anymore. We sometimes go further; we underpay them on the theory they ought to be glad to “cook” for AA cheap.

Now isn't this carrying our fears of professionalism rather far? If these fears ever got too strong, none but a saint or an incompetent could work for Alcoholics Anonymous. Our supply of saints being quite small, we would certainly wind up with less competent workers than we need. (. . .)

So, where needed, let's revise our attitude toward those who labor at our special services. Let us treat them as AA associates, and not as hired help; let's recompense them fairly and, above all, let's absolve them from the label of professionalism.

Let us also distinguish clearly between “organizing the AA movement” and setting up, in a reasonably businesslike manner, its few essential services of contact and propagation. Once we do that, all will be well. The million or so fellow alcoholics who are still sick will then continue to get the break we sixty thousand AAs have already had.

Let's give our “service desks” the hand they so well deserve.

(From *The A.A. Grapevine*, July, 1948. Reprinted from *The Language of the Heart*, pp 86-87 with permission of The A.A. Grapevine, Inc.)

2008 Steering Board

<u>Chair:</u>	Tom S.
<u>Alt. Chair:</u>	Mary Jo N.
<u>Secretary:</u>	Lesli D.
<u>Treasurer:</u>	Diane E.
<u>Members at Large 2008:</u>	Steve B. & Jeff H.
<u>Members at Large 2007:</u>	Mark K. & Lisa L.
<u>Advisor to the Board:</u>	Jeff T.
<u>Office Manager:</u>	Tom N.

Office Calls in June

Meeting information	199
Inventory/hours	32
12th step calls	12
Temporary sponsor	31
Speaker request	17
Special events	1
Outside issues	14
Info For Professionals	3
Administrative	133
Other	79
Total Calls	521
Daily average	24.8
Visitors	191

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, June 17, 2008

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

The Primary Purpose of Intergroup was read by Mark K.

May Minutes Approved and accepted with one correction: Val L. attended the meeting.

Treasurer's Report. June Contributions \$3810 – 47.6% of Income. Contributions for June were above the budgeted amount for the month and year to date. Sales for June were below budget for the month. Expenses were also below budget. June sales \$4186– 52.4% of Income. Group contributions \$3348.

Office Report -- Tom N. A number of new items from AA World Services: (see available list) GSO Preliminary Report copies available. Obituary for Ben B. has provoked checks to be sent to the office which we can not accept. Checks will be returned with an explanation.

Website Report – Jonathan L. Usage page report completed, titled “Website Usage Stats.” Our website has been updated to say when Intergroup was incorporated. Currently, 579 weekly meetings are listed. Please help keep us up to date by communicating new meetings and events.

Outreach Program – No Report - Patty will update Jeff.

Night Owl Report – Patti M. Database sheets are incorrect. Please make sure coordinators are updating the list by calling Tom or emailing list to Patti. The New Orientation Meeting will be held on June 28th from 10-12 (coffee and donuts provided.) We need more people for backup and have some open shifts available.

Intergroup Events.

- Intergroup Open House will be held Saturday, June 21st; Flyers distributed.

Old Business. None.

New Business. None.

Group Announcements- Maplewood Annual Picnic – Potluck BBQ, Prizes, Speaker. Midway Garage Sale 11 AM June 20-22. Alano Society in Minneapolis Old timers meeting August 2nd 1PM-3PM.

Concept Review - Mark K read the pamphlet (next month Julie).

Mock Report (next month John).

Closed with the Responsibility Statement and the Lord's Prayer.

Attendees:

Donald B.- Main Idea Tue 8p	Angela S-Midway	Jon C- 3 rd Edition	Mark K. Board at-Large	Garth M- Defogged Mens
Barb H-Highland #11	Ellen H-Amigos III	Jeff T- Board Advisor	Mary Jo N. – Alt Chair	Patti M-Night Owl Co-ord
Betsy-Happy, Joyous & Free	Jon C- 3 rd Edition	Tom N- Office Mgr	Barb-Great Hope WBL	Val L- Back to Basics Burnsville
Jan B- McAlester/Plymouth	Julie M-Basic Text	Tom C-Shrwv 12x12	Jeff H- Board At-Large	Cyndi C. Great Hope WBL
Diane E-Board Treasurer	Jeff C- Summit Hill	Tom L-Hazelwood	Jonathan- Web Servant	Taylor B. Women's Basic Text

Next Meeting: Tuesday, July 15th . Same place, same time (7:30 PM)

The Twelve Concepts: Concept Eight

The trustees of the General Service Board act in two primary capacities: (a) With respect to the larger matters of over-all policy and finance, they are the principal planners and administrators They and their primary committees directly manage these affairs. (b) But with respect to our separately incorporate and constantly active services, the relation of the Trustees is mainly that of full stock ownership and of custodial oversight which they exercise through their ability to elect all director of these entities. -Reprinted from the pamphlet, *The Twelve Concepts for World Service Illustrated*, by permission of AA World Services, Inc.

“We finally learned what the business world well knows: that we could not, at the level of top management, run a large, active and full-fledged business entity with loose-jointed committees and departments. For example, how could our Trustees function today if they were to become a mere “committee” or “department” of the General Conference instead of the legally chartered and carefully defined body that they necessarily are?” -Reprinted from the *AA Service Manual* pages 34-35 with permission of A.A. World Services.

<p>7th Tradition Suggestions for Groups</p> <p>“Every group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.”</p> <p>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 Conference-approved pamphlet: “Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality mix.”</p> <p>50% <u>St. Paul Intergroup</u> Spruce Tree Center 1600 University Ave. #407 St. Paul, MN 55104</p> <p>30% <u>General Service Office</u> P.O. Box 459 Grand Central Station New York, NY 10163</p> <p>10% <u>Southern MN Area 36</u> Area Assembly P.O. Box 2812 Mpls., MN 55402</p> <p>10% <u>District Committee</u></p> <p>Ramsey County: District 8, P.O. Box 2267 St. Paul, MN 55102</p> <p>Dakota County: District 19, P.O. Box 1466 Burnsville, MN 55337</p> <p>Washington County: District 15, P.O. Box 181 Lake Elmo, MN 55042</p> <p>SE Ramsey County: District 26, P.O. Box 75980 St. Paul, MN 55175</p>	<p><i>BE A NIGHT OWL !!</i></p> <p>Night Owls are often the first A.A. 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 the office or go to our website: www.aastpaul.org</p> <p><u>District Meetings</u></p> <p>District 8 (Ramsey Co.) Fairview Community Center 1910 Co. Rd B, Rm 203, Roseville 3rd Wed., 7:30 PM</p> <p>District 15 (Wash. Co.) Christ Lutheran Church 11194 N. 36th St., Lake Elmo 4th Mon., 7:00 PM</p> <p>District 19 (Dakota Co.) Rosemount Community Center 13885 South Robert Trail 2nd Wed., 7:00 PM</p> <p>District 26 (SE Ramsey Co.) 1099 Payne Ave. St. Paul 2nd Fri., 6:00 PM www.district26-area36.org</p> <p>Thanks to all the terrific volunteers who helped in the Office during June!</p> <p>Amy, Andrew, Andy B, Brian, Brandon, Carolyn, Chris C, Greg, Gretchen A, Jack, Jack R, Jaclyn B., Jeff H, John M., Johni B, Jon, Julie Y, Lee, Maureen, Mike A, Mike R, Paul L, Reed, Roger, Susan D, Taylor</p> <p>Thanks to all the Night Owl volunteers and groups as well!</p> 	<p>INTERGROUP INCOME FOR JUNE</p> <p>Number of Group Contributions: 28 Total Group Contributions:\$3,348.00 Number of Faithful Fivers: 20 Total from Faithful Fivers: \$384.00</p> <p><i>“Thanks!” to the groups that contributed in June:</i></p> <p>11 West Bernard Basic Text Women's Group Cliffhangers III Cottage Grove Groups Dakota Alano Thursday AM Grover's AA Highland Park Groups Hugo Groups Main Idea Maplewood Groups Meeting of the Waters Midway Groups New Brighton Groups North Branch Community Groups Primary Purpose Burnsville Rosemount Groups Shalom Group Shoreview 12&12 Shoreview Big Book Plus Third Edition Third Tradition Northfield Thurs. Night Lake Elmo Group Traditions & History Group Uptown Groups White Bear Groups White Bear Women's Wed. AM Woodbury Friday Big Book Woodbury Serenity Sisters</p>
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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 13th of the preceding month (i.e., submit a Tenth Step essay by the ninth month, September.)

UPCOMING A.A. EVENTS!!

Cornhusker Roundup XXXI

August 14th - 17th
 Holiday Inn, Omaha, Nebraska
www.AA-Cornhusker.org

27th Annual Al-Anon/Alateen FELLOWSHIP WEEKEND

August 22nd & 23rd
 Ramada Minneapolis Northwest
 Brooklyn Park, MN.
 For more Info: 952-920-3961

Hiawathaland Get-Together

August 29—31st
 Kahler Grand Hotel, Rochester, MN
h-land.org

Fiftieth Southern Minnesota Roundup

“There is a Solution”
 September 5 - 7
 Best Western Hotel, North Mankato, MN
area36.org/events.html

18th Annual HEARTLAND ROUND-UP

September 5 - 7
 Park Rapids, MN
www.heartlandroundup.com

SOBER STOCK IV 08

Saturday, September 13th
 The Moose Lodge
 Aberdeen, SD
 For more Info: 651-485-2436

Dear Bill W.,

I've done my inventory and admitted my wrongs to another alcoholic, but still the people in my home group make me so mad! We're always fighting over everything. I'd like to give them a piece of my mind. Doesn't rigorous honesty mean I should always speak my mind.

— An Anonymous Drunk

“We must avoid quick-tempered criticism and furious, power-driven argument. The same goes for sulking or silent scorn. These are emotional booby traps baited with pride and vengefulness. Our first job is to sidestep the traps. When we are tempted by the by the bait, we should train ourselves to step back and think. For we can neither think nor act to good purpose until the habit of self-restraint has become automatic.”

From the *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, p. 91.

The Adventures of Clara T.



Cartoon reprinted by permission from the July, 1998 A.A. Grapevine.

Is your meeting represented at Intergroup?

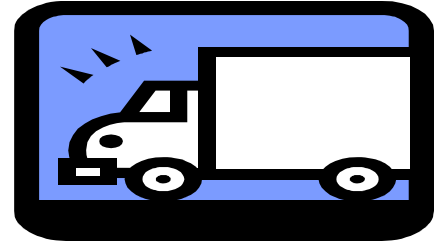
The August Representatives' meeting will be held August 20th, 7:30 pm, at the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, 285 N. Dale St., St. Paul, 55103. The church is located just south of I-94; from Dale turn west on Iglehart to park.

St. Paul Intergroup
Spruce Tree Center
1600 University Ave. W., Suite #407
St. Paul, MN 55104

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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) _____