



Special Issue: Tradition Seven

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

Many A.A. members in the Twin Cities have already learned that the prices for A.A. literature are going to go up this summer. The last price increase was in the summer of 2005, and a lot has changed since then. The General Service Office in New York has been significantly affected by price increases and by the economic instability of the last year. The G.S.O.'s costs have increased and so they are raising the prices on our books.

The price increases won't be too severe: The biggest change is that the Big Book could go up by as much as two dollars. We probably don't need to see this as a crisis, but a change like this gives us an opportunity to take a new look at a few things, and to reflect on what we see. The timing here is perfect, as the G.S.O.'s need for more money comes at the same time as the July issue of the *Lifeline*, where we routinely include a reading on Tradition Seven.

A.A. World Services is the publisher of all Conference-Approved A.A. literature. The price paid by Intergroups and Central Offices for a Big Book includes the cost of printing and shipping, and also a small "mark-up" that goes to support the essential services provided by our General Service Office. The mark-up on A.A. literature makes up about fifty percent of the budget for A.A.'s General Service Office (see table below). The remaining amount comes from Group and other A.A. contributions.

The situation is pretty much the same for most Intergroups and Central Offices: While Group contributions make up most of our revenue, a growing proportion comes from a small mark-up on literature and medallions.

Some A.A. members find this state of affairs troubling. The thought is that according to Tradition Seven, the vital services provided by the General Service Office and by our local Intergroups should be funded entirely by our own contributions. This would allow us to sell our books "at cost" — that is, the lowest possible price. Other members are not troubled by the mark-up: They see each literature purchase as an additional opportunity to make a contribution. This question about how we fund our services is captured by an Advisory Action approved by this year's General Service Conference, the body that makes decisions on issues affecting A.A. as a whole. The Conference asks, "If we continue to use literature profits to partially fund services, should there be a limit?" and, "If there is a limit how do we continue to pay for services if there is a shortfall in contribution?" (See *Box 4-5-9*, Summer 2009).

For those of us troubled to see our vital services being funded by literature income, rather than by the "Self-support" of our contributions, the obvious solution is for us, the Fellowship, to contribute more, since price increases are made to cover contribution shortfalls. For several years, various Intergroups and A.A. members have been circulating posters urging folks at meetings to put two or more dollars into the basket, rather than the single buck that has been the standard through several decades of inflation. A variation on one of these posters is included in this issue of the *Lifeline*.

In addition to this poster, we are including excerpts from a number of A.A. publications on Finance and Self-support, both to encourage reflection and discussion, and to offer information on many of the most common questions that come up at Saint Paul Intergroup.

The questions raised by this new price increase are not new to A.A. For instance, the Big Book has always been a major source of funds for the offices in New York. Still, the price increase will be uncomfortable for some, and so we might as well welcome this opportunity for reflection and growth.

	<u>2008</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2000</u>
Literature income	\$6.9M	7.0M	6.9M	6.7M	5.7M	4.7M	5.0M	5.9M	5.2M
Contributions	\$6.5M	6.5M	6.1M	5.4M	5.2M	5.1M	4.9M	5.7M	4.5M

— Tom N., Office manager

St. Paul Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous®

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

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STEP SEVEN: Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

This highly introspective step in recovery is crucial to moving on from the past and beginning a new life as a true human being. In addition to simply asking God to remove my defects of character, I honestly must want them exorcised from my heart. That, I have found, is the difficult part – real daily work on an existential level.

Relishing in my own devastating ego and self-righteousness, especially while sober and not damaging the world on a daily basis, is a soft option for someone who has become comfortable in their own skin via the first six steps. Sobriety, if nothing else, is a testament to one's fortitude and willingness to set themselves aside and do the right thing. Do I really want to delve into the great unknown of personal possibility under the guidance of a Higher Power, leaving behind the twisted criterion I have created for myself in my former life? This is a question every alcoholic must stamp solidly into their consciousness on a daily basis.

Humility can be an ugly word to an alcoholic of my kind. My seemingly intrinsic judgmental nature; my tendencies to ignore those in need of my help; my stagnancy and complacency for life; my impatience with others; my petrifying fear of the minds of those I seek to impress all around me – these are all glacial setbacks in my mind that would surely plague me to the near reaches of a grisly death had God not been willing to save my wretched skin, giving me the clear mind to honestly look at the dying face staring back at me in the mirror.

Surely I am the Special Son of the universe, a unique snowflake of endless potential. But no, I am simply a troubled young man with God in his heart, nothing more but just enough. I am no better nor worse than any of my fellow men. My problems and personal shortcomings are no more profound or exceptional than the rest of humanity. Today I am a recovered alcoholic. Thank God.

-- Matthew H., Office Volunteer.

Concept Seven Essay by Scott A., Southern Minnesota Area Delegate

"The Conference recognizes that the Charter and Bylaws of the General Service Board are legal instruments: That the Trustees are thereby fully empowered to manage and conduct all of the world service affairs of Alcoholics Anonymous. It is further understood that the Conference Charter itself is not a legal document: that it relies instead upon the force of tradition and the power of the A.A. purse for its final effectiveness."

This is one of my favorite concepts as it deals with the balance of power. Our Board of Trustees is incorporated in the state of New York. They have the legal authority to carry out the affairs of Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole. Our Conference Charter isn't a legal document meaning that all our General Service Conference can do is make advisory actions. Our Board can veto these advisory actions if they feel the need to do so. So where's the balance? Alcoholics Anonymous is self-supporting through its own contributions. (7th Tradition) The groups hold the purse strings. Without the support of the groups, nothing can happen.

If, therefore, in the years ahead, the Conference will always bear in mind the actual rights, duties, responsibilities, and legal status of the General Service Board, and if the Trustees in their deliberations will constantly realize that the Conference is the real seat of ultimate service authority, we may be sure that neither will be seriously tempted to make a "rubber stamp" out of the other. We may expect that in this way grave issues will always be resolved and harmonious cooperation will be the rule.

— Reprinted with permission from *Minneapolis Intergroup MIRUS*, July, 2008.

2009 Steering Board

<u>Chair:</u>	Mary Jo N.
<u>Alt. Chair:</u>	Julie M.
<u>Secretary:</u>	Jeff T.
<u>Treasurer:</u>	Michael K.
<u>Members at Large 2009:</u>	John D. & Jeff C.
<u>Members at Large 2008:</u>	Lisa L. & Mark K.
<u>Advisor to the Board:</u>	Tom S.
<u>Office Manager:</u>	Tom N.

Office Calls in May

Meeting information	203
Inventory/hours	31
12th Step calls	14
Temporary sponsor	29
Speaker request	22
Special events	11
Outside issues	20
Info for professionals	14
Administrative	155
Other	66
Total Calls	565
Daily average	28.3
Visitors	208

Call tally is for calls taken during office hours only and does not include calls taken during Night Owl shifts.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

With answers from the *A.A. Guidelines* on Finance.

Question: How can groups participate [in A.A.'s essential services] ?

Answer: To help support A.A.'s essential services, the General Service Conference suggests that individual groups, through an informed group conscience, adopt a specific contribution plan tailored to meet the group's financial situation. Once the basic group expenses have been taken care of (rent, refreshments, A.A. literature, local meetings lists), and a "prudent reserve" has been set aside to cover unexpected expenses, the group may decide to further carry the message by sending money to the following A.A. service entities:

- The local district, which communicates directly with the groups, providing the district group conscience for the area assemblies, and serving as a link between the area delegates and the G.S.R.s.
- The area committee, which coordinates vital A.A. activities over a broad geographic area; sends a delegate to the annual General Service Conference; holds area assemblies to determine the needs of the Fellowship; and provides information at all levels of service.
- The local intergroup or central office, which may provide phone service for the Twelfth Step calls and other inquiries; coordination of group activities; A.A. literature sales; institutions work; public information and cooperation with the professional community activities.
- A.A.'s General Service Office, which functions as a storehouse of A.A. information, communicating with members and groups in the U.S. and Canada, and sometimes around the world; publishes A.A.'s literature; and supplies information and experience to professionals and others interested in A.A.

Question: Doesn't all A.A. money go into one pot? In other words, when our group contributes to central office (intergroup), isn't our money distributed to the area, district and General Service Board (for G.S.O. operations)?

Answer: Each A.A. entity—group, district, area, central or intergroup office, and G.S.O.—provides a specific service and is autonomous. Separate checks need to be sent to each entity. (Note: Some local A.A. entities do pass along a portion of the contributions they receive to G.S.O.)

Question: Our group is planning a party to celebrate its anniversary. Can we use Seventh Tradition funds to pay for the decorations and food?

Answer: Most A.A. members understand that their Seventh Tradition contributions will be used to pay group expenses and Twelfth Step work. Group anniversary parties, while considered traditional and helpful by many A.A.s, are not generally regarded as Twelfth Step work. Some groups ask their members to dig deeper into their pockets to cover a celebration. Others choose to pass a second basket. It is a matter for each group to decide, and either course would not seem to conflict with the Seventh Tradition of self-support.

Question: Can our group accept donations from local businesses or other non-A.A. individuals or organizations? Can our group make a donation to a local homeless shelter, treatment facility, etc.?

Answer: Alcoholics Anonymous accepts no outside contributions. In accordance with the Sixth Tradition, A.A. makes no contributions to any outside organization or cause, no matter how worthy.

Question: Are my contributions to A.A. tax-deductible?

Answer: Contributions to an A.A. group, central office, or intergroup are tax-deductible only if the entity is a qualified charitable organization as determined by the Internal Revenue Service. Contributions made directly to the General Service Board of A.A. are deductible under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The Internal Revenue Code has no provision under which the General Service Board of A.A. could apply for tax-exempt status for all groups and other A.A. entities, since each entity is autonomous in financial matters, as in all other ways. Donations to A.A. groups are not deductible unless the group has filed the proper application of Form 1023 with its local I.R.S. office and has obtained a ruling that the organization is tax-exempt.

Question: Is there a limit to how much an A.A. member can contribute to G.S.O.?

Answer: Yes. That limit is \$3,000 a year.

Question: Can people leave money to G.S.O. in their wills?

Answer: Bequests in wills are acceptable only from A.A. members, with a maximum of \$3,000 from any one person, and only on a onetime basis—not in perpetuity.

Notes on the “Prudent Reserve.”

Tom N., Office manager.

Occasionally, questions are raised about the “savings” St. Paul Intergroup has in the bank, and whether we shouldn’t spend that money on carrying the message. St. Paul Intergroup keeps a “prudent reserve,” an emergency fund as suggested in the *A.A. Guidelines* for Central or Intergroup Offices. Our pamphlet, “Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix” suggests,

Any suggested prudent reserve for a group should be dependent on local needs. A suggested prudent reserve for central offices, Intergroups, and area committees could be one to twelve months’ operating expenses, depending on local needs.

A recent survey of 100 Intergroups and central offices found that most common prudent reserve was six months’ operating expenses. In 2006 the Board of St. Paul Intergroup assessed that our prudent reserve covered slightly less than three months’ operating expenses, and we set a goal of increasing our reserve to cover six months’ expenses.

The Summer, 2009 issue of *Box 4-5-9* reports that the prudent reserve for the General Service Office is currently at nine months’ operating expenses.

In the Long Form of Tradition Seven, Bill W. warns us against building up too much un-designated money, beyond a prudent reserve:

The A.A. groups themselves ought to be fully supported by the voluntary contributions of their own members. We think that each group should soon achieve this ideal; that any public solicitation of funds using the name of Alcoholics Anonymous is highly dangerous, whether by groups, clubs, hospitals, or other outside agencies; that acceptance of large gifts from any source, or of contributions carrying any obligation whatever, is unwise. Then, too, we view with much concern those A.A. treasuries which continue, beyond prudent reserves, to accumulate funds for no stated A.A. purpose. Experience has often warned us that nothing can so surely destroy our spiritual heritage as futile disputes over property, money, and authority.

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OBTAINING A TAX ID NUMBER

(SOMETIMES REQUIRED TO SET UP A GROUP BANK ACCOUNT)

In April of this year we contacted the Internal Revenue Service to ask about how to obtain the tax ID number required by most banks to get a group bank account. These are the updated instructions:

1. Fill out IRS Form SS-4. This can be downloaded from www.IRS.gov .
2. Call the IRS at 1-800-829-4933. Press #1 for English, then #2 for “new EIN number.” You might be on hold for several minutes, but this is the fastest way to get the EIN number.
3. When the operator comes on, tell them you want to apply for an EIN by phone.
4. The operator will ask you for the information from IRS Form SS-4. You do not need to mail in the form.
5. After you give them the SS-4 information, they will give you the EIN (tax ID number).
6. Write down the EIN. This is the Tax ID Number you need to open a bank account for your group.

St. Paul A.A. Intergroup Representatives' Meeting Minutes, May, 2009

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm (see Attendees below).

Open with the serenity prayer and Introductions.

Reading of the Primary Purpose – read by John.

Approval of last month's minutes – motion to approve, seconded, motion passes.

Treasurer's Report

Good sales month but contributions are down. Literature prices are going up to compensate for the lack of contributions to GSO. There is concern that AA will no longer be "self supporting" via contributions. Furthermore, merchandise sales are not bridging the gap. An unexpected cost is the legal fees regarding the bylaws. We spent more on TGIS but made more and were able to stay in the black with that event. The contribution figure on the finance spreadsheet does include "Faithful Fivers".

Office Manager Report

Intergroup now has 2 new part time staff members, Bill S. and James B. The Office will soon be open Saturdays.

Website Report – Jonathan reported that site use has been status quo.

Outreach Program– Jeff C. Absent, no report (partial report from Patti M).

Night Owl Report – Patti M There are three open shifts; Please call the Office if you are interested in one of these shifts.

1st Monday of the month from 10 p.m. – 6 a.m.

1st Tues of the month from 8 p.m. – 6 a.m.

5th Tuesday of the month from 8 p.m. – 6 a.m.

There was an orientation meeting on May 30th with more to come.

Intergroup needs 12 Step volunteers - please contact the Office; also we need more volunteers available at night.

Intergroup Events: Reminder - talk with your groups and see which events they would like to help out at.

TGIS got very positive feedback on both meeting and meal. Thanks to attendees and the organizers.

June 20th Intergroup Open House in the Parking Ramp Intergroup: 11:00 – 3:00 BBQ. Please refer to the yellow event sheet for more info. The Problem and Solution Group has volunteered to set up for the event.

Ice Cream Social: Tom S. is still looking for AA's with 25+ years of sobriety for this.

October 17th Fall Step Workshop.

November 21st Gratitude Night – Brice volunteered for the committee.

December 31st New Year's Eve Speaker and Dance.

Old Business

The Bylaws committee says they should have something for the board to look at in 2 – 3 months.

There was a question as to whether St. Paul Intergroup should host a Gopher State Hospitality Suite next year.

That created questions of hospitality suite vs. literature sales and if hosting a suite would create challenges with literature sales. Groups should discuss this and give feedback to Intergroup over the next few months.

New Business

Josh asked about building a linked page on MySpace to inform locals on A.A. events and whether he could put links to the Intergroup website on that MySpace page. Discussion on that was deferred for further consideration.

Group Announcements

Midway Club Rummage Sale June 12-13.

Hole in the Donut group celebrates 1 year on July 21

Maplewood Alano picnic is coming up

St. Paul Speaker Meeting Moved to St. Joe's Hospital. Parking is Free

3 Amigos Pancake Breakfast – August 29th. Time TBD


Concept Review - May: Concept V _____ Volunteer for June, Concept VI _____ .

Mock Rep Report: _____ Volunteer for June Report: _____ .

XIV. Close with the Responsibility Statement.

Attendance:

Angela & Bubba.-Midway	Bob Z—Amigos	Charlie S-NTLP	Cathy H --Maplewood
Garth M.-Defogged Mens	James L-3 rd Edition	Terrie O — Back to Basics	Joe S HJF, BTB 12x12
Julie M Alt Board Chair	Josh	Julie T-Summit Women's BB	Mitchell W — Problem & Solution Sat.
Deb M-Great Tidings	Jonathan L.-Web Servant	Tom C—Shoreview 12 x 12	Dan W—Firing Line
John D—Board At-Large	Bryce A — West End Club	Tom S—Board Advisor	Jeff T.—Secretary
John F—Highland Sat AM	Mark K-Board At-Large	Jes N — Uptown Groups	Patti — Night Owl Coordinator
Mollie — Tues Basic Text	Cathy B — Como Park BB	Merle K.	Craig B—12 Step Happy Hour

<p>7th Tradition Suggestions for Groups</p> <p>“Every group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.”</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>BE A NIGHT OWL !!</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>MAY CONTRIBUTIONS</p> <p>Number of Group Contributors: 41 Total Group Contributions: \$3788 Number of Faithful Fivers: 17 Total from Faithful Fivers: \$394</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><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 the groups that <u>contributed in May:</u></p> <p>Back To Basics BB Burnsville Cliffhangers I Thurs. PM Como Area 12 & 12 Day By Dei Forest Lake Alano Fri. 12 & 12 By The Book Hastings Groups Hazelwood Group Highland Park Groups Hole in the Donut Group Hour of Power Lindstrom Thurs. 12x12 Maplewood Group Meeting of the Waters Monday Meeting Monday Night Hope - Lakeville New Brighton Alano, Sq. 11 North Branch Community Groups Outright Mental Defectives Pages of Wisdom BB Primary Purpose - Burnsville Ridge Runners II Rivertown BB (Hastings) Rosemount Groups Roseville Centennial Group Shoreview 12&12 Sisters of Serenity St. Croix Valley Groups St. Paul Speakers Mtg. Stillwater Trinity Groups The Book Club The Firing Line Group Third Tradition Northfield Uptown Groups Weekend Jumpstart II White Bear Groups Woodbury Wed. Noon Step Study</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><u>The Lifeline: Purpose Statement</u></p> <p><i>The Lifeline</i> is the 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.) 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 content that might 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).</p>	<p>Thanks to all the terrific volunteers who helped in the Office during May!</p> <p>Adrian, Andy, Brian, Chris S, Connie E, Crysil, Dade W, Dave, Dave W, Dayna K, Emily E, Frank D, Geraldine, Graham, Greg C, Jack, Jane B, Jeff R, Joe M, Kelly G, Kristin Y, Lee C, Mary Anne, Max S, Nate R, Nate W, Peter, Peter G, Ratta, Ray, Ray C, Rick B, Rick D, Rick N, Scott M, Steven, Susan D, Taylor R, Tierney, Val.</p> <p>Thanks to all the Night Owl volunteers and groups as well!</p> 	

UPCOMING A.A. EVENTS!!

District 8 Summer Brunch
Sunday, July 26th, 10am to 1pm
 Highland Park Pavilion, St. Paul
 On Montreal Ave., north of West 7th St.

Minneapolis Intergroup
SUMMER OPEN HOUSE !
Saturday, August 1, 9am to 1pm
 7204 W 27th St., St. Louis Park
www.aaminneapolis.org

Maplewood Alano Annual Picnic
Sunday, July 26th, 11am
 Battle Creek Park — Main Pavilion

West Central Regional Forum
w/ the A.A. General Service Board
 St. Cloud, MN — Holiday Inn
September 11, 12 & 13

64th Annual Duluth Round-up
 Duluth Entertainment and Convention Center
September 11, 12 & 13
www.duluthroundup.org

19th Annual
Heartland Round-up
 Park Rapids, MN — Northern Pines Assembly Ground
September 11, 12 & 13



"I'm sober but I'm still broke. Coffee costs as much as booze."

Cartoon reprinted with permission of the A.A. Grapevine, Inc. June, 1976.

Dear Bill W,

I finished my step work right before my first anniversary, and I've been sober for twenty months. Lately I'm starting to get cranky again, and I don't really feel at home in meetings any more. What do you suggest?

— An Anonymous Drunk

Many A.A.'s go in for annual or semiannual housecleanings. Many of us also like the experience of an occasional retreat from the outside world where we can quiet down for an undisturbed day or so of self-overhaul and meditation.

Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, p.89, reprinted by permission of A.A. World Services, Inc.

Is your meeting represented at Intergroup?

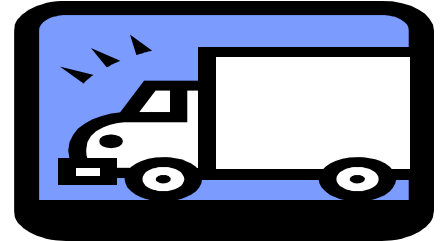
The July Representatives' meeting will be held Tuesday, July 21st, 7:30 pm, at the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, 285 N. Dale St., St. Paul, 55103. The church is located just south of I-94. For parking, turn west on Iglehart from Dale.

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

Change Service Requested

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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 \$5.00 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., Ste. 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) _____