The Lifeline



August 2016 24 Hour Phone: 651-227-5502 Volume 52, Issue 8

Volunteer's View

When I was a child, my mom brought me and my younger siblings grocery shopping with her, all the time. There was something exciting about all of that food, those long aisles that went on forever, and the free taste tests; but then came that moment when mom was a little too focused on the shopping list and she was snaking her way through the hectic highway of people. All of a sudden, she would vanish and those aisles would seem a lot longer and taller than before. All of the faces would begin to blur and I'd feel alone in an unfamiliar and scary place that I really knew nothing about.

That about sums up how I felt when I moved to St. Paul and joined the recovery community, exactly 90 days ago. Originally from Michigan, I moved here to do something that I knew absolutely nothing about - getting sober. I'm 19 years old and almost 400 miles away from home, like a kid lost in a grocery store, except that I'm not going to find my mom here and it's not a grocery store which I'm navigating – it's my life.

Since moving here, my life has been turned upside down and inside out, and changed in ways I didn't think it would. I moved into a sober house and, within my first few days of living there, I heard a lot about this "Intergroup" thing. I figured, "Hey, I don't work right now. Let's see what it's all about." Since then, St. Paul Intergroup has played a powerful role in my recovery. Starting out as something just to fill my time, it is now somewhere I look forward to going to. The environment is filled with people who truly care about those around them and want nothing more than to help other alcoholics. We laugh; we talk about everyday things; and, every now and then, we answer a phone call that might save a life. The other day, someone called to ask if we had a 53-year medallion! Just being around to witness that moment was such a moving and inspirational part of my day.

Feeling lost and alone for so long in my alcoholism, and then starting over in a completely new place has been an overall terrifying experience. With the help and unity of A.A., I've found myself experiencing life in new and amazing ways. Volunteering at Intergroup has helped me to make meaningful connections which I plan to keep for a long time. It's given me opportunities to be of service to other alcoholics, and helped me not to feel so lost in my life. It gives me a sense of purpose like I've never experienced before. I look forward to participating in Intergroup's mission for many years to come.

Alice V., St. Paul Intergroup Office Volunteer – Line by Line; St. Paul, MN

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

Keep it Simple!

The first time I worked this step, I had to constantly remind myself that it only has TWO parts:

Make a thorough list of everyone I had harmed in the course of my alcoholism.

Become willing to make amends to everyone on my list.

Again and again, I stalled on this step. Again and again, I drank. I didn't want to face the people I had hurt, especially those who had hurt me as well. So, the list was never made. The willingness never came. I was never sober for very long. I lived in isolation, fear, shame, anger, and remorse.

Then, I realized I was looking too far ahead when I took this step. I was looking at Step Nine as I sat down to work Step Eight. I was adding more parts to this two-part step. As I tried to make my list, I was already making amends in my head, trying to predict if it would go well, if I would be forgiven, if I would lose a friend, if I would be hurt further.

In working closely with my sponsor, I took this step only as it read in the Big Book - no more, and no less. As I sat down with pen and paper, I had to ask: who had I hurt – physically, emotionally, financially? I had a good solid list of people on my Fourth Step, so I started there. I had identified my contribution to each resentment I held against another person. Then, I moved further: my children (whom I had no resentment towards), innocent friends who had never hurt me at all and people who weren't even aware I had harmed them. I needed to be thorough; to write down the name of every person, and to ask God to help me be considerate of the harms I had inflicted, in every circumstance.

Step Eight (continued from page one)

The Big Book says "Faith without works is dead." I had to place faith in my Higher Power to help me see everyone I had harmed, pray for the willingness to place them on the list, and to take the action of writing each name down as it came to me.

Once my list was as complete as possible, I looked at the second, and final, part of this step. Step Eight doesn't ask for anything more than for me to <u>become</u> willing to make amends to them all. "Become" means "begin to be." It didn't mean I had to BE willing. I just had to BEGIN to be willing. My sponsor helped me to see that, by taking the action of writing each name on my list, I had already started to become willing to make amends. It really was that simple!

Through working Step Eight, I have learned a powerful lesson about keeping everything the right size, and keeping it simple.

Anna F. – Outright Mental Defectives; St. Paul, MN

Tradition Eight: Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.

A friend from the program recently informed me he was excited to start a new job and was psyched to be an "A.A. Special Worker." I then inquired if Intergroup had hired him or if he was moving to New York to work at our General Service Office (GSO). A rather perplexed look came over his face and a discussion opened up. He had been led to believe, by another A.A. member, that being hired at a facility to provide care and treatment for chemically dependent clients, he "would qualify" as an "A.A. Special Worker." The whole conversation led me again to know how important it is not only to talk through the steps with newcomers in meetings and sponsees via the Big Book, but also to discuss what A.A. is and is not; what do I/we belong to; and how important the Traditions and Concepts are in preserving our Fellowship.

Our service centers include our Intergroup Offices, General Service Office, A.A. World Services, and A.A. Grapevine Offices. Each of these entities are physical spaces, open and operating to further our Twelfth Step work of carrying the A.A. message to the outside world. Staff members work there daily and, locally, trained volunteers cover the incoming phone calls at Intergroup. Yes, the lifeblood of an Intergroup is the volunteer base that is willing to staff phones when a possible newcomer calls in (live Twelve Step call), or when someone traveling through on vacation calls to request local meeting information. The volunteers' A.A. membership qualifies them for that unpaid job and task. And, there's a lot more to an Intergroup than "how to find a meeting."

Several years ago, I had the privilege of serving as the Public Information Chair for Area 36, which is the southern half of the state of Minnesota. This is a volunteer position. The Intergroup Office Manager called me, as he had gotten a call from an RN at a large hospital in Rochester, MN. The RN wanted to talk with a local A.A. member to access a database to solicit A.A. members for a medical study they were conducting. (Folks, just to reassure you – A.A. DOES NOT engage in any medical research, and member/group contact information is NEVER given out for those purposes!) Our paid A.A. Special Worker, the Office Manager at Intergroup, was available during business hours and had the skill set to chat with the RN and then connect me, an A.A. member doing Public Information Twelfth Step outreach/education, with her.

The Eighth Tradition is also about finances. When the basket is passed around at each meeting I attend, I need to ask myself, do I just "see" a basket? Or am I grateful for the paid workers at my local Intergroup; the A.A. Grapevine Director; the paid A.A. staff members who assemble the background information of the annual General Service Conference agenda items for General Service Reps' (GSRs) and our Delegate? If my view is narrow, I'm only seeing a basket, versus remembering I'm connected to a worldwide Fellowship. We each have a part to play in getting the word out about a spiritual way of life to "live with" and arrest our alcoholism on a daily basis versus dying from it.

For more information, please refer to A.A. Co-founder Bill W.'s article about Traditions Seven and Eight, entitled Respecting Money, (found in The Language of the Heart or online at www.aagrapevine.org, archived Grapevine articles (additional fees may apply).

Carla N., Area 36 Grapevine La Viña Chair – Bridge to Shore Squad 28; Minneapolis, MN

The Lifeline: Purpose Statement

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

Please email your article to lifeline@aastpaul.org, or send it by regular mail to Lifeline Editor, St. Paul Intergroup, 608 Seventh Street West, St. Paul MN 55102. 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.

Concept Eight: The trustees are the principal planners and administrators of over-all policy and finance. They have custodial oversight of the separately incorporated and constantly active services, exercising this through their ability to elect all the directors of these entities.

According to *The Twelve Concepts Illustrated*, Concept Eight is grounded in Bill W.'s early mistakes of trying to run the various service functions of A.A. directly, and finding in the end that the better approach was delegation and oversight by many, rather than by a few or just one.

Concept Eight is explicit in both its scope and authority: we grant the A.A. Trustees the necessary power and responsibility to oversee the day-to-day functions of Alcoholics Anonymous, "writ large." The Trustees, in turn, delegate and share this great obligation with the two corporate service entities (A.A. World Services, Inc. and the A.A. Grapevine) as well as the General Service Board, through their power to elect the Directors of these various entities. The magic word here is "delegate," which makes me eternally grateful for the trials and errors which led Bill to realize how unwise and counterproductive it is to allow the concentration of power and influence in any one body of people, or any one person in A.A.

By asking the Trustees to take responsibility for overseeing the "big picture" of our Fellowship's General Services, we A.A. members are free to focus on the vital work that began so many years ago when one alcoholic sat down with another to share their experience, strength and hope. We get to do this vital Twelve Step work through regular participation in our home group meetings; volunteer work for our Intergroups, Areas, and Districts; and most especially one-on-one by carrying the message one alcoholic to another, as it was before there was ever a General Service structure.

I like to think of Concept Eight this way: we A.A. members are the drivers of A.A. message. The Trustees, through the General Service entities, are the principals who ensure that our singleness of purpose retains its clarity and visibility through our literature and service outreach. They keep our vessel afloat, but leave the driving to us.

This Concept is a reminder to me that I have a very special responsibility as a member of A.A., that, "When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. always to be there. And for that: I am responsible."

Bill S., St. Paul Intergroup Tradition Eight Special Worker – The Promises Meeting; St. Paul, MN

Thoughts from the Board

Since I got sober, over a decade ago, my life has been nothing but sunshine and rainbows, calm seas and smooth sailing. The world is my oyster! Every dream has come true!... NOT!!!

Tradition Three states "the only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking." The only requirement for membership and acceptance into the A.A. Fellowship is that we want to get over this soul-wrenching malady. I look at it this way: all my life, I've felt I didn't get the handbook to life that told me how to act, what to do, etc. I felt I was fundamentally flawed in some way and needed to overcome those flaws on my own, before I could even start to feel that I could participate in life. This tradition tells me that I've already met all of the prerequisites for membership.

With service work, the main thing is simply to show up. Showing up with the willingness to be of service is the main requirement of most service commitments. Since the move of the St. Paul Intergroup office, we have experienced some unforeseen challenges; some things have not gone exactly as planned, and this has been stressful at times. In sobriety, we sometimes think "now that I'm not drinking, everything will go along smoothly, without any unforeseen challenges." You do not need to be sober long to realize that life still happens. One thing I heard, early in my sobriety, was "those aren't bumps in the road; that's just the road."

I've heard speakers talk about how *stressful* their life is, but they are sober; or how *busy* their life is since being sober but that they were grateful for this. I heard a woman speak recently who, toward the end of her talk, commented on how *full* her life was. I found this to be a nice take on how we want to perceive things. Being of service is a time commitment, usually without any prerequisites. It can be an opportunity to meet adverse experiences with serenity and to have a sense of fullness in life. It made me realize that a full life is not without challenges. When I was drinking, I was not even close to participating in life. With sobriety, I have a chance.

Joe W., St. Paul Intergroup Board Treasurer – New Brighton Big Book; New Brighton, MN

Saint Paul Intergroup's 2016 Annual Ice Cream Social &

Long-Timers' Recognition

Enjoy an Ice Cream Social and join in recognition of those with more than a quarter century of continuous sobriety.

Hear how they did it!

WHEN:

Saturday, August 20th

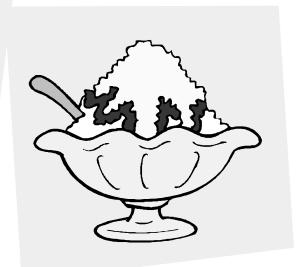
4:00PM - 6:30PM

WHERE:

St. Mark's Lutheran Church

550 7th Street West

St. Paul, MN 55102



For more information, please contact St. Paul Intergroup: 651-227-5502



ASL Interpretation available upon request. Please contact staff at Intergroup by Friday, August 1st to secure arrangements.

UPCOMING A.A. EVENTS!!

Southern Minnesota Area 36 Area Committee Meeting

Best Western North Mankato, MN

Saturday, August 6th - 9:00 AM—5:00 PM

For more info: www.area36.org

58th Annual Southern Minnesota Roundup

"God Either Is, or He Isn't." Best Western Hotel, Hwy 169 North Mankato, MN

Friday, Sept. 9th - Sunday, Sept. 11th

For more info: somnroundup@gmail.com

Your News?

We invite you to share your AA news here!
Please send your items to *lifeline@aastpaul.org*.
We look forward to hearing from you.

Group and Area News

New Meeting: A New Day group is holding a Thursday 10:00AM 12 & 12 meeting at the Family of Christ Church, 10970 185th Street, Lakeville, MN. The meeting is Closed, Mixed, All-Ages, and Handicap Accessible.

New Meeting: The *Senior Vintage People* group is holding a Thursday 9:00AM Literature meeting at the Silver Sobriety Center, 5630 Memorial Avenue North, Stillwater, MN. The meeting is Open, Mixed, Seniors (50+), and Handicap Accessible.

New Meeting: The *Steps to Freedom Big Book* group is holding a Wednesday 6:30PM Big Book meeting at the Christ Methodist Church, 2500 Hudson Place, Maplewood, MN. The meeting is Closed, Mixed, and All-Ages.

The 15th Annual Empty Chair Men's Retreat

Camp Knutson 11169 Whitefish Avenue Cross Lake, MN 56442

Friday, August 19th - Sunday, August 21st

Hosted by The Tuesday Night
Men's Problems & Solutions Meeting
The Empty Chair Men's Retreat was named
for the alcoholic who still suffers.

For more info: call Jamie M. 612-227-9747 jkmac21@msn.com



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Looking for a Service Opportunity? Become a St. Paul Intergroup Night Owl!

Upcoming Night Owl Orientations:

Saturday, August 20th, September 17th, October 18th

Every Third Saturday from 10:00 -11:00 AM

St. Paul Intergroup Office

608 Seventh Street West - St. Paul, MN 55102

To RSVP please call: 651-227-5502

St. Paul Area Intergroup Representatives' Meeting Minutes June 21st, 2016

Meetings Represented: Como Park Big Book; Defogged Men's Group; District 8; District 19; Fireside Women's Big Book; The Firing Line; Gratitude in Action; Happy, Joyous and Free; Hole in the Doughnut; Maplewood Alano Groups; Outright Mental Defectives; Pocketing Our Pride; Problems & Solutions; Rule 62 Step & Tradition; Sober Goats; Students of Life; Summit Hill; Uptown Groups; Women's Basic Text

Opened with the Serenity Prayer, introductions, and Matt D read the Primary Purpose of Intergroup.

Minutes from last month were reviewed, motioned and seconded, and approved.

Treasurer's Report, Matt R no treasurer's report this month due to data problems with QuickBooks, noting no problems with reconciling paper bank statements. In general on budget. Contact Joe W at treasurer@aastpaul.org

The Office Report, Johni B, Gopher State literature sales were \$4,256 and 1st time over \$4,000 of 2010, 2013 and 2016 sales. All items accounted for as sold or returned and all sales reconciled. Thanks to all volunteers for their dedication. We love our new office location. Calls regarding security alarm activation for security breaches will now go to Office, then Johni B, then Sandy rather than to Night Owl. Volunteer list has been updated so we are more effectively carrying the message. Meeting directory now has new two-page spread with one page devoted to open speaker meetings. Contact Johni B at manager@aastpaul.org

The Website Report, 660 meetings and 283 groups total. Down 2 meetings from last month. Sergey is doing the updates such as meetings and new flyers, etc. Jonathan is completing new website design, both desktop and mobile versions. Plenty of service opportunities and no current Night Owl shift openings. All stats are down this month except for meeting searches, which were way up. Content and event suggestions encouraged. Contact Sergey or Jonathan at webservant@aastpaul.org

Outreach Program, no report. Contact Jestine M at outreach@aastpaul.org

Update from the Board, meeting next month at St Stanislaus, approved 2 new signs for new office, Jenni S

Night Owl Report, Lesli D, 0 open shifts, groups should make sure their volunteers have updated Night Owl instructions. Night Owl Orientation is every 3rd Sa at 10 a.m. in the Office. Contact Lesli D at nightowl@aastpaul.ora

Liaison Reports, District 8, Matt D, Area Grapevine workshop in planning stage, had Delegates Report, W 7th Aug. block party date TBD; District 15, Jon for Julie H, booth at Washington Co. fair; District 19, Dan R, had Delegates Report, also approached for Area Grapevine workshop.

Upcoming Intergroup Events

Office Open House/IG's 50th Anniversary, Sa 7/9, 11-3pm, food and fun, 608 7th St W, Sandy K and JD

Ice Cream Social/Old Timers Meeting, Sa 8/20, 4-6:30pm, 3M/3F speakers 25+ years sobriety, new location St. Mark's Lutheran Church 550 7th St W, Tim B and Joe W

Old Business, Next Meeting is 7/19, 7:30pm, St Stanislaus Church, 398 Superior St

New Business, Downtown Alano may reopen in late Aug./Sept with new floors, kitchen and bathrooms.

Group AA Announcements, OMD Potluck 1st Fr 7/1 7pm potluck speaker and medallion ceremony, 1221 Marshall Av; Uptown House 1st Sa 7/9 (this month) 7pm, AA and Alanon speakers and food, Recovery Church; Rule 62 2nd Anniversary, Sa 6/25 6pm food/7pm speaker Sonja B, 341 Hamline Av; St. Paul speaker meeting every Su 7pm, 500 Cedar Av

Suggestions for next month's agenda, None

Grapevine Report, Erin gave report; volunteer for July, Stephanie

Concept VI, John gave report; volunteer for Concept VII for July, Carolyn

Mock Rep Report, Mike C; volunteer for July, Greg

Closed with the Responsibility Statement

2016 Steering Board:		Office Calls/Visitors—June 2016	
Chair:	Sandy K.	Meeting information	82
Alternate Chair:	Jenni S.	Inventory/hours 12th Step calls	35 11
Secretary:	Scott L.	Temporary sponsor Speaker request	16 32
Treasurer:	Joe W.	Special events	2
Alternate Treasurer:	Matt R.	Outside issues Info for professionals	14 1
Members-at-Large 2016:	Jestine M. & Mike C.	Administrative	84
Members-at- Large 2017:	J.D. & Lesli D.	Other Total Calls	92 369
Advisor to the Board:	Tim B.	Average Calls/Day Total Visitors	16.8 300
Office Manager:	Johni B.	Average Visitors/Day	13.6

NEW Location!!

August 2016 REPS' MEETING: Tuesday, August 16th @ 7:30 PM

SAINT STANISLAUS CHURCH 398 West Superior Street; St. Paul, MN 55102



7th Tradition 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

608 Seventh Street West St. Paul, MN 55102

30% General Service Office

P.O. Box 459 Grand Central Station New York, NY 10163

10% Southern MN Area 36

Area Assembly P.O. Box 2812 Mpls., MN 55402

10% District Committee

Ramsey County: District 8, P.O. Box 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

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

JUNE CONTRIBUTIONS

Number of Group Contributors:31Total Group Contributions:\$3290Number of Faithful Fivers:15Total from Faithful Fivers:\$380



District Meetings

District 8 (Ramsey Co.)

Fairview Community Center 1910 Co. Rd B, Rm 108 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 Rosemount 2nd Wed., 7:00 PM

District 26 (SE Ramsey Co.)

Grace Lutheran Church 1730 Old Hudson Rd. St. Paul 2nd Sun., 7:00PM www.district26-area36.org



Thanks to all of the FANTASTIC Office Volunteers who helped in June:

Alec F., Alex A., Alice V., Bob P., Brent B., Brina B, Burt K., Colin K., Dan M., David H., Dustin S., Evan D., Frank D., Henry O., J. P. R., Jean R., Jenny L., Jon H., Kate A., Kathy E., Kirsten B., Marc S., Melissa G., Michael L., Mickey Nate W., Pat W., Sam S., Suzanne B., Steve W., Tom P., Ty K.

Thanks to our AWESOME Night Owls too!

Thanks to all the Group that contributed in June 2016

11th Step FINE Group Anoka Day By Day Children of Chaos Plus Cottage Grove Groups Dakota Alano Dakota Alano SAT 11AM Day by Day Women's Group Easy Does It Sun 10AM BB Forest Lake Alano Friday Night By The Book Friends in Recovery Happy, Joyous and Free Highland Park Groups Lakeville Wed. Beginners Group Mahtomedi Tuesday Step Mendota St. Peter's Sat 9AM Rivertown BB Group-Hastings Rosemount Groups Rule 62 Step & Tradition Group Serious Sober People Shoreview 12 x 12 Sisters of Serenity Sober Goats Summit Hill Third Edition Group Third Tradition Northfield Three R's group Turtle Group - VA Una Luz en el Camino Up In Smoke



Uptown Club

St. Paul Intergroup 608 Seventh Street West St. Paul, MN 55102

Change Service Requested

Non-Profit Organization U.S. Postage

PAID

Twin Cities MN Permit No. 7451

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 ${\it Faithful Fiver}$ - Enrollment Form

Faithful Fivers graciously contribute \$5.00 or more to St. Paul Intergroup each month to enable us to 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.

quarterly or monthly.	minibolions may be made annount, brannount,		
~Yes! Please enroll me as a $\mathcal{F}aith$	ful Fiver!		
1. Contact information:	3. Choose a Payment Method: Credit Card/Debit Card*		
NameAddress			
City State ZIP			
Phone Number	Every time Deter		
Email			
2. Amount & Frequency:			
Amount: \$ Frequency: (check only one)	*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 confacting Intergroup. Check - Please make payable to: Saint Paul Intergroup 608 Seventh Street West Saint Paul, MN 55102		
Monthly Quarterly Bi-Annually Annually			
Start on//			
Please send my receipt to my home/postal address			
Please send my Lifeline to my email address instead			