



## STEP 5

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

The following words are found in the first paragraph of the AA 12x12 commentary on Step Five, “Few steps are harder to take than Five. But scarcely any Step is more necessary to longtime sobriety and peace of mind than this one.” The text of the step is very clear, “Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.” This can seem to be quite a daunting task. It is highly unlikely that anyone who is new to sobriety, or a long-time member, relishes the thought of completing a deep dive into our character defects and then sharing the results with anyone. The 12x12 goes on to state, “Few muddled attitudes have caused us more trouble than holding back on Step Five. Some people are unable to stay sober at all; others will relapse periodically until they really clean house.” A goal of continuous long-term sobriety that leads to solid incremental changes in our lives is put at risk when we skimp on Step Five. Another way to put it is that half measures availed us nothing. It is imperative that we hold nothing back!

Every individual is unique. While the AA fellowship embraces many of the common threads

of alcoholism that each member can relate to, the working of the twelve steps lends insight into particulars that are individual in nature. For example, we each have our own story. No two are exactly alike. The working of the “Steps” is tailored to this principle. We work our program. Therefore, there is a logical progression that is intended for our benefit. The admission of powerlessness and unmanageability under the influence of alcohol is just the starting point. We come to grips with the fact that we need help to stay sober. We find it when we turn our will over to “the care of God as we understand him.” Work begins immediately. A searching and fearless moral inventory is beneficial only if we employ the rigorous and honest appraisal that it requires. Once accomplished the program steers us into Step Five. We now share our newfound insight with God, ourselves, and another human being.

At this point a fair question would be, “What have I found?” The answer to this question will vary depending on who is asking it. As stated earlier, everyone is unique. No two people on earth have the exact same story. Our lives start in infancy and have continued into the present day. Our entire life’s inventory makes up the totality of who we are. Many variables are at play. Where we were born, how we were raised, who influenced our thoughts and ideas, and the volumes of choices and decisions that we made, are just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to really knowing what makes us tick. That is why understanding the last

---

*The Lifeline* is the monthly newsletter of the St. Paul and Suburban Area Intergroup, Inc. It is about, by, and for groups and members of the A.A. Fellowship. Opinions expressed herein are not to be attributed to A.A. as a whole, nor does publication of any article imply endorsement by either A.A. or St. Paul Intergroup. We welcome articles on a Step, Tradition or Concept, in addition to descriptions of personal experience. We also welcome original cartoons and drawings expressing the wry side of A.A. experience.

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

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

Website: [www.aastpaul.org](http://www.aastpaul.org) Online Store: [aaspi.company.site](http://aaspi.company.site) E-mail: [lifeline@aastpaul.org](mailto:lifeline@aastpaul.org) Phone: (651) 227-5502

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

## 5TH TRADITION

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

One of my groups had an interesting turn recently. Somehow, the group simply allowed multiple Traditions to be thrown out the window. People either didn't notice, didn't understand or didn't care. It seems most members didn't know the Traditions well enough to comprehend what had happened. Most at the meeting thought that what happened seemed OK to them.

The group is a closed meeting of AA, which means attendance is limited to persons who have a desire to stop drinking. The group conscience was to state at every meeting our adherence to our singleness of purpose and that discussion at this meeting is limited to experience with alcohol and recovery from alcoholism.

Unbelievably, one day this meeting was chaired by a non-alcoholic. And no one objected. The person stated she was an addict and had never been a drinker. She said that she had tried alcohol but didn't tolerate it so she didn't ever pursue it. She proceeded to tell her story of addiction to benzodiazepines.

Nowadays we know many members, if not most, have had some drug use during their time drinking, so mentioning drugs can be commonplace. Here though, our chairperson had never had trouble with drinking. She said she had hesitated to speak because she didn't know if that was OK. She had been encouraged and invited to speak by a group member.

Later, I told my group that it was painful for me to see our group conscience ignored. I also mentioned to the addict privately that the meeting was supposed to be limited to discussion of our alcohol use. She accused me of judging her and not liking her personally. She said that no one else had said this to her in four years of attending AA.

I felt torn up but confused, as I couldn't put every-

thing that was awry into concise words. So I turned to our General Service Office, as I had done in the past when I needed clarity on the Traditions. They went through the Traditions with me and shared relevant passages. They directed me to our pamphlet, "Problems Other Than Alcohol," written years ago. This is not a new problem. The pamphlet perfectly addresses the issue and is clear.

It seems many frame the problem incorrectly in the first place. We don't tell non-alcoholics they can't speak, attend closed meetings or chair any meetings out of arrogance or snobbery. It is not exclusion, it is a statement of humility. We simply only know one thing. To focus solely on drug addiction affects our unity, our common welfare and God's will as expressed in our group conscience, all while it violates our only requirement for membership. The Third Tradition is meant to be inclusive, so long as a member has a problem with alcohol. At one point, AA even deleted the word "honest" from the phrase, "a desire to stop drinking."

While speaking to our group, I sobbed at one point because it's about AA's future. I didn't even mind my ugly crying under the fluorescent lights to make my point. I don't believe anyone had ever seen me cry or be upset at all. I'm just an old-timer known for sharing my experience, strength and hope. Nonetheless, I was cross-talked and a woman with five years of sobriety stated that our founders included everyone and all our differences. She said that AA was all-inclusive.

What had made me sob in the first place was my memory of my old AA friend Frank, who was a very early member. I didn't know what the woman meant by her understanding of the founders, but I actually remember them first-hand. And Frank was one of them.

I met Frank in 1989 in New York City, where I began my AA journey. I was 26 years old and Frank was in his 80s. He was 45 years sober, which was much older than my entire lifespan. We'd have coffee and he'd tell me about the old days. Frank got sober in 1944. God bless this man who spent time with me. I must have seemed like a kid. Frank

described how a small number of members would get together for a meeting. Wives would be there because there was no Al-Anon then. Few worked or had money so they would buy something at the supermarket after the meeting and just talk. Frank was a simple man. He and his peers had been sober before the Traditions were written. They had been drunk before there was an AA. And they lived the early battles in meetings that threatened to tear our Fellowship apart.

The Traditions provide guidance, protection and solutions for issues that threaten our society. What those old-timers like Frank had in common was gratitude, fear of ego and pride, and a protective stance around the Traditions. They would stand up and interrupt a meeting when a Tradition was being ignored and explain why there might be a problem. They would shun praise and avoid people placing them on a pedestal. They were men of very few words.

I asked Frank if he had contributed to the writings in our book Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. He simply said, "Well, I guess I hope some of our group discussions ended up in there."

I will always remember those old-timers and their lasting warning: Do not take AA for granted as though it will always be here. It's up to us to keep it alive.

By: Ann O. | Needham, Massachusetts

part of Step Five is essential. "The exact nature of our wrongs." How does this impact my world view and my place in it? How does it impact daily choices and decisions? How honest is my self appraisal? Am I dealing with reality as the world sees it or am I seeing through a filtered lens of my own delusions and insecurities? What are the root causes of my behavior? How does this relate to my ability to really "clean house."

The working of the steps for me has become a lifetime process. Steps four and five have been beneficial in adding personal insight that has resulted in serenity. It's like peeling back the layers of an onion. The deeper I go into root causes, the more I understand the choices and decisions that formed my story. Talking to another person about the exact nature of our wrongs brings everything into focus. Looking someone in the eye jars the subconscious, leading to an earnest desire to freely discuss our innermost secrets. Once out into the open, they no longer hold sway over our emotions! In a sense it is somewhat cathartic. I had been sober for around ten years when I recognized that there were more peels of the onion that were still untouched. I enlisted the help of a psychologist and did an in-depth analysis. In essence I was working a fourth and fifth step. The insight that I gained into understanding why I am like I am was life changing. It helped me to implement changes to my behavior that has allowed me to make better choices and decisions going forward. I am no longer as prone to self-sabotage as I was in the past. I have learned how to forgive myself. With the help of the serenity prayer, I truly can "let go and let God" be in control.

The successful working of Step Five is a springboard that solidifies our grip on living sober. Leaving no stone unturned, we have put it all on the line. We truly are honest, open, and willing. The last paragraph of the 12x12 on Step Five puts it into focus. "This feeling of being at one with God and man, this emerging from isolation through the open and honest sharing of our terrible burden of guilt, brings us to a resting place where we may prepare ourselves for the following Steps toward a full and meaningful sobriety." The program works if we work it!

Bernie W.

## Service Work: The Heartbeat of AA

### ✦ Why Service Matters in AA?

Service is the lifeblood of Alcoholics Anonymous. It's not just about giving back; it's about keeping the fellowship alive, supporting each other in sobriety, and fostering a sense of community.

### 💛 Connectivity & Fellowship

Service work is the glue that binds our large community together. By actively participating in service roles, you contribute to the unity and strength of AA. It's a chance to form lasting connections with others who understand the journey to sobriety.

### 🔄 Keep the Miracle Alive

Service work is the heartbeat of AA, ensuring the continuation of the miracle of recovery. When we actively engage in service, we help others stay sober, and in turn, it reinforces our own commitment to a life of recovery.

### 🔍 District Needs YOU!

### ➔ GSRs Wanted!

Our district needs Group Service Representatives (GSRs) from meetings like yours. Be the voice of your group at the district level and play a crucial role in decision-making processes.

### ➔ Open Chairs & Positions

There are open positions waiting to be filled. Your skills and commitment are needed to keep our meetings running smoothly.

### 👤 Meeting Info

- Find your district and times on the Area 36 webpage at [area36.org](http://area36.org).
- St. Paul Intergroup Board and Reps Meeting: every 3rd Tuesday at 7:30 PM.

### Get Involved!

Whether you're a newcomer or a seasoned member, there's a service role for you. Step up, be a part of the solution, and keep AA vibrant and strong.

For more information about how to be of service in AA General Service, speak with your sponsor or visit the [area36.org](http://area36.org) webpage, or reach out to intergroup and the volunteers and staff will be happy to direct you to ways to be of service to Alcoholics Anonymous.

## THOUGHTS FROM THE BOARD «FROM COFFEE TO COMMITMENT»

When I first came into Alcoholics Anonymous, I learned the importance of service work from my sponsor. My sponsor had a strong emphasis on being of service to the sick and suffering alcoholic or just to the others in need of help. Today because of that I understand the importance of being of service as it relates to my own sobriety, but I also understand that service work has brought me to have more love and respect for my fellows in AA. The people I surround myself with today may not always love the service work they do, but they are happier because of it and love doing service work and that is a big reason that I surround myself with these people.

Being the manager of St. Paul Intergroup, a special worker in Alcoholics Anonymous has been a wonderful journey. Thanks also to my first sponsor I recognize that being of service and working in a place that seems to be of service are two different things. The truth is that I may help other alcoholics find sobriety or come closer to sobriety, but this does not absolve me of being of service outside of work. The Big Book and others in the program talk about the importance of service work, what they are talking about is voluntary service work.

Money and spirituality do mix but at the end of the day, my understanding that just because I am paid to help someone does not mean I've paid back the damage I've done to the world or paid it forward. That comes in being of continued service to my fellows and my groups that I attend. My first year in sobriety and my experience in going through treatment had shown me many people who had recovered, and their form of service was "helping at work." I understand that some people stay sober that way, but I know that I cannot. That I must go out of my way to help others, or I am destined to drink again. I may have plenty of opportunity to help others when I answer the phone and make sure that St. Paul Intergroup stays running smooth so that when the next alcoholic who needs help can be helped but at the end of the day, I am paid by others to make sure that does hap-

pen. I am paid to make sure that others recover.

My favorite commitment to this day is making coffee for a meeting. It is a perfect all-around commitment, I have to show up early, complete a task, and I am there early enough to either engage with others at the meeting or be in the opportunity to be of more service to my meeting. The position also makes sure that I stay after the meeting and clean up the mess. The coffee maker position ensures that I show up early and that I stay late, just like my first sponsor taught me. That sometimes the best part of the AA meeting is before and after when we truly get connect with our fellows.

Jacob F - Office Manager

# OFFICE UPDATE

St Paul Intergroup is doing very well this year allowing us to be more equipped to serve our AA community. Not much is new but we have had overwhelming positive feed-back about the office rearrangement over the last few months.

The office is very excited to be hosting literature sales at Gopher State this year, so make sure to stop by, say hello and pick up a book!!

We will of course also be in our suite hosting and co-hosting with other groups in our area. Gopher State should be a wonderful time!!

Just a friendly Reminder:

- If you want a flyer or note in the lifeline please send them to the office by the third Monday of every month to meet the deadline.
- The office is always looking for article writers, so please feel free to reach out to the office on topics to write.
  - There are service commitments available at the office and with the Night Owl
- The office is also looking for a new staff member. So reach out to the office for more information on that.

## SELF-SUPPORT SUGGESTIONS FOR GROUPS

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

### 50% St. Paul Intergroup

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

### 30% General Service Office

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

### 10% Southern MN Area 36

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

### 10% District Committee

#### **Ramsey County:**

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

#### **Dakota County:**

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

#### **Washington County:**

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

## WAYS TO FINANCIALLY SUPPORT INTERGROUP

### 1. VIA SQUARE

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



### 2. VIA CHECK

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

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

---

### AREA 36 PINK CAN PLAN

**THE PINK CAN PLAN COLLECTS FUNDS TO PURCHASE AA LITERATURE FOR ALCOHOLICS IN CORRECTIONS FACILITIES IN SOUTHERN MINNESOTA.**

**MAIL CONTRIBUTIONS TO:**

**PINK CAN PLAN**  
**PO BOX 41633**  
**PLYMOUTH MN 55441-0633**

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

presents its  
**30<sup>th</sup> Annual Serenity Breakfast  
Sunday May 19, 2024**

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



**Guest AA Speaker**



**Christina G. from Brecksville, OH**

*Speaker will be ASL interpreted, building is Handicapped Accessible*

Breakfast: 8:00 am to 10:25 am

Speaker Meeting: 10:30 am to Noon

Only \$18.00 in advance ~ \$20.00 at the door

(Speaker only = Seventh Tradition)

Map and directions on the back of this flyer

**DISTRICT SERVICE  
MEETINGS**

*District 8 (Ramsey Co.)*

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

*District 15 (Washington Co.)*

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

*District 19 (Dakota Co.)*

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



**LOOKING FOR A SERVICE OPPORTUNITY?**

*Become a St. Paul Intergroup Night Owl*

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

St. Paul Intergroup Office  
39 Wentworth Ave E, Suite 365  
West St. Paul, MN 55110-3401  
To RSVP - please call 651-227-6602

**2024 INTERGROUP BOARD OF  
DIRECTORS**

Advisor to the Board: Elliot W.  
Board Chair: Kelly K.  
Alt. Board Chair: Ricky G.  
Treasurer: Devin R.  
Alt. Treasurer: Brittani G.  
Secretary: Alex S.  
Members at Large:  
Mary U.  
John K.  
Brandon H.  
Office Manager: Jacob F.  
Webservant: Jonathan L.  
Night Owl Coordinator: Lesli D.

**GREEN CAN PLAN**

**PLEASE HELP PROVIDE AN ASL  
INTERPRETER AT AN AA MEETING IN  
DISTRICT 8**



CHECKS CAN BE SENT TO

ASL FUND

PO BOX 131831

ROSEVILLE, MN 55113-0020

OR

CONTRIBUTE ELECTRONICALLY

VENMO @ASLFund-DistrictEight

Contact District 8 ASL Fund Coordinator

PLEASE POST ON BULLETIN BOARD

# "Road to Recovery"



## GOPHER STATE ROUNDUP XLIX May 24<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> 2024



Activities and Accommodations:

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

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

REGISTRATION – \$30.00 Contribution (Ages 13 & Over)  
Scholarships Available On-site

## Register in Advance

Guaranteed Special Room Rates Register early for the best rate. Details at [www.gopherstateroundup.org](http://www.gopherstateroundup.org) or directly with DoubleTree by Hilton at 800-222-8733. Mention Gopher State Roundup for a special rate.

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



St. Paul & Suburban Area Intergroup, Inc.

@SPIntergroup



venmo

Office

Volunteers

Bernie

Alec

Shaun L.

Jane H.

Lynn E.

Frank D.

Thanks to your all!

And Thanks to our many Night Owl volunteers as well.

Hoot Hoot!

If you are intrested in being of Service, please Visit our Website or Contact the office!!

THE FOLLOWING GROUPS, MEMBERS AND FAITHFUL FIVER MEMBERS MADE THE SERVICE OF INTERGROUP POSSIBLE LAST MONTH:

- 25 A.A. Groups contributed - \$4,201.13
- 32 Faithful Fivers contributed - \$1,137.86
- Total Contributions - \$5,575.99

Happy Hour Men's Meeting  
 Hope Church - Monday AA  
 Gratitude in Action - Mahtomedi  
 4th Step Workshop  
 Maplewood Groups  
 Birds of a Feather  
 North Dale Group  
 OMD  
 Como Park BB  
 Children of Chaos Plus  
 Wednesday Night Men's 12 x 12  
 Pocketing Our Pride - Mpls

Summit Hill  
 We Care Alcoholics Anonymous  
 Grovers Thursday Night  
 Forest Lake Alano  
 Happy Joyous and Free - Mahtomedi  
 Steven A Schletty  
 Maplewood Groups  
 Cottage Grove AA  
 West End Club  
 ++Walkin  
 Lake Elmo Thurs Night Group  
 Ridge Runners II Sat 830 AM

*Thank You So Very Much!*



Meeting  
Info Calls

34



12th Step  
Calls

5



Speakers  
Calls

3



Total  
Calls

122

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

Change Service Requested

Non-Profit  
Organization  
U.S. Postage

**PAID**

Twin Cities MN  
Permit 7451

*Please let us know a month in advance if your address changes. It saves us the cost of return postage and enables you to get each issue of *The Lifeline*. Our mailing permit does not provide for mail forwarding. THANK YOU!*



## St. Paul Intergroup **Individual Contribution** Enrollment Form

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

### **1. Contact Information:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### **2. Amount & Frequency:**

Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Frequency: (check one)  
 Monthly  Quarterly  Bi-Annually  Annually  
Start on: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
 Faithful Fiver (\$5.00/month)  
 Terrific Tenner (\$10.00/month)  
 Fantastic Fifteneer (\$15.00/month)

### **3. Choose a Payment Method:**

Credit Card/Debit  
 Visa  MasterCard  AMEX  Discover  
Card # \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
Name on Card: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Check - Please make payable to:

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