



Step 6

Step 6 continues to be confusing for me.

There is no action to be taken or result that shows this step is complete. What is a defect? How is it removed? What do I do? What does my Higher Power do? This step comes after Step 4 – took inventory – and Step 5 – shared the inventory and discovered some truths about ourselves, so that must be on purpose, right? We have looked at ourselves honestly, and now we must do something about what we have discovered. Are we ready to change? In Step 6 we need to be entirely ready or willing to make a change. The dictionary says willingness it is “cheerful compliance” – readiness, eagerness, enthusiasm. The opposite of willingness is aversion, opposition, hesitation and apathy.

There is a paradox in Step 6. We must be willing to have our defects removed. It is a process that involves both us and our higher powers. Who does what? And what are defects?

- Some of my defects are:
 - o Worrying about the future - awfulizing

- o Controlling situations for my comfort
- o Fearing I am not good enough
- o Being judgmental of others
- o Needing to be perfect to feel safe
- o Being selfish – self centered

The Chapter 6 of Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions discusses instincts as they relate to defects. It says that instincts are natural, and we have them to help us live and thrive. However, these instincts can become outsized or overgrown, so our defects are these outsized instincts. Another definition of defects could be our attachment to pain. When we cling to old behaviors that may have served us in the past, but are now causing us or others pain, we may want to define those behaviors as defects. How much pain do we want to endure before we let go of the behavior and detach from the pain? Or as I have heard it put “How Free do we want to BE!”

Step 6 involves this paradox of having to fully own and admit that we have defects of character but then equally to step back and do nothing about it until we are entirely ready to let our Higher Power do the job of removing it. It is strangely giving up of control to receive a free gift and find a new kind of control. It's what we did when we quit drinking: let go and let God. Step 6 is asking us to apply that same process to our defects. I would call it Grace.

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 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 Online Store: aaspi.company.site E-mail: lifeline@aastpaul.org Phone: (651) 227-5502
Office Hours: Monday - Friday 9:30 to 5:30, Saturday 10:00 to 2:00 Sunday Closed

TRADITION 6

This free gift, Grace, is just like springtime! A gift we all receive freely. Just by being alive. It is a lot of work to get out of the way and allow Grace to fully operate and liberate. We work to not work to get the desired result.

The Ansel Adams quote, “Chance favors the prepared mind,” speaks to how he was “lucky” to get his iconic photos by preparing and waiting for hours to get the exact right light and circumstance. So perhaps our work is to prepare to step out of the way, to relinquish our hold on the instincts and habits that used to serve us, to let them go, to trust in the Grace that is a gift to all of us that will relieve the pain these old instincts and habits cause us.

But this isn’t a one and done step. This is something we do continually as we live our lives. Through meditation, we discern if our instincts and habits are serving our purposes and if we find them useful or if they are causing us pain.

- Are we trying too hard to make a situation just so?
- Are we judgmental about people, places and things?
- Are we continually negatively self-talking?
- Are we bragging and gossiping to feel superior?

If our basic instincts are out of whack, we need to revisit the paradox of honestly identifying our offending behavior – whether it is called out to us or not – then get out of the way to let the defect be removed through the free gift of Grace. As it says in Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, “This step separates the men from the boys’ [or adults from the children, as I prefer]. So declares a well-loved clergyman who happens to be one of AA’s greatest friends. He goes on to explain that any person capable of enough willingness and honesty to try, repeatedly, Step 6 on all their faults – without any reservations whatever – has indeed come a long way spiritually.” [Bolded emphasis mine].

Rosemary H, St. Paul

I’m grateful that when I came into AA there were plenty of good examples around to teach me the principles we are to practice in order to change our lives. The man who became my sponsor was talking at coffee one day about how he’d been studying the Twelve Traditions and learning to practice them in his daily life. I was interested and listened to what he had to say, although I really thought the Twelve Traditions had no practical application on a personal level and were certainly for people with more sobriety than I had. I secretly figured maybe someday I would “graduate” to the Traditions after I had “mastered” the Twelve Steps. After all, they came after the Steps in the “Twelve and Twelve.”

This man talked about placing the common welfare of his family above his own wants and desires, and of placing the welfare of his employer’s business and the team above his own selfish desires for personal success. He explained the concept of self-support in a way that I had not heard before by describing the spiritual principle of recovering alcoholics paying our own way in society. The more he talked, the more interested I became. I began discussing these principles with this man while we began to work the Steps. I didn’t wait until after I took the Steps to learn.

One thing that he told me regarding Tradition Twelve was that someday one of the toughest things I would have to do would be to stand up for these principles and lovingly place them before the personalities in a whole group and tell them that I felt that they were wrong. He said that I would someday be the minority voice and that I would have to walk through the fear of rejection that

plagued me because nobody else would do it for me.

That day did come at a Saturday night meeting I had grown to love. It was full of long-timers and AAs whose sobriety I greatly respected. The format for the meeting was that you received a ticket when you walked in and the first half of the meeting was a discussion by lottery. If your ticket was pulled you got to go to the podium and share on any recovery topic or experience that week relating to how you stayed sober. The second half was a speaker meeting with a break in-between.

During the readings and all the things we do to open a meeting the basket was passed. Then the chairperson announced that a second basket was going around for the Oak Street Center Children's Christmas Party. I was sitting in the front row so he brought one of the baskets to me and one to another person in the front row. It was expected of us to walk the basket around the room to help it get all the way to the back and then to the podium safely. As I took the basket I felt great anxiety and looked at the Twelve Traditions hanging on the wall. Tradition Six seemed brighter than the others. Here was a great cause—children at Christmas. They were our children too, because the Oak Street Center was a clubhouse where AA meetings were held. I suppose it could be rationalized that this was not an outside enterprise, but my heart said it was. A clubhouse is a related facility and the children were not AA members. I handed the basket to the guy next to me and said, "I can't participate in this."

The anxiety was growing as I felt I had to do something about this. But what? I am a people pleaser in the extreme. If I said something, I feared these people would tell me I was out of line and I wouldn't have their approval. Nobody else seemed troubled by it as I watched money dropping into the basket.

As I stewed over the dilemma, the meeting began and went on as usual. However, God had a plan for me this night and my ticket number was called. My palms were sweaty as I stood up because I knew what I had to do. I had to stand up in front of a room full of longtime sober people whom I greatly respected and be the one to say that this was wrong. I said a quick prayer on my way to the podium. When I got there I took a deep breath and did it. I don't remember exactly what I said, but it was very well received...until the break. At the break I was approached by several members of the majority, who tried to "educate" me, told me that I was mistaken, and began sharing their perception of the truth.

In the light of all of this wisdom freely given to me by well-meaning old-timers, I did not change my vote or my mind. What actually happened is that I began a dialogue about the issue and the group conscience eventually decided not to pass a second basket for outside causes.

Several spiritual principles were interwoven into this situation, but I owe the entire outcome to God. He prepared me by helping me become familiar with Tradition Six and how these principles work for our good and the good of the Fellowship. If not for the Twelve Steps I would not have had the faith to face my fear and be a minority voice. I did not yet know of the Twelve Concepts as spiritual principles, but I began to learn of the importance of the minority voice to the good of AA before I knew it was a spiritual principle. All of our legacies are supported by each other. It is never too soon to begin learning and practicing all of the principles in "all of our affairs."

St. Paul Intergroup Newsletter

**St. Paul and Nearby
Communities' AA
Program is Vital —
Support It with Your
Contributions!**



**Carry the message
to alcoholics in our
community with
your experience,
strength, hope, and
creative abilities!**

We are seeking contributions in these areas:

- Articles about the steps, traditions, sponsorship, AA experience
- Graphics related to St. Paul AA
- Original AA jokes and cartoons
- Local AA organization event announcements

**If you write your shares or leads, it is
easy to turn it into an article! Email us.**

**For further details and schedule, please contact
lifelinechair@aastpaul.org**

A Different Perspective

As I get older in sobriety, my appreciation for the AA program that saved my life only grows. I came into the rooms at age 39. I had nothing, only a few letters that I brought out of jail with me and the clothes on my back. After my forced sobriety of a few months in jail, I found myself right back to drinking, hanging out in bars, getting into uncontrollable messes. How on earth did I get back there so quickly?

I am thankful that with the help of the staff at a treatment center, I was introduced to AA for the first time. At the meetings, I met a lady who appointed herself as my sponsor and she took me through the Steps.

After a few months of sobriety, I quickly got into service and started hearing about things like Traditions and Concepts. I'm an alcoholic of the educational variety, meaning I wanted to learn more about what these were. I wanted to be sure that my time wasn't being invested in some new-age, pyramid-scam cult.

In my hometown, we are blessed to have over 15 AA groups, many of them offering three meetings a day. Soon I kept seeing this certain member repeatedly at the same meetings I attended. He had something I wanted. He had an understanding of the Traditions and the Twelve Concepts of World Service. He shared this experience to help me deal with the world around me, as I was slowly learning how to deal with myself in this world.

But as I learned, I found it hard not to judge my fellow members for their shortcomings. Our groups' guidelines were inconsistent and,

irritatingly, either too strict or too lenient. All I could see was everyone's faults and flaws. I knew that I needed to do something about this because the only thing that I was seeing in our meetings were the differences among us, not our similarities.

So I gathered up the courage and asked this man, "Old Mossback," as I affectionately call him, to be my service sponsor. My sobriety has been enriched and strengthened tenfold since that day.

He and I jumped into literature studies about the Traditions and spent over a year discussing them, him teaching, me learning. We attended speaker meetings and on the car ride to and from the meetings, he would treat me to a story-telling session of his experiences with AA, specifically in general service, which became my passion. Over time, a whole new world opened to me. Who knew that everyone, including myself, had the right to be wrong? Who knew that each Tradition was more flexible than I would have considered possible?

I could finally enjoy peace of mind at any group or among any AA members when I remembered to keep in mind ideas such as autonomy, self-support and anonymity. I am learning daily more of our AA history and the different types of literature available that allow me to see things in a different perspective. I truly learned about humility in action from this man.

Recently, Old Mossback visited the Wilson House in Vermont and he sent me a picture of the headstone of our cofounder, Bill W. On that headstone, he placed his 29-year chip I had given him some months before. Words cannot explain how amazed I was that my token of appreciation to the sponsor who helped save my life was sitting on the marker for one of the people who founded the program that saved both of ours.

-Grapevine

By: Christina R. | Stockton, Calif.

Intergroup Open House and Cribbage Tournament

On Saturday May 16th, the well-attended St. Paul Intergroup Open House and For-Fun Cribbage Tournament was held at the Intergroup Office on 33 Wentworth Avenue in West Saint Paul. Brandon and Allisa tied for first place in the five-round Cribbage Tournament, each with 598 points, sharing a trophy and bragging rights. Ted G. who came in second said, "oh well, it was a lot of fun!" A couple of alcoholics said that the chili dogs were the best they've had in a while. It was the smokey flavor from chef Mark's barbeque. While festivities were happening outside and in the conference room on the second floor, the Intergroup Office was open on the third floor for people to purchase literature, tokens, book covers, etc. and to learn about what's going on in St. Paul AA. We will see you again next time.

Office Update

- We recently updated our database of reps and volunteers so that we can better share updates, information, and events with our community
- We could always use more volunteers, St. Paul Intergroup runs on volunteers and the more members we have participating in AA St. Paul Intergroup the better it runs and more it can help care our primary message.
 - If you could talk to your groups about sending reps to our monthly board and rep meeting, this is one of the best ways to support St. Paul Intergroup, please also ask your reps to confirm their contact information with the office so they can receive updates for the meetings
- We had a wonderful time at gopher state thanks to the many volunteers who showed up to help. Our many volunteers are what make intergroup work smoothly.

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**

How It Works

4th Step

Workshop

*Where: St Paul Intergroup
33 Wentworth Ave
St Paul, MN 55118
Right Conference Room
(street level by front doors)*

*When: Saturday July 11th (part 1) &
Saturday July 18th (part 2)*

*Time: 10 AM to 3 PM - there is no cost
(will break for lunch 12:00 to 12:45)*

Cost: There is no cost-this is a free workshop

*Bring: Big Book, paper, pencils or pens & a friend or
two. Everyone and all 12-step programs
welcome!*

For sign-up and more information call
St Paul Intergroup 651-227-5502
Christopher B 651-707-5551
Marty Y 651-261-5484

DISTRICT SERVICE MEETINGS

District 8 (Ramsey Co.)
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.)
2nd Weds. Of the Month -7pm to 8:30pm
Eagan Community Center
1501 Central Pkwy
Saint Paul, MN, 55121
Lone Oak Room
dist19@area36.org



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
33 Wentworth Ave E, Suite 355
West St. Paul, MN 55118-3431
To RSVP - please call 651-227-5502

2025 INTERGROUP BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Advisor to the Board: Ricardo G.

Board Chair: Alex S.

Alt. Board Chair: Brandon H.

Treasurer: Don H.

Alt. Treasurer: Marc K

Secretary: Zach B

Members at Large:

Emily M.

Jamie Lynn

Matt

Kristine C.

Office Manager: Jacob F.

Webservant: Jonathan L. & Ethan

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

St. Paul Intergroup Outreach Committee

Together We Can Help

- Help keep meetings up to date!
- Let people know about Intergroup!

Volunteer!

**Truly Make a Difference in
the Life of an Alcoholic!**



Scan the QR
Code

The Hand of AA Always to be There...

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

(651) 227-5502
outreach@aastpaul.org

If you would like to financially contribute to St. Paul, this QR code will bring you to the St. Paul Intergroup website contribution page.

There are other ways to contribute to St. Paul intergroup as well and you can find those on our website or at the office in person.



Office Volunteers

Bernie, Lynn, Frank, Mike, Matt, Sue

Thanks to your all and thanks to our many Night Owl volunteers as well.

Hoot Hoot!

If you are interested in being of Service, please Vist our Website or contact the office!!

The following groups, members and Faithful Fiver members made the service of intergroup possible in the month of January:

- 25 A.A. Groups contributed - \$2,566.45
- Faithful Fivers contributed - \$5,651.36
- Total Contributions - \$10,465.38

Forest Lake Alano
Wednesday Night Men's 12 x 12
Old Timers
Midway Club
Sunday Night Grace
Thursday Meditation Meeting
Saturday Morning Womens Group
Pages of Wisdom

Mahtomedi Happy Hour 12 & 12
Grovers Thursday Night
North Dale Group
WBL Thurs Bloom Ave
Weekend Jumpstart II
Shoreview 12 x 12
Clay City AA
4th Step Workshop
East Side Club - East Side Group
Roll of Nickels

Saturday Morning Womens Group
A Vision for You

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

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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 *Terrific Tennes* (\$10.00/month), *Fantastic Fifteneers* (\$15.00/month), or *Thoughtful Thirtiers* (\$30.00).

1. Contact Information:

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: ____ ZIP: _____
Phone: _____
Email: _____

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Amount \$ _____
Frequency: (check one)
☐ Monthly ☐ Quarterly ☐ Bi-Annually ☐ Annually
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☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ AMEX ☐ Discover

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Expiration Date: ____/____

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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