

Keeping it Simple



Josephine County Intergroup Newsletter

May/June 2018

Inside This Issue

- 1 Welcome
- 1 Step 5
- 2 Tradition 5
- 2 Step 6
- 2 Tradition 6
- 3 *Step 5 is the End of Isolation* by Dawn D
- 4 *Step Six* by Dawn D
- 4 *Step Six, a Poem* by Bruce D
- 4 *Ordeal, a Poem* by Brandon H
- 5 *Alcoholism* by G.O. D
- 6 *Fellowship, an artwork* by Phil R
- 6 Central Office News
- 7 News from Oregon Area Delegate
- 8 Current Donations
- 9 Heard It in a Meeting
- 9 Sober Events
- 10 Birthdays & Events Calendar

Welcome! We are glad you are here.

"*Keeping it Simple*" is a bi-monthly publication brought to you by the Josephine County Intergroup. Copies of the Newsletter are available online, at the Central Office, and the Hi-Lo Club.

We also offer a subscription service which provides the Newsletter directly to your email Inbox! Visit the GP AA website for the subscription form and directions. All previous issues of the Newsletter are available on the website at www.grantspassaa.com/newsletters.

Many thanks to this issues' contributors – Vera F, Phil R, G.O. D, Brandon H, Bruce D, Dawn D, Jen F, Kathy T, and Winslow C.

Get involved and see personally how this service work can enrich your sobriety. Please join us at our next planning meeting on June 24th.

Also, please send your contributions (personal stories, poems, art work, cartoons, jokes, or anything that has helped you on your journey) for the July/August issue no later than Friday, June 22nd. To submit your contribution or get involved with the Newsletter Committee, email Winslow at gpaanews@gmail.com.



Step 5 "Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs."

ALL of A.A.'s Twelve Steps ask us to go contrary to our natural desires ... they all deflate our egos. When it comes to ego deflation, 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.

A.A. experience has taught us we cannot live alone with our pressing problems and the character defects which cause or aggravate them. If we have swept the searchlight of Step Four back and forth over our careers, and it has revealed in stark relief those experiences we'd rather not remember, if we have come to know how wrong thinking and action have hurt us and others, then the need to quit living by ourselves with those

tormenting ghosts of yesterday gets more urgent than ever. We have to talk to somebody about them.

From AA World Services, Inc., *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, p. 55.

Tradition 5 “Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.”

OUR PRIMARY PURPOSE

The more A.A. sticks to its **primary purpose**, the greater will be its helpful influence everywhere.

A.A. COMES OF AGE, p. 109

It is with gratitude that I reflect on the early days of our Fellowship and those wise and loving "foresteppers" who proclaimed that we should not be diverted from our **primary purpose**, that of carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

I desire to impart respect to those who labor in the field of alcoholism, being ever mindful that A.A. endorses no causes other than its own. I must remember that A.A. has no monopoly on miracle making and I remain humbly grateful to a loving God who made A.A. possible.

From the book *Daily Reflections*
Copyright © 1990 by Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc.

Step 6 “Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.”

“THIS is the Step that separates the men from the boys.” So declares a well-loved clergyman who happens to be one of A.A.’s greatest friends. He goes on to explain that any person capable of enough willingness and honesty to try repeatedly Step Six on all his faults—without any reservations whatever—has indeed come a long way spiritually, and is therefore entitled to be called a man who is sincerely trying to grow in the image and likeness of his own Creator.

From AA World Services, Inc., *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, p. 63

Tradition 6 “An A.A. group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.”

A.A. members employed by outside agencies “wear two hats”— but Tradition Six cautions any such members against wearing both at once! On the job, they may be alcoholism counselors; they are *not* “A.A. counselors.” At meetings they’re just A.A.’s, not alcoholism experts.

From the book *The Twelve Traditions Illustrated*
 Copyright © 1971 by Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. All rights reserved.



Step Five is the End of Isolation



I see how the survival techniques I learned growing up (don't tell, don't feel, don't know, you have to do it by yourself and trust no one) are the exact opposite of what it takes to do this step. "Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs." *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, p. 55. Doing **Step Five** relieves that sense of isolation and loneliness which we suffer. *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, p. 57.

Some symptoms of self-sufficiency and trying to conceal character defects are irritability, anxiety, remorse, and depression. "...without a fearless admission of our defects to another human being we could not stay sober." *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, p. 56.

"We must be entirely honest with somebody if we expect to live long or happily in this world." *Alcoholic Anonymous*, p.73-4. The grace of God will enter to expel our destructive obsessions when we are willing to try this. The great dividend of this step is humility "a clear recognition of what and who we really are, followed by a sincere attempt to become what we could be." *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, p.58.

I wondered who I can trust? No one, that's who! But as I practiced exposing my character defects at first by telling my therapist, it became easier to tell people who mattered to me. It turns out that trust comes after telling.

Try someone who can be objective such as a clergyman, a psychologist or a doctor. With all the will power you have, start talking. (Perilous resolve – a firm decision to do something hazardous or risky.) See what happens, you may begin to experience how trustworthy feels, we notice peace of mind; fear falls away, and we get closer to God, maybe you will make a trusted friend. Return home and be quiet for an hour, review the first five steps, thank God and ask if our work is solid so far? *Alcoholic Anonymous*, p. 75

It is the beginning of true kinship with man and God achieved by practicing Step Five. When it's time to quit living by ourselves with those "tormenting ghosts" uncovered while working Step Four. By admitting our character defects, we reveal the exact nature of our wrongs, and by hearing each other's stories, we start to receive and give forgiveness. (Forgive – to excuse for a fault or offense.)

Step Six

Step Six "Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character."

Practically nobody has this degree of readiness, some of our defects are enjoyable. Still, we try to make progress in the building of character so, "ask God to help us be willing."
Alcoholic Anonymous, p. 76.

Becoming entirely ready is "the best possible attitude one can take in order to make a beginning on this lifetime job." *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, p. 65.

Dawn D.

Step 6

This step sounds easy and simple,
Like being ready to remove a pimple.
Who wants a character with defects?
That's like living with a home full of rejects.

The 12X12 tells us these defects have become like a throttle;
We use them more and more to adapt and cope with life.
But they consistently cause us to live in strife,
Trapped and chained to the bottle.

With Step Six radical changes can be made.
We begin to live a new life,
Where light shines through the shade.
We soon begin to experience joy and freedom from strife.



Bruce D.



Ordeal

Too scared to laugh
Too happy to cry
Too much to live for, not ready to die

Questions without answers
Tears without relief
Fear invades, hope and belief

Still I sit anxiously waiting
Living in limbo, procrastinating

A 6th Step prayer:

"God, thank you for removing my fear and for showing me the truth about myself. Father, I need your help to become willing to let go of the things in me which continue to block me off from you. Please grant me your Grace Lord and make me willing to have these objectionable characteristics, defects and shortcomings removed.

www.friendsofbillw.net/twelve_step_prayers

'Til the verdict is read ... stagnating

Ready to know if I'm on death row
Ready to face the choices I've made
Nowhere near ready to lie in my grave

The reaper's scythe hangs over my head
Dreams on hold because of dread
Soul in torment ... eyes see red

Too scared to laugh
Too happy to cry
Too much to live for ... not ready to die

Brandon H.

ALCOHOLISM, the Thinking Disease

Today's article marks the resurgence of the column I wrote several years ago. It is my pleasure to be in a position once more to be able to provide the community with a more in-depth understanding of a disease that ravages so many people. It is my belief that with a deeper comprehension of this disease, prevention and treatment can proceed faster and more efficiently. The quicker that this disease is recognized and treated, the more lives that can be saved.

It is always fun to watch the reaction when I say, "Alcoholism is a thinking disease, not a drinking disease". The responses I get range from shock and disbelief to a statement that I have lost my mind. When I explain the meaning of "alcoholism is a thinking disease", a smile usually ensues. Yes alcoholism is about alcohol, but it is more about the ISM. There are a lot of euphemisms to explain ISM but the one I like best is I Suffer Miserably. Rarely do you find an alcoholic who is happy with life.

Alcohol numbs the pain of life's difficulties. We are stressed, distressed, unhappy, or frustrated by many things that happen to us. Thus to feel better, we drink or use some other unhealthy process to become happy, joyous and free. Unfortunately it only makes things worse in the long run. We may believe that the troubles of life just happen and we have to deal with it. Some time that is true but many of the stressors we suffer with are caused by how we think. We are trained by society to believe in certain things and we follow without examining those beliefs.

The following examples will introduce some concepts that will be expanded on in future columns. Romance is only for the rich and beautiful. Climbing the ladder by the dog eats dog routine creates success. Only the toughest survive. The one with the most toys is the winner. All of these are dangerous fallacies that can produce a great deal of pain. By thinking and believing in these concepts so much distress is created that a person frequently turns to alcohol and other substances for relief. Our thinking brought us pain.

Our thinking brought us to the bottle. Alcoholism is a thinking disease. Knowing this is important. There is hope. There is a better way.

G.O. D.



Fellowship



Phil R



Central Office News

On April 21st Kathy T and Jen F honored our Central Office volunteers for all their service with a fabulous Volunteer Appreciation Pizza Party.



We are truly grateful to our Central Office volunteers for all their service to help the office run smoothly and efficiently and to help our AA community. Honored were Bruce, Sherry, Dave, Donn, Elizabeth, Joan, Kelly, Richard, Scott, Janet, and Rick. **If you are interested in adding your name to this list, please call Kathy T at the Central Office at (541) 474-0782 and leave a message.**

Also, the 2nd Annual Spring Fling was a great example of our local AA community getting together to have fun and fellowship while raising a few bucks to support Central Office. Almost 100 members gathered at the Bear Hotel to enjoy a lovely dinner catered by Goodness Gracious. The Bear Hotel is so fun! As people finished touring the exhibits, they

asked fellow party-goers “Did you see the ... bear?” or “Did you find the Crater Lake room?”

Vera F, our Area delegate, traveled from Bend to share her story and powerful message and to verify once again that we truly are Happy, Joyous and Free. Thank you everyone who helped make this such a fun time and a great support to keep our Central Office up and running and available to “anyone reaching for the hand of AA.”

Lastly, the St. Patrick’s Day Dinner 2018 was fabulous. There was barely an empty seat in the house. With large portions for everyone, each plate overflowed with delicious tender, moist corned beef, a quarter section of cabbage, a pile of potatoes, red, yellow, blue, and white and a soft sweet roll. With a plate of real butter at each table. We were called up table by table in “Roundup” fashion which made it seem like the food line moved quickly.

The team who cooked, served and cleaned-up after are greatly appreciated; Les, Terre, Crystal, Tamarah, Miles, Kathy F, Shawn M, Jil, Laurie, Kathie S, Jeri R, Tony, Steve P, Robert and other anonymous cooks and food donors.

Our speaker was Kevin O, who shared his story with humility and humor. We raffled off one, blue glass vase and half the pot. The whole night was a great success! Thanks to the HiLo club and to everyone for coming.



News from Oregon Area Panel 68 Delegate, Vera F

In the Spring of 1938, A.A. was but three years old. There were only 50 members!! The book, Alcoholics Anonymous, was just an idea. Even after the Big Book was published, the Fellowship was around 100- 150 members. Bill W. and Dr. Bob answered the letters and phone calls from doctors, family members, judges, wives, newspapers inquiries, and of course, the alcoholics. Dr. Bob spent a great deal of time in the hospital wards with drunks, while Bill crisscrossed the country helping new groups get established. When members and groups had questions about what to do and what not to do, they turned to Bill and Bob. They held the ultimate authority and responsibility for the groups. Realizing their own mortality, they began to see the need for a process to ensure A. A.’s future.

The idea for a General Service Conference was first introduced by Dr. Bob and Bill W. in 1950 as a mechanism to transfer responsibility and authority for AA to its members before their deaths. Dr. Bob and Bill wanted to prepare the AA fellowship from any future crisis by vesting authority in the Trustees and the Members. The first conference in 1951 embodied the concept of the Conference as a service group with action not as a legislative body. (Concept One) It was to be, and remains, the collective conscious of the fellowship in which everyone has a voice. This year’s Conference will meet April 22-28, 2018 with the theme of “A.A. – A Solution for All Generations.”

Representatives of the Fellowship -- our elected Delegates -- from the 93 Areas in the U.S. and Canada -will- meet for six days with the trustees of the General Service Board, the staffs of the General Service Office and the A.A. Grapevine and certain other service workers to review the operations and finances of AA World Services and the A.A. Grapevine and to address the questions, concerns, and suggestions of the Fellowship at large.

The group conscience of this annual meeting is considered the voice of the A.A. Fellowship which guides and directs the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous. The sole purpose of this gathering is to focus on how A.A. can improve on its ability to reach and help the suffering alcoholic.

Home Groups and A.A. members in the U. S and Canada are currently discussing the General Service Conference Agenda Items and will forward their feedback to their GSRs, DCMs and Delegates. Here in OR Area 58 this process began with our Pre-Conference Assembly in February where we randomly assigned districts to each of the Conference Committees for agenda review. This is loosely modeled after the General Service Conference and it provides the Delegate with the Area's conscience on the agenda items. This Pre-Conference activity also informs the fellowship about what is being discussed in A.A. as a whole, and gives our members an ideal of how their voice is part of the greater whole of A.A.

This is an exciting time in the fellowship as we gather for the purpose to improve AA's ability to carry our message of recovery and to insure our Fellowship's survival into the future. The Delegates report is given at the May Assembly and by invitation from Districts throughout the remainder of the year. I look forward to visiting District 7 when I return from the 68th General Service Conference and sharing my Conference experience with you.

In Gratitude and Service,
Vera F
Oregon Area 58
Panel 68 Delegate



Current Donations for February 16, 2018 – April 24, 2018

Thank you so much to all who help to support and keep Central Office open to serve our community.

Please note: The amounts shown here are officially recorded funds received from Groups presented at the monthly Intergroup meetings. Donations received after the mid-month deadline will be reflected in the following month's report.

Current	Feb 16 - Apr 24		Year-To-Date (YTD)	Dec 15 - April 24		
	Group	Current		YTD	Group	Current
50/50 Raffle	\$132	\$132	Merlin Group	\$30	\$30	
Anon (Winner of Raffle)	\$132	\$132				
Attitude Adjustment	\$0	\$25	Monarch Group	\$0	\$50	
Cease Fighting	\$180	\$180				
Easy Does It	\$0	\$240	Monday Men's Book Study	\$0	\$40	
Friday Night Winners Group	\$0	\$600	Nooners Meeting	\$100	\$100	
GP Veterans Group	\$0	\$20	Stronger Together Women	\$0	\$125	
Happy Hour Group	\$80	\$120	Thursday Night Winners	\$0	\$120	
Language of the Heart	\$30	\$30				
Illinois Valley Group	\$0	\$100	Wednesday Progress Group	\$0	\$226	
Live & Let Live Group	\$0	\$80	Williams Applegate	\$0	\$100	
Marathon Meetings	\$0	\$156	Women's Live & Let Live	\$120	\$120	



Heard It in a Meeting

Anonymous slogans and pearls of wisdom!

"I am an ego-maniac with an inferiority complex."

"Just cause you got the monkey off your back doesn't mean the circus has left town."

"I said that it was not the program that worked but it was me who worked the program."

"I am powerless over everything except my recovery. For that I am responsible."



Sober Fun Events

Current Area AA events can be found at www.grantspassaa.com under **Sober Fun**.

Friends of Bill W Monday Night Bowling

Caveman Bowl, 1230 Rogue River Hwy, Grants Pass, OR 97527
Every Monday! Sign-up at 5:00PM. Bowling at 5:30PM. Cost is \$2.50/game w/shoes and \$3.50/game w/shoes for kids.

Bingo

Hi Lo Club, 668 Lincoln Rd, Grants Pass, OR 97526
May 12th and June 9th, 7:00-9:00PM

Movie Night - FREE

Hi Lo Club, 668 Lincoln Rd, Grants Pass, OR 97526
May 26th and June 23rd, 7:30PM



Birthdays and Anniversaries

Do you want to celebrate your AA birthday in the newsletter?

Send your info to gpaanews@gmail.com

NAME	DATE	YEARS	NAME	DATE	YEARS
Donna D	April 25, 1971	47	Crystal H.	May 19, 2008	10
Jary K	April 15, 1979	39	Jaren H	April 24, 2009	9
Nancy D	April 17, 1979	39	Debbie P	May 13, 2009	9
Anne F	April 29, 1985	33	Craig H	April 6, 2011	7
Leslie W	May 20, 1985	33	Chris W	May 8, 2011	7
Ted W	May 25, 1987	31	Jose A	May 15, 2011	7
Sandy G	May 25, 1987	31	Mike T	April 1, 2012	6
Karen A	April 11, 1988	30	Melanie H	April 21, 2012	6
Phillip M	April 28, 1988	30	Annette R	April 4, 2014	4
Pat H	April 17, 1989	29	Clint W	April 10, 2014	4
Patricia M	May 1, 1989	29	Joey P	April 16, 2014	4
Dennis D	April 10, 1990	28	Angel	April 23, 2014	4
Kristin B	May 20, 1990	28	Christa	April 1, 2015	3
Francois M	April 20, 1991	27	Julia H	April 19, 2015	3
Patricia W	May 24, 2002	16	Shelley	April 9, 2016	2
Steve K	May 13, 2003	15	Jody L	April 15, 2016	2
Butch E	May 15, 2003	15	Heather W	May 3, 2016	2
Ron M	April 1, 2006	12	Jan R	May 5, 2016	2
Greg G	April 28, 2006	12	Monique	May 30, 2016	2
Abigail M	May 7, 2006	12			

Upcoming Calendar Events

Visit [www.grantspassaa.com /events](http://www.grantspassaa.com/events) for full details.

Event flyers and registrations can usually be found at the Central Office.

If you are involved in an upcoming event, please let us help get the word out. Email us at grantspassaa@gmail.com

Josephine County Intergroup Office

432 NW 6th Street Suite 202
Grants Pass, OR 97526

(541) 474-0782 (24 hours a day)

Office Hours: Monday – Friday, 10am – 4pm and Saturdays by appointment

www.grantspassaa.com

Outreach Committee Meeting	May 1
District 7 Business Meeting	May 1
Treatment Centers Committee Meeting	May 7
Intergroup Business Meeting	May 17
Roundup Committee Meeting	May 24
Movie Night	May 26
Treatment Centers Committee Meeting	Jun 4
Outreach Committee Meeting	Jun 5
District 7 Business Meeting	Jun 5
Intergroup Business Meeting	Jun 21
Movie Night	Jun 23
Newsletter Committee Meeting	Jun 24
Roundup Committee Meeting	Jun 28