

Anonymous Times

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Understanding Why We Were Chosen!

The Editor

I believe that God in his Wisdom selected this group of men and women to be purveyors of his goodness. In selecting those to bring about this phenomenon, he went not to the proud, the mighty, the famous, nor the brilliant. Instead he went to the humble and unfortunate. He went to the drunkard -- the-so-called weakling of the world.

He might well have said to us: "Unto your weak and fee-



ble hands I have entrusted a power beyond estimate. To you have I given that which has been denied the most learned of your fellows. Not to scientists, not wives nor mothers, not even to my priests or ministers have I given

such a gift of healing of other alcoholics. The Gift must be used unselfishly. It carries with it grave responsibility; no day can be too long - no effort too great. It must be used with tolerance for I have restricted its application to no race.

No creed and no denomination. Personal criticism you must expect. Lack of appreciation will be your lot. Your motives will be misjudged. You must be prepared for adversity, for what men call adversity is the ladder you must ascend - rung by rung - toward spiritual perfection, never to obtain.

And remember, in the exercise of this power, I shall not exact from you beyond your capabilities. You are not selected because of your exceptional talents. Be careful always, if success attends your efforts, not to ascribe to personal superiority that to which you can lay claim only by virtue of my gift.

If I had wanted learned men to accomplish this mission, the power would have been entrusted to the physician and scientist. Had I wanted eloquent men, there would have been many anxious for the assignment, for talk is

the easiest use of all the talents which I have endowed mankind. If I had wanted scholarly men, the world is filled with better qualified men than you, who would have been available.

You were selected because you have been the outcasts of the world and your experience as drunkards has made (or should make) you humbly alert to the cries of distress that come from the lonely hearts of alcoholics everywhere.

Keep ever in mind the admission you made on the day of your profession in alcoholics anonymous.... THAT YOU WERE POWERLESS AND THAT IT WAS ONLY WITH YOUR WILLINGNESS TO TURN YOUR LIFE AND WILL UNTO MY KEEPING THAT RELIEF CAME TO YOU."

NORTH ORANGE COUNTY CENTRAL OFFICE

1111 E. Commonwealth, Ste. D,
Fullerton, CA 92831

OFFICE HOURS

9 am-9 pm

PHONE: (714) 773-4357 (24 hrs.)

FAX: (714) 773-0179

WEBSITE: www.aanoc.com



E-MAIL: officemanager@aanoc.com

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An Analytic Examination of Step 12

Taken from the Big Book Workshop Workbook

Let's look at step 12 for just a moment. There are three parts to it. The first part, probably the greatest promise to be found anywhere in the Big Book, is "Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps." I think that a promise to me, if I will put the first 11 steps to work in my life to the best of my ability, means that I can then have a spiritual awakening.

What is a spiritual awakening? A personality change sufficient to recover from alcoholism. Bill tells us in the 12 and 12 that there are as many different kinds of spiritual awakenings as there are people in A.A. But they all have certain things in common. That is, they are able to feel, believe and do things that they could never do before on their own strength unaided. Now, if that be the criteria of a spiritual awakening, then I believe that I must have had one of some kind, because I certainly feel things that I never felt before.

Today I feel true love. I never knew what love was. I always had love mixed up with sex and things like that. Today I realize that doesn't have anything to do with love. Love is compassion, tolerance, patience and goodwill towards my fellow man. Today I feel some of that; before A.A., I never felt any of that and could have cared less about you. You could have some after I got what I wanted, but I was going to get mine first every time. Those feelings have changed.

Today I believe things I never believed before. I believe God is a kind and a loving God. I believe he stands ready



to help any human being anywhere in the world the instant they are ready to give self-will back to him and begin to follow his will. Before, I thought God was Hellfire and Brimstone. I believe God disciplines us; sometimes we are so hard-headed that it takes a big blow to us to get our attention.

I think we are the ones that punish ourselves, not God, and we blame how we feel on Him. My belief about God has changed entirely. I can do things that I couldn't do before I came to AA: I can stay sober and I'm allowed to do many things I could never do while I was drinking. So if that's the criteria, then surely I've had some form of spiritual awakening.

Now the second part. What am I supposed to do with it? Carry this message, not a message, not the message, not some message, but this message to others.

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NOC Central Office BULLETIN BOARD

H&I 2ND SUNDAY Sept. 14 & Oct. 12	NOCPIC 2ND WEDNESDAY Sept. 10 and Oct. 8	INTERGROUP 2ND WEDNESDAY Sept. 10 & Oct. 8	VOLUNTEER MEETING SATURDAY Oct. 11 at 10 a.m.
<p>Orange County Hospitals and Institutions Committee 2nd Sunday of each mo. Institutions Committee: 4-5 pm (Orientation at 3:15 pm)</p> <p>Hospitals Committee: 6-7 pm (Orientation at 3:15 pm) Garden Grove Alano Club 9845 Belfast Garden Grove Call (949) 278-5173</p>	<p>North Orange County Public Information Committee</p> <p><i>Learn about sharing the message with Non-AA people like high school and college students.</i></p> <p>Meets at 6:30 p.m. on the 2nd Wednesday of every month at NOCCO 1111 E. Commonwealth, Ste. D, Fullerton If you have questions, call Brian K. at 714-658-4581</p>	<p>North Orange County Intergroup Association</p> <p><i>Be an intergroup representative for your meeting.</i></p> <p>Meeting at 7:30 p.m. on the 2nd Wednesday of every month at 109 E. Wilshire Fullerton (First Christian Church)</p>	<p>CENTRAL OFFICE holds a quarterly volunteer meeting on the 2nd Sat. every three months. <i>Coffee and donuts provided.</i></p> <p>Learn how to fill shifts at Central Office, be of service and meet fellow volunteers.</p> <p>Call 714-773-4357 for information</p> <p>MEETING 10 A.M.</p>

Step 12 ... From Page 2

What is the Message? "Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps." That's the only message that we have to carry to other people.

Sometimes we get to thinking we're healers in A.A. Or we get to thinking we're marital advisors, economic advisors, sex advisors. I don't know of any group of people in the world that screwed that mess up worse than we did, yet we think we can advise other people in those areas. NO WAY!

"An alcoholic armed with the facts about himself can help another alcoholic learn about the disease of alcoholism." We know more about it than anybody alive because we're

Sometimes we get to thinking we're healers in A.A. Or we get to thinking we're martial advisors, economic advisors, sex advisors.

the only people alive who have experienced the disease of alcoholism.

Same thing with the recovery process. We are the only people in the world who have experienced recovery from the disease of alcoholism.

Unique Knowledge

Now we can take that very unique knowledge and carry that to another human being and help him understand what his problem is -- the disease of alcoholism. We can help them understand that their solution will need to be a vital spiritual experience. We can help them walk through a program of action with the help of this workshop and the people that started it. So he can have a spiritual awakening and recover from his disease. And we are the only people in the world who can do this.

I've got to believe that in the 1930's, God got tired of seeing people like us die. He had to take a Bill and Bob and Bobby and Dr. Jung and Dr. Silkworth and the Oxford Group and all the others concerned and put this thing together. God has always worked with people through people. Seldom does he speak to one of us directly

If God worked through people in the 1930's to set this up, and now they're all dead, it stands to reason that He will work with people today through people to continue to carry this message to those who are still suffering. There's no alcoholic that shouldn't be dead. How many times did we wake up the next morning and say, "Weren't we lucky the night before?"

I don't think luck had anything to do with it. I think we are chosen people. Not as a race, but to do a job. They tell me today that 96-97% of the alcoholics that are alive today will die from their disease, never even knowing that they're alcoholic. Four percent of us manage to stagger into A.A. and less than 25% of us are recovering. Now, we're talking about one out of one hundred who have recovered from this disease.

I used to ask, "God, why am I an alcoholic?" Today I ask, "God, why am I not one of those dying from the disease?" I don't have any trouble with God's will. I don't think God is concerned with where I work. I don't think He's concerned with where I live. I doubt whether He's concerned to any great extent about to whom I am married. I think He is concerned only with what I am doing with what He's so freely given to me. If we can take this unique knowledge and together avert the deaths of countless thousands of people, we will be very lucky individuals.

The third part in Step 12 states, "And practices these principles in all our affairs." Well, what are the principles? We've heard arguments go on for hours about this, just as they have about the difference between a defect, a short-coming and a wrong. In "How It Works, Bill states:

"No one among us has been able to maintain anything like perfect adherence to these principles. We are not saints." The principles we have set down are guides to progress.

What did he set down just before that statement? The Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous. In the Forward of the 12 and 12 he states:

"The 12 Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous are a set of principles, spiritual in nature, which if practiced will expel the obsession to drink."

I have never seen him yet write about the principles, except when it was in connection with the 12 Steps. They are a set of principles. Now it's easy for me to practice them here in A.A. I love you and you love me and we're going to do our best not to hurt each other. And through practicing these principles here in AA, that hour a day we can be happy, peaceful and free. But what do we do with the other 23 hours of the day?

I practice these principles in my own home, where I spend 10-12 hours a day. And I practice these principles with my spouse. I realize how powerless I am over her. I realize the insanity of this. She's 55 years old. She's not going to listen to me anymore. I make a decision to turn her will and her life over to the care

Continued on page 6



UPCOMING EVENTS!

Southern California AA Convention

"Celebrate the Journey" is the theme of the 57th annual Southern California Alcoholics Anonymous Convention, to be held September 19, 20, and 21 at the Town and Country Resort & Convention Center in San Diego. Visit www.aasocal.com for more information.

Annual Gold Country Roundup

The 22nd Annual Gold Country Roundup will be held September 26, 27 and 28th at the Amador County Fairgrounds in Plymouth, Amador County.

"Taking a trip, not taking a trip" is the theme of the three-day event. Register at www.goldcountryroundup.com.

Hot 'n Dry Roundup

Hot n' Dry Roundup 2008, hosted by Southern California's gay men of Alcoholics Anonymous, will be held September 18, 19, 20 & 21 at the Hilton Palm Springs Resort located at 400 East Tahquitz Canyon Way. Palm Spring CA. For more information, visit www.hotndry.com.

Ventura County AA Convention

The 30th Annual Ventura County Alcoholics Anonymous Convention will be held September 5, 6, & 7 at the Hyatt Westlake Plaza, 880 S. Westlake Blvd. Westlake Village, California 91361. "We Stood At the Turning Point" is the theme of the event. Visit www.vcaac.org for more information.

Woman to Woman in San Diego

Woman to Woman San Diego, an annual conference for recovering alcoholic women, will be held September 26- 28 at the Dana on Mission Bay in San Diego.

For more information, visit www.womantowoman-sandiego.com.

Looking for something to do?

Here are some upcoming events
that might be of interest

Celebrate Sobriety in the City by the Bay

The 16th annual Spirit of San Francisco Convention will be held October 10, 11 and 12 at the Holiday Inn Golden Gateway, 1500 Van Ness Ave, San Francisco. More information on the event can be found at www.spirit-sf.org.

Lake Tahoe Fall Festival

The Lake Tahoe Fall Festival will be held October 10, 11, & 12 at the Horizon Casino Resort, in Stateline, NV. Visit www.laketahoefallfestival.com for more information.

24th Annual Santa Barbara Convention

The 24th annual Santa Barbara Alcoholics Anonymous Convention will be held October 24, 25, & 26, at the Santa Barbara Elks Lodge #613; 150 North Kellogg Avenue, Goleta (near Santa Barbara). Visit www.sbaaconvention.org for more information.

Santa Clarita Valley AA Convention

The 5th Annual Santa Clarita Valley Alcoholics Anonymous Convention will be held October 17-19 at the Hyatt Valencia and Santa Clarita Conference Center. Call **(661) 310-0384** or visit www.scvaaconvention.org for more information.

New Meeting to Launch in Brea

An Eleventh step meeting will be held Wednesday mornings at 6:30 beginning September 10.

The hour-long meeting will be held at the Brea Congregational Church, 300 E. Imperial Highway in the room near the kitchen. Come join the fellowship for some early morning meditation.

AA Central Office phone calls

Men = 501

Women = 603

BIRTHDAY DONATIONS



August

Joe L. 33 years
Ken S. 3 years
Liz H. 17 years
Mary O. 22 years

September

Tiffany G. 1 year

October

Tony A. 1 year
Whitney 3 years

PUBLISH YOUR BIRTHDAY or SOBRIETY STORY TODAY!

To publish your birthday, send us your name, sobriety date and your contribution check (DO NOT SEND CASH) in the mail to: North Orange County Central Office, 1111 E. Commonwealth, Ste. D, Fullerton, CA 92831. Or email: officemanager@aanoc.com

THE ANONYMOUS TIMES online in Color!

The Anonymous Times is available online at <http://www.aanoc.com>, as well as at your favorite meeting. Feel free to submit your personal stories about sobriety to us at aatimes@aanoc.com.

Articles for the Anonymous Times can now be submitted on the NOCCO website: www.aanoc.com. Also, send us your letters and suggestions in the mail:

North Orange County Central Office 1111 Commonwealth, Suite D, Fullerton, CA 92831.

CHECK IT OUT – DUDE! YOUNG PEOPLE'S AA MEETINGS!

Sunday

Fullerton 6:00 pm 216 N. Malden (Alano Club)
Orange 7:00 pm 261 N. Glassell@Chapman
(The Ugly Mug)

Monday

Irvine 7:30 pm Wild Bunch Men's Step Study
5001 Newport Coast Dr. Mariners Church (Port Kid Zone room)

Tuesday

Anaheim Hills 7:30 pm Step Study/Kaiser Lakeview-Bsmt.
Dana Point 7:30 pm Campfire Beach Meeting
(Winter) 34451 Ensenada Pl. @ D.P. Harbor Dr. - Boat House (Youth Center) (November thru March)

Wednesday

Irvine 7:30 pm Wild Bunch Beginner Q&A
18842 Teller Ave. @ Campus (New Song Church)
Newport Beach 8:30 pm Topic Discussion, 414 E. 32nd St.
Yorba Linda 8:00 pm Topic Discussion, 5320 Richfield Rd.
Garden Grove 8:00 pm Young People's Meeting
7212 Chapman Ave. @ Knott Ave. (Serenity Hall) 797-G4

Thursday

Costa Mesa 8:00 pm Moorehead Podium Call-up
2476 Newport Blvd. @ Fair (Oddfellows Hall)
Laguna Beach 8:00 pm Romper Room Beginners
20456 Laguna Canyon Rd.

Friday

Anaheim Hills 8:00 pm Discussion-411 Lakeview Ave.
@ 91 Fwy. (Medical Building, Basement, Rm # B-4)
Huntington Beach 7:00 pm Seacliff, 225 7th St., Garage #1 @ Olive
Irvine 7:30 pm Boys in Sobriety
4400 Barranca & Culver

Saturday

Rancho Santa Margarita 7:30 pm RSM 1 Hour Discussion
30322 Via Con Dios (Church)

Subscriptions/Gifts

Treat yourself or a friend to the A.T. for only \$6.00 a year! Send your name and address:

Name _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

Please send this along with \$_____ for _____ subscriptions at \$6.00 per year to:

ANONYMOUS TIMES: 1111 COMMONWEALTH Ave. Ste. D, FULLERTON, CA 92831 Phone: 714-773-4357

12th Step ... Continued from page 3

of God as I understand Him. And I inventory me to see why I still have the need to control her.

I find those defects of character that cause that and talk it over with another human being and I ask God to take them away. And I make amends quickly to her when I have harmed her. There are times I'm really ashamed of me. There are times I treat absolute strangers with more courtesy than I treat my spouse at home. If I practice these principles in my home with her, I could be happy, peaceful, and serene another 8-10 hours a day there.

How about with my children? Can I realize how powerless I am over them? Can I realize the insanity of me trying to control their lives for them? My oldest child is 35, the youngest is 23. They're not going to listen to daddy anymore. Can I make a decision to turn their will and their lives over to the care of God as I understand Him? Can I inventory me and see why I need to control them? Can I find those defects and do something about them?

Can I make amends quickly when I smart off to them once in awhile? If I could practice these principles with my children, I could be happy when I'm with them. If I don't do this, I don't stand a chance with them, because all we'll do is argue and fight. If I can practice the principles with my kids, I can be happy there another hour or two a day.

How about on the job? Can I see how powerless I am over my co-workers? Do I realize the insanity of my trying to control them? Can I make that decision, and take inventory of my behavior on the job? If I have wronged someone can I make amends? If so I can be happy there 8-9 hours a day. We're down to about 23 hours now. I have one hour left. How about the supermarket checkout line? I'm in the express lane, I've got three items.

There's a little old lady in front of me with her whole basket full. She has about 50 things in there. She shouldn't be in this damn line anyway; she needs to be over there. I'm in a hurry and I want to get through here. Now it takes them about 10 or 15 minutes to add up her bill.

Then after they add up the bill, she pulls out her coupons. It takes another 10 minutes to add up her bill, and they get her new bill added up and she gets out her checkbook. It takes her about 10 minutes to write the check, and then she stands there and balances her checkbook. She has a Honolulu library card for identification. She shouldn't

be in this line in the first place and I'm in a hurry. Now, if I could practice these principles in the supermarket checkout line, I could be happy there too.

What we're saying is, it's really up to us how happy we are. We have the tools, haven't we? We've got 11 steps that, if we will use them in our lives on a daily basis, we can be happy, peaceful, serene 24 hours a day, seven days a week, four weeks out of the month, and 12 months out of the year if we choose to do so. But it's entirely up to us. Nobody else can do it for us, and nobody should do it for us. We'll have to do this with God's help, for the rest of our life if we want to be happy, peaceful and free.

12-Step List

Practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics. It works when other activities fail.

Big Book page 89

North Orange County Central Office and struggling newcomers need your help. The 12-step list is a group of volunteers who can be on hand, according to their availability, to talk to newcomers on the phone or take them to an AA meeting. Your information will be confidential, central office will call you with the newcomer's contact number and you can take it from there.

Here is your chance to give back to a program that was given so freely to you, even if your availability is limited. And here are some promises from the Big Book when we work with others:

Life will take on new meaning. To watch people recover, to see them help others, to watch loneliness vanish, to see a fellowship grow up about you, to have a host of friends—this is an experience you must not miss. We know you will not want to miss it. Frequent contact with newcomers and with each other is the bright spot of our lives.



SPEAKER MEETINGS: September/October 2008



Anonymous Times would like to publish your list of speakers for November/December 2008.

Contact Central Office
or email to aatimes@aanoc.com.
Deadline for publication is October 15, 2008.

Friday 8:00 p.m.	La Habra Speaker Meeting 631 N. Euclid, La Habra (Church, 1 block south of Whittier Blvd.) Sept. 5 Jeff L., Long Beach Sept. 12 Bob L., Glendale Sept. 19 John C., Redondo Beach Sept. 26 Art R., Hermosa Beach Oct. 3 Alberta K., Chino Hills Oct. 10 Jim M., Hemet Oct. 17 Jerry F., Redondo Beach Oct. 24 Joe M., Huntington Beach Oct. 31 Louie T., Phillips Ranch	Sunday 10:30 a.m.	Western Medical Center 1025 S Anaheim Blvd., Anaheim Sept. 7 Jon C., Orange Sept. 14 Jaci W., Irvine Sept. 21 Undetermined Sept. 28 David P., Santa Ana Oct. 5 Douglas S., Santa Ana Oct. 12 Steven M., Orange Oct. 19 Gloria W., Dana Point Oct. 26 Undetermined
Sunday 8 p.m.	Fireside Speaker Meeting 8150 Knott Ave., Buena Park CA Sept. 7, Elaine M., Pomona Sept. 14 Patrick C., Costa Mesa Sept. 21 Steve L., Redondo Beach Sept. 28 Adell S., Hermosa Beach Oct. 5 Steve L., Torrance Oct. 12 Pat S., Palos Verde Oct. 19 Dyanne G., Orange County Oct. 26 Donna H., Huntington Beach	Saturday 8:00 p.m.	Oddfellows Speaker 109 E Wilshire, Fullerton 92832 First Christian Church Sept. 6 Aydin A. Lakewood, CA Sept. 13 Dan, Long Beach Sept. 20 Kathy, Long Beach Sept. 27 Nicole G., North Hollywood Oct. 4 Nancy C., Los Angeles Oct. 11 Danny M., Los Angeles Oct. 18 Pat Y., Pasadena Oct. 25 Tracy H., Brea

Show up and hear the
message of recovery



A Station Wagon-Full of Resentments

By Trisha G.

You know I was in a meeting and someone talked about our resentments and how they are like we are driving a station wagon just tossing all the crumpled feelings, bad stuff, junk, trash, and wreckage in the back. There is a big over stuffed chair there too. It has a broken leg and one arm is a bit worn, but it is back there slamming around with each turn we take. When we stop drinking and start feeling, it is like slamming on the brakes and all that stuff comes flying forward, and now we are buried in it... YIKES!

But then I got a better picture

The 12 steps teach us to deal with each and every one of those pieces of stuff in a much better way than tossing them behind us, under the seat, out the window, or in the back of our station wagons, as we drive through life.

An Examination

When working the steps we learn to take each piece and process -- look at it, feel it, and take it apart. For example, take the one that looks like a fast food bag. (This is part of the 4th step as we make a detailed account in black and white of what we have, what hurt us, what we are resentful about.) There are used and unused napkins, some packages of ketchup, salt, creamer, and a stirring stick in the fast food bag. Also found there are two nasty-looking slices of tomatoes, a bun with a bite or so left of it, one cold french fry and the wrapper that both came in, plus an extra fry bag.

Now we take the steps and work through the bag. Maybe this bag represents an ugly fight you had with someone, or maybe it was words said to you when something traumatic happened, or maybe it was how a boss told you your job was being phased out.

The bag really is a cool bag -- it might have a neat handle on it and can be reused, so it goes into the recycle pile. There was something that you learned in this disruptive

incident that can be reused. Now you look at the trash -- that which cannot be used but which is truly trash. These are the parts of the situations which are untrue -- the slimy tomatoes, the hamburger wrapper with greasy, cheesy smudge and the used napkins.

Those trash items need to be put into the trash can, not just tossed out the window onto your driveway, where you must drive everyday, but placed in the trash bin, a much more appropriate place.

Finally let go of the old stuff that garbage. Take it to the dump, work the steps, be willing to be willing, make a list of amends that must be made and make them. The bun



can be tossed into the grass for the birds to snack on. This reminds me about the meeting after the meeting at the coffee shop, the restaurant or in the car while finishing up a cup of coffee and doughnut while sharing experience, strength and hope with others.

Looking Back

That old chair can be compared to relationships. It holds comfortable, good memories, which are very used and sometimes abused. Where there is chance for repair make it so, and where the relationship has possibility of harm take the time to evaluate what to do. Ask yourself whether it is time to take that chair to the dump as well, or perhaps to a repair shop (a religious person, professional therapist) or whether it can be repaired with time. When you do not think there is chance for repair, give it time.

In the back of that station wagon you may find reason and hope for more chances and more growth to build and repair, to look for the perfect way to patch up that worn part on the arm of this old chair.

Look for the correct color of stain *Continued on page 9*

Central Office Needs Volunteers

Central office has openings to answer phones on the following days and times:

Tuesday 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.
 Tuesday 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.
 Thursday 12 p.m. to 3 p.m.
 Saturday 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

A minimum six months of continuous sobriety is recommended. Those interested are asked you call Central Office at (714) 773-4357.

Answering phones at Central Office is a vital way to be of service, help yourself stay sober and bring the message of recovery to those who seek it.

The Station Wagon...From Page 8

to match the wood and possibly the perfect piece of wood to replace that broken leg. This is the living amends as we work and rework the 12 steps in our lives on a daily basis.

We tossed some of these resentments into the back of our station wagons, items we thought were trash but now in sobriety we might say, "Oh, I wondered where that was." It could be a friendship or a bill that needs to be paid (yes we have to own up and take care of the wreckage of our past). It could be a hurt feeling, anger, unhappiness, non-forgiveness, whatever needs to be finally dealt with. Once we work the steps on our stuff in the station wagon, we see that there is space to give others a ride and be of service. We get better mileage in life when our station wagon has less clutter. Amazing.

We have a pile of recyclable material to be shared with others. We have a pile to give away that is the ketchup, the mustard, the creamer and the stir stick. Who knows what we may do with these items? Some of it may be given to others, some may be used by ourselves and perhaps some can be put to good use in another way. The chair may sit back there in station wagon cargo hold as we look for ways to make repairs.

There might be a bag of trash to drop at the next trash can. One pile of trash that must be put into the hazard-

ous waste round up will ride around awhile until the next collection occurs. We work the 12 steps in all our affairs.

Yes, we still have a tendency to roll up that resentment in a little ball and toss it in the back. But as soon as we open the back of the station wagon, it falls out at the most improper times and causes problems (we blow up in a rage and display abnormal behavior, we build up much clutter, we drink, we use whatever we can to change the way we are feeling). Let's keep those resentments cleaned out so we can work a spiritual program and have that daily reprieve. To maintain recovery from alcoholism, you must give away to another what has been given to you.

I am not perfect but I do practice this 12-step principle in my life, so that someday I can help more people and be of service. I learn more and grow each time I work the steps, truthfully, honestly, and with commitment. I have about 2 1/2 years of sobriety and I am working the steps, going to big book studies and other meetings almost every day of the week. I work with newcomers, old-timers and people who have the same amount of time as I do. What I can say is, "God did for me what I could not do for my self."

I urge you to work the steps and embrace each one, ALL 12 of them. There are 12 for a reason, and you must work them in order.

Sobriety -- A Journey Like No Other

By Normie R.

Do you think you have a problem with alcohol? I am a recovering alcoholic - my sobriety date is July 26, 1987. I thought I was going to die young with a good looking corpse. Instead, I found recovery and a group of people who loved me until I learned to love myself. It has been a journey like no other.

Spiritual matters always are. I learned that the truth would set me free but first it "pissed me off". I could either grow or I'd have to go. My first sponsor explained to me "Normie either you are alcoholic or you are not. If you are alcoholic there is one absolute rule: You'll have to change everything! The same person will drink again."

I got the message that if I drank even just a little it would take me back to my disease. I knew in my heart I did not have another recovery in me. I was done playing Russian Roulette with my life. I had squandered away many years, my health, my career -- all that was good. I had been doing the dance of death and did not even recognize how proficient I had become. A skillful liar, cheat and thief.

After the initial shock of learning I had crossed the line into alcoholism I had to do what the winners did. I had to suit up, show up and grow up. Sometimes it was exhausting to be in my skin.

The committee was ruthless and loud. At 90 days, when I was thoroughly exhausted from fighting the terror in my head, I had my first spiritual awakening. As I tossed in my bed, I heard a voice outside of me. A calm peaceful tone stated, "You don't have to be afraid anymore." I sat straight up in my bed and looked around, only to find I was alone. Suddenly, a quietness came over me.

The voices in my head disappeared and I slept like a baby. The next morning, as I attended my step study meeting on the sand in Long Beach, I consulted with Thomas. He had 2 years at that time and was a guru to me. I explained what happened and he smiled and hugged me. "Oh Norm, that was a spiritual awakening." I understood at that moment, this would be the beginning of something new and exciting for me. My life as I had known it would never be the same. So I say to you my friend, **HANG ON TO YOUR TUSHY FOR THE RIDE OF YOUR LIFE!**

North Orange County Central Office Revenue and Expense Report Through July 2008

Revenue	July 08	July 07
Sales - AA Books and Literature	\$26,599.36	\$23,694.60
Sales - Chips and non-AA	\$18,085.05	\$17,844.10
Donations - Groups and Individuals	\$30,674.22	\$38,643.83
Fundraisers	\$3,051.00	\$4,000
Interest	\$1,044.35	\$17.93
Total Revenue	\$79,453.98	\$84,200.46
Cost of Goods	\$29,491.71	\$30,578.70
Gross Profit	\$49,962.27	\$53,621.76
Operating Expenses		
Salaries	\$23,865.00	\$22,880.00
Bank Charges	\$25.00	\$35.00
Bad Checks	\$0.00	\$19.40
Computer Expenses	\$0.00	\$1,228.61
Depreciation	\$578.69	\$599.03
Dues & Subscriptions	\$0.00	\$0.00
Insurance - General Liability	\$600.63	\$103.18
Insurance - Work Comp	\$450.00	\$328.78

Operating Expenses (continued)		
Insurance - Medical	\$1,166.00	\$1,575.00
Legal & Accounting	\$1,295.00	\$1,225.00
Newsletter Cost	\$1,991.24	\$1,480.50
Office Supplies	\$2,907.51	\$1,791.85
Postage	\$145.50	\$0.00
Penalties on Tax Payments	\$34.42	\$0.00
Office Rent	\$11,140.00	\$9,111.73
Equipment Rental	\$1,024.77	\$1,024.77
Relocation Expenses	\$0.00	\$770.00
Repairs & Maintenance	\$242.00	\$490.20
Seminars & Education	\$1,067.54	\$735.60
Taxes - Payroll	\$1,949.69	\$1,862.29
Taxes - Annual Filings	\$60.00	\$60.00
Telephone	\$2,776	\$2,708.29
Utilities	\$1,425.56	\$977.40
Total Operating Expenses	\$52,745.32	\$49,006.63
Other Income & Expenses	\$361.16	\$0.00
Net Income/Loss	-\$2,421.89	\$4,615.13

Regularly Scheduled NOC Meetings

North Orange County Intergroup Association
2nd Wednesday of each month at 7:30 p.m.
109 E. Wilshire, Fullerton (First Christian Church)

Orange County Hospitals and Institutions Committee
2nd Sunday of each month as follows:
Institutions Committee: 4-5 p.m. (3:15 p.m. Orientation)

Hospitals Committee: 6-7 p.m. (5:15 p.m. orientation)
Garden Grove Alano Club, 9845 Belfast, Garden Grove

Cooperation with the Professional Community (CPC)
1st Saturday of each month at 9 a.m.
202 W. Broadway, Anaheim

North Orange County Hispanic Intergroup Association
Every Friday at 8 p.m.
330 N. State College Blvd., Ste. 207, Anaheim
Call (714) 956-7243 for information

North Orange County Public Information Committee
2nd Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m.
NOCCO, 1111 E. Commonwealth, Ste D, Fullerton

Contribute



Problems Other Than Alcohol

Understanding the Third Tradition

The following excerpt from a Grapevine article by A.A.'s co-founder Bill W. represent principles which have been reaffirmed by the members of the A.A. General Service Conference of 1969, 1970 and 1972.

"The problem of drug addiction in its several forms lies close to us all. It stirs our deepest interest and sympathy. Many A.A.'s, especially these particular addictions, are now asking, "What can we do about drugs – within our Fellowship, and without?"

Specifically, here is a list of questions we are often asked:

1. "Can a nonalcoholic pill or drug addict become an A.A. member? No
 2. "Can such a person be brought, as a visitor, to an open A.A. meeting for help and inspiration? Yes
 3. "If so, should these nonalcoholic pill or drug users be led to believe that they have become A.A. members? No
 4. "Can a pill or drug taker, who also has a genuine alcoholic history, become a member of A.A.? Yes
- "Now there are certain things that A.A. cannot do for anybody, regardless of what our desires or sympa-

thies may be. Our first duty, as fellowship, is to insure our own survival. Therefore, we have to avoid distractions and multipurpose activity.

- "Sobriety – freedom from alcohol – through the teaching and practice of the Twelve Steps, is the sole purpose of an A.A. group. Groups have repeatedly tried other activities, and they have always failed. It has also been learned that there is no possible way to make non-alcoholic's into A.A. members. We have to confine our membership to alcoholics, and we have to confine our A.A. groups to a single purpose. If we don't stick to these principles, we shall almost surely collapse. And if we collapse, we cannot help anyone.

- "I see no way of making nonalcoholic addicts into A.A. members. Experience says loudly that we can admit no exceptions, even though drug users and alcoholics happen to be first cousins of a sort. If we persist in trying this, I'm afraid it will be hard on the drug user himself, as well as on A.A. We must accept the fact that no nonalcoholic, whatever his affliction, can be converted into an alcoholic ... and an A.A. member.

- "We cannot give A.A. membership to nonalcoholic addicts. But, like anyone else, they should be able to attend open meetings, provided, of course, that the groups themselves are willing."

The Way of Humility

By Sue S.

"Where humility had formerly stood for a forced feeding on humble pie, it now begins to mean the nourishing ingredients which can give us serenity." – *The Twelve Step and Twelve Traditions p. 74*

Today I Find that humility allows me "grace"- to fully accept my humanness. It is the main element that takes me out of myself. Before Alcoholics Anonymous, I had to be constantly in control and was constantly absorbed with false pride.

Never would I let myself believe that there was a Higher Power who loved me so much that he was willing to guide me on my journey if I just let Him. Being self-consumed leaves no room for humble behavior.

Besides, I have learned that one of the greatest impediments to humility is being judgmental. When I ex-

pected others to behave the way I think they should, I missed the whole point. I used to live my life in the middle, being envious and fearful of people I felt were above me and pitying those whom I believed were below me.

Equal Ground

God was too far ahead of me to be seen. But the members of Alcoholics Anonymous made me realize through their actions, words and fellowship that we are all on equal ground and God resides in the center and is very easily within reach.

Gaining humility can begin with a few small steps.

Losing false pride and showing kindness towards others is the beginning of the right path, for people who treasure humility also understand the value of human life, including their own.

Giving Up Wine

By Anonymous

I was walking down the street when I was accosted by a particularly dirty and shabby-looking homeless woman who asked me for a couple of dollars for dinner.

I took out my wallet, got out ten dollars and asked, "If I give you this money, will you buy some wine with it instead of dinner?"



"No, I had to stop drinking years ago," the homeless woman told me.

"Will you use it to go shopping instead of buying food?" I asked.

"No, homeless woman said. "I don't waste time shopping," the homeless woman said. "I need to spend all my time trying to stay alive."

Beauty Salon or Food?

"Will you spend this on a beauty salon instead of food?" I asked.

"Are you NUTS?" replied the homeless woman. "I haven't had my hair done in 20 years!"

"Well," I said, "I'm not going to give you the money. Instead, I'm going to take you out for dinner with my husband and me tonight."

"The homeless Woman was shocked. "Won't your husband be furious with you for doing that? I know I'm dirty, and I probably smell pretty disgusting."

"I said, "That's okay."

It's important for him to see what a woman looks like after she has given up shopping, hair appointments, and wine."

Captured Quips from California Jack

The wit and wisdom of Bill and Bob's friends.

From the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous, pg 82; "The alcoholic is like a tornado roaring his way through the lives of others."

You're trying to fix a broken tool with the tool that's broken.

You can't keep a bird from landing in your hair, but you can keep it from building a nest.

Definition of a bachelor pad: All the houseplants are dead and there's something green growing in the refrigerator

My mind is like a bad neighborhood. I don't go in there alone unless I'm looking to get my butt kicked.

If you're wondering when the next shoe is going to drop, ask yourself why you threw it into the air in the first place.

Buckets of regret are really heavy.

For me it's not so much, "Is the glass half empty or half full?", but, "Where's the glass?"

I don't want the cheese anymore; just please let me out of the trap!

AA has a wrench for every nut, even one as stripped out as you.

There are people who make things happen, some who watch what happens, and those who wonder what happened. Which one are you?

Do you have a quote that you think should be added to the list? Send it to California Jack at **Golden.Buckey@yahoo.com**.

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Editor: Moses H. / Copy Editor Anna F.

Layout & Design: Paul H.

Regular contributors: Roxy T./California Jack/Sue S.;

NOCCO Board Oversight Committee: Jan W. & Jeff B.