

Lifeline

Experience, Strength, and Hope in Orange County

A Spiritual Disease Cannot Be Treated with a Chemical Substance

What does it mean to be fearless and thorough, as is suggested in Step Four? In my journey of sobriety, those two adjectives had been put into an upside-down plan and purpose many times, on a daily basis, through my years of active alcoholism. As I encountered the hundreds of forms of tormenting fear that I was driven to the bottle and prescribed meds for, I unknowingly was paralyzed by fear(s). They had a numbing effect on any and all moral and philosophical convictions that I thought I was living up to. After my journey of sobriety began, I would see that I could not live up to them because my mental faculties were twisted and distorted via the influence of the spirit of alcohol that I was gripped by.



later learn that a spiritual disease cannot be treated with a chemical substance.

I was placed into rehab upon my doctor's refusal to prescribe me any more pills. As I looked at the Fourth Step, I was totally paralyzed with the fear that I would remain in rehab for the rest of my life because I didn't think I had any defects or resentments. I couldn't make an inventory on what I wasn't aware of having. My wise counselor in the rehab program suggested that I write my present and my past husband's names down and said for me not to worry about it. She said things would be more clear, as my sobri-

ety grew, one day at a time. I was so relieved that I started yelling

Continued on page 14

That spirit had been a dormant source of misery-making decisions from my first sip of alcohol in my momma's womb. And as I grew in my toddler years, I was given hot toddies (mixture of alcohol, honey, and water) for the relief of chronic upper respiratory symptoms. I would later learn this was merely feeding the spirit of alcoholism. It was (is) a spiritual disease through which a seed was planted many generations before the seed multiplied and birthed in my own generation. Although Momma stopped giving me hot toddies due to me spitting them in her face, she sought her doctor as to "what to do with this wild child." Thus began my journey with the doctor's prescribed medications.

I would grow up on prescribed medications without any more alcohol being forced down my throat. When I was nineteen, I got married and picked up my first drink since my toddler years. That drink picked up right where it had left off all those years ago. I would

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The Lifeline is published monthly by the Orange County Intergroup Association

Purpose: The *Lifeline* Committee is a group of AA members charged with the responsibility of producing and distributing the Orange County *Lifeline*. The *Lifeline* is published monthly and is supported solely through contributions from the AA groups and members of Orange County. The *Lifeline* proposes to meet the following needs of the Orange County AA membership: to inform AAs of service opportunities, events, and announcements; to share experience in recovery, unity, and service; and to report the actions, finances, and meetings of the Orange County Intergroup Association and other Central Office committees.

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—CALL BEFORE YOU TAKE A DRINK—

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Welcome 2024
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For more information on service committees, or if you have a situation that requires an immediate answer, please contact Orange County Central Office at (714) 556-4555 or email manager@oc-aa.org.

Public Information Committee meets the **4th Wednesday of the month at 5:30PM** in the Central Office Board Room and by Zoom (Meeting ID: 372 574 1056, Password: PIROCKS).

Group Relations Committee meets the **3rd Thursday of the month at 6:00PM** via Zoom (ID: 913 4366 3535, Password: ocaa).

Lifeline Committee meets the **1st Thursday of the month at 7:00PM** via Zoom (ID: 886 0942 7655, Password: lifeline) *See page 3 for more details.*

Special Events Committee meets the **3rd Wednesday of the month at 5:30PM** at Central Office.

South Orange County H & I meets the **3rd Wednesday of the month at 6:00PM** (new members' orientation) and **6:45PM** (business meeting), Laguna Beach Canyon Club (small room), 20456 Laguna Canyon Road, Laguna Beach. South County H & I's mailing address is 27068 La Paz Rd., #706, Aliso Viejo, 92656. For more information, go to www.sochic.club.

Orange County H & I meets the **2nd Sunday of the month at 4:00PM** (Institutions) and **6:00PM** (Hospitals) at the Garden Grove Alano Club (9845 Belfast Dr., Garden Grove). Orientation is at **3:15PM** and **5:15PM**. The Committee Meeting is at 6:00, and the meeting opens around 5:40. For more information on Orange County H & I, go to www.ochandi.org or email contact@ochandi.org.

The Central Office Committee meets the **2nd Thursday of the month at 10:00AM** at Central Office.

The OCAA Technology Committee meets the **1st Monday of the month at 6:00PM** via Zoom (ID: 933 6844 2432, Password: ocaatech).

The Orange County Intergroup Assoc. meets the **2nd Wednesday of the month at 7PM (6:30** new rep orientation) at Norma Hertzog Community Center, 1845 Park Ave., Costa Mesa.

—IN PERSON ONLY—

For information about **General Service** meetings, please go to the Area 09 website, www.msca09aa.org.

VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED AT CENTRAL OFFICE

PLEASE CONTACT CENTRAL OFFICE TO FIND OUT ABOUT SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES.

714-556-4555
MANAGER@OC-AA.ORG

Thank you to our board and committee members.



Letter from the Editor

This month, we are focusing on Step Five and Tradition Five. I hope you'll take the time to read our cover story "A Spiritual Disease Cannot Be Treated with a Chemical Substance." Effie R. writes about Steps Four and Five and how fear can only be conquered with love. I also suggest Chuck H.'s article "Feelings" on page 8 as he writes about how feelings are more important than thinking.

I remember my first Fifth Step and the relief that I felt when it was over. My sponsor listened patiently as I went over my entire Fourth Step with her. When I was done, she told me I could burn it. We were sitting outside her beautiful condo overlooking Newport Beach, and I put that Fourth Step in the firepit and burned it. I felt so much relief as I watched the smoke rising. I am forever grateful for the ways we AAs show up for each other and offer to share what was so freely given to us.

We always publish the short form of the Traditions on page 4 in the "Our Principles" section. We write this page in service to the newcomer who would like more information about the Steps, Traditions, and Concepts, and an editor's note about where to read the long form of the Traditions is included. Paul B. pointed out that the long form of Tradition Five is different than the short form. The short form reads: "Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers." The long form reads: "Each Alcoholics Anonymous group ought to be a spiritual entity having but one primary purpose—that of carrying its message to the alcoholic who still suffers."

Thank you as always for reading the *Lifeline*. If you would like to sign up to have the *Lifeline* delivered by email every month, you can subscribe at www.oc-aa.org. Printed copies are available at Central Office, the satellite office, and our monthly Intergroup meetings. Location information can be found within the *Lifeline*. If you have any suggestions or would like to submit an article to the *Lifeline*, please email me at oclifineditor@gmail.com.

Jennifer J.
Lifeline Editor

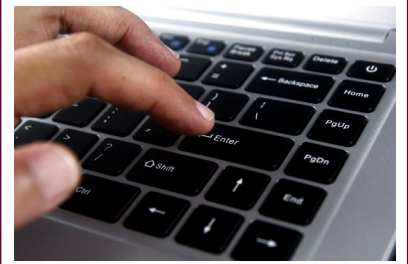
In 1941, a news clipping was called to our attention by a New York member. In an obituary notice from a local paper, there appeared these words: "God grant us the serenity to accept the things we cannot change, the courage to change the things we can, and the wisdom to know the difference." Never had we seen so much A.A. in so few words. With amazing speed, the Serenity Prayer came into general use. – As Bill Sees It, "Learn in Quiet," p. 108

For many years, I had the Serenity Prayer prominently displayed on my desk at work. It became a conversation piece at times, or an unexpected Twelfth Step call. For me, it was that simple prayer that brought me so much solace in the face of chaos, tragedy, or emotional blow-ups. I learned to slow this prayer down in my head to fully digest each powerful component.

It starts with "God," which reminds me that I have profound faith I can lean into for comfort. Then, we ask for "serenity," which tells us that we need to find peace. When we ask "to accept the things we cannot change," we are acknowledging that we have little or no control over people, places, and things. "Courage to change the things I can," is a polite way of admitting that we are better off not trying to change the outcome of everything, and to keep the focus on what we can change; ourselves, our actions, and our reactions. Lastly, "the wisdom to know the difference," reminds us that it may be best to ask God to direct our thoughts and actions.

The Serenity Prayer taught me the power of being able to hit the pause button before I sabotage myself (ISM) with hasty judgments or hurtful words. I am so thankful that the early AA pioneers adopted the Serenity Prayer into our program, and with it, they gave us an essential tool for a peaceful life.

Anonymous



Share Your Thoughts on Sobriety with the *Lifeline*

If you'd like to submit an article, poem, or cartoon to be considered for publication, please send all submissions to the email address below by the 15th of the month for the following month (e.g., August 15th for the September issue). The best articles are under 600 words and are often much shorter. If you are unsure of what to write, you can think of a great share at your favorite meeting. You can write on a topic like how you chose your sponsor, your concept of a Higher Power, or tell your story. Not a writer? A committee member can interview you and write your story. You will have final approval on anything published. Please email oclifineditor@gmail.com for more information.

The *Lifeline* Committee invites you to join us. *Lifeline* Committee members can help read, write, edit, create, design, or simply offer suggestions for the *Lifeline*. The *Lifeline* Committee meets on the first Thursday of the month via Zoom (ID: 886 0942 7655, Password: lifeline).

Our Principles

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

Step Five answers the question of what to do with our Fourth Step list. We share the wrongs on our moral inventory with God/Higher Power, ourselves, and most importantly, another person. Many alcoholics try to skip this last part, but this invariably leads to relapse. Remember, we've already admitted we can't recover by closing ourselves off from others. The ego-deflating action of honestly and thoroughly confessing to another human being brings all the dark deeds we've committed into the light to reveal our true self. The precious knowledge gained from Step Five prepares us to deal with our character defects, while at the same time freeing us from the tormenting ghosts of our past.

Tradition Five: Each group has but one primary purpose – to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

Tradition Five is about AA unity through purpose. Members find relief from alcoholism by working together to carry AA's message to other alcoholics. But there are times that the actions of even the best-intentioned of us can stray from this primary purpose. As a group, we focus on helping alcoholics get and stay sober above all else. The belief that we'll lose anything we put ahead of our sobriety also goes for the Fifth Tradition. Anything we put ahead of, or distracts us from, our primary purpose can compromise our unity, threaten the fel-

lowship, and most importantly, harm AA's ability to help alcoholics.

Concept V: Throughout our structure, a traditional "Right of Appeal" ought to prevail, so that minority opinion will be heard and that petitions for the redress of personal grievances will be carefully considered.

[Concept IV](#) says every AA member has a vote. [Concept V](#) adds that every member also has a voice. AA decisions are based on majority rule, but with checks and balances as explained in [the AA Service Manual \(ASM\)](#). To ensure any [informed group conscience](#) is truly the will of a Higher Power/God, a two-thirds majority is usually required. However, even after a decision is reached, the minority must still be heard from and their input considered. Being open to dissenting opinions further validates AA group decisions while safeguarding against a misguided majority. Additionally, any member with a grievance may appeal directly to the [General Service Board \(Inside AA p. 8\)](#). Concept V ensures that AA always be considerate of every member.

[Editor's note: You can read the long form of the [Traditions](#) on www.aa.org or on pp. 563-556 in the Big Book. You can also learn more about the [General Service Office](#) and how it serves AA on www.aa.org.]

Ron B.

How Am I Doing?

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

1. Do I ever cop out by saying, "I'm not a group so this or that Tradition doesn't apply to me"?
2. Am I willing to explain firmly to a newcomer the limitations of AA help, even if he gets mad at me for not giving him a loan?
3. Have I today imposed on any AA member for a special favor or consideration simply because I am a fellow alcoholic?
4. Do I help my group in every way I can to fulfill our primary purpose?
5. Do I remember that AA old-timers, too, can be alcoholics who still suffer? Do I try both to help them and to learn from them?

(Reprinted with permission from the [AA Grapevine](#))

(Traditions Checklist available from Central Office)

([SMF-131 Traditions Checklist](#) is available from the [AA Grapevine](#) on www.aa.org)

Support Your Central Office

@OCAINTERGROUP



Scan. Pay. Go.

You can [contribute](#) online at www.oc-aa.org with Paypal or Venmo (QR codes above).

Checks and money orders can be sent to:

ORANGE COUNTY CENTRAL OFFICE
1526 Brookhollow, Suite 75
Santa Ana, CA 92705



May AA Birthdays

Jim M.	Mission Viejo	8 years
Michelle B.	San Clemente	10 years
Richelle K.	Orange	13 years
Mary Ellen K.	Huntington Beach	45 years

You can celebrate an AA birthday in the *Lifeline* with a [donation](#) to Central Office. A donation of any amount is a generous way to celebrate the gift of sobriety and support your Central Office.

In keeping with AA's Seventh Tradition, we only accept contributions from AA members or groups.



Located at the end of the 55 freeway in Costa Mesa next to the Donald Dungan branch of the Costa Mesa Public Library

Orange County Intergroup Meeting
Second Wednesday of each month
7:00PM meeting, 6:30PM new rep orientation
—IN PERSON ONLY—

Info: 714-556-4555, www.oc-aa.org

Norma Hertzog Community Center
1845 Park Ave.
Costa Mesa

764 TOTAL CALLS	CENTRAL OFFICE ACTIVITY March 2024			
	12 Step Calls	Meeting Info	General Info	Customers
OFFICE VOLUNTEERS (MAIN + SATELLITE)	2	273	169	201
CALL FORWARDING VOLUNTEERS	2	196	122	0

Central Office/Satellite Office Monthly Book Drawing Winners

Kim L., Marcie R., Brian F., Kimber H., Mark T., & Aubree S.

Hospitals and Institutions Corner



It was around my fifth year of sobriety when a friend asked if I would join him on an AA panel. He informed me it was at a prison. My first reaction, which I kept to myself, was fear of the location and that I would not know what to say. During my drinking years, I had been incarcerated in city and county jails but did not identify with prison. I accepted his invitation to be a one-time visitor. He had me approved to join him and a few others to attend his panel.

I recall the metal detector and sign-in process being a bit strict. The chat with the others on the way in did put me at ease. Going through the hallway with the sound of heavy doors shutting behind made me a bit nervous at first. Being led by our prison sponsor to the prison yard and watching the inmates doing their outdoor activities looked like a scene from a movie. From there, we went into the chapel.

After the inmates filed in, we said the Serenity Prayer. The other panel members shared first. I was taught to just share my own experience. I said a quick prayer for help with what to say. I will not forget the feelings I experienced of being part of a greater purpose. I am not so occupied with myself and have a stronger awareness of God when I do this.

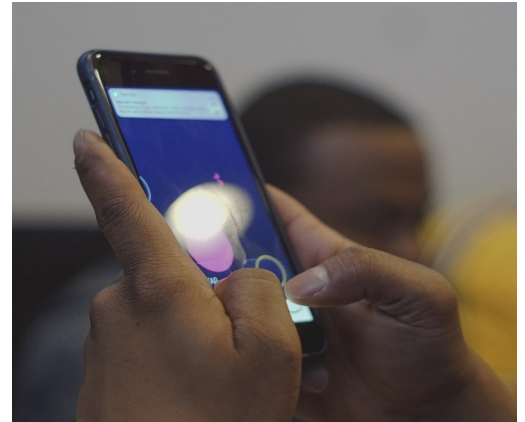
My friend invited me back to this panel, and I later joined Alcoholics Anonymous Hospitals and Institutions. I now have forty years of sobriety and have learned that the feelings of gratitude, peace, and belonging far outweigh the sacrifice required to do this.

I thank God for helping me to find and continue this way of service.

Patrick K.

For more information, visit www.ochandi.org or email contact@ochandi.org. For South County, visit www.sochic.club.

Looking for a service commitment you can do with your phone?



The Orange County Central Office call forwarding program insures that our help line phones are answered by volunteers 24/7. During hours when the Central Office is closed, calls are forwarded to a call forwarding volunteer's home or cell phone, where the volunteer answers the calls just as if they were sitting in Central Office. This allows Central Office to save money because we do not have to use an answering service. More importantly, the caller will be talking to a member of Alcoholics Anonymous. Two years of sobriety are suggested to volunteer for this service. Please call the Central Office Manager in Santa Ana at (714) 556-4555 or the Satellite Office Manager in Laguna Niguel at (949) 582-2697 to sign up for a brief orientation session.

SHIFTS:

Monday—Friday

- 6AM—9AM
- 6PM—9PM
- 9PM—6AM

Saturday and Holiday:

- 6AM—9AM
- 1PM—4PM
- 4PM—7PM
- 7PM—10PM
- 10PM—6AM

Sundays

- 6AM—10AM
- 10AM—2PM
- 2PM—6PM
- 6PM—10PM
- 10PM—6AM

Archives Corner

Coffee and Donuts

Coffee and donuts hold a special place in AA meetings, dating back to the early days of the fellowship. Around this very percolator, Bill W. and Dr. Bob engaged in countless conversations at the Smiths' kitchen table over cups of coffee. They explored ways to maintain sobriety, not just for themselves, but for the countless others who would follow in their footsteps.

In *Dr. Bob and the Good Old Timers*, Dr. Bob reminisces about the gatherings that followed AA meetings, often held at Kistler's Doughnuts on 375 W. North St in Akron, Ohio. It was during one of these post-meeting fellowshiping that Dr. Bob was told that some members couldn't afford to join in. In response, he suggested bringing doughnuts to the meetings themselves, ensuring that no one would feel excluded from the fellowshiping of the post-meeting refreshments.

Oldtimers recall the role donuts played during AA's early days, becoming a cherished tradition at meetings. Donuts were only served after the meeting in an effort to deter newcomers from hastily departing after the Lord's Prayer. This allowed the members time for welcoming, exchanging phone numbers, and introducing them to AA literature.



The iconic Wear-Ever Aluminum Coffee Percolator (no. 5063) that was used in the Smith family home in Akron, Ohio, during the 1930s

In 1999, Dr. Bob's daughter, Sue Smith Windows, sold a collection of Dr. Bob's personal items to Brown University. The collection comprises over five thousand items, including two hundred books, dozens of pieces of memorabilia, and several hundred manuscripts (both original and photocopied). The books, all from Dr. Bob's personal library, cover religious and spiritual topics as well as issues related to addiction and recovery. The manuscripts feature the notes of Dr. Bob's wife, Anne, who documented the spiritual principles that later influenced the Twelve Steps of the AA movement. Additionally, there's a looseleaf binder containing mimeographed instructions on how to set up an AA meeting, which were distributed to chapter secretaries, along with some pages of Dr. Bob's letters and notes.

Noteworthy among the collection is the coffee pot that Dr. Bob and Bill W. first used to sober up with in 1935. Brown University houses a significant AA Archives collection utilized for research in alcoholism and addiction studies.

Mary G.
MSCA 09 Archives

Third Step Prayer (Today)

My sponsor's wisdom resonates deeply with me as she encourages the simple yet profound practice of "staying in today," "bringing it back to today," and "being right here, right now." With my mind often buzzing like a busy bee, flitting between past and future, her gentle reminders ground me in the present moment. One particularly beautiful suggestion she made was to infuse the word *today* into the Third Step Prayer and naming what my difficulties are. This practice has truly anchored me in the following twenty-four hours. I find myself sprinkling *today* throughout my thoughts and prayers, and it has made a remarkable difference. If you're seeking a way to stay present, I invite you to embrace this idea. Here's to the profound gift of "living in today!"

God, I offer myself to Thee (today) – to build with me and to do with me as Thou wilt (today). Relieve me of the bondage of self (today), that I may better do Thy will (today). Take away my difficulties (today), that victory over them (today) may bear witness to those I would help (today) of Thy Power, Thy Love, and Thy Way of Life. May I do Thy will always (today).

LeLania M.

Feelings

The day I got sober I did not care about the wife anymore. I did not care about the job anymore. I did not care that I was going to lose all my material things anymore as she was going to take everything. There was no doubt in my mind that I was going to die.

It was not going to be a quick death; it was going to be a very slow miserable death. It was going to be a slow loss of living in a nice house, to an apartment, to a rented room, to an alleyway and a cardboard box. There was that moment in my life I needed help, and I only knew one place to go. I was going to put myself into an alcoholic rehab. I had experience going to two Alcoholics Anonymous meetings, and they did not work. Of course, they were only four years apart.

I had met a man at work who was a declared alcoholic. I asked him, about a year before I got sober, "Joe, how does it feel to be an ex-alcoholic?" He replied, "Chuck, I am an alcoholic; I just chose not to drink." I had never met anyone who stated they were alcoholic. The other thing I did not realize at the moment was that I had just let Joe know that I also had a drinking problem.

About six months later, my drinking had become steadily worse. I asked Joe, "How did you stop drinking?" Joe formed a cup with his hands and said, "I gave my living problems to God. I gave my drinking problem to God. I am only responsible for the first drink, and I am only responsible one day at a time." I simply did not understand.

I knew I could not stop drinking on my own. I needed help. I got up and walked out of a business meeting and went looking for Joe. Yes, I was a businessman. I had a nice house, a nice wife, a nice job, a nice car, and a nice wristwatch; I could not be an alcoholic. I did not realize at the time that by getting up and walking out of that meeting to look for Joe, I had just admitted I had a drinking problem without knowing it. I was at Step One.

Shaking like a leaf in a strong wind, I knew I could not get in my own car and drive home. God has a sense of humor. The very day I went looking for Joe, he had taken the day off. I was coming apart at the seams. Sooner or later, I was going to make a scene at work, crying and curling up on the floor in the fetal position. Not knowing what else to do, I turned to the lady at the desk next to me and told her what was happening to me. You don't think that God had a plan. She turned out to have fourteen years in Al-Anon. She got me a



cup of coffee, got me to sit down, and she called Joe.

The first sign of unconditional love was Joe and his wife drove down to the plant, and he put me in the passenger seat of my own car and drove me home. I have been sober ever since. It's been forty years, but it is still a one-day-at-a-time program.

By removing alcohol from my system, I started to feel feelings that I never felt before. I did not realize that my drinking was covering up a lot of my feelings. So, I started to feel: feelings of anger, despair, shame—the feeling of a lost soul.

In rehab, they put me in a room alone with me. I was not very good company. They gave me the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*, referred to as the *Big Book*. They gave me a copy of *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*. I then discovered there were no doorknobs on my side of the door. I said the best prayer of my entire life. "God, please help me."

Basically, what I learned in rehab was to go to AA meetings. They would load up a group of us and take us each day to a different type of AA meeting. There were open discussion groups, closed discussion groups, a men's stag meeting, a *Big Book* study group, and a *Twelve and Twelve* reading group. One day each week, they would take us to a speaker meeting.

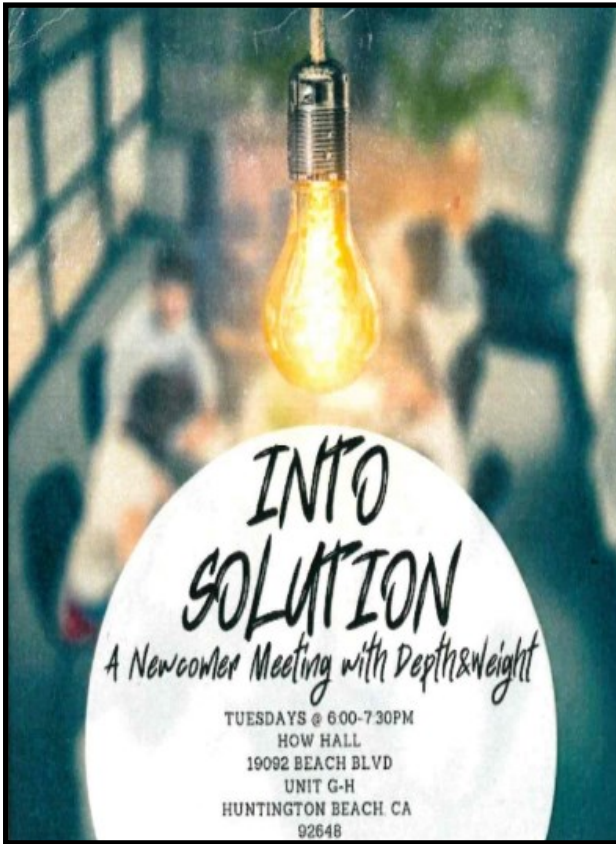
All these feelings were coming to the surface, and I felt angry, afraid, and ashamed. I tried to quit thinking and do what I was told to do. I got a sponsor. Some guy walked into an AA meeting wearing a three-piece suit, and I could relate to wearing a three-piece suit. I had no idea who this guy was, but he said he would be my sponsor. One of the first things my new sponsor told me was that he was not interested in my thinking. He had heard my thinking in bars. All he wanted to hear was my feelings. I started to live life on life's terms, and all these overwhelming feelings came to the surface.

We did the Fifth Step together, and, surprisingly, I did a very good job on the first try. I knew I was not going to get everything the first time around, but I decided that if it entered my head it was going on that piece of paper called the Fourth Step. My sponsor said something that has always stayed with me. As we were leaving the room, he said, "What was said here, stays here. What was given to God, let God keep." The tremendous amount of weight that came off my shoulders was huge.

Today, I am feeling okay with me most of the time. There is still a real world out there, and I can still have unwanted feelings pop up. The nice thing is I know how to deal with them or just let go of them. I give them to God and go help someone else. I have sponsored a lot of guys over the years. The first thing I tell them is that I am not interested in your thinking; I am only interested in your feelings.

Chuck H.

One of the first things my new sponsor told me was that he was not interested in my thinking. He had heard my thinking in bars. All he wanted to hear was my feelings.



Newcomer Meeting

May Pamphlet of the Month

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

2022
MEMBERSHIP SURVEY



This membership survey (P-48) summarizes the latest data of AAs in the United States and Canada.

[[Pamphlet](#) available on www.aa.org]



New Meeting

NEW BIG BOOK STUDY
"BYOB"
BRING YOUR OWN BOOK

one Sunday at a time

EVERY SUNDAY @ 1:00PM

THURSDAYS SUNSET BEACH
16865 PACIFIC COAST HWY.
HUNTINGTON BEACH, CA 92649

AA Vaccinations



“Practice, practice, practice,” the room echoed after the reading of “How It Works.” This echo has been heard many times by this meeting goer. “Meeting makers make it!” This is another common refrain parroted to beginners and early-timers to simplify our program to a confused flock of followers in early recovery. Practicing AA principles in all our affairs will implant

a way of thinking with the ingestion of ideas, words, actions and behavior of suggestions for living. Thus, a loose garment is woven to reenter society as a newly modeled citizen of the world with a better understanding and acceptance of all who are searching for their own truths while finding themselves. After all, everyone eventually seeks “who they are” after finding that everyone else is already taken.

In primitive villages without advanced medical facilities, the inhabitants adapted rituals which when first observed seem contrary to sensical behavior. One by one, the villagers exhaled into the mouths of newborns infants. This action enhances the immunity to infectious diseases. Babies during the earliest stages of life are protected by God with an abundance of immunity to disease and infection. This primitive but highly effective method of “human vaccination” from others leads to the creation of additional anti-bodies to help protect the newborn through the many diseases encountered in childhood.

That essentially is how AA works, through others and a new Higher Power replacing the false deity of intoxicants. Alas, the light bulb came aglow. Our daily AA meetings of imperfect people sharing their imperfections provide soulful vaccinations of recovery to inoculate and shield us from the insanity of taking a drink that day. Our AA brothers and sisters, by sharing their recovery message to newcomers, early timers and those with substantial sobriety, are reinforcing the walls of abstinence from the whiskey vandals of self-centeredness. They are led by the Four Horsemen whose leader, The Merchant Of Misery, is riding the charging steed strangely named, “This Time It Will Be Different,” dragging with him his faithful mercenaries, Denial, Self-Pity, and Complacency. They are always ready to pounce and trounce on sober prey at their weakest moments.

Stay in the middle of the pack for protection from these merciless marauders. We are uniquely equipped with AA flak jackets! Together we are armored with Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, our new Higher Power, sponsor, fellow followers and likeminded individuals to thwart the vigilantes of misery.

Daily injections of love, understanding, and acceptance by working and serving others coupled with ever improving listening skills and a willingness to change, we reenter the world of accountability, responsibility and trustworthiness as a trusted servant. Good fortune, my friend, as we trudge, dance in the rain, and skip down the road of Paradise to the fourth dimension traversing on the spiritual escalator to the sunlight of the Spirit.

John G.



Above Ground and Sober



How are you? This question has been asked by someone at every meeting of Alcohol Anonymous I have attended over the last forty-three years. Sometimes it is just a greeting, and sometimes the question is asked in earnest. My standard answer has always been partly cloudy. This answer has always pretty much summed up my journey on the path of recovery.

Passing Storms

*Sunlight beating down from the sky,
Thunder rolling in the distance,
Heat lightning flashes across the horizon,
Breeze turning into gusts,
Will it rain or will it not,
In a while it all fades away leaving sunlight,
Fading to a soft; cool evening breeze and a breeze,
In what seems a flash, the tumult passing by.*

*Sunlight and storm signs, a paradox,
Like the inner working between my ears,
Walking in the light, avoiding the shadows,
Thunder rumbling in the far distance,
A word, an action, and lightning flashes,
Shadows of resentment and anger rush forward,
Yet a simple pause and request to God,
Shadows disperse, allowing the light back for sure.*

*Over nature I exercise absolutely no control,
With the inner storm signals, the ISMs, I am given a choice,
The tools of the program make this possible,
Sobriety has allowed me to live a better life,
Guided by the Twelve Steps, the shadows are kept at bay,
One day at a time, staying sober, doing the best I can,
Self-will brings turmoil, surrender brings contentment,
Experience has proven this true as along sobriety's journey, I roll.*

This answer allowed me the option of not going into detail. Having dealt with moderate to severe physical pain and the bouts of depression that came along with the chronic pain, I did not wish to share any of that negativity except with a sponsor or close friend in the fellowship. After all, I was still above ground and sober. I would get through it with my Higher Power's/God's help and our program of Alcoholics Anonymous. Today, my days are still partly cloudy, yet the longer I am sober the simpler it seems to get. Now my go-to answer to “How are you?” is “Above ground and sober.” Reality! Every day that I wake up sober means anything is possible—a gift of sobriety. Every day come reminders that I have no power over people, places, or things. I have only the decision to drink or not drink today. I have chosen to remain sober and make my daily surrender to my Higher Power/God, then do the necessary steps to remain sober for that day.

Today, once more I find myself above ground and sober. Lately, I have been in constant physical pain again, some old age, but most the results of craziness while out practicing my alcoholism. Yet, I also got to watch, play, and enjoy my grandchildren. This is all a result of not taking a drink one day at a time. It does not get better than that. I was told to “keep it simple, stupid” forty-three years ago, and I have.

Trust God, clean house, and help others.

Bill F.

UP TO CODE

In AA we hear a lot about doing a “spiritual house cleaning.”

This means transforming our true selves into a place where our Higher Power/God can enter and expel our alcoholic obsession. But we can’t do this until we figure out what needs to be cleaned, repaired, or discarded. This is why Steps Four and Five are so important. Completing our moral inventory is like a home inspection where we document our spiritual condition. Next, we check our Step Four results in Step Five (*Big Book*, p. 72).



The Fifth Step has three parts and all must be completed. Sharing my Fourth Step list of shortcomings and character defects with only myself and my Higher Power/God isn’t enough. We must also share it with another person. Foregoing this portion of Step Five is one of the most frequent causes of relapse (*Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, pp. 55-56).

After my wife and I purchased our house, we wanted to make sure it was ready before having people over. We inventoried it ourselves, but we weren’t experts in things like plumbing, electrical, termites, etc., so we wanted to share the results. We found a qualified inspector who reviewed our findings and added his own. This way we were fully prepared to make repairs so we could bring our home “up to code,” a term that means adhering to minimum requirements to ensure a dwelling is safe, hygienic, and functional.

In Step Four we inspect our spiritual abode, the first Step towards ensuring that it meets the requirements of addressing conditions and behaviors that would block our Higher Power/God from entering. After decades of alcohol abuse, it was im-

We also once again confirm that we’re willing to go to any length to get and stay sober. This includes ensuring that our Higher Power/God will always have a place in our lives and hearts by finding the integrity to bring our spiritual house “up to code.”

perative that I set aside my ego and admit I needed help with this. The third part of Step Five is a way to certify that we haven’t rationalized or diminished our part in those times we caused unhappiness for ourselves and others (12 & 12, p. 60).

We usually do our Fifth Step with our sponsor, but any understanding and trustworthy person will suffice. My sponsor helped me make sure I hadn’t left anything out of my Fourth Step list—unintentionally or intentionally—and that I was confessing my own sins and nobody else’s. We also identified my character defects and their impact on my behavior: the faulty wiring of my selfishness, the dry rot of my dishonesty, the instability of my fear, the creeping toxic mold of my resentments, and the flammability of my anger.

But there’s more to confessing to another person than just reciting our sins. Like many before me, after coming clean in this part of Step Five, I was greeted by a profound sense of relief. However, there was also an unexpected feeling of accomplishment from finally doing the right thing because it was the right thing to do. The tormenting guilt and shame of my past began to fall away as I thought to myself, “so this is what integrity feels like.” Accepting forgiveness and someday forgiving others now seemed possible.

Our Fifth Step helps us to accept responsibility for our part in our alcoholism. The ego-deflation of admitting to another person the exact nature of our wrongs provides the tangible evidence that we’ve humbly admitted who and what we are—both defects and assets. We also once again confirm that we’re willing to go to any length to get and stay sober. This includes ensuring that our Higher Power/God will always have a place in our lives and hearts by finding the integrity to bring our spiritual house “up to code.”

Ron B.

Group Contributions to Central Office, March

City	MAR	YTD	Group Name	Amount	Group Name	Amount	Group Name	Amount	
ALISO VIEJO			M-F 12:00P-Take The Steps, Nat. Scien	\$10	M-F 6:30A-Att & Grat, 30605 Ave D/L Flo	\$161	\$161	Fri 7:05 AM Back To Basics (Ballpark Piz	\$574
ANAHEIM			MW 12:00P-Alton Noon, 5001 Newport	\$259	Sa 6:30A-The Straight Pepper Diet, 3060	\$75	\$75	Jumpstart M-F 6:30A Sat/Sun 7A	\$600 \$600
ANAHEIM HILLS			Mo 5:00P-(W)'s Blue Book, 5001 Newpo	\$100	SAN CLEMENTE			Mon. So Coast Mens Stag	\$448 \$448
We 7:00P-Just the Black Print, 4101 E.	\$255		Mo 7:30P-(W)'s Disc., 15 Orange Tree	\$365	Fr 7:00P-(W)'s BB & SS, 202 Ave Aragon	\$59		Sat. 9AM Morning Fellowship	\$80
BREA			Tu 12:00P-W's Mariners BB Study, 5001	\$136	Fr 7:00P-Friday Knights, 27002 Camino	\$268		Sat. Morning Women's	\$1
BUENA PARK			Tu 6:00P-W's Courage To Change, 1818	\$174	SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO			Sat. Noon Tustin AWC (Alkies Winner Ci	\$100 \$100
CAPISTRANO BEACH			Tu 7:00P-(M)'s K.I.S. 12X12, 5000 Barr	\$140	Dly 6:00A-Taking a Trip, 31891 Camino	\$440		Sat 7PM-Fishbowl Laguna Hills Zoom	1,000 1,000
CORONA DEL MAR			Sa 11:00A-B.B Stdy, 1 Sunnyhill - Turtle	\$200	Dly Various- San Juan Meetings	2,420		MISC. DONATIONS	
			LAGUNA BEACH		Mo 5:00P-(W)'s Solutions, 32382 Del Ob	\$220		Birthdays Donations	\$180 \$453
Mo 6:30P-CDM BB SS, 1601 Marguerite	\$433		Dly 7:00A-C Club 7AMs Att Adj, 20456 L	\$317	We 6:15P-Effect Speaker Discussion Gr	\$290		IG Coffee Basket	\$50
Tu 6:00P-(W)'s 12x12, 3233 Pacific Vie	\$250		Su 7:00A-Whale Watchers (M)'s, PCH @	\$281	Th 6:00P-Do the Steps, 32202 Del Obi	\$275	\$475	7th Tradition Zoom Mtgs	\$43
			COSTA MESA		Sa 6:30A-Eye Opener, 32202 Del Obispo	1,000		Piggy Bank	\$5
Su 12:15P-High Noon Participation, 204	\$50		Mo 6:30P-(W)'s BB Stdy, 21632 Wesley	\$100	Sa 8:00A-(M) Black Print Only Study, 27	\$231	\$231	Saddleback Valley Fellowship	\$185 \$185
Mo 7:00P-(M)'s CDM Soup, 2850 Fairv	\$500		Th 6:00P-Women's Stag, 20456 LCR	\$143	SANTA ANA			PERSONAL DONATIONS	
Th 7:00P-12 Steps & 12 Trads Study Gr	\$150		Fr 6:00P-Happy Hour Disc, 20456 LCR	\$140	Su 11:00A-Two or More, 1764 S. Main	\$30		Anonymous	\$962 1,085
Fr 6:30P-This Must Be The Place	\$60		Sa 8:00P-Living Sober Spkrs Grp, 428 P	\$304	Th 6:00P-On the Way Home, 2000 W. Al	\$25	\$25	Alexander A, San Clemente	\$2
Fr 6:30P-The Family Afterwards	\$60		LAGUNA HILLS		SEAL BEACH			Bill D. CMAC 10am BB Study Zoom	\$3
Fr 7:30P-Creative Share, 2525 Fairview	\$60	\$120	Su 7:00P-Legacies Grp, 23802 ADC	\$600	Mo 7:30P-Speakers, 500 Marina	\$473	\$473	Carolyn M.	\$50
Sa 6:00P-Sat. Night Refugees, 2144 Th	\$742		Mo 6:30P-(W) SS/Living Sober, 23802 A	\$248	We 7:00P-BYOC Coffee BB	\$100	\$175	Curtis H.	\$20
			CYPRESS		SILVERADO CANYON			David B., Fullerton	\$10 \$10
			DANA POINT		SUNSET BEACH			Derek G. Laguna Niguel	\$50 \$125
Dly 7:00A-Hardcore Harbor, 34402 E. P	1,500		Mo 5:30P-(M)'s What's/Purpose, 27631 L	\$120	Mo 4:30P-(W)'s Hour of Power, 16865 P	\$258		Elizabeth H., Brea	\$100
Mo 5:30P-(W)'s Disc, Ensenada & DPH	\$155	\$155	Mo 8:00P-12&12 Stdy, 30071 Ivy Glenn	\$210	Tu 7:00A-Tues at Thursdays, 16865 P	\$73	\$161	Gaston E.	\$104
Tu 7:00A-Men's Stag 33501 Stonehill	\$198	\$198	We 6:00P- BB 12&12 Study, 30017 Ivy G	\$120	We 7:00A-Attitude Adj, 16865 PCH	\$162		George H., Rancho Mission Viejo	\$2
Tu 5:30P-So Coast Men's Stag, 24642 S	\$96		Fr 7:00A-Back to Basics Men's, 30120 To	\$315	Th 7:00A-Thur at Thursdays, 16865 PCH	\$30		Issella G.	\$160
We 7:00A-(M)'s Gloria Dei BB, 33501 St	\$150	\$300	Fr 7:00A-Ivy Glenn (M) Stag, 30071 Ivy	\$358	Th 5:30P-(W)'s Disc, 16865 PCH	\$90		James & Carol W., NB	\$280
We 6:00P-(W)'s SOS, 25975 Domingo	\$57	\$196	Fr 10:30A-Friday Morning Women's Mee	\$189	Fr 12:00P-Drunk Busters, 16865 PCH	\$100	\$200	Jenna K.	\$5 \$25
We 6:30P-Pines Park Discussion, 27012	\$200	\$200	Fr 7:30P-Here & Now, 24360 Yosemite	\$50	Sa 11:00A-Noon at 11, 16865 PCH	\$60	\$120	Julie W.	\$75 \$75
Th 7:00A-Th Morn Men's Topic, 33501 S	1,132		Sa 9:00A-Meditation Meeting, 29102 Cro	\$175	TRABUCO CANYON			Kate L., Santa Ana	\$500
Th 7:00P-Primary Purpose, 33501 Ston	\$100	\$530	LAGUNA WOODS		TUSTIN			Laura J., HB	\$10 \$10
Sa 7:00A-(M)'s 10th Step, 33501 Stoneh	\$389	\$514	Dly 7:30A-Do It Sober, 24442 Moulton	\$40	Dly 6:00A-Attitude Mod, 1221 Wass	\$360	\$660	Lynn B.	\$25 \$75
			FOUNTAIN VALLEY		Fr 10:30A-Top/Hill Gang, 24252 El Toro	\$100		Marilyn C., San Clemente	\$3 \$6
Dly 8:30A-How It Works AA Meeting, FV	\$25		LA HABRA		WESTMINSTER			Michael L.	\$330
Mo 6:30P-(M)'s No Bull, 16581 Brookhur	\$50		M-F 6:15A- Topic Disc, 631 N. Euclid	\$400	Th 9:00A-(W)'s SS, 14402 Prospect	\$60		Pej P.	\$54 \$54
			FULLERTON		WHITTIER			Rob S. Orange	\$15
			GARDEN GROVE		YORBA LINDA			Robert R.	\$15 \$15
MTh 10:30A-We/OK Today, 9182 Chap	\$200		Mon 7:00P-PAID Women's BB Study (Sa	\$185	UNLISTED GROUPS			Robyn C.	\$2 \$2
			HUNTINGTON BEACH		VILLA PARK			Robert S., RSM	\$35 \$105
Dly 6:00A-Early Birds, HOW Hall	\$50	\$100	LA MIRADA		Su Dly 7:30A-24 Hr Book, 17885 Santiag	\$252		Rodger & Annette F., Irvine	\$50
Dly 6:00A-Early Birds Disc., 8121 Ellis	\$275		LAS FLORES		Su 9:02A-Spkr/Part, 17885 Santiago	\$240		Sherman S.	\$20 \$20
Dly 8:00A-Hggrs II, H.B Lifegrid Tower 1	\$350		LOS ALAMITOS		WESTMINSTER			Stephen M.	\$10
Su 9:00A-On/Beach, Lifegrid Tower 11	\$250		MISSION VIEJO		WHITTIER			Tom P., HB	\$5
Su Noon-Newcomers BB Discussion, H	\$25	\$40	M-F 12:00P-Diss At Elks. 25902 Margue	\$100	YORBA LINDA			IN LOVING MEMORY	
Su 1:30P-As Bill Sees It Disc, 19092 Be	\$20		We 9:30A-(W)'s Topic, 26051 Marguerite	\$150	UNLISTED GROUPS			In Memory of Sandy P. #15144	\$25 \$25
Su 7:30P-Disc, 9812 Hamilton Ave.	\$100		Th 12:00P-Presb Ch of the Master, 2605	\$200	Anonymous Meeting	\$167		GROUP INFORMATION REQUESTED	
M-F 7:00A-Huggers, 8200 Ellis	\$275	\$460	Th 6:00P-(M) 3 G's Park, 26931 El Retiro	\$292	Brea Mens Group 562316	\$106	\$106	GSO #000342592	\$48
Mo 12:00P-(W)'s Bill Sees It, 18631 Cha	\$105	\$105	Th 8:00P-Stand/Door, 26051 Marg	\$632	Charle St. Step House, CM	\$120		Receipt #1032 Need more info	\$60
Mo 6:00P-Read n Chat, 18631 Chapel L	\$25		Fr 8:00P-Couch Meeting, 26001 Muirland	\$65	WESTMINSTER			TOTALS	
Mo 6:30P-Both Books, 16911 BolsaChic	\$60	\$60	NEWPORT BEACH		Into Action BB, CM	\$150	\$150	\$15,787	\$53,808
Mo 7:30P-(M) KIS, 1912 Florida	\$60		Dly 6:30A-Round Table Disc., 414 E. 32n	1,200	Fri Double Winners, St. Johns	\$100			
Tu 1:00P-Harmony (W)'s, Beach/Denny	\$50	\$50	M-F 12:15P-Shark@Aquatic, 1 Whiteclif	1,331	Mon 6:30 pm Women's Living Sober, Mis	\$163			
Tu 6:00P-(W)'s 12x12 SS, 19092 Beach	\$187		Su 9:30A-Sandy Survivors, 15th/W.Balb	\$782	Th 11:00A-(W)'s Closed BB, SJC	\$84			
Tu 7:00P-Beginners (M)'s, 1912 Florida	\$500		Mo 6:30P-(W)'s Solid Solutions, 1441 W.	\$175	WANDERING GROUPS				
Tu 7:30P-Newcomer (M)'s Stag, 9812 H	\$100	\$200	Mo 8:30P-Balboa Island Step Study, 107	\$400	Fri P83 Wandering Group	\$100	\$100		
We 10:30A-Slogan Sisters, 9812 Hamil	\$170	\$170	Tu 6:00P-Castaways (W) C to C-BB Stud	\$100	We 6:30P- Rolling Men's Stag BB Study	\$250			
We 6:30P-(W) 12x12 SS, 9812 Hamilton	\$175	\$175	We 7:30P-Men's Stag, 798 Dover	\$50	ZOOM MEETINGS				
We 7:00P-(M)'s Stag, 8121 Ellis Ave	\$300		Th 7:00A-Closed Women's 12x12, St Ma	\$340	As Bill Sees It Newcomer	\$72			
We 7:30P-Triangle Grip BB, 18631 Chap	\$50		Sa 8:00A-Dover Men's Stag, 798 Dover	\$100	Attitude Adj. Tam Cryn Club	\$568	\$1,794		
Th 10:00A-(W)'s BB Stdy, 18631 Chapel	\$120		Sa 8:00A-EZ Risers, 2046 Mar Vista	\$125	Back Bay (M)'s Zoom	\$41	\$686		
Th 5:45P-Dry Dock, 8121 Ellis	\$100	\$100	ORANGE		Dly 7:05A-Attitude Adjustment	\$630			
Fr 6:00P-(M)Men In The Solution, 18631	\$45	\$45	Tu 7:00P-(W)'s Keep It Simple, 1310 E	\$111	Dly Noon Time Recovery (Costa Mesa)	\$50			
Sa 6:00A-Sunrise Sobriety, 8121 Ellis	\$36		We 7:00P-Name/Hat, 1130 E. Walnut	\$75	Dly Early Birds	1,581			
Sa 9:30A-Charle St. Overflow, 9812 Ha	\$30		Sa 8:00P-Visiting Spkrs, 395 S Tustin St	\$150	M-F 7:00A-Zoom Daily Reflecting Group	\$800			
Sa 9:30A-(W)'s BB Study, 19092 Beach	\$60		Su 11:00A-Big Book Study, 2191 N Oran	\$70	Tues/Thurs 7:05 A-The 705 Virtual AA	\$256	\$544		
Sa 10:00A-(W)'s Closed Womens BB St	\$250	\$550	PLACENTIA		Tu 5:30P Womens @ The Grange	\$26	\$26		
Sa 7:00P-Sat Nite Live BB, 18631 Chap	\$50		RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA		Tues Nite Women's BB Study	\$225	\$297		
			Mo 7:00P-(W) Stay/Sober, 30382 VCD	\$490	Wed. 5PM- East Meets West	\$40	\$40		
			Mo 7:30P-Charter(M)'s, 30605 Ave de la	\$484	Sun 7pm-Fishbowl Discussion	\$25	\$25		
			Thu 7:30P-11th Step Spiritual Exp Dis., 3	\$81					
			IRVINE						

Sober, useful, loving action carries a message of hope and victory over alcoholism. Today, we do our best to do our best and let God do the rest. Please remember, you do have the courage to change one day at a time. Together, we succeed. If you have a pulse, you have a purpose. Let's explore that purpose together.

Chris W.



Speaker Meetings

Costa Mesa

6:00PM, Saturday
HYBRID
Saturday Night Refugees (12X12 Speaker Meeting)
 2144 Thurin St. @ Victoria St. (Grange Hall)
 Meeting ID: 703 741 362, Password: GRANGE
 Contact: Joel B.

7:00PM, Sunday
IN-PERSON
Costa Mesa Speaker Group
 2040 Placentia Ave. (Costa Mesa Alano Club)
 Contact: Christy B.

Dana Point

9:30 AM *First Sunday only each month*
IN-PERSON
Dana Point Harbor Monthly Speaker Birthday Group
 34699 Golden Lantern (Wind and Sea Restaurant)
 Contact: Brent W. or
 Contact: John H.

Huntington Beach

5:45PM, Tuesday
HYBRID
Sun and Sea AA Hybrid Meeting
 8121 Ellis Ave (HB church, upstairs meeting room)
 Meeting ID: 882 0896 9623, Password: Sunandsea
 Contact: Cindy S.

Irvine

7:00PM, Saturday
HYBRID
Turtle Rock Speaker Meeting
 1 Sunnyhill
 Meeting ID: 269 016 646, Password: wildbunch
 Contact: Joseph C.

Laguna Beach

8:00PM, Saturday
HYBRID
Living Sober Speaker Meeting
 428 Park Ave. (St. Mary's Episcopal Church)
 (in the back building, Guild Hall)
 Meeting ID: 129 629 389 (no password)
 Contact: Neil K.

8:00PM, Saturday
HYBRID
CC Sat Nite
 20456 Laguna Cyn. Rd. (The Canyon Club)
 Meeting ID: 269 016 646, Password: canyon
 Contact: Tim A.

Laguna Hills

7:30PM, Sunday
HYBRID
Legacies Group Speaker Meeting
 23721 Moulton Pkwy. (Florence Sylvester Senior Cn.)
 Meeting ID: 446 899 371, Password: Legacies
 Contact: Thelegaciesgroup@gmail.com

Laguna Niguel

7:00PM, Sunday
HYBRID
Laguna Niguel Speaker Meeting
 24360 Yosemite Road (@La Paz Rd.)
 Meeting ID: 451 797 737, Password: NewYMCA
 Contact: Bill W. &
 Jesse C.

Lake Forest

7:30PM, Friday
IN-PERSON
Saddleback Valley Fellowship Friday Night Speaker Meeting
 23401 El Toro Rd. (@ Muirlands Blvd.), Ste. 101
 Contact: Vijay

Orange

8:00PM, Saturday
HYBRID
Saturday Night Visiting Speakers
 395 S. Tustin St. (Community of Christ Church)
 Meeting ID: 620 819 804, Password: aa
 Contact: Matt D.

05/04 Daniel WG
 05/11 Julie
 05/18 John S.
 05/27 KD

Orange

7:00PM, Sunday
IN-PERSON
Sunday Night Speaker Meeting of Orange
 250 S. Prospect St. (Revive Covenant Church)
 Contact: Manny A.,
 Speaker host: Eddie P.

05/05 Joey W., Tustin
 05/12 Kelly C., Claremont
 05/19 Justin A., Anaheim
 05/26 Jennifer J., Costa Mesa

Rancho Santa Margarita

7:30PM, last Friday of the month
IN-PERSON
Roads End Participation
 Via Con Dios at Santa Margarita Pkwy.
 Speaker last Friday of the month

San Clemente

6:00PM, Monday
IN-PERSON
Men's Stag Speaker and Discussion Meeting
 929 Calle Negocio (San Clemente Friendship Center)
 Contact: Tom P.

7:30PM, Friday
IN-PERSON
Friday Night Open Speaker Meeting
 202 Aragon (St. Clement's By the Sea Church)
 Contact: Tom P.

Tustin

7:00PM, Sunday
IN-PERSON
Sober & Crazy Speaker Meeting
 12881 Newport Ave. (Grace Harbor church)
 Contact: Megan H.

Villa Park

9:02AM, Sunday
IN-PERSON
9:02 Speaker/Participation Meeting
 17855 Santiago Blvd.
 Contact: Annette H. or
 E.C.

WHEN YOUR MEETING HAS A CHANGE OF OFFICERS

- Please contact Central Office.
- A contact name and phone number are needed with every meeting.
- The name and number are for internal use only and will not be shared or published.

- 1) Go to www.oc-aa.org
- 2) Under Meeting Directory, find your meeting
- 3) At the bottom of your meeting listing, click on UPDATE MEETING INFO
- 4) Add name and number in space above the link containing your meeting info

The update gets delivered to manager@oc-aa.org or call Skip at 714-556-4555.



A Spiritual Disease Cannot Be Treated with a Chemical Substance

Continued from page 1

at the top of my lungs, and she had to call security to hold me down until a pill calmed me down, for a brief period of time.

It was seven years before I would do another inventory. This was activated by the misery I felt from not being in emotional sobriety though I had not picked up a drink of alcohol. Since that day, I have learned to do fearless and thorough Fourth Step inventory maintenance at least once a year. The Tenth Step is not sufficient for me to be fearless and thorough. I need to get out paper and pen to be rigorously honest with myself. And in that rigorous honesty, I've been given the courage to look at names on my list, which I used to feel guilty about having on my list—names of my children, grandchildren, and great grands are on that list, from time to time. There are also the names of others whom I love, my sponsors, and the people about me. I've learned from doing ongoing Fourth Step inventories just how much I could (but don't) still be pushing resentments down inside of me. And when I did (or do, unknowingly), I wind up with mental and/or physical maladies created by the unhealthy, miserable toxins of resentment.



Step Five has been an ever-present Step that guides me to happiness. I used to think that happiness for me was held in another person, place, or thing's hands. I was always hurt and disappointed to discover that this thought was only an illusion. When I began my recovery from a hopeless state of mind and being in AA, I learned that I held the key to my happiness and to my well-being. It took many years for God to remove the scales from my spiritual eyes and begin to reveal the hidden things in my heart.

In those many years, God began to create in me the courage to cease flailing from guilt and shame that I did not know I was drowning in. He enabled me to stand still and begin to deal with the truth that would set me free, in His lifetime of painful reconstruction, to admit that I had been selfish, dishonest, and driven by hundreds of forms of paralyzing fear.

In order to mask the fear(s), I blamed everyone else for the misery that I was held captive in what felt like an iron vault from whence I would never be able to escape. It has not been an overnight matter to bring me into a balanced life of admitting my own wrongs. I still walk through times when thoughts to admit the wrongs of others creep in. The practice of casting down those thoughts has made a huge difference in my attitude to admit my wrongs and to pray for those whom I want to admit

For this alcoholic, the ongoing process of Steps Four and Five is a perpetual design for me to continue to spiritually develop into what I believe is the best healing grace of what I've come to identify as LOVE.

the wrongs of. In those times, The Holy Spirit redirects my thoughts and gives me the desire to continue to practice admitting my own wrongs.

I believe this desire has birthed in my spirit because of asking God every day to direct my thinking (Eleventh Step Prayer, *Big Book*, pp. 86-88). Admitting my own wrongs gives me insights on what I need to do to improve the relationships that I have fractured by my wrong doings, especially with my family members. I love the recovery dance that's a part of my life now, due to an ongoing Fifth Step. I love the emergence from isolation, of the guilt and the shame that held me captive. I have come to be in peace, no matter what's going on, in or around me, due to the sense of relief that Step Five continues to bring me. It is always such a great preparation for the other seven Steps to follow.

I've come to believe through many experiences of Step Five that it activates that one sentence on page 64 in the *Big Book*: "When the spiritual malady is overcome, we straighten out mentally and physically." It is one miracle of healing, after another, when I admit to God, to myself, and to another human being the exact nature of my wrongs. And for this alcoholic, it is only God who can reveal that exact nature in His time and in His gentle correction as He prepares me to become aware of, accept, and admit what the wrong is.

I love that we are each as honest as God's grace allows us to be in every moment of every day. We are each one on our own spiritual path with the God of our own reality and understanding of God. Our Fourth Step Inventory very clearly states that we "made a fearless and thorough moral inventory of OURSELVES," not of others. I came into sobriety convinced that I had no defects and no resentments. I was a blazing, blaming little child in an adult's body. At almost forty-four years of sobriety, my inventories clearly show me that I resent everyone and everything several times per day. There is a vast difference in recognizing the resentment very quickly now (in the blink of an eye) and working through the Steps to give it to God instead of unknowingly creating maladies in my mind and body. Some may call it "denial," I have come to see it as "lack of knowledge."

It takes searching, studying, work, and practice in a lifetime of reconstruction for us to persevere in creating our own mental and physical health. It must continue for a lifetime, one day at a time, in the transformation God has begun. For this alcoholic, the ongoing process of Steps Four and Five is a perpetual design for me to continue to spiritually develop into what I believe is the best healing grace of what I've come to identify as LOVE. And God's perfect LOVE casts out a bit more of unknown fear in Fourth Step inventories. The fear(s) living in me, unknowingly for many years, ate away at the core of my mental and physical well-being. They were fears that a drink of alcohol was a Band-Aid for a much deeper wound than these Band-Aids would even begin to cover.

Effie R.



Mark Your Calendar

» UPCOMING EVENTS

May 16-19

Tri-State 39th Annual Round-Up
 Don Laughlin's Riverside Resort Hotel
 and Casino
 1650 S. Casino Dr.
 Laughlin, NV
www.tristate-roundup.com

May 17-19, 2024

Woodstock West
 Journey through the Twelve Steps of AA
 Four Points by Sheraton, LAX
 9750 Airport Blvd.
 Los Angeles, CA
 310-645-4600
www.woodstockwest.biz

May 31-June 2

**38th Annual Sunshine of the Spirit
 Convention 2024**
 Courtyard Marriot
 9619 Mariposa Rd.
 Hesperia, CA
www.sunshineofthespirit-highdesertconvention.com

June 6-9

AA Desert Roundup
 Renaissance Esmerelda Resort & Spa
 44-400 Indian Wells Lane
 Indian Wells, CA
www.desertroundup.com

September 20-22

Woman to Woman San Diego
 The Dana on Mission Bay
 1710 W. Mission Bay Dr.
 San Diego, CA
www.womantowomansandiego.com

Check the www.oc-aa.org events section for updated Intergroup committee meetings

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS
 ORANGE COUNTY INTERGROUP ASSOCIATION
 STATEMENT OF INCOME & EXPENSE
 PERIOD ENDING 03/31/2024 UNAUDITED

	Mar 24	Jan - Mar 24
Ordinary Income/Expense		
Income		
Literature Resale	2,074.23	8,012.15
Birthday Donations	475.00	662.65
Group Donations	15,452.66	52,103.50
Individual/Fellowship	1,533.60	3,473.62
Interest Earned	4.64	13.62
Literature Sales	7,758.43	35,532.19
Shipping and Delivery Income	0.00	-7.50
Total Income	27,298.56	99,790.23
Cost of Goods Sold		
Cost of Literature Sold		
Cost of Goods Sold	8,087.41	36,068.10
Cost of Literature Sold - Other	0.00	0.00
Total Cost of Literature Sold	8,087.41	36,068.10
Shipping / Misc. Adjustments	0.00	-338.95
Total COGS	8,087.41	35,729.15
Gross Profit	19,211.15	64,061.08
Expense		
Accounting	0.00	3,910.00
Auto Expense (all Mgrs.)	89.47	241.16
Convention & Svs Event Expense	0.00	55.00
Copier Expense	0.00	293.59
Credit Card Expense	190.32	748.02
Freight and Shipping Costs	0.00	7.50
Insurances	0.00	724.50
Intergroup Expense	206.24	2,312.24
Internet Expense	177.22	531.93
Lease Expense	284.05	852.15
"LIFELINE" Expense	1,625.00	4,875.00
Maintenance & Repairs	160.00	480.00
Offices' Supplies & Expenses	407.97	1,511.35
Payroll Tax Expense	743.74	3,138.26
Postage	0.00	136.00
Public Info Expense	160.08	160.08
Reconciliation Discrepancies	-0.01	-0.02
Reimb. Health	500.00	1,500.00
Rent Main/Satellite Offices	7,179.08	12,443.08
Salaries	10,255.36	30,249.17
Special Events Expense	1,127.46	1,127.46
Taxes & Licenses	20.00	20.00
Telephone Expense	385.27	1,157.16
Utilities	71.57	195.77
Volunteers Coffee & Water	32.50	99.50
Website Expense	358.99	1,083.96
Total Expense	23,974.31	67,852.86
Net Ordinary Income	-4,763.16	-3,791.78
Other Income/Expense		
Other Income		
Purchase Discounts	0.00	717.82
Total Other Income	0.00	717.82
Net Other Income	0.00	717.82
Net Income	-4,763.16	-3,073.96



May Word Search

Name _____

Email address _____
or phone number _____

Q N H N E M E C Q N V Y R D A F Y O N E
 J D C L W E P I W K D G E I P N E F J X
 J Q W D P G K W K J G N C O Y D J N Q I
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 W P B L C C M P Y I S B J T Y Q R S I K
 V S B H O S A Y A M L Q G D E H A S L E
 L P O N Z T K L A B C I X H O D E A E E
 A Q L H F D E F E B K J T V G H F G N D
 F V V R X L R A U S B M I Y U K J E O D
 U K Y Z J Q J L I O C H Y W F W L Y L Y

HUMILITY
 FEARLESSNESS
 HONESTY
 RECOVERY

ADMITTED
 ADMISSION
 FORGIVENESS
 DISCUSSION

MESSAGE
 SHOEMAKER
 LONELINESS
 PARADOX

WIN A FREE BOOK OF YOUR CHOICE!

Complete the word search (these words from the *Big Book* or *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* can be forwards, backwards, up, down, or diagonal), and make sure to include your name and phone number or email address. Take a picture of a word search you completed on paper, or take a screen shot of a word search you accessed electronically and used the markup or highlighter feature on your phone or computer, and email it to: lifelinecommittee@oc-aa.org, or mail the completed puzzle to Central Office at 1526 Brookhollow Dr. Suite 75, Santa Ana, CA, 92705. If your answers are correct, your name will be entered into a drawing for a chance to win a free book of your choice from Central Office.

DEADLINE IS JUNE 15th

Congratulations to March's winner, Julie B.!