
LIFELINE



Salt Lake City
Central Office
Newsletter

August 2007

A.A. TERMS

I am no expert, but here is my understanding of several A.A. terms that seem to be a bit blurred in several places I have visited in the fellowship.

“Open” means that everyone on planet Earth is invited to attend the meeting but only alcoholics share.

“Closed” means only alcoholics may attend.

“Speaker” means that one person will tell his/her story or speak about some aspect of alcoholism and/or our recovery program and only A.A. Conference-approved literature will be quoted and/or read.

“Discussion” means that the alcoholics in the room will discuss some aspect of alcoholism and/or our recovery program and only A.A. conference literature will be quoted and/or read.

Therefore “Open Discussion” does not mean that everyone on the planet is free to speak and any topic at all may be discussed. I believe that this is what distinguishes an A.A. meeting from group therapy without a therapist.

I was in an A.A. meeting once when the chair called for a topic from the floor. No one responded for several minutes and then a member of O.A. who was visiting spoke up and said she was jonesing badly for some fudge and asked us to talk about fudge as a topic. If “Open Discussion” means anyone can talk about any subject, this is an appropriate topic for an A.A. meeting. If jonesing for fudge is not an appropriate topic, where do we draw the line?

I believe we must stick strictly to A.A. conference approved literature in A.A. meetings. If we don’t draw the line there, I can see nowhere else to draw it. If you can read from a “meditation book” that is not from A.A., can someone else read from “*Mien Kampf*”?

I am not questioning anyone’s motives. I think many of us have great motives. This is not about motive. It is about principle, and principle always trumps motive. My mentor, Cliff from California, says, “the Traditions are a set of principles which are designed to protect A.A. from our very best motives.”

Tradition Five tells us that “Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry it’s message to the alcoholic who still suffers..” Tradition One states, “Our common welfare should come first, personal recovery depends on A.A. unity.” Our General Service Conference had agreed that the message we carry to the still suffering alcoholic is the message of A.A.’s literature. To preserve unity and singleness of purpose, all A.A. groups agree to carry the same message. So, even though Tradition Four says that each group is autonomous, it adds that this applies *except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole*.

What could affect A.A. as a whole more than our failure to carry A.A.’s clear message by not confining our discussions to problems relating to alcohol and solutions taken from Conference approved literature?

The *Big Book* tells us to check our *motives* in only two places—when we are going to bed with someone or when we are going where they serve booze. Everywhere else it tells us to check our *principles*.

My Home Group holds two open discussion meetings per week. We solved the subject problem by coming up with Chairperson guidelines. Our group conscience has instructed our Chairperson to start and stop on time and set a topic in three minutes or less by reading a paragraph or less from conference approved literature and commenting on it. Consequently we talk about recovery at every meeting.

My sponsor told me early on that I was to take my problems to my sponsor and my solutions to our meetings.

I’m sure this article will kick the top off the anthill as far as comments are concerned. Please consult your delegate or former delegate or an old-timer before you disagree.

(Scott L. is a member of the Back Room Group in Nashville.)

**CENTRAL OFFICE
STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Central Office is to provide the basic services listed, to include, but not limited to:

- To carry the A.A. message and help those individuals who suffer from alcoholism;
- to maintain a 24-hour Twelve-Step phone service;
- to answer phone inquiries as needed;
- to compile, update and print meeting lists;
- to maintain A.A.-approved literature for sale to members and the public;
- and to print and distribute a newsletter.

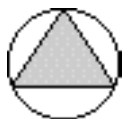
Specifically excluded shall be the operation of any club, clubhouse or drying-out place, and acts in violation of the Twelve Traditions of A.A.

**Suiting up and Showing Up
Groups Represented At the
Central Office Reps Meeting for:**

July 2007

CAMETO BELIEVE
VISION FOR YOU
10th STEP GROUP
MURRAY GROUP
SPIRITUAL QUEST
SIMPLY BIG
OFF THE CUFF
COME AS YOU ARE
SUGARHOUSE MEN'S
HAPPY DESTINY
TOO EASY BEGINNERS
GARDEN VARIETY
CITY AT SEVEN
PARK CITY STEP STUDY
BOGIRISH
VALLEY VIEW
HONEY'S BREAKFAST
BY THE BOOK
LIVING IN SOBRIETY

SIMPLY BIG
YOUNG AND ALIVE
GRAPEVINE
HILLCREST GROUP
WESTMINSTER
5:15 HAPPY HOUR
FIRESIDE GROUP
NON SENSE
BREAKFAST CLUB
NOMADIC LUNCH
DNS
APPLYING THE PRINCIPLES
AS BILL SEES IT
CLOSED MEETING
NON-SMOKING SOBRIETY
BOUNTIFUL HAPPY GROUP
BOUNTIFUL COMMUNITY
AFTERNOONERS



"Let us never be a closed corporation; let us never deny our experience, for whatever it may be worth, to the world around us. Let our individual members heed the call to every field of human endeavor. Let them carry the experience and spirit of A.A. into all these affairs, for whatever good they may accomplish. For not only has God saved us from alcoholism; the world has received us back into its citizenship."

A.A. Comes of Age, pp. 232-233

LIFELINE

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF

CENTRAL OFFICE OF SALT LAKE CITY, INC.

We welcome your correspondence and will publish your material, space permitting, if it meets editorial criteria. *Share your experience, strength and hope with another alcoholic.* For a free subscription or to submit articles, suggestions or contributions, contact Central Office of Salt Lake City:

CENTRAL OFFICE OF SALT LAKE CITY, INC.

80 West Louise Avenue

Salt Lake City, Utah 84115

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To reduce our costs, Central Office would like to update our mailing list for the **LIFELINE**. If you have moved please contact C.O. at 484-7871

Thank you.

Please visit our website for meeting information.

www.saltlakeaa.org

Is Your Group Represented?

The next C.O. Reps Meeting is the second Tuesday of the month at 7:00 P.M. at Central Office,
80 West Louise Ave. (2680 West)

Upcoming Events

August 10th — 12th; **Campvention**, North Ogden, UT.
Questions; Walt B. @ 801.603.9124 or Kevin L. @ 901.391.2288
August 26th; **Central Office Picnic**, Murray Park, Pavilion 5 Murray, UT
August 30th — September 2nd; **The Great Outdoors Beaver Meeting**, Beaver, UT.

email: jojopelli@gmail.com

Sept. 7th — 9th; **Women's Big Book Retreat**, Camp Rodgers.

Call Patti L @ 801.541.9901

September 14th — 16th; **CC + H₂O, 15th Annual Men's Retreat**, Lava Hot Springs, ID.

Info.; James B., 801.301.1058, or; joheeb@gmail.com

Sept. 21st — 23rd; **Area 69 Fall Assembly**, Park City, UT.

Info: 800.548.8824 or www.bwlandmarkinn.com

A Service Announcement

It's summertime and everyone wants to play. AA Central Office still needs help with the phones. Remember service work helps with your recovery.

Interested? Call Camille @ 916.0831

Never talk down to an alcoholic from any moral or spiritual hilltop; simply lay out the kit of spiritual tools for his inspection. Show him how they worked with you. Offer him friendship and fellowship.

Alcoholics Anonymous, page 95

SCHEDULE INFORMATION

CORRECTIONS AND CHANGES TO THE JULY, AUGUST, SEPTEMBER SCHEDULE

NEW MEETINGS:

Living Sober Study Group will meet in the home at 40 North 200 West in Tooele, UT at 7:00 pm on Friday.

A closed, non-smoking women's meeting, the **Butterfly Group**, which met at 85 West Sunset Ave. - 7:30 pm on Tuesdays has been cancelled. **Women & Mothers** meets at the VOA Women's Detox (687 West 4170 South) at 7:00 pm on Wednesday.

LOCATION AND TIME CHANGES:

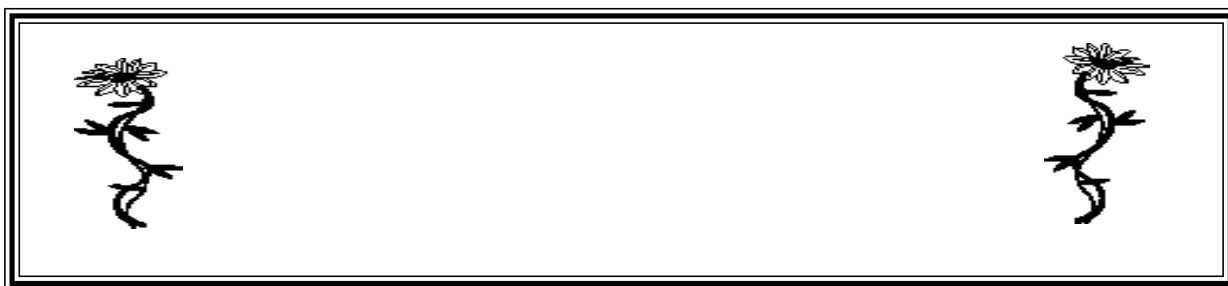
The **Up Group** has moved to 4700 South 900 East. They meet in Anna's Cafe at 12pm. The **River to Recovery** group that met at St. Mary's on Tuesdays at 7:00pm is now meeting at 745 East 300 South. Once again the **Women & Mothers** group meets on Wednesday at 7:00 pm at 687 W. 4170 So.(V.O.A. WOMEN'S DETOX CENTER).

The **Garden Variety** group that meets on Sundays at Anna's Cafe (4700 South 900 East) will start at 9:30 am instead of 10:00 am.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR BIRTHDAYS!



Improve the quality of your sobriety and get out of yourself! Central Office needs volunteers for service work. We need people for 12-Step calls, stuffing envelopes, answering the telephone, et cetera. If you are interested contact Central Office at 484-7871.



HOW TO CRY

I always thought that crying and laughing were opposites. They are not. They are siblings. Both are involuntary emotional releases. Since I started to become real, rather than an act, my laughter comes from a different place, deeper in my spirit. My tears come from that same place. It was necessary for me to learn to feel my feelings for me to be able to touch that place. It is a gentle place of feeling.

Crying and laughing are also similar physically. When I laugh my stomach muscles flex and relax my face flushes red and my breathing takes on an irregular pattern. When I cry all of these occur, too.

I learned as a child to stop the flow of tears by hearing my father scream, “**If you don’t stop that crying, I’ll give you something to cry about!**” I learned to stop the tears by flexing the muscles that surround my tear ducts. I did it so often that I forgot how to relax them. I didn’t really need to learn to cry. I needed to remember how to cry.

I had also learned not to focus my mind on anything that would evoke my emotions to a point that I might begin to cry. I needed to re-learn/remember how to stay in a mental place of feeling.

Anything worth doing is worth doing poorly as I learn to do it. One of the most important things I learned was not to expect instant success. I learned not to beat myself up for being unable to cry. I believe that chastising myself for my inability to let the tears flow would have made me less able to feel. It would have strengthened my need not to feel and slowed the process considerably.

This process takes time. It took me over a year before I was able to cry the first tear. It was worth the time and effort and wait. You have probably been blocked for a number of years, decades in many cases. It will take time to change. Please commit the time and be patient with yourself.

I would suggest that you begin each session with a prayer. Just tell God what you are trying to do and ask for His help. Then sit quietly for a few minutes in His Presence.

There are several tools that gave me considerable assistance in my quest for tears. The Reader’s Digest and Chicken Soup for the Soul contain lots of heart-warming stories in every copy. I suggest that you get a copy and select a quiet spot, maybe under a tree in your back yard or by a gently flowing river or in a room in your home where you won’t be interrupted. Begin to read.

When you feel the emotions starting to flow and the need to cry emerges, stop reading and focus on whatever you just read. Do not focus on trying to cry, as this will stop the emotional feelings. Think of the beautiful passage you just read and try to relax the muscles in your face and begin to flex and relax your stomach muscles. Think of the passage as long as you can and continue to try to slacken your facial muscles and flex and relax your stomach muscles. Do this until you feel the emotional peak has passed or until your tears begin to flow.

Once the emotional peak has passed, whether you cried or not, reread the passage and if you are able to touch the feelings again, repeat the process. If your urge to cry does not reappear, continue reading until you are touched again.

I suggest you plan about three sessions per week of about 30 minutes each.

Another good tool is movies. Go to “chick flicks”. There are some really touching ones. Use the same physical exercises mentioned above as you feel the need to cry in the theater.

Certain books are also great tear starters. All of the Chicken Soup for the Soul books are excellent tear starters and one of my favorite novels is The Education of Little Tree. Use the same technique we discussed above.

Audio-tapes are another good source of emotional food. The Education of Little Tree is available on tape as are a number of other books and seminars. I also suggest anything by Leo Buscaglia.

My own first breakthrough was via audio-tape. I was traveling a lot during the time I was trying to learn to cry. I would listen to tapes and when something would touch me I would try to cry.

For months I couldn’t even get close. Eventually I would feel like I was about to start to cry so I would pull over to the side of the road. As soon as I put on my blinker and started to slow down the feeling would pass. This happened many times before I was able one afternoon to get the car stopped and sit still and cry. What an exhilarating experience!

It was wonderful to be able to finally get a few tears out but it was not like the dam had burst. I still had to continue to make effort and do the things we’ve talked about for many months to improve on my ability to let the tears flow.

Today I can cry whenever I need to but my learning is incomplete. I am now in the process of learning to talk while I cry. I have some success to report but this part of process is not finished.

My ability to stop tears did not go away. I can stop them anytime. If I’m in an inappropriate place for crying, I delay the tears until a better time.

Once your ability to cry is relearned you may find yourself crying at times and not knowing why. Don’t worry about it. Your mind doesn’t have to know why you are feeling. Besides, you are probably a few decades behind on your crying. You are just catching up!

(from page five)

When I've had a good cry I feel like my soul has had a warm shower and dried off in the sunlight of the spirit. I hope this process blesses you as it has me!

Submitted with permission from Scott L., Back Room Gp., Nashville, TN.

Beer Troubleshooting

Symptom: Feet cold and wet. *Fault:* Glass being held at incorrect angle.

Action: Rotate glass so that the opening points toward the ceiling.

Symptom: Feet warm and wet. *Fault:* Improper bladder control.

Action: Stand next to nearest dog and complain about house training.

Symptom: Beer unusually pale and tasteless. *Fault:* Glass empty.

Action: Get someone to buy you another beer.

Symptom: Opposite wall covered with fluorescent lights. *Fault:* You have fallen over backwards.

Action: Have yourself tied to the bar.

Symptom: Mouth contains cigarette butts. *Fault:* You have fallen forward

Action: See above.

Symptom: Beer tasteless, front of your shirt is wet. *Fault:* Mouth not open or glass applied to wrong part of face.

Action: Retire to the restroom and practice in mirror.

Symptom: Floor blurred. *Fault:* You are looking through the bottom of an empty glass.

Action: Get someone to buy you another beer.

Symptom: Floor moving. *Fault:* You are being carried out.

Action: Find out if you are being taken to another bar.

Symptom: Room seems unusually dark. *Fault:* Bar has closed.

Action: Confirm home address with bartender.

Symptom: Taxi suddenly takes on a colorful aspect and textures. *Fault:* Beer consumption has exceeded personal limitations.

Action: Cover mouth

Symptom: Everyone looks up at you and smiles. *Fault:* You are dancing on the table.

Action: Fall on someone cushy looking.

Symptom: Beer is crystal clear. *Fault:* It's water, someone is trying to sober you up.

Action: Punch him/her.

Symptom: Hand hurts, nose hurts, mind unusually clear. *Fault:* You've been in a fight.

Action: Apologize to everyone you see, just in case it was them.

Symptom: Don't recognize anyone or the room your in. *Fault:* You have wandered into the wrong party.

Action: Ask them if they have free beer.

August 2007						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29	30	31	1 5:30-10:30p OPEN	2 5:30-11:55p Michael S	3 6-11p Grb Kms	4 2-6p John I 6-11:55p OPEN
5 9-12p Brian S. 12-6p An AA Grp 7-9p 974 Grp 9-11:55p OPEN	6 5:30-10:30p NKS 11-11:55p Jeff R	7 12-9:30a Jeff R 5:30-10p 10th Step 10-11:55p open	8 5:30-10:30p OPEN	9 6:30-11p Hillcrest	10 8:30-11p Rsr Yng Ppl	11 3-7p Its in the Book 7-11:55p OPEN
12 9-12p Brian S. 12-6p An AA Grp 6-11:55p Melissa B	13 5:30-10:30p NKS 11-11:55p Jeff R	14 12-9:30a Jeff R 6:30-10p 10th Step 10-11:55p open	15 5:30-10:30p OPEN	16 5:30-11:55p John S	17 8:30-11p NoSmk Sbty Hr	18 2-7p OPEN 7-11:55p Mgrs Frdly Bnch
19 9-12p Brian S. 12-6p An AA Grp 6-11:55p OPEN	20 5:30-10:30p NKS 11-11:55p Jeff R	21 12-9:30a Jeff R 5:30-10p 10th Step 10-11:55p open	22 5:30-10:30p OPEN	23 5:30-11:55p Dave S	24 12-8:30a Dave S 6-10p Honey's	25 2-7p OPEN 7-11:55p Gpvrine
26 9-12p Brian S. 12-6p An AA Grp 6-11:55p OPEN	27 5:30-10:30p NKS 11-11:55p Jeff R	28 12-9:30a Jeff R 5:30-10p 10th Step 10-11:55p open	29 5:30-10:30p OPEN	30 5:30-11:55p Dave S	31 12-8:30a Dave S 6:30-11p 5:15 Hpy Hr	1 2-7p OPEN 7-11:55p Gpvrine
2	3	4	5	6	7	8

