

Step 5 and Relapse

Lately, I have seen friends, one by one, relapse. Why? What makes the difference for a sober alcoholic who stays sober versus one who relapses?

It is the program of A.A. that can help you not just stop drinking, but recover from the character faults that led you to disaster in the first place. Not picking up a drink, one day at a time, is the all-important first step in a successful recovery; it is a continuing choice that we must make every day. But, in and of its self, it is not enough to change our lives for the better.

To achieve the best results from the miracle program of Alcoholics Anonymous, all the Steps must be followed with as much determination and courage as we could muster. A drunken jerk who stops drinking but doesn't work the Steps is now a sober jerk, not a successfully recovering alcoholic who remains "willing to grow along spiritual lines." Alcoholics Anonymous is about change, but not just surface or behavioral changes. The program is about changing from inside, developing, through honest self-examination and rigorous effort, into a wiser, kinder, more honest, more complete person.

Step 5 requires tremendous courage. For many of us it's the first time we have taken a close look of what we have done; who we have wronged in our years of active disease. It requires strength to stare into your reflection and find yourself disgusted by what we have become, but don't flinch at this task: with honesty and hard work, you can recover.

When we were drinking or using, it seemed natural to blame our problems on outside problems: "The world is against us; the boss isn't fair; if people didn't upset me then I wouldn't behave this way." Step 6 is the process by which we recognize that the faults are within us. For the first time, there is light at the end of the tunnel. If the flaws are within us, then we can change them. Step 6 is about the hope that the Higher Power in our lives can help us change. It is only through such change that we can achieve lasting sobriety.

If you have done a complete job of Steps 5 and 6, be proud of yourself. If you still have work to do, roll up your sleeves and get to it, swallow the very human fear of change and prepare to step into a future where you are the person of your dreams.

— anonymous —

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
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.

CENTRAL OFFICE OF SALT LAKE CITY, INC.

80 West Louise Avenue
Salt Lake City, Utah 84115

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Please visit our website for meeting information.

www.saltlakeaa.org

Suiting up and Showing Up

**Groups Represented At the
Central Office Reps Meeting for:**

April 2008

VISIONFOR YOU	SPIRITUAL QUEST
BOUNTIFULCOMMUNITY	120°CLOCKHIGH
AN A.A. GROUP	BRING YOUR OWN BOOK
NONONSENSE	BIGUGLIES
AS BILL SEES IT	OLD FASHION A.A.
EARLY FRIENDSHIP	FOOTHILL
10TH STEP GROUP	CITY AT SEVEN
SATURDAY SPEAKER	SOBER SISTERS
HAPPY GROUP	SUNDAY BRUNCH
MIDVALE LUNCH	DRAPER FIRESIDE
974 GROUP	FLYIN' HIGH
A CLOSED GROUP	CAME TO BELIEVE
HONEY'S	HAPPY DESTINY
NOT A GLUM LOT	BOUNTIFUL MEN'S
MAGNA FRIENDLY	BY THE BOOK
5:15 HAPPY HOUR	CREATIVESUFFERING
SHARING AND CARING	HOLLIDAY
YOUNG AND ALIVE	BEN B. TREASURER
10 TH STEP GROUP	JOHN B. BOARD
YOUNG PEOPLES	WACY PAA.
WOMEN'S STEPPING UP	RON K. DA BOSS

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. (2860 South)

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.

“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

Upcoming Events

and **SCHEDULE CHANGES**

May 9th — 11th; **Spring Cleaning**, The Lodge at the Mountain Village, Park City, UT.
register on-line @ www.anaagroup.org

May 16th —18th; **Post-conference Assembly**, Ogden, UT.
484-7871 for info.

also, May 16th —18th, **24th Annual Tristate Round-Up**, Laughlin, NV.
for additional info, www.tristate-roundup.com

May 23rd — 25th; **22nd Annual Gathering of Eagles**, Dallas, TX
www.dallasgatheringofeagles.org

May 23 — 26: **Price Campout**, Pacific Corp — Huntington Campground in Huntington Canyon, Price, UT.
Call Jerry P.: (435) 637-0741
glppappas@yahoo.com
or Brent (435) 613-0547

May 30th — June 1st; **Flagstaff 2008 Roundup**, Fort Tuthill Campground, Flagstaff, AZ.
www.flagstaffroundup.com.

June 6th — 9th; **Fellowship of the Spirit**, Snowbird, UT.
Who you gonna call?
484-7871 for info.

July 11th — 13 th; **26th Annual Great Outdoors Campout**, Defa's Ranch, UT.
Info; Laura Lee Hulsey @ 801-388-7078

August 29th—31st: **2008 Pacific Regional Forum**, Doubletree Hotel, Spokane, WA.
Info: General Service Office @ 212-870-3400,
www.aa.org , or,
mikemc2@comcast.net.



The **Backstreet Club** has an Old Timer's meeting every Saturday at 7 pm. On the first Saturday of the month . The club is located a 576 South 2600 West, Bountiful, Utah.

The **Nomadic Lunch Bunch** wants to announce the agenda for their meetings. On Mondays, they have a Big Book Study. Tuesday's meeting covers the Steps and Traditions. Wednesday is the birthday meeting and Thursday and Friday are recovery meetings. At 12:15, 2265 South State. (Use the north-east door of the bowling alley)

Point of Note

Once again it's time for the **Price Campout** at Pacific Corp — Huntington Campground in Huntington Canyon plant campground starting This is an annual fund-raising event for the Price Alano Club. Camping and BBQ are \$20. per unit. The BBQ is \$10 per person. All 12th Step groups and there families are welcome. So are their potluck dishes.

—> Everyone wants to play. AA Central Office still needs help with the phones. Remember service work helps with your recovery. Interested? Call Camille D. @ 916.0831

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.

Re: Things We Cannot Change.

Obviously, neither the newsletter editors nor the staff of Central Office know all the members of the local fellowship. If you have knowledge of the death of one of our members, please notify us at Central Office during business hours, or mail us the obituary from the local newspaper. You can also E-mail us at; staff@saltlakeaa.org. If you need additional contact information for Central Office, it's located at the bottom of this page.

Step 5: Remove Our Shame

I had been sober in A.A. for two years when I went to a meeting and admitted I felt ashamed of being an alcoholic. The feedback I got was very extensive and helpful, and something one fellow said to me really clicked. "It seems to me as if you're ready for step 5," he said.

I was between sponsors at the time, so I asked a woman who attended one of my regular meetings if she would hear my Fifth step. Using all I had learned about Step 4 in the meetings, I set about writing my inventory.

Searching and fearless it was, as I proceeded to write pages that unearthed memories I'd long buried. And along with my past history, I realized I wanted to be rid of a resentment against someone I had been carrying since getting sober. I had tried to pray for the person and to let go of the resentment, but every day my anger toward this person still simmered. I knew I was finally ready to be rid of the resentment when I admitted it was hindering my progress toward my sobriety and peace.

When I finished my Step four writing, a friend suggested that I not let too much time go by between writing my inventory and sharing it.

So one cold February day in 1990, I sat at her table and read my inventory.

Before I started, however, she offered some important guidance: "Remember that our Higher Power is also here listening." and "You can trust that nothing you say will leave this room."

The second statement was especially helpful because if anything was an exercise in trust for me, it was this experience.

As I read my inventory, I was sure she'd be shocked or judgemental. What a relief to encounter understanding and acceptance. I felt my shame melt away.

When I finished, she said, "The things you've talked about today are over and no longer a part of you. If you do another Step four and five, it won't be on what you've addressed now, for that's gone."

I left her home that day feeling relieved of a huge burden and also cleansed.

Several days later, I realized I hadn't once thought of the person I'd resented so much. This was a miracle.

Through Step five, God had removed my shame about being an alcoholic as well as the resentment I'd harbored for so long.

And that freedom still exists, years later.

Teresa P. Syracuse, New York

‘In A Bamboo House on Stilts’

All my adult life, owing to my line of work, I’ve had to travel to some pretty isolated spots in the world. About nineteen years ago, my Higher Power caught up with me, and unexpectedly I found myself in the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous. When I’d reached the ripe old age of six months in the program, I was asked to go on assignment to the “Green Hell,” the Amazon jungles of Bolivia. Unsure of myself, and feeling sort of wobbly about my fledgling sobriety, I asked my sponsor, Jim, for advice. “What should I do?” He assured me that if I was doing the will of my Higher Power, and if, through prayer and meditation, I were to stay in contact with God and with my sponsor, God wouldn’t let me get into a situation where I couldn’t remain sober. He would always be there to lend me a hand and to give me strength when I felt I was growing weak. Jim pointed out that the name of the game was “trust.” “Are you ready to turn your will and your life over to the Higher Power?” he asked. His final words of advice were, “Remember, Dan, easy does it.” But as I made arrangements to head for South America, I thought, “What if Jim is wrong?”

To my surprise and delight, Jim had told me the truth! Three months later I returned from the jungle sunburned and mosquito-bitten with my sobriety still intact if not strengthened.

And now, nearly two decades of sobriety later, I am still “on the road.” Not too many months ago, I spent nine weeks on assignment in Southeast Asia, and was badly in need of an AA meeting. I’d attended a large meeting in a church hall in hot and sultry Bangkok, Thailand, and had been to another smaller one on a sunny front porch in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. But two meetings in two months was not enough. Since leaving Cambodia, I’d traipsed around the steamy wilds of Borneo in Malaysia. Everywhere I went, I looked in vain for an AA meeting. I did a lot of praying and meditating, but I could find no meeting. I really needed to talk to someone who would understand an alcoholic who was turning a bit raggedy around the travel-worn edges.

That was on my mind as the dugout canoe in which I was riding made its way across the crocodile-infested waters to the town of Agats in Irian Jaya. If you’re not quite sure where that is, take out your atlas and find a map of New Guinea just north of Australia. Then look at the western half of the island — the part that belongs to Indonesia. That side is the province of Irian Jaya; on the southwest coast, on the Arafura Sea, where the Asmat people live, is the little settlement of Agats.

In this remote corner of the globe, it seemed an even remoter possibility that I would find an AA meeting. The canoe pulled up to shore, and I waded across the squishy mudflats, gratefully heading for dry land. It had been arranged that I would stay with some Catholic missionaries there in the village. Meeting me graciously at the shore, they demonstrated their hospitality by offering me a cold beer. I thanked them for their offer but opted for lemonade instead.

Several hours later, I found myself seated in the missionaries’ dining room, having supper with them. The conversation ebbed and flowed around me, and I gradually grew drowsy in the equatorial heat. But all of a sudden, one of my table mates, James, said “As we say, easy does it. . . .” A shock ran through me. After the meal ended, the missionaries headed off to their various chores and I followed James outside to ask, “You wouldn’t be friend of Bill’s would you?” Grinning he nodded.

That evening, in a bamboo house on stilts above the tidal waters of the Arafura Sea, James and I had a meeting, accompanied by the rhythmic drumming of the Asmat people who were celebrating a local feast. The collective wisdom of Bill and Bob, and the voices of so many uncounted members over the past sixty years wrapped around us in the tropical night. It was a lesson of trust.

Daniel J., Maryknoll, New York (1996)

*A.A. Around the World:
Adventures in Recovery*
pages 14 and 15

May 2008

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 12-7a Todd K 5:30-12a Denise G	2 12-7a Denise G 7-9:30a Andrea 6-12a Grtr Krns	3 2-6p Andrea 6-12a Darlene B
4 9-12 pm Brian S 12-6p An AA Grp 7-9p 974 Grp 9-11p Dave W	5 5:30-10:30 NNS 11-12a Jeff R	6 12-9:30a Jeff R 5:30-10p 10 th Step 10-12a OPEN	7 5:30-7p Afternooners 7-12a Todd K	8 12-7a Todd K 6:30-10p Hillcrest	9 7-9:30a Andrea 6:30-12a Basic Young Peoples	10 3-7p Its in The Book 7-12a Darlene B
11 9-12 pm Brian S 12-6p An AA Grp 6-11p Melissa B	12 5:30-10:30 NNS 11-12a Jeff R	13 12-9:30a Jeff R 5:30-10p 10 th Step 10-12a OPEN	14 5:30-7p Afternooners 7-12a Todd K	15 12-7a Todd K 5:30-12a John S	16 7-9:30a Andrea 6:30-12a Non Smoking Sbrty Hr	17 2-7p OPEN 7-12a Magna Friendly Bunch
18 9-12 pm Brian S 12-6p An AA Grp 6-8p OPEN 8-11p Dave W	19 5:30-10:30 NNS 11-12a Jeff R	20 12-9:30a Jeff R 5:30-10p 10 th Step 10-12a OPEN	21 5:30-7p Afternooners 7-12a Todd K	22 12-7a Todd K 5:30-12a Dave S	23 7-9:30a Andrea 5-10p Honey's Breakfast Bunch	24 2-6p Billy S. 6-10p Grapevine 10-12a OPEN
25 9-12 pm Brian S 12-6p An AA Grp 6-8p OPEN 8-11p Dave W	26 5:30-10:30 NNS 11-12a Jeff R	27 12-9:30a Jeff R 5:30-10p 10 th Step 10-12a OPEN	28 5:30-7p Afternooners 7-12a Todd K	29 12-7a Todd K 5:30-12a Dave S	30 7-9:30a Andrea 5-10p 5:15 Happy Hour	31 2-6p OPEN 6-12a OPEN

CENTRAL OFFICE OF SALT LAKE CITY, INC.

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