

LIFELINE

Salt Lake
City
Central
Office

NOVEMBER 2023



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ROAD TO SOBRIETY

They say that "The road to hell is paved with good intentions." I had already been to hell, a personal hell designed to either get my attention or take me out. I was fortunate. But to stay sober, it was going to take a lot more than "good intentions." The road to sobriety is paved with change. But change doesn't come quickly; it comes in steps (pun intended).

I took Step One while I was still drinking. I admitted I was powerless over alcohol and that my life had become unmanageable. But I saw no hope for me, so I continued to drink. Even so, I was willing to listen to anyone who could help me. I found myself back in AA again, by the Grace of God, a DUI and the direct order of a very caring commanding officer. Lucky for me, my commanding officer believed in second chances.

I had believed in God all my life, I just wasn't happy with Him; particularly what I believed was His harsh treatment of me. I had to come to believe in a Power greater than myself all over again. Coming to believe was a long and slow process. But coming to believe that I wasn't God was immediate, and that was a very good start. Eventually I called that power God. It was three letters, one syllable, easy to say, and when I used the word everyone in the room had a general idea what I was talking about, even my friend Ken, the atheist.

My belief in God was not necessarily the same as me having a relationship with God. Having a relationship with God requires me to get rid of those things that separate me from God. The major ones are resentments, dishonesty, guilt, impatience, intolerance, self-centeredness, pride, jealousy, envy, laziness, procrastination and greed.

Thank God, AA has some Steps for that. I discovered that nature abhors a vacuum. As my defects are removed they begin to be replaced with virtues. Serenity replaced my resentments. Honesty replaced my dishonesty. Service to others replaced my self-centeredness.

As I take the Steps, I become more acceptable to God and the people around me. I had begun the process of developing a relationship with humanity. Unfortunately, not all of humanity was as accepting of me as God was. In order for me to walk this planet, head held high, looking eye to eye with the rest of humanity, I had to fix a few things with those I had harmed. AA came through again; they had Steps for that.

Now I had to cut out a sober life of my own. I had to make myself useful. My new life could not take on the shape of the selfish life I had before. I had to be of service to God, myself, my family, my friends, my employer and my fellow alcoholics. I had to constantly check my progress; make sure I was still on the path. I had to reaffirm God's will for me and my willingness to go in that direction. I had to take the wonder of sobriety, put it into words a drunk can understand, and plant the seed. Once again, AA had Steps for that.

Recovery is the long and winding road that leads to God, sobriety and a fulfilling life. AA provides the means to staying on that road. It's so much more than anti abuse treatment, electro-shock aversion therapy and old fashioned abstinence. It is a way of peaceful existence with God and the world around me. I wouldn't have it any other way.

- Anonymous

CENTRAL OFFICE Board of Trustees

Chair — Wade J. board@saltlakeaa.org .
Co-Chair — Shannon M. cochair@saltlakeaa.org
Secretary — Jake S. secretary@saltlakeaa.org
Treasurer — Mark C. treasurer@saltlakeaa.org
Trustee (2) — John S. trustee02@saltlakeaa.org
Trustee (10) — Sonya M. trustee10@saltlakeaa.org
Trustee (13) — Alan B. trustee13@saltlakeaa.org
Trustee (11) — Philip W. trustee11@saltlakeaa.org
Alt Trustee — Diane B.

SEVENTH TRADITION Contribution Addresses

General Service Office

Post Office Box 2407
James A Farley Station
New York, NY 10116-2407

Area 69 Treasurer

PO Box 18134
Kearns, UT 84118

District 10 Treasurer

P.O. Box 57271
Murray, UT 84157

Salt Lake Central Office

80 West Louise Ave.
Salt Lake City, UT 84115
(Please include group name)

District 2 Treasurer

P.O. Box 615
Salt Lake City, UT 84110

District 11 Treasurer

P.O. Box 461
Bountiful, UT 84011

District 13 Treasurer

P.O. Box 95383
South Jordan, UT 84095

CENTRAL OFFICE Standing Committee Chairs

Activities — Kim B. activities@saltlakeaa.org
Archives — Ben H. archives@saltlakeaa.org
By-laws — OPEN bylaws@saltlakeaa.org
Literature — Jim S. literature@saltlakeaa.org
Coins — Kathy M. coins@saltlakeaa.org
Public Info — Allison S. pi@saltlakeaa.org
Cooperation with Professionals — Karmina B. cpc@saltlakeaa.org
Corrections — Serena C. corrections@saltlakeaa.org
Outreach — Open outreach@saltlakeaa.org
Hotline — Max M. hotline@saltlakeaa.org
Newsletter — Danny B. lifeline@saltlakeaa.org
Technology — Elan B. it@saltlakeaa.org
Treatment & Accessibility — Charlie T. treatment@saltlakeaa.org
Twelfth Step — Charlie C. 12step@saltlakeaa.org
Volunteers — Bob C. volunteer@saltlakeaa.org
Website — Jeff P. webservant@saltlakeaa.org
Immediate Past Chair — Brad M.

DECLARATION OF UNITY

This we owe to A.A.'s future; To
place our common welfare first; to
keep our fellowship united. For on
A.A. unity depend our lives and the
lives of those to come.

CENTRAL OFFICE MEETING MINUTES – OCTOBER 2023

Board of Trustees

Chair: Wade J. – Welcomes everyone, moment of silence for the alcoholic who still suffers. Introductions.

CO-Chair: Shannon M. – Reads the CO Preamble.

Secretary: Jake S. – Please provide him your email if you have not been getting the emails.

Treasurer: Mark C. – Goes over the Profit and Loss for September, Donation Sheet for September. Slow month for both donations and purchases, a little under from an operating perspective, but we had just bought a grill, otherwise we would've been even for the month.

We did have another fraud situation occur; the precautions were not good enough. Now we have a new bank account, passwords, and a safe combination. Please keep your passwords to yourself. \$1,500 misappropriated online, able to stop it and reverse.

Trustee: John S. – Requested he announce the Area 69 Fall Workshop. Sons of Utah Pioneers on Saturday November 4th, panel discussions 1:30 "Getting your toes wet in service" followed by 2:45 "Immersing Yourself in Service" and then at 4:30 "Spirit of Rotation."

Trustee: Sonya M. – Excused. Report: Things are going well at District 10. The district is preparing to host the Fall Workshop, and it looks like there will be some interesting sessions focused on service. The flyer for that is up on our website, along with other AA events. Thank you to Jeff and the Web Committee for everything they do.

The district is also trying to figure out the best way to get Venmo to work for group donations, which is a challenge many service entities and groups are facing. My service term is ending, so please talk to me if you are interested in the position or have any questions. Thank you for the opportunity to be of service.

Trustee: Phillip W. –

- District 11 meeting 25 people of attendance.
- Great representation of groups by GSRs. Much better than CO reps from Dist 11.
- Corrections chair reported the jail is all caught up with applications processed. Jail meetings are working. Pink can donations are up.
- No new business.

Trustee: Alan B. –

- The 2023 Fall Assembly is in the books and was a big success. Thanks to Kaley and all the great District 13 AA volunteers for all your hard work in hosting this event. Attendance was solid for most Utah districts.

- The general trend in meeting attendance in District 13 is steadily trending down slightly. This could be due to the tail end of summer and vacation season.

- Andy, DCMC, will be looking for a new location for the monthly GSR meeting. If needed, please contact me for the site and time of the October GSR meeting. It will no longer be held at Jim's Restaurant

- "New location will be coming Monday October 16th" at the Good Shepherd Church in Sandy at 6pm.

- Thank you all for your time, support, and contributions to Central Office. It is much appreciated.

Alternate Trustee: OPEN

Alternate Trustee: OPEN

Immediate Past Chair: Brad M. Not present.

Standing Committee Chairs

Hotline Telephone: Max D. – Hotline is now at 100% coverage. From now on we need to let people know that we are officially "open" day and night. There are other new steps we need to take in this new phase.

12th Step Coordinator: Charlie C. – Manages the 12 step list for people to be called when someone calls the CO looking for assistance with taking them to a meeting, needs to be updated. New form forthcoming, also asking if numbers can be given out to people calling in. Question regarding calling the numbers to make sure they are still accurate; Charlie says yes as he is updating it.

Activities: Kim B. – Chili Cookoff had about 100 people attend, about 15 chilis. Successful event, occurring annually. Paid \$250 for the room, and we received \$136 in donations.

Newsletter: Danny B. – Requests for stories of "Experience Strength and Hope" have had limited success. Would appreciate more stories submitted. Please have GSRs take this back to their groups. Need about 3 stories a month. Send stories to Lifeline@saltlakeaa.org

Outreach: Jack H. – Going well, trying to get more participation in Central Office.

Website: Jeff P. – Web traffic has been consistent compared to past months, about 5,000 visitors. Added a translate button, looks like it is translating things from English to Spanish if needed. Question from Lifeline regarding adding a banner stating volunteers available after hours.

By-Laws: Brad C. – Four positions are open for election next month. Secretary, Treasurer, Trustee District 10, and Trustee District 13. Two year commitment. Qualifications for each position are as follows:

CENTRAL OFFICE MEETING MINUTES – OCTOBER 2023

Cont from pg. 3

Standing Committee Chairs

Secretary:

The Secretary shall:

- Be an elected and voting member of the Board of Trustees.
- Attend and keep minutes of all regular Board of Trustees meetings and all regular CO Committee meetings.
- Provide all proper notices of Board of Trustees and CO Committee meetings.
- Keep an up-to-date list of CO Reps and their Groups.
- Arrange for all Central Office records to be available for inspection by any member of A.A. at Central Office during normal operating hours.
- Be the custodian of all Central Office documents and records.
- Make revisions to the By-Laws document as approved by the CO Committee.

Treasurer:

The Treasurer shall:

- Be an elected and voting member of the Board of Trustees.
- Attend all regular and special Board of Trustees meetings and all regular and special CO Committee meetings.
- Provide for the receipt, custody, control, and safekeeping of all corporate financial records, including, but not limited to: receipts, expenditures, assets, liabilities, and vouchers to facilitate the appropriate and timely audit of Central Office's financial affairs.
- Prepare and present monthly financial reports to the Board of Trustees, the bookkeeper, and CO Committee.
- Prepare and present the Annual Financial Report to the Board of Trustees, the bookkeeper, and CO Committee on or before the February Board of Trustees and CO Committee Meetings of each year.
- Prepare and present an annual budget to the Board of Trustees, the bookkeeper, and CO Committee for their approval on or before the October Board of Trustees and CO Committee meetings.
- Be one of the cosigners on all bank accounts.
- Conduct a minimum of two inventories of Central Office supplies, property, and equipment each year. Also, to include cooperation with Coins Committee in the twice annual coins inventory.

Trustees at Large & Alternate Trustees:

- Attend all regular and special Board of Trustees meetings and all regular and special CO Committee meetings.
- Assist, participate and share in the responsibilities of the Board of Trustees as described in these By-Laws and as otherwise authorized or delegated by the Chairperson or their designate.
- Alternate Trustees fill in at meetings and activities when the regular Trustee at Large is unable to attend and to accept the position of Trustee at Large when that person is unable to complete their term.

Please pray about it, share it with your groups. Important positions to be filled, we have been in scramble mode since Covid. Generally if you have a position now, it's a two year position. Rotating after only one year is not fulfilling that commitment.

Volunteer: Bob C. – No report.

Literature: Jim S. – I have nothing new to report. The new books have arrived.

Archives: Ben H. – Need to place Archives event flyer at clubhouses. Please handout /pass around flyer at meetings. Working on Archive Game and prizes. If you want to help on the Archive event, I will be at Central Office the 1st and 2nd Tuesday of each month at 4 pm.

Public Information: Allison S. – Goes to events and teaches what AA isn't and isn't. Has a fondness for traditions as it is why AA works. Got a few contacts looking for assistance, will be connecting with them. Mental Health America of Utah is having a Halloween Carnival on the 27th, looking for a table there also.

Accessibility: Charlie T – Update on Purple Can; It has paid 40 times this year. We sent out \$2,500 and pulled in \$9,000 last year. We have about \$4,500 left today. Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday meetings are listed online to serve the deaf.

Corrections: Serena C. – Donna the DCM from district 12 has requested info for prison orientations. We're hoping to start taking more Spanish-speaking meetings into the prison. Ben from Archives has graciously allowed us to take some of the older grapevines into SL Metro Jail. Those are a big hit with inmates when we can get them! Betsy (district 10 corrections chairperson) will be having a gathering at her home on Oct. 14. The idea is that the various corrections volunteers and service people will meet/greet and share ideas.

Cooperation with Professionals: Karmina B. – A big thank you to Charlie for his hard work.

Technology: Elan B. – New computer is up, handbook written for his replacement in case anything bad happens and someone needs to take over.

Coins: Kathy M. – Things are going well.

New Business – If you are going to order the meal it needs to be ordered ahead of time for the Fall Workshop, it will be Café Rio with 2 enchiladas, need to know in advance. Janet, our Archivist, wrote a 50 year Utah History, every Grapevine article written by anyone in Utah in last 50 years, updated at 60 year mark and 70 year mark. Must order it in advance. They sell for \$17. The 70 year is an addendum, which sells for \$5 apiece. We have had them here in past in bulk, but not the most rapid seller. Believe 20 would be a good place to start. \$440. Charlie is motioning for \$440, seconded by Scott from Hillcrest. Wade asks this suggestion be taken back to the groups for discussion.

Adjourn and Close with Responsibility Statement

Next CO Representative meeting will be held on 11/14/23 @ 6:30 pm.

I Am Responsible. When Anyone, Anywhere, Reaches out for Help, I want the Hand of A.A. Always to be There. And for That: "I Am Responsible."

PAMPHLET OF THE MONTH

**YOUNG
PEOPLE
AND
A.A.**

This is A.A. General Service Conference-approved literature.

The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for A.A. membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions.

If drinking is causing you trouble, and you want to stop but can't seem to do it on your own, give Alcoholics Anonymous a try—try it for 90 days, and if your life doesn't get better, at least you'll better understand your options.

All of us felt strange about going to A.A. But we now see that A.A. saved our lives—and is the best thing that ever happened to us. We also now know that there are many members who are our age—in fact, approximately 10% of A.A.

members are under the age of 30.

At beginners meetings, we discover that we are on the same level with anyone who is new to A.A. Even if there's a business executive or a grandmother next to us, we're all starting from scratch together, tackling the basics of A.A.

Some communities have young people's groups. You can find these groups in a local meeting list, or by asking Young members. Young member can attend any meeting, and as you'll in our stories, a bond of understanding links alcoholics of all ages and circumstances.

JOKE OF THE MONTH

Police Patrol

Recently a routine police patrol parked outside this bar. After last call the officer noticed a man leaving the bar so intoxicated that he could barely walk. The man stumbled around the parking lot for a few minutes, with the officer quietly observing. After what seemed an eternity in which he tried his keys on five different vehicles, the man managed to find his car but he leaned up against his car while he smoked a cigarette. And few other patrons left the bar and drove off.

Finally, he got into the car and started the engine, switched the wipers on and off...it was fine, dry summer night, flicked the blinkers on and off a couple of times, honked the horn and then switched on the lights. He moved the vehicle forward a few inches, reversed a little and then remained still for a few more minutes as some more of the other patron's vehicles left. Finally, when his was the only car left in the parking lot, he pulled out and slowly drove down the road.

The police officer, having waited patiently all this time, now started up his patrol car, put on the flashing lights, promptly pulled the man over and administered a breathalyzer test. To his amazement, the breathalyzer

indicated no evidence that the man had consumed any alcohol at all! Dumbfounded, the officer said, I'll have ask you to accompany me to the police station. This breathalyzer equipment must be broken. " I seriously doubt it, tonight I'm the designated decoy."

- Anonymous



Noah, where shall I put the Bee's?



..... In the Ark Hives!

FINANCIALS – SEPTEMBER 2023

<u>Income Statement</u>	2023	2022
<u>Revenue</u>		
Group Contributions	\$1,187.52	\$2,856.49
Contributions - Other	\$1,155.50	\$ -
Purple Can Contributions	\$521.98	\$ -
Sales of Product Income	\$6,967.33	\$6,461.50
Total Income:	\$9,823.33	\$14,509.18
Total Cost of Goods Sold	\$5,362.10	\$5,709.95
GROSS PROFIT	\$4,470.23	\$8,799.23
<u>Expenses</u>		
Accountant	\$630.00	\$ -
Bank Charges & Interest	\$12.67	\$ -
Square fees	\$127.24	\$ -
Activities	\$804.30	
Cash Over Short	\$(29.81)	\$ -
Cleaning and Office Supplies	\$56.30	\$ -
Volunteer Snacks Etc.	\$168.49	\$ -
Literature Handouts	\$75.41	\$ -
Phone & Internet	\$243.90	\$ -
Postage and Delivery	\$0.90	\$ -
Printing, Paper & Reproduction	\$459.31	\$ -
Rent	\$1,500.00	\$ -
Software & Hardware	\$392.19	\$ -
Utilities	\$396.43	\$ -
Website	\$47.98	\$ -
Total Expenses:	\$4,885.31	\$3,539.39
NET OPERATING INCOME	\$(415.08)	\$ -
Interest Income	\$36.52	\$ -
Other Expenses/Fraud	\$0.00	\$ -
Net Income:	\$(378.56)	\$5,259.84

Please Note: According to the Central Office Bylaws it is required to have 6 months overhead in the prudent reserve. Average monthly costs are \$4,000 per month, or \$24,000 for 6 months.

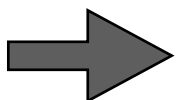
Thank you everyone for your donations!! We appreciate you!

GROUP CONTRIBUTIONS – SEPTEMBER

Basic Young People	\$129.00
BBT and T	\$80.00
Early Beginnings	\$85.00
Eye Opener	\$96.00
Every Night Firelight	\$150.00
Flying High	\$50.00
Fresh Air Serenity	\$100.00
Happy Group	\$97.00
Hillcrest Zoom	\$100.00
Luke Mckvie	\$427.00
Magna Friendly Bunch	\$250.00
Margaret Avaret	\$100.00
New Yorker	\$93.00
Primary Purpose	\$133.00
Salt Lake Group	\$159.30
Speak Easy Ladies	\$26.50
Sunday Morning Break	\$167.00
Thunderheart	\$100.00
Women BB Study	\$50.00
Women Stepping Up	\$200.00
Young and Alive	\$50.00
Monthly Total:	\$2,642.00

Thank you so much for all the groups and individuals who donated this month.

Donate here



HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

HOPE OF HOPE

Utah State Prison

Ron W. — 30 Days

Jack H. — 90 Days

Jesus H. — 5 Years

UNITY LUNCH BUNCH

D.L. — 30 Days

Fran — 30 Days

Kevin I. — 90 Days

Ed H. — 4 Years

Rodney H. — 13 Years

PRIMARY PURPOSE

Ed P. — 34 Years

Kyle C. — 9 Years

THUNDERHEART

Kurt W. — 34 Years

Jim C. — 48 Years

Kimberly M. — 6 Years

AND TO ALL WHO WE MISSED !

Submit picture or scan group birthdays to:
lifeline@saltlakeaa.org. Or drop off at C.O.
80 West Louise Ave (2860 S.)

A sober birthday is a day you can remember all the hard work you have done to maintain your sobriety. It also celebrates all of the people who got you to this point in your recovery. Taking a day to celebrate your sobriety is a happy occasion allowing us to reflect on "what our life was like then, and what our life is like today"

MEETING UPDATE AND UPCOMING EVENTS

Meeting Update

The Unity Lunch Bunch

Unity Lunch Bunch has moved from Central City Rec Center to Fellowship Hall 2060 S Windsor St., Salt Lake City – Weekday Noon meetings.

The New Way Group

Huntsman Mental Health Institute (formerly UNI)
501 Chipeta Way, 2nd Floor (cafe), Salt Lake City
New Time: Sundays at 10:00 am - 11:00 am

Out from Under Book Study

Fellowship Hall 2060 S Windsor St.
Salt Lake City, UT 84105
Monday & Friday Time 2 pm - 3 pm



Hosted by California Northern Coastal Area 06

PRAASA 2024

Pacific Region A.A. Service Assembly

Save the Date!

March 1 - 3, 2024

San Francisco, California

All A.A.'s Welcome • With Al-Anon Participation
Spanish & ASL Interpretation Available



Visit www.PRAASA.org

In late fall 2023 for online registration, hotel reservations, transportation and event info

Fellowship Hall Presents CLEAN AND SOBER KARAOKE

with DJ Phil N Clean

**FIRST SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH
FROM 9 PM TO 12 AM**

Everyone is invited to come to have good clean and sober time!
FREE to enter! \$5 Donations appreciated!
All donations go directly to the club!

*Children are welcome but MUST be supervised!

Fellowship Hall 2060 South Windsor Street, SLC

AREA 69

Fall Workshop

Hosted By District 10

Sons of Utah Pioneers

3301 E Louise Ave, Salt Lake City, UT

General Service Conference Theme:

"Connecting with Love, Unity and Service."

Saturday Nov 4th

Registration 8:00 am

Service Orientation 8:30 am

Area Business 9:00 am - 12:00 pm

Lunch 12:00 - 1:30 pm (on your own)

Panel Discussions

1:30 - 2:30 pm - Getting Your Toes Wet in Service

2:45-3:45 pm - Immersing Yourself in Service

4:00-5:00 - Spirit of Rotation/Service Sponsorship

Dinner 5:00 - 6:00 pm /Cafe Rio Mexican Grill \$15

(Pre-Order by Nov 1st)

AA Games 6:00 - 7:00 pm

AA Meeting 7:00 - 8:00 pm

Sunday Nov 5th

Round Tables 9:00 - 10:00 am

Ask-It-Basket 10:00 - 11:00 am

Spiritual Speaker 11:00 am

Registration

Workshop \$15

Dinner \$15

Pre-Registration for

Workshop & Dinner

Due by Nov 1st

For Questions email Todd:

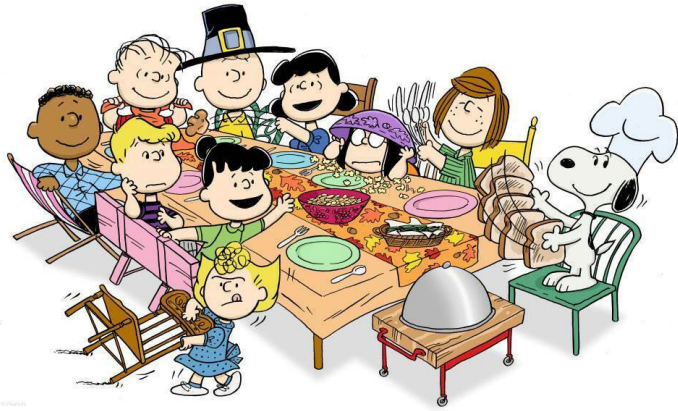
dist10dcmc@gmail.com



venmo
Last 4 Digits
8812

Include in Payment Info:
Your Name / Fall Workshop
and what payment is for
Dinner, Workshop, or Both

UPCOMING EVENTS



Thanksgiving Dinners

Will be held at:

Fellowship Hall - 2060 Windsor St., SLC, UT

Alano Club - 5056 S 300 West, Murray, UT



Winterfest 2024 Theme: Finding My Spiritual Path

*** From Big Book – Step 10 – page 84**

"We vigorously commenced this way of living as we cleaned up the past. We have entered the world of the Spirit."

Dixie Winterfest is the annual AA conference hosted in St. George, Utah, offering a mid-winter weekend of recovery, fellowship and "Fun in the Sun". This year will be the 26th consecutive year of Dixie Winterfest.

It's the annual fund raising event to support the **Dixie Central Office**. The DCO provides support to those alcoholics needing assistance in recovery in the form of local AA Meetings information and coordination, both in print and on its [website](#). The office has a wide selection of literature, brochures, CDs and other items available.

The weekend conference is organized to provide a full slate of recovery sessions and opportunities for fellowship. Typically the conference consists of Speakers, Workshops, and Marathon Meetings—along with "Fun in the Sun" organized activities such as golf, bingo, hikes, a luncheon, Saturday evening mixer, talent show, pickleball, game night and, of course, the magnificence of Southwest Utah.

Two Event Locations:

This year will be slightly different than years past. This year the event will be divided into two venues. The first location will be our traditional Red Lion Hotel, located at 850 S Bluff Street, St George. Everything related to the event will take place at The Red Lion Hotel with the exception of our Saturday Keynote Speaker meeting. The Keynote Speaker meeting will be held at the Dixie Convention Center, located at 1835 S Convention Center Dr., St George, Utah.

Salt Lake Central Office 2024 Elections

Tuesday, November 14 at 6:30 PM

In-Person: 80 Louise Ave S, Salt Lake City, UT 84115

Zoom Hybrid Meeting Code: 938044555 Password: aa

Two-Year Service Positions Available:

Secretary Chairperson

Treasurer Chairperson

Trustee at Large (District 10 liaison)

Trustee at Large (District 13)

***Two alternate Trustees if above positions are filled**

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subscribe to a digital version
of Lifeline



To subscribe to a printed
version, send an email to
lifeline@saltlakeaa.org

PROSE AND POETRY

The Virtue of Selfishness

Always "I" before we
Never "they" before me
Individualism is the indie ISM
And is the essence of truism
That internalizes selfishness
As an egotistical individualist
With non-altruistic virtue
Of singularity before plurality
The vanity in "I" is of protest
With each "I" intent to express
That "I" am always greater
That the mediocre lower less
Its pure virtuous selfishness
All in the narrowed vision
Of modernity's objectiveness
Defiant to common cause
With a caustic twist
The embrace of anti-socials
And their anti-human vocals
Are advocates of deceit's risk
Whenever Atlas shrugs
The caste fault-line erupts

— Samuel M. King

Comfort

This is my wish for you:
Comfort on difficult days
Smiles when sadness intrudes
Rainbows to follow the clouds
Laughter to kiss your lips
Sunsets to warm your heart
Hugs when spirits sag
Beauty for your eyes to see
Friendships to brighten your being
Faith so that you can believe
Confidence for when you doubt
Courage to know yourself
Patience to accept the truth
Love to complete your life

— Ralph Waldo Emerson

"Humility is not thinking less of
yourself, but thinking of yourself
less"

DISBELIEF

The program of recovery includes having me coming to believe in a power greater than myself. But quite subliminally, the program asks me to believe in a lot more. In the very early days of my sobriety this was out of the question. My disbelief was so strong, so irrational and so entrenched that coming to believe in anything proved to be problematic.

That said, there was one belief I maintained since my childhood, sitting in a pew in the Methodist Church in Wilton, Maine; I still believed that there was a God. I maintained that belief mostly because the Big Bang theory doesn't make sense to me without some unimaginable Power, greater than me and greater than the universe itself.

I believed that God was energy. What I believed in pretty much stopped there. I certainly didn't believe in a God that cared about me; how else could I explain the direction my life had gone. Other than that, I was a walking, talking vessel of disbelief.

So when AA suggested to me that they had a solution for my alcoholism, it was met with disbelief. It didn't stop there. The list of things I didn't believe was extensive. They told me the first drink would get me drunk. I didn't believe it, mostly because I didn't believe I possessed a physical craving for alcohol. I simply wasn't like them. Thus, I sat in the back of the room, where I presumed the visitors sat.

In Step Four I really didn't believe that I had resentments, nor did I believe that I played any part in the harm others had caused me. I still had the "poor me" mentality where others were to blame and I bore no fault. In Steps Six and Seven they talked about character defects. I didn't believe I had any character defects; after all, you need to have a character before you can have a character defect. I suspect that self-pity had a lot to do with the empty

feeling I had; a faceless minion without a character.

Then, in Steps Eight and Nine they talked of making amends to those we hurt. I didn't believe that I had hurt anyone but myself. Because my family lived in Maine and I lived in Nevada, I felt I didn't even have the opportunity to hurt anyone. However, I believed I could have easily made a list of people that owed me amends.

I started to attend meetings on a regular basis. Some meetings started by introducing a topic. Others started by reading a portion of Chapter Three of the Big Book, More About Alcoholism. But the overwhelming majority of the meetings started by reading a portion of Chapter Five of the Big Book, How it Works.

I made a meeting every day in the beginning. So I got to hear someone read "Some of us have tried to hold on to our old ideas and the result was nil until we let go absolutely" every day. Eventually it wore me down. Maybe I do have a craving, but drinking to prove it seemed counterproductive. I needed help. Maybe God could help. It seemed better than trying to prove a negative. Maybe I did have resentments, character defects and owed amends. Maybe tossing out my old ideas would help!

I think that it was just as hard to conquer my disbelief and let go of my old ideas as it was to come to believe and adopt new ideas that would save my life. When you lose air in a tire on your car, you pump it up. But when a tire goes flat, you replace it. My life had gone flat. I had to replace the dis-beliefs with new beliefs; beliefs that work. With the new beliefs I could get myself back on the highway of life. Still today, my life occasionally gets a little low on air, that's why I go to meetings and pump it up.

— Anonymous

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