

On The Rogue Again

JACKSON COUNTY CENTRAL OFFICE NEWSLETTER

Jackson County A.A. Central Office
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Editors Note -
August/ september 2015

"When someone you love becomes a memory, the memory becomes a treasure."

For over a year, James drove me to the Gloria Dei meeting. He tried to get me bowling but I wouldn't do it!!!

You were loved and you will be missed, James Campbell.

~Virginia

We would love to hear your stories thoughts. If you have a submission for the newsletter please email it to Fifi3333@gmail.com.

We publish for your enjoyment and information. Any mistakes you find are there for a purpose. We publish something for everyone, and some people are always looking for mistakes.

On the Rogue Again, is a monthly Newsletter of the Jackson County Central Office. It is about by, and for the members of Alcoholic Anonymous Fellowship. Opinions expressed herein aren't to be attributed to Alcoholic Anonymous as a whole, nor does publication of any article imply any endorsement by either Alcoholic

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Have a good day unless you have made other plans.

Read pages 86-87-88 in your Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous every day.

Central Office News

Greetings from the Board of Jackson County AA Central Office. We thank all of the groups and individuals for their generous support. A great way to get involved is to volunteer for a four hour shift once a week. Please contact Bill S. at Central Office to learn more about this. You can always come to the business meeting the first Saturday of the month to volunteer. Remember, Central Office now has a web site. There you can find information about upcoming events and the meeting schedule as well the current issue of "On the Rogue Again." You can find it by pointing your browser to either www.jacksoncountyaa.org or www.aa.jacksoncountycentraloffice.org.

"The less people know, the more stubbornly they know it."

~Osho

Board Members

Chair	-	Wayne T.
Co-Chair	-	Bob A.
Office Manager	-	Al Z.
Volunteer Coordinator	-	Bill S.
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Newsletter Editor	-	Virginia H.
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Donations for July/August 2015

Bottom of the Barrel	20.00
Medford Fellowship	55.00
Talent/Phoenix Group	269.30
Sober Seniors	150.00
Crack of Dawn	140.00
Pacific Positive	800.00
Tuesday Living Sober	72.00
I Did It My Way Ashland	75.00
Sunday Night Rogue River	100.00

Birthdays

Janet D	20.00
Bob	15.00
Darcy	5.00
Richard K.	38.00
Hildegard	34.00

Newsletter

Darcy	10.00
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How about donating a dollar for each year on your sobriety birthday?!

District 16 Elections

Will be held at the Smullin Center

Wednesday, Oct. 21st, 7pm

Find positions and descriptions at

www.medfordareaaa.org

Step Eight

Made a list of all persons we had harmed,
and became willing to make amends to
them all.

As I continue to live each twenty-four hours in the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous and attempt to practice its principals in all my affairs, one Step seems to play an increasingly important role in my life and in my relationships with others. This quiet but potent Step is Step Eight.

Many people, myself included, tend to lump Steps Eight and Nine together. By doing this, I never really achieved even a glimmer of the humility and love that Step Eight has to offer. Being a person of impatient actions, I was off and running on Step Nine with a simple list of names tightly grasped in my sweaty hand and a bad case of false humility to go along with it. Needless to say, I came home each evening with a battered sense of justice and my tail tucked underneath me.

As usual, I did not read all the words contained in the Step, and, just as I had done in Step One, I read only the first half before jumping to my next Step. The resulting self-induced pain has, however, taught me much about myself and the principles of this simple program.

Going back to Step Eight, I read the words at last, "...became willing to make amends to them all."

As I began to absorb what was being said to me, and as I reviewed the first seven Steps leading up to this one, It suddenly became clear what the message was for me and what the hasty mistake of impatient interpretation had cost me in serenity. The word "identify" held the key to my success with this Step. To become willing means to become willing to identify myself in others. I had been using Step Eight not as preparation for Step Nine, which is the carrying out of that willingness, but as a hiding place for my own real fear of my true shortcomings. The purpose of Step Eight for me is not to hide but to identify.

In order not to identify, I either condemned or forgave as if I were some kind of standard for comparison. In this Step I receive the humility to “Identify,” to see myself in others and to share their burdens and difficulties by sharing myself. In this Step I truly join the human race. My identification becomes my freedom – freedom from fear and anger. When I can identify my own shortcomings in another, the battleground between us is removed. I cannot make amends when I am still condemning or forgiving myself or the one I am making amends to, because of the judgment this implies. I have always found condemnation to be a lonely road and have always found forgiveness to be a confusing and impossible task.

When I forgive someone I guess what I really mean to say is that I admit I judge others. Forgiving and condemning are God’s business, not mine. Only he has the mercy to judge and accept at the same time. My job is to achieve enough humility to see myself in others and to accept both myself and others, by identifying. The willingness to make amends will grow from this act of love. When I become “willing to make amends to them all” I am saying to them, “your pain is my pain; when I hurt you, I hurt myself; I will try not to hurt you anymore.”

When I have achieved this kind of willingness to identify, my Higher Power has always set up my amends and allowed both of us to grow from the love involved in such an act.

- E. C., Bowling Green, KY.

The Best of the Grapevine, Vol. 2

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“Let everyone sweep in front of his own door and the whole world will be clean.”

~Goethe

Step Nine

Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

Questions to ask yourself;

Have I reviewed the list of persons I made in my 4th and 8th Steps?

Are there any persons on that list to whom I don’t owe amends, or to whom direct amends cannot be made without harming them or others? Have I discussed this with my sponsor to be sure than I’m not just trying to avoid making difficult amends?

Are there any persons not on that list that I should make amends to? And have I discussed this with my sponsor?

Do I understand the difference between making amends and saying I’m sorry?

If there are any amends I am not yet willing to make, have I discussed the situation and my feelings with my sponsor? And am I sure that I have completed work on Step 8 first?

Have I discussed all direct amends with my sponsor (or other trusted and knowledgeable advisor) and determined precisely what mistakes or wrongdoing I am trying to set right in each case? And what form the amends to each person should take?

Have I prayed and written about each amends so that I am prepared to say and do precisely what needs to be said and done? . . . and to avoid putting my foot in my mouth and making things worse instead of better?

In cases where direct amends are not possible, have I determined appropriate indirect amends that can be made?

After making each amends, have I reviewed what happened with my sponsor and am I sure that my conscience is clear?

And am I fully committed to the behavior changes necessary to make living amends to my family and others affected by my past behavior?

What am I doing to be sure that the behavior changes are appropriate, and to monitor my own progress in making them?

Grace...providing me what I don't
deserve.

Mercy...protecting me from what I do
deserve.



Tradition Eight

Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever non-professional. We define professionalism as the occupation of counseling alcoholics for fees or hire. But we may employ alcoholics where they are going to perform those services for which we may otherwise have to engage nonalcoholics. Such special services may be well recompensed. But our usual A.A. "12th Step" work is never to be paid for. (long form, pg. 564-565 4th Ed.)

Thoughts on Tradition 8 ...

There is a saying in the 12 step groups In order to keep it you must give it away. The 12th Step says "Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps we tried to carry this message to others and to practice these principles in all our affairs".

The 8th Tradition insures that anytime a newcomer reaches out for help in AA, he will

receive it free of charge. Members freely share their own experience strength and hope with the newcomer to help themselves in their own recovery in the process of "giving it away in order to keep it".

Tradition seven says we are self supporting through our own contributions and tradition 8 states that contributions can be used to employ special workers for literature for group conscience process from group to district from district to area from area delegate to GSO from GSO to AA worldwide.

The 8th Tradition is so very simple. But greed, no matter how you try to see it, is still greed. I know today that nothing good comes from a negative action except a negative reaction and to be paid for our services by holding work shops to make a profit to an individual is not in AA's best interest.

But paying someone for their services outside of twelfth-step work does not compromise AA's message it just gets other jobs done so the recovering alcoholic has the freedom to be there and reach out and help another alcoholic have the literature to give have meeting list printed etc.

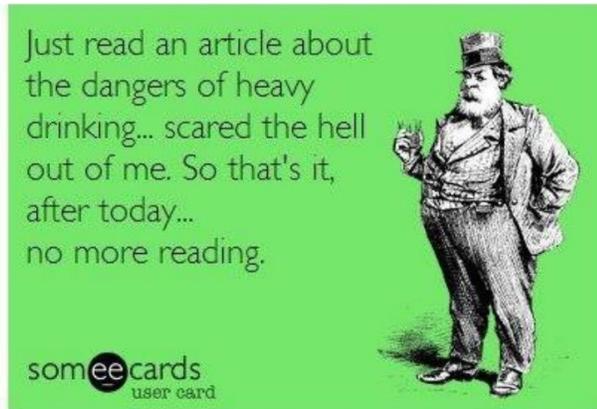
Those who work in service for us are worthy of their hire this very important Tradition is the very rock on which the freely given program of AA is built someone has to answer the phone while the rest of us get on with our regained lives.

AA is not therapy when a professional in the alcoholism field even one who is in the fellowship does real therapy with a person who has not yet attended AA or hasn't completely dropped the rock of denial this is NOT paid 12th step work its paid professional work.

It is all right for that AA member who is also a therapist to encourage attendance at AA or to discuss sobriety progress within the framework of the steps with the alcoholic within therapeutic sessions.

Some self righteous, self appointed AA tradition police had to be reminded by an old-timer of a few of the choice words of Bill W in Warranty five contained in Concept XII. There are not supposed to be any official or unofficial tradition vigilantes in AA.

Of course what the full context of this tradition is saying is that AA itself, as an organization doesn't hire any paid counselors to go out and do OUR usual twelfth step work. AA says that we have to be friendly with our friends in the treatment community, even those who don't completely agree with our methods.
-A friend of Bill W.



Tradition Nine

A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.

The lead paragraph to the Ninth Tradition in the pamphlet "The Twelve Traditions Illustrated" reads "The words 'Let's keep it simple' were the last Bill W heard from his fellow founder of AA, shortly before Dr Bob's death in 1950. Aware that 'it' meant our recovery program, Bill later wrote 'We need to distinguish sharply between spiritual simplicity and functional simplicity. When we get into questions of actions by groups, by areas and by AA as a whole, we find that we must to some

extent organize to carry the message - or else face chaos. And chaos is not simplicity."

Perhaps the main challenge and barrier in interpreting and applying the Traditions in a spiritual manner, is a propensity of many members to inform themselves with little more than what is printed on the short form window-shade displays of the principles. The spiritual application of the principles is a function of how well members are informed either on their own initiative or by others. Interpretations can vary widely depending on whether a member is acting as an "AA lawyer" or an "AA unifier."

All too often a member will extract a word or two from the short form of the Traditions or Concepts and interpret the principle(s) as their semantic imagination leads them rather than to be constructively informed by AA literature. There is much helpful literature e.g. the books "Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions" "AA Comes of Age" "Twelve Concepts for World Service" by Bill W, or the pamphlets "The Twelve Traditions Illustrated" and/or "Twelve Concepts Illustrated" and other pamphlets and service pieces.

The long form of the Traditions and Concepts is far more informative, in context and substance, than their short form counterparts. Also, there is a very under-appreciated pamphlet titled "The AA Group" that is a gold mine of information for groups on the application of the Traditions and Concepts.

Much can be gained, and gleaned, from the Steps, Traditions and Concepts, both in understanding and results, when each of them is viewed as a whole instructive sentence. Each whole instructive sentence can then be viewed as a "principle" (i.e. a rule of personal conduct) that we try to practice in all our affairs as a means of developing a spiritual condition that offers a daily reprieve from alcohol. The resultant God-given gift is something called "sobriety" (freedom from alcohol). The gift of the Traditions is "unity" (to keep the Fellowship from destroying itself).

Perhaps the worst way of using the Traditions is in a legalistic manner especially when someone is accused of "violating" this or that. The Traditions were not designed to produce legalistic conformity. They were designed to produce spiritual unity.

Keep this in mind the next time you are about to repeat a rumor or spread gossip:

In ancient Greece (469 - 399 BC), Socrates was widely lauded for his wisdom. One day an acquaintance ran up to him excitedly & said, "Socrates, do you know what I just heard about Diogenes?"

"Wait a moment," Socrates replied, "Before you tell me, I'd like you to pass a little test. It's called the Triple Filter Test."

"Triple filter?" asked the acquaintance.

"That's right," Socrates continued, "Before you talk to me about Diogenes let's take a moment to filter what you're going to say. The first filter is Truth. Have you made absolutely sure that what you are about to tell me is true?"

"No," the man said, "actually I just heard about it."

"All right," said Socrates, "So you don't really know if it's true or not. Now let's try the second filter, the filter of Goodness. Is what you are about to tell me about Diogenes something good?"

"No, on the contrary..."

"So," Socrates continued, "You want to tell me something about Diogenes that may be bad, even though you're not certain it's true?"

The man shrugged, a little embarrassed.

Socrates continued, "You may still pass the test though, because there is a third filter, the filter of Usefulness. Is what you want to tell me about Diogenes going to be useful to me?"

"No, not really."

"Well," concluded Socrates, "If what you want to tell me is neither True nor Good nor even Useful, why tell it to me or anyone at all?"

The man was bewildered & ashamed.

This is an example of why Socrates was a great philosopher & held in such high esteem. It also explains why Socrates never found out that Diogenes was banging his wife.

There's a reason your windshield is bigger than your rearview mirror... Where you're headed is much more important than what you've left behind

September 8th marks the two year anniversary of Maryann leaving us for the big meeting in the sky. She continues to inspire us every day.



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