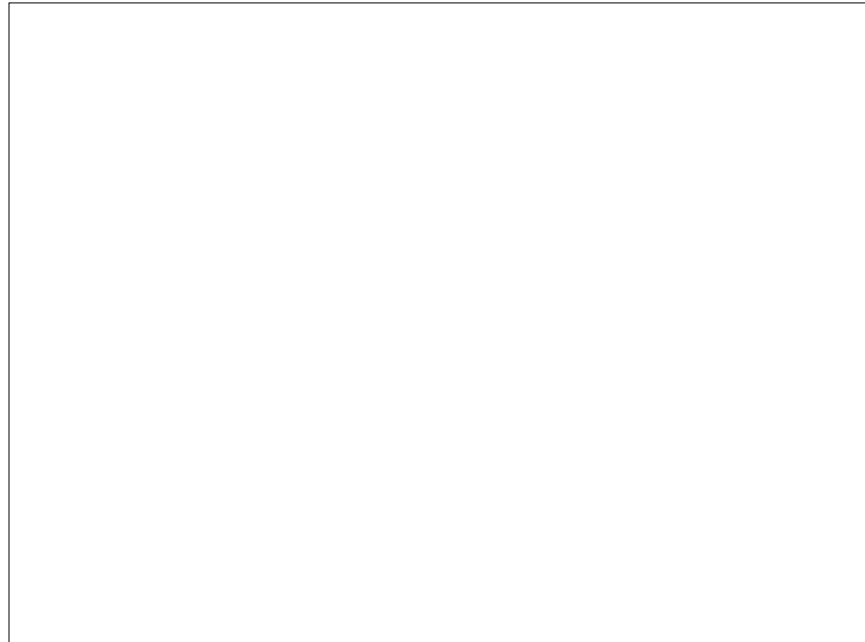


Central Office
1213 State Street, Suite H
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 962-3332



MESSENGER

STEP 4: NAMING THE NEGATIVES.

Reprinted with Permission from the April, 1997 Grapevine

The Fourth step attracted me almost as I arrived at the doors of Alcoholics Anonymous. I came to AA full of guilt and remorse for all the bad things I'd done — for example, being an unfaithful wife, not doing my job to the best of my ability and still expecting the highest rewards, and being unresponsive to other people's needs. I was totally self-centered, while at the same time I was thought of by others as being a good wife to a man who drank too much and ran around, being loyal to a job for twelve years, and being so sweet (I never expressed an opinion). But the way I was viewed by others was not the way I felt inside.

I heard AAs talking about getting rid of the guilt of the past by taking the Fourth and fifth Steps. I wanted to get rid of my feelings of fear, frustration, and depression, and I became willing to go to any length to accomplish that.

The first thing to do was to make a decision that since I couldn't handle my own life (look at the mess it was), I could find my own higher power to which I could turn over my life and my will. After that, I'd be able to look at myself and take responsibility for my past actions.

Early on, one of my ways of staying sober had been to write down my feelings and questions and new things I learned. At the beginning of my sobriety I would ride home from a meeting on a bus. My small notebook in my purse was there to write down any thoughts I'd had during the meeting I'd just left.

After about fifteen months (and a couple of journals), I went to someone with a good solid sobriety and asked for help in turning my notes into a Fourth step. He suggested that we meet and I arrived, notebooks in hand. He started me talking, leading me in a discussion of my problems in the areas of sex, society, and security (as suggested by the Big Book). He suggested that I look at pride, greed, lust, anger, gluttony, envy, and sloth. We talked for about three hours and covered every area of my life I had problems in. I found I could put names to my negative feelings and see their source.

What a relief to tell someone about myself without any threat of retaliation or condemnation. I realized I wasn't the worse, most immoral woman alive. I was no different from others who shared at meetings, neither worse nor better, and I wasn't strange or different. When I looked at my assets, I realized that I hadn't set out to harm other or intentionally behaved in an unacceptable manner. I wasn't a bad person ; I was a sick person trying to get better. I was a worthwhile human being.

People talk about having a spiritual experience after taking the Fourth Step. What happened to me was that I learned about the person I had been. I looked at my "emotional deformities" so I could "move toward their correction". I now had a better sense of direction concerning what areas I needed to work on. As Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions explains, ". . . A bread-new kind of confidence is born, and the sense of relief at finally facing ourselves is indescribable.:

Since that first inventory, I've taken many Fourth Steps. When my marriage was in trouble, I looked at my part in the problem at where I'd been wrong. I had no fear in looking at my behavior because I'd been trying in sobriety to be a good wife and companion. I found that my dependence on someone I considered stronger was misdirected. I was frightened of life and hadn't grown up; I felt dominated but in some areas I myself was the one who dominated. I put demands on another person which couldn't possibly be met. I tried to manipulate my husband to meet what I thought were my needs, when I really didn't know my needs.

Today, when a particular problem can't be covered by a daily Tenth Step, I find it natural to use the Fourth Step. I start with the First Step and see where I'm powerless, I recognize that a Higher Power can help me, and I use the Third Step prayer as primary move toward the Fourth Step. After taking a Fifth Step, I use the subsequent Steps to help me handle the problem.

The Fourth step lets me look at myself, look into my fear of not getting something I want or losing something I have, get a perspective on my character defects, and move forward to try to establish true partnerships with other human beings: all in order to be one in a family, to be a friend among friends, to be a worker among workers, to be a useful member of society."

As of March 31, 2011, we have 44 people who have become 200 for 100 members. In case you haven't heard about the 200 for 100, we are looking for 200 new supporting members who would be willing to donate 100 for the year, that is just \$8.33 each month (which is less than what I usually spend on my coffee and other daily drinks). Hope you will also consider being part of the 200 for 100 to help us reach our goal of 200.

Volunteer Shifts Open at *Your* Central Office

There are currently both morning and afternoon shifts available for people looking to be of service. The morning shift is from 9:30am to 1:30pm, and the afternoon shift is 1:30pm – 5:30pm. If you have time on your hands and want a great way to be of service to another alcoholic., please contact me at Central Office phone (805) 962-3332 or email JohnS@SantaBarbaraAA.com. Thank you.

John S., Central Office Manager

Tradition Four

Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole.

GROUP DONATIONS MARCH, 2011

	Mar 11	Feb 11	Jan— Mar 11		Mar 11	Feb 11	Jan— Mar 11
003 Eye Opener	210.00	420.00	830.00	139 It's A Hell Of A Deal	0.00	538.80	538.80
004 Monday At A Time	0.00	160.00	160.00	140 Gay Discussion, Sunday	0.00	126.33	126.33
007 Sound Off	0.00	48.00	48.00	141 Off Center	0.00	394.20	394.20
010 Foundation Group	107.64	0.00	107.64	145 The How And Why Of It	49.20	0.00	100.20
011 Sundowner Group	0.00	0.00	140.00	153 Happy Destiny	400.00	0.00	791.86
013 New Pair Of Glasses	50.00	0.00	50.00	156 Start Your Day Right	0.00	0.00	500.00
019 Onward & Upward	65.00	0.00	65.00	159 Speak Easy Step and Traditions	0.00	0.00	120.00
020 Cambridge Group	107.20	0.00	107.20	164 Men Who Have Lost Their Legs	475.00	0.00	805.00
021 Summerland Monday Group	20.00	72.00	92.00	166 Serenity Sisters	0.00	0.00	31.63
023 For Women Only	120.00	0.00	120.00	170 Barefoot Group	0.00	2.00	2.00
024, Mesa-Singleness of Purpose	40.00	0.00	120.00	173 Let it Go-11th Step Meditation	0.00	101.45	101.45
026 Carpinteria Study Group	0.00	0.00	104.00	177 Key Group	0.00	700.00	700.00
030 Sisters In Solution	65.00	0.00	65.00	181 Keep Coming Back Group	0.00	0.00	104.08
034 Women of Change	0.00	0.00	248.47	182 Just the Black Print	0.00	107.45	107.45
045 Alternative Group	0.00	66.40	66.40	183 Summerland/Montecito, Thurs.	0.00	0.00	114.00
047 Tuesday Men's Stag	0.00	151.16	151.16	184 Jay Walker Book Study	0.00	0.00	51.00
055 Staying Alive	136.20	120.00	256.20	189 Friday Night Book Study	0.00	0.00	41.00
064 Women's Serenity Group	0.00	0.00	123.00	191 Men on a Mission	0.00	175.00	175.00
067 Rigorous Honesty	0.00	79.00	112.00	196 Montecito Book Study	21.00	31.00	52.00
068 Stepping Stones	0.00	159.51	159.51	197 Big Book Comes Alive Women's Meeting	84.00	0.00	84.00
070 Success Group	0.00	0.00	80.00	201 Birthday Donations	97.00	0.00	462.00
079 Harbor Group	176.68	248.21	580.55	202 Supporting Members	1,041.22	1,604.72	3,678.38
083 Sober Students, Tues Eve	60.00	0.00	60.00	204 Memorial Fund	0.00	0.00	250.00
084, 83 - 87 Group	350.00	350.00	1,300.00	207 Gratitude Month	7.00	129.60	648.60
094 Questions & Answers	0.00	0.00	7.00	210 Convention Income	581.53	0.00	581.53
097 Almost Saints	0.00	220.05	220.05	211 Rent Received	169.00	48.00	268.50
100 Student of Life	0.00	0.00	20.00	212 Special Events	70.00	0.00	70.00
111 Carpinteria Canalino	0.00	0.00	111.00		\$4,738.67	\$6,540.47	\$18,094.78
112 Montecito/Carpinteria	100.00	0.00	100.00				
113 Sought Through Prayer & Meditation	14.00	11.00	45.00				
114 Schooner Group	0.00	0.00	70.00				
117 Way Of Life	0.00	213.59	231.59				
120 Sat. Morn. Home Boys	0.00	63.00	613.00				
125 On Awakening	122.00	200.00	632.00				

Supporting Member Donation Coupon

- I would like to become a supporting member of the Santa Barbara AA Central Office, and help it continue to carry the message and be there for the alcoholic who still suffers. I look forward to finding my monthly newsletter in the mail each month! Enclosed is my first contribution of \$ _____. I will continue to donate this amount on a (circle one) monthly, quarterly, annual, other _____ basis.

- I am already a supporting member. This is my regular contribution of \$ _____.

Name _____

Street _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ E-Mail _____

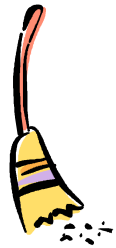
Please make check payable to: **AA Central Office, S.M.C.
1213 State Street, Suite H
Santa Barbara, CA 93101**

Every AA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions. – Seventh Tradition (short form), reprinted by permission of AA World Services, Inc.

STEP FOUR

Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

Cleaning House



Inventory... Cleaning house... Dirt. I never thought that my dirt was so important. I believed it was to be left as trash in the darkness of a garbage bin or dumpster. Not being a gardener, I never knew the value of the dirt I made. Of course, I had to separate the dirt from the garbage. It turns out that the garbage was just incorrect thinking and the dirt was the stories I had accumulated from my past. Thankfully, I had followed through with the previous three steps and realized I was powerless, that I needed help and that I believed the person I asked to help me could and would.

Garbage... In my family the way we dealt with things that constitute tough news was to drink to kill the pain. I remember believing that things outside myself were good excuses for tying one on. Like all the cool kids drink, so I should drink, too. I remember, when I had achieved being in with those people and one of us had died due to an alcohol related accident, we cool people drank to kill the pain and drove to the graveyard so we could feel even worse and drink some more. You get the picture. My thinking was in need of some adjustment. My thinking was garbage.

With the help of my sponsor and going to meetings where I heard or asked questions about the columns, I was able to finally see that my head was the trash dumpster. My thoughts were all wrong and since they were wrong, my behavior was wrong. I was not taking responsibility for my actions; rather, I was blaming the outside world. The fourth column put me square in the middle of my relation to the Universe and showed me that the finger-pointing essentially had to stop. I am the common denominator in ALL of my relations (people, places and things).

I know I am jumping ahead to the fifth step but as we know the fourth and fifth are tied together. The reality was (is) that as I was asking questions of my sponsor about the fourth, I was really doing a fifth step. So as I am giving my fourth step to my sponsor, my sponsor was identifying and helping me sift out the dirt and recycle the garbage.

Dirt... things grow in dirt but only if you know how to use it. Dirt doesn't go in the garbage bin. It is distributed to the various places in my garden where I plant the seeds of relationships for them to grow. I share my dirt. My dirt brings me salvation and it helps others to see that there is salvation in our actions.

In a step study group I was involved in, we came back from a two week 5th step break and shared some things that were pertinent to our 5th step experience. I shared a story about my being arrested on Mother's Day and having to call my mom to bail me out. We continued around the circle and there were two other stories regarding Mother's Day. One guy's brother died on that day. Another person shared that he hadn't called or seen his mom in years. But on the most recent Mother's Day, his sponsor told him to make an effort, which he did, and now has a fantastic relationship with her.

What happened next was phenomenal. There was one guy who shared quite well but I could tell he was holding something back so I said, "Dude, nice share but you seem to be shy about something". All of us having made ourselves vulnerable by sharing honestly, he finally felt comfortable enough to share this part of his story. He admitted that his mother had taken her life on Mother's Day and that he was the last person she ever spoke to.

Honestly, there were no tears but there was a huge sigh of relief. Not only for him, for all of us. Collectively we had given our fear up to God. We not only felt lighter, we looked brighter. Some darkness had past.

My part in the past with my mom was a dirty story. My part in that step group was to share that dirt. Its effect for him was liberating and brought some sense of salvation. That experience for me was also liberating. I had just made a living amends and had been of service to another alcoholic.

I still have garbage for thoughts. I just don't act on them. I still make dirt. However because of A.A., I now know how to till it (turn it over) and use it for my garden.

We, who were once cursed as drunks, are now blessed as alcoholics thanks to A.A.

Another Anonymous Alcoholic
AAA

Convention News

Logo Artwork Submission Deadline Extended

The theme for this year's convention is "Utopia", from Bill's Story in the Big Book of *Alcoholics Anonymous* (page 16):

Most of us feel we need look no further for Utopia. We have it with us right here and now. Each day my friend's simple talk in our kitchen multiplies itself in a widening circle of peace on earth and good will to men.

Now we need a logo for the Convention that is based on that theme. We are calling on the creative members of our recovery community to provide it. All submissions are welcome. Your drawing doesn't need to be perfect. The convention's Graphics Committee will take care of transforming your idea to a production-ready logo to be used on the Convention web site, registration forms, badges, tee shirts, coffee mugs, and the banner above the speaker podium. Remember that simple line drawings work best as a logo, rather than more elaborate, renderings.

You can give your artwork to any committee member, mail it to Central Office (1213 State St., Suite H., Santa Barbara, CA 93101), drop it off there, or bring it to the next committee meeting. Be sure to give us a way to contact you if you don't submit your work in person. The next committee meeting will be 6:00 p.m. on April 14th, and we will select the logo then. If you mail your artwork or drop it off at Central Office, it must arrive by April 13.

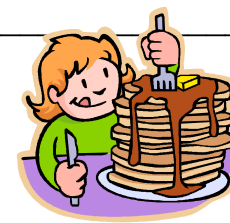
Participate

There are still plenty of opportunities for you to get involved in this year's convention. There are several committee positions still open. And the convention wouldn't be possible without the help of volunteers, so that's another way to participate. Not only is it a way to be of service, but it's a lot of fun. If you want to participate in building the 2011 convention, plan to attend the next committee meeting. Go to www.sbaaconvention.org, the convention web site, and click on "participate" for directions to the meeting, or contact Central Office or any committee member.

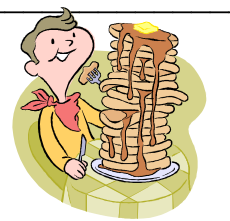
Mark Your Calendars

All the committee members' plans are beginning to advance, and they are all designed to produce a wonderful experience for everyone who attends. Don't miss it! Mark your calendars (if you haven't already) for the weekend of October 21-23, and we'll see you then, if not before.

~ Your Convention Committee



TAKE YOUR SPONSOR TO BREAKFAST



April 30th, 2011 at the Goleta Valley Community Center at 9:00 a.m., we are having a Central Office "Bring your Sponsor to Breakfast" breakfast. There will be a hot breakfast of eggs, pancakes, bacon, sausage, yogurt, coffee and juice, and a lot of good fellowship. Breakfast starts at 9:00 a.m. and the 50/50 raffle and the speaker meeting begin right after, and we should be out of there by noon at the latest. Noah D. of Santa Barbara will be our speaker. Breakfast tickets are \$5 and are available at Central Office, 1213 State Street, Suite H, Santa Barbara, or at the breakfast. If you have any questions, please call Central Office at (805) 962-3332. We look forward to seeing everyone for a great time of fellowship, food and fun.

PRAYER ANSWERED! Welcome aboard Jon H.! OUR NEW TREASURER!!!

The General Service Conference starts May 1st.

This is the time of year when we your Trusted Servants ask for your input. The General Office wants to know how "WE" The Groups and Members want them to run AA as a whole. Questionnaires are circulating around in meetings. Please fill them out, and give them to your GSR, or drop them off at Central Office on, or before April 25 so we can get them to our Delegate, Ken S. We want Ken to be well informed, so he can carry the message of Area 93 as a whole when he attends the General Service Conference this May in New York.

Sponsorship Appendix to the Big Book

It seems we have more time for groups and members to let their voices be heard on this matter. At our last Area Assembly, the voting on this item was postponed to the May 15th Area Assembly. **WHY?** At our last Assembly we had **88 New GSR's!!!** This is the most New GSR's "by far" at an Area Assembly in the history of Area 93. Many of them did not have sufficient information on this matter. It was found to be in the best interest of our New GSR's to table the vote to the next Assembly, giving ALL of us more time to get informed on this proposal.

Please step up and let us, "Your Trusted Servants", hear your or your group's voice on this Item by May 14th so your GSR knows how to carry your message when they place their vote on May 15th. You can also send an email to the address below.

Thank you in advance for being of service at the **MOST IMPORTANT** level, the Member and Group level.

Anyone is welcome to attend General Service events. Hope to see you there!

Upcoming Meetings & Events:

May 2: GSR Monthly Meeting (1st Monday): 6 PM, Holy Cross Church, 1740 Cliff Dr.

May 15: Area Assembly: Simi Valley, CA

For More Info: Contact your Group's GSR -or- your DCM: Matt D. (886-1904) 1964goletian@gmail.com

Responsibility Declaration:

"I am responsible. When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there. And for that: I am responsible."

<p>Group Contributions to AA Make check payable to:</p> <p>Santa Barbara Central Office 1213 State Street, Suite H Santa Barbara, CA 93101</p> <p><i>Include your meeting name, and local meeting number (from the meeting guide)</i></p> <p><i>Central Office will collect donations for Hospitals and Institutions and GSR through the office when you bring your Central Office Donation.</i></p>	<p>Central California Area 93 606 Alamo Pintado #140 Solvang, CA 93463</p> <p><i>Include your meeting name, GSO group number</i></p> <p>General Service Office P.O. Box 459 Grand Central Station New York, NY 10163</p> <p><i>Include your meeting name, GSO group number</i></p> <p><i>Any questions please call Santa Barbara Central Office at 805 962-3332</i></p>
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March 2011 Birthdays

Name	Years
Beth	1
Chris P	1
Gail K	1
Jeff A	1
Melanie E	1
Tony A	1
Edward F.	2
Gary L	2
Natasha H	2
Phil	2
Scott N	3
Al R	4
Dawn H	4
Gail F	4
Hopper	4
Kate D	4
Katherine C	4
Patsy A	4
Ronnie L	4
Beverly R	5
Eric R	5
Tomas	5
Kathleen M	6
Dominic A	7
Patsy A	7
Randy F	7
Scott	8
Angie B	10
Joe W	11
Scot M	15
Scott H	15
Marcel	16
Bob D	18
Kim M	18
Laurie	19
Maggie	19
Nancy R	20
Mark K	21
Mary K	21
Steve V	24
Jonathan B	25
Theresa C	28
Jeannie R	29
Mary F	30
Robert B	30
Dave F	31
Judi C	31
Suzanne J	31
Jeremy F	32
Jim M	39



Service Meetings

GSR (General Service Representatives) meets at 6:00 p.m. on the 1st Monday of each month at Holy Cross Church Hall, 1740 Cliff Drive, behind the church.

IGR (Intergroup Representatives) meets at 6:00 p.m. on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at the First Presbyterian Church, 21 East Constance.

H&I (Hospitals & Institutions) meets at 6:00 p.m. on the 2nd Monday of each month at Central Office.

PI (Public Information) meets at 6:00 p.m. on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at Central Office.

Facilities Committee meets at 6:00 p.m. on the 1st Wednesday of each month at Central Office.

Submissions Needed

The Messenger needs your articles and letters. We especially seek submissions on the step or tradition associated with the month of the same number. For May, we need writing on Step 5 and Tradition 5. Send submissions to johns@santabarbaraaa.com

Central Office Statistics

During March, 2011, your Central Office had:

AA Information calls	491
Al-Anon Referrals	33
Referrals to other programs	26
12step via answering service	14
Out-of-town visitors	25
12-step via office	36
Office walk-ins	189
Hits on our Web site	966

***The Messenger* is published monthly by:**

23rd District Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous
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