



The Santa Barbara

December 2005

MESSENGER

Hospitals & Institutions

Those of you who have any length of sobriety must realize the importance of carrying the message. And there are many ways to do that. One of our co-founders Bill Wilson intuitively realized the importance of carrying the message when, during his third trip to the hospital under the care of Dr. William D. Silkworth, he “had been relieved of his drink obsession by a sudden spiritual experience...” and that “in order to save himself he must carry the message to another alcoholic.”

My first sponsor was involved in H&I many years ago. She took me to an H & I meeting somewhere in Los Angeles, where I was living at the time, and it seemed to me there were hundreds of people there. That could have just been my perception because at six months or so of sobriety, who knows? About that time my sponsor told me I needed to buy a car. I was thinking of a nice 280 Z or some other sporty two-seater. My sponsor said I wouldn't be able to take people on panels if I were to become a panel leader. I was uncharacteristically a conformist when I came to AA and did most everything my sponsor said to do, so I bought a four-door Isuzu. Ugh. But it was new and could get the job done. I could carry the message and other people. But for whatever reason, I didn't think H&I was something I'd like to do. Probably because I was so new, so shy, didn't think I had anything to offer, selfish maybe.

I did go on panels though. My first little talk was at about the same time, six months of sobriety. We went to the Veterans' Hospital in Westwood. It was very scary but I survived. Doing little things like that got me used to speaking in front of people. Though sometimes the patients seemed incapable of listening, it was good practice and got me out of myself. Many in attendance were sort of drooling or sleeping. Then they'd be jolted awake by a tiny round of applause from our little panel and would wheel up or shuffle up and bum a smoke. But that didn't matter. I stayed sober that night.

Six months prior to meeting Dr. Bob Smith (our other beloved co-founder) in Akron, Ohio, Bill Wilson “had worked with many alcoholics on the theory that only an alcoholic could help an alcoholic, but he had succeeded only in keeping sober himself.” Bill was actually discouraged by this—after six months none of the drunks he drug off the street and brought into his home stayed sober. After he relayed this thought to his wife Lois, she turned to Bill and said, “But you have.” Bill, who hadn't drawn a sober breath for years, had six months of sobriety. He was carrying the message and, whether the drunks got it or not, it kept him sober. He also asked Dr. Silkworth if he could be allowed the privilege of talking to some of the other alcoholic patients at the hospital where he himself was a patient. This is the very earliest example of H&I in our society that I know of.

So here I am many years past my newcomerness. About eight years ago I started going into our women's county jail and honor farm. It's kind of sad to see many of the women rotating in and out, in and out. I know that could be me if I don't do what I do. I just wish they would get it. I want them to know how good life can be.

Did any of you hear Paul S speak Saturday night at the Action Participation meeting at Grace Lutheran? Paul just got out of prison in October after doing 25 years. He talked about getting the message inside and how much it meant to him. He gave H&I a lot of the credit for the good life he has today. Paul is one of the lucky ones who heard the message and got sober in 1987, stayed sober in prison, (no small feat if you ask me), sponsored men in that institution, and carries the message himself. What a great thing. A life saved, one more of God's kids walking in the sunlight of the spirit because of Alcoholics Anonymous, because of H&I.

—Theresa C

Holiday Cheer

Happiest of holidays to all of you from your Central Office. My wish is that you have a most joyous, healthy, and peace-filled holiday season. Things are slow around the office right now. They usually are at this time of year. But I expect the New Year to bring us a whole batch of new friends; it usually does. So I am just using this quiet time to do a little end-of-year housekeeping. Besides the nuts-and-bolts stuff of gratitude for another sober year, and the good will that seems to pervade this time, I would also like to thank some special people, and some other special things in my life. If you don't find yourself on this list, and you think you should be there, it is probably true and nothing more than an oversight on my part. That out of the way, here's my list:

The program of Alcoholics Anonymous, for saving my life when I wasn't sure it was worth saving.

My family. My wife, her sons, and our granddaughter.

My father and my brother. Our book talks about families being reunited, and mine has been.

The fellowship in Alcoholics Anonymous, for letting me be part of.

A host of friends, but especially Steve and Patrick, who have been my road-dogs this year.

Don W, gone but not forgotten.

John S and Paul S, great examples of how well our program works.

The Big Four Group at CMC as a whole, and many of its members individually.

Survivors Group from USP Lompoc, ditto individual members.

All the guys at the ARC. You make Wednesday night special for me.

Everyone who has ever volunteered here at the office, and especially those doing it now. You help so much.

My sponsor Rick M. I really am going to call you someday.

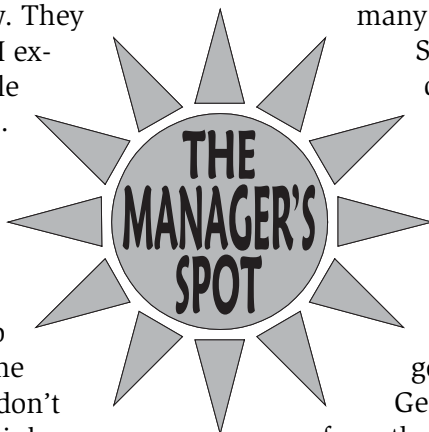
Geoff C, Chuck G, and Carla M, my pals from the valley. Thanks for including me.

All those H&I trudgers out there just doing the deal. My home group, Men Who Have Lost Their Legs. Right on!

That other group. Woof!

All of you who read this, thanks for taking the time.

In the spirit of the fellowship,



Tim

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.

A Twelfth Step Prayer

Dear God,

My spiritual awakening begins to unfold. The help I have received I shall pass on and give to others both in and out of the fellowship. For this opportunity I am grateful. I pray most humbly to continue walking day by day on the road of spiritual progress. I pray for the strength and wisdom to practice the principles of this way of life in all that I do and say. I need you, my friends, and the program every hour of every day.

Tradition Twelve Contemplation Questions

Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

1. Why is it good idea for me to place the common welfare of all AA members before individual welfare? What would happen to me if AA as a whole disappeared?
2. When I do not trust AA's current servants, who do I wish had the authority to straighten them out?
3. In my opinions of and remarks about other AAs, am I implying membership requirements other than a desire to stay sober?
4. Do I ever try to get a certain AA group to conform to my standards, not its own?
5. Have I a personal responsibility in helping an AA group fulfill its primary purpose? What is my part?
6. Does my personal behavior reflect the Sixth Tradition—or belie it?
7. Do I do all I can do to support AA financially? When is the last time I anonymously gave away a Grapevine subscription?
8. Do I complain about certain AAs' behavior—especially if they are paid to work for AA? Who made me so smart?
9. Do I fulfill all AA responsibilities in such a way as to please privately even my own conscience? Really?
10. Do my utterances always reflect the Tenth Tradition, or do I give AA critics real ammunition?
11. Should I keep my AA membership a secret, or reveal it in private conversation when that may help another alcoholic (and therefore me)? Is my brand of AA so attractive that other drunks want it?
12. What is the real importance of me among more than a million AAs?

—Originally published in the *AA Grapevine*

Concept XII

The Conference shall observe the spirit of A.A. tradition, taking care that it never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds and reserve be its prudent financial principle; that it place none of its members in a position of unqualified authority over others; that it reach all important decisions by discussion, vote, and, whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; that its actions never be personally punitive nor an incitement to public controversy; that it never perform acts of government, and that, like the Society it serves, it will always remain democratic in thought and action .

—*AA Service Manual*

Letters

Letter from a Friend

To All My Alcoholic Brothers and Sisters,

I am trusting that this message finds all of you in the best of health, with peace of mind, and high spirits. Hopefully you are taking it one day at a time, and enjoying the spirit of the season. I wish you all continued sobriety and a joyous upcoming holiday. Please know that you are in my prayers, and that I wish for you all the best life has to offer. Those of us here at CMC who are members of the Big Four Group just want to say thank you to everyone out there for your continued support.

With love, your friend,
—Malik

Happy Destiny

He booked a red eye
Leaves today, Pink Cloud Airlines
At golden sundown
—Daniel P

Checklist of Relapse Symptoms

Exhaustion Allowing oneself to become overly tired; usually associated with work addiction as an excuse for not facing personal frustrations.

Dishonesty Begins with pattern of little lies; escalated to self-delusion and making excuses for not doing what's called for.

Impatience I want what I want NOW. Others aren't doing what I think they should or living the way I know is right.

Argumentative No point is too small or insignificant not to be debated to the point of anger and submission.

Depression All unreasonable, unaccountable despair should be exposed and discussed, not repressed: what is the "exact nature" of those feelings?

Frustration Controlled anger/resentment when things don't go according to our plans. Lack of acceptance. See *impatience*.

Self-pity Feeling victimized, put-upon, used, unappreciated, convinced we are being singled out for bad luck.

Cockiness Got it made. Know all there is to know. Can go anywhere, including bars and boozy parties.

Complacency Like *cockiness*, no longer sees value of daily program, meetings, contact with other alcoholics, (especially sponsor!), feels healthy, on top of the world, things are going well. May even be cured!

Expecting too much of others Why can't they read

my mind? I've changed, what's holding them up? If they just do what I know is best for them? Leads to feeling misunderstood, unappreciated. See *frustration*.

Letting up on disciplines Allowing established habits of recovery—meditations, prayer, spiritual reading, AA contact, daily inventory, meetings—to slip out of our routines; allowing recovery to get boring and no longer stimulating for growth. Why bother?!

Using mood-altering chemicals May have a valid medical reason, but misused to help avoid the real problems of impending alcoholic relapse.

Wanting too much Setting unrealistic goals; not providing for short-term successes; placing too much value on material success, not enough on value of spiritual growth.

Forgetting gratitude Because of several listed above, may lose sight of the abundant blessings in our everyday lives: too focused on *wanting too much*.

"It can't happen to me." Feeling immune; forgetting what we know about the disease of alcoholism and its progressive nature.

Omnipotence A combination of several attitudes listed above; leads to ignoring danger signs, disregarding warnings and advice from fellow members.

—Adapted from the Akron Intergroup News, December 1998

Twelve Tips on Keeping Your Holiday Season Sober and Joyous

Holiday parties without liquid spirits may still seem a dreary prospect to new AAs. But many of us have enjoyed the happiest holidays of our lives sober—an idea we would never have dreamed of, wanted, or believed possible when drinking. Here are some tips for having an all-round ball without a drop of alcohol. (From the *Box 459* Holiday Issue, 2003.)



1 Line up extra AA activities for the holiday season. Arrange to take newcomers to meetings, answer the phones at a clubhouse or central office, speak, help with dishes, or visit the alcoholic ward at a hospital.



2 Be host to AA friends, especially newcomers. If you don't have a place where you can throw a formal party, take one person to a diner and spring for the coffee.



3 Keep your AA telephone list with you all the time. If a drinking urge or panic comes—postpone everything else until you've called an AA



4 Find out about the special holiday parties, meetings, or other celebrations

given by groups in your area, and go. If you're timid, take someone newer than you are.



5 Skip any drinking occasion you are nervous about. Remember how clever you were at excuses when drinking? Now put the talent to good use. No office party is as important as saving your life.



6 If you have to go to a drinking party and can't take an AA with you, keep some candy handy.



7 Don't think you have to stay late. Plan in advance an "important date" you have to keep.



8 Worship in your own way.



9 Don't sit around brooding. Catch up on those books, museums, walks, and letters.



10 Don't start now getting worked up about all those holiday temptations. Remember—"one day at a time."



11 Enjoy the true beauty of holiday love and joy. Maybe you cannot give material gifts—but this year, you can give love.



12 "Having had a . . ." No need to spell out the Twelfth Step here, since you already know it.



NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Brittney D	1
Bobby Joe	1
Don	2
Chuck	2
Tamara	2
Don G	3
Tim C	5
Debbie	5
Denise	5
Jim S	6
Mark R	6
Bree	7
Mark S	8
Maggie	8
Howard E	10
Colette	12
Alan	13
Bob T	16
Mayanna K	17
Mike K	18
Norm C	18
Pat L	19
Marie C	19
John M	25
Dyna	30
George W	33
Joyce M	47

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

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Santa Barbara, California 93101

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sbaa@santabarbaraAA.com

Submissions Needed

The Messenger needs your submissions and letters. We especially seek submissions on the Step or Tradition associated with the month of the same number. For the first month, January, we need writing on Step 1 and Tradition 1. Send submissions to jimstoic@hotmail.com.

Central Office Statistics

During November your Central Office had:

AA information calls	738
Al-Anon	29
Referrals to other programs	51
12-step via answering service	38
Out-of-town visitors	16
12-step via office	6
Office walk-ins	606
Hits on our Web site	639

Service Meetings

GSRs (Group Service Representatives) meet at 6:00 p.m. the first Monday each month at the Cottage Hospital, Conference Rooms E and F.

IGRs (Intergroup Representatives) meet at 6:00 p.m. the second Tuesday each month at First Presbyterian Church, 21 E Constance, in Santa Barbara.

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

PI (Public Information) meets the fourth Saturday of each month. Call 687-7673 for more information.

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	<u>November</u>	<u>October</u>	<u>YTD</u>		<u>November</u>	<u>October</u>	<u>YTD</u>
001 Sunrisers	0.00	0.00	40.00	100 UCSB Discussion	0.00	0.00	55.00
002 Courage To Change	0.00	75.00	75.00	110 Focus On Recovery	0.00	0.00	34.17
003 Eye Opener	240.00	300.00	3,855.00	111 Carpinteria Canalino	0.00	0.00	759.00
004 Monday At A Time	0.00	59.51	376.11	112 Montecito/Carpinteria	0.00	0.00	420.00
005 Noon Step Study	0.00	0.00	50.00	113 Sought Through Prayer & Meditation	0.00	0.00	97.00
006 Start Your Week Right	0.00	0.00	180.00	114 Schooner Group	0.00	0.00	369.00
007 Sound Off	0.00	0.00	150.00	115 Eleventh Step Meditation	0.00	23.00	127.38
008 Beginner's Group	0.00	0.00	84.85	117 Way Of Life	125.00	450.00	2,752.00
010 Foundation Group	70.00	81.00	755.15	120 Sat. Morn. Home Boys	0.00	222.50	1,227.10
011 Sundowner Group	0.00	0.00	650.00	121 Problems And Solutions	0.00	0.00	21.00
013 No Shenanigans	0.00	0.00	176.00	130 Saturday Night Sobriety	0.00	96.00	240.00
016 Big Book Workshop	0.00	0.00	46.00	133 Action Participation	0.00	0.00	1,000.00
020 Cambridge Group	170.00	0.00	170.00	139 It's A Hell Of A Deal	0.00	0.00	661.50
021 Summerland Monday Group	0.00	100.00	274.00	140 Gay Discussion, Sunday	0.00	0.00	206.05
022 There Is A Solution	0.00	0.00	458.60	141 Off Center	0.00	787.09	1,767.16
023 For Women Only	0.00	100.00	400.00	143 Sunday Go To Meeting	0.00	0.00	70.00
026 Carpinteria Study Group	0.00	0.00	100.00	144 Back To Basics, Young People	0.00	0.00	230.31
030 Sisters In Solution	0.00	0.00	15.00	146 Out Of Town Speaker, NH II	142.00	85.20	532.60
034 Women of Change	0.00	39.85	261.92	148 San Ysidro	130.00	0.00	260.00
035 12 & 12 Study, Tues.	0.00	0.00	100.00	149 Getting To Know You	0.00	64.00	468.00
045 Alternative Group	0.00	0.00	269.00	150 Goleta Sun. Night Speaker	0.00	0.00	79.00
047 Tuesday Men's Stag	0.00	0.00	579.00	153 Happy Destiny	0.00	0.00	300.00
051 Men's Group At St. Mary's	0.00	0.00	420.59	156 Start Your Day Right	0.00	0.00	80.00
052 As Bill Sees It, Weds.	0.00	0.00	30.00	158 Isla Vista Sobriety	0.00	49.50	49.50
053 Both Oars In The Water	0.00	0.00	180.00	161 Back To Basics Group	0.00	4.32	4.32
055 Staying Alive	20.00	20.00	387.00	162 No Frills	0.00	0.00	187.35
056 Women By The Books	0.00	0.00	98.40	164 Men Who Have Lost Their Legs	0.00	400.00	1,449.18
062 Do The Steps Or Die	36.17	31.65	517.84	165 Junkyard Dogs	74.26	57.72	770.57
064 Women's Serenity Group	0.00	45.00	437.00	166 Serenity Sisters	0.00	0.00	134.00
067 Rigorous Honesty	152.00	24.00	1,047.00	170 Barefoot Group	15.00	13.00	164.11
068 Stepping Stones	18.00	0.00	255.64	177 Key Group	0.00	0.00	1,200.00
070 Success roup	0.00	0.00	210.00	181 Keep Coming Back Group	0.00	323.25	1,089.99
071 The Loft	0.00	0.00	435.00	183 Summerland, Thurs.	0.00	198.66	1,564.75
072 Discussion Gay Wednesday	0.00	0.00	48.00	186 Turning Point	0.00	0.00	383.00
073 Young People's	0.00	0.00	177.08	196 Powerful Cement	0.00	0.00	50.00
076 11th Step	400.00	0.00	580.00	200 Anonymous Donations	5.00	0.00	158.04
077 Briefly Big Book	0.00	0.00	21.00	201 Birthday Donations	0.00	170.00	928.00
079 Harbor Group	366.32	318.65	4,209.09	202 Supporting Member	928.00	864.00	11,534.00
083 Sober Students, Tues Eve	0.00	0.00	210.00	203 SBYPAA	0.00	0.00	53.42
089 Here & Now	0.00	0.00	140.00	204 Memorial Fund	0.00	0.00	160.00
091 New Life	0.00	0.00	240.00	205 Refunds	0.00	0.00	243.27
093 Into Action, Thurs	0.00	0.00	80.00	209 Meeting Guide	135.00	65.00	985.00
097 Almost Saints	0.00	0.00	870.13	210 Convention Income	5,178.00	0.00	5,989.79
098 Keep It Simple, Saturday	0.00	0.00	66.00	211 Central Office Rent Received	165.00	288.00	1,803.80
099 Sink Or Swim	0.00	0.00	180.00	212 Special Events	0.00	0.00	3,063.50
				TOTAL	8,369.75	5,355.90	63,627.26

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(805) 962-3332

