



MESSENGER

Tradition Twelve

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

THE spiritual substance of anonymity is sacrifice. Because AA's Twelve Traditions repeatedly ask us to give up personal desires for the common good, we realize that the sacrificial spirit--well symbolized by anonymity--is the foundation of them all. It is AA's proved willingness to make these sacrifices that gives people their high confidence in our future.

But in the beginning, anonymity was not born of confidence; it was the child of our early fears. Our first nameless groups of alcoholics were secret societies. New prospects could find us only through a few trusted friends. The bare hint of publicity, even for our work, shocked us. Though ex-drinkers, we still thought we had to hide from public distrust and contempt.

When the big book appeared in 1939, we called it "Alcoholics Anonymous." Its foreword made this revealing statement: "It is important that we remain anonymous because we are too few, at present, to handle the overwhelming number of personal appeals which may result from this publication. Being mostly business or professional folk, we could not well carry on our occupations in such an event." Between these lines it is easy to read our fear that large numbers of incoming people might break our anonymity wide open.

As the AA groups multiplied, so did anonymity problems. Enthused over the spectacular recovery of a brother alcoholic, we'd sometimes discuss those intimate and harrowing aspects of his case meant for his sponsor's ear alone. The aggrieved victim would then rightly declare that his trust had been broken. When such stories got into circulation outside of AA, the loss of confidence in our anonymity promise was severe. It frequently turned people from us. Clearly, every AA member's name--and story, too--had to be confidential, if he wished. This was our first lesson in the practical application of anonymity.

With characteristic intemperance, however, some of our newcomers cared not at all for secrecy. They wanted to shout AA from the housetops, and did. Alcoholics barely dry rushed about bright-eyed, button-holing anyone who would listen to their stories. Others hurried to place themselves before microphones and cameras. Sometimes they got distressingly drunk and let their groups down with a bang. They had changed from AA members into AA show-offs.

This phenomenon of contrast really set us thinking. Squarely before us was the question, "How anonymous should an AA member be?" Our growth made it plain that we couldn't be a secret society, but it was equally plain that we couldn't be a vaudeville circuit either. The charting of a safe path between these extremes took a long time.

As a rule, the average newcomer wanted his family to know immediately what he was trying to do. He also wanted to tell others who had tried to help him--his doctor, his minister, and close friends. As he gained confidence, he felt it right to explain his new way of life to his employer and business associates. When opportunities to be helpful came along, he found he could talk easily about AA to almost: anyone. These quiet disclosures helped him to lose his fear of the alcoholic stigma, and spread the news of AA's existence in his community. Many a new man and woman came to AA because of such conversations. Though not in the strict letter of anonymity, such communications were well within its spirit.

But it became apparent that the word-of-mouth method was too limited. Our work, as such, needed to be publicized. The AA groups would have to reach quickly as many despairing alcoholics as they could. Consequently many groups began to hold meetings which were open to interested friends and the public, so that the average citizen could see for himself just what AA was all about. The response to these meetings was warmly sympathetic.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS



I hope you all had a great Thanksgiving. I know that the people who showed up here at Central Office for the potluck meal and marathon meetings sure had a good time. And thank you, Linda and Zoe, for all your love and service in making that event happen.

Personally, I love this time of year. The spirit and emotion of people and families coming together to celebrate. Including our extended AA family. Ever since I got sober (almost 25 years ago now) there has always been just a little more joy, just a little more fellowship, just a little more warmth, within our Society during the holidays. Or so it has always seemed to me. I think it is because there is, perhaps, a tendency amongst some of us to feel things more deeply because of all the hoopla surrounding the celebrations. Like

those passengers of the great liner in the moment after rescue we experience the camaraderie, joyousness and democracy (and relief) of being among the saved. So we are maybe just a little kinder and more understanding toward those who are experiencing their first sober holiday. Let's face it, this is a time of year when a lot of us 'got away' with even more drinking than usual. It was, after all, called for, was it not? And how could we not participate? We didn't want to be a drag on everyone else and bring them down. Or whatever tired excuse we used to use. The truth was that the fun had been long gone from this type of celebrating, and now what were we going to do? In Alcoholics Anonymous we were given the tools we needed to both celebrate AND be sober. It wasn't easy (for me) the first holiday season, but our Fellowship carried me through. With meetings, with reaching out, and with caring for me until I could care for myself.

So, if this is your first sober holiday season, or even if you've had others, but this one is tough on you, please look on page 5 of this newsletter and see the helpful suggestions for not just getting through, but actually enjoying, this time of year. And remember that we are with you in the Spirit of the Fellowship.

Happy Holidays, everyone.

Tim

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! Encloses in 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, delining outside contributions. – Seventh Tradition (short form), reprinted by permission of A World Services, Inc.

ATTENTION !!!

Looking for Volunteers

How time flies!

It's time to start work on planning our 2008 convention.

Keeping with last year's schedule, committee meetings will be at 6 p.m. the 2nd Thursday of each month at Maggie's Pre-School, located at 3523 Modoc Rd. for directions call 682-6800 / 895-0716.

Our first meeting will held January 10th 2008. There are plenty of committee positions to be filled as well as other opportunities to help out. the January meeting will be about choosing the theme for 2008. Themes must be a direct quote from AA hard cover literature (as opposed to pamphlets) If you have suggestions for a theme feel welcome to attend and share with us on January 10th at 6 p.m. or pass it on to another committee member. So come join the fun of planning our next year's convention. Looking forward to another great year, hope to see you on the path.

Maggie C.

Santa Barbara District 23

General Service Representatives

<http://www.ccaadistrict23.com>

Public Information

Public Information (P.I.) in Alcoholics Anonymous means carrying the message of recovery to the still-suffering alcoholic by informing the general public about A.A. Your District 23 P.I. Committee carries the message:

- PACT Parolee Orientation & Health Fairs
- PSAs – press, radio, television
- Placards & Telephone Tear-off Signs
- Meeting Guides at hotels, inns and motels

Public Information takes many forms.... Whatever the form, it comes down to "one drunk carrying the message to another drunk," whether through personal contact or through the use of third parties and the media.

For more info or to volunteer: pi@ccaadistrict23.com

Responsibility Pledge

"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."

Reprinted from Pamphlet P-1, This Is A.A., page 24, with permission of A. A. World Services, Inc.

Deeper Than Words

"Everyone must agree that we AAs are unbelievably fortunate people; fortunate that we have suffered so much; fortunate that we can know, understand, and love each other so supremely well--these attributes and virtues are scarcely of the earned variety. Indeed, most of us are well aware that these are rare gifts which have their true origin in our kinship born of a common suffering and a common deliverance by the grace of God. Thereby we are privileged to communicate with each other to a degree and in a manner not very often surpassed among our nonalcoholic friends in the world around us.

"From AA's very beginning our success with each new prospect has always rested squarely on our ability to identify with him or her in experience, in language, and especially in feeling--that profound feeling for each other that goes deeper than words. This is what we really mean when we say 'one alcoholic talking to another.'"

Bill W

Reprinted with permission of **The AA Grapevine, Inc.**

Soon groups began to receive requests for AA speakers to appear before civic organizations, church groups, and medical societies.

Provided anonymity was maintained on these platforms, and reporters present were cautioned against the use of names or pictures, the result was fine.

Then came our first few excursions into major publicity, which were breath-taking. Cleveland's Plain Dealer articles about us ran that town's membership from a few into hundreds overnight. The news stories of Mr. Rockefeller's dinner for Alcoholics Anonymous helped double our total membership in a year's time. Jack Alexander's famous Saturday Evening Post piece made AA a national institution. Such tributes as these brought opportunities for still more recognition. Other newspapers and magazines wanted AA stories. Film companies wanted to photograph us. Radio, and finally television, besieged us with requests for appearances. What should we do?

As this tide offering top public approval swept in, we realized that it could do us incalculable good or great harm. Everything would depend upon how it was channeled. We simply couldn't afford to take the chance of letting self-appointed members present themselves as messiahs representing AA before the whole public. The promoter instinct in us might be our undoing. If even one publicly got drunk, or was lured into using AA's name for his own purposes, the damage might be irreparable. At this altitude (press, radio, films, and television), anonymity--one hundred-percent anonymity--was the only possible answer. Here principles would have to come before personalities, without exception.

These experiences taught us that anonymity is real humility at work. It is an all-pervading spiritual quality which today keynotes AA life everywhere. Moved by the spirit of anonymity, we try to give up our natural desires for personal distinction as AA members both among fellow alcoholics and before the general public. As we lay aside these very human aspirations, we believe that each of us takes part in the weaving of a protective mantle which covers our whole society and under which we may grow and work in unity.

We are sure that humility, expressed by anonymity, is the greatest safeguard that AA can ever have.

(Editor's Note: This brings to a close "The Twelve Traditions," a new series of explanation. Bill has also completed a new interpretation of the Twelve Steps. These will not appear in *The Grapevine*, but we will soon announce publication date and details of a new book containing both the series on the Traditions and the Steps. Authorized by the 1952 General Service Conference, the book will be published by Works Publishing, Inc.)

Bill W.

Don't Blow Your Stack!

... It is evident that the harmony, security, and future effectiveness of AA will depend largely upon our maintenance of a thoroughly nonaggressive and pacific attitude in all our public relations. This is an exacting assignment, because in our drinking days we were prone to anger, hostility, rebellion, and aggression. And even though we are now sober, the old patterns of behavior are to a degree still with us, always threatening to explode on any good excuse. But we *know* this, and therefore I feel confident that in the conduct of our public affairs we shall always find the grace to exert an effective restraint.

Concept XII, Warranty Five

Simple In Language, Plain in Meaning Quote of the Month

Much has been written, much has been said about the Twelve Steps of AA. These tenets of our faith and practice were not worked out overnight and then presented to our members as an opportunist creed. Born of our early trials and many tribulations, they were and are the result of humble and sincere desire, sought in personal prayer for divine guidance.

As finally expressed and offered, they are simple in language, plain in meaning. They are also workable by any person having a sincere desire to obtain and keep sobriety. The results are the proof. Their simplicity and workability are such that no special interpretations, and certainly no reservations, have ever been necessary.

Dr. Bob

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.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS



November 2007 Birthdays

Dalicia	1
Lisa B	1
Dan D.	2
David F.	2
Tamara S.	4
Don G.	5
Dave B.	6
Tim C.	7
Jim S.	8
Patricia G	9
Shelly S	18
Steve O.	18
Mayanna K	19
Norm C	20
Patricia E	22
Laurie O	22
Lauren B	28
George W	35
Eddie H.	36
Joyce M	49

The Messenger is published monthly by:

**23rd District Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous
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Santa Barbara, California, 93101**

805-962-3332

sbaa@santabarbaraAA.com

Submissions Needed

The Messenger needs your submissions and letters. We are looking for articles for the step or tradition associated with the month of the same number. For the Twelfth month, December we need writing on Step 1 and Tradition 1. Send submissions to **JohnS@santabarbaraAA.com**

Central Office Statistics

During the November 2007 your Central Office had:

AA Information calls	902
Al-Anon Referrals	57
Referrals to other programs	49
12step via answering service	48
Out-of-town visitors	29
12-step via office	27
Office walk-ins	675
Hits on our Web site	1161

Service Meetings

General Service Representatives (GSR) Monday at 6:00pm meet at: Holy Cross Church Hall, 1740 Cliff Dr. Behind the Church

IGR's (Intergroup Representatives) meet at 6:00 P.M. the second Tuesday each month at First Presbyterian Church 21 East Constance in Santa Barbara

H&I (Hospitals & Institutions) meets at 6:00 P.M. at 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.

22nd ANNUAL Santa Barbara Convention Committee – 2nd Thursday of each Month, 6:00 P.M. at 3523 Modoc Rd. Commitments Available!

Donations by Group November 2007

001 Sunrisers	0.00	0.00	229.00
003 Eye Opener	270.00	210.00	2,610.00
004 Monday At A Time	0.00	212.10	748.10
006 Start Your Week Right	0.00	80.00	240.00
007 Sound Off	0.00	0.00	75.00
008 Beginner's Group	0.00	0.00	20.00
010 Foundation Group	0.00	0.00	386.50
011 Sundowner Group	372.00	0.00	2,808.00
013 New Pair Of Glasses	30.00	0.00	150.00
014 El Montecito Saturday Night	0.00	0.00	320.00
019 Onward & Upward	0.00	0.00	160.00
020 Cambridge Group	0.00	0.00	60.00
021 Summerland Monday Group	268.00	0.00	468.00
022 There Is A Solution	0.00	0.00	394.00
023 For Women Only	0.00	138.54	372.54
024, Mesa-Singleness of Purpose	0.00	0.00	75.00
025 Grateful Group	0.00	0.00	70.00
028 The Mother Group	0.00	0.00	110.00
030 Sisters In Solution	18.00	0.00	18.00
034 Women of Change	0.00	0.00	217.00
035 12 & 12 Study, Tues.	0.00	80.00	240.00
045 Alternative Group	65.00	0.00	461.00
047 Tuesday Men's Stag	0.00	0.00	280.00
051 Men's Group At St. Mary's	0.00	0.00	386.00
053 Both Oars In The Water	0.00	80.00	240.00
055 Staying Alive	150.00	0.00	420.00
062 Do The Steps Or Die	54.47	55.12	620.22
067 Rigorous Honesty	12.00	12.00	860.00
068 Stepping Stones	0.00	47.00	468.26
070 Success roup	0.00	0.00	80.00
071 The Loft	0.00	0.00	250.00
073 Young People's	0.00	0.00	210.00
074 Casa Serena (BB Study)	0.00	0.00	137.00
076 11th Step	0.00	80.00	240.00
077 Briefly Big Book	0.00	0.00	85.00
079 Harbor Group	401.19	315.00	4,573.39
083 Sober Students, Tues Eve	70.00	0.00	190.00
089 Here & Now	0.00	0.00	145.00
091 New Life	0.00	0.00	232.00
093 Into Action, Thurs	0.00	0.00	160.00
094 Questions & Answers	0.00	0.00	39.80
097 Almost Saints	0.00	260.40	1,497.40

099 Sink Or Swim	0.00	80.00	240.00
100 UCSB Discussion	0.00	0.00	210.00
101 Big Book Study, Friday	0.00	0.00	50.00
103 Munch Bunch	34.87	0.00	76.09
111 Carpinteria Canalino	0.00	0.00	400.00
112 Montecito/Carpinteria	0.00	0.00	242.06
113 Sought Through Prayer & Meditation	37.00	0.00	226.86
114 Schooner Group	79.00	0.00	357.00
115 Eleventh Step Meditation	35.00	0.00	221.51
117 Way Of Life	0.00	0.00	300.00
118 Speaker Connection	0.00	0.00	231.58
120 Sat. Morn. Home Boys	0.00	180.00	1,010.40
122 Came to Believe Candlelight	0.00	0.00	110.00
130 Saturday Night Sobriety	0.00	72.00	144.00
133 Action Participation	0.00	0.00	1,280.00
139 It's A Hell Of A Deal	0.00	192.00	1,284.00
140 Gay Discussion, Sunday	0.00	87.00	234.00
141 Off Center	0.00	0.00	1,387.65
144 Back To Basics, Young People	0.00	0.00	78.00
145 The How And Why Of It	50.00	0.00	50.00
149 Getting To Know You	0.00	0.00	376.00
150 Goleta Sun. Night Speaker	0.00	115.00	115.00
151 Our Meeting	0.00	50.00	85.00
153 Happy Destiny	0.00	0.00	400.00
156 Start Your Day Right	400.00	0.00	1,700.00
158 Isla Vista Sobriety	0.00	0.00	43.65
163 Mustard Seed	0.00	0.00	30.00
164 Men Who Have Lost Their Legs	0.00	285.00	1,594.77
165 Junkyard Dogs	0.00	500.00	1,201.00
166 Serenity Sisters	100.00	0.00	343.15
170 Barefoot Group	51.00	65.00	653.56
177 Key Group	0.00	1,260.00	2,510.00
181 Keep Coming Back Group	0.00	271.78	1,390.47
183 Summerland, Thurs.	0.00	0.00	721.80
186 Sunday Night Alternative, NH III	0.00	0.00	312.18
200 Anonymous Donations	0.00	0.00	538.00
201 Birthday Donations	0.00	23.00	1,069.00
202 Supporting Members	717.00	636.67	10,302.17
204 Memorial Fund	0.00	0.00	580.00
210 Convention Income	3,234.96	0.00	6,391.71
211 Rent Received	125.00	0.00	1,125.00
212 Special Events	230.00	0.00	4,235.00
Totals:	6,804.49	5,387.61	65,196.82

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