



MESSENGER

Twelfth Step Work Is AA

If we live AA, we are doing Twelfth Step work. . .how infinitely more powerful is our message, if the suffering alcoholic recognizes that AA has produced in us a patient, humble, and loving friend of God and man.

OBVIOUSLY there would be no such thing as this life-saving fellowship called Alcoholics Anonymous, were it not for the regenerating two basic elements which seem to me to make up the vital Twelfth Step. They are, of course, a mission to carry the message, and a high calling to practice daily the AA principles in all our affairs as best we can.

If we look first at the mission territory into which we are to carry our message, we will better understand the absolute necessity of putting into practice the principles we advocate. It should not be difficult for us to familiarize ourselves with the mission fields into which we are venturing, inasmuch as we have all, more or less, recently dwelt in that outer darkness ourselves. That darkness, wherein we were, and where they are now groping, is a hell on earth. On the fringes of despair, our prospective members are utterly alone in their losing battle, with no one to understand their problems, much less anyone to give them any permanent help in their tragic and desperate plight.

The world, in its fantastic progress, has left them behind as hopeless and helpless. Their closest of family ties have been severed, and where there was love, there is pity; where there was loyalty, there is contempt. Their faith in all things human as well as divine has been totally shattered. They are literally alone, abandoned, and doomed. They must blot out of their minds the joys of the past and they dare not face the inevitable sorrows of the future. Their souls cry out, as did their Divine Master's, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

Our mission, our carrying of the message, is the lone response to their plea, it is the only ray of light to pierce the Stygian darkness that encompasses them. Will they hear us? Will they respond to our beacon of hope? Can they again put their trust in men? The answers to these questions lie in the second basic element of our Twelfth Step.

It seems to me that we will almost always be able to answer these two questions in the affirmative, if and when we really practice the principles of AA in all our affairs. The virtues of patience, humility, and charity must be ours, not at our meetings alone, but in every hour of our twenty-four hour program. Were it not for the charity of our sponsors we would not be here tonight. If they had not been possessed of patience, how many of us would still be here? Had they not the virtue of humility, of what concern would our sad situations have been to them? Our sponsors were sober, they knew the life-saving program. It is true that someone else had given it to them, but it does not necessarily follow that they were obliged in justice to hand it on to you and me. Thank God they were not only hearers of the word, but they were doers of it also. They were living the AA program, they were putting into daily practice the principles of AA in all of their affairs.

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**THE
MANAGER'S
CORNER**

In Gratitude

I am truly grateful for everyone who helped make my first official year as manager at your Central Office so awesome. My thanks go out for the support of all of the group secretaries and treasurers, the IGR Board, and especially the office volunteers and helpers who show up and make our Central Office a safe, comfortable place to come. Central Office couldn't keep its doors open without those dedicated volunteers.

This year's breakfast and 4th of July barbecue were great successes, filled with good food, good fellowship and good fun. I look forward to next year's breakfast and the 4th of July barbecue, where we'll try a new event--the resentment wall. More information will be coming on that later, but we can all look forward to another great day of fellowship and recovery.

Thanks to everyone who participated in our second annual Gratitude month in November, so far we have taken in over \$2,200.00 and counting, this will help provide the financial support Central Office needs in order to keep serving the local AA community. There is a special place in Alcoholics Anonymous for the word "gratitude". I know I am blessed and have much to be grateful for, including the opportunity to be District 23's "special worker".

In 2010 I am looking forward to finding more ways for your Central Office to even be of more service to our Santa Barbara fellowship.

I look forward to seeing everyone again in 2010. For those of you who have never stopped by the office, I invite you to come down and take a look. You are always welcome and I would sure enjoy meeting each and every one of you. I would like to wish everyone a great Holiday and a safe new year, and pray that all of the promises bless you this upcoming year.

John S., Manager

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.

District 23 General Service

www.ccaadistrict23.com

Does Your Group Have a GSR?

“The strength of our whole AA service structure starts with the group and with the General Service Representative (GSR) the group elects. I cannot emphasize too strongly the GSR’s importance.”

(Bill W., on General Services and the GSR)

When you’re a GSR, you are linking your home group with the whole of AA. You transmit ideas and opinions, as well as facts; through you, the group conscience becomes a part of “the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.”

The GSR position is a 2 year commitment. You will attend District and Area Assembly meetings to transfer information back to your group AND to vote in matters affecting AA as a whole. You typically give a GSR report to your group on a monthly basis.

Locally you can get involved and become a part of our committees: Facilities, Literature, Public Information, Cooperation with the Professional Community, Archives, Accessibilities, or the Grapevine. We need volunteers all the time! We have fun carrying the message, and would love to have every group represented in our district!

For more info, please contact the District 23 DCM (Don H.) Phone: 630-4834 or email: dcm@ccaadistrict23.com

Upcoming District 23 events:

- **GSR Monthly Meeting (Nov. 2):** 1st Monday at 6PM, Holy Cross Church, 1740 Cliff Dr.
- **Facilities Committee Meeting (Nov. 4):** 6 PM, SB AA Central Office. Chair: Earl U.
- **Area Assembly (Nov. 15):** Oxnard
- **Public Information Committee Meeting (Nov. 17):** 6 PM, SB AA Central Office. Chair: Don H.

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.”

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

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 (over 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 W.

I said to begin with that this Twelfth Step is the step of regeneration. If there were no Twelfth Step, there would not be any AA. I firmly believe that even Bill and Doc, our founders, could not have kept themselves sober for long, had they not come up with this crowning admonition of the new way of life they developed. Because, the Twelfth Step simply means living the other eleven steps. It follows as does the day the night, that when we have recognized our dependence upon God (as we understand him) and we have turned our lives entirely over to his guidance and care, we will observe the command to love one another as he has loved us. In other words, we will always be doing Twelfth Step work, as long as we are adhering to the other eleven steps.

Many of us find Twelfth Step work very difficult, others of us seem to find very little opportunity for it. Much of our concern over these apparent difficulties lies in the fact that we try so hard to define Twelfth Step work. It cannot be defined in terms of the number of contacts made or even in the number of men and women we have introduced to the program. Twelfth Step work is AA. If we live AA, we are doing Twelfth Step work. Our every thought, word, and deed either builds up or tears down the program. We must practice what we preach; our own sobriety is by no means secure because we may have lost the florid complexion and now have an extra buck in our jeans. The change, if it is to endure, must originate in the very depths of our souls. When our hearts have been turned over to the care of God, our lives have in all truth been changed.

This new life will communicate itself to all with whom we come in contact. The message of AA will be carried far and wide to alcoholics and non-alcoholics alike. Who could possibly estimate the number of AAs who have come into this new life as a result of the good example of one of our members. How many non-alcoholics have been witness to the change in an alcoholic acquaintance and as a result, the non-alcoholic carries the message to another in need of help with his problem.

How many of our former bar buddies, who are still at the bar, are watching us? How many of them are already on their way into AA, because they see the light shining through us?

Not for a minute would I belittle the glorious and meritorious work of those who spend themselves in what we commonly refer to as Twelfth Step work. It is the work that we all must do whenever the opportunity presents itself to go to the aid of an alcoholic in distress. What I am trying to say is that Twelfth Step work is much broader and all-embracing than what we sometimes realize. We all know that in carrying the message to another alcoholic we find our best approach, in fact generally our only approach, lies in pointing out what we had to do to sober up; in telling, not what he must do, but what we have found worked for us. How infinitely more powerful is our message, when he already knows or at least immediately recognizes that AA has produced in us a patient, humble, and loving friend of God and man.

Therefore I think that we must go out on Twelfth Step calls ever mindful that we are very likely only the immediate instrument in this particular case, and as we go to and return from that call, our journey may well be fraught with occasions to sow the seeds for many, many calls yet unheard. Yes, I think that the as yet unarticulated calls must be given voice by our daily practice of AA principles in all of our comings and goings.

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 2009

Name	Years
Mat S	1
Olivia C	1
Naomi H	1
Louie R	2
Melissa W	2
Lucy	2
Vanee V	2
Clark G	2
Sharon G	3
Lisa B	3
Nevin	4
Lauren L	4
Eric	4
Elizabeth	5
Brian G	5
Brittney	5
Nathan	6
Robert F.	6
Nathan	6
Don G	7
Tim C	9
Jim S	10
Kathy S	12
Nancy S	12
Charlie L.	13
John D.	15
Georgas	15
Shelly S	20
Marlene H	20
Steve O	20
Norm C	22
Marc C	23
Ken R	23
Bill M	23
Patricia E	24
John M	29
Dennis W	29

The Messenger is published monthly by:

**23rd District Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous
1213 State Street, Suit H
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 First month, January we need writing on Step 1 and Tradition 1.

Send submissions to **JohnS@santabarbaraAA.com**

Central Office Statistics

During the November 2009 your Central Office had:

AA Information calls	665
Al-Anon Referrals	52
Referrals to other programs	41
12step via answering service	38
Out-of-town visitors	41
12-step via office	42
Office walk-ins	375
Hits on our Web site	1,625

Service Meetings

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

IGR's (Intergroup Representatives) meet at 6:00 p.m. on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at First Presbyterian Church, 21 East Constance in Santa Barbara.

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 first Wednesday of each month at Central Office.

Donations by Group November 2009

	Nov 09	Oct 09	Jan - Nov 09		Nov 09	Oct 09	Jan - Nov 09
001 Sunrisers	0.00	0.00	216.00	112 Montecito/Carpinteria	0.00	160.00	428.96
002 Courage To Change	0.00	0.00	100.00	113 Sought Through Prayer & Meditation	27.00	13.00	157.75
003 Eye Opener	286.00	310.00	2,992.00	114 Schooner Group	0.00	50.00	343.00
004 Monday At A Time	0.00	249.93	1,011.70	115 Eleventh Step Meditation	0.00	0.00	193.00
005 Noon Step Study	0.00	0.00	9.00	117 Way Of Life	0.00	0.00	750.00
006 Start Your Week Right	0.00	160.00	540.00	120 Sat. Morn. Home Boys	165.00	0.00	1,242.60
007 Sound Off	0.00	0.00	30.00	122 Came to Believe Candlelight	0.00	0.00	50.00
010 Foundation Group	150.00	0.00	463.77	125 On Awakening	0.00	154.00	154.00
011 Sundowner Group	0.00	0.00	350.00	130 Saturday Night Sobriety	0.00	72.00	216.00
013 New Pair Of Glasses	0.00	100.00	100.00	133 Action Participation	0.00	0.00	520.78
014 El Montecito Saturday Night	225.00	0.00	325.00	139 It's A Hell Of A Deal	0.00	0.00	663.60
019 Onward & Upward	0.00	40.00	384.00	140 Gay Discussion, Sunday	0.00	0.00	80.00
020 Cambridge Group	0.00	0.00	100.00	144 Back To Basics, Young People	0.00	90.00	437.96
021 Summerland Monday Group	0.00	0.00	432.19	145 The How And Why Of It	0.00	24.60	166.20
022 There Is A Solution	0.00	120.00	447.00	148 San Ysidro	0.00	67.25	151.25
023 For Women Only	0.00	0.00	242.40	150 Goleta Sun. Night Speaker	0.00	0.00	151.60
024, Mesa-Singleness of Purpose	71.00	0.00	231.00	153 Happy Destiny	0.00	249.20	812.70
026 Carpinteria Study Group	0.00	0.00	99.00	163 Mustard Seed	0.00	0.00	125.00
034 Women of Change	140.00	0.00	267.10	164 Men Who Have Lost Their Legs	460.00	218.00	2,268.00
035 12 & 12 Study, Tues.	0.00	160.00	540.00	165 Junkyard Dogs	0.00	225.00	895.00
045 Alternative Group	198.90	0.00	652.50	166 Serenity Sisters	0.00	0.00	105.03
047 Tuesday Men's Stag	84.00	108.00	588.00	170 Barefoot Group	15.00	0.00	182.00
051 Men's Group At St. Mary's	0.00	54.00	248.00	173 Let it Go-11 th Step Meditation	100.00	0.00	100.00
053 Both Oars In The Water	0.00	160.00	540.00	177 Key Group	0.00	0.00	1,960.00
055 Staying Alive	180.25	70.00	745.25	180 Thursday Ladies Night	0.00	0.00	110.00
062 Do The Steps Or Die	0.00	0.00	75.33	181 Keep Coming Back Group	0.00	344.25	1,466.71
064 Women's Serenity Group	0.00	0.00	173.61	182 Just the Black Print	105.00	0.00	173.00
067 Rigorous Honesty	78.79	119.78	1,217.68	183 Summerland/Montecito, Thurs.	0.00	350.00	1,060.00
068 Stepping Stones	0.00	144.50	292.70	186 Sunday Night Alternative, NH III	0.00	0.00	189.00
070 Success Group	80.00	0.00	170.00	187 Turning Point	0.00	0.00	50.00
074 Casa Serena (BB Study)	0.00	0.00	56.00	191 Men on a Mission	60.00	0.00	164.00
076 11 th Step	0.00	160.00	540.00	197 Big Book Comes Alive Women's Meeting	0.00	0.00	176.00
079 Harbor Group	58.00	146.00	1,025.40	201 Birthday Donations	0.00	0.00	3,023.00
083 Sober Students, Tues Eve	0.00	0.00	100.00	202 Supporting Members	872.00	690.00	12,748.69
084, 83 – 87 Group	300.00	145.00	1,532.48	204 Memorial Fund	0.00	0.00	1,450.00
089 Here & Now	0.00	0.00	180.00	207 Gratitude Month	1,943.52	168.54	2,164.01
093 Into Action, Thurs	0.00	0.00	270.00	208 World Services Donation	71.75	231.00	1,687.50
094 Questions & Answers	7.49	0.00	47.11	210 Convention Income	0.00	0.00	2,706.00
097 Almost Saints	0.00	200.00	1,005.00	211 Rent Received	178.00	158.00	1,478.55
099 Sink Or Swim	0.00	160.00	540.00	212 Special Events	0.00	0.00	3,685.00
100 Student of Life	0.00	0.00	40.00				
111 Carpinteria Canalino	0.00	0.00	400.00				
				TOTALS:	\$5,856.70	\$5,872.05	\$63,805.11

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