



MESSENGER

Step One: We admitted we were powerless over alcohol, that our lives had become unmanageable. Consider Step One to be data, not judgment.

When you take away judgment, it's easier to consider alcoholism to be a disease, not a disgrace. Two key words in the step are "powerless" and "unmanageable".

"...we were powerless over alcohol"

One dictionary definition of powerlessness is the inability to produce an effect.

I am unable to produce an effect over alcohol, but alcohol certainly produces an effect on me.

Nowhere in the definition is judgment. Just data.

"...our lives had become unmanageable."

Unmanageable is defined as "awkward or difficult to keep under control or within limits, ...not submitting to discipline; unruly." Again, data, not judgment.

What does life consist of? Among other things, life consists of the weather, laws, traffic, road construction, and work. I am not able to manage the weather; I don't even try to. I can't manage traffic or road construction. What I can manage is myself. And if I stick to managing myself, I'll usually be too busy to worry about managing other people, places and things.

This actually brings relief- I don't need to manage anyone or anything else except me.

Just as the first word of this step is "we", within the step are at least 8 mentions that "I" cannot do this deal alone, I need to find some God of my own understanding, and I need others:

On page 21 "... only an act of Providence can remove it (the obsession for destructive drinking.)"

On page 22, "... so far as alcohol was concerned, self-confidence was of no good whatsoever,"

"...we were victims of a mental obsession so powerful that no amount of human willpower could break it." "...no such thing as personal conquest of this compulsion by the unaided will," "...few indeed...had ever won through singlehanded combat" and "it was a statistical fact that alcoholics almost never recovered on their own resources..." Look for the other mentions.

And for relapsers, consider this classic line: "...when these laid hold of the A.A. principles with all the fervor with which the drowning seize life preservers, they almost invariably got well." Powerful promise. Ask anyone who relapsed if they laid hold of the AA principles with such fervor. (fervor-intensity of emotion)

Page 22- "Our sponsors pointed out our increasing sensitivity to alcohol- an allergy, they called it." More data, more non-judgment, more relief.

The first part of Step 1 talks about an obsession for destructive drinking. Sometimes it's no longer about destructive drinking; it's about destructive thinking. That brings up one of my favorite lines: "I came for my drinking; I stayed for my thinking."

Maryjean B, Alcoholic

**THE
MANAGER'S
CORNER**

I would like to thank everyone who made my first official year as your special worker, such a great experience.

In the upcoming year, one of my goals is to bring more information to the AA community about what is going on in your Central Office, what we do down here, why we do it and some of the outcomes that have been the results of our efforts in service.

I want to thank every group in our area who supported your Central Office, as well as the supporting members who contribute to help us be able to remain open and be of maximum service to the alcoholic who still suffers.

Gratitude month was a great success for only our second year. We brought in almost \$4,500.00, so thanks to everyone, "group and individual" who participated.

To all of the volunteers who answer the phones at the Central Office, THANK YOU, without you, the office wouldn't be the safe and loving place it is. Also thanks to all the other people who come in to volunteer their time in helping out in various tasks. You really make a difference with your service.

February 27th, 2010 at the Goleta Valley Community Center at 9:00am, we are having a Central Office FUN raiser, a "Bring your Sponsor to Breakfast", breakfast. We will be having eggs, hotcakes, bacon, sausage, juice, yogurt, coffee and a lot of great fellowship. There will be a great speaker and a 50/50 raffle, so we look forward to seeing everyone out there at 9:00am-12:00pm.

I look forward to being of service in the upcoming year and hope to see some of you who have never visited your Central Office. Come in to say hi.

In Service,
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!

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.

District 23 General Service
www.ccaadistrict23.com

Archives Committee

The Archives Committee is responsible for maintaining an Archives Display which includes:

- Photos of some of the people and places that have made up AA history
- A large scrapbook AA-related newspaper articles from 1935-1941 (Very interesting and fun to read!)
- Copies of the original manuscript of the Big Book.
- The booklet: "Passing it On: A Brief History of AA in Santa Barbara", which describes how AA came about in our local Area.

Every year we have been fortunate enough to setup the Archives Display at the Santa Barbara Convention in October.

The Archives Committee will be happy to bring and setup the Archives Display for your group or for any special AA function.

For more information or to schedule a visit, contact the Archives Committee Chair at archives@ccaadistrict23.com.

Or you can contact the DCM (Don H.):

Phone: (805) 630-4834

Email: dcm@ccaadistrict23.com

Upcoming District 23 events:

- **GSR Monthly Meeting (Jan. 4): 1st Monday at 6PM, Holy Cross Church, 1740 Cliff Dr.**
- **Facilities Committee Meeting (Jan. 4): 6 PM, SB AA Central Office. Chair: Earl U.**
- **Area Assembly (Jan. 17): Simi Valley**
- **Public Information Committee Meeting (Jan. 19): 6 PM, SB AA Central Office. Chair: Don H.**
- **District 23 Officer's Meeting (Jan. 26): Tues. before GSR Mtg.: 6 PM, SB AA Central Office**

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."

In Service

Hi my name is Elsie and I am an alcoholic. My sobriety date is June 5th, 2007; the best 5th I ever had. I am really grateful to be sober. Being in recovery this past 2 ½ years wasn't easy, but what got me through was being of service, because of what A.A. has done for me; especially the women in this program and my sponsor. I know being of service to another person has gotten me through hard times in sobriety. That's why I continue to do it even when I don't want to.

To keep my sobriety I have had to let go of people I love, knowing in my heart that it was for the best. Sometimes in meetings people talk about "letting go of your past"; for now, these people are my past. It is only through the people in AA. that I have been able to get through difficult situations like these.

That's why I love coming down to Central Office, because I feel safe and it gets me out of me by being of service to others. I am grateful for the old-timers because they continue to give me hope, and also to the newcomers who remind me how powerful this disease is; "it ain't no joke".

I know that if I stay connected to this program everything will fall into its place. I just have to trust in my higher power in all areas of my life and continue to be of service to another alcoholic.

To the newcomer: hang on and get a sponsor, do the steps, go to meetings and get a commitment. Stay connected and get a Higher Power that will help you and see you through the trials in your life.

Elsie, Alcoholic

Young and Sober

My name is Olivia and I came into this program at 17 years old. I couldn't imagine at the time giving up the only solution I had for dealing with all of my "life's problems" - alcohol. When I got here I was a total wreck; completely different from the person writing this article. My life was completely unmanageable and I had little to no hope of recreating my life in any way. I would have never imagined my life to be the way it is now.

Today I'm 19 years old, with over a year of sobriety. When I came here, I instantly noticed the lack of young people my age in the rooms, with excessive amounts of old people. How could I relate? Today, I've learned that age doesn't matter. It's the similarities that we all share, not the differences. I am among a fellowship that shares a common malady, alcoholism.

I'm in college where obviously many people are either drunk or high, or reminisce about being those as well. I grabbed a sponsor instantly because I needed help if I was going to do this thing and give it a fair shot.

Doing the 12 steps has helped me out in every problem I have come across. I would have never imagined that being my age, I would be okay with the fact that I don't drink. What's so amazing is that I don't want to. I hang out with other people in A.A who are around my age and have fun, sober. This program has not only taken away my obsession to drink, but it has shown me a new way of living. I apply all of the steps in school and with my parents/loved ones.

I go to young people's meetings and share the solution that was told to me when I was new. It's true, I do sometimes think that it would be nice to go drink with some of the people I go to school with, but that thought quickly disappears when I remember where I go when I drink: institutions, jail, or death.

To me it's an easy choice, and I choose to be free today; free from that hopeless state of mind and body. My hope is to show young people that it is possible to be young and sober at the same time.

Olivia C, alcoholic



Central Office Breakfast

**Saturday February 27, 2010
Goleta Valley Community Center
5679 Hollister Ave**

Breakfast at 9:00 am

Speaker Meeting after breakfast, 50/50 Raffle,

You can purchase breakfast tickets

at Your Central Office or at the breakfast

Tickets \$5.00 each

Call 962-3332 for information



Gratitude Month 2009

Gratitude Month was a great success, our current total of donations is at \$4,431.90, with probably a few more donations still not in yet. Below are the group totals donated for Gratitude Month. I would like to thank all the groups and people who participated. Gratitude Month was by far our single largest donation for 2009. Without Gratitude Month, our year would have been in the red, instead of the black.

If you do not see your group listed, please ask your group. I don't believe that everyone knows about Gratitude Month and my goal is to reach each group this upcoming year and explain how important the money raised is in making your Central Office as effective as it can be in our primary purpose of carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

TOTALS FOR GRATITUDE MONTH 2009

11th Step	62.92	Mustard Seed	51.00
83-87 Group	97.00	Onward and Upward	6.00
Almost Saints	177.05	Rigorous Honesty	83.75
Back to Basic	8.00	Schooner Group	56.74
Both oars in the water	18.00	Sink or Swim	38.00
Carpinteria Study Group	17.62	Sisters in Solution	21.00
Courage to Change	49.75	Sound Off	22.00
Eye Opener	320.00	Squirrel Crossing	17.00
Gay Discussion	51.00	Start Your Day Right	457.66
Grateful Group	22.00	Start Your Week Right	20.00
Gratitude Month Anonymous	675.00	Staying Alive	61.50
Group	256.50	Stepping Stones	100.00
Homeboys	127.00	Success Group	16.00
How and Why Big book Study	37.00	Summerland in Montecito	62.00
It's a Hell of a Deal	155.00	Sundowners	69.00
Jay Walker Book Study	39.00	Tea and Twelve	25.00
Junkyard dogs	194.00	The Alternative Group	45.00
Just the Black Print	55.00	The Big Book comes alive	45.00
KCB	43.01	Thursday Night 11th Step	33.00
Let it Go-11th Step Meditation	62.00	Tuesday Nite Mens stag	115.00
Men who have lost their legs	150.00	Twelve and Twelve	64.30
Mesa Singleness of purpose	30.00	Walking Barefoot	33.00
Monday at a time	113.00	Way of Life	192.10
		Totals:	\$4,431.90



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

December 2009

Birthdays

Name	Years
Brenda B	1
David F	1
Laura S	1
Maggie C	1
Robert Y	1
Susan R	1
Alcyia	2
Garu U	3
Tammy	3
Aiko L	5
Bowle J	5
Chelsea V	5
Jim B	5
Naomi C	5
Kelly B	6
Mike C	7
Matt F	8
Roxanne S.	8
Clay C	9
Manny B	10
John L	11
Cindy K	12
Susan B	16
Natalie B	18
Dinah M	20
Jay F	20
Lyle	20
Joan L	23
Bo S.	25
Spencer W	27
Kurt F	32
Lucy H	33
Irish Tony	35

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 2nd month, February we need writing on Step 2 and Tradition 2.

Send submissions to JohnS@santabarbaraAA.com

Central Office Statistics

During the December 2009 your Central Office had:

AA Information calls	661
Al-Anon Referrals	55
Referrals to other programs	39
12step via answering service	45
Out-of-town visitors	39
12-step via office	40
Office walk-ins	365
Hits on our Web site	1,550

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 December 2009

	Dec 09	Nov 09	Jan - Dec				
001 Sunrisers	0.00	0.00	216.00	112 Montecito/Carpinteria	0.00	0.00	428.96
002 Courage To Change	0.00	0.00	100.00	113 Sought Through Prayer & Meditation	7.00	27.00	164.75
003 Eye Opener	210.00	286.00	3,202.00	114 Schooner Group	0.00	0.00	343.00
004 Monday At A Time	203.06	0.00	1,214.76	115 Eleventh Step Meditation	150.00	0.00	343.00
005 Noon Step Study	0.00	0.00	9.00	117 Way Of Life	780.00	0.00	1,530.00
006 Start Your Week Right	0.00	0.00	540.00	120 Sat. Morn. Home Boys	0.00	165.00	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	0.00	150.00	463.77	125 On Awakening	0.00	0.00	154.00
011 Sundowner Group	0.00	0.00	350.00	130 Saturday Night Sobriety	0.00	0.00	216.00
013 New Pair Of Glasses	0.00	0.00	100.00	133 Action Participation	220.00	0.00	740.78
014 El Montecito Saturday Night	0.00	225.00	325.00	139 It's A Hell Of A Deal	192.00	0.00	855.60
019 Onward & Upward	44.00	0.00	428.00	140 Gay Discussion, Sunday	140.00	0.00	220.00
020 Cambridge Group	0.00	0.00	100.00	144 Back To Basics, Young People	0.00	0.00	437.96
021 Summerland Monday Group	0.00	0.00	432.19	145 The How And Why Of It	0.00	0.00	166.20
022 There Is A Solution	78.00	0.00	525.00	148 San Ysidro	0.00	0.00	151.25
023 For Women Only	200.00	0.00	442.40	150 Goleta Sun. Night Speaker	0.00	0.00	151.60
024, Mesa-Singleness of Purpose	40.00	71.00	271.00	153 Happy Destiny	0.00	0.00	812.70
026 Carpinteria Study Group	65.00	0.00	164.00	163 Mustard Seed	0.00	0.00	125.00
034 Women of Change	0.00	140.00	267.10	164 Men Who Have Lost Their Legs	0.00	460.00	2,268.00
035 12 & 12 Study, Tues.	0.00	0.00	540.00	165 Junkyard Dogs	0.00	0.00	895.00
045 Alternative Group	0.00	198.90	652.50	166 Serenity Sisters	0.00	0.00	105.03
047 Tuesday Men's Stag	72.00	84.00	660.00	170 Barefoot Group	0.00	15.00	182.00
051 Men's Group At St. Mary's	50.00	0.00	298.00	173 Let it Go-11th Step Meditation	0.00	100.00	100.00
053 Both Oars In The Water	0.00	0.00	540.00	177 Key Group	630.00	0.00	2,590.00
055 Staying Alive	0.00	180.25	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	0.00	1,466.71
064 Women's Serenity Group	0.00	0.00	173.61	182 Just the Black Print	0.00	105.00	173.00
067 Rigorous Honesty	72.21	78.79	1,289.89	183 Summerland/Montecito, Thurs.	186.00	0.00	1,246.00
068 Stepping Stones	62.40	0.00	355.10	186 Sunday Night Alternative, NH III	0.00	0.00	189.00
070 Success Group	0.00	80.00	170.00	187 Turning Point	0.00	0.00	50.00
074 Casa Serena (BB Study)	0.00	0.00	56.00	190 Living Sober Book Study	89.50	0.00	89.50
076 11th Step	0.00	0.00	540.00	191 Men on a Mission	0.00	60.00	164.00
079 Harbor Group	30.00	58.00	1,055.40	197 Big Book Comes Alive Women's Meeting	61.64	0.00	237.64
083 Sober Students, Tues Eve	0.00	0.00	100.00	200 Anonymous Donations	0.00	0.00	103.23
084, 83 - 87 Group	150.00	300.00	1,682.48	201 Birthday Donations	257.00	0.00	3,280.00
089 Here & Now	45.00	0.00	225.00	202 Supporting Members	699.00	872.00	13,447.69
093 Into Action, Thurs	0.00	0.00	270.00	204 Memorial Fund	150.00	0.00	1,600.00
094 Questions & Answers	0.00	7.49	47.11	207 Gratitude Month	2,488.38	1,943.52	4,652.39
097 Almost Saints	155.00	0.00	1,160.00	208 World Services Donation	307.95	71.75	1,995.45
099 Sink Or Swim	0.00	0.00	540.00	210 Convention Income	500.00	0.00	3,206.00
100 Student of Life	0.00	0.00	40.00	211 Rent Received	193.00	178.00	1,671.55
111 Carpinteria Canalino	0.00	0.00	400.00	212 Special Events	0.00	0.00	3,685.00
				Totals:	\$8,528.14	\$5,856.70	\$72,436.48

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

