



MESSENGER

Wrinkles in My Ego The Sixth Step

STEP SIX says, "Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character." How to be entirely ready has been quite a puzzler for me. I have to keep in mind that the Step does not say, "I tinkered with my personality till I became perfect." First of all, I am not sure what perfect is; and second, when it comes to ironing out the wrinkles in my ego, I am about as clever as a gorilla repairing a wristwatch.

The first thing I have to keep in mind is that *God* does the removing, as well as deciding what is to be removed. So many of my difficulties were caused by the misapplication of God-given virtues that if I tried to sort them out, I would very likely throw out much of the wheat with the chaff. But, after twenty years of trying to become entirely ready for God to do His work, I can honestly say it sure is worth the effort.

At one time or another, many of us feel insecure, inadequate, and uncertain. Somehow, we just aren't very enthusiastic about the present. As of today, I am quite sure what *not* to do for this state of affairs. I used to resort to a form of liquid courage that seemed to be just what I needed. For me today, the process of becoming ready to have God remove these defects of character starts with being where it is happening--at meetings! If we ask for God's guidance and go about our business *as though* we were going to get it--we will. I also believe that we should be active in seeking God's help and passive in accepting His guidance.

Perhaps, one of the next things to remember is that, since I have been mixed-up for several decades, it would not be realistic for me to expect to come up smelling like Albert Schweitzer overnight. "Though the mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small." I have to tell myself: Stay sober and wait.

It is very difficult to steer a parked car and make much progress toward any destination. I try to get moving by using what I have. When I first came to AA, I was so far gone, I couldn't remember a phone number long enough to dial it, so I had to write it down. I was not stable enough to hold a good job, so I took a mediocre job. In fact, I had five jobs after I sobered up, and each paid less than the previous one. You might say I had a very promising future behind me. The sixth job finally paid off, and I got back to my trade. I had to use what I had. In short, I had to be going somewhere before I could be guided.

These are some of the things I have learned along the way from the people in AA. I have also seen people who have grasped the program hang on in spite of tremendous odds, such as slow death by cancer or sudden loss of loved ones by accident. Whatever the character defects of these people might have been, drinking was not among them. They stuck to the program.

God as I understand Him does not cheat anyone. I don't pretend to know how, when, or where the score is evened up, but I am certain that it always is.

4th of July BBQ

To Benefit

Central Office

11 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.

(Meal served at Noon)

Tucker's Grove

N. Turnpike Rd & Cathedral Oaks

Games, Fellowship, Bake Sale,

50/50 Raffle and lots of Fun

\$5 per plate

Purchase tickets at

Central Office

or at the

BBQ





In a letter written in 1959, Bill W. wrote, "Gratitude should go forward, rather than backward. In other words, if you carry the message to still others, you will be making the best possible repayment for the help given to you."

I am grateful for the sponsorship that showed me that gratitude was an action word. That if I wanted to feel grateful, I should act grateful. And, conversely, that if I felt grateful there was a darn good chance I would start wanting to act that way.

I can, of course, feel grateful when I volunteer at Central Office or when I attend a meeting at New House, one of the prisons, the Rescue Mission or the Salvation Army. These meetings are usually packed with people new in recovery, and that always helps me to remember my primary purpose and my own early days in recovery. I also get to feel that I may be of some small help as an example to those people, because some of those are

places I have been myself

I have also learned through sponsorship that I should put my money where my mouth is. That one of the ways I can get right with the world is to pay my own way. That some of those financial amends I could not make directly, for various reasons, could be made indirectly by supporting my Group and my Central Office, as well as service organizations like Hospital & Institutions. It was pointed out that now that I was making more money as a direct result of staying sober and being a good employee, that perhaps I should let that fact be reflected in my 7th Tradition contributions.

It also turns out that there are a lot of ways for me to perform acts that make me feel better besides 12th Stepping other alcoholics. That, of course, is our primary purpose, but there is more to life than that pursuit. One of my first jobs in recovery was scrubbing toilets as a custodian at a school. I always felt a little ashamed of that, until a friend of mine told me she cleaned houses for a living and had learned to really enjoy toilet cleaning. When I questioned how that was possible, she informed me that it suddenly hit her at some point while she was engaged in that activity, that since she was down on her knees she might as well pray. That her prayer was that she hoped that whoever used the facility she was working on would be happier for having found a clean comfortable place. A place she had a part in creating. You know? I never felt bad about scrubbing toilets after that.

This article is, of course, my own opinion and has no reference on Central Office or A.A. as a whole.

Thank you for my life.

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.

Convention News

Your convention committee continues working on the “behind the scenes” jobs we referred to in last month’s Messenger. In some cases, this resembles a juggling act. The Program Chair and the Site Coordinator, for example, have to work closely with each other to make sure all the different groups’ events are accommodated. Thanks to a wide participation this year, a good deal of thoughtful planning is required. There will be marathon meetings, of course, as well as the H&I breakfast, a long-timer’s meeting, the AA/Al-Anon split pitch, Al-Anon meetings, plus the main speaker meetings Friday and Saturday nights, and on Sunday morning. In addition, we are expecting a good turnout for the young people’s meetings, and the gay and lesbian meetings, as usual, and a big participation from our Spanish-speaking friends this year. Providing a location for all these events, and coordinating the times, is a daunting task, but it’s all just part of the job of putting on a convention of this size. We’re lucky to have such a talented group of willing workers. If you would like to help plan the 2008 convention, join us at the next committee meeting, 6 PM on June 12th, at Maggie’s place (check the web site, www.sbaaconvention.org, for directions to the meeting). If you want to volunteer at the convention itself, email volunteer@sbaaconvention.org. We can use the help, and you’ll have a great time.

We are still hoping to get the registration forms in the mail and out to meetings by the end of May (this is being written mid-month), and if we have, they should be in your hands by the time you are reading this, or will be very soon. As of this writing, on-line registration is being tested, and it should be available shortly also. That means you can take advantage of the price breaks available to you through early registration. If you register early, it will cost only \$20, compared with \$25 at the door. The \$100 package is an even better deal since it gets you a complete weekend of fun, fellowship and recovery, plus two very good meals (three if you count the H&I breakfast), to say nothing of the bonus memorabilia items you get, along with free coffee (when you bring your convention mug to Hospitality). Consider, too, that by the time the convention rolls around, the money you spent to register back in June would have been long gone anyway, but now, since you signed up early, it’s almost as if the weekend is free! Now doesn’t that seem like good alcoholic reasoning?

One of the events that is becoming increasingly popular is the Friday night barbeque. If you missed previous barbeque nights, anyone who did go can tell you the Elks sure know how to do that grilling. It looks like more and more people have discovered that fact. The meal features tri-tip, chicken, baked beans and salad. It makes my mouth water just thinking about it! The barbeque is where the prizes for the golf tournament will be presented, too, so that will be worth the price of dinner for its entertainment value alone. Just be aware that if attendance this year increases like it has in the past couple, we may sell out – another reason to sign up early.

Sign up early or sign up late, whatever you decide to do, mark your calendar for the weekend of October 24, 25 and 26, and plan on joining us. We look forward to seeing you then.

~ Your Convention Committee

Santa Barbara District 23
General Service Representatives
<http://www.ccaadistrict23.com>

Literature

Your District #23 Literature Committee provides filled Literature Racks, Newcomer Packets or Meeting Directories to our Local Libraries and Facilities. Help us reach out to the newcomer by restocking our literature, assuring that the AA message is available even before he reaches the door of A.A.

We also have startup literature bundles for Groups that do not have AA Conference approved Literature.

Plus we can answer any questions you or your group may have regarding the difference between A.A. Conference approved Literature and Non AA Literature.

For more info or to volunteer please contact us:

Literature@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."

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JOKE OF THE MONTH

AT A RECENT MEETING, a member was talking about his pre-AA financial problems, which brought to mind this story, received from *Short Snorts*. A fellow who was badly in need of drinking money went into a bank to try to borrow some. "I'm sorry," said the teller, "but the loan arranger is out to lunch."

"That's okay," replied the lush. "Let me talk to Tonto instead."



JULY 4TH BAKE SALE CENTRAL OFFICE FUNDRAISER



Baked goods will be sold at the July 4th BBQ at Tuckers Grove 11:00am. Please donate your baked goods on the day of the event. You can bring them in portion sized baggies to sell or bring it to the Bake Sale table and we will do it for you.

Any desserts are appreciated. This year we will also be raffling off some whole cakes and pies.



For questions or to volunteer to help call Patsy 964-4443



**"JOHNNY ONE-STEP" THINKS IT'S AN ESCALATOR---
---JUST SIT ON THE FIRST STEP AND RIDE UP.**



May 2008 Birthdays

Name	Years
Amy H.	1
Gloria	1
Jami	1
Mark C.	1
Patrick O	1
Brad Z	2
Darren K.	2
Don M.	2
Melody	2
Shannon M.	2
Cory C.	3
Jeff S.	3
Kyle S.	3
Leilana	3
Lindsay O.	3
Monte M	3
Patricia C	3
Phil G	3
Matt D.	4
Patsy	4
Don E	5
Gary	5
Jen P	5
Richard K.	5
Steven E	5
Emily W	6
Janice V	6
Laurie Lea	6
Mike M	6
Elizabeth	7
Paul D.	7
Chris D	8
Joan G	13
Cynthia H	15
Louise G	15
Doug K	17
Helen D.	18
Blanco O.	20
Chris	20
Sissy H	20
Shannon	21
Barbara N.	22
Debi S	23
Catherine	24
Brian S.	25
Bob C.	28
Joan S.	28
Jean E.	31
Barbara H.	33
Irish Tony	33
David D.	36
Al M.	37
Gill	37
Jim W.	37

The Messenger is published monthly by:

**23rd District Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous
1213 State Street, Suit H
Santa Barbara, California, 93101**

805-962-3332

JohnS@SantaBarbaraAA.com

Submissions Needed

The Messenger needs your submissions and letters. For the July 2008 Messenger we are looking for articles for Step 7, Tradition 7. or Concept 7. Or any other AA related story, H and I, or any on your experience, strength and hope. Send submissions to **JohnS@SantaBarbaraAA.com**

Central Office Statistics

During the April 2008 your Central Office had:

AA Information calls	985
Al-Anon Referrals	70
Referrals to other programs	43
12step via answering service	58
Out-of-town visitors	45
12-step via office	25
Office walk-ins	654
Hits on our Web site	1,134

Service Meetings

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

IGR's (Intergroup Representatives) meet at 6:00 P.M. the 2nd Tuesday 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 each month at the Central Office.

PI (Public Information meets the 4th 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 May 2008

	May 08	Apr 08	Jan - May 08		May 08	Apr 08	Jan - May 08
11th Step 076	0.00	80.00	160.00				
12 & 12 Study, Tues. 035	0.00	80.00	160.00	Montecito/Carpinteria 112	59.60	164.66	224.26
Action Participation 133	0.00	177.30	1,058.30	Mustard Seed 163	0.00	115.00	115.00
Almost Saints 097	175.00	300.00	649.00	New Life 091	0.00	200.00	200.00
Alternative Group 045	0.00	52.00	238.00	Off Center 141	0.00	75.00	449.85
Back To Basics Group 161	0.00	0.00	194.62	Questions & Answers 094	27.85	0.00	27.85
Back To Basics, Young People 144	123.89	0.00	182.00	Rigorous Honesty 067	24.00	0.00	54.00
Barefoot Group 170	42.00	47.00	285.75	Sat. Morn. Home Boys 120	0.00	186.00	336.00
Big Book Study, Friday 101	0.00	0.00	11.50	Saturday Night Sobriety 130	0.00	72.00	72.00
Big Book Workshop 016	0.00	0.00	20.00	Schooner Group 114	0.00	100.00	201.00
Both Oars In The Water 053	0.00	80.00	160.00	Serenity Sisters 166	0.00	0.00	124.12
Cambridge Group 020	120.00	0.00	120.00	Sink Or Swim 099	0.00	80.00	160.00
Came to Believe Candlelight 122	40.00	0.00	40.00	Sisters In Solution 030	0.00	0.00	25.00
Carpinteria Canalino 111	400.00	0.00	640.00	Sought Through Prayer & Meditation 113	0.00	0.00	27.00
Casa Serena (BB Study) 074	294.00	0.00	294.00	Start Your Day Right 156	125.00	400.00	1,325.00
Courage To Change 002	100.00	0.00	100.00	Start Your Week Right t006	0.00	80.00	160.00
Do The Steps Or Die 062	40.58	40.10	200.54	Staying Alive 055	70.00	75.00	265.00
El Montecito Saturday Night 014	0.00	73.00	73.00	Stepping Stones 068	162.60	0.00	288.81
Eleventh Step Meditation 115	0.00	0.00	59.00	Student of Life 100	0.00	0.00	50.00
Eye Opener 003	175.00	225.00	1,120.00	Success Group 070	0.00	80.00	80.00
For Women Only 023	114.00	60.00	174.00	Summerland Monday Group 021	0.00	0.00	216.00
Gay Discussion, Sunday 140	75.00	0.00	75.00	Summerland, Thurs. 183	200.00	800.00	1,000.00
Getting To Know You 149	307.00	0.00	307.00	Sunday Night Alternative, NH III 186	204.35	0.00	378.20
Goleta Sun. Night Speaker 150	0.00	0.00	50.00	Sundowner Group 011	350.00	0.00	962.00
Happy Destiny 153	400.00	0.00	400.00	Sunrisers 001	0.00	0.00	100.00
Harbor Group 079	155.26	248.50	917.46	There Is A Solution 022	0.00	60.00	60.00
Here & Now 089	80.00	0.00	80.00	Tuesday Men's Stag 047	0.00	0.00	250.88
Into Action, Thurs 093	0.00	0.00	100.00	Way Of Life 117	0.00	630.00	630.00
It's A Hell Of A Deal 139	0.00	177.27	326.82	Women of Change 034	0.00	124.00	124.00
Junkyard Dogs 165	0.00	0.00	350.00	200 Anonymous Donations	140.65	98.76	1,665.09
Keep Coming Back Group 181	0.00	255.00	626.03	201 Birthday Donations	5.00	408.00	597.00
Men Who Have Lost Their Legs 164	290.00	0.00	927.00	202 Supporting Members	1,047.00	437.00	3,008.46
Men's Group At St. Mary's 051	0.00	0.00	96.00	204 Memorial Fund	535.00	0.00	560.00
Mesa-Singleness of Purpose 024	40.00	40.00	160.00	211 Rent Received	40.00	280.00	735.00
Monday At A Time 004	117.50	0.00	415.50	212 Special Events	705.00	0.00	6,339.05
				Totals:	\$6,785.28	\$6,400.59	\$31,581.09

Central Office
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