

Victor Valley Intergroup, Central Office, Inc.
18888 Highway 18, Suite 107
Apple Valley, CA 92307
Telephone: 760-242-9292; Email: vvigco_aa@yahoo.com;
Web site: www.victorvalleyaa.org



Step Nine

Step Eight left us ready and willing to finally make amends to all the people that we had harmed, including the ones we once had resentments against. Some of the amends will not be possible, for various reasons. But the fact that we become willing to do so was the great importance of Step Eight. Now at Step Nine, we are ready to begin the process.

But what exactly is an amend?

First of all, what isn't an amend? It is definitely not a simple apology. There will come times later, what we practice Step Ten, where an apology is all that is necessary. And a verbal apology can certainly be a small part of an amend. But to me, an amend is a change. When we amend the Constitution, we don't apologize for it—we change it. The dictionary defines amend as a change for the better, or to remove or correct faults. So in many cases, the amends we need to make are changes in our way of life—changes for the better. Since in Step Six, God is moving to remove our faults or defects of character, and in Step Seven God is helping us to overcome our shortcomings, our amends should change us in very basic ways.

For the loved ones who suffered from our selfishness and inconsiderateness, the change will be an ongoing effort to treat them with every consideration we used to give ourselves; to use our time and our efforts to help ensure their happiness as well as our own. This is sometimes called a “living amend.” An example might be my amends to my children where I could tell them Dad is sorry that he was not always there when they needed him; that he knows there were times when he should have been at Scout campouts or band concerts, or just home in the evening to help with homework. But now that he has stopped drinking, and with the help of his Higher Power, this is not going to happen anymore. However, just saying the words isn't the amend. The amend comes when I make every effort to always be there when they need me—to always be the dad that sleeps on the ground with them at campouts, to always be in the audience at concerts or parades, to be there at parent-teacher conferences, and to always answer the phone at 2:30 in the morning when the caller says, “Dad, I need you.” We can and must make similar amends to our spouses, parents and the close friends who have stuck with us through all of our drinking escapades.

(Continued on page 2)

Tradition Nine

The words “Let's keep it simple” were the last Bill W. heard from his fellow founder of A.A., shortly before Br. Bob's death in 1950. Aware that “it” meant our *recovery* program, Bill later wrote, “We need to distinguish sharply between spiritual simplicity and functional simplicity. . . . When we get into questions of action by groups, by areas, and by .A.A. as a whole, we find that we must to some extent *organize* to carry the message—or else face chaos. And chaos is not simplicity.”

When Tradition Nine speaks of “A.A. as such,” it goes to the heart of the A.A. experience, to the “spiritual simplicity” of an alcoholic's saying, silently perhaps, “Help!” and another alcoholic's answering, “I know how you feel. We're here to help you.” Such a relationship couldn't be organized. Or could it?

A nonmember familiar with modern business procedures might examine the A.A. practice of sponsorship and see it as a haphazard operation. How about computerizing it? Then an A.A. behind an intergroup desk might say, “So you want help? First, you need the right sponsor. We have personality profiles of all our sponsors fed into our computer. We'll match you up to the best one for you if you'll just fill out this questionnaire. . . . Where are you going? Come back!” *That* would be an attempt to organize “A.A. as such.” (Please—nobody get any ideas!)

But in “action by groups,” we find that we do need some degree of organization. If everybody thinks somebody else is going to make the coffee, what's the result? No coffee! To avoid such a disaster, one or more members agree to be responsible for preparing meeting refreshments. All the way from coffee-brewers to trustees on the General Service Board, those who take part in A.A. service work are assuming responsibility—*not* taking authority. (Here Traditions Two and Nine interlock.) Group officers are responsible to the members of the group; intergroup committees, to the groups in one locality; institutions committees, to A.A. groups in treatment facilities and correctional facilities; area committees, to all groups in their areas; Conference delegates and committees, to all groups in the U.S. and Canada; the General Service Office and Board and the board's committees, to all groups and members everywhere.

(Continued on page 2)

*Step Nine**(Continued from page 1)*

Financial amends are simpler. At least they are simpler to determine. Sure it's no fun to cough up our hard-earned cash to someone we owe, and we don't necessarily get a warm fuzzy glow when we've done it. In my case, my former employer determined that I had taken over \$2,000 from them. That was the figure that they arrived at. I paid it, even though I was out of work and really needed it. My lawyer at the time told me to wait until after he had worked with the District Attorney on a plea bargain, and that you should never make restitution before it was ordered. But I told him my program of recovery required me to do it, and in fact it was already done. I never heard from my employer after they cashed the check, but when I see my store manager or former co-workers around town, I know I have a clean slate, and I don't have to duck into a bar to hide.

Finally, there are the amends which cannot be made directly or would cause more harm than good. I had countless patients whom I served while I was, to put it mildly, not at my best. They did not get the benefit of a fully engaged and alert pharmacist. And while no harm came to them, thank God, they didn't get all that they were paying for. Yet I couldn't track them all down and make amends. For one thing, part of my probation bans me from the store, so I can't access records. And also, it might cause some of them to stop shopping at that store, harming my former employer.

However, as part of my stipulated agreement with the Board of Pharmacy, I have to pay them over \$8,000 for the costs of investigating and prosecuting my case. It is called "reimbursement" rather than a fine. So I treat that money in my mind as my amends to my patients, as the Board will use it to investigate and help other impaired pharmacists before they harm anyone. It is also my amend to the profession itself.

There are other types of amends and ways of making them. But the key to this Step is to make every effort to clean up the messes of our past and start fresh. Not all of our amends will be accepted. Nevertheless, when we have done our best to change our way of life so as not to do any more harm, then we will know a new freedom and a new happiness. We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace. Those last words appear in the Big Book just following the section on Step None. In A.A., we have a name for the sentences that follow Step Nine. We don't call them the "possibilities" or the "potentials." We call them "The Promises."

Submitted by,

Doug H., Hesperia, CA

*Tradition Nine**(Continued from page 1)*

In an average business corporation, the board has final power to determine company plans and policy. Our board of trustees serves in a custodial capacity' trustees vote at the Conference—but as individuals, with one vote apiece. In industry, branch offices jump when the home office speaks. Our G.S.O. is just a clearinghouse of A.A. information, offering *suggestions* based on experiences reported to it by groups.

And yet, with so small a degree of organization, A.A. miraculously does work! One reason may be that Tradition Five applies to each A.A. committee and board as directly as it does to each A.A. group. By cleaving to this "one primary purpose" in all its activities, the Fellowship retains "spiritual simplicity." To diffuse that purpose, to embroil A.A. in issues apart from its true concern, would create dangerous complication. . . .

Via, The Twelve Traditions Illustrated

God Sends His Best — Bob E.

A woman was at work when she received a phone call that her small daughter was very sick with a fever.

She left work and stopped at the pharmacy to get some medication. She got back to her car to find that she had locked her keys in the car. She didn't know what to do, so she called home to tell the babysitter what had happened.

The babysitter suggested that woman find a coat hanger to open the door as she informed the woman that the baby's fever was worsening.

The woman found an old rusty coat hanger that had been left on the ground, possibly by someone else who at some time had locked their keys in the car. She looked at the hanger, then at the car and said, "I don't know how to use this."

She bowed her head and asked God to send her help. Within five minutes a beat up old motorcycle pulled up with a dirty, greasy, bearded man who was wearing an old biker skull rag on his head.

The woman thought, "This is what you sent to help me?" But, she was desperate, so she was also very thankful. The man got off his cycle and asked if he could help.

(Continued on page 4)

Hospitals and Institutions (H&I) Committee

The sole purpose of the High Desert H & I Committee is to carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous to those who are confined and cannot attend *outside* A.A. meetings. Our committee members carry the A.A. message by distributing literature and sharing their personal stories with patients and inmates.

Your financial support is needed to continue this vital 12th Step work. The H & I Committee is entirely supported through *your* donations. Your donations cover the cost of literature our members distribute at H & I Panel meetings. Thanks to the groups and individuals listed below for supporting our commitment to carry the A.A. message.

Barstow Desert Group—\$113.00; Cedar St. Big Book—\$5.00; Dogtown—\$41.00; HUG Group—\$113.00; Primary Purpose—\$37.50; SNCG—\$123.61; TGIF—\$64.85; Tumbleweed—\$226.55.

H & I needs more volunteers who would like to carry the A.A. message to those confined. Become a member of H & I and share your experience, strength and hope. The H & I Committee meets every 3rd Monday at the Alano Club on Central Rd. in Apple Valley at 6:30 p.m.

Yours in Service,
High Desert H & I Committee

Become a "Faithful Fiver"

What are Faithful Fivers?

They are A.A. members who pledge at least \$5.00 each month toward the support of their Central Office to "carry the message." Many of us have spent more than \$5.00 daily/hourly on alcohol during our drinking days!

I agree to pledge \$ _____
 and enclosed is my contribution.
 Name*: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____
 State/ZIP: _____

**You may remain anonymous if you wish.*

Intergroup Minutes August 21, 2010

Kara O. opened the meeting at 9:31 a.m. with the Serenity Prayer and Matt R. read the 12 Traditions.

Wayne U. read the 6/19/2010 minutes. Betty B. motioned to accept, Helen Mc. seconded the motion and it was approved.

Treasurer's Report: Matt N. gave the report as Sheldon S. is on vacation. Wayne U. motioned to accept the report; Sam D. seconded the motion, approved. See the newsletter for full report.

Office Manager's Report: Craig B. gave the report. See the newsletter for the number of visitors, information call and 12 Step calls for July and August. A special edition of "A.A. Comes of Age" from the San Antonio International Convention is on sale for \$7.00. Craig thanked all the volunteers stepping up to fill all shifts at Central Office. Craig also sends a special thanks to Mark C. for filling in as Office Manager while he was having knee surgery and recovery.

Public Information: Helen reported the radio announcements are still going, as well as newspaper article also. She also read a letter from James J. en Radio announcements are still going, as well as newspaper article also read letter from James J. about PI and his commitment to help.

OLD BUSINESS: Committee elections tabled until next meeting. The newsletter will only be published every other month unless many events are occurring several months consecutively.

NEW BUSINESS: Big Bear Group extends their gratitude for our support.

BIRTHDAYS: Melanie W. with 1 year on Aug. 2nd, Betty B. with 20 years on Aug. 11th, Becky B. with 11 years on Aug 16th, Jack N. with 50 years on Aug. 24th, and Pete P. with 53 years on Aug. 16th. COUNGRATULATIONS!!!

ATTENDEES: Betty B., Newsletter, Children of Chaos, Matt R., TGIF, Larry S., Barstow Desert Group, Doug H., HUG, Wayne U., Secretary, Matt N., Associate Member, Helen M., Public Information, Sam D., Co-chairman, Melanie W., SNCG, Sally M., Tumbleweed, Kara O., Chairman, Craig B., Office Manager, How It Works.

The next meeting will be October 16, 2011 at 9:30 a.m. Betty B. motioned to close, Sam D. 2nd, Wayne U. prayed us out at 10:11 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Wayne U.

Directory Changes

DELETE

LUCERNE VALLEY

Saturdays, 2 Can Share,

CORRECTION

HESPERIA

Saturday, 7:00 p.m. Candlelight Meeting, (H1) should be listed at 9:00 p.m.

APPLE VALLEY

The correct address for the Men's Dogtown Meeting is 11842 Cibola Rd.

Upcoming Events

September 24 — 26, 2010

59th Southern California A.A. Convention, Town & Country Hotel, San Diego, CA. Visit www.aasocal.com for more information.

October 2 — 8, 2010

Celebration with Love, at The Place, Lucerne Valley, CA, 32774 Old Woman's Springs Rd. For more information or to participate call Sandi at 760-981-5184.

October 8 — 10, 2010

1st Annual Wrightwood Men's Sober Retreat, hosted by the Wed. Night Wrightwood Men's Group. For information call 760-920-6378 or view the retreat location visit www.lionswildcamp.com.

Central Office Activities

	<u>AUGUST</u>	<u>Y.T.D</u>
Visitors	96	642
Info Calls	216	1,339
12 Step Calls	2	7

CALL FORWARDING

Info Calls	203	1,135
12 Step Calls	1	13

TOTALS

Info Calls	419	2,491
------------	-----	-------

F.Y.I.

Central Office is now selling Big Book Covers! And don't forget we also have fancy chips, medallions and jewelry. Come by and check it out!

God's Best

(Continued from page 2)

She said, "Yes, my daughter is very sick. I stopped to get her some medication, and I locked my keys in my car. I must get home to her. Please, can you use this hanger to unlock my car?"

He said, "Sure." He walked over to the car, and in less than a minute the car was opened.

She hugged the man and through her tears she said, "Thank you so much! You are a very nice man."

The man replied, "Lady, I am not a nice man. I just got out of prison today. I was in prison for car theft and have only been out for about an hour."

The woman hugged the man again and with sobbing tears cried out loud, "Oh, thank you God! You ever sent me a professional!"

Is God good or what?

Via, Akron InterGroup News, Sept. 2010

Submitted by,
Chief Chris B., Middletown, RI

And Finally . . .

A Real Man

A real man is a woman's best friend. He will never stand her up and never let her down. He will reassure her when she feels insecure and comfort her after a bad day.

He will inspire her to do things she never thought she could do; to live without fear and forget regret. He will enable her to express her deepest emotions and give in to her most intimate desires. He will make sure she always feels as though she's the most beautiful woman in the room and will enable her to be the most confident, sexy, seductive and invincible.

No, wait! Sorry. I'm thinking of wine. It's wine that does all that!

Never mind.

Via, the Internet