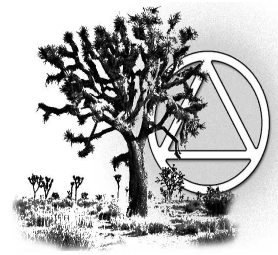


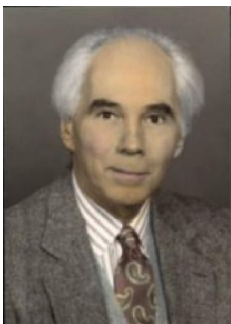
Victor Valley Intergroup, Central Office, Inc.
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Apple Valley, CA 92307
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I Am Responsible

When anyone, anywhere, Reaches out for help,
I want the hand of A.A. to always be there. And for that: I am responsible.

An Obituary



The following was submitted by Ron M. of Victorville, CA. It is proof that Alcoholics Anonymous had a good friend in Mr. Kurtz.

Ernest Kurtz (1935—2015)

Kurtz, Ernest 9/9/1935—1/19/2015 Age 79, died Monday January 19 of pancreatic cancer at his home in Ann Arbor, MI. he was the author of *Not-God: A*

History of Alcoholics Anonymous (1979), *The Spirituality of Imperfection* (1992) and *Experiencing Spirituality* (2014) with Katherine Ketcham, *Shame and Guilt: Characteristics of the Dependency Cycle* (1981), *90 Meetings in 90 Days* (1984), *A.A.: The Story* (1988), and *The Collected Ernie Kurtz* (1999), as well as a multitude of monographs and articles on the intellectual significance of A.A., recovery, and spirituality. His collected papers are available at http://www.williamwhitepapers.com/ernie_kurtz/. Ernest Kurtz was born in Rochester, NY, the son of Edward and Josephine Kurzejewski. He entered St. Bernard's Seminary and College where he earned a BA in philosophy and then entered the priesthood in 1961 and served as a priest in Our Lady of Good Counsel parish in Rochester, New York from 1961 to 1966. He entered Harvard University in 1966, where he earned a Ph.D. in the History of American Civilization in 1978. He is survived by his wife of thirty-four years, Linda Farris Kurtz of Ann Arbor, and his sister Mary Ann Kurtz Allen of Concord, MA. *Not God* was originally a Harvard doctoral dissertation completed in 1978 and then published as a book by Hazelden in Center City, MN. The book has been read by scores of recovering people and their families as well as researchers and scholars over the years and is still in print. His research in the A.A. Archives was unprecedented and informed much of the A.A. story he told, but in addition, Kurtz' analysis of the source of A.A.'s ideas, the origins of the "[Big Book]," its development in the Great Depression directed attention to the fellowship's historical

(Continued on page 2)

Practice These Principles

To the alcoholic just entering the program, if he/she is anything like me, experiences the gentle compassion exhibited by members of the group in all different phases of recovery. And, like me, they all seem to be very knowledgeable about what I might do as a newcomer. One might say, "I just don't pick up today," while the next might say, "I'll be your sponsor," and the next might suggest making ninety in ninety, and on and on. I'm sure that they all mean well, and all of those things may be helpful at the time, and most of the things they suggest are valid ideas depending upon where you are in the process. As a starter, almost anything is better than doing nothing.

Next, we are faced with the suggestion that we start, in one form or another, to begin going through the Steps in the order that they are written. This is where the real work comes in. Here is where we address all of those difficult experiences that were at the root of our problems. These were the things that the drinking seemed to mask for awhile. Things that we didn't even realize about ourselves.

Many of us were desperate enough to want relief from our nightmares, and we proceeded to go through the Steps the best we could at our own pace. If we do these things in the spirit that they were intended, and not modified them to bypass the more difficult areas of our memories as we go through the Ninth Step, we are introduced to the promises, which were previously thought to be unattainable, coming true in our lives every day to one degree or another.

Steps Ten through Twelve were referred to as the maintenance Steps, and at the very end of Step Twelve it is suggested that we "practice these principles in all our affairs." At first I found it hard to understand and to detail what they meant by "these principles." I was fortunate to have been encouraged to attend a Step Study meeting weekly for as long as I was in Alcoholics Anonymous. [As] a result I found *these principles* popping up on virtually every page. [Such]

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

significance in the larger context of American history. Kurtz's analysis of A.A.'s spirituality helped many members appreciate A.A.'s understanding of a higher power and the Twelve Steps and to see how they differed from formal religion. Kurtz left the priesthood in the late 1970s and took his first post-Ph.D. teaching position at the University of Georgia in 1979. He taught for many years at the Rutgers University Summer Schools on Alcohol Studies and at the School of Social Service Administration Summer Institutes. He taught briefly at Loyola University of Chicago before becoming Director of Research and Education at Guest House in Lake Orion, Michigan. He later moved to Ann Arbor where he consulted at the Center for Self-help Research and with researchers in the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Michigan. He will be remembered for his lectures and workshop presentations throughout the United States and the rest of the world, and later for his mentorship to many new scholars in the field and for his contributions to the A.A. History Lovers webgroup. His work continued up until four days before his death. A memorial service is scheduled for April 22, 2015, 1 PM at Dawn Farm on Stoney Creed Road in Ypsilanti. Donations in his honor can go to Dawn Farm at www.dawnfarm.org/donate-now/.

Published in Ann Arbor News from Jan. 22 to Jan. 25, 2015

Practice/Principles

(Continued from page 1)

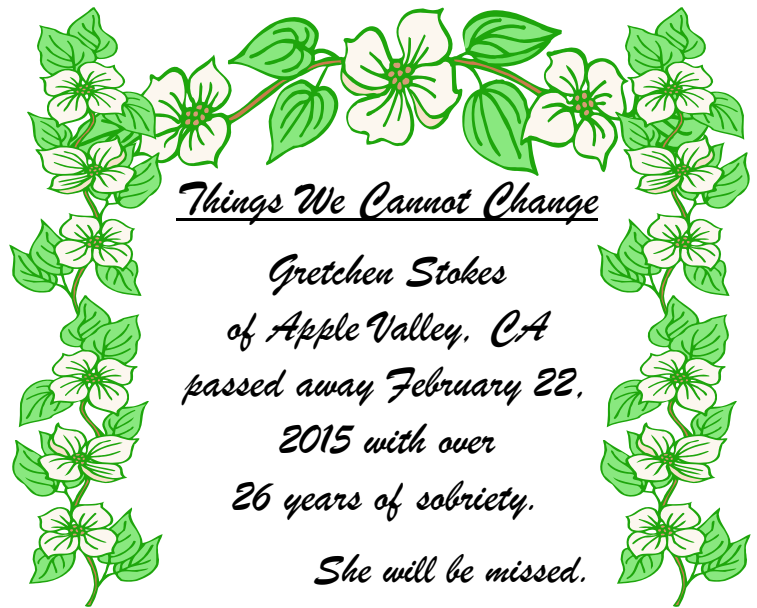
as, restraint of pen and tongue, remove the word blame from your speech and thought, and so on. I also noticed that the Ste. Francis Prayer was conveniently located in the previous Step (11). The 12 X 12 is chuck full of these little suggestions that seem to be nudging us in the right direction if we are conscientious enough to seek them out and try to see where they can move us away from our old selfish thoughts and habits.

We could be satisfied simply not drinking, going to meetings, and associating with others in the program if that's all we want. [Or] we could try to overcome the fears and inhibitions and seek out the spirit that lies beneath the surface of our actions, making sure that our motives are right. Our actions are the direct result of our principles. Everything we do, every act we perform, is the result of our thinking and our values. [And] our thinking and our values are *the spiritual frame work of all of our behaviors*. These things, I've learned, I have the ability to change, however, I sometimes don't have the strength to change. May prayers are simply, "God, please show me what to do, and give me the strength to do it." Then I start to listen.

Submitted by,

Rick R., Poway, CA

Share your Experience, Strength, and Hope by submitting your own story. Make this *YOUR* newsletter.



Things We Cannot Change

*Gretchen Stokes
of Apple Valley, CA
passed away February 22,
2015 with over
26 years of sobriety.*

She will be missed.

Husbands as Sponsors

When my sponsor moved to Phoenix when I was sober about 3 years, George's program helped sustain me. I knew no one who worked it better. Once, when we were sober about 25 years, we were on vacation at the North Rim of the Grand Canyon. About the second or third day George asked, "What's wrong, Babe? You've seemed 'down' ever since we got here."

"I don't know. I just feel bad."

"In what way?"

"I don't know."

"Well, you're always so quick to tell your girls to write. Maybe you should take a little of your own advice."

"But I don't have anything to write on."

(He rummages through the camper drawer and finds a 3x5 notepad and a stub of a pencil.) "Here!"

"But I don't know what to write."

"Remember? Put the pencil on the paper and let *it* write?"

Which I did. And the upshot was that I was fearful in three areas of my life and clueless to that fact: "I'm *afraid*?" [I] wrote a fear inventory – exactly as directed in the Big Book – and shared it with him (no one else was available!). [I] released it to my Higher Power, and within weeks all three areas were resolved in a way I was completely comfortable with.

Hey! The program still works – like it always has. And George F. could play sponsor to his own wife when he needed to!

Submitted by,

Kathy F., Hesperia, CA

Life Can be Beautiful!

Things I have learned by attending meetings and practicing the principles of the A.A. Fellowship:

That if we want to get some of the good things out of life, we must put some good things into it; and that we really do not own anything until we begin to share it with others, and even then we are only partners in its ownership.

That to get more pleasure out of life and make it more interesting, we should set up at least one major goal for ourselves, that it will keep us busy working toward some end, instead of just living each day through without getting any satisfaction out of our work.

That it is dangerous for us to become boastful and claim victory for ourselves, because we are members of a fellowship, all of who are contributing some material to building a fortification against our weakness.

That we should practice the A.A. theory; that today is much more important than tomorrow. Today is ours, and even if we don't use it, it is ours. Out of today we are making our yesterdays and tomorrows. It is foolish to keep putting off until some future time the things we want to do for ourselves and others.

That we are travelers on life's highway, we travel from portal of birth to the portal of death; we can leave the highway strewn with wreckage of all kinds, or we can leave it strewn with kind and pleasant memories for those who will follow.

That the road toward peace and happiness sometimes runs through the valley of sorrow, disappointment and grief, but if we go straight and turn right, we will find the sunshine, peace and happiness that every person is looking for.

That we should set up a reasonable, instead of an impossible standard for ourselves, so that we will not be forever frustrated simply because we can't keep up with our neighbors; set our own pace and decide for ourselves what is important and what is not.

That we should start a hobby of collecting memories; but they can't be collected like old postage stamps; they are made by what we do for others. It is the imperishable wealth of memories that become the only food which sustains our lives, and we should feel sorry for the person without a rosary of memories. He has nothing to companion the soul on its journey toward the shining dawn.

That in living, as in fighting one advantage of altitude is security. If we are to keep our heads clear, our hearts clean, and our bodies sober, we must live above certain danger zones.

There is considerable security in high thinking. High thinking lifts us above the attacks of petty insult and slight resentments which magnify our moods. High thoughts give us security from the ravages of little worries which sap our energies and so often destroy our peace of mind.

That the best things are the nearest: the breath in our nostrils, the light in our eyes, the followers at our feet, duties at our hand, the path of God just before us. So let's not grasp for the stars, but do life's common work as it comes, certain that the daily duties and daily bread are the sweetest things in life.

That none of us can live well and happily by only an occasional good resolution.

That at the end of each day we should stop to remind ourselves of all the things we should be thankful for.

Ed B., original Editor of the IGNews March 1958

Intergroup Minutes January 17, 2015

The meeting was call to order at 9:40 a.m. by Helen M. who led us in the Serenity Prayer.

Bill P. read the minutes of the previous meeting. Betty B. motioned the minutes be accepted as read. Passed.

Twelve Traditions were read by Maria B.

Treasurer's Report: Carl O. read the Treasurer's Report. As of January 31, 2015 there was a balance of \$14,987.26 in savings, \$7,121.11 in the C.D., and \$6,394.28 in checking. Income for the month was \$2,985.69, with total expenses of \$3,836.34. January's income before literature was -\$850.65. Literature sales were \$1,033.83. The net income was \$183.18. Bill P. motioned to accept the report. Treasurer's Report passed.

Office Manager's Report: Craig B. reports we may need volunteer for Tuesday a.m and p.m. Craig thanked Bill P. for helping in Central Office during his absence.

Web Master's Report: The website is down. Craig B. commented we need a new [server as there are too many problems with the website].

New Business: Craig suggested a computer program for the volunteers for sales of literature, donations, and chips and medallions. [That way there would be only one receipt needed.] Bob R. is looking into this matter. It would be a time saving measure to reconcile our sales and contributions.

The next Intergroup meeting will be March 21, 2015 at 9:30 a.m. at Central Office.

[t was motioned the meeting adjourned. The meeting adjourned at 10:45 a.m. (?)]

Respectfully submitted,
Bill P., Secretary

Upcoming Events

Intergroup meets the third Saturday of each month at Central Office at 9:30 a.m. Please have your Intergroup Reps. plan on attending.

April 10—11, 2015

Ride for Recover, from Barstow to Beatty, NV. More information will be forthcoming.

June 12—14, 2015

The High Desert Sunshine of the Spirit Convention will be held at the Ambassador Hotel in Victorville, CA (Soon to be Holiday Inn [again!]). This is a new date for the convention so plan on attending and supporting it. Also, the 20th Annual Founders' Day Picnic will be poolside during the Convention. More information for both events will be available in the coming months.

September 19, 2015

H & I Roundup at Horsemen's Center in Apple Valley, CA. More information will be forthcoming.

Confusion of Duties

It cannot be your duty to do anything that is beyond your reach or your strength at the moment.

It cannot be your duty to do anything that sacrifices your won integrity or your own spiritual development.

It cannot be right to be hurried, or sad, or discouraged, or angry, or resentful, or antagonistic, under any circumstances.

If you have no time for prayer and meditation, you will have lots of time for sickness and trouble.

Around the Year with Emmet Fox, p. 61

A.A. Thought for the Day

Courtesy A.A.-Alive net

November 13, 2014

Bill W. shares:

It is traditional in A.A. that we do not make speeches; we just talk about our own experiences. . .

I was brought up in a little Yankee town of about fifty houses, East Dorset, Vermont. I was born under the shadow of a mountain there called Mount Aeolus.

An early recollection is one of looking up and seeing that vast and mysterious mountain wondering what it was and whether I would ever climb that high. But I was presently distracted by my aunt, who, as a fourth-birthday present, made me a plate of fudge.

For the next thirty-five years I pursued the fudge of life and quite forgot about the mountain.

A.A. Co-founder Bill W., July 1950

Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age, pp. 52-53

And Finally . . .

