



Heart To Heart

Regina and Area AA Intergroup Monthly Newsletter (Sk. Canada)

Please have all birthdays, celebrations, announcements, poems, and articles for June submitted to the Editor by May15th for June publication.

www.aaregina.com

STEP FIVE

“Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.”

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.



Regina AA Central Office

Broad St, Business Center
#107-845 Broad St.
Regina, Sk. S4R 8G9
Open: Mon. Wed. Fri.
12:00-5:00
aa@sasktel.net
Closed Statutory Holidays

24 Hr. Answering Service
306-545-9300

Service Meetings

All members of Alcoholics Anonymous are welcome to attend.

Office Committee
Monday before Intergroup
6:30
Central Office
Broad St, Business Center
#107-845 Broad St.

Intergroup
First Wednesday of the month
7:30
YWCA -1940 McIntyre St.

Districts 15, 17, 18
Second Wednesday of the month
7:30
Mount Olive Lutheran Church
2015 - 4th Ave. N.

FOCUS: STEP 5: ADMITTED WRONGS TO GOD

I mentioned last month when writing about Step Four that Step Five followed in perfect succession. It does! And thank goodness! I took my lists of resentments, fears, sexual conduct and other harms to my sponsor and went through the entries, one by one, filling in background where necessary. My sponsor listened patiently as I moved across the columns for each item. On a number of the entries, when I got to the columns where I was to identify my part in the situation, my sponsor gently offered perspectives that I didn't have. For example, I had resentment toward someone to whom I'd loaned money on more than one occasion. Not large amounts, but always in response to a promise that the money would be repaid. It never was. I couldn't see, without my sponsor pointing it out, that I had been dishonest in this situation. I had not been truthful about how bothered I was at being asked for another loan when the first had not been repaid. My sponsor even suggested that the person didn't really understand that it was important to repay the money. Boy, did I jump to argue with that! But I had to concede that, no, I do not have mind-reading capabilities, so, no, I could not assume that as fact. The only fact I had was that I never was upfront about my annoyance and I continued to act against my own truth. Therefore, I was dishonest. Wow. That was certainly a new way to look at things! It was a bit of an effort, too, to keep my focus on only my part, but my sponsor was patient and consistent and I soon became adept at reading that facial expression that told me I needed to look a little deeper at my own motivations, conscious or not, and stop looking at the behavior of others.

Once through the lists, the patterns were pretty obvious. The nature of my fears and the tendency to alleviate those fears through selfish and dishonest behaviors really boiled down to a handful of issues. And these issues were pretty clear to me... I understood them. That meant that I could work on them. I could move on to Step Six by considering how these fears and this dishonesty and selfishness manifested themselves in my choices and my actions. It really did make sense and it really wasn't so awful! The process of doing Step Five took away some of the guilt and shame that I felt in response to the Fourth Step. I still wished I had done things differently, and that some things had never happened, but that's like wishing that a pickle could, once again, become a cucumber. It's wasted wishing. The process also gave me a foundation for what has become an invaluable tool for me: Talking about it. Bringing my thoughts and feelings out into the open with my sponsor and with my trusted friends has provided me more relief over the years than I can describe. My "magical magnifying mind" can warp my thoughts and feelings into things that are completely inappropriate perceptions and proportions. But when I put them out in the open and am given someone else's response to them, they are tamed. They are right-sized. I can become right-sized. This is the gift that Step Five just keeps on giving.

Ceased the Fight
the COIN 4 May 2014



Stepping Out of the Darkness and into the Light

Step Five is my favorite. It was the day that the light bulb was turned ever so slightly into the socket. A connection was made, a mystery was solved.

I had been sober for about 14 years at the time. There was periods of "so-driety" interspersed, but let's just say I was not experiencing joy and freedom. I was willing to go to any length at this time of my life. Emotional pain was pushing me forward.

I went to my sponsor's house that special morning. I was not afraid, just perplexed on how my life kept ending up in the same old rut. Something different happened that day with my sponsor.

The further we ascended into my Fourth Step, the more my state of malady became apparent. I was feeling beaten, tired, and exhausted. I was not afraid of dropping the secrets, the garbage. I had been in meetings for a long time, and I knew that secrets kill. He asked if I could see the exact nature of my wrongs? What? Was he speaking Cantonese to me? It was as if I had never grasped these words before.

He informed me that while it was wonderful to drop the sack of garbage, how was I not going to create another sack to fill? What is the common denominator of all my problems? What is the exact nature of my wrongs - the one thing, the chief character defect, from which all others stem? He helped me to see, like a light going on in a dark room, that all my wrongs can be traced back to the reliance on my own will, rather than aligning my will with my Higher Power's. Suddenly, I could see this chief character defect - the one that presided over them all.

My sponsor then told me that I would never have to be that man again, ever! He read to me from the 12x12 about the "clear recognition of what and who we really are, followed by a sincere attempt to become what we could be." Instant right sizing! Humility took hold. I now possessed a key to my program - my journey, he called it.

RECOVERY

Step Five

“Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.”

Having made our personal inventory, what shall we do about it? We have been trying to get a new attitude, a new relationship with our Creator, and to discover the obstacles in our path. We have admitted certain defects; we have ascertained in a rough way what the trouble is; we have put our finger on the weak items in our personal inventory. Now these are about to be cast out. This requires action on our part, which, when completed, will mean that we have admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being, the exact nature of our defects. This brings us to *the Fifth Step* in the program of recovery. Alcoholics Anonymous pg 72

This is perhaps difficult—especially discussing our defects (column 4) with another person. We think we have done well enough in admitting these things to ourselves. There is doubt about that. In actual practice, we usually find a solitary self-appraisal insufficient. Many of us thought it necessary to go much further. We will be more reconciled to discussing ourselves with another person when we see good reasons why we should do so. The best reason first: If we skip this vital step, we may not overcome drinking. Time after time newcomers have tried to keep to themselves certain facts about their lives. Trying to avoid this humbling experience, they have turned to easier methods. Almost invariably they got drunk. Having persevered with the rest of the program, they wondered why they fell. We think the reason is that they never completed their housecleaning. They took inventory all right, but hung on to some of the worst items in stock. They only *thought* they had lost their egoism and fear; they only *thought* they had humbled themselves. But they had not learned enough of humility, fearlessness and honesty, in the sense we find it necessary, until they told someone else *all* their life story.

More than most people, the alcoholic leads a double life. He is very much the actor. To the outer world he presents his stage character. This is the one he likes his fellows to see. He wants to enjoy a certain reputation, but knows in his heart he doesn't deserve it. The inconsistency is made worse by the things he does on his sprees. Coming to his senses, he is revolted at certain episodes he vaguely remembers. These memories are a nightmare. He trembles to think someone might have observed him. As fast as he can, he pushes these memories far inside himself. He hopes they will never see the light of day. He is under constant fear and tension—that makes for more drinking. Alcoholics Anonymous pg 72-73

We must be entirely honest with somebody if we expect to live long or happily in this world. Rightly and naturally, we think well before we choose the person or persons with whom to take this intimate and confidential step. Those of us belonging to a religious denomination which requires confession must, and of course, will want to go to the properly appointed authority whose duty it is to receive it. Though we have no religious connection, we may still do well to talk with someone ordained by an established religion. We often find such a person quick to see and understand our problem. If we cannot or would rather not do this, we search our acquaintance for a close-mouthed, understanding friend. (Such as our Sponsor or an experienced member of the fellowship) It is *important that they be able to keep a confidence*; that they fully understand and approve what we are driving at; that they will not try to change our plan. Alcoholics Anonymous bottom of pg 73 - 74

When we decide who is to hear our story, *we waste no time*. We have a written inventory and we are prepared for a long talk. We explain to our partner what we are about to do and why we have to do it. He should realize that we are engaged upon a life-and-death errand. Most people approached in this way will be glad to help; they will be honored by our confidence. Alcoholics Anonymous pg 75

Returning home we find a place where we can be quiet for an hour, carefully reviewing what we have done.

1. We thank God from the bottom of our heart that we know Him better. (Step 5 Prayer)
 2. Taking this book down from our shelf we turn to the page which contains the twelve steps.
 3. Carefully reading the first five proposals we ask if we have omitted anything, for we are building an arch through which we shall walk a free man at last.
 4. Is our work solid so far?
 5. Are the stones properly in place?
 6. Have we skimped on the cement put into the foundation?
 7. Have we tried to make mortar without sand?
- Alcoholics Anonymous pg 75

STEP FIVE PROMISES

We pocket our pride and go to it, illuminating every twist of character, every dark cranny of the past. Once we have taken this step, withholding nothing,

1. We are delighted.
2. We can look the world in the eye.
3. We can be alone at perfect peace and ease.
4. Our fears fall from us.
5. We begin to feel the nearness of our Creator.
6. We may have had certain spiritual beliefs, but now we begin to have a spiritual experience.
7. The feeling that the drink problem has disappeared will often come strongly.
8. We feel we are on the Broad Highway, walking hand in hand with the Spirit of the Universe. Alcoholics Anonymous pg 75

“We recover by the steps we take, not the meetings we make.”
Anonymous

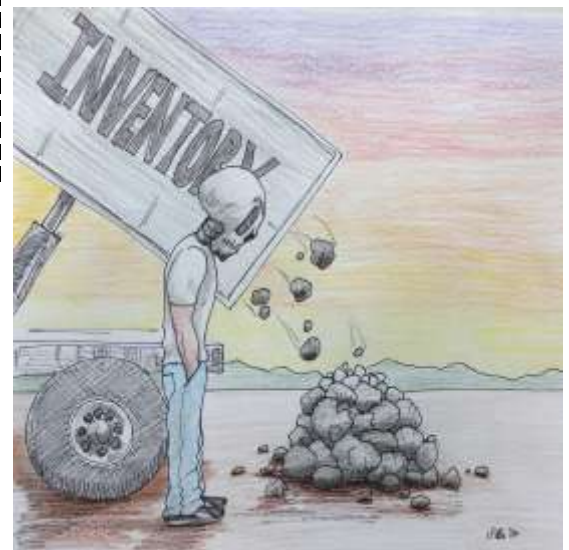
Spiritual Principle
Step Five

INTEGRITY



“This Step Five may take awhile; I would hate for you to fall asleep in the middle of it.”

— Joe H., Vancouver, British Columbia



U N I T Y

Tradition Five

“Each Alcoholics Anonymous group ought to be a spiritual entity having but one primary purpose—that of carrying its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.”

THE MESSAGE

HERE is the text of Tradition Five:

“Each group has but one primary purpose--to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.”

And here is the commonly heard misreading: “Each group has but one primary purpose--to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers.” In this case the possessive pronoun “its” is replaced by the definite article “the.” You might ask, “What’s the big deal?” The big deal is this: Not every AA group carries the AA message, which is the Twelve Steps of recovery from alcoholism. The Fourth Tradition allows each group to conduct itself as it sees fit, provided that it doesn’t step on the toes of other AA groups or AA as an entity.

I’ve attended some pretty wacky AA meetings; at times I’ve even asked myself, am I really at an AA meeting? Therefore, it is an important point of AA tradition that each group be allowed to carry its own message to the still sick and suffering alcoholic.

I hope readers at AA meetings focus more intensely on reading the actual text of our literature instead of potentially reading into the text what they consciously or unconsciously want to see.

TIM W. Nashville, Tenn. May 2010 Grapevine

Spiritual Principle Tradition Five

PURPOSE



Happy Birthday to those celebrating milestones of sobriety...those 24hrs add up!

Harmony
Warren M....4yrs....May 27,2 015

**Women’s Serenity
October M....4yrs....May 25, 2015**

Tradition Five Checklist:

1. Do I ever cop out by saying, “I’m not a group, so this or that Tradition doesn’t apply to me”?
2. Am I willing to explain firmly to a newcomer the limitations of AA help, even if he gets mad at me for not giving him a loan?
3. Have I today imposed on any AA member for a special favor or consideration simply because I am a fellow alcoholic?
4. Am I willing to twelfth-step the next newcomer without regard to who or what is in it for me?
5. Do I help my group in every way I can to fulfill our primary purpose?
6. Do I remember that AA old-timers, too, can be alcoholics who still suffer? Do I try both to help them and to learn from them?

www.grapevine.org

ROUNDUPS

- Turtleford Roundup
May 3-4
- Yorkton Roundup
May 4
- PA Gateway Roundup
May 24-26
- Lloydminster Roundup
May 24-26
- Battleford Roundup
June 8
- Marean Lake Campout
June 14-16
- Coronach (Wood Mountain) Campout
June 21-23
- LaRonge Roundup
August 2-4
- Lakeshore Murray Point Campout
August 5-7
- Pike Lake—Delisile Campout
August 9-11

See Posters on
aaregina.com & aasask.org

This is Bill.
Bill was powerless over alcohol. Bill's life had become unmanageable.
Bill sat with another alcoholic and worked a 12 Step program.
Bill has not had a drink since 11th December 1934. Bill continued to work with other alcoholics to keep himself sober.
Be smart.
Be like Bill!

“If you don’t have a sobriety date, I encourage to get one of those. It has been my experience that Alcoholics Anonymous makes so much more sense when I have a sobriety date!” Anonymous



Clarence had his last drink on February 11, 1938 and he carried this medallion until just before his death on March 22, 1984. It has been dated back into the mid-1940's and the holes represent 46 years of sobriety. Clarence started AA group #3 in Cleveland in 1939, and in the beginning had a higher recovery rate than Bill and Dr. Bob combined. His story, “Home Brewmeister”, can be found on page 297 of the Big Book.(First Edition BB; Now in Experience, Strength & Hope))

Selling Birthday Medallions Not A.A. Medallions

Although birthday medallions and monthly coins are not “approved”, they do have a long standing tradition in Alcoholics Anonymous. Many Intergroup Offices throughout the world provide a convenient place for purchase, as a service to it’s members.

There has been a bone of contention with some of our Members as to whether or not they will support our Regina Intergroup office on this matter. GSO has no opinion, there is no breaking of any of the 12 Traditions. Ask yourselves, Do I have a Birthday Medallion in my pocket?

Anonymous

S E R V I C E

Concept Five

By Editor April Lifestyle Concepts, May 2012

Throughout our world service structure, a traditional “right of appeal” ought to prevail, thus assuring us that minority opinion will be heard and that petitions for the redress of personal grievances will be carefully considered.

This Concept establishes not only the right for minority opinion to be heard and grievances addressed, but imposes upon the minority a responsibility to express their point of view, and upon the majority the responsibility of really listening with an open mind. It can be extremely difficult to stand up and express a minority opinion, particularly when the minority appears to be very small. From childhood most of us have been told that in a democracy “the majority rules”. Many of us have a fear of ridicule, or being judged, or looking foolish among our peers. In A.A., however, each of us has an obligation to share our thoughts. All of us who have been in service for some time have seen situations where the minority opinion expressed has brought to the attention of the group a facet of the question that had been overlooked, and has thus changed the outcome of a vote. Concept Five recognizes that minorities can frequently be right, and that even when they are partly or wholly in error they still perform a valuable service when they bring about a thorough discussion of important issues. Bill Wilson tells us that the well-heard minority is our chief protection against an uninformed, misinformed, hasty or angry majority. Strictly speaking, a democracy operates on the will of the majority, no matter

how slim that majority may be. We have found in Alcoholics Anonymous, however, that our Third Legacy method of electing delegates, in which a two thirds majority is required, or the top candidates names are placed in the hat and the trusted servant is the person whose name is drawn, has strengthened the spirit of democracy among us. Another example is the way the General Service Conference operates, refusing to take important decisions on anything less than a two thirds vote, and even when a two thirds vote has been obtained allowing for the minority opinion to be heard once more.

One additional note: while several people may vote in the minority, not all of their objections may be the same. It is always a good idea to allow for more than one person to be heard if they have something new to add to the discussion. One of the best ways I know to come to agreement is thorough and open discussion of all the points of view represented in any group. This can and does often take a substantial amount of time, spread over more than one meeting. In this time of instant electronic communication the process may seem to be painfully slow. But taking this time, and allowing always for the minority opinion to be heard, can ensure that our Higher Power, as expressed in our group conscience, will be heard. Thus, this Concept protects Alcoholics Anonymous from the tyranny of either the majority or the minority, so long as we serve in the spirit of the Twelve Steps, the Twelve Traditions, and the Conference Charter.

Yours in service, Mickey H. Past Delegate, Panel 49, Utah Area 69

Minority View

Newcomers to A.A.’s General Service Conference are often surprised at the pains taken by the presiding office to make sure the minority has a second opportunity to present its views. Even after extensive debate on an issue, followed by a vote in which a “substantial unanimity” is reached, those opposed are polled individually to see if they wish to speak further to their minority view. In fact, numerous instances can be cited in which this minority view is so compelling the Conference has then reversed itself.

This is A.A.’s “Right of Appeal” in action, and Bill says the same principle should apply to meetings of our area committees, trustee committees and boards. On an issue of grave importance, the minority has the actual duty of presenting its views.

This “Right of Appeal” recognizes that minorities frequently can be right; that even when they are in error they still perform a most valuable service when they compel a thorough-going debate on important issues. The well-heard minority, therefore, is our chief protection against an uninformed, misinformed, hasty or angry majority.

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- *Co-signing your excuses and rationalizations!
- *Work only the Steps you want, in the order you choose!
- *Learn the secret of giving it away before you even have it!
- *Why “walk the walk” when you can just “talk the talk”?
- *Remember, it’s better to look good than to feel good!
- *Why save your ass at the cost of losing your face?

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Spiritual Principle Concept Five

CONSIDERATION

Intergroup wants to express our appreciation for those groups and individuals who have made generous financial contributions, and give a special thank you to all the members who volunteer their time to help the sick and suffering alcoholic.

The following Groups made contributions in March, 2019

Tuesday Night Step
Northern Lights
Heartview
Ramada @ 9

Concept Five Checklist:

Throughout our structure, a traditional “Right of Appeal” ought to prevail, so that minority opinion will be heard and personal grievances receive careful consideration.

1. Should minority opinion always be heard at the Conference? Area assemblies? District committee meetings? Home group?
2. If the majority of my group feels one way about something, but I feel another way, should I just keep quiet and accept it?
3. What is “substantial unanimity”?
4. What is meant by the “Right of Appeal”? Is it applicable at all levels of service?
5. What is meant by the “tyranny of the majority”? What is A.A.’s chief protection against an uninformed, misinformed, hasty, angry majority?

www.aagrapevine.org



Heart to Heart is the newsletter voice of Regina area AA. Regina Intergroup as a service to the AA community publishes it. It uses the basic intent of the AA Grapevine policy and mission statement as its editorial policy. Its intent is to enhance an already strong recovery community by providing a vehicle for sharing the combined recovery messages and our experiences, strengths and hopes. You and your group can contribute to its financial survival through your group and tax-deductible donations to Regina AA Intergroup Office. Any of the articles in this publication are the opinion of the writers and do not necessarily reflect official AA position.