



Unity Newsletter



Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

A.A. Oldtimers...On the Ninth Step

A.A. Grapevine, July 1945, Vol. 2 No. 2

Like others of the Steps, Number Nine is closely related to Number Three – “to turn our will and our lives over to God as we understood Him.” If we have accomplished this step to any measurable degree, we have attained at least a small measure of humility and a realization of our dependence on Him.

Having prepared a list of all people we have harmed and brought ourselves to the point where we are willing to make amends to them, our Ninth Step is one calling for positive action. There is a world of difference between being willing to do a thing and actually doing it. How many times in the pre-A.A. state have we said “I am sorry, I won’t do it again” and felt that that constituted complete amends.

A sincere apology, with a true explanation to the person harmed, of what we believe to be the reason for our past actions can quite frequently readjust personal relations –but the A.A. realizes that this cannot take care of the ones we have really hurt and invariably these are the ones we should and do love most.

Most of us had at least a few years of real pathological drinking behind us when we first learned of the Twelve Steps. Those terrible years are the ones that become repulsive to us as we progress in our new-found life program for order and happiness—years in which our every action was influenced by alcoholic thinking, with all its implications. It naturally follows that whatever our state in life may be, those close to us bore the brunt of our outrageous behavior. How can one make amends to a dear wife, son or daughter or parent who through no fault of their own truly suffered physically and financially and more important, mentally, the humiliation and embarrassment of going through life with a drunkard? A simple “I am sorry; it won’t happen

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DISTRICT MEETINGS

Please see your district minutes for the most up to date district meeting places and times.



EAST TENNESSEE INTERGROUP

AA in the time of COVID-19 News

After this issue, this detailed page of meetings will be discontinued. Current information about new meetings, changed meetings, discontinued meetings, and more can be found here:

<https://www.etiaa.org/meeting-update-info-2020/>

Please see these links for the most up to date meeting information.

Online East Tennessee Meetings:

<https://www.etiaa.org/et-online-meetings/>

East Tennessee Printable Meeting lists:

<https://www.etiaa.org/meeting-information/>

Meeting Search:

<http://www.etiaa.org/meetings/>

Meeting Guide App:

https://www.aa.org/pages/en_US/meeting-guide

Online Intergroup:

<https://www.aa-intergroup.org/>

Please let Intergroup know of any changes: manager@etiaa.org or call
865-522-9667

Step Nine: Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

GOOD judgment, a careful sense of timing, courage, and prudence — these are the qualities we shall need when we take Step Nine.

After we have made the list of people we have harmed, have reflected carefully upon each instance, and have tried to possess ourselves of the right attitude in which to proceed, we will see that the making of direct amends divides those we should approach into several classes. There will be those who ought to be dealt with just as soon as we become reasonably confident that we can maintain our sobriety. There will be those to whom we can make only partial restitution, lest complete disclosures do them or others more harm than good. There will be other cases where action ought to be deferred, and still others in which by the very nature of the situation we shall never be able to make direct personal contact at all.

Ninth Step Prayer

“Higher Power, I pray for the right attitude to make my amends, being ever mindful not to harm others in the process. I ask for Your guidance in making indirect amends by staying abstinent, helping others and growing in spiritual progress.”

Tradition Nine (long form):

Each A.A. group needs the least possible organization. Rotating leadership is the best. The small group may elect its secretary, the large group its rotating committee, and the groups of a large metropolitan area their central or intergroup committee, which often employs a full-time secretary. The trustees of the General Service Board are, in effect, our A.A. General Service Committee. They are the custodians of our A.A. Tradition and the receivers of voluntary A.A. contributions by which we maintain our A.A. General Service Office in New York. They are authorized by the groups to handle our overall public relations, and they guarantee the integrity of our principal newspaper, the A.A. Grapevine. All such representatives are to be guided in the spirit of service, for true leaders in A.A. are but trusted and experienced servants of the whole. They derive no real authority from their titles; they do not govern. Universal respect is the key to their usefulness.

Tradition Nine Checklist:

1. Do I still try to boss things in AA?
2. Do I resist formal aspects of AA because I fear them as authoritative?
3. Am I mature enough to understand and use all elements of the AA program—even if no one makes me do so—with a sense of personal responsibility?
4. Do I exercise patience and humility in any AA job I take?
5. Am I aware of all those to whom I am responsible in any AA job?
6. Why doesn't every AA group need a constitution and bylaws?
7. Have I learned to step out of an AA job gracefully—and profit thereby—when the time comes?
8. What has rotation to do with anonymity? With humility?

Concept IX and Checklist:

Good service leadership at all levels is indispensable for our future functioning and safety. Primary world service leadership, once exercised by the founders, must necessarily be assumed by the trustees.

- Do we discuss how we can best strengthen the composition and leadership of our future trusted servants?
- Do we recognize the need for group officers? What is our criteria for election? Do we sometimes give a position to someone “because it would be good for them”?
- Do I set a positive leadership example?

Unity Newsletter

is a monthly publication of East Tennessee Intergroup about, by and for members of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). Opinions herein are not to be attributed to AA. Except when indicated, this publication does not imply endorsement by either AA or the Newsletter. Delegates to the General Service Conference on April 24, 1972 agreed that the use of full names and addresses could improve communication within the Fellowship. Consequently, we may use full names for AA service members. To ensure anonymity, it is requested that the Newsletter be kept within the Fellowship.

Submissions

Is your group celebrating Birthdays/Anniversaries? Are you? Do you have AA-related questions or myths that Intergroup of East Tennessee Alcoholics Anonymous (ETIAA) can answer for you? Is there an "In Memory" group member to be recognized? We encourage all appropriate submissions by sending them to:

Newsletter Coordinator,
manager@etiaa.org

Around East Tennessee

Service Opportunity

The **Golden Age Retirement Village** in East Knoxville by Skyline Park would like to have a meeting brought in and/or offer their space for a meeting. Contact Kimberly at 585-4044 if you or your group is interested.

AA Birthdays:

Primary Purpose Group, Oak Ridge, TN

August 2020 Anniversaries
James S., 26 years
Scott S., 2 years
Jim T., 1 year
Doug M., 1 year

Monday Night Men's Meeting, West Knoxville

John W. 33 years
Bill S. 33 years

Please use the following format: **first full name; last name initial; birthday month; number of years sober.**



Intergroup Financial / Contributions Report

GROUPS DONATING	Jul 20— Jun 21	Jul 20— Jun 21	GROUPS DONATING	Jul 20—Jun 21	Jul 20— Jun 21
1ST THINGS 1ST KNOXVILLE 719412	650.00	650.00	SEYMOUR SHARING	178.00	178.00
4TH DIMENSION	284.00	284.00	SOBRIETY SOCIETY- SO-SO 709581	200.00	200.00
BACK TO BASICS- OAK RIDGE	50.00	50.00	SUNDAYS AT 7-KNOXVILLE	100.00	100.00
BIG BOOK RECOVERY	25.00	25.00	TCYPAA	20.00	20.00
BLOUNT COUNTY GROUP	150.00	150.00	TELLICO VILLAGE	30.00	30.00
BREAKFAST BUNCH GREENEVILLE	110.00	110.00	TENNESSEE GROUP 723519	83.00	83.00
COLONIAL HEIGHTS 99658	35.00	35.00	UNKNOWN GROUP	108.82	108.82
CONTRIBUTION JAR	25.97	25.97	Venmo	17.00	17.00
COOKIE GROUP	180.00	180.00	WEST KNOXVILLE GROUP	102.30	102.30
COVER TO COVER	120.00	120.00	TOTALS	7,824.80	7,824.80
FOUNTAIN CITY SERENITY	168.08	168.08			
FREE AT LAST 712012	36.00	36.00			
HAPPY HOUR	10.00	10.00			
Individual	2,454.43	2,454.43			
KEEP LEANING FORWARD	65.00	65.00			
LAFOLLETTE-THERE IS HOPE	40.00	40.00			
LUNCH BUNCH- GREENEVILLE	99.71	99.71			
NORRIS CLINTON GROUP	50.00	50.00			
Paypal	8.00	8.00			
PRIMARY PURPOSE- OAK RIDGE	250.00	250.00			
SATURDAY MORNING BIG BOOK STUDY	553.70	553.70			
SERENITY SISTERS 630722	1,620.79	1,620.79			

East Tennessee Intergroup of AA fiscal year is July 1 -June 30

Continued from p. 1

is not enough. It is not enough for us and it is not enough for the aggrieved person.

Direct amends, by all means, is a must, in restoring physical property to the rightful owner, paying debts willingly within our ability to do so and retracting the lie that hurt a reputation; but the real amends are made in scrutinizing our day-in and day-out conduct and keeping that conduct "on the beam." The loved ones whom we have hurt don't want their "pound of flesh." Whether they are still in daily contact with us or not, amends are best made to them by restoring the love and confidence and respect they once had for us by the action of right living. With that thought clearly in our minds that "first drink" is an improbability, even an impossibility and the well-rounded, good life we all yearn for becomes readily visible to us.

B. H.

Forest Hills, New York

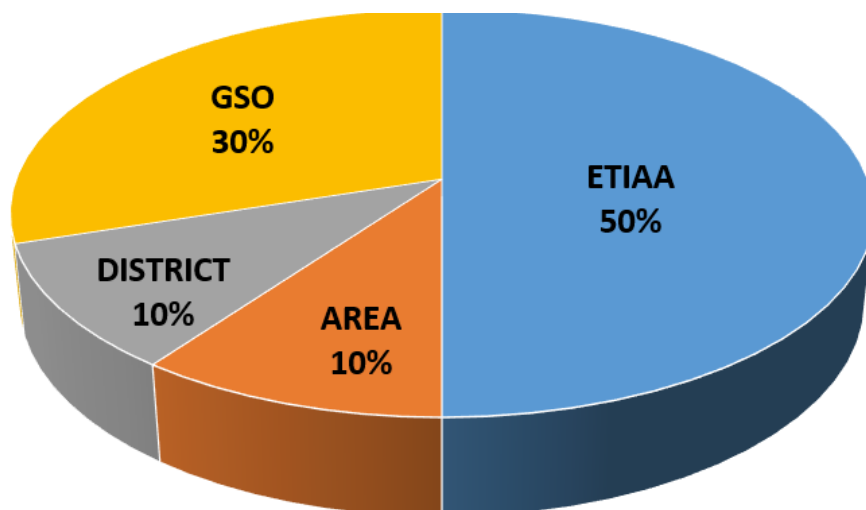
How can groups participate?

To help support AA's essential services, the General Service Conference suggests that individual groups, through an informed group conscience, adopt a specific contribution plan tailored to meet the group's financial situation. Once the basic group expenses have been taken care of (for example, rent, refreshments, AA literature, Grapevine literature, local meeting lists, GSR travel expenses to attend service functions) and a "prudent reserve" has been set aside to cover any emergency contingencies that might arise, the group may decide to further carry the message by sending money to the following AA service entities.

- The local district, which communicates directly with the groups, providing the district group conscience for the area assemblies and serving as a link between the area delegates and the GSRs.
- The area committee, which coordinates vital AA activities over a broad geographic area, sends a delegate to the annual General Service Conference, holds area assemblies to determine the needs of the Fellowship, and provides information at all levels of service.
- The local intergroup or central office, which may provide phone service for Twelfth Step calls and other inquiries, coordination of group activities, AA literature sales, institutions work, public information, and cooperation with the professional community activities.
- AA's General Service Office, which functions as a storehouse of AA information, communicating with members and groups around the world, publishes AA literature, and supplies information and experience to professionals and others interested in AA.

[Self-Support—Where Money and Spirituality Mix. Go to: www.aa.org/assets/en_US/f-3_selfsupport.pdf]

7TH TRADITION SUGGESTED CONTRIBUTIONS



Every AA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

CONTRIBUTION ADDRESSES

**ETIAA East Tennessee
Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous
9217 Park West Blvd #B3
Knoxville, TN 37923**

**865-522-9667 www.etiaa.org
New ways to donate:
Paypal Manager@etiaa.org or 865-320-8649
Zelle Manager@etiaa.org or 865-320-8649
Venmo @ETIAA**

**General Service Office
Grand Central Station
P.O. Box 459
New York, NY 10163
www.aa.org**

The GSO prefers online contributions

**Area 64 Assembly
2500 Murfreesboro Pike
Suite 105 Box 235
Nashville, TN 37217
www.area64assembly.org**

**District 1 Treasurer
Richard Ellis
1302 Chestnut St.
Kingsport, TN 376604**

**District 2 Treasurer
PO BOX 1872
Johnson City, TN 37605**

**District 3 Treasurer
John H.
1466 Darbee Dr.
Morristown, TN 37814**

**District 4 Treasurer
PO Box 264
Alcoa, TN 37701**

**District 6 Treasurer
Richard B.
105 Mariner Point
Clinton, TN 37716**

NEW ADDRESS

**AA District 50/51 Treasurer
9217 Park West Blvd
Suite B-3 (ETIAA)
Knoxville, TN 37923**

Please be sure to include your Group Name and Number.

Intergroup Committee
will be available on
Zoom.
[https://zoom.us/
j/190817792](https://zoom.us/j/190817792)
Call 1-929-205-6099.

To add your district's
service committees
email us at [manag-
er@etiaa.org](mailto:manager@etiaa.org)

RECURSOS EN ESPAÑOL

La Viña (The Grapevine) en Español
<https://lvtienda.aagrapevine.org/>

Does your group have an Intergroup Representative?

**Your thoughts, opinions, and ideas
need a voice.**

**Elect a group representative to
join our monthly Intergroup
Business meeting.**

**Service opportunities to help your
local A.A. community become
stronger and more unified.**



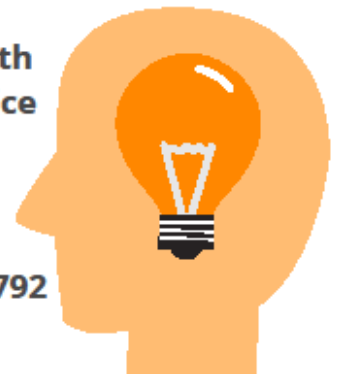
**3rd Monday of every month
6:30pm at Intergroup Office**



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Zoom link:

<https://zoom.us/j/190817792>

Phone: 1-929-205-6099



9217 Parkwest Blvd. #B3, Knoxville, TN, 37923 / 865-522-9667

August 2020 Intergroup Minutes

Open with Serenity Prayer and monthly Tradition at 6:30.

Present via Zoom: - Tami D, Rebekah R., SuZanne A., Katie B., Robin G., Susan W., Fawn L., Rhonda M., Annie B., David R., Jacque H., Marian G., Heather

Groups Represented: TN Group, Happy Destiny II , Morristown Group, P40 Prime Time Group, Blount County Group, First Things First. Previous minutes were accepted without any modifications via motion by David R., Seconded by SuZanne A., all in favor.

Manager's Report – Rebekah R.

- ICOAA – there are online workshops available thru ICOAA this year and the cost is \$30 per person and up to 10 people from each Intergroup can register. There are many beneficial workshops to choose from. The event is scheduled for 09/17-09/20/2020 and if interested in attending reach out to her for instructions on how to register and attend.

- End of Year Report – Rebekah presented the End of Year report and requested approval to publish in next month's Newsletter. Vote taken and all in favor of publishing after review.

- Office Manager Evaluation due in November – Rebekah advised a committee will need to be formed to complete her annual evaluation.

- COVID-19 Webpage – Rebekah advised the COVID-19 Webpage has been discontinued. Continuing to update the Meeting Guide App as well as the printed schedules with any necessary changes to meeting availability and locations.

- Returning Checks due to Obituary and 7th Tradition – when a member of Alcoholics Anonymous recently passed-away the family requested donations to AA in lieu of flowers in the obituary not knowing that AA does not accept outside donations. As a result, Intergroup has received many checks as contributions and Rebekah and staff have been working on verifying if the contributions came from an AA member or not. If determined the checks did not come from a member or if unable to determine member status the checks are being returned.

- Intergroup Zoom Account – Rebekah advised a couple of groups who have requested to use the Intergroup Zoom account to hold their meetings. To date the Zoom account has only been loaded to conduct business meetings, such as District meetings. Rebekah advised the NYC Intergroup has a free Zoom account available to any AA groups who request access for holding meetings and she will direct any local groups to contact the NYC Intergroup for Zoom accounts.

Treasurer's Report – Fawn L.: July contributions at an all-time high.

- Profit and Loss: July up \$4528.87. YTD thru August 4th is + \$5942.42.

- Prudent Reserve back up to \$11K.

Hotline – Jacque H. advised she is stepping down from the Hotline Coordinator position. She has completed calendars for Aug, Sept and Oct. She had someone relinquish one of the weekend Hotline volunteer slots but has filled the position with existing volunteers. Tami D. is working to update the 12 Step Call List and Tami also filled the vacant Tuesday evening volunteer slot for the Hotline.

Jacque requested all present announce to their groups that a new Hotline Coordinator is needed and for anyone interested to reach out to Rebekah R. at Intergroup (865-320-8649) as she will be filling in as Coordinator until the position is filled.

Service Workers – Annie B. advised she has a new person interested in volunteering at Intergroup name of Tony. Tony has 6 yrs sobriety and she is unsure of he has come into the Intergroup office to date. Annie advised she is in need of more office volunteers.

Archives – Annie B. stated she has not been able to work on Archives due to health issues. Will resume work as soon as able.

Website – Sterling – not present

Accessibilities – Carole W. absent, however reported via text message to Rebekah R. that she has been working with a local Veteran who is in need of transportation to AA meetings. The Veteran is checking with other Vets to see about getting to meetings, many of them are in wheelchairs. Carole reported the those with special needs may be able to attend the Cookie Group as they are meeting outside in camp chairs. Carole also reported the VA has shut down the AA meeting that was being held at their facility due to COVID and she doesn't know if they will allow the meeting to open back up when the time comes.

Spanish Liaison – still open

CPC/PI – Robin G.

- Robin reported she has been attending CPC/PI meetings and they are planning a workshop, dates not yet determined.

- She did an interview with a reporter from The Daily Times in Maryville, TN and the article was about how pandemic has changed the face of AA in our area. Unsure of when or if the article was printed.

Treatment – Beth H. – not present

Corrections – Marian G. reported no new updates or changes to institution's status.

Outreach - Ken absent, however reported via text message to Rebekah R. that he has reached out to someone in the Tri-Cities area to obtain contacts for the Hotline.

Events – SuZanne A.: Nothing to report due to Covid-19.

Mobile Intergroup – Patrick - not present

Pricing Committee – Rhonda M. and Heather

- Rhonda shared with the group her analysis of the pricing at Intergroup for all items sold. She reported the biggest sales are from literature with the Big Book, 12&12 and Living Sober being the best sellers.

- Rebekah advised the majority of Intergroup's income is from donations and has never been from actual sales.

- After much discussion a motion was made by Fawn L. to leave the pricing on items as is. The motion was seconded by Rhonda M. All in favor, none opposed.

- Rebekah advised setting up of the online store is pending Sterling's return.

Old Business:

New Business: Rebekah advised a committee of five people is needed to complete her Office Manager Annual Evaluation. David R., Fawn L., and Heather all agreed to be on this committee. Will look for others to join on the next Intergroup meeting.

Meeting closed via motion from Rebekah R. and seconded by Rhonda M. at 7:50 pm. All in favor.

Next meeting to be held September 21st at 6:30pm

2020 District 4 Minutes

Contact Mike T for meeting details.

2020 District 6 Minutes

District 6 meetings are suspended until September.
Robert G. is the new DCM for District 6

August 2020 District 50/51 Minutes

August 3, 2020

Virtually Attending: Jacque, Katie, Jeff J., Erica J., Trey M., Sandy H., David T., Michelle C., Rick B., Sandra B.

please note this meeting was a virtual meeting using the Zoom platform

Jacque opened the meeting with a moment of silence followed by The Serenity Prayer.

Introductions were made around the "room."

A motion was made (Jeff) to accept the minutes from last month as written. The motion was seconded (Katie) and passed unanimously.

Jacque District 50

3rd Quarter Assembly will be over three days on Zoom. (8/27, 8/28, 8/29)

Jacque can be reached at sweetiepie5267@gmail.com and/or 865-296-4501

Angela District 51 (absent): NO REPORT. Angela can be reached agl8137@tds.net and/or 865-924-3055

Treasurer's Report – Sandra B.

Balance as of 8/3/2020 is unknown. Sandra is having issue with TVA Credit Union getting on the bank account. Will have updated numbers next number.

One deposit recorded in the amount of unknown.

A motion was made to accept the treasurer's report as given. Motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

CPC/PI – Trey M.

On 9/12 there will be a "Working with Others" workshop that will focus on sponsorship.

The Metro Nashville has asked for help regarding PI – see Trey if you want to help.

The next CPC/PI meeting will be via Zoom on 8/26/20 at 5:30. Get details from Trey or Intergroup Facebook.

Treatment Report – John S. (ABSENT): NO REPORT

The next treatment committee will be on 8/13/20 at 7:00p.m via Zoom.

Corrections Report – Bree (ABSENT): NO REPORT

Corrections subcommittee will now begin meeting quarterly. Please contact Bree for information regarding next meeting. Committee meeting date TBD.

Bree can be reached at 865-936-3133 (no emails requested)

Grapevine Report – Sandra B.

The free online Grapevine stopped on 7/31/20. Plenty of copies in stock for corrections.

Sandra can be reached at: sgbrown0418@comcast.net

Bridging the Gap Report – David T.

Quiet month - no calls for AA, requests for other fellowships were forwarded to appropriate contacts.

David can be reached at: BTG5150@gmail.com or 865-272-9526

Events – Erica/Sandy H:

1st Quarter Assembly 2021 Flyers are completed.

We will ask for pledges from groups to fundraise for 1QA.

Committee meetings immediately after District meeting via Zoom.

Archives Report – Open

The position of Archives chair is open. Please see Angela or Jacque if you are interested. Job entails retrieving group history forms. Talk to our archivist in Murfreesboro and compare to current meeting list. If there is a group that has old photos or tapes you may be responsible to sending to Murfreesboro for preservation.

Group News:

1st Quarter Assembly (2021) is still on track for Knoxville. Monitoring social distancing guidelines accordingly. Hotel contract may be cancelled in the event of an "act of God" i.e. COVID-19. Theme is "WE ARE NOT A GLUM LOT". Contract is approved.

Sobriety Society is planning an outing to the Drive-In theater on 8/29 – contact Jacque or Trey for details.

1st Quarter Assembly 2021 Committee Meeting will be on 9/14/20 at 5:30.

OLD BUSINESS: Budgets tabled indefinitely. Alternate treasurer tabled

NEW BUSINESS:

General discussion around whether or not it is a conflict to have a District officer in multiple roles. General consensus is "no."

Request for GSR's to consult individual groups for pledges to 1QA 2021.

Motion to adjourn (Katie), seconded (Jeff). Meeting adjourned at 7:06 p.m.

Closed with the Serenity Prayer.

THE NEXT DISTRICT MEETING WILL BE SEPTEMBER, 14 2020 AT 6:30PM VIA ZOOM.

Service Work Opportunities for Intergroup

Looking for involvement in Service Work? Following is a list of Intergroup projects that need assistance:

- Someone to provide content for the website. Mainly making posts and writing articles.
- Updating the meeting lists, website and app. Needs to be proficient in Word Press and MS Publisher and highly organized. Meeting Guide App keeps updating functions so updated meetings need to be frequently revisited to have updated information.
- Online Store Set Up- Needs to be proficient in Square and work with USPS.
- Helping set up users to get online to stay in touch with AA. Setting up email, Meeting Guide, Zoom, Newsletter to help other who are not technologically savvy.
- Outreach to meetings; does not have to cover all of East Tennessee. Contact Ken L. to start outreach work in your area.
- Meeting list/app coordinator to update meeting info
- Someone to help with YouTube videos
- Re-label and reorganize pamphlets
- Hopefully, within the next quarter, we will be adding a chat bubble to our website to respond to newcomers. We are looking for people willing to help with that. Like the hotline but digital. **We will not be able to provide this without service workers.**



Notes to our members:

We depend on you for meeting updates. Please check your meeting info on the MEETING GUIDE app and our website at etiaa.org and let us know of any errors. Each meeting update gets changed in 5 places so human errors are easy to make.

Intergroup has a private FaceBook group. You cannot see who is in the group or what they are saying but you can search for it under “East Tennessee Intergroup” and we do verify that you are an AA member to join.

The Intergroup Office in San Jose, CA has some awesome resources regarding a digital Seventh Tradition.

<https://aasanjose.org/technology>

<https://aasanjose.org/7th-tradition-for-on-line-meetings>

On the lighter side....



BONUS READING: This issue features profiles of two people who made their mark in AA. On pages 12 to 15, the powerful principles they practiced far outweighed their charismatic personalities.

Sam Shoemaker 1893-1963

Samuel Moor Shoemaker was born on December 27, 1893, in Baltimore, Maryland. He attended St. George's, an Episcopal boarding school in Newport, Rhode Island, and later attended Princeton University starting in 1912. In 1917, he went to China to start a branch of the YMCA and teach business courses. While there, he met Frank Buchman, founder of the Oxford Group. After his time in China, Sam returned to Princeton in 1919. From 1922 to 1933 he was visited frequently by Buchman and later travelled with Buchman in Europe, the Middle East and India, performing missionary work similar to their time in China. In 1925, he married Helen Smith.

Sam Shoemaker: Friend of A.A.

Bill W. once wrote in the A.A. Grapevine that "Dr. Sam Shoemaker was one of A.A.'s indispensables. Had it not been for his ministry to us in our early time, our Fellowship would not be in existence today." His help for A.A. was tangible even before the Fellowship began to exist. As the head of Calvary Church, Sam built Calvary House, which served as a hostel where Ebby T. stayed for a time. Sam also ran Calvary Mission, a place for "the down-and-out," which Bill W. visited in 1934 near the end of his drinking.

Sam was also an early member of the Oxford Group, having met Frank Buchman in 1918 in China. The close association of early A.A. to the Oxford Group ensured Sam's association with the Fellowship and Bill W. Initially, he was unhappy with the decision by Bill and other alcoholics to hold meetings independent of the Oxford Group. Later, after Sam left that Group in 1941, he apologized to Bill W. for the disapproval of the Oxford Group and the fact that it gave little encouragement to A.A.

Bill W. made it clear that Sam Shoemaker "passed on the spiritual keys by which we were liberated." The first three Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous, the starting point for sobriety in the A.A. program, were inspired in part by Shoemaker. Bill further explained that "the early A.A. got its ideas of self-examination, acknowledgement of character defects, restitution for harm done, and working with others straight from the Oxford Groups and directly from Sam Shoemaker, their former leader in America, and from nowhere else."

Dr. Shoemaker helped A.A. in fundamental ways. Physically, he provided refuge for alcoholics in New York through Calvary Church. Of greater importance was his spiritual aid, which directly influenced the Twelve Steps and the nature of A.A.'s program of recovery. His long and close friendship with Bill W. provided support to the co-founder, and helped the Fellowship weather its fledgling years. On October 31, 1963, he passed away in Maryland.

https://www.aa.org/pages/en_US/a-biography-of-sam-shoemaker

I Stand at the Door

By Sam Shoemaker (from the Oxford Group)

*I stand by the door.
I neither go to far in, nor stay to far out.
The door is the most important door in the world -
It is the door through which men walk when they find
God.
There is no use my going way inside and staying there,
When so many are still outside and they, as much as I,
Crave to know where the door is.
And all that so many ever find
Is only the wall where the door ought to be.
They creep along the wall like blind men,
With outstretched, groping hands,
Feeling for a door, knowing there must be a door,
Yet they never find it.
So I stand by the door.*

*The most tremendous thing in the world
Is for men to find that door - the door to God.
The most important thing that any man can do
Is to take hold of one of those blind, groping hands
And put it on the latch - the latch that only clicks
And opens to the man's own touch.*

*Men die outside the door, as starving beggars die
On cold nights in cruel cities in the dead of winter.
Die for want of what is within their grasp.
They live on the other side of it - live because they have
not found it.*

*Nothing else matters compared to helping them find it,
And open it, and walk in, and find Him.
So I stand by the door.*

*Go in great saints; go all the way in -
Go way down into the cavernous cellars,
And way up into the spacious attics.
It is a vast, roomy house, this house where God is.
Go into the deepest of hidden casements,
Of withdrawal, of silence, of sainthood.
Some must inhabit those inner rooms
And know the depths and heights of God,
And call outside to the rest of us how wonderful it is.
Sometimes I take a deeper look in.
Sometimes venture in a little farther,
But my place seems closer to the opening.
So I stand by the door.*

*There is another reason why I stand there.
Some people get part way in and become afraid
Lest God and the zeal of His house devour them;
For God is so very great and asks all of us.
And these people feel a cosmic claustrophobia
And want to get out. 'Let me out!' they cry.
And the people way inside only terrify them more.
Somebody must be by the door to tell them that they are
spoiled.
For the old life, they have seen too much:
One taste of God and nothing but God will do any more.
Somebody must be watching for the frightened
Who seek to sneak out just where they came in,
To tell them how much better it is inside.
The people too far in do not see how near these are
To leaving - preoccupied with the wonder of it all.
Somebody must watch for those who have entered the
door
But would like to run away. So for them too,
I stand by the door.*

*I admire the people who go way in.
But I wish they would not forget how it was
Before they got in. Then they would be able to help
The people who have not yet even found the door.
Or the people who want to run away again from God.
You can go in too deeply and stay in too long
And forget the people outside the door.
As for me, I shall take my old accustomed place,
Near enough to God to hear Him and know He is there,
But not so far from men as not to hear them,
And remember they are there too.*

*Where? Outside the door -
Thousands of them. Millions of them.
But - more important for me -
One of them, two of them, ten of them.
Whose hands I am intended to put on the latch.
So I shall stand by the door and wait
For those who seek it.*

*'I had rather be a door-keeper
So I stand by the door.*



<https://www.latimes.com/obituaries/story/2020-08-28/clancy-imislund-director-la-midnight-mission-dies>

Clancy Imislund, longtime director of L.A.'s Midnight Mission, dies at 93

By [Doug Smith](#) Senior Writer Aug. 28, 2020

Clancy Imislund left a lucrative career with a Beverly Hills marketing firm to become managing director of the Midnight Mission in downtown's skid row, returning as a transformative leader to an institution that had once kicked him out for bad behavior.

Restoring his faith in a higher power was the hardest step for Clancy Imislund. So when the day finally came in October 1958, to take that step, he put his faith in Bob.

"I'll try to do what Bob says," he recounted decades later.

That wasn't Dr. Bob, co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous, but just Bob, a run-of-the-mill actor who became his sponsor in the latest of many episodes of sobriety. After several weeks of tagging along with Bob to grab food at AA meetings, Imislund had an awakening.

"I began to get the sense that Bob knew how I felt," he said, a sense he had never gotten before from father, friend or therapist. "I never knew anybody who knew how I felt," he said. "People like us are magnets for advice from everybody that we know. But if you can find someone you believe knows how you feel, that advice becomes meaningful information."

Imislund stayed sober that time, and for the next 62 years he carried the message around the world, giving talks almost weekly at AA meetings from South Dakota to Reykjavik, Iceland, and becoming a sponsor to thousands of others.

Along the way, he left a lucrative career with a Beverly Hills marketing firm to become managing director of the Midnight Mission in downtown's skid row, returning as a transformative leader to an institution that had once kicked him out for bad behavior. Under his hand, the soup kitchen and housing facilities grew with programs to address the social needs of skid row, said its president and CEO G. Michael Arnold.

"He's probably the first person to bring substance use treatment to people living on skid row," Arnold said.

Evolving from executive to ambassador at-large, Imislund held the title of managing director for the next 46 years until his death Monday at 93.

He left a legacy in the quasi-secret world of AA unmatched by any but founders Bill Wilson and Dr. Bob, said Stephen Watson, a Midnight Mission board member and one of the roughly 170 people Imislund was sponsoring up to his death.

Imislund died of an undetermined cause while in isolation following a positive test for COVID-19, his daughter Mary Imislund Dougherty said.

Growing up in a Norwegian Lutheran family in Eau Claire, Wis., Imislund discovered, as he would later confess, that, "I seem to need more fun than other Lutherans somehow."

By the time he was 15, straight A's and self-discipline were behind him. "I have a flair for doing the wrong thing, to almost instantly do the worst thing I could have done," he said.

The attack on Pearl Harbor offered an escape. He hitch-hiked to San Francisco intending to make something of himself as a war hero. Stints in the merchant marine, then the Navy introduced him to whiskey and tobacco to the betterment of his self-image if not his character. "I felt like men looked," he said of his emotional reaction to alcohol.

After the war Imislund returned to Wisconsin, enrolled in college, married Charlotte, "this girl with flashing black eyes and black hair," and settled into what he would later recognize to be the normal life of an alcoholic.

Nights with family punctuated by nights in jail culminated in a vow of sobriety, made over the coffin of his first son, who died on a frigid winter night when Imislund was jailed and didn't make it home to restart a finicky heater.

"John Imislund, this will never happen again." It was a vow made to be broken. The family moved a lot. The time in El Paso stands out as the pleasantest of her life, his daughter said. Her father, a talented self-taught musician, partied at home with the city's marijuana-smoking jazz musicians.

"My happiest memories are laying in my bed, smelling that smell, hearing that music," she said. "They would sit all night and play the most amazing incredible music. He just gathers these incredible people."

In Texas, Imislund had great jobs, Mary said, among them even directing the Grand Opera at the University of Texas. But he always lost them, falling victim to what he would describe as the recurring "spring in my gut" that made him restless, eventually turning the world from "technicolor to black and white."

A nearly successful suicide attempt led to a mental commitment and electric shock therapy. Thorazine and tequila followed. The night he went out to buy food for his new daughter Susan and didn't come back, Charlotte packed up the kids and resettled in a one-bedroom apartment. Imislund eventually headed for Los Angeles.

After being ejected from the Midnight Mission, Imislund made the most important trip of his life, walking miles to the AA club at Wilshire and Fairfax where he fell under Bob's sway. "He found me ways not to quit jobs," Imislund would say. "A terrible process. I finally held a job for four months before I got fired." Gradually, Bob broke through to Imislund's faith which had been devastated by the belief that God took his son's life to pay for his sins.

"Kid, you're not important enough for God to hate," Bob told him. "By the time he died, I believed in AA as the higher power," Imislund would say.

It took five years to regain Charlotte's trust. He got a job in advertising, became head of a family again and founded the Pacific Group, held in a Westside synagogue, that has grown into one of the world's longest standing and largest AA meetings, said Watson, the Midnight Mission board member.

"Clancy inspired the masses," she wrote. "I see in my mind's eye ... so many rooms, so many people crowded into the back, outside, in adjoining rooms. I remember his words. I hear the laughter. And I am grateful."

He became what Watson would describe a 12-step "rock star," becoming sponsor to Hollywood elites, judges and business executives along with the people he picked up off the street. "If you asked Clancy how many people he had sponsored he would say, 'One too few,'" Watson said. He estimates the number at 10,000 with the ripple effect touching tens of thousands of lives.

Family ties with his four daughters and surviving son were stable but distant, Susan Imislund Yodice, the daughter born in Texas, said. The daughters understood his absences as necessary amends for "things you can never undo." After Charlotte died in 2012, their father became more spiritual and a more attentive father.

"He became this accessible, loving dad," she said. "I feel grateful that in my 50s I got this dad, and that's been a joy."

It was in 1974 that Imislund returned to the Midnight Mission. Under his leadership its mission expanded to embrace treatment, work and housing services. He built its financial base with his pen, president and CEO Arnold said. "He would open the phone book and start writing letters to people in the phone directory," Arnold said.

"He could create some of the most compelling stories about both recovery and the work of the Midnight Mission," Arnold said. "It's hard to separate Clancy from either the Midnight Mission or the AA. He dedicated the last 46 years of his life to trying to do good with those two messages."

In his talks, Imislund spoke of AA as a mystery with a practical goal. "Nobody knows why it works," he said. "The purpose of AA is not to make you dry longer and longer. The purpose of AA is to do very slowly what alcohol did fast. To change my perception of reality."

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