

the Westword

25 cents
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may issue/2008

5th Tradition Checklist

B. L.
Manhattan, NY
AA Grapevine
April 1970

Tradition 5: Each group has but one primary purpose – to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

On my fourth sober AA day, I was sitting alone in one of our musty old meeting rooms, very sad and very broke. All the AAs had seemed very kind in their desire to help, but none of them had mentioned money. And, like thousands of other new members, I believed my biggest problems were financial. Yet not one person had offered a loan.

Then, suddenly, one of those big, handsome, gray-templed, well-dressed old-timers strode in with a friendly smile widening his face. He stuck out his hand and squeezed mine. "If I can help you any way at all, just say so, and I'll do it!" he declared heartily.

Trying to sound as if I were merely asking for a match, I said, "I hope so. You see, I need to borrow two thousand dollars."

His silence was total.

But finally he spoke. "You're in the wrong place," he said firmly. "We don't lend money here, my friend. That's not what this place is for."

I froze, but he went on and on. "We won't help you with a money problem. We won't help you with a family problem or a job or clothes or a medical problem or food or a place to spend the night. All we will do in AA is help you stay sober," he explained. "Then you can take care of these other problems yourself. You can take care of yourself, can't you, if you're sober?"

I hated that word "sober." But what could I say? "Certainly," I snapped, humiliated that, in my ignorance of AA "folkways, I had been caught in a faux pas, as if someone had found me eating peas with my fingers.

What the man had said made perfectly good sense. I had been sober a few days and could take care of things. So I put my gradually clearing mind to it, remembered a cousin I had not tapped for months, sent a wire, and got some dough.

To my astonishment and sorrow, I almost instantly found myself drunk.

Within a few hours, my new AA benefactor had given me in very blunt words a sharp summary of Traditions Five, Six, and Seven. And, by getting drunk, I had

illustrated perfectly the special sense behind Five. What I needed most was not money, obviously. After getting it, I still had the drinking problem that had made me think of approaching AA in the first place.

This happened in January 1945, and the first hint of the Twelve Traditions was not to appear anywhere in AA until the July 1945 issue of the Grapevine, when Bill W. wrote, "I would like to discuss in coming issues such topics as anonymity, leadership, public relations, the use of money in AA, and the like."

Therefore, what I encountered in AA during my first few months, before the Traditions were formalized, were customs of AA behavior followed by members who had learned that some AA ways would work, and others would not.

That is the authority of the Traditions in my personal life. I honor them, not solely because of their authorship or their having the mystical number twelve or their being adopted by the Fellowship at the First International Convention in Cleveland in 1950. I cherish them because they work. They enable me and my fellow AAs to stay sober, together, and to carry our message to other alcoholics.

But I did not like the Traditions at first, especially when they conflicted with what I wanted. I was a suspicious character, often turning phony operator to get what I wanted. During those first weeks, I kept wondering what "those AAs" were really up to or after, and what I could get out of them.

The real miracle is that most of them acted with extraordinary kindness. No matter what I tried to maneuver out of them, they tried just to give me the message.

In subsequent years, I tried to misuse AA in two ways; that is, I tried to get more out of it than the sobriety message. Once, I wangled a part-time job from a fellow member, then took advantage of him. Coming in late, I would excuse myself by thinking, "After all, we're both alcoholics; he ought to excuse my little weaknesses." He exploited me, too, expecting long hours of unpaid work simply because I was a fellow AA. We began to concentrate on what we were owed, not on what we as AAs owed each other. Neither of us got drunk, but our friendship did not survive.

Another time, I tried to use AA for romance, and really did find balm for a lonely heart with an AA partner. We found romance, all right, but we lost our sobriety.

Years have gone by since I had AA infancy as an excuse for my gimme tendencies. Today, I try to look at the Fifth Tradition as a giver, not as a taker. But the picture is not pretty enough to brag about. It isn't always easy, even now, to keep my personal wants out of the way when I try to carry the message. I want applause as an AA speaker, compliments as a Grapevine writer. I want to be a "success" as a sponsor--that is, I want to be the one who sobered somebody up!

I have found I prefer to carry the message to pleasant, attractive, grateful alcoholics who do what I say and give me full credit for their sobriety. Sometimes I wish I did not even have to carry the message at all; I wish I could just wait where I am for people to come and pick it up.

continued on pg 2: see "Checklist"

I am responsible.
When anyone, anywhere, reaches
out for help, I want the
hand of AA to always be there.
For that, *I am responsible.*

Calgary AA Central Service Office

#2, 4015 1st Street S.E.

Calgary, Alberta – T2G 4X7

Phone: (403) 777-1212 Fax: (403) 287-6540

Email: centraloffice@telus.net

Office Hours:

Mon to Thr: 8:30am – 1:00pm, 2:00pm – 5:00pm

Fri: 8:30am – 5:30pm, Sat: 9:00am – 1:00pm

Closed Sundays and Stat Holiday Weekends

CLOSED: Saturday, May. 17 & Monday, May. 19.

NEW MEETINGS

New Fellowship Group (Open, Mixed)

Monday & Friday, 7:00pm
Hanna Hospital Cafeteria
Hanna, AB

Harvest Hills Big Book Study (Open, Mixed)

Monday, 7:30pm
Harvest Hills Alliance Church
10099 Harvest Hills Blvd. N.W.

Chestermere Group (Open, Mixed)

Sunday, 7:00pm
Wheelchair Accessible
Chestermere Town Hall
105 Marina Rd.

Daily Reflections (Open)

Thursday, 8:30pm
Scarborough United Church
134 Scarborough Ave. S.W.

Hussar Group (Open, Mixed)

Friday, 8:00pm
Hussar School (downstairs)
More Info: Gail G. 934-9819

Ladies Living Sober (Closed, Ladies, 12 x 12, Discussion)

Thursday, 7:00pm
Lutheran Church
13811 Deer Ridge Dr. SE

New Beginnings: Open Ladies Big Book (Open, Big Book)

Wednesday, 10:30am
7620 Elbow Drive SW

CANCELLED MEETINGS

Tsuu T'ina Spirit Healing Lodge Meeting

Monday & Thursday, 8:00pm
Tsuu T'ina Reserve

Rule 62:



"Now let me tell you all about AA."

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Joke of the Month

AA Grapevine

February 1994

“ “ The local pub’s resident drunk was holding forth in his usual loud-mouth manner. He had a lot to say about the many injustices he’d met with in the world, and finally whined, “You know, the only real licking I ever got was for telling the truth!”

Silence hung long in the air, then came a small voice from the end of the bar:

“Sure cured you, didn’t it.” ☺

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MEETING CHANGES

Action Group

Wednesday, 8:00pm

New Meeting location!!!
First Mennonite Church
2600 Richmond Rd. S.W.

Get To The Point Group

Thursday, 7:45pm

Meeting time changed from
Thur. 7:00pm TO Thur. 7:45pm

“Beginners Take 12”

(formerly “Back to Basics”)

Monday, 8:00pm meeting ONLY.

Early meeting time cancelled.

Knocking on Heaven’s Door Group

(Open, Mixed, Discussion)

Sunday, 2:30pm

*NOTE: Music Jam following meeting on the

2nd and 4th Sunday’s ONLY: 3:30pm - 6:00pm

Tsuu T’ina Reserve Meeting

Tuesday, 5:00pm

Meeting time changed from
Wed. 8:00pm TO Tues. 5:00pm

Spirit Walkers

Wednesday, 7:00pm

Meeting time changed from
8:00pm TO 7:00pm
Based on Native Spirituality

Sobriety & Beyond

Mondays, SE

This meeting is now held Mondays at 7:30pm
(NOT 8:00pm) at the New Brighton Residence As-
soc. Building - #2, New Brighton Dr. SE

(Buzz for entry)

continued from page 1: “Checklist”

On the other hand, I rejoice that I can now participate in so many good ways of fulfilling our primary purpose. I can help put on public meetings and other public-information activities to carry the message to the alcoholics who are still out there drinking, sick, scared, completely unaware that we want them, and completely wrong in their notion of what our sober life is like. I can be on our hospital- and jail-visiting committees. I can serve on my group’s hospitality committee, to welcome the ill-at-ease new man. I can attend or lead beginners meetings. I can help support our local Intergroup office and the AA General Service Office, which reach drunks in places I cannot get to. I can have coffee with the new man after the meeting, instead of running off to chin and gossip with my old friends.

Yes, my group (made up of individual AAs, including me) has improved a lot in its respect for our Fifth Tradition--in its ways of carrying the message. My own AA history has lengthened considerably since I first caught glimpses of the sobriety-preserving wisdom in the AA ways of doing things, summed up in our Traditions. But I have recently discovered something else quite wonderful about the Fifth: It does not say that AAs should help only newcomers.

I do not agree that the newcomer is the most important member at any meeting. In my opinion, equally important are those old-timers who showed me the way, and any middle-timer who may today be suffering. If newcomers are indeed the lifeblood of AA, old- and middle-timers are its skin and backbone. What a bewildered mess we would be in without them!

So in your next meeting, when that Tradition about carrying the message “to the alcoholic who still suffers” is mentioned, please give a thought, not only to newcomers, but also to the alcoholics older in AA who are sitting there. One of them might be me. I still suffer, sometimes. I still need to hear the message, always.

Fifth Tradition 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 he is or what is in it for me?
5. Do I help my group in every way I can to fulfill our primary purpose? Does my group carry the message, or do we expect people to come get it?
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? ☺

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If you would like to contribute a recovery related story to be published in the Westword, simply drop it off at Central Office or email it to:
westwordeditor@gmail.com

VALUABLE 12 STEP OPPORTUNITIES

“ Practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics.”

- Big Book, Pg. 89

Members needed to carry the message to **Bowden Institution**.

(Please note: Security clearance is required)

More Information: email: corrections@area78.org

Members needed to carry the message to the **Remand Centre, Spy Hill Jail and Calgary Youth Offenders Centre**.

(Please note: ALL THREE require security clearance & min. 1 yr. sobriety)

More Information: **Mellissa R. (403) 264-5268**

Members needed at Central Service Office as **Telephone Monitors**.

One shift per week, Monday to Friday

9:00am to 1:00pm or 2:00pm to 5:00pm

More Information: **Axel (403) 355-5600 or Mathew (403) 777-1212**

Calgary AA would like members for the **12 Step List**.

More Information: **Axel (403) 355-5660 or Mathew (403) 777-1212**

or email: centraloffice@telus.net

Bridging the Gap is looking for members willing to work in **NE Calgary** as well **Centres Outside of Calgary**.

More Information: **Mathew (403) 777-1212 or email: centraloffice@telus.net**

Calgary & Area 78 Corrections Committees:

We are always in need of **any and all, current or old Grapevines**, for use in the jails of Southern Alberta. Drop them off in the special box at CSO and they will get read several more times & help inmates to find sobriety. You can also give them to your GSR to take to the CGSC meeting or Area Assembly.

Women Needed to Chair Meetings Once a Month

Women are needed to chair a Beginners Meeting once a month at women's treatment facilities.

The commitment is either Saturday morning or Sunday evening.

The experience is very rewarding to those who have been involved.

If you are interested, please contact **Colleen C. at 667-2780**.

Join the Public Information Committee!:

There are many service opportunities available on this fun and exciting committee. The public information committee is dedicated to spreading word to the public about the **"solution on which we can absolutely agree and join in brotherly and harmonious action!"** (BB pg. 17)

Next meeting: **Central Office - Always the LAST Wednesday of the month.**

More information: pichair.calgary@gmail.com

"We are continuously being asked to speak at non-AA meetings. PI can always use more "informed" speakers for non-AA occasions. This is a very good opportunity to be of service to the still suffering alcoholic. On June 9th at 6:30pm (prior to the monthly intergroup meeting) there will be an information session on "speaking at non-AA meetings". Please join us!"

-Public Information Committee

COMC: 2 Vacancies!:

Effective immediately, there are two vacancies on the Central Office Management Committee. For more information on these positions please contact **Woody H. @ 286-1794** or forward your resume to CSO.

All submissions to be included in any upcoming editions of the Westword newsletter should be sent to westwordeditor@gmail.com no later than the first Monday of each month. Anything sent past this deadline MAY NOT be received in time to be included in the edition.

Thank you - Westword Editor

UPCOMING EVENTS

Front Runners Calgary Roundup

May 16th - May 18th, 2008

Hillhurst United Church

1227 Kensington Close NW

Calgary, AB

More Information: frontrun30@hotmail.com

34th Annual Lloydminster Roundup

May 30th - June 1st, 2008

Legacy Centre

50101-46th St.

Lloydminster, AB

More Information: **Chris (780) 875-7576**

27th Annual Gratitude Roundup

June 6th - June 8th, 2008

The Glenmore Inn

Calgary, AB

More Information: **CSO 777-1212**

Rocky Recovery Roundup

June 13th - June 16th, 2008

Buster Creek Hall

(near) Rocky Mountain House, AB

See poster @ CSO for more information or call

More Information: **(403) 845-2784**

District 86 Roundup

June 20th - June 21st, 2008

180 Brent Blvd.

Strathmore, AB

Cost is a 7th Tradition donation

More Information: **Nick (403) 888-5185**

Pincher Creek's 2nd Day Roundup

Saturday, June 21st, 2008

Pincher Creek, AB

More Information: **Linda (403) 627-3015**

or **Cassandra (403) 627-4161**

CSO NEWS

COMING SOON!!! 4 HOT NEW GRAPEVINE CDs!

Emotional Sobriety - vol. 1 & 2

Spiritual Awakenings - vol. 1 & 2

\$14.50/ea.

4 AWESOME AA DVDs!

Markings on the Journey - A history of AA

\$22.50

Bill tells his story - from Stepping Stones, NY

\$22.50

Bill discusses the 12 traditions

\$14.00

Alcoholics Anonymous - about AA in general

\$14.00

Still Discounted!!!

Big books are still only \$9.00!!!

Keep those contributions coming so they can remain that price!

HAPPY AA BIRTHDAY!

April

272 Group:

Ellen D. 23 yrs.

Dalhousie Mens:

Eric P. 1 yr.

Edgemont Group:

Leslie C. 2 yrs.

Glenmore:

Al B. 1 yr.
Sean 1 yr.
Chris P. 1 yr.
Adam 1 yr.
Chris D. 2 yrs.
Susan 5 yrs.
Tania 6 yrs.
Rick C. 10 yrs.

Mike P. 13 yrs.
Lyle. 13 yrs.
Claude 20 yrs.
Gillian 22 yrs.

Highland Park:

Murray L. 19 yrs.

Irricana:

Lance S. 1 yr.
Gary O'K. 20 yrs.

Link Group:

Craig S. 5 yrs.

MAAT:

Susan Q. 1 yr.
Rita U. 2 yrs.
Ron D. 14 yrs.
Glen B. 40 yrs.

Marlborough Park:

Jack B. 52 yrs.

McKenzie Group:

Patti 1 yr.
Linda S. 1 yr.
Mike R. 4 yrs.
Margie M. 7 yrs.
Jason M. 8 yrs.
Derrick M. 9 yrs.
James B. 10 yrs.
Doug M. 14 yrs.
David W. 15 yrs.
Judy H. 20 yrs.
Kevin 29 yrs.
Melody 30 yrs.

New Beginnings:

Connie B. 1 yr.
Kerry R. 2 yrs.
Lance M. 3 yrs.

Jack B. 4 yrs.
Chad H. 5 yrs.
Barbara L. 7 yrs.
Staci L. 9 yrs.
Linda M. 10 yrs.
Chris G. 10 yrs.
Kerry G. 11 yrs.
Natalie L. 12 yrs.
Tim R. 13 yrs.

Ogden Group:

Bill M. 10 yrs.

Recovery:

James P. 1 yr.
Billie S. 3 yrs.
Melissa C. 3 yrs.
Leslie R. 3 yrs.
Les M. 8 yrs.
Natalie I. 12 yrs.
Keith H. 17 yrs.

Sandy M. 18 yrs.
Terry W. 18 yrs.
Tom Mc. 20 yrs.
Jim P. 21 yrs.
Stan K. 33 yrs.

Sun. Morn. 11am Group:

Doug H. 11 yrs.
Eunice A. 17 yrs.

Unity:

Pablo 17 yrs.

Wed. Eye Opener:

Leslie C. 2 yrs.

May

272:

Stan R. 5 yrs.
Anneliese W. 19 yrs.
Phil D. 20 yrs.

Back to the Drawing Board:

Laurie ? yrs.
Jennifer ? yrs.

Crossroads Group:

Carol L. 19 yrs.
Tony S. 32 yrs.

Front Runners:

Gerry Mc. 14 yrs.

Highland Park:

Verona S. 19 yrs.

Irricana:

Ron Mc. 16 yrs.
Steve B. 18 yrs.

Link Group:

Brenda M. 13 yrs.

MAAT:

Gerard D. 15 yrs.
Melvin S. 20 yrs.
Gary O. 26 yrs.
Sandra F. 26 yrs.

Marlborough Park:

Brian F. 7 yrs.
Jackie N. 27 yrs.
Johnny G. 32 yrs.

Ogden Group:

Roy F. 16 yrs.

Recovery:

Brett T. 3 yrs.
Cody W. 4 yrs.
Laura F. 15 yrs.
Jane H. 22 yrs.
Beto C. 23 yrs.
Clayton R. 31 yrs.

Tues. Morning Ladies:

Gaye 7 yrs.
Marjorie 24 yrs.

NOTE:

Please remember, if you would like your groups monthly birthday's listed, please be sure to submit them to Central Office, or email westwordeditor@gmail.com, no later than the first Monday of each month.



SUNDAY MORNING BREAKFAST

Downtown Ramada Inn
708 - 8th Ave. SW

Breakfast - 9:00am
Speaker - 10:00am

UPCOMING GROUPS:

- Drawing Board (May 11th)
- Recovery (May 18th)
- Airport Group (May 25th)

Come and join us for breakfast:

Buffet Breakfast \$12.00
Healthy Start Breakfast . . . \$9.00
Toast & Coffee \$4.00
Coffee \$2.00

To inquire about speaking opportunities in the future, call Jacques at 714-5101.



DOWNTOWN SATURDAY NIGHT SPEAKER MTG.

Fortis Building
North Tower
801 - 7th Ave. SW

Speaker - 8:00pm

In an effort to help better serve the Calgary AA community, the Intergroup Steering Committee has begun the process of standardizing email addresses for the committee chairs. Please feel free to contact any of us at any time.

Intergroup Chairpersoncalgaryintergroupchair@gmail.com
Public Information Chairperson pichair.calgary@gmail.com
Telephone Monitoring Chairpersonmonitorchair@gmail.com
Westword Editor westwordeditor@gmail.com

*Please Note: More email addresses are to follow next month as they are created!



TELEPHONE MONITORING

This is an experience you must not miss. We know you will not want to miss it. Frequent contact with newcomers and with each other is the bright spot of our lives.

- Big Book, Pg. 89

Thank you to all who signed up as late night monitors!

If you would like to serve in this capacity, please phone Axel at:

355-5600

monitorchair@gmail.com

Calgary's 27th Annual Gratitude Roundup



JUNE 6,7,8, 2008

The Glenmore Inn

2720 Glenmore Trail S.E.

Calgary, AB, Canada (www.glenmoreinn.com)

(403)-279-8611, Toll Free 1-800-661-3163

*Friday
&
Saturday Dances*

Speakers

AL-ANON
and
ALATEEN
Participation

Friday, June 6

8:00pm Bob O. (A.A.) Centennial, Co.

Saturday, June 7

9:30am Len B. (A.A.) , Calgary, Ab

11:00am TBA (ALATEEN)

1:15pm TBA (ALANON)

2:45pm Chris R. (A.A.) Hunt, Tx.

7:30pm Karen G. (A.A.) Los Angeles, Ca.

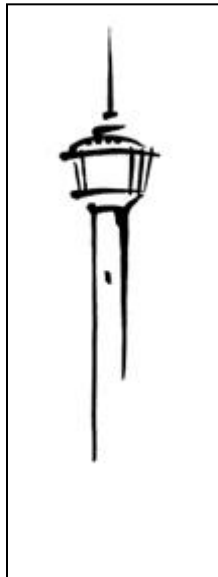
Sunday, June 8

8:30am Speaker Panel - Steps 6&7

10:00am Don C. (A.A.) Colorado Springs, Co.,

For More information contact:
#2 4015 - 1st St. SE
Calgary, AB T2G 4X7

Central Service Office
(403)-777-1212
aaoffice@telusplanet.net



Registration Cost

\$20.00

-includes all meetings and 2 dances

Banquet Cost

\$58.00

-includes all registration cost and dinner