



The Willamette Valley Intergroup

Eye Opener

June 2009

Willamette Valley Central Office

687 Cottage Street NE

Monday - Friday 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Saturdays 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

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June, the 6th Month

Step 6

Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

Tradition 6

An AA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the AA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.

*Were entirely ready to have God remove
all these defects of character.*

I HAVE attacked Step Six many times. It has attacked me in return. We have had open warfare, and we have had moratoriums. For periods of time, I have purposely ignored this Step. Often, I have stated that it did not make sense to me.

The battle began some years back, when I regularly attended Step-discussion meetings. I had done my best on the first five Steps, I thought. I had even made a written list of all my defects. They counted up to twenty-seven.

(cont. page 2)

Following the example of an old-timer friend of mine, whose quality of sobriety I admired, I printed, in ink, each one of my separate defects on a white poker chip. Then all twenty-seven chips went into a small, fat, yellow pitcher. Every morning on awaking, I plunged my hand into it (like picking a number from a goldfish bowl) and came up with the "chip for today." The defect might be anger, fear, pride, resentment, gossip, snobbery, self-pity, and so on, but whichever one it was had to be concentrated upon for the next 24 hours, and either reduced to a minimum or cast away.

It was a kind of game. I enjoyed wrestling with one "defect" a day. I felt I was making progress, really working the AA program. It hadn't yet occurred to me that I had gone overboard on this "defect" business. Twenty-seven indeed! How is that for the "pride" defect? Of course, most of them were not serious flaws of character, such as the inability to be honest with oneself. Most were bad habits possessed, in some degree, by most humans.

Nevertheless, I kept up this game for two or three years, telling many AA friends about it and urging them to go and do likewise. I explained that, although the Step suggested that God would remove these defects when and if I became ready to let go of them, I was of the school that believed in the saying "Pray for potatoes, but reach for the hoe." I did ask my Higher Power to lend a hand on the day's defect I happened to confront, but I felt that He expected me to use energy on rooting it out of my character.

Still, these dozens of defects I had laid claim to kept cropping up again and again, over and over. It seemed that the harder I fought them, the harder they fought back. I became quite discouraged. I decided I had been willing, I had tried, and I would now let Number Six, and myself, have a vacation. I put the little yellow pitcher on a shelf behind some books and only now and then dipped into it. I kept busy and active in AA; I felt comfortable being sober; I was trying to practice the AA principles in all my affairs. Then, out of nowhere, came a deep resentment toward an AA friend. I agonized over it, prayed over it, but discussed it with no one. I had insomnia, indigestion, and fatigue. (Any good doctor can tell you that negative emotions make people physically ill.)

Fortunately, just about that time our group was slated for discussion of Step Six. I opened my copy of *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* and read the Step all the way through. Although I had read it many times before, it seemed as if I saw its meaning for the first time. I gathered that, instead of fighting mightily against a defect, I had to let go of it. Just simply open up my hands, my heart, and my mind and say to my Higher Power. "Here it is, this defect. I give it to you. Please remove it from me." In this case, it was the bitter and destructive resentment that I wished to be rid of. And so it happened. It faded away and never returned.

Since then, I have followed the same procedure on other serious emotional problems, with the same result. I just have to keep in mind that if I am not 100 percent sincere in my willingness to be rid of the problem, the procedure won't work. I have come to realize that Step Six means exactly what it says. No more, no less. When, and if, I become ready to have painful, inhibiting, or long-standing flaws removed, they will be. Not always permanently, not all of them. But if and when they return, they will be weaker and much easier to let go of. As for all those bad habits I once listed as defects, I am trying to arrest them a day at a time, as I do my alcoholism.

A little progress has been made on pride. I can now admit that most of my troubles stem from one large and glaring defect: self-centeredness. For how can I wallow in self-pity, weep over resentments, be sick with righteous anger, ache with envy, tense up with fears and anxieties unless all my thoughts are exclusively on poor me?

A long time ago, a very wise man, Marcus Aurelius, wrote: "A man's life is what his thoughts make it." Through Step Six, I have learned how true this is. I may never comprehend it fully, yet I know its value to me. It calls forth the most precious asset any recovering alcoholic can have: the willingness to get out of the driver's seat, to stop trying to run the show. I need to keep the Sixth Step message of letting go and letting God in my own thoughts at all times.

F. C. Manhattan, New York Sept 1970 Vol 27 Num 4

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Tradition Six Checklist

An AA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the AA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.

1. Should my fellow group members and I go out and raise money to endow several AA beds in our local hospital?
2. Is it good for a group to lease a small building?
3. Are all the officers and members of our local club for AAs familiar with "Guidelines on Clubs" (which is available free from GSO)?
4. Should the secretary of our group serve on the mayor's advisory committee on alcoholism?
5. Some alcoholics will stay around AA only if we have a TV and card room. If this is what is required to carry the message to them, should we have these facilities?

Tradition Six: Enthusiasm Unbounded

I was a little over a year sober when I began answering phones with my sponsor at our local intergroup. During one shift, he overheard a conversation in which I waxed poetic about the virtues of AA and then tried to help the caller with other problems. After the call, he calmly asked, "Have you ever read the Traditions in the 'Twelve and Twelve?'"

My only exposure to the Traditions had been grumbling attendance at a few Traditions meetings.

"No," I answered.

"Well, if you are going to do more service," he said, "you might want to read about them. They're kind of . . . important."

Although I was insulted and defensive--my first reaction to many of his suggestions--I realized that he had about twenty more years of experience than I, so I'd better take the suggestion.

I'm so glad I did. I loved reading about the trials, errors, and misadventures that the early AAs had while developing the Traditions that guide our Fellowship today. I realized that early AAs were just as fallible and, occasionally, as misguided as anyone else. But, by returning to a primary purpose, obstacles could be overcome, and the Fellowship would survive.

As I've continued to do service at the group level and beyond, I've witnessed how our Traditions help the Fellowship navigate through all sorts of situations. It's not always pretty, either, so I really started to appreciate the wisdom that came from the experience of those in the early days.

One Tradition that I've grown grateful for is the Sixth Tradition. At first, it took me a while to see how a Tradition that deals with specific issues--money, endorsement, lending out the AA name--could apply to my own recovery. But the more service I've done over the years, the more I've come to realize how this Tradition really helps our Fellowship to keep it simple.

For a number of years, I took an AA meeting into a detox every other Friday night. The detox is part of a hospital and is run, like many hospital detoxes, by a trained, professional staff.

Early on in my commitment, a patient showed up after the meeting started. She apologized profusely and began telling me why she was late. I realized

that because I was leading the meeting, some detox patients might assume that I work for the hospital.

I told her that I appreciated the apology, but it wasn't necessary. From that point on, I made sure I explained, at the beginning of each meeting, that I was neither a member of the hospital staff, nor a professional in the field of alcoholism treatment. I told them that I was simply a drunk, just like them, who found a solution in Alcoholics Anonymous. The speaker and I were there to share our experience in the hopes that it might help another alcoholic--we wanted to give back what had been so freely given to us. We had nothing to do with the hospital, we weren't there to enforce any rules, make money, or sell anything. I found it helpful to make this clear from the beginning, both for the patients and for myself. It helped define the meeting's primary purpose, and it also, perhaps, made it easier for the patients in the detox to see me as a peer, not as a counselor or a doctor.

In my own recovery, Tradition Six reminds me not to overstep my bounds. As my sponsor witnessed that day at intergroup, there are times I get excited and try to fix things I have no business fixing. Whether I'm answering phones, talking to a newcomer at a meeting, or working with a sponsee, my only purpose is to share my experience, strength, and hope, and to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers. There are plenty of competent professionals, more qualified than I, who can handle everything else.

John G.

New York, New York

SOBERFEST RAFFLE **BEACH HOUSE GET-AWAY**

Three days and Two nights with Dinner and Lunch



Location of house is 7 miles north of Newport within walking distance of beach. \$500 value. Drawing set for July 31st.

Tickets are \$10 each or 3 for \$25.

Contact Chris H. for tickets at (503) 999-1758

Willamette Valley Intergroup Minutes

May 18, 2009

Chairs and Committee members attending: Co-Chair-Gene H., Secretary-Jane A., Treasurer- Kathleen K., Eye Opener Editor-Roger L., Office Manager-Laura F.; Outreach Coord., Candace L.; Computer Admin., Dave S.

Group Representatives:

Kathleen K	Group I
Jane A	Tuesday Nite Chapel
Roger L	Friday Nite LSN
Fred D	Mill Creek Group @ OSP
Dallas N	SAYPAA
Tiffany	Step of the Month
Bill B	Pioneer Group
Karen B	Deaf Community
Candace R	7am Downtown
Terese F	Way Home Group
Christian	H&I representative

Opening: Meeting started with Serenity Prayer lead by Roger. Candace read Preamble and Dave read the 12 Traditions.

Minutes reviewed. approved

Reports:

Access Committee: (Gene H.) No new items. He was asked to write up an article and submit to Eyeopener.

Al-Anon Liaison: (Barbara S.) Not present, did submit a report to secretary from last business meeting of AIS.

Computer Administrator: (Dave S.) There have been some problems with the email accounts. He is addressing them and may have to go to a new provider due to the amount SPAM the current accounts are getting..

Eye Opener: (Roger L.) All is going well.

H&I Committee: (Christian) reported they were working on a mission statement. Jane stated that a meeting has now been created for men and women at the work center.

Intergroup Liaison: (Gene H.) nothing new to report

Meeting Schedule Coordinator: (Margaret B.) not present

Phone Coordinator: (Ben M.) Not present.

Office Manager: (Laura F.) 329 contacts in March for a total of 1417. They will be closed on Monday for Memorial day. Wanted representative to remind the groups that prices will increase in July, so order now. She has done two group-training sessions for office volunteers. The Saturday AM group has taken on the responsibility of Central office for every other Saturday. That has not happened before.

Outreach Coordinator: (Candace.) She has gone to a couple of meetings and brought a new IR to this meeting. She has suggested to some of the groups to have an IR and an Alternate IR.

Soberfest Committee: (Ron P.) A raffle is being done through the end of July. The winner will get a two nights- three days stay at the coast. Tickets are for sale at \$10 a ticket or 3 for \$25. Flyers were given out for distribution to the groups. The Webmaster and Eyeopener Editor have also been provided with the flyer.

Treasurer: (Kathleen K.) Distributed monthly report. Was reviewed and accepted.

Webmaster: (Ron P.) not present.

Old Business:

Gene asked each member of the Intergroup committee to read the by-laws and more specifically the specific duties and responsibilities of their position before next meeting. By doing so- it provides a setting for the organization to be the best. Discussion followed on updating of by-laws and keeping them up-to-date. The IR's were asked to go back to their groups and obtain a group conscience. Does the Eyeopener still need to carry the treasurer's report and latest approved minutes? Are the by-laws good as they stand or should we consider updating them?

New Business:

Co-Chair position and Treasurer position will be up for new nominations in 2010. Need the chairperson to write up an article to get nominations for these two positions. IR's need to obtain nominations for these positions.

Meeting adjourned

SAVE THE DATE !
SATURDAY AUGUST 15



11TH ANNUAL

A.A. WOMEN'S LUNCHEON

To help with the event or for
further information contact

Jane A. (503) 580-1906

**2010 INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION
OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS**

The 2010 International Convention of AA will be held July 1-4 in San Antonio, Texas with the theme A Vision for You A.A. members and guests from around the world will celebrate A.A.'s 75th year at this event with big meetings held Friday night, Saturday night and Sunday morning in the Alamo dome. Other meetings, scheduled or informal, will take place throughout the weekend in the San Antonio Convention Center and local hotels. Start your planning now!!

Have something you'd like to see in the Eye Opener?
Send all suggestions and/or information to:

Roger.L@comcast.net

June 2009 Calendar

Grapevine Speakers Meeting

When Sat, June 6, 7:30pm – 9:30pm **Where** First Congregational Church, 700
Marion St. NE, **Description** Monthly AA Speaker Meeting

H&I Committee Meeting

When Mon, June 8, 7pm – 8pm **Where** Central Office, 687
Cottage NE, Salem, OR

District 4 GSR's Meeting

When Thu June 11, 7pm – 8pm **Where** St Paul's Episcopal Church,
1444 Liberty St. SE, Salem, OR

TTCO Speakers Meeting

When Sat June 13, 7pm – 9pm **Where** St Paul's Episcopal Church,
1444 Liberty St. SE, Salem, OR
Description Take The Cotton Out Speakers Meeting.
AA, Al-Anon Speakers Meeting.

WVI Committee Meeting

When Mon, June 15, 7pm – 8pm **Where** Central Office,
687 Cottage NE, Salem, OR, 97301

KIS-S Committee Meeting

When Thurs, June 18, 5:30pm – 6:30pm **Where** Central Office,
687 Cottage NE, Salem, OR

Soberfest Committee

When Fri, June 26, 7pm – 8pm **Where** St Paul's Episcopal Church,
1444 Liberty St. SE, Salem, OR

KIS-S Speakers Meeting

When Sat, June 27, 7:00pm – 9:30pm
Where Morningside Methodist Church, Salem, OR
Description Keep It Simple Speakers Meeting.
AA, Al-Anon Speakers Meeting.

TTCO Committee

When Tue, June 30, 7pm – 8pm **Where** Central Office,
687 Cottage NE, Salem, OR

MEETING CHANGES

Committee Meetings

KIS-S time changed to
3rd Thursday, 5:30 to 6:30 pm

Sign Language Interpreted Meetings (SI)

**Keizer, 6:30pm on Monday

Causes and Conditions

Faith Lutheran Church 4505 River Road N.

Salem, 7:30 on 3rd, 4th, and 5th Thursdays

Capitol Discussion Group

1998 Lansing Avenue, NE (Corner at Sunnyview)

New Meetings--Salem

Men On a Mission (open, non-smoking, men only)

Meets Wednesday at 1:00pm

ROCC Building, 1144 Madison Street, NE

The Tenth Hour Candlelight Meeting

Meets Friday from 10:00pm to 11:15pm

Woodland Chapel, 582 High Street, SE

Cancellations—Salem

Big Book Step Study Thursday, 6:30pm

St. Paul's Episcopal Church

Late Nite Mission Meeting

Salvation Army

All meeting times have now been cancelled

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Willamette Valley Intergroup Roster

Chair	Vacant	Co Chair	Gene H.
Treasurer	Kathleen K.	Secretary	Jane A.
H&I	Christian	Access Com	Gene H.
Phone Line	Ben	Eye Opener	Roger L.
Web Master	Ron P.	Schedule	Margaret B.
Spanish	Maria R.	Alanon	Barbara S.
Outreach	Candace R.	Intergroup Liaison	Vacant
Soberfest Chair	Ron P.	Office Manager	Laura F.

Attention!! Effective July 1, 2009
A.A. World Services, Inc.
New Book Prices!!!
Literature prices will increase
Get your orders to Central Office
as soon as possible!!

ORCYPAA 2009 CAMPOUT

2009 ORCYPAA Chair

Mitch Stevens

327 Effie St

Medford, OR 97405

Phone 541 301 3615

Colinsdado3@yahoo.com

June 19th - 21st Valley of the Rogue State Park

Hope to see you there!!!



**Father
Edward
Dowling**
Sept 1, 1898
to
April 3, 1960

Father Edward Dowling, S.J., the Roman Catholic priest who worked closely with Bill and Dr. Bob in formulating the Steps and the Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous. Father Dowling was Bill's friend and Spiritual Advisor.

"Bill had made a decision, Father Ed reminded him, to turn his life and his will over to God ... he was not to sit in judgment on how he or the world was proceeding. He had only to keep the channels open ... it was not up to him to decide how fast or how slowly AA developed ... For whether the two of them liked it or not, the world was undoubtedly proceeding as it should, in God's good time."

Father Ed endorsed AA for American Catholics with his appendix in the Big Book and his Queen's Work pamphlet of 1947. He was the first to see wider applications of the twelve steps to other addictions, and wrote about that in Grapevine (AA's magazine) in the spring 1960 issue. Bill added a last line to that Grapevine article: "Father Ed, an early and wonderful friend of AA, died as this last message went to press. He was the greatest and most gentle soul to walk this planet. I was closer to him than to any other human being on earth."