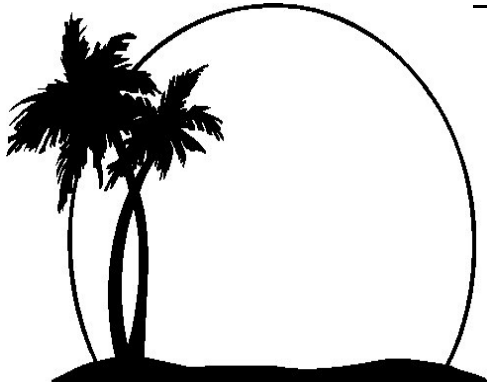


May, 2021



Your Santa Barbara Central Office

Presents

The Messenger

14 W. Anapamu Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 962-3332 www.santabarbaraaa.com

Your Central Office relies on the generous support of its members. Please consider becoming a supporting member so that we can continue carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

Supporting Member Donation Coupon

- ☐ I would like to become a supporting member of the Santa Barbara AA Central Office, and help it continue to carry the message and be there for the alcoholic who still suffers. I look forward to receiving my monthly newsletter by email each month!

Enclosed is my first contribution of \$ _____.

I will continue to donate this amount on a (circle one) monthly, quarterly, annual, other _____ basis.

- ☐ I am already a supporting member. This is my regular contribution of \$ _____.

To donate by check:

Please make check payable to:

AA Central Office
14 W. Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

To donate by credit, debit, or ACH:

To set up a recurring donation by credit card, debit card, or checking account, please call or visit Central Office so we can assist you.

To donate by Venmo:

Search for: @SBCentralOffice or scan the QR code on page 2. Make sure to indicate who is making the donation.

The Manager's Corner

BY TIM W.

I am now officially one of those guys who may begin to relate something to you with the words “Back when I was new, we” and then go on to tell you about the good old days and how we did A.A. right. Not like these young whippersnappers today by golly!

I am aware, of course, that there were decrepit old guys doing the same thing when I was new. I know I looked and reacted toward them in much the same manner I observe newer members looking and reacting to me sometimes. Especially when I am harkening back to the golden age of Alcoholics Anonymous. Say around the year 1983. Do you remember how your parents became smarter at some point? Can you remember that? That's the same thing that has gone on for me in my recovery. It turns out those old guys actually did know a thing or two. It just took becoming one for me to figure that out.

I was greatly heartened recently when I was informed that there are several Groups in our community, and several Sponsors, who, individually, are actually studying and informing the people they work with about the Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous. Here again, something that seemed to occur more often when I was new in the program. I truly appreciate the people who are making an effort to do that. And, of course, I have to ask myself if I am doing all I can to further people's understanding of this important aspect of our program. Because I do believe that the Steps will save the individual and the Traditions will save our Society.

Anyway, that's my rant for the month. Maybe next month I'll write about the really cool names we had for people way back then. Because it feels like that's fading away too. I mean where are old 'Slow Talking Peggy' and 'Overcoat Ron' and 'Forehead Bob' and 'Salvation Army Tim' when we need them?

[illegible]

Venmo for Central Office Donations

Your Central Office is now accepting Venmo donations. Scan the QR code below
or search for: @SBCEntalOffice

IMPORTANT: Please indicate what Group is making the donation or what individual member is making the donation



Scan QR Code for payment

Central Office Hours & Updates

Your Central Office is currently open from **10-2 Monday through Friday**. To limit the number of people in the office at any given time, we do keep the front door locked. So, please just knock and we will let you in. We are also happy to make arrangements to meet people outside of our normal hours. All you need to do is call and make an appointment in advance.

Despite more limited hours, we still have our 24/7 phone line, so newcomers, old-timers, and everyone in between can always find someone to talk to.

Call us at: (805) 962-3332

[illegible]

Is Your Group Holding In-person Meetings?

Let Your Central Office know so we can update the Meeting Guide.



A Message From the Newcomer

*I see you at the meetings;
But you never say hello,
You're busy all the time you're there
With those you already know.
I sit among the others,
Lonesome, nervous, and shy;
Frightened of this brand new world
As you oldtimers pass me by.
But darn it, you folks asked me in,
And talked of Fellowship,
You could just step across the room
But you never made the trip.
Why can't you nod and say "Hello".
Or stop and shake my hand?;
Then go and sit among your friends
Now that I'd understand.
Perhaps I'll be at your next meeting,
Why don't you start a trend?
Come over and introduce yourself,
I really need a friend.*



April Birthdays

<u>Member</u>	<u>Years</u>
Kimberly L.	1
Paola	2
Tevor C.	2
Talia	2
Todd J.	3
Elias	4
Debbie C.	7
Rob C.	7
Michael A.	7
Adam B.	8
Matt	10
Alison S.	16
Darren P.	17
Nancy B.	24
Gina	25
Jill H.	27
Nan S.	29
Michael A.	30
John R.	33
Arnie C.	34
Craig B.	44
Dave S.	44
Marti W.	45
Brian B.	45
Armando	52

The Messenger is published by
YOUR Central Office.

Please send submissions to:
manager@santabarbaraAA.com

***Have an AA birthday? Please let
your Central Office know so that we
can print it in The Messenger.***

Central Office Statistics

During April, your Central Office had:

AA Info Calls	133
Alanon Referrals	0
Other Referrals	1
12 Step Calls	1
12 Step Office	2
Out of Town Visitors	2
Office Walk Ins	180
Website Pageviews	6,266

“When it comes to ego deflation, few Steps are harder to take than Five. But scarcely any Step is more necessary to longtime sobriety and peace of mind than this one.”

Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions, page 55

On the Fifth Step

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

AFTER THE FIRE

BY A.B. (ORICK, CALIFORNIA)

I was feeling fragile and vulnerable. It was May 7, 2009 and I had 94 days of sobriety. I was about to meet with my sponsor, Diane, to do a partial Fifth Step on the issue I had suffered from and drank over for 40 years. I had been working on it for a week and it was a living hell. For the first time ever, I was trying to open up, delve into, and thoroughly examine this issue. I was anything but fearless! I was terrified, but once I unearthed it, there was no going back. I couldn't eat and I couldn't sleep. I couldn't live this way for any length of time, and yet I couldn't get past it to finish writing the rest of my Fourth Step. Diane suggested doing a partial Fifth Step on the issue now, and doing the rest later.

Seated at the kitchen table in her house, Diane started off with a beautiful prayer. Then it was my turn, and I went to where I have never before gone with another human being. I told the story of what was largely responsible for most of my drinking. After a week of bumping up against emotions such as terror, shame, rage, horror, revenge, grief, depression and desperation, the miracle of AA occurred. I never thought it would happen to me.

I burned the story in her fireplace, symbolically releasing it forever, and then I experienced something that I have never felt before and was at a loss for words with which to describe it to Diane. I left her house still not understanding what was happening, but by the time I got out on the road, I knew that something was very different. I couldn't make my mind work! It was as if I were drugged, or partially anesthetized, or had jet-lag. I felt strangely detached, unaffected by external stimuli, but as I drove along, I was acutely aware of colors: the sunlight, the green woods, the blue sky, and the yellow, pink, orange, and purple flowers next to the road. I was driving slowly because I couldn't seem to get the car up to the speed limit. By the time I got to the freeway, it was humorous, in a way. I was mentally incapable of making a simple decision such as which direction to go on the freeway. I got on and off freeway

ramps five or six times heading in different directions, absolutely unable to make my mind work. I had no conscious control over my mind and yet there was no fear.

I became increasingly aware of a strong beckoning. Something was urging me to go toward trees or water, like a giant magnetic force that I couldn't resist. Since I couldn't mentally negotiate the freeway to get me to the forest where there were trees, I headed west toward the beach that was there right next to the freeway.

I watched the sunlight on the water and let the sound of the crashing surf course through me for nearly two hours without a conscious thought. It was then that the words came to me: unshakable calm. I had been taken over by an unshakable calm such as I have never felt before. It lasted all day. Nothing could dispel it. Not giving blood at the blood bank, not going to the store to pick up an Rx, not going to return a blender. My body was going through the minutiae of errands, but the force that had taken me over was immutable. After seven hours, I finally acknowledged that a

miracle was taking place. It was as if something was wrapping its arms around me. The non-physical had just manifested in my life in a very physical way! I cried with joy and gratitude. I called my sponsor to tell her what was happening. I cried off and on through the AA meeting that night, unable to adequately express how I felt. Somehow, all my sober friends there seemed to understand anyway, and were loving it.

The spiritual experience lasted well into the next day. I realize now that I can no longer doubt the existence of a personal connection between a Higher Power and myself. Not any more. In fact, what I experienced was being one with a Higher Power. There was no separation. From the depths of emotional hell came the bliss of a tangible connection with my Higher Power.

I stand in awe and appreciation for having experienced this connection ... and maybe, just maybe, I can finally stay sober.

—From the September 2011 Grapevine

*"I realize now that I can
no longer doubt the
existence of a personal
connection between a
Higher Power and
myself."*

On Tradition Five

"Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers."

OUR PRIMARY PURPOSE

BY ANONYMOUS (HARTSDALE-ARDSLEY, NEW YORK)

THERE is a Fifth Tradition Group within our group. We think it helps to examine our group conscience every once in a while, especially that part of our conscience which could tell us whether or not we are properly performing our primary purpose.

You will remember that Tradition Five reads: "Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers." That seems to place a responsibility on a group, over and beyond the responsibility of the individual who might meet with or sponsor a suffering alcoholic. There have been at least a few occasions when one of us after visiting a prospect once or twice will decide that the fellow is "not ready" or "too far gone" or "not wanting to stop"; and then proceeded to forget him, despite the fact that the suffering alcoholic had approached the group for help.

Our little Fifth Tradition Group (made up of four or five new and old members) tries to keep track of such prospects and according to their judgment, may suggest that another member-closer perhaps because of neighborhood, vocation or age group—give this still-suffering alcoholic an occasional phone call or suggest a pick-up for a meeting that might have some special mutual interest. Sometimes it works . . . at least it makes us feel that we are giving the fellow or girl another chance, perhaps in recognition of the multitude of "another chances" given each of us.

We ask our members to keep this "group-with-in-the-group" informed of all prospects that come to us, through Intergroup, local phone exchange, clergymen, doctors, or when they might just come to our open meetings, seeking information for themselves. We don't hound or chase after those who don't want us, but there probably are some who need just a little more encouragement.

Also, this group extends its interest to those who

are new in AA and those who seem to have a little difficulty in stopping and even to those around for awhile who haven't picked up any group activity or made any firm friendships. Oft times this group will suggest that one of us become a "friend" to such people. We don't appoint sponsors for the newcomer because we believe that each one has the personal privilege of selecting his sponsor, but many times this "friend" can make the newcomer feel more welcome, and help him better understand what is going on. We don't spy or pry or try to find out when the fellow or girl had his or her last drink . . . we just want to be sure they know we are interested and eager to help when asked.

We want to make sure that no one will continue to suffer. . . just because we forgot!

Our Fifth Tradition Group meets occasionally to review the group membership to remind others that someone has been around for a few months and may be ready to talk at an open meeting or lead a closed meeting. They often suggest that a member might be helped if he were encouraged to get into a new group

activity, or someone else is getting close to an anniversary and should be given a chance to decide whether he or she wants to celebrate at an open meeting. They also greet our guest speakers at open meetings and see to it that they know we appreciate their visit. They keep their eyes open for any new faces which might indicate that another suffering alcoholic is seeking help; and try to neglect no one.

In fact, they are doing what probably all of us want to do, yet so often overlook. They are not relieving us of our individual responsibility or stopping any of us from being as active as we want to be. They are merely watching in the background so that we as a group will be ever mindful of our primary purpose—to help all who come to us for help. Someone . . . at some time . . . helped each of us. We want to be sure that no one will continue to suffer . . . just because we forgot!

—From the May 2009 Grapevine

CENTRAL OFFICE

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