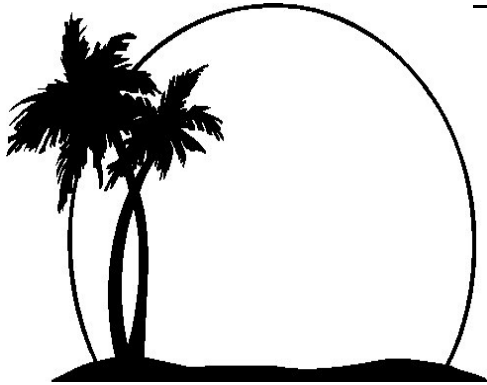


September, 2021

Your Santa Barbara Central Office

Presents



The Messenger

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

Making Amends

“Nothing will compare to the reward of being honest, having people accept what you’ve done and recognizing how far you’ve come.”

The Manager's Corner

BY TIM W.

People frequently express apprehension about the Fourth Step, not understanding that what they are really afraid of is the Fifth Step. That's where you actually have to tell someone else about all the stuff you wrote down.

But personal experience tells me that what they should really be worried about is the Ninth Step. Telling your secrets to one person, as you do in Five, is scary enough. But (spoiler alert) when you get to Nine you actually have to tell a bunch of people about the ways in which you've mistreated them. Through theft, through slander, through betrayal, through numerous small, smarmy, and cowardly acts. And you need to look them in the eye when you do it. That's where the going can get tough, and even the tough frequently don't want to get going.

It can be very difficult to look someone in the eye and own up to how you did wrong by them, how you regret it, and express a desire to make it right if possible. Talk about a pride buster! Fortunately, the majority of

people approached in this humble manner will take it easy on us, although sometimes they will add some things to your list that you had overlooked or forgotten. When this happens we just accept it, try to see the truth in it, and then again ask what we can do to make it right.

One final word of caution...please, please, please run what you intend to do as far as making amends is concerned with your Sponsor or spiritual guide. Sometimes in attempting to take the weight off ourselves, we would actually be setting up a situation where to do so would injure others. My Sponsor told me I couldn't go find that guy and tell him how sorry I was that I'd slept with his wife. Instead that was one I'd have to live with, and perhaps it would help me be faithful in my own marriage.

The (carefully examined with assistance) amends process will bring us great growth and comfort eventually. It's the getting through it that can sting. Good luck on your endeavors in this area.

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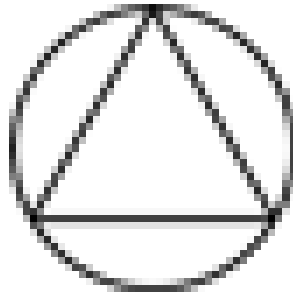
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Scan QR Code for payment

****Santa Barbara AA Convention Update****



Dear Friends,

After much discussion and careful consideration recently, the Santa Barbara Convention Committee reached a decision to once again postpone this year's convention and push it off until next year when it can be done correctly. There are numerous reasons for this—the main one, of course, being the safety of our community. Time had gotten away from us and we found ourselves far too close to the deadline to do the things necessary to ensure a high-quality and safe event.

This, of course, disappoints all of us. We love our convention; we love the good time that we have; and we want to make sure that when it does happen, it will be up to our standards. In the meantime, Your Central Office is looking into creating a separate event to foster fellowship. That said, we still are not sure when it can happen because of the current pandemic constraints. When and if this all clears up sufficiently (and it will), we will create an opportunity for our community to come together at the earliest possible safe date.

Until that time, please take care of yourselves. Our sincere thanks goes out to all who have been working hard in the prior months to plan the convention. We very much appreciate your efforts. We also very much appreciate your wisdom in choosing to postpone this event to ensure the wellbeing of our community.

Lastly, thank you for your continued support of Your Central Office. We are still functioning and supporting our community. Our office hours are 10-2 Monday-Friday, but if you need something outside of these hours, we will be more than happy to make arrangements.

In the spirit of the fellowship,

Your Central Office

On the Ninth Step

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

260 Breakfasts

A trip to an old boss to make things right led to a long, wonderful friendship he never expected

BY ANONYMOUS

Out of all of the Twelve Steps, I think it was the Ninth Step that helped me start to grow in understanding and personal effectiveness. Someone once said that God stands for "Grow Or Die." How true that is for me.

I had to make many amends in my Ninth Step. I had been told that whenever I make an amends to anyone, I should express my sincere regrets for my past behavior. Along with that, I should ask whether I can do anything to make up for the harm I caused. Most of my amends went well and no one asked me to do anything but keep on my path because it seemed to be working well.

One amends I made was to a former employer I had worked for at a restaurant many years earlier. I was a cook there and had done my fair share of taking things that did not belong to me. When I got to the part where I asked if there was anything I could do to make up for the harm I caused, my former boss looked at me and said, "As a matter of fact, there is something that may be helpful." I had made about 15 amends by that time and this was the first time anyone said there was something I could do.

"Do you remember that old guy who was my handyman at the restaurant?" she asked. "We called him 'Old Man Bob.'"

"Sure," I replied. "I remember him. I just saw him a few days ago."

She said that Bob's health was not good, and he could not drive his car anymore. Bob loved to eat breakfast at the restaurant on Saturdays, so she asked me to pick him up and bring him to the restaurant when I could, as she did not have the time to pick him up herself because of work. She offered to "comp" our breakfasts if I did so. And so my amends journey started.

"By making a simple amends to someone, I was taken on a long, wonderful journey."

I picked up Old Man Bob on Saturday mornings for more than five years. We had a wonderful breakfast at the restaurant and then we went to the grocery store. Bob liked to flirt with all the women in the store. They loved Bob. We became a regular thing at the grocery store. Bob and I also enjoyed many wonderful dinners together. We both loved to cook and eat good food. On Christmas, we'd always have a prime rib dinner.

Bob's health gradually got worse over the years. One day he asked me if I could be his caregiver and I agreed. So another journey began. I did not realize I would be getting phone calls at all hours of the night or day to check on him. You see, Bob was totally deaf. I had to write on a piece of paper to communicate with him. The emergency 911 button on his phone that he used to call for help worked well, but when the people on the other end of the 911 call would try to talk to him, he couldn't hear them. So I'd get a call and someone would ask me to check in on him. There were some long nights in emergency rooms. Bob finally had to be moved into an assisted living home where he could get the care he needed. I visited him there often.

In 2012, Old Man Bob passed away. He was 85. Being able to be of service and take care of Bob taught me a lot. After he died, I realized a few things about my life. One was that in taking care of and being there for Bob, I was making an amends to my father, who had died of cancer at the age of 63. I had been unable to show up and be there to help my father in his last days of his life, and I loved my father very, very much.

Another thing I learned is that I had brought some joy to Bob's life and he in turn brought joy to mine. By making a simple amends to someone, I was taken on a long, wonderful journey. It's a journey with no destination because I will never arrive. It also taught me what the word humility really means and reminded me of a William Blake quote I once heard: "I sought my soul, but my soul could not see. I sought my God, but my God eluded me. I sought my brother, and I found all three."

—From the March 2021 Grapevine



August Birthdays

<u>Member</u>	<u>Years</u>
Teresa G.	1
Talin	1
Henry M.	1
Johnny W.	2
Tyler M.	2
Will	3
Will P.	3
Shelley S.	3
Sally R.	4
Steve H.	7
Allison W.	8
Teri C.	11
Kevin C.	13
Ken S.	13
Cristian W.	14
Bob D.	18
Judy J.	18
Fred C.	22
Tom P.	24
Dan M.	24
Jennifer B.	26
Jessie	27
Chrissy B.	28
Lisa E.	28
Christy B.	28
Andrea W.	29
Jacquelin D.	30
Michael W.	31
Mary M.	34
Mary Anne H.	35
Gordon C.	37
Matt J.	48

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 August, your Central Office had:

AA Info Calls	115
Alanon Referrals	1
Other Referrals	0
12 Step Calls	4
12 Step Office	2
Out of Town Visitors	0
Office Walk Ins	209
Website Pageviews	8,257

"Above all, we should try to be absolutely sure that we are not delaying because we are afraid."

Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions, page 87

On Tradition Nine

"A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve."

WHY BE ORGANIZED?

A conversation with the coffee crew reminds this "elder statesman" why AA is set up the way it is

ROBERT P. (AMITY, OREGON)

When we ran out of creamer at our meeting the other day, I heard, as I often have, a couple of members say, "AA ought never be organized!"

Right then, the elder statesman status I aspire toward started leaking red. "Do you know what Bill meant by the word organize?" I asked the members. I just wanted to be helpful so they could understand Tradition Nine. They probably don't even know where that quote comes from, I thought.

Fortunately, I was schooled to just share my experience, strength and hope. So I said, "I learned that when Bill wrote, 'A.A., as such, ought never be organized,' he meant that we do not have membership rules or a way to discipline our members. He wanted the members to run the show." They looked at me and politely said, "Uh-huh," and walked away, giving me a strange look.

So in my daily inventory that night, I looked back at my early memories of the Twelve Traditions. I too had gone through the same familiar stages of thinking huh? to who cares? when I was new. My sponsor suggested that I care, so I finally began studying the Traditions.

But I had to ask myself, how often do I listen nowadays when the Ninth Tradition is read in a meeting? Do I really listen to the words? Well, honestly, hardly ever, which is a shame, since I consider the Traditions to be critical for the Fellowship to survive.

Now comes the salient question: Do I understand Tradition Nine? The long form says: "Each AA group needs the least possible organization," and then goes on to describe the minimal organization that AA as a whole requires. Then, I go to my dictionary. (Yes, a book. I know I'm old, but Bill didn't have a cell phone.) It

says of the word organize: "to form into a coherent unity or functioning whole" and "to arrange by systematic planning a united effort." Wow, that's a lot of AA packed into one word. Perfect for Dr. Bob's admonition to keep it simple.

Bill, of course, knew that not every member could attend the General Service Conference or serve on the General Service Board, so a simple structure of electing delegates and trustees to attend was created. This structure allows communication between the AA members to the Conference and back, with the beautiful side benefits of creating a mechanism for local and area services. He even throws in the egalitarian concept of the spirit of rotation. Dang, that Bill could write!

But, ah-ha! It's here that I hear some bashing of the "politics" of AA. I try to suggest that my perception of politics is personalities over principles, rather than our Twelfth Tradition of the opposite. Who provides the meeting schedules, staffs the hotlines, coordinates the institutions work, informs the public and maintains our website, not to mention the many less-well-understood Twelfth Step activities? But then some might say, "What about all those elections with the fancy titles?" Yes, we have service boards and committees, but we try to be directly responsible to the Fel-

lowship as a whole.

Time for more inventory, I tell myself. How well do I remain responsible to AA as a whole? Do I get defensive about our service structure? How well do I help keep politics out of service? How well do I know and communicate AA's Traditions, with their deep meaning? How well do I, as Bill W. writes in the January 1966 Grapevine, "reckon AA in two words ... humility and responsibility"?

Dr. Bob, in his final public address at the first International Convention in Cleveland, said: "Our Twelve Steps, when simmered down to last, resolve themselves into the words 'love' and 'service.'" As in all things AA, I too can make more progress.

—From the September 2017 Grapevine

How well do I, as Bill W. writes in the January 1966 Grapevine, "reckon AA in two words ... humility and responsibility"?

PRE-REGISTER NOW!

SWACYPAA VII

WITH AL-ANON PARTICIPATION!



SEPTEMBER 16-19, 2021
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VENTURA, CA

To register online & get more
info, visit swacypaa7.org



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