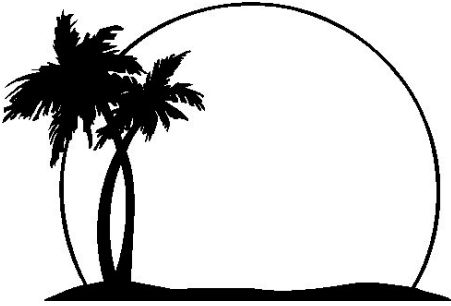


*May, 2022*



Your Santa Barbara Central Office Presents

# *The Messenger*

14 W. Anapamu Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
(805) 962-3332 [www.santabarbaraaa.com](http://www.santabarbaraaa.com)

## **Guess who I saw?**

I LIVE VERY CLOSE to a well-known treatment center. You'd probably recognize its name. Some years ago, a very famous Hollywood personality was in there.

How did I know that? Because someone broke their anonymity. I heard it whispered in my AA meetings: "Did you hear that X is in treatment? I saw them at the AA meeting!" Pretty soon people were flocking to the meetings there in hopes of seeing them.

I felt so bad about this situation. This person lost the opportunity to be "just one of us drunks." The spiritual foundation of all our Traditions was ignored.

The incident taught me to cherish our Tradition of anonymity even more than I already did. This Tradition helps me to keep my ego in check and to be concerned solely with passing on the AA message.

This morning at my home group, I felt real joy as we went around the circle introducing ourselves. Nearly 30 people, each giving only their first name, followed by "I'm an alcoholic." It doesn't matter, it shouldn't matter, whether my last name is Jones or Rockefeller, how many letters I have after my name, if I live in a Hollywood mansion or a nameless shelter in a small town, or whether I've been in AA 10 days or 10 years. The only thing that matters is that I have a desire to stop drinking today. Anonymous

Wilsonville, Ore.

# The Editors Note

**By Noah**

When I got sober there was a man named Charlie who impressed the heck out of me. He was young, sober and displayed the characteristics of the type of person I hoped to become.

One time, while sitting outside the library at SBCC it started to rain, just enough so that the ground got slippery. A girl came barreling out of the library and took a sharp right, but her legs slipped from under her and as she scrambled to right herself, her books went flying and ultimately she was down.

Being relatively newly sober, and more to the point, incredibly selfish and self centered, I didn't know what to do, but Charlie did. Before she even hit the ground he was up, asking her if she was ok and picking up her books to hand back to her. That left a lasting impression on me, we help, everyone, as often as we can.

Here we are years later and I am still trying to catch up to the man I saw Charlie be that day, the type of person who is always ready to help. Our Big Book is pretty clear, it states that "above everything, we alcoholics must be rid of this selfishness. We must or it kills us". The way I read that is that above everything is pretty high up there on the old priority list, maybe even the top priority?

My experience is that I reduce my selfishness by being of service and giving freely to others. Has that been your experience? I'd love to hear about it, shoot it over as a letter, email, or other and we can print it here to share with our peers. You might even get out of self by writing the letter (bonus)!

XX

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



Scan QR Code for payment

## A Spiritual Awakening at Its Best

Years before I came to Alcoholics Anonymous I was aware that there was something dreadfully wrong with me but not one person ever suggested that I might be an alcoholic or that I should try A.A. Perhaps that was due to the denial of the people around me that drank like I did.

Suggesting that I had a problem with alcohol would mean outing themselves and others. Looking back on it now, I feel fortunate that I survived those last few years of failed attempts at life and when I ran out of options I came to A.A. sincerely looking for answers. The denial within me was gone.

My mind was open and for the first time in my life I was desperate and I was listening. At my first A.A. meeting I was moved by what I heard. It was different than anything I had experienced before. The people were being honest and candid about things that only brought shame and guilt to me in the past. I felt safe for the first time in my life and could discuss those things openly, that had been taboo up until then. Prior to that, everything in my life was a façade.

At that moment on October 15, 1969, my perception of the world had changed and I have not wanted a drink since. Call it a *Spiritual Awakening* if you like, and it was for me, but it came in the form of a Profound Change in Perception. In appendices 2, in the Big Book, it describes a man who had "*undergone a profound alteration in his reaction to life.*" I began to question all of the decisions I had made in the past, and how the residue of those decisions had tarnished and eroded any chance of a successful, happy life.

I became aware that the values system that I had learned as a child, at church and at the Boy Scout meetings, etc. was lost in the dust, and was replaced with guilt and shame. I was in trouble when I violated my own value system. I now realize that, I wasn't a bad kid but I was a kid that wasn't strong enough to do the things I knew to be right. The more I broke the rules, the easier it became and moral standards were meaningless.

Soon drinking was the only thing that eased my conscience. When that quit working for me, I found myself at the door of Alcoholics Anonymous. Once I had that change of perception I knew what to do. It may be as simple as "*trying to stop doing the things that I regret*" but the key to it all is "*Being honest with myself*", and never going back to my old way of thinking.

I said that I was fortunate to have survived those last few years of drinking and that I came to A.A. looking for answers. Being desperate enough to ask for help was the most important part of that experience. I don't believe that anyone could have convinced me to stop drinking against my will. I may have stayed dry long enough to get the heat off, but I doubt that I would have sincerely surrendered to the degree necessary to have that change of perception and therefore no spiritual awakening.

Getting off in the right direction from the start was very important to any success I've had in A.A. I know that I only live once and I don't want to waste one moment of the precious life God gave me.

Today, as I continue to practice the all of the things I've learned in A.A. it has resulted in a peace of mind that was unimaginable when I first walked through the doors of Alcoholics Anonymous and, for that, I am extremely grateful.

*By Rick R.*

# Priorities

My self-centeredness dictates I put my desires ahead of my connection with a Power greater than myself. When I look at this in black and white, it feels like an incredible waste of time and energy.

I am only now considering the search for what blocks my connection with a Universal Law of Cause and Effect. Everything points to the lack of sincerity in my quest for a better life. The time and effort is a factor, no doubt, I expect everything to come easy to me. So, my prayer and meditation lacks the joy it deserves.

I should be rejoicing more in my prison cell, the strides I do accomplish are not in proper order. Education, physical fitness, are tip top, but mental health and spiritual happiness are barely on the list. My priorities have always been askew so it's no surprise. Identifying and removal of my short-comings lacks motivation every though I am drowning, perhaps it has not gotten bad enough which is a scary thought, and its not easy to scare an alcoholic.

My 2022 march through step three is the decision, being sure I know what my will and life is, then put them on the table for not only sobriety, but contented sobriety.

*Submitted by Dalton E.*

## **Sponsorship: Your Questions Answered**



### ***Is there any one best way of sponsoring a newcomer?***

The answer is no. All members are free to approach sponsorship as their own individual experiences and personalities may suggest. Some sponsors adopt a more or less brusque, “Take it or leave it” approach in dealing with newcomers. Others exhibit extreme patience and great personal interest in the people they sponsor. Still others are somewhat casual, content to let the new person take the initiative in asking questions or seeking help in special situations.

Each approach is sometimes successful and sometimes fails. The sponsor has to decide which to try in a particular case. The experienced sponsor recognizes the importance of flexibility in working with newcomers, does not rely on a single approach, and may try a number of different approaches with the same person.

### ***May a newcomer have more than one sponsor?***

Many feel it is best for a newcomer to have only one sponsor. Choosing one sponsor helps to avoid the precarious practice of a newcomer going from sponsor to sponsor seeking the advice he or she wants to hear.

### ***When is a member ready for sponsorship responsibility?***

Our primary purpose is to carry the message of A.A. to the alcoholic who still suffers. A.A. members who have actually worked the Steps of A.A. as a way to attain sobriety are often in the best position to share their experience, strength and hope. The most successful sponsors seem to be men and women who have been in A.A. long enough to have a good understanding of the A.A. program outlined in the Twelve Steps. Many of us think it wise to seek advice from our own sponsors about when we may be ready to take on the responsibility of sponsoring another alcoholic.

The member who has been sober for months or years is usually — but not always — able to work more effectively with newcomers than the members whose experience is limited to only a few weeks or days. Thus, length of sobriety is a factor, but not the only factor, in successful sponsorship. Just as importantly, the sponsor should have capacity for understanding, patience, and the willingness to devote time and effort to new members.

**Want to read more, check out the pamphlet online at**

**[https://www.aa.org/sites/default/files/literature/assets/p-15\\_Q%26AonSpon.pdf](https://www.aa.org/sites/default/files/literature/assets/p-15_Q%26AonSpon.pdf)**

Central Office Stats

AA Info Calls	81
Out of Town Visitors	4
Office Walk Ins	241
Website Pageviews	6966

**Why do we publish these statistics and why do you care? Well, Central Office provides important services for our community and you can see how those can help the suffering alcoholic. What if no one answered the 81 calls? What if no one answered when you called? Fine, you've already got yours, but what if no one answered when your son, daughter, brother, mother, father, friend called? This is part of our responsibility**

**Hospitals & Institutions (H&I) Service Committee Meeting**  
**Meets the 2nd Mon. of the month**  
**at Your Central Office**  
**5:30 Orientation for new members**  
**Business meeting as usual**  
**6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.**

**S.B. Intergroup (IGR)**  
**Meets the 2nd Tues. of the month**  
**6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.**  
***Zoom ID – 885 2339 5123***  
***Password – 433031***

**General Service Committee (GSR)**  
**District 23**  
**Meets the 1st Mon. of the month**  
**6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.**  
***Zoom ID – 854 898 114***  
***Password – 061035***

**Santa Barbara Young People's AA**  
**SBYPAA Service Committee**  
**Meets at your Central Office the 1st and 3rd Wednesday**  
**6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.**

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.*

### **April Birthdays!!!**

Member	Years
Tessah	1
Manny P	1
Dave H	1
Amber A	1
Jim O	2
Ellen R	5
Teddy	8
Chris O	8
Jane R	16
Darren P	18
Jenny L	18
Ron O	19
Steve G	23

### **April Birthdays Cont!!!**

Member	Years
Nancy B	25
Gine V	26
Gordon B	26
John P	27
Jil H	28
Mimi B	28
Nan S	30
Susan F	33
Catalina Joe	34
John R	34
Rick	37
Mary F	40
Craig B	45
Dave S	45
Brian B	46
Marilyn S	50
Jim McN	50



## ***CENTRAL OFFICE***

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Santa Barbara, CA 93031

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