



## We Set Them On Paper

### Step Four: "Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves"

"In dealing with resentments, we set them on paper." That simple sentence in Chapter five of the Big Book slowed my reading one evening as I sat with a blank pad in front of me, making no progress on my Fourth Step.

At that time I had been coming to meetings for two years and had not had a drink during that time. My introduction to the Steps was at my first meeting where the Twelve Steps were printed on a yellowed old shade that hung behind the speaker. I thought that if this was all there was to Alcoholics Anonymous, I'd have it down pat in four or five weeks, because everything that was on the wall had been included in my religious education. The Fourth Step was nothing more than an examination of conscience while the Fifth Step was the sacrament of confession. With that settled, I sat back to drink my coffee and the days passed.

I found hope in the Fellowship and moved forward like a horse with blinders on, never looking back. But the sharing, especially at Step meetings, brought reality to me as my head cleared. Like all who had gone before me in the Fellowship, I could not escape the past.

For the first year, the first three Steps held my attention. Every time that I got to the Fourth Step, I proceeded to lose myself in the text of the "Twelve and Twelve." Why did I get lost there? Easy—just the mention of the seven deadly sins—pride, greed, lust, anger, gluttony, envy, and sloth—and guilt raises its head. Guilt did help me not pick up the first drink though it kept me from understanding the rest of the text in the "Twelve and Twelve." Privately I wanted to finish all the Steps so fast I'd make the Guinness Book of World Records, but publicly I nodded my assent when people said, "You should do a Step a year." I found myself writing in circles every time I tried to list all my sins.

One day, anger became my companion. It stayed day and night. My sponsor said that his sponsor claimed the Fourth Step was the Step for anger. Why didn't I take another look at what the Big Book had to say about it?

That night I discovered the sentence. "In dealing with resentments, we set them on paper." Nothing about guilt or sin here. No examination of conscience or sacrament of confession, just resentments. The Big Book says "resentment destroys more alcoholics than anything else. From it stem all forms of spiritual disease. . . ."

I began at my earliest memory and came forward through my life. My list was thorough. No one I knew well was left off, nor were institutions with which I had had contact. I was a walking resentment.

As I got to the middle of my list, my need to justify my resentment with a short postscript disappeared and I attempted simply to discover whether my anger was based on threatened self-esteem, money, ambition, or personal relationships.

When my list was complete I began to discover a startling truth—I had really been dependent on everyone. In this context the words "selfish," "dishonest," "self-seeking," and "frightened" took on new meaning. I appeared to be as powerless over the things I feared as I was over alcohol.

But I had only to turn the page of the Big Book for the instruction to make a list of my fears, ask my Higher Power to remove my fear and direct my attention "to what He would have us be." The Big Book says that after completing the Fourth Step, "you have swallowed and digested some big chunks of truth about yourself." This was true. Yet these truths were not accompanied by guilt. Instead I felt a deep sadness at the desperation with which I had acted. It was the beginning of an acceptance of myself, shortcomings, wrongs, and all.

The Fifth Step stood ahead—the road to "perfect peace and ease." I was ready to call my sponsor and set the time for it. We made the date two weeks from then—I wanted to stay on the old, familiar road a little longer before sharing my inventory with him.

Bernie B., New York, New York

# Calendar Events

## Upcoming Events

**May 15-18, 2014**

### **Tri-State Roundup**

Don Laughlin's Riverside Hotel & Casino  
Laughlin, NV 89029

<http://www.tristate-roundup.com>

**June 5-8, 2014**

### **AA Desert Pow Wow**

Renaissance Esmeralda Resort  
44-400 Indian Wells Lane  
Indian Wells, CA 92210

<http://www.desertpowwow.com>

**June 6-8, 2014**

### **Founder's Day**

Akron, OH

<https://foundersdayregistration.akronaa.org>

**September 26-28, 2014**

Southern California AA Convention  
Town and Country Convention Center  
San Diego, CA

<http://www.aasocal.com/>

**July 2-5, 2015**

2015 International AA Convention  
Atlanta, GA

<http://www.aa.org/lang/en>



To find out what else is going on, you can:  
Visit Central Office at 1137 #B Pacific St, SLO, or  
Call us at: 805-541-3211, or  
Visit our website at [www.sloaa.org](http://www.sloaa.org)

## SERVICE COMMITTEE SCHEDULE

### Service Opportunities

#### **Central Office Board of Directors Meeting**

1st Wednesday, 5:30pm, Central Office  
1137 Pacific Ave., #B, S. L. O., CA. 93401

#### **Intergroup Central Office Rep. Meeting**

2nd Sunday, 8:30am, Central Office  
1137 Pacific Ave., #B, S.L.O., CA. 93401

#### **22nd District General Service Rep. & Comm. Mtg**

2nd Sunday, 10:15am, Alano Club  
3075 Broad St., S.L.O., CA. 93401

#### **Hospitals and Institutions Mtg + Bridging The Gap**

3rd Tuesday, 6:40pm, Alano Club  
3075 Broad St., S.L.O., CA. 93401

#### **District 22 Convention Committee**

2nd Sunday, 12:00pm  
560 Higuera St., Suite E, S.L.O.

#### **7th Tradition Mailing List**

<b>General Service Office</b>	<b>22nd District</b>
P.O. Box 459	P.O. Box 1891
New York, NY. 10163	S.L.O., CA. 93460

#### **Intergroup CCCOI**

P.O. Box 12737  
San Luis Obispo, CA. 93406

#### **Central California Area Assembly Area 93**

606 Alamo Pintado, #140  
Solvang, CA. 93463

#### **Hospitals and Institutions (H&I)**

P.O. Box 12737  
San Luis Obispo, CA. 93406

## **A.A. BIRTHDAYS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*Birthdays for the month of May*

*Jesse F. - 5 years*

*Meredith B. - 9 years*

*Mike B. - 9 years*

*Crystal T. - 24 years*

*Geoff T. - 26 years*

*If you are celebrating a birthday, send the details to us: [nnleditor@gmail.com](mailto:nnleditor@gmail.com)*

### **NEWSLETTER ARTICLES NEEDED**

Do you have a story, cartoon, etc. that is AA related that you want to share? Email it to us at: [nnleditor@gmail.com](mailto:nnleditor@gmail.com)

We welcome all submissions but only publish those that are about recovery and AA.

## **Service Opportunities at the Central Office**

Our Central Office provides AA-Approved Literature and general information to alcoholics, the public and the groups of San Luis Obispo County. We are entirely staffed by volunteers ... **Would you like to be of service?**

We maintain regular business hours Monday through Saturday with our **Office Volunteers** who work a 3-hour shift every week or every other week. We also have an answering service who contact our **Call Forwarding Volunteers** who are available by phone when the office is closed.

**Our goal** is for anyone who is looking for help for themselves or someone else to be able to talk to an alcoholic 24 hours a day 7 days a week. If you'd like more information or would like to volunteer **please call 805-541-3288**. Six months continuous sobriety is required and training is provided.

## HOW DO YOU TALK ABOUT BEING HUMBLE?

I've been in meetings where the topic has been humility and thought how do you talk about being humble? One time I chuckled at this question and was called on to share. Honestly I didn't know what it meant, but I've looked it up, and I read "not proud or haughty; not arrogant or assertive" - Which is the exact opposite of my natural disposition. My higher power must have been working through me that night because I shared in a way that also is against my nature. I didn't

talk exclusively about me!

Instead I talked about doing things for others which is not something that I do naturally unless I know I'm going to get a return on my investment. Because of the program of Alcoholics Anonymous I've learned that giving to someone else can be its own reward. The best return I've ever gotten from investing my time and money into something big was a smile and a thank you.

That night was amazing to sit with my two best friends and listen to that person talk about how grateful she was to have six months sober. Everyone could see the light in those eyes and how the future looked so promising for that person. I'll never forget that night no matter what happens to any of us. I'm grateful that I listened to my sponsor and passed it on like I was told to.

I passed on the message because people told me that it would keep me sober. So really I was being selfish while working with that person and I still don't know if it was a humble act. Most of what I said came from the Big Book, Twelve and Twelve, meetings, and of course my sponsor and friend. The amazing thing about how this works is that I learn as much from working with others as I do when working with my sponsor and I'll never stop learning.

Please read the following from A.A. Comes of Age, page 287, which talks about humility in a way that I could understand and I hope passing it on here might help you.

"At the beginning we sacrificed alcohol. We had to, or it would have killed us. But we couldn't get rid of alcohol unless we made other sacrifices. We had to toss self-justification, self-pity, and anger right out the window. We had to quit the crazy contest for personal prestige and big bank balances. We had to take personal responsibility for our sorry state and quit blaming others for it.

"Were these sacrifices? Yes, they were. To gain enough humility and self-respect to stay alive at all, we had to give up what had really been our dearest possessions - our ambition and our illegitimate pride."

Anonymous, via The Coordinator, *San Diego*

**Do you have an article to publish?**

**Send it to us:**

**nnleditor@gmail.com**



### Co-founder Quotes

#### **Blind Trust?**

*"Most surely, there can be no trust where there is no love, nor can there be real love where distrust holds its malign sway.*

*"But does trust require that we be blind to other people's motives or, indeed, to our own? Not at all; this would be folly. Most certainly, we should*

*assess the capacity for harm as well as the capability for good in every person that we would trust. Such a private inventory can reveal the degree of confidence we should extend in any given situation.*

*"However, this inventory needs to be taken in a spirit of understanding and love. Nothing can so much bias our judgment as the negative emotions of suspicion, jealousy, or anger.*

*"Having vested our confidence in another person, we ought to let him know of our full support. Because of this, more often than not he will respond magnificently, and far beyond our first expectations."*

# IT AIN'T HEAVY, IT'S MY BUNDLE

My life is almost perfect. I have two grown sons who are wonderful. I have a well constructed house, a nice dog, and a husband who treats me like a queen. In fact, on days I feel well, I don't even think of being sick. I have Hepatitis C, a liver disease. Recently, my health has gotten worse, and I have been struggling to accept the fact that I'm not well.

This reminds me of the story about a man who was given the opportunity to switch burdens with someone else. He entered a room where other people had exchanged their loads of care for others. After he put his own bundle down and looked around, he realized that some bundles were too awkward to carry or some too large and that his bundle of care was the only one that seemed to fit. So he picked up the same bundle of care and went on his way.

I think that guy must have been in AA. He knew that God doesn't always give us what we want. He gives us what we need. Maybe I need an illness. Maybe, it's part of my lesson here on this earth to learn how to live happily with the limitations of my disease. Maybe, it was the only way God could slow me down long enough to get me to use some of the talents He gave me, like writing. Some days I'm a maniac, but maybe I would be a raving maniac without my illness.

At any rate, I'm blessed to be a part of the program of AA. Every time I walk into a meeting, there is someone who has it worse than me. My best friend recently went through chemotherapy for ovarian cancer. Her suffering made me realize I was lucky to have my particular bundle of cares.

Maybe, that is how the program works. We hold each other up during the times we can't stand on our own and through that process we are made humble enough to know that we only have this day, this hour, this minute. Then, for a moment, we are brought into a peaceful acceptance of what God has given, what he has taken away, and what He has left us. Today, I will happily carry my own bundle.

*(Dawn K, reprinted from The Groupvine, Coachella Valley)*

## AREA SPEAKER MEETINGS

Five Cities Speaker Meeting  
2nd Friday, 7:00pm Potluck, 8:00pm meeting  
564 Mesa View Dr., Arroyo Grande

Fellowship Speaker Meeting  
Every Friday, 7:00pm, Church  
1515 Fredricks St., San Luis Obispo

Middle House Speaker Meeting  
Every Sunday, 10:00am (Pastries and coffee at  
9:30am)  
2939 Augusta St., San Luis Obispo

Sunday Night Speaker  
Every Sunday, 6:00pm, Lutheran Church  
4500 El Camino Real, Atascadero

### SATURDAY SPEAKER MEETINGS

Week

1<sup>st</sup>

South County Speaker Meeting  
8:00pm, St. John's Lutheran Church  
959 Valley Rd., Arroyo Grande

2<sup>nd</sup>

Morro Bay Speaker Meeting  
7:30pm, St. Timothy's Parish Hall  
962 Piney Way,, Morro Bay

3<sup>rd</sup>

Saturday Night Live  
7:30pm, Mtnbrk Community Church  
1775 Calle Joaquin Rd., San Luis Obispo

4<sup>th</sup>

Cambria Speaker Meeting  
8:00pm, Santa Rosa Catholic Church  
1174 Main St., Cambria

Last

Easy Does It Speaker Meeting  
7:00pm, St. James Church,  
14th & Oak St., Paso Robles