

GRAPESCCIN

APRIL 2024

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HOW PRAYER WORKS – IN MY EXPERIENCE

PART TWO BY ANONYMOUS

There was that one night I couldn't sleep. For hours I tossed and turned, wrestling over the harassment I experienced at work. One guy - a homophobe who had my number from day one and took every opportunity to ridicule me in front of others - was wearing me down.

Few people liked him. Some obviously didn't like what he was doing, but didn't know what to do. I didn't know either. Talking to a supervisor or the front office was out of the question. And at that time and place, it wouldn't have helped me at all. I needed the job, which paid well for someone like me with few skills. But this treatment was getting to me.

I'd been in A.A. for a couple of years and as best I could, I'd embraced the program, the steps and the fellowship. I was in touch with a great sponsor. But it was taking me a long time to use the tools the program had given me. How is it we can so easily forget the powerful resources our program offers?

Back to sleepless tossing and turning: It hit me. Pray, dummy! My prayer said, "God, I tried and I can't figure this out. I can't fix it. Help me, please, and take it from me." And the Quiet Voice said, "That's better ..."

My sponsor had taught me how to pray: Get on my knees, get honest, tell God what the problem is, then go do something else. Don't tell God what the solution should be - let it go, wash my coffee cup, fix the faucet, read that book, turn on the tube, remember what step I'm on ... Get out of the way.

So I handed it over. It wasn't my business anymore. I took my sponsor's advice: I asked God for help and went to bed. I'm still bewildered that I forgot what had been preying on my mind. I slept like a baby.

The next day I arrived early to work and went to the machine-only break room to kill time. The few people there were at a single table. I had only a five-dollar bill, so I went over and asked if anyone could break it for me. The man who stood up, pulled out the one-dollar bills and handed them to me was the man I feared would spit on me if he could get away with it.

He never bothered me after that. In a few weeks he was gone from the workplace. I have no idea how that all came about.

I've discovered God usually answers my prayers quietly, letting me realize that all I need to do much of the time is get out of the way and let a situation take care of itself.

I once heard at a meeting something like, "There's my business; there's none of my business; and there's God's business."

I think the Serenity Prayer runs along those lines too.

Intergroup minutes and reports are now published on our website:
<https://aasantacruz.org/documents/>

ZOOM MEETING PICKS UP FOUR-YEAR CHIP

BY GREG G.

Today, March 16, marks four years since I sent a Zoom link to the STP meeting which still meets in the Red Church downtown. “I’ll be online until social distancing is no longer encouraged,” I told the group. “I expect that to be three weeks.” Four years later, I’m still joining that 7 a.m. Zoom nearly every day.

I’m not sure I would have survived the last four years had it not been for this daily ritual made possible by a few clicks. I didn’t know I’d face some of the most challenging years of my sobriety. I celebrated 30 years May 1, 2020. Instead of the party I was expecting with my A.A. family, flowers were delivered to my doorstep, with a very nice card. We had a Zoom party instead. Those were the days of trying to do my sales job from my kitchen with constant bombardment from kids on lockdown and roosters crowing every five minutes. The roosters were the result of my kids’ science project to hatch eggs, and lucky me, we got three roosters who lived right outside my kitchen window. I joked with my customers that the rooster noise-canceling feature was coming soon.

A couple months later, the first newcomer joined our meeting. Online sponsorship was launched. I was navigating this new world when a freak summer lightning storm set the mountain on fire. My new sponsee, who’d checked in to Janus a couple weeks before, asked me if he should leave Janus to save his house in Felton. Probably a good idea, I agreed. Somehow he stayed sober, and is still sober to this day. Truly a miracle. And his house is still standing.

To end the year, I had the pleasure of an emergency-room visit to Dominican for an appendectomy. I had to wait outside for an hour in the freezing cold before I could get a Covid test to allow me inside – only to wait in agony for several more hours in that insane asylum they call a hospital.

2020 had been a shit show. I was hoping for a better 2021. It got worse.

In June I lost my 34-year-old son to a drug overdose. My world exploded again, and a huge new responsibility was placed on my shoulders: I found myself supporting two families. I have two daughters with my wife here in Santa Cruz, my two grandkids and their mother live up in Chico. All these kids range in age from 14 to 7. They’re a handful. I’m a 53-year-old grandfather with 33 years of sobriety. Go figure. It’s wonderful and difficult to explain. I do feel blessed, most of the time.

There have been more challenges. Safe to say, there’s seldom a dull moment in my life, a life I owe to A.A. The last four years have been the “acid test” Bill wrote about in Step 10: “Can we stay sober, keep in emotional balance, and live to good purpose under all conditions?” I’ve survived this test in good spirits. I’ve stayed sober. I’ve worked to maintain emotional balance. Most importantly, I’ve lived to a good purpose under all these conditions.

I’m supporting my family by the grace of a loving higher power. I’m a member of a thriving online A.A. group now called On Awakening. What a blessing. None of this is possible without the daily reprieve I’m granted by clicking those links to join my online family. There’s more love in those little Hollywood squares than I’ve experienced just about anywhere else. That’s amazing to me, and truly the biggest gift the last four years have shown me.

As we read at the end of every On Awakening 7a.m. meeting: “We shall be with you in the Fellowship of the Spirit and you will surely meet some of us as you trudge the Road of Happy Destiny. May God bless you and keep you – until then.”

ON ANONYMITY

BY ANONYMOUS

In early recovery, my brain still in a fog, I was talking to a woman in the kitchen of my new boyfriend. I'd seen her at an A.A. meeting and was happy to meet her again, outside the rooms.

We talked about our jobs; I mentioned one business I'd worked for. It turned out she had a connection to the business, which meant she and I had a mutual acquaintance in our A.A. meeting. I brought up this person's name and asked the woman to say "Hi" to our mutual friend at the next meeting because I wouldn't be there.

She calmly and firmly replied she would not. "My anonymity is deeply important to me," she declared. In other words, who we see here and what we say here, let it stay here.

I've never had fully trusted humans to keep to that principle. And I've experienced the consequences of violating it. Some years back, I lost a friend to this disease. She was a beloved member of our A.A. fellowship. At her memorial, all kinds of memories were shared at the podium. The victim's mother sat alone in the front row, grieving while a line-up of enthusiastic newcomers on pink clouds unintentionally blew our friend's anonymity in public, along with the anonymity of those of us in the pews. Whether we cared or not isn't the point.

As one newcomer shared the capricious adventure she'd enjoyed with our friend, extolling the virtues of A.A., the grief-stricken mother rose and walked up the aisle out of the church. I don't know what she felt as strangers told intimate, unabashed stories of her daughter's escapades as an alcoholic in recovery. But she wasn't happy, and she didn't return.

I've violated this principle, too. One Christmas, I gave my brother a T-shirt with a logo lauding recovery emblazoned across the front and back. He's a private, sensitive man, and his recovery is personal. I'd blown his anonymity in front of our family, and his wife didn't mince words letting me know I'd humiliated him.

Recently, I've had the urge to share particular past behaviors and the guilt and shame of becoming someone I never thought I'd become while drinking. Those anecdotes would definitely make my story more interesting. And they might help someone. But I fear being judged. That, and my lack of confidence in the group's adherence to anonymity has kept me from sharing.

Here's what I've come to believe about that: When I feel compelled to share intimate details of my recovery but balk because I don't trust my fellow alcoholics to keep my secrets, this is not on my A.A. brothers and sisters. Rather, my higher power is telling me to share with my sponsor. My lack of confidence in anonymity is not about others; rather, that distrust is my higher power guiding me to share appropriately by giving my sponsor a jingle.

At some point, I may be able to freely share these slivers of my story. After all, sharing is about owning our past rather than our past owning us. But until then, it's OK to listen to that doubt and take it as a sign that my higher power still has some work for me to do in forgiving myself.

There's an entry in "Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions" that goes like this: "Enthusiastic over the spectacular recovery of a brother alcoholic, we'd sometimes discuss those intimate and harrowing aspects of his case meant for his sponsor's ear alone. That aggrieved victim would then rightly declare that his trust had been broken."

Anonymity begins with me. It's my sacred duty to listen with compassion and keep the words of others inside me and the sacred rooms of alcoholics. Those words create an energy of love that in good and mysterious ways travel into the world. I don't want to break that seal and spoil the energy, and I certainly don't want to blow the program for someone else by violating the spiritual foundation of all our traditions — anonymity.

RULE 62 TRIVIA TEST

By Anonymous

The answers are given elsewhere in the issue.

1. Which tradition is shorter in the “Long Form” in the Big Book than in the “Short Form” we customarily hear at meetings?
2. Finish this quotation: “There is a principle which is a bar against all information, which is proof against all arguments and which cannot fail to keep a man in everlasting ignorance – that principle is ...?”
3. Where can you find the 10th Step promises?
4. What was the Washingtonian Movement?
5. What service group in Santa Cruz meets the first Wednesday evening of each month, and where?
6. Was Bill W. ever homeless?
7. Who was Sister Ignatia?
8. How many steps include the words alcohol, alcoholic or alcoholism?
9. What is the unofficial “sixth slogan”?
10. When and where was the first A.A. group formed?
11. Where are the first percentages of successful A.A. recoveries reported in the Big Book?
12. Many people say the first 164 pages of the Big Book are the most important; others claim the same for the first 181 pages. Why?

FROM THE GENERAL SERVICE CHAIR

Greetings! This is an active and exciting time for General Service. You and your groups' voices will be heard at the upcoming 74th A.A. General Service Conference in New York, where the direction of our amazing fellowship and recovery program will be decided. This is no small thing. Lives are in the balance. Our literature, the accessibility of meetings, the caring of others, and knowing that my crazy is OK made my life worth living. I know it works.

It's important for me to think about those who haven't found our program – I suspect a couple of my younger family members might qualify. What would resonate with them? Let your GSRs make your ideas heard. Next weekend, they will pass those ideas on to our delegate, Eric, so he can carry them on to the conference.

The 2025 International A.A. Convention is scheduled in Vancouver. I missed Detroit in 2020, and I'm anxious to get to Canada. If you are too, and hope to find a hotel, you likely won't be able to right now. All the hotels are reserved by the Convention; registration and hotel booking will open in September. Patience required.

A new book, "Our 12 Steps," will be available April 26.

The GSO's Public Information Desk has asked us to share with you a survey on anonymity and social media. The information you provide will guide public-information work A.A. does on our behalf.

Survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/EN-anonymity>

Unity Day is May 18 (see flier.) This is an effort by the various service entities in Santa Cruz, who aim to make the day fun and engaging. To get involved or for more information, contact Ken W, (831) 246-4870. The pandemic stretched us apart a bit. Unity Day invites us to connect with Love, Unity, and Service – the New York Conference theme.

I appreciate being of service, and I'm grateful for the opportunity.

Deb A.
District Committee Member Chair
Santa Cruz General Service



EXPLORE
EXPERIENCE
ENGAGE

UNITY DAY

HOSTED BY SANTA CRUZ COUNTY
General Service, Intergroup, H&I and ACYPAA

Come explore, experience, and engage with Santa Cruz County AA service entities for an afternoon of panels, fellowship, and ice cream!

Saturday, May 18th
1 PM - 4 PM

TRADEWINDS CHURCH SOQUEL
4525 Soquel Dr.
Soquel, CA 95073

For More Information
Contact Ken W. (831) 246-4870 wyllicen@yahoo.com



General Service Monthly Meeting is Now Hybrid!

Second Wednesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at the Mid-County Senior Center or on Zoom
Meeting ID: 898 9003 8938
Passcode: 121212



SANTA CRUZ COUNTY INTERGROUP

JANUARY - MARCH 29, 2024 CONTRIBUTIONS

11 Step Meditation Group	100.00
Anonymous	494.00
Acceptance Group.	57.59
BYOB	25.00
Aptos Women Serenity	450.00
Aromas Group	161.80
Awareness Group	180.00
Early Risers.	416.86
Friday Night Lights	62.00
In the Woods.	1022.22
Jade Street	1004.40
Make My Day	121.60
Mattson Lane Group.	108.00
Men’s Basic Step Study	245.00
Men’s Westside Big Book	235.35
MidTown Women’s Big Book	118.00
Monday Mens Meeting	300.00
Roxas	435.37
Santa Cruz Speakers Meeting	356.01
Saved By Grace	900.42
Scotts Valley Steps & Traditions	282.43
Skyland	60.00
Sobriety and Gratitude	240.00
Soquel Acceptance Group	241.80
Soquel Acceptance (Fri noon)	186.00
Sunday Morning Spiritual	48.30
Sunday Nite Candlelight	341.00
Shivering Denizens	80.00
Twisted Sisters	46.20
We Agnostics, (WAAFT)	400.00
Westside Group Tuesday Night	120.00
Womens Nonbinary	44.00

TOTAL. 8783.35

1. Tradition 2, pages 562 and 563 in the Big Book,
2. "... contempt prior to investigation." (Herbert Spencer, p. 568)
3. Pages 84, last paragraph, and 85, top of page.
4. Founded 1840, members stayed sober by relying on each other, sharing experiences, finding fellow drunkards and telling about themselves and how the society helped. Once there were thousands. They lasted about 70 years but got involved with such issues as prohibition, abolition and women’s suffrage. Politics and infighting finished them.
5. The Intergroup Council, which currently meets online. Find the information at <https://aasantacruz.org/events/>. Or ask at Central Office.
6. Yes. In 1939, the bank foreclosed on Bill and Lois’s home. They spent two years at the homes of Hank P. and other A.A. families, and also used the back room of the A.A. Clubhouse.
7. A nurse who, with Dr. Bob, helped almost 5,000 hospitalized alcoholic patients between 1935 and 1965. She was the first to use tokens to mark sobriety milestones.
8. Two: Steps 1 and 12
9. Placed in order, the first words of the Five Slogans can be read: "Live Easy But Think First."
10. Akron, 1935, "When [Bill W.] returned to New York... the first A.A. group had actually been formed, but no one realized it at the time." (Pg. xvii, first paragraph)
11. In the foreword to the Second Edition (1955), on page xx, top partial paragraph: "... 50 percent got sober at once and remained that way..."
12. The first 181 pages include "Doctor Bob’s Nightmare" chapter.

SOBRIETY MILESTONES

MARCH

Scott L	March 14, 1981
Kim H.	March 23, 1981
Don W.	March 3, 1983
Kathy A	March 13, 1984
Rick W	March 20, 1985
Margie W.	March 21, 1987
Allison B.	March 30, 1990
Amy J.	March 31, 1991
Lynn N	March 21, 1992
Ben L	March 2, 1998
Mark G	March 23, 1998
Tim S	March 16, 2000
James C.	March 28, 2005
Dave S	June 6, 2005
Fred R	March 18, 2006
Kerry G	March 3, 2008
Annie P.	March 2, 2009
Sandy R.	March 20, 2009
Jill S.	March 27, 2009
Michael S.	March 17, 2011
Elaine R	March 19, 2012
Laura C	March 20, 2012
Annie M.	March 28, 2013
Leslie F	March 28, 2014
Davina S	March 19, 2015
Barbara S.	March 11, 2018
Liana F.	March 1, 2021

IN MEMORIAM

Tom H.	March 14, 1954
Gil W.	March 17, 1985
Mary Kay P. 18 yrs	March 10, 1997

Want to list your A.A. anniversary
in the GrapeSCINN?

Email your name and sobriety date to:
grapesccin@gmail.com

A decorative border of various flowers and leaves in shades of green, red, and pink surrounds the central announcement card.

*Santa Cruz County Intergroup
Presents*

**APRIL
BIRTHDAY
SPEAKER
MEETING**

GUEST SPEAKER
Jeffrey N
Novato, CA
DATE: 5/6/88

MID COUNTY SENIOR CENTER
829 Bay Ave, Capitola

Saturday, April 6th
Doors open 5:30pm • Meeting at 7:00pm

UPCOMING EVENTS

For more information
about this month's events, visit
asantacruz.org

April 6 @ 7:30 pm - 8:30 pm
Intergroup Council Meeting
Meeting ID: 828 1508 0970
Passcode: 588309

April 6 @ 7:00 pm - 8:15 pm
Birthday Speaker Meeting
Mid-County Senior Center
829 Bay Ave., Capitola

April 7 @ 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm
CRUZYPAA Monthly Meeting
Harvey West Park
326 Evergreen St, Santa Cruz

April 7 @ 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm
ACYPAA Business Meeting
Hope Church: 4525 Soquel Drive, Soquel
Meeting ID: 526 749 9058
Passcode: 262829

April 9 @ 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm
Joint Committee on Safety
Meeting ID: 892 3730 0658
Passcode: 857738

April 10 @ 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm
General Service District Meeting
Meeting ID: 898 9003 8938
Passcode: 121212

April 11 @ 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm
Web Committee Meeting
Meeting ID: 884 7009 1801
Passcode: 2272

April 17 @ 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm
Intergroup Steering Committee Meeting
Meeting ID: 861 8723 8980
Passcode: 723088

April 20 @ 5:30 pm
Take Your Sponsor to Dinner
St. John's Church
120 Russell Ave, Felton

April 21 @ 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm
CRUZYPAA Monthly Meeting
Harvey West Park
326 Evergreen St, Santa Cruz

April 21 @ 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm
CRUZYPAA Monthly Meeting
Harvey West Park
326 Evergreen St, Santa Cruz

April 24 @ 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm
H&I Committee Meeting
Trinity Presbyterian Church
420 Melrose Ave, Santa Cruz

April 27 @ 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
SC Fellowship Birthday Speaker Meeting
Santa Cruz Fellowship
412 Front Street, Santa Cruz

www.acypaa.org

ACYPAA LII

All California Young People In Alcoholics Anonymous

BUSINESS MEETINGS

Every 1st & 3rd
Sunday at 1pm.

Zoom ID: 526 749 9058
Password: 262829

4525 Soquel Dr
Soquel CA 95073

TradeWinds Church (Hope Church)



BEN LOMOND FELLOWSHIP

MMMM ... LASAGNA

TAKE YOUR SPONSOR TO DINNER

Saturday, April 20

St. John's Church, 120 Russell Ave., Felton

SPEAKER MEETING • DESSERT AUCTION • \$15 DONATION

Doors open at 5:30
Speaker at 7

For more information or to sign up for service, contact Ed O. at 408-406-2004

MADE WITH LOVE & HOMEMADE FRESH