

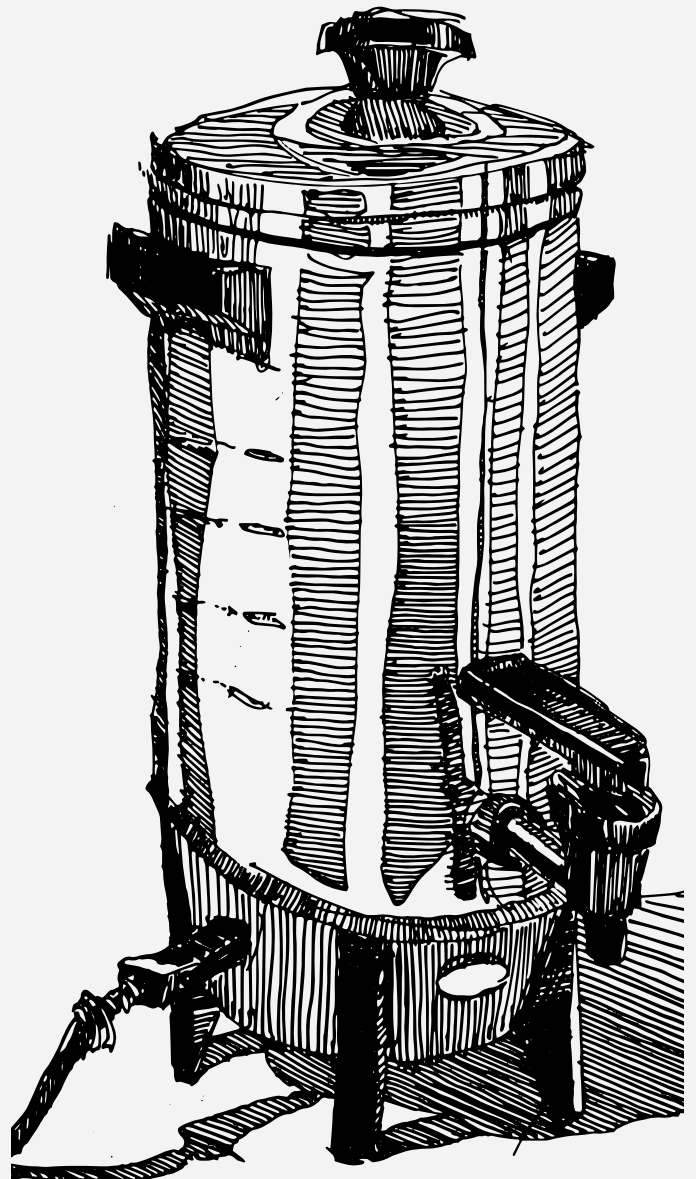
the **GRAPESCINN**

IN THIS ISSUE, we feature articles on the Twelfth Step, the Twelfth Tradition and the Twelfth Concept, as well as two personal stories from our fellowship. In the story *The Light at the End of the Street*, an AA describes the welcome that greets each of us when we finally approach Alcoholics Anonymous. A meeting undergoes transformation by adapting to an online format in *Meetings in the Time of Corona: Zooming In*. And we list sobriety milestones for the month of November as well as a calendar of December events.

Enjoy a fun and sober holiday season!

December is the perfect time to reflect upon our three legacies: the Twelve Steps, Traditions and Concepts. AA's triangle symbol was designed by its founders to illustrate three ideas: Recovery (the Twelve Steps), Unity (the Twelve Traditions), and Service (the Twelve Concepts).

Step Twelve	2 - 3
Tradition Twelve	4
Meetings in the Time of Corona	5
The Light at the End of the Street	6
Sobriety Milestones	7
December Events	8
H&I Service Opportunities	9





STEP TWELVE: LOVE THAT HAS NO PRICE TAG

I zoomed into “On Awakening” from Turlock one morning. I remember I was desperate because the smoke from the fires settled over the Central Valley, and we couldn’t breathe. The pandemic was in full force. I was isolated. I thought it was random good luck to find “On Awakening.” In retrospect, it was my Higher Power saving my ass. One regular at the meeting said, “Hey, come back!” He was so welcoming. I’ve heard him say this countless times to other newcomers and first timers with the same “we got your back” camaraderie and warmth.

Right action key to good living

So I did. Now I’m a regular at the 7 a.m. On Awakening meeting, zooming in from Turlock to Santa Cruz nearly every day Monday-through-Friday, soaking it all in: The Steps & Twelve Traditions, The Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous, Emotional Sobriety, As Bill See It, Living Sober, the prayers, and my favorite: “On Awakening”: [we] think about the twenty-four hours ahead. We consider our plans for the day. Before we begin, we ask God to direct our thinking, especially asking that it be divorced from self-pity, dishonest or self-seeking motives.” My marching orders. I have never met a single

meeting that provides the entire blueprint for living in such a comprehensive way. I attend to see my friends and feel the healing warmth of acceptance and belonging. I hear my daily (gentle) directive with morning sun, and coffee, and my cat making a cameo on Zoom.

Growing spirituality is the answer to all our problems

I practice Step Twelve by giving thanks to the good folks in Santa Cruz and Aptos for carrying the message Monday through Sunday. I position myself to hear the message daily. The message I’ve been hearing the loudest the last month or so is: spiritual growth first. “How’s your relationship with your Higher Power?” my Sponsor asks. It is The Central Question; it’s a 12th Step question. I have to do my work so I am better able to be of service. I pray and turn it over (all of it). And then when I forget, and I do it again.

The joy of living

The joy of living is that I have new friends and family in Santa Cruz who I hope to meet in person, preferably on the beach or on some wooded hike. I see how the program works in their lives. I have witnessed growth, and change, and comebacks, and recoveries, and the end of isolation. Thank you to Lucie

for this writing invitation and for giving me a deadline (always essential for this alcoholic). The joy of living for me is intrinsically woven into the fact that I’ve found my people and together we’ve found a way of living that works. We have meaning and purpose and what I’ve recently heard termed: life force.

I got my start in AA as a seventeen-year-old kid. They said, “you’re lucky. You have no idea how lucky you are. Keep coming back.” Tool #1: Keep coming back. I’ve been putting this simple tool into practice for 34 years. I come back when I want to, and when I don’t want to, and when everything is good, and when it’s not. Every meeting I attend leaves me feeling different. It’s a spirit healer to be in a room with others earnest to “get this.”

Thank you, A.A., for the Twelve Steps which got me out of the black hole of active alcoholism. The Steps work well with all aspects of living. I have a “what Step are you on?” mentality today, and I have a Higher Power, and I have all of you. Thank you, Santa Cruz, for carrying such a strong message to those who need it, including this AA loner over here in the Central Valley. Grateful.

Steph P, Turlock

UNDER MY SPONSOR'S GUIDANCE,

I took Steps One through Eleven repeatedly and to the best of my ability. I revisited the steps with the men I sponsored. I became more emotionally available and spiritually honest each time. I became ready to carry this message: As THE result of taking the first eleven steps, I had had a spiritual awakening.

My awakening dispelled the fear that my needs and wants wouldn't be met. Rather, I began to see my needs were always met and my wants often evolved into a more spiritually healthy, less selfish, less self-centered desire. I saw that I possessed every tool necessary to be happy. I simply had to trust the process and take the actions I learned in our fellowship. If I did, I would always be provided for.



AnonyMouse, Santa Cruz

Step Twelve: Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all of our affairs.

A SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

How many nights did I say that I wouldn't drink the next night. I was tired of feeling shame about my behaviors, the same shameful and unattractive behaviors night after night. During the day, I was a professional woman respected by my colleagues and community.

Over a period of about 30 years I regularly saw therapists and was never asked about my alcohol intake and habits and I never disclosed my alcohol consumption and drinking behaviors.

It wasn't until I hit bottom at age 51. While wasted one night I trespassed the home of neighbors who trusted me fully. At that moment, I felt that I had lost all my integrity. I never would have trespassed if I was sober. I hit bottom that night and was ready to become a woman I would be proud of - a dignified woman. I sought an AA meeting for the first time at 5at my first meeting April 2000 that my story was not unique and I immediately connected with the woman who shared her story. I was awed by her honesty.

I heard that I never had to drink again. When I arrived home after that meeting, I didn't drink, and I didn't drink the next night. It wasn't long after that I felt filled with the presence of my Higher Power and I started to feel a relief and peace I hadn't felt for decades.

D, Santa Cruz

THE 12TH TRADITION

Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

What matters in AA is capsulized in our responsibility statement. “I am responsible, when anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there, and for that I am responsible.”

What could stop the outreach of the hand of AA? Bill Wilson wrote these “suggestions” known to us as the AA traditions to provide ideals on getting along with each other. It was April of 1946 when this organization was having some growing pains, some internal turmoil. We were getting caught up in personalities instead of principles.

Please ask yourself: Do I like or agree with ALL the people in my AA meeting? Probably not, but does it matter? The big picture is that lives can be saved, and we can be part of the solution. This solution focus is a change for many of us, who were viewed as the problem or having a problem.

Personality conflicts will arise. This is part of life. Recently we have had many loud voices expressing different opinions on many topics, from global issues to personal circumstances. It has created havoc in families, for some driving them apart for years.

Where is the place for these opinions in AA? This tradition is our guide. We can rely on

the principles of humility, honesty, and making amends to avoid the drama. We are responsible for our behavior only. Others are responsible for theirs. Acting in principle helps prevent us from engaging in negative or toxic behavior that could impact our self-esteem. AA offers us a new way of life and so does Tradition 12. Practice it properly and love wins, even if the love is just for ourselves.

The traditions can go beyond our AA meeting rooms to all our relationships, just as our principles do. As we strengthen our recovery and our relationships, our AA organization will thrive and so will each of us.

The AA Tradition Checklist

Pamela L, Corte Madera

In Tradition Twelve, I learned that I don’t get to talk about myself and all the great things I’ve done in AA, real or imagined. Nor do I honor the tradition by breaking the anonymity of my sponsor if I identify him by name or gesture, at any level. Seriously, if “Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all of our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.”, how is it okay to place his personality in front of the group?

AnonyMouse, Santa Cruz





MEETINGS IN THE TIME OF CORONA: ZOOMING IN

When news of the pandemic hit the press, we were stunned. Sheltering in place, social distancing and no gatherings of more than ten 10 people.

Yikes! we thought. But what about our meetings? Our lifeline? The meeting in question convened Monday through Saturday at 7:00 a.m. and for us attendees provided what we had come to rely on: a community willing to waken, gather for prayers and read from various pieces of AA literature. Some of us had found solace from this community for many years.

What were we to do?

Enter Greg G., with a plan. He would affect an internet connection called Zoom. Previously we'd only heard of the term as a sound: "the car zoomed past." Nobody much used it. But wait: with Covid19 raging for the next twelve (plus) months and red flags against in-person meetings, zoom would fast become a household word. And our salvation.

The only requirement was a

computer, iPad or iPhone and a code. All we had to do was push a few buttons that Greg sent us and voila, a magic connection. The screen would spring to life and indeed show Hollywood Squares featuring tiny likenesses of each of us. Some of us generously learned to run the programs needed to screen the material: the opening prayers, pages from the Big Book or the Twelve and Twelve. Others volunteered to be secretary of a day's meeting, just as we'd done when we were meeting in person.

It worked! It really did.

Sure, we had to learned to mute ourselves and refrain from moving around during the meeting which causes distractions, so we added cautionary remarks which we called "housekeeping rules." And we didn't need to worry about serving coffee or goodies.

But what about the 7th tradition? That too was arranged by a member, Kerry, who knew the ropes of Venmo. Certainly it was easier to drop two dollars in

a basket but over time we realized Venmo or a check were not as difficult as we'd first thought.

Then along the way we discovered the joy of substituting for our real "self" a suitable photo or image. It came in handy on bad-hair days or on blah days when we were loath to show ourselves in a public way. There's even a way on Zoom to enhance one's image. I once went this route and ended up with lips too huge for my mouth. When I began speaking, everyone collapsed in gales of laughter.

Zoom's biggest plus is that it's ubiquitous; any time of night or day we can reach out and touch someone. We can attend meetings in Paris or Mozambique or St. Petersburg. We can enjoy national or international conferences without buying a plane ticket or renting a hotel room.

Just as the program has worked magic in our lives, Zoom works magic for us now. Hoorah for Zoom!

Kathryn C, Santa Cruz



THE LIGHT AT THE END OF THE STREET

For some taking a walk down the street can be seen as a walk through their lives.

Imagine a street with beautiful houses and white picket fences, kids playing in the yard and a dog or two running around. This is the nice end of the street. The street goes on into the distance where the houses slowly become older and not as well maintained. It is a dead-end street.

You decide to take a walk down the street. It is nighttime. At the beginning of the street curtains are open, inside you can see families at the dinner table eating, the porch lights are on and you feel safe.

As you continue the picket fences disappear. Not many curtains are open now. The darkness starts to make you feel less comfortable. There are many more houses to go before you see end of the street.

You walk farther down the street; there is a feeling of sadness and hopelessness. Some houses are not well maintained, some are quiet while others you might hear some yelling or fighting, most curtains are drawn closed. Most porch lights are not on. But you do notice a light down at the end of the street.

Not the most desirable area to be in.

You are almost at the end of the street where lives have turned into something we never thought would happen us. There still is one place we are curious about, the house at the very end of the street. The house where the porch light is on. Curiosity sets in. There is something different about this house.

For some of us we can say we lived on this street. As we go through life some have moved...up the street or maybe down the street, sometimes up and down several times, but now we are at this end of the street and lost. Today the house at the end of the street is the only one we haven't lived in. We feel there is nowhere else to go so out of curiosity we finally go to that last house.

Approaching the house, the curtains are open with people inside talking, socializing. They appear to be happy. Several people are on the porch. With reservation we approach the house, walk up the porch. We are instantly welcomed!

This house is where we discovered Alcoholics Anonymous and were told "this is the last house on the block!"

Marty L, Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz



Cathy CM.	11/13/81
Pat H.	11/28/82
George E.	11/28/87
Valerie M.	11/24/89
Robin S.	11/22/90
Bobbie B.	11/1/91
Suzi S.	11/5/91
Rich L.	11/21/91
Steve D.	11/1/94
Robin B.	11/6/95
Michelle C.	11/27/95
Paul M.	11/5/96
Mary R.	11/15/98
John T.	11/22/98
Sharon H.	11/17/99
John A.	11/20/00
Kim F.	11/26/00
Maggie D.	11/7/01
Mike K.	11/9/01
Jim D.	11/23/01
Bradley A.	11/27/07
Lori P.	11/23/09
Brian P.	11/1/10
Glenn H.	11/11/11
Aaron W.	11/14/12
Tim W.	11/10/14
Janie N.	11/19/14
Katie B.	11/26/14
Joyce H.	11/30/14
Stephene F.	11/27/15
Bill R.	11/22/16
Maggie M.	11/12/19

In Memoriam
Michael G. 11/21/75

Want to list your A.A. anniversary in the GrapeSCINN? Email your name and sobriety date to: grapesccin@gmail.com



JANUARY SPEAKER MEETING

Mid-County Sr. Center
829 Bay Ave.
Capitola, CA 95

Birthday Speaker Meeting

Hosted By: Watsonville Fellowship of AA

Ivy Z / Fair Oaks, CA
9 years – Sept. 10th 2013

January 7th 2023
7pm Doors open 6:30

DECEMBER 2022 EVENTS

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm ☞ CRUZYPAA Monthly Meeting	2	3	4 7:30 pm - 8:30 pm ☞ Intergroup Council Meeting	5	6	7 7:00 pm - 8:15 pm ☞ Birthday Speaker Meeting
8	9	10	11 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm ☞ General Service District Meeting	12	13	14
15 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm ☞ CRUZYPAA Monthly Meeting	16	17	18 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm ☞ Intergroup Steering Committee	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm ☞ Santa Cruz Fellowship Birthday Speaker Meeting
29	30	31	1 7:30 pm - 8:30 pm ☞ Intergroup Council Meeting	2	3	4 7:00 pm - 8:15 pm ☞ Birthday Speaker Meeting

For more information about this month's events,
see the Santa Cruz County AA website

January 1, 2023 @ 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm
CRUZYPAA Monthly Meeting
326 Evergreen St, Santa Cruz, CA

January 4, 2023 @ 7:30 pm - 8:30 pm
Intergroup Council Meeting

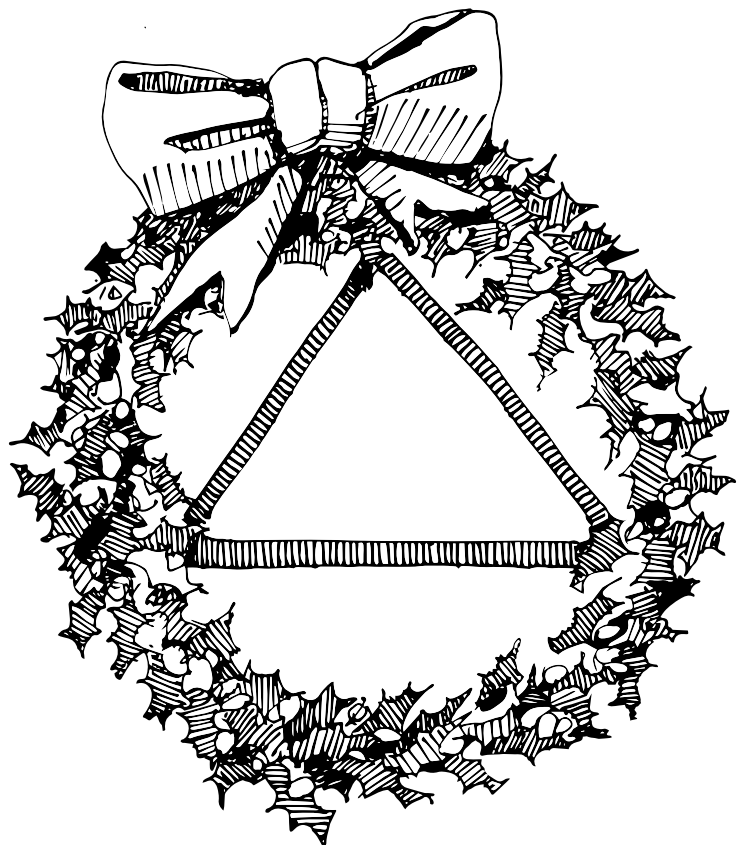
January 7, 2023 @ 7:00 pm - 8:15 pm
Birthday Speaker Meeting
Mid-County Senior Center
829 Bay Ave., Capitola, CA

January 11, 2023 @ 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm
General Service District Meeting

January 15, 2023 @ 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm
CRUZYPAA Monthly Meeting
326 Evergreen St, Santa Cruz, CA

January 18, 2023 @ 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm
Intergroup Steering Committee

January 28, 2023 @ 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
Santa Cruz Fellowship Birthday Speaker Meeting



I am responsible.

**When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help,
I want the hand of A.A. always to be there.
And for that, I am responsible.**



SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

AREA 73 HOSPITALS AND INSTITUTIONS COMMITTEE

- GSR Liaison: 6 months sobriety

Correctional Facilities:

- Salinas Valley State Prison – Needs Visiting Sponsors: Male, 5 years sobriety
- Ben Lomond Fire Camp – Needs Coordinator: Male or female, 3 years sobriety.
- Water Street Jail/Women – Needs Coordinator: Female, 3 years sobriety.
- Juvenile Hall – Needs Coordinator: Male and Female, 3 years sobriety.
- Water Street Jail/men – Needs Coordinator: Male, 3 years sobriety

Rehabilitation Centers

- Behavioral Health/Dual
- Diagnosis Facilities:
- Behavioral Health Unit – Needs Secretaries: Male or female, 3 years sobriety.
- Casa Pacific – Needs Coordinator: Male or female, 3 years sobriety.
- El Dorado Center – Needs Coordinator: Male or female, 3 years sobriety.
- Telos – Needs Coordinator: Male or female, 3 years sobriety.

Transitional Housing for Homeless Veterans

- Paget Center – Needs Coordinator: Male or female, 3 years sobriety
- Meetings at Santa Cruz County Jails (Water St. Men’s and Women’s, Blaine St. Women’s, and Roundtree Men’s Facilities) are restarting as soon as we have cleared volunteers. Secretaries needed all facilities URGENTLY.

If you are interested in any of the above service positions please email: SantaCruzcountyHI@gmail.com

All Jail Facilities: One year sobriety, 5 years since last felony & 2 years since last misdemeanor required. Orientation and clearance required for service at both men’s and women’s county corrections facilities. You must complete an application before orientation can be scheduled. Live Scan background check cost will be covered by H & I.

All other H & I Facilities: Please visit fillhandisc.org to fill out the volunteer form. We will be in touch with you to initiate your volunteering and assistance in placement into an open meeting.

Contact the Santa Cruz County H & I committee at: SantaCruzCountyHI@gmail.com website at HandISC.org

H & I Committee meets on the 4th Wednesday of each month at 7pm at 420 Melrose Ave., Santa Cruz (Trinity Presbyterian Church)