

GRAPESCCIN

October 2023

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

Continuing to Continue

BY TONY D. Z., SANTA CRUZ

When I came into A.A. a month before my twenty-second birthday, I did everything my sponsor told me to. I went to meetings, took commitments and read the Big Book regularly.

After college, I traveled through Europe with a backpack and attended meetings in Rome, Paris and Athens. I returned to school at 25, and with just over three years' sobriety, I was certain I'd ascended the pinnacle of recovery and would somehow remain sober of my own volition. You can imagine how well that worked out.

When I returned to A.A. in my early 30s, I half-measured my way through nearly a decade of self-manufactured misery before I met a man who asked me whether I was willing. I answered honestly: I didn't know.

"Fair enough," he said. "Are you willing to be willing to be willing?"

I've always been a word guy. I enjoy reading and writing, and do my best to express myself clearly and deliberately. His word play convinced me I might have a shot at recovery, despite a history of chronic relapse. I noticed the steps are written in the past tense, but the tenth step begins with the word "continued." This implies an ongoing, never-ending process. It occurred to me I hadn't "continued" to do a thing for my recovery in my mid-20s, and the reason for my first relapse became obvious.

There's freedom in a regular inventory; promptly admitting I was wrong is liberating. I had an experience with a bank manager a couple of years ago that showed me the relief available when I choose humility over hubris.

I went to the bank to deposit money into my daughter's account. The line was 20 people deep, and only two tellers were helping customers. When the manager greeted me and asked how he could help, I asked him whether he was willing to open another window.

"I'm sorry sir, I'm afraid I can't do that."



I was already in a foul mood when I'd parked my car. When I reached the young lady at the window, I'd been stewing in line for at least 20 minutes. I put \$500 on the counter and gave her my daughter's account number.

"May I see your ID?" she asked.

"Why?" I asked. "I'm putting money in, not taking it out."

She tried to explain the policy, but when she reached the part about the "Patriot Act" passed in 2001, I cut her off.

"I'm going out to my car to grab my ID. When I return, I'm going to stand off to the side and wait for you to finish with your next transaction. Deal?"

She agreed to allow me to return to the front. But as I waited, the manager asked me to move to the end of the line.

"She and I already discussed this," I said.

I'm certain my nostrils flared as I spoke: he stepped back abruptly and stated that in the future, I'd be required to wait at the end of the line. I smiled as he retreated to his office.

It took three days for the discomfort to get the better of me. I decided to return to the bank, and found the manager sitting behind his desk. But when I began my apology, he cut me off. "Oh, that's OK, sir," he said with a customer-service smile. "It's no problem."

"Listen," I told him. "I know you're supposed to say that. The bottom line is I was a jerk, and you were the guy who happened to get between me and what I wanted at the time."

The most subtle slight can fester over time. But it was I who'd suffered because of my rotten disposition. It may take years to complete the amends that matter most, but a regular inventory and prompt admission of wrongs assures me I'll add less weight to the baggage I accumulated over the course of my drinking. And though the word "promptly" is vague, it does mean sooner rather than later. Unless, of course, I'd rather suffer instead.

Good news from Heaven. And one other little thing

Two alcoholics, longtime friends, are wondering if there's A.A. in heaven.

So they make a deal: The first one who gets to heaven will send a message back to the other, letting him know if there's A.A. in heaven, and if it's any good.

One of them dies, and manages to get in touch with his friend: "I've got good news, and I've got bad news," he says. "Which do you want first?"

"The good news," the friend answers.

"OK. Yes indeed! Heaven has A.A. meetings, and they're great!"

"So what's the bad news?" his friend asks.

"You're the speaker tomorrow night."



Every Day is Garbage Day

BY LESTER, SANTA CRUZ

I give thanks to my Higher Power for guiding me back into the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous. I am beyond grateful that I don't have to execute this program flawlessly. I just have to commit to it.

After my relapse, I delved deep into the causes and conditions that led me to drink. I've done the work before, but did I truly look beyond the surface? I've discovered that the steps are meant to be taken repeatedly. Each time, I uncover more layers of myself – parts I couldn't see before.

At this juncture, I've admitted I have a fatal, progressive disease, and I've determined to place my hand in God's while I listed those I resented. I've cataloged my character defects and assets as I work to right my wrongs.

But what about those days when everything seems to go awry, when everyone and everything seems to get under my skin? Given enough of those days, I'd find more mess and wreckage. I'd feel soul-sick once again without knowing why.

That's where I rely on our Tenth Step: a nightly spot-check inventory. Once more, I place my faith in my loving Higher Power and put pen to paper. I go through a list of questions, and answer honestly and thoughtfully. Here are those questions; they might help you:

1. Have I been resentful, dishonest, afraid, guilty or angry today?
2. Do I owe an apology?
3. Do I need to discuss this with someone?
4. Was I kind and loving toward all?
5. What could I have done better?
6. Was I thinking of myself, or was I thinking of what I could do for others?

Taking the time to answer each question, I become more self-aware. My sponsor and I chuckle about the tricks my mind plays when I need to share with another. Through enough of these spot-checks, I also recognize situations where pausing would have been a valuable tool. In other instances, leaving a situation without reacting has been my best decision. I process the information nightly so I can keep my side of the street clean. The trash collector empties our dumpster every week, not every year. It's in my best interest to declutter my mind nightly to better serve my fellows.

There was a time before A.A. when I couldn't look in the mirror for fear of the person staring back. I pitied that man. Through the grace of my Higher Power and the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous, now I can gaze at my reflection and understand the man I see, without judgment or pity. Using the tools of the program, I can look at myself with all my flaws and scars and recognize I'm a work in progress. I'm content with that.

The opposite of addiction is connection; today, I feel more connected to the world around me because of Alcoholics Anonymous and all those who came before me.



'Each time, I uncover more layers of myself – parts I couldn't see before.'

Yes, meetings are helpful, but vigorous Tenth Steppin' reduces the need for the volume of fellowship / meetings and allows practice in our lives.



My new sponsor quickly showed me from the Big Book how to use the Tenth Step.



continue to watch for selfishness, dishonesty, resentment, and fear when these crop up, we ask God at once to remove them



discuss them with another person at once (send sponsor a quick text with "s" for selfish or some short message, or call to sponsor, leave message, etc.)



resolutely turn our thoughts to someone we can help (can be a prayer, can be followed by helpful action)



New Sponsor, New Tenth Step

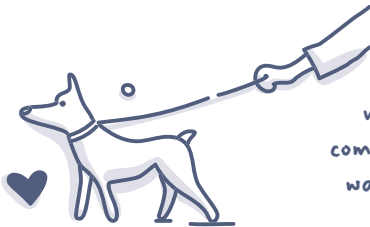
ask God to remove my fear and direct my attention to what He would have me be

Anonymous, Santa Cruz County



Keep it Simple
EZ Does it
First Things First

pause
~~~~~



vigorously commenced this way of living



constantly reminding ourselves we are no longer running the show, humbly saying to ourselves many times each day "Thy will be done"

amend quickly if harmed anyone (most corrections can be caught in thought life before actions are taken)

To feel good, do good and stay sober, use the Tenth Step to weed the thought garden.



Have a great day one moment at a time!



pause like a soldier awaiting orders - ask for right thought or action - someone is yelling or stressed - God please give me the right thought or action, or take a break, step away and make a call

use the resentment prayer on page 66-67, use the fear prayer on page 68



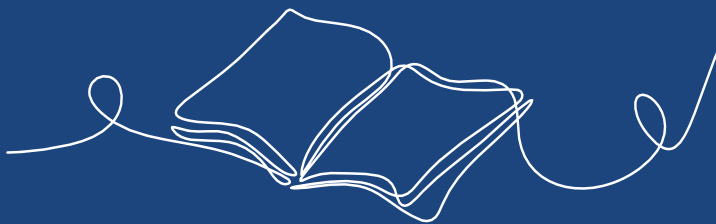
Tenth Step prayer constantly:  
"How can I best serve Thee - Thy will (not mine) be done"



This is a sick man. How can I be helpful to him? God save me from being angry.

# The Words Resonate

BY ANONYMOUS, APTOS



**A**s an English teacher, I love words. One of the first assignments I have my classes write is to tell me about their favorite, or least-favorite word or phrase. Besides learning a lot of slang I can't use because I'm too old and it's weird (according to my 13-year-old), I get to hear students' views on love and apologies and friendships. I even get to learn about defenestration.

Reading their work and soaking in the language, I started thinking about what might be my favorite word or phrase these days. I stand by such words as "hella," "ripper," and "siiiiiick" and always will, but these days, probably my favorite words come out of the Big Book. There's always a line that will sneak up on me and there's some pure poetry in there. I used to look for lines that could be sung in a hair-metal voice; there are more than you'd imagine. "Alcohol gave me wings to fly, and then it took away the sky." I mean, come on. The promises, our slogans - we have so many great phrases in our shared language of the heart.

My absolute favorite is "Keep coming back." You might hear it thrown out as a joke when an old timer gets a chip, but you are much more likely to hear it said encouragingly when a newcomer introduces themselves. We even end a lot of our meetings by chanting it together, (perhaps tacking on some variation of "It works if you work it, so work it because you're worth it"). If we're not singing "You Are My Sunshine."

I first heard "Keep coming back" after introducing myself as a newcomer, and it lit me up. I really had nowhere else to go. I couldn't hang out with my buddies or I'd end up drunk again; then in trouble at work; spiraling out and isolating; and finally stuck hanging out with the person I least wanted to spend time with: myself. Meetings were a magical place where people weren't trying to hustle you, and they seemed genuinely to care about each other.

Most importantly, they were smiling real smiles; they seemed happy. People had bright eyes and beamed at each other when they spoke. People were laughing, at the kinds of things people don't really laugh at outside of A.A., the kinds of things that would make the dinner table go quiet when I brought them up for a laugh at home.

I thought I was pretty smart when I came in, but I couldn't stop drinking on my own. I kept coming back, and eventually, I understood that it was the first drink that got me drunk. And, I didn't get to have any more drinks if I wanted a life that was manageable. Then I understood that if I didn't take a drink between meetings and I kept coming back, I could turn hours into days. I realized I could go to more than one meeting a day when I needed it. I learned I could be of service before and after the meeting. I learned that even if I couldn't put my hand out to introduce myself, if I stuck around long enough someone would put their hand out to me. I learned that meeting-makers make it, and I learned I could be a part of the meeting. I could raise my hand and volunteer for service positions. I could share my experience, strength and hope during the meetings, and I could share laughs, stories and difficulties in the parking lots after. I kept coming back because what I saw at meetings was working for others and I wanted it for myself.

Rocketing into a fourth dimension of existence of which I had not even dreamed, I've learned by putting the days together that I can know at least one person at pretty much any meeting in the county, because I kept coming back. I can't tell you how much it means to me to know I belong here, and that I have a chair here. A.A. is my church. It's my home. It's been my salvation, and it's a gift freely given. I keep coming back.

# From the General Service Chair

BY DEB A., DISTRICT COMMITTEE MEMBER CHAIRWOMAN  
SANTA CRUZ GENERAL SERVICE

I smile when I think about the mental anguish I went through before I stopped drinking. My life was going to be dull, and the fun would be gone.

I was wrong. My life has exploded with opportunities for new adventures and new excitements. That mental debate ended August 16, 1991, when for the first time in my life I chose a contrary action to a sure bet. Thirty-two years later I can say, without hesitation and with much gratitude, Thank you God and A.A. for an incredibly fun, full and satisfying life! I write this a couple days ahead of leaving on another adventure, this time with A.A. and AlAnon folks to Greece and Israel. That's after a few days in Boston and Long Island with a person dear to me. Adventure awaits!

Because I was taught always to put A.A. first, before I leave I'd like to share recent General Service activity.

The Fall Assembly is in Monterey this year, on Nov. 4. The night before, we're invited to a Fashion Show - yes, that's correct - to "wear an outfit that symbolizes our sobriety and walk the runway."



*Pre-Assembly*  
**FASHION SHOW AND  
A.A. SPEAKER MEETING**  
**Friday, November 3, 2023**  
THE MOOSE FAMILY LODGE, 555 CANYON, DEL REY OAKS, CA

|          |                                                  |
|----------|--------------------------------------------------|
| 6:00 PM: | DOORS OPEN                                       |
| 6:30 PM: | WALK THE RUNWAY!                                 |
| 7:00 PM: | A.A. SPEAKER MEETING<br>MONTY C. (SAN DIEGO, CA) |

Wear an outfit that symbolizes your sobriety and walk the runway!  
Sign up starts at 6:00pm on day of event.  
No fees! Free Admission.

**HOSTED BY DISTRICT 01 MONTEREY**

An illustration of three women in stylish outfits. One woman is sitting on a black box, wearing a red top and pants. Two women are standing behind her, one in a pink blazer and the other in a pink top and dark pants. They are all wearing red shoes.

See fliers for more information. All A.A. members are invited! GSRs are encouraged to participate.

The new Grapevine app has been successfully launched and the pamphlet Young People in A.A. has been revised and updated with seven new stories.

Our delegate Eric L. has submitted a request from California Northern Coastal Area to the General Service Board, asking for a pamphlet for transgender members. We will know in January 2024 if it will be included as an Agenda Topic.

Thank you for allowing me the privilege of doing service for the fellowship that makes my life fun!

# SOBRIETY MILESTONES

## September

|              |                    |
|--------------|--------------------|
| Phil S.      | September 26, 1976 |
| Jean W.      | September 30, 1978 |
| Maria F.     | September 1, 1981  |
| Betsy H.     | September 27, 1982 |
| Jill S.      | September 1, 1984  |
| Carl H.      | September 4, 1984  |
| Carolina     | September 15, 1984 |
| Coco C.      | September 18, 1986 |
| Claire S.    | September 1, 1987  |
| Jennifer P.  | September 26, 1987 |
| Lanie C.     | September 5, 1989  |
| Gail L.      | September 13, 1992 |
| Tim B.       | September 21, 1992 |
| Ron H.       | September 11, 1997 |
| Eileen E.    | September 5, 1998  |
| Rick A.      | September 1, 2001  |
| Jeremiah C.  | September 5, 2002  |
| Valerie C.   | September 5, 2002  |
| Brian S.     | September 20, 2006 |
| Russ A.      | September 20, 2006 |
| Mac B.       | September 25, 2006 |
| Johnny H.    | September 29, 2007 |
| Karena B.    | September 8, 2010  |
| Eva Z.       | September 19, 2011 |
| Scott F.     | September 26, 2011 |
| Brian O.     | September 1, 2012  |
| Reb B.       | September 9, 2012  |
| Lydia E.     | September 28, 2012 |
| Kristin S.   | September 13, 2013 |
| Stephen H.   | September 16, 2013 |
| Stephanie S. | September 7, 2015  |
| Marisol      | September 19, 2016 |

**W**ant to list your A.A. anniversary in the GrapeSCINN? Email your name and sobriety date to: [grapesccin@gmail.com](mailto:grapesccin@gmail.com)

A vertical rectangular advertisement with a background of vertical orange and yellow stripes. At the top, a dark blue circle contains the text: "Saturday • October 7", "santa cruz intergroup presents:", "Birthday Speaker Meeting", "Doors open at 5:30 • Meeting at 7:00", "MID-COUNTY SENIOR CENTER", "829 Bay Ave. Capitola", "Speaker: Justin H", "San Jose • 5.8.18", and "Hosted by Scotts Valley Women's 12x12". Below the circle is a cartoon spider wearing a party hat, with a string from the circle attached to its back.

**Saturday • October 7**  
santa cruz intergroup presents:  
**Birthday Speaker Meeting**  
Doors open at 5:30 • Meeting at 7:00  
**MID-COUNTY SENIOR CENTER**  
829 Bay Ave. Capitola  
Speaker: Justin H  
San Jose • 5.8.18  
Hosted by Scotts Valley Women's 12x12

# OCTOBER EVENTS

For more information  
about this month's events, visit  
[aasantacruz.org](http://aasantacruz.org)

October 1 @ 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm  
**CRUZYPAA Monthly Meeting**  
Harvey West Park 326 Evergreen St

October 4 @ 7:30 pm - 8:30 pm  
**Intergroup Council Meeting**  
Meeting ID: 828 1508 0970  
Passcode: 588309

October 6 @ 10:00 am - October 8 @ 5:00 pm  
**ACYPAA Summit**  
Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk

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

October 10 @ 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm  
**Joint Committee on Safety**  
Meeting ID: 892 3730 0658  
Passcode: 857738

October 11 @ 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm  
**General Service District Meeting**  
Meeting ID: 898 9003 8938  
Passcode: 121212

October 12 @ 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm  
**Web Committee Meeting**  
Meeting ID: 884 7009 1801  
Passcode: 2272

October 13 @ 8:00 am - October 15 @ 5:00 pm  
**NCAA Fall Conference - Fresno**  
2233 Ventura St, Fresno, CA 93721

October 14 @ 10:00 am - 12:00 pm  
**4th Step Workshop**  
Ben Lomond Fellowship  
9496 Hwy 9, Ben Lomond

October 15 @ 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm  
**CRUZYPAA Monthly Meeting**  
Harvey West Park 326 Evergreen St  
Santa Cruz

October 18 @ 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm  
**Intergroup Steering Committee Meeting**  
Meeting ID: 861 8723 8980  
Passcode: 723088

October 29 @ 3:00 pm - 6:00 pm  
**Santa Cruz Fellowship Birthday Speaker Meeting**  
Santa Cruz Fellowship  
412 Front Street, Santa Cruz

**CRUZYPAA**  
PRESENTS  
**ACYPAA SUMMIT**  
SANTA CRUZ CA  
**OCTOBER 6-8, 2023**

RESERVE YOUR HOTEL ROOM

CRUZYPAA @CRUZYPAA

PRE REG \$20

COURTYARD BY MARRIOTT

MAIN MEETING & DANCE AT SANTA CRUZ BEACH BOARDWALK

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY INTERGROUP PRESENTS  
**HALLOWEEN PARTY**  
SPEAKER MEETING & FUNRAISER  
October 29 • 3pm-6pm

speaker • music • prizes • potluck costume contest  
Live music by Wred Horse!

Vets Hall Downtown  
846 Front St, Santa Cruz, CA

Show up early to help decorate and remember to bring food to share!

SPEAKER:  
Stacey A. from Mountain View





WATSONVILLE FELLOWSHIP  
HALLOWEEN PARTY

**BBQ CHICKEN DINNER 6:15 PM**  
**SPEAKER MEETING 7:15 PM**

**\$10 SUGGESTED DONATION**

DINNER - MEETING - DANCING - COSTUME CONTEST

**OCT. 21**  **STARTS 6 PM**

Springfield Grange 6 Werner Rd., Watsonville

**FALL ASSEMBLY 2023**  
"THE AREA INVENTORY"

**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4**

Monterey Moose Family Center  
555 Canyon Del Rey Blvd. Del Rey Oaks, CA

Zoom ID: [632 553 607](#) | Password: 1935

|                       |                     |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| REGISTRATION          | 9:00 – 10:00 AM     |
| ORIENTATION           | 10:00 – 10:15 AM    |
| AREA BUSINESS MEETING | 10:15 AM - 12:00 PM |
| LUNCH                 | 12:00 – 1:00 PM     |
| AREA INVENTORY        | 1:00 – 5:15 PM      |
| WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND?  | 5:15 – 5:30 PM      |



**Attending online?** Spanish-English interpretation and Closed Captioning will be provided on Zoom.

**Attending in-person?** Bring your **FM RADIO** for Spanish-English interpretation and Assisted Listening.



NCCAA  
74<sup>th</sup> Annual  
Fall Conference

**Northern California Council of  
Alcoholics Anonymous**

*Oldest AA Conference Since 1947!*

**Fresno, CA**

**DoubleTree by Hilton**  
2233 Ventura St, Fresno, CA 93721  
**October 13, 14, 15, 2023**

| Friday Oct. 13, 2023                                     | Saturday Oct. 14, 2023                                     | Sunday Oct. 15, 2023           |
|----------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 2:00 PM Registration Opens<br>5:00 PM Long Timer's Panel | 8:00 AM – Steering Committee<br>11:00 AM – NCCAA Delegates | 8:00 AM Meditation Meeting     |
| 8:00 PM Open Speaker Meeting                             | 8:00 PM Open Speaker Meeting                               | 10:00 AM Open Speaker Meeting  |
| <b>Georgia B.</b><br>Los Angeles, CA                     | <b>Richie B.</b><br>Los Angeles, CA<br>YP Speaker          | <b>Marcelo N.</b><br>Marin, CA |

Additional program information on back of flyer

*AI-Anon and Spanish Speakers & Participation*

*Area 06 & 07 Updates – Marathon Meetings*

*Saturday Night Dance – Free Drawing*

*Sunday Morning Meditation Meeting*

*Introducing New Officers at this Conference*



Visit NCCAA website for more information on how to be of Service to NCCAA.

[NCCAA Website](http://www.norcalaa.org)  
norcalaa.org

PRE-REGISTRATION CUT OFF DATE IS OCTOBER 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023

CONFERENCE RATE FOR HOTEL CUT OFF DATE IS September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023

**PRE-REGISTRATION - \$20.00 (per person) - AT THE CONFERENCE - \$25.00**

VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT --<http://www.norcalaa.org>

