

The **MESSENGER**

Middle Tennessee Central Office Intergroup

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OCTOBER 2012

Tradition 10: My Father, Myself **Discarding opinions, inside AA and out**

Sometimes, I'm great at practicing the Tenth Tradition. Other times, I'm horrible at it. But my ability to apply this Tradition in my life has grown as I have gotten older in sobriety. I still slip up sometimes, as I think we all do. One guiding principle has become clear to me:

I am practicing the spirit of the Tenth Tradition as long as I am sharing my experience, strength, and hope, and not my opinions.

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By practicing this, I've been able to strengthen my relationships in and out of the rooms, including a difficult relationship with my father.

One of the sayings I've heard in the rooms for many years is, "We go to meetings to give, not to get." For me, the difference between being a "giver" and a "taker" is the quality of what I bring to meetings with me. Am I sharing my experience, strength, and hope, or am I sharing my opinions? If I'm sharing my experience, strength, and hope, I'm sharing about how the principles I've learned in AA -- such as service, unity, reaching out for help, acceptance, faith, or humility--have helped me to live life on life's terms just enough to stay sober for a few twenty-four hours. If I'm sharing my opinions, it sounds different, even to my ears. It sounds more like, "You should do this to stay sober," rather than, "This is what I did to stay sober."

In fact, sharing my opinions even feels different. It's almost as if I can feel that self-righteousness begin to seep out of my pores and coat me and whatever I say in an icky, prideful goo. This coating is usually preceded by my hearing

something I disagree with in a meeting. Feeling my hand shoot up, I open my mouth to "correct" what I believe are my sober colleagues' delusions. Why I still feel sometimes, after years of sobriety, that it's my job to correct everyone's delusions is beyond me! Perhaps it's more manifestation of self-centered fear. Why else would I feel the need to always be right?

For many years, I would opine in meetings, saying things that were divisive, rude, and hurtful, because I felt that I had the "right" brand of sobriety. Some people I directed my rants at ten or more years ago still avoid me today. I can't say I blame them--it hurt when others did it to me. Talk about doing damage to group unity!

For me, the change in my thinking and sharing began when I had about five or six years of sobriety. An assignment from my sponsor meant I was to start practicing the Tenth Tradition with my family, specifically with my dad, as part of my amends toward him.

Basically, I had always felt afraid that I wasn't a good enough daughter for him, that he wished he'd had someone more normal, with fewer tattoos and fewer

(Continued on page 2)

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opinions that differed from his own. My fear that I wasn't good enough turned into a fear that he didn't love me. Being the kind of alcoholic I am and being a person from a loud, opinionated family, I decided that I'd alienate my dad by arguing with him about politics. That way, if he didn't seem to love me the way I wanted him to, I could chalk it up to politics--not to my deepest fears about our relationship.

Of course, that didn't work! In the course of an inventory, I realized that this was a ploy so that I didn't have to have a real relationship with my dad. I didn't want to risk finding out I wasn't what I thought he wanted me to be. I was used to arguing with my dad about politics, so that's what I did. Instead, I had to practice not arguing with him, one day at a time. This was hard--and scary. I actually had to talk to my dad about what was going on in my life, not about what was on the nightly news. It was much more personal. As time went on, it got easier. Still, there were a couple of times when I strayed, went into the personality of my politics, and

ended up in shouting matches, complete with the sullen silences afterwards.

As I learned how to have a real relationship with my dad, I learned that I could have a real relationship with other people based on this principle, too.

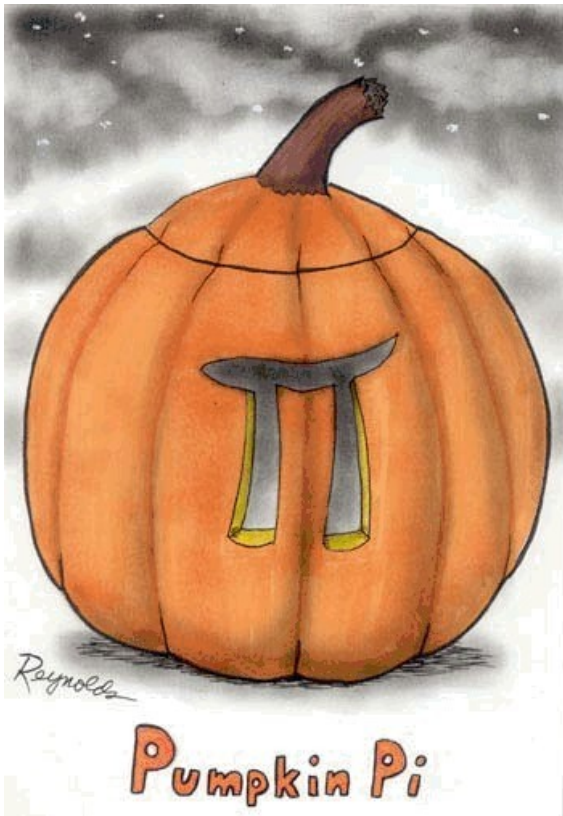
When I talk about my opinions, I don't leave a lot of room to talk about my feelings, my hopes, my dreams, my aspirations, my life. I leave room for argument, but not for relating. That has been dangerous for me, both inside and outside AA. Arguments usually lead me right back to feelings of isolation, difference, anger, and self-righteousness. These feelings, if left unchecked, could lead me back to a drink if I don't cut out the actions causing them.

I learned in AA of the principle of one alcoholic talking to another in the language of the heart. The logical extension of that principle is talking from the heart, one person to another. To me, this is something I feel I must aim for--it's part of practicing these principles in

all of my affairs. And, it allows me to be a giver in terms of my family, my job, and my social affairs rather than expect people in those areas of my life to kowtow to me.

Part of the reason this idea has become so important to me is that my dad, with whom I so struggled to be real, died about ten years ago. Fortunately, I'd had about four or five years of practicing relating to him, one person to another. I knew, when he died, that he loved me, even though we still occasionally butted heads. I had taken that leap of faith in AA and practiced talking with him, instead of arguing with him. I am not sure if either he or I would have believed in our love for each other had I avoided this work. By allowing me to have a relationship with him based on love and common ground, my nonalcoholic dad taught me something about AA: I need to have that relation with all of you, too.

*Juliet H.—Pinole, California—October 2008
Reprinted with permission—AAGrapevine*



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I was once a homeless man. I lived on the street and on the couches of a few acquaintances. All of my belongings were packed in a suitcase; I carried it everywhere. I seldom had a place to shower, so I stank worse than a dead animal--but this did not matter to me, because I was drunk. Before being homeless, I was in jails and prisons for over fifteen years of my life. I was a liar, a thief, and I cared for no one except myself. Self-centeredness ruled my way of living. Either people did things the way I wanted them done, or I had no use for them. I had no true friends. My own family had finally given up on me after years of hearing how sorry I was. It did not help to say I was sorry when I continued to be a sorry excuse for a human.

Today, I get to my AA meeting a few minutes before 7 A.M., having strolled lazily from the bus stop, enjoying the fresh morning breeze. Jerry, Monty, and a few others are milling around the door, waiting for it to click open. A few men and women are homeless, and want a warm, free cup of coffee.

I hear the church bells chiming from a cathedral, a few blocks from the meeting, and the sound echoes off the skyscrapers. One ring, two rings, three, four, five, six, seven rings means seven o'clock, and it is time for the automatic lock to click open. The door opens at seven and the meeting starts at seven-thirty. A few other early birds and I put out our cigarettes in an ashtray outside the front door and go inside. The door is frosted glass and, etched into the upper half, there is a circle with a triangle inside the circle and the letters "AA" inside the triangle.

It is an old building with a lot of character built into it. Somehow, it feels like home to me.

There are meetings here throughout the day, and I am usually in attendance for a couple of them. People start to show up and begin greeting each other and catching up on each other's lives. The chairperson for this meeting arrives early to get the coffee ready for others to serve themselves as they arrive.

The F&G initials stand for Fleur Avenue and Grand Avenue; the original site of the AA meeting place. Today, it is located in a few rooms in a two-story building on the southeast corner of 11th and High streets, in Des Moines, Iowa. When the location changed, the group decided to keep the meeting name the same. It may always be called F&G, although it is larger and no longer filled with smoke.

Hanging along the walls are a few sayings with the ideas and principles of AA. At one end of the main room are the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. At one end of the main room is a side room used for special events or for private conversations. I have never had a private conversation in the side room, and

after seeing the tears of those who come out of that room, I do not want to go in there. Eventually, I guess I will want to, but I am in no hurry. It is the place where a person admits his character defects and talks about his resentments and fears with another. It is where some people, who attend F&G, do their Fourth and Fifth Steps.

Framed with wood and behind a piece of glass is an essay titled "Trouble Makers." The saying is worth a lot and well suited for the F&G meetings.

It says, in part:

Trouble Makers

Few of us are afraid of what any newcomer can do to our AA reputation or effectiveness.

***Those who slip,
those who panhandle,
those who scandalize,
those with a mental twist,
those who rebel at the program,
those who trade on the AA reputation
--all such persons seldom harm an AA
group for long.***

Some of these have come out most respected and best loved. Some have remained to try our patience, sober nonetheless. Others have drifted away. We have begun to regard the troublesome ones not as menaces, but rather as our teachers. They oblige us to cultivate patience, tolerance, and humility. The false righteousness of we who condemn them does our group the deeper damage.

I began as a troublemaker at F&G, and the people around these tables accepted me, without fear or condemnation, so I kept coming back. I can still cause trouble, but it is no longer my purpose. Today I find solutions that are in abundance around the tables of F&G.

I hear the voices of more people arriving. Some are moaning and groaning, others are happy and smiling, still others are reserved and quiet. One man shuffles by me on his way to the bathroom. Whew, he smells ripe still. I think to myself that I should have used the bathroom right away, because he will leave it a mess. He is one of the homeless, and I cannot blame him for wanting to splash some water on his face. His clothes are tattered and dirty. They're the same ones he has worn all week. Love and tolerance are part of our AA principles, and I am given plenty of opportunity to practice these principles at my home group.

(Continued on page 5)

From the desk of Charles C.

Before you get this edition of *The Messenger*, I shall have returned from the 27th Annual Intergroup AAWS Seminar in Washington, DC. Once a year, all Intergroup offices in the country are invited for a 3 day conference where ideas and information are exchanged between Central Offices. I attended my first conference last year and consider it an honor and a privilege to represent *The Middle Tennessee Central Office*. We have a financially sound, active and vibrant office with over 40 volunteers working to keep it that way. Over 115 groups and meetings have made financial contributions in 2012, and from my perspective, our Intergroup does not experience a lot of the challenges and issues shared by other areas. We have over 875 meetings a week in Middle Tennessee, and that is a lot.

There are a few areas where I wish we did things more often and effectively, and I will look for opportunities to see what other offices and Intergroups do in those areas.

One of the concerns is *The Messenger* newsletter. The Intergroup has decided to subsidize our newsletter, make it free online and continue to mail hard copies to paid subscribers. I seek answers to create more involvement and partnership with the groups. We have little feedback and less contribution of material from individuals and groups. I want our newsletter to "carry the message", and I believe it shall. I solicit your feedback and ideas, but I get very little. Together, I know we can be more effective and promote unity.

Another area relates to individual contributions. Though

financially sound overall, a faithful and consistent base of individual donors would greatly enhance and multiply our primary purpose. We have a great work to do in many areas that I cannot begin to share here, but they relate to books and public information going to schools, communication with professional organizations, and to those individuals with special needs in treatment facilities and nursing homes. Our life-saving and family saving message cannot be confined to the walls of our meetings. Willing messengers alone do not get it done.

I think we need more common functions, where we all come together to celebrate sobriety and our fellowship. There are a few roundups and retreats, but we are unable to have a State Convention every year for many reasons, and there are too many sober alcoholics in Tennessee, and especially in Middle Tennessee, not to have a large, recurring convention every year. This is not the responsibility of an Intergroup or service center, but *The Central Office* is where the information is shared, distributed and given life and motion.

As I said at the beginning, we are blessed in Middle Tennessee with a vibrant, healthy, financially sound office. With those blessings come opportunity and responsibility. I go to the Intergroup Seminar to share who we are and what we do in Middle Tennessee, but I also go to find ways to share with you how things might be done even bigger and better.

Thanks for the opportunity to go and grow !!

CENTRAL OFFICE OFFICERS	NAME	PHONE #
Chairperson	Cynthia S	407.468.5641
Vice Chairperson	Michael A	615.497.6617
Secretary	Lois B	615.579.7303
Treasurer	Don R	931.239.1523
Public Information/Cooperation with the Professional Community	Al C	615.883.4553
Corrections	Nancy C Jody C	530.218.8176 931.319.3446
Treatment	Jon T	804.306.6256
Archives	Don D	615.525.7643
Central Office Director	Charles C	615.832.1136
Central Office Bookkeeper	David	615.832.1136

FIRST TUESDAY OF EVERY MONTH: District 32 Meeting

When:
6:30pm – 7:30pm

Where:
Central Office
Conference Room

176
Thompson
Lane

FIRST TUESDAY OF EVERY MONTH: District 35 Meeting

When:
6:30pm – 7:30pm

Where:
5925 O'Brien Ave

SECOND TUESDAY OF EVERY MONTH:

**Intergroup Meeting
(Central Office)**

When:
5:45pm – 6:45pm

Where:

**Central Office
Conference Room**

176 Thompson Lane

More people show up and start sitting around the tables. For most, there is real pleasure in their voices as they greet each other. Several people acknowledge me with a hello and a handshake. Some give me a warmer welcome with a hug, and a sincere inquiry about how I am doing. "How ya doing?" is a kind of coded question among some of us in AA that really means, "How is your sobriety holding up?" It's asked with genuine concern and a willingness to offer help if needed. I usually tell them I am okay, because I am. I play and coach the F&G Softball team on Saturdays with some of these people. We go bowling and golfing together and pitch horseshoes.

I take a few deep breaths with my eyes closed just to relax myself, and then I look around at the people who have come to the meeting. It continues to amaze me how extremely different characters can come together and have a single purpose in common.

An AA meeting is not a meeting of like-minded individuals, because of the differences among us. There are doctors, lawyers, construction workers, bankers, and students. We are young and old, from the ages of seventeen to eighty; we are rich and poor, all races, all religions, all political views among us. The only thing we all agree on is that one drunk talking to another drunk is the only way that we know to help each other stop being drunks.

The way that one drunk talks to another is not always so agreeable, and often leads to lively and humorous discussions. One man uses the "f" word so often that it has become a standard joke to count how many times he says it when he talks. He is a lovable character, though he tries not to be.

When another man speaks sometimes he is timed. The average length for a person to speak at a meeting is two or three minutes. This guy will go on and on for ten or fifteen minutes if the chairperson does not ask him to let someone else speak. Despite his long-windedness, he usually makes a lot of sense and helps many of us understand our way to sobriety.

There are those among us who have mental illnesses; often they do not take their medications, and they will mumble incoherently for a little bit. If I listen closely enough, I occasionally hear them say something very profound and meaningful for me. I think that is because I might have a mental illness, too.

About a half hour into a meeting, the basket goes around the room. Those who can, usually put a couple dollars in the basket. Sometimes, I don't want to give up any dollars, but I remember that it was suggested I consider how much money I wasted during a single night at the bar, and I

realize that a dollar is a small price to pay for the priceless help I get staying sober around the tables of AA.

I have been coming to F&G over a year, attending at least three meetings every week. I try to go to seven meetings a week, going to different ones so I do not become bored attending the same meeting over and over. I rarely attend a meeting at F&G without knowing the names and faces of all, except the newcomer. Most know my name, as well.

The hour is almost over for this meeting. As always, I have heard helpful suggestions, most of them things I have heard hundreds of times before that I need reminding of often. Things like, "It's important to learn how to listen before speaking," "Nothing ever gets better when we drink," "Keep it simple," and "One day at a time." They are helpful reminders for an easier, softer, kinder way to live.

Today, I do not attend meetings so much for the purpose of not drinking, but more for learning to live life sober, without fears, and to build up my self-esteem. Having a home group helps me overcome the bad feelings I can have about my past. There are friends here to lift my spirits.

Often, I enjoy my other meeting places more than F&G, but this is where I got sober. I call it my "home group," and just walking through the front door gives me a comforting feeling of coming home each time I am here. It is a great way to start my day. There are people here who are glad to see me. We smile and laugh, reminding each other that we do not have to take life so seriously.

I first walked into an AA meeting three years ago. I did not get it the first two years and kept going back to the booze. I now have a year of sobriety, and I no longer smell like a dead animal. Over the past year, I have managed to get my own apartment, and I have accumulated too many belongings to fit into a suitcase. I applied for and received a student loan. I have recently finished my first year of college. I will be returning to school this coming fall to finish my Associate of Arts degree. I hope to earn a Masters degree in English.

Of all the changes over the past year, most significant are the friends I have made along the way. In addition, communication is rekindling with my family. Today, I feel loved and cared for, and I actually feel the same for others. I plan to keep coming back so that I can continue to learn how to live sober. F&G accepted me as I was and having a home group has given me a family and a life.

Donald M. – Des Moines, Iowa
Reprinted with permission – AAGrapevine – October 2007

Notes From A Group Inventory Chair

Sometimes it's hard to address the gorilla

I have been blessed in sobriety beyond my comprehension--but this doesn't mean that my life has been a perfect bowl of cherries. There were times it seemed closer to a bowl of pits.

I am privileged to serve the Fellowship as a delegate to the General Service Conference from Area 83, Eastern Ontario International. For this, I am extremely grateful.

Groups that do an inventory sometimes ask me to chair their inventory meeting--perhaps as a result of my being active in service for a number of years. If the date fits in my calendar, I say yes.

What's in it for me? Why do I enjoy spending my Saturday afternoons chairing group inventories?

I keep on learning. I find out about problems I never knew existed in our Fellowship. I am shown solutions to problems that I would never have thought up. I get to meet AA members I might never meet otherwise. And I get to see them at their best--trying to make their home group the best group in the world.

I've learned other things, too; what follows is a brief compendium, from my own perspective, and it offers the following suggestions:

1. The chair is not there to take the group's inventory, but to facilitate the process of members taking their group's inventory.
2. It is important that the chair be a respected member of the Fellowship and from outside the group in question. The chair must be perceived as unbiased and neutral about the group's issues. Being respected makes it easier to maintain the necessary control during the meeting.
3. The questions in the pamphlet, *The AA Group: Where It All Begins*, have proven to be a good framework for the exercise.
4. The process takes as long as it takes. It should not be over until the last member has said their piece.
5. The chair's responsibility is two-fold. First, keep the meeting on topic. Second, make sure the room becomes what I call a "Tradition Twelve Zone." Don't allow discussions about personalities. If the chair does his or her job properly, everyone will feel safe enough to speak his or her mind.
6. Brief notes should be kept--to share with members who could not attend, and to capture good ideas to carry forward to the group's business meeting. Typically, the recorder is a group member.

Do group inventories help? I don't have a single answer. Sometimes, and at some level, yes. Like most other activities in Alcoholics Anonymous, the results are a function of the input. The more I put in, the more I receive in return.

Some groups have bloomed after an inventory session. Other groups note that issues unearthed in an inventory are the same ones found during the last group inventory some years ago.

I facilitated a group inventory and discovered, weeks later, that no one could, or would, talk about the group's "six-hundred pound gorilla," whatever it might be. As far as I know, that "gorilla" remains at all their meetings. I believe I have failed them, because, on that day, I could not make the room sufficiently safe for a discussion that should have occurred.

Are group inventories worthwhile? Absolutely. If we never choose to risk, little stands to be gained. At the very least, members of the group get to meet each other in a different venue, to see each other in a different light. In addition, there is always a chance that a group will become more dynamic, and find new ways to carry its message of hope to more of those who still suffer.

Roy R.—Toronto, Ontario
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The alcoholic is like a tornado roaring his way through the life of others. Hearts are broken. Sweet relationships are dead. Affections have been uprooted. Selfish and inconsiderate habits have kept the home in turmoil.

MEETING CHANGES		EVENTS	
NEW		WORKSHOP ON THE A.A. GROUP Saturday, November 3 8:30 to noon <i>Breakfast at 8:30</i> <i>Pizza at noon</i>	
37013	Lighthouse Fellowship Church 5100 Blue Hole Antioch Wed 6pm OD		Monday Night Prime Time Annual Picnic Sat Oct 20th 11:00– 2:00 <i>Please bring side dish or dessert</i> Church of the Resurrection 1216 Sneed Rd
37046	Limitless Lode College Grove UMC 8568 Horton Hwy Tues 7pm		
37064	Road to Recovery Fellowship Bible Church 1725 Columbia Ave Suite 100 Room 102 Franklin Tues 8p CD		
37067	Cool Springs Newcomers Bradford Health Services 1897 Gen George Patton Dr Franklin Mon & Wed 7pm CD/Beg		
37072	Ladies Night Out Cedar & Church Goodlettsville Tue 6p		
37076	Hermitage Women’s Hermitage Pres Church 4401 Lebanon Rd Hermitage Mon Noon OD		
37076	Women's BB Study Hermitage Pres Church 4401 Lebanon Rd Hermitage Sat 3pm		
37080	Joelton Mtg. Thur 7pm OD		
37082	Comfort Zone Oak Street House 335 Oak street Kingston Springs Wed Noon		
37086	LaVergne Solutions Right Rd Ministries 188 Old Nashville Hwy La Vergne Tues-Fri 5pm OD		
37115	Serenity House 102 Harris St. Madison TT Wed 8pm	SAVE THE DATE FRIDAY NOVEMBER 30th 2012 ANNUAL DINNER THE MIDDLE	
37129	Serenity 435 S. Molloy Ln Murfreesboro Sat 2:30 OD/Gay		
37129	Murfreesboro Grapevine Mtg 801 N. Maney Ave Sun 8pm		
37148	Portland Unity Fri 6:30pm		
37174	New Women's AA Grace Episcopal Church/Community Hall Main & Beechcroft Springhill 6:30pm		
37203	WANGL OutCentral Cultural Comm Center 1709 Church St Fri 6:30pm		
37206	Eastside Women's Eastwood Christian Church 1601 Eastland Ave Tues 6:30pm		
37209	Made A Decision Holy Trinity 6727 Charlotte Pike Tues - OD/Gay		
37211	Safe Place Oasis Church 7533 Lords Chapel Dr Tue & Thurs 6:30pm OD		
37211	Steel Magnolia Women's Last Stop Club 2122 Utopia Sun 10am CD/WM		
37221	Keep It Simple Holy Trinity Lutheran Church Sneed Rd. Mon 8pm TT CD	Intergroup Meeting Steering Committee (Central Office) When: Thursday October 25th 5:45pm	
37388	Drop the Rock 106 N. Anderson St Tullahoma Sat 8:30am Men/Lit		
38562	Old Time AA First UMC Gainesboro 302 S. Main St Fri 8pm OD		
MOVED			
37027	Brentwood Full Moon Otter Creek Church 409 Franklin Rd		
37034	Chapel Hill New Life Comm Baptist Church 5216 Nashville Hwy		
37064	Garden Variety St. Andrew Lutheran Church 908 Murfreesboro Rd Tues/Thurs 7:15pm		
37115	Women's Serenity Now Meets 5:30pm OD		
37122	Key to Sobriety 595 W. Division St Mt Juliet		
37211	Saturday Eyeopener Club 62 323 Peachtree Nashville 9am OD		
CHANGES			
37013	Higher Powered Fri 8pm		
37027	Brentwood BB Sun 7pm now 1hr		
37069	Living in the Now is now Monday Night Prime Time		
37087	Lebanon By the Book Mon-6:30 Tues-6:30 Fri-7:00		
37174	Women's AA Mtg name change S.O.S. (Sisters of Sobriety)		
37204	Vine Hill Vine Hill Towers 625 Benton Ave Thurs 9am is now at 4pm		
CANCELLED			
37015	OISVAL Valley View Ashland City Fri 8pm		
37027	Prime Time - Tues night		
37066	Search for Serenity		
37066	Turning Point		
37086	LaVergne Solutions Saturday		
37172	Ex-Offenders		
37172	Robertson County Wed & Sun night		
37203	Program Study		
37211	Young Timers Sunday 8pm		
37212	Natchez Trace Wed 11am		
37212	Natchez Trace Thurs Noon		
37214	Freedom House Wed 7pm		
37217	Love & Laughter Thurs 8:15		
38501	Cookeville Weekend Recovery Thurs 6pm		
38570	Livingston Tues & Fri		
38556	Jamestown Tues 7pm		
42223	The Power of Now		

My name is Rose. I'm eighteen years old and I'm a recovering alcoholic. My parents were very young when I was born--too young to take care of themselves, let alone me. During my childhood I came to believe that drinking was okay; I thought it was normal. I was an only child and often drank to fend off the loneliness. My whole family was tied up in drugs and alcohol. My father and mother got divorced, and a few years later my father tried to kill himself under the influence of drugs. That didn't stop me from drinking.

I quit school and started drinking on a daily basis. I hung out with the wrong crowd. I stayed out all night, went to bars, got into fights, and got arrested. I got into so much trouble that the courts gave me a sentence of one year in jail, suspended. I was put on probation for two years, and my probation officer quickly noticed my alcoholism. She threatened me with ten days in jail if I didn't admit myself to a treatment center.

In the treatment center, I realized that my world was falling apart. I was no longer living, I was struggling. I knew I couldn't go on that way much longer. I learned a lot about the disease of alcoholism and was introduced to the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. That treatment center was a major stepping stone in my life. Through the program I found a new freedom and a new happiness. AA is a way of life today, because for me to drink is to die and I want very much to live.

The Promises say I can be restored to a "normal" way of life--unfortunately I had no normal way of life to be restored to. I'm still learning how to live happy, joyous, and free. In order to be those things, I must work the program to the best of my ability, just the way it has been laid out. I cannot fix it to my liking. I must surrender myself totally. I've turned my will over to the care of a Higher Power whom I choose to call God. I've accepted the gift of grace.

Willingness, awareness, acceptance, and honesty are the keys to my emotional sobriety. I'm willing to go to any lengths to keep my sobriety. I have the willingness to make changes--and I really have changed for the better. I'm honest today; I need not put on an act for people to like me. I'm not afraid to let my skeletons out of their closets. I am learning to love myself as well as loving others.

I learn this by being open and honest, by sharing in groups. I share my experiences, strength, and hopes, and my fears, doubts, and insecurities. By this I may be able to help a fellow alcoholic.

All I need to do is continue to go to AA meetings and stick with the winners. I want that sparkle in my eye, that skip in my step that they have. So I've joined a group and gotten involved as much as possible by helping to set up the meetings and by going on commitments. I keep in contact with sober people every day. I have a sponsor and I try to stay away from sick situations. I can enjoy healthy relationships. I can love and be loved. I set goals in my recovery and stick with them. I have so much to give and so much more to receive. I can believe in myself and I'm grateful for the beautiful people God has put in my life.

I get on my knees in the morning and ask for God's will not mine to be done for the day. I return the gift of grace at night. I kneel at my bedside and thank God for all that he has helped me with. I go to sleep and look forward to another day. Before sobriety, I never honestly looked forward to a new day. God has given me this day to use as I wish; Alcoholics Anonymous shows me how to live it without a drink.

*Rose L.—Somerville, Massachusetts
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*Available at the Central Office:
Emotional Sobriety
Emotional Sobriety II*



Freedom from Fear

For all its usual destructiveness, we have found that fear can be the starting point to prudence and to a decent respect for others. .

The more we have of respect and justice, the more we can begin to find the love which can suffer much, and yet be freely given.

- The Language of the Heart, p. 265

Group	Mo Amt	YTD Amt
21ST AVEUNE		146
24 HOUR		160
ANONYMOUS GROUPS	33	1,007
ANY LENGTHS	50	150
BACK DOOR AA		100
BACK ROOM	594	3,323
BACK TO BASICS		25
BAR NONE		100
BELLEVUE		274
WINNERS AND BEGINNERS	20	105
BIKERS IN RECOVERY	40	280
BRENTWOOD FULL MOON	200	600
BY THE BOOK (LEBANON)		25
BY THE BOOK (DICKSON)		54
CAME TO BELIEVE	25	50
CELEBRATE SERENITY		123
CLARKSVILLE		50
CLUB 62 UNITY		12
COLUMBIA	20	160
COMFORT ZONE		500
COMMUNICATIONS		157
COOKEVILLE	100	150
CROSSVILLE NON-SMK STEP		71
DAILY REPRIEVE		146
DAVIDSON RD	600	3,300
DAVIDSON RD WOMEN'S		241
DONELSON YET		100
DOWNTOWN LUNCH	109	280
DROP THE ROCK		100
DRUNKS IN THE PARK	102	562
EAST SIDE SATURDAY		300
EASY DOES IT		130
EVERY NIGHT AT 6	14	339
FAIRFIELD GLADE	20	94
FAYETTEVILLE		40
FIRST THINGS FIRST		503
FIVE & FIVE		794
FRANKLIN		1,485
FRANKLIN WOMEN'S		100
FREE TO BE		596
G.O.D. (GRP OF DRUNKS)		50
GOODLETTSVILLE A.A.	250	450

Group	Mo Amt	YTD Amt
GRATEFUL ALIVE		243
GRATITUDE		113
HAPPY HOUR		165
HARDING ROAD		500
HIGH NOON		475
HILLSBORO ROAD	250	923
IBI-UBU		225
KEEP IT SIMPLE BELLEVUE	53	664
KEY TO SOBRIETY		86
KICKOFF'S NOT TILL NOON	180	283
LAFAYETTE NEW HOPE		75
LAMBDA		150
LAST CALL		25
LATE LUNCH BUNCH		1,462
LAVERGNE SOLUTIONS		175
LAWRENCEBURG		40
LET IT HAPPEN		50
LIFE SAVERS		150
LINDEN		100
LIVING BY THE PRINT		300
LIVING IN THE NOW		35
LOVE AND LAUGHTER	25	25
MCMINNVILLE		100
MID-DAY BREAK		887
MT JULIET FELLOWSHIP		125
MURFREESBORO		50
MUSIC CITY HAPPY HOUR	100	100
MUSIC ROW		150
MUSTARD SEED	50	400
NATCHEZ TRACE MEETING		220
NEEDED MEETING CLOSED		144
NIPPERS CORNER MEETING		28
NORTH BORO		50
NORTHSIDE, CLARKSVILLE		225
OUT TO BREAKFAST		60
OUT TO LUNCH BUNCH		320
P.O.P.	200	400
PAY DAY		75
PORTLAND UNITY		50
PRIMARY PURPOSE		219
PULASKI	5	25
RAY OF HOPE		200

Group	Mo Amt	YTD Amt
REBOS (SOBER)		307
RIDGETOP BASICS		134
ROAD OF HAPPY DESTINY		30
ROBERT E. LEE WOMEN'S		100
SANGO SOLUTIONS	10	45
SAT NIGHT ALIVE MEETING	30	240
SEARCH FOR SERENITY		120
SEEKING SANITY		979
SERENITY	100	450
SHADE TREE		1,022
SISTERS OF FAITH		75
SMOKE FREE-Sobriety 1st	25	167
SMYRNA GRATITUDE	100	800
SUNDAY NIGHT BUNCH		300
TEMPLE HILLS	25	150
THE BASEMENT BUNCH		200
THE HUT		20
THE STRAGGLERS		50
THE UNITED	100	300
THE WAY OUT		950
TRUDGING THE ROAD		100
TURNING POINT		462
VALLEYVIEW ASHLAND CITY		160
WANGL		54
WAVERLY		60
WEEKENDERS		100
WEST MEADE	200	200
WEST NASHVILLE		210
WESTMINSTER		436
WHITE HOUSE		160
WINNERS AND BEGINNERS		218
WOMEN IN THE SOLUTION		150
WOMEN'S SPEAKER MEETING	115	115
WOODBURY		780
YOUNG GUNS		92
YOUNG TIMERS		81

	Mo Amt	YTD Amt
TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS	3,745.	37,138..

IS YOUR GROUP CONTRIBUTING?

MIDDLE TENNESSEE CENTRAL OFFICE
STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES ACTUAL AND BUDGETED
FOR THE MONTH AND EIGHT MONTHS ENDING AUGUST 31, 2012 AND 2011

	CURRENT MONTH			YEAR TO DATE		
	Actual	Budget	Budget-Var	Actual	Budget	Budget-Var
INCOME						
LITERATURE SALES	\$ 12,353.99	12,434.87	(80.88)	\$ 97,076.13	99,478.96	(2,402.83)
LITERATURE PURCHASES	(3,987.29)	(8,333.33)	4,346.04	(66,407.96)	(66,666.64)	258.68
FREIGHT IN	(60.35)	0.00	(60.35)	(289.46)	0.00	(289.46)
DIRECTORY	(193.25)	(437.50)	244.25	(1,482.85)	(3,500.00)	2,017.15
NET LITERATURE SALES	8,113.10	3,664.04	4,449.06	28,895.86	29,312.32	(416.46)
GROUP	4,276.21	4,666.67	(390.46)	37,748.74	39,292.11	(1,543.37)
INDIVIDUAL	171.89	291.67	(119.78)	8,140.61	2,333.36	5,807.25
MESSENGER	84.00	208.33	(124.33)	1,071.00	1,666.64	(595.64)
SPECIAL EVENTS	0.00	333.33	(333.33)	0.00	2,666.64	(2,666.64)
INTEREST	7.86	16.67	(8.81)	71.45	133.36	(61.91)
TOTAL INCOME	12,653.06	9,180.71	3,472.35	75,927.66	75,404.43	523.23
EXPENSES						
CASUAL LABOR	300.00	150.00	150.00	900.00	1,200.00	(300.00)
PAYROLL	5,289.00	4,121.67	1,167.33	36,618.80	34,853.16	1,765.64
LEGAL & PROFESSIONAL	145.00	155.42	(10.42)	1,150.00	1,243.36	(93.36)
SALES TAX EXPENSE	14.86	0.00	14.86	(9.83)	0.00	(9.83)
RENT	2,165.03	2,197.08	(32.05)	17,869.69	17,576.64	293.05
PRINTING	530.00	412.50	117.50	2,499.20	3,300.00	(800.80)
PAYROLL TAXES	404.59	313.57	91.02	2,724.52	2,652.36	72.16
MAINTENANCE	91.00	74.17	16.83	605.35	593.36	11.99
TELEPHONE & FAX	488.19	475.00	13.19	3,859.24	3,800.00	59.24
COMMUNICATIONS	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
ANSWERING SERVICE	163.50	190.50	(27.00)	1,351.00	1,524.00	(173.00)
POSTAGE	61.64	100.00	(38.36)	999.16	800.00	199.16
OFFICE SUPPLIES	193.10	166.67	26.43	1,567.84	1,333.36	234.48
BANK SERVICE CHARGE	0.00	0.00	0.00	68.12	0.00	68.12
COMPUTER PROJECT	133.00	83.33	49.67	417.36	666.64	(249.28)
EMPLOYEE BENEFIT	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
INTERGROUP EXPENSE	0.00	83.33	(83.33)	279.65	666.64	(386.99)
INSURANCE	0.00	175.00	(175.00)	1,216.00	1,400.00	(184.00)
SPECIAL EVENTS / FUNCTION	0.00	166.67	(166.67)	105.44	1,333.36	(1,227.92)
REPAIR & MAINTENANCE	0.00	0.00	0.00	44.03	0.00	44.03
TRAVEL	203.60	274.13	(70.53)	525.46	2,193.04	(1,667.58)
DEPRECIATION	0.00	41.67	(41.67)	271.65	333.36	(61.71)
OVER/UNDER	(7.99)	0.00	(7.99)	(52.95)	0.00	(52.95)
TOTAL EXPENSES	10,174.52	9,180.71	993.81	73,009.73	75,469.28	(2,459.55)
NET INCOME	\$ 2,478.54	0.00	2,478.54	\$ 2,917.93	(64.85)	2,982.78

BRENTWOOD FULL MOON	
Ben A.	10.14.82
Diana D.	10.03.07
Gene L.	10.11.02
Kent C.	10.09.05
Mark H.	10.07.11
Stephanie W.	10.16.08
Vanessa B.	10.06.09
DONELSON YET	
Val S.	10.31.88
EASY DOES IT	
Charles	10.15.08
Lori	10.31.01
Lou C.	10.16.10
Randy	10.13.84
EVERYNIGHT @ 6	
Ann B.	10.08.01
Clay K.	10.04.09
Janice C.	10.11.00
Joe B.	10.13.11
Kay P.	10.24.10
Kevin C.	10.23.09
Mark C.	10.03.11
Megan B.	10.02.01
Mike M.	10.05.08
Sheila F.	10.02.09
Tiffani D.	10.12.11
FELLOWSHIP	
Christy L.	10.21.07
Donna H.	10.15.95
Heather S.	10.13.11
Isa S.	10.01.98
FRANKLIN SAT MEN'S	
Andrew G.	10.04.06
Charles B.	10.05.05
David P.	10.05.10
Earl H.	10.07.89
Jim S.	10.20.08
John H.	10.13.06
Ricky C.	10.24.03
Tommy P.	10.31.08
GRATEFUL ALIVE	
Beth D.	10.05.11
Bruce T.	10.10.05
Hugh N.	10.12.86
IBI-UBU LEBANON	
Keisha B.	10.25.07
Robert B.	10.04.06

KEEP IT SIMPLE	
Bruce T.	10.10.05
Claude T.	10.31.11
Daniel B.	10.24.04
John H.	10.13.06
Kevin M.	10.20.11
Linda L.	10.25.85
Margaret Ann W.	10.07.08
LATE LUNCH BUNCH	
Carmen B.	10.04.92
Danny	10.13.10
Jonathan P.	10.19.10
Tom E.	10.16.88
LOVE AND LAUGHTER	
Alexander M.	10.15.11
Bruce B.	10.18.08
Clay K.	10.04.09
Daniel P.	10.13.11
Kathy H.	10.28.93
Lynn B.	10.26.01
Teresa C.	10.22.08
MID-DAY BREAK	
Ann B.	10.08.01
Clay	10.04.09
Connie M.	10.29.11
Craig A.	10.26.09
Donald S.	10.08.10
Kay P.	10.24.10
Pearl B.	10.20.86
Shannon C.	10.08.11
Sharon R.	10.16.09
Tiffani D.	10.12.11
Tim J.	10.07.08
MON NIGHT PRIME TIME	
Aaron B.	10.01.90
Alex L.	10.20.09
Bret K.	10.26.06
Charlie E.	10.26.08
Dan W.	10.31.08
Dusty P.	10.05.10
Josh W.	10.12.10
Mike A.	10.01.06
Tammy P.	10.21.96
MT JULIET FELLOWSHIP	
Justin O.	10.10.11
Missy D.	10.10.11
Morgan C.	10.31.06
Randy D.	10.13.84

NEW FAITH	
Kenneth G.	10.24.85
NIPPERS CORNER	
Connie J.	10.28.77
Janet D.	10.15.01
Rick H.	10.22.00
ONE DAY AT A TIME	
David M.	10.15.08
Don B.	10.11.10
Josh M.	10.23.04
Leslie B.	10.16.10
Lisa R.	10.10.00
Richard M.	10.06.10
P.O.P.	
James F.	10.28.10
Kevin F.	10.12.86
Nathan W.	10.30.11
Rip B.	10.25.87
Seth R.	10.01.11
Steve B.	10.05.97
Tom R.	10.27.10
PORTLAND UNITY	
Kevin L.	10.13.89
Randy B.	10.27.10
RIDGETOP BASICS	
George	10.10.11
Lou C.	10.09.83
Ralph P.	10.21.08
Rita S.	10.02.83
Tom J.	10.20.85
ROBERT E. LEE WOMEN'S	
Patty D.	10.28.09
SEARCH FOR SERENITY	
Gatha S.	10.08.87
Kevin F.	10.12.86
Tom B.	10.27.10
SEEKING SANITY	
Charles L.	10.15.08
Christa E.	10.20.09
David H.	10.09.07
Elyse T.	10.10.06
Lize	10.11.10
Patrick E.	10.11.06
Sam B.	10.02.90

SHADE TREE	
Anna G.	10.03.07
Brandon G.	10.06.07
Carol R.	10.30.07
Carolyn S.	10.01.06
Chris K.	10.16.07
Dan D.	10.02.91
Daniel F.	10.16.10
David W.	10.13.06
Dawn B.	10.27.08
Deborah L.	10.28.09
Deena W.	10.04.03
Donna P.	10.24.88
Dylan	10.06.09
James C.	10.??.07
Jane P.	10.14.11
Jo J.	10.13.07
Joan H.	10.05.89
Joann L.	10.13.09
Joe T.	10.09.05
Keri B.	10.05.05
Lori B.	10.27.08
Mary Ann S.	10.03.73
Melanie G.	10.21.07
Nancy L.	10.02.05
Pete R.	10.26.89
Phil C.	10.05.09
Ray H.	10.11.10
Rick B.	10.06.04
Roger G.	10.01.09
Shannon B.	10.05.08
Shannon O.	10.11.05
Susan C.	10.27.09
Steve H.	10.13.06
Tanya F.	10.04.04
Teresa J.	10.14.06
Terry Mc.	10.08.04
Whit G.	10.03.11
SMYRNA GRATITUDE	
Dustin	10.29.10
Winter P.	10.17.10
WEEKENDERS	
Dick C.	10.17.89
Ken L.	10.11.11
Mark S.	10.20.95
Tom B.	10.27.10
WOMEN IN THE SOLUTION	
Cilla G.	10.14.91
Cordy C.	10.31.79
WOMEN'S SPEAKER	
Bernie B.	10.21.86



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