

# The MESSENGER

## Middle Tennessee Central Office Intergroup

**APRIL  
2013**

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It is also available on-line at [www.aanashville.org](http://www.aanashville.org).

If you read *The Messenger* on-line, a contribution to The Middle Tennessee Central Office would help and be appreciated.

**PLEASE MAKE A NOTE  
STATING YOUR  
DONATION IS FOR  
THE MESSENGER.**

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### Step Four: Where's My Rocket? Practicing the program in a practical way

In early October 1993, I was dropped off in the middle of rainy nowhere and shuffled into the intake chamber of a rehab. I was scared. I was a long way from my cozy single room occupancy on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, and I hadn't been out of New York in many years.

That's where I first learned about the Twelve Steps of recovery; that Alcoholics Anonymous was my only hope; that only a psychic change and a spiritual awakening could cease the inevitable downward progression of my alcoholism. That's where I first heard Dr. Bob's prescription: Trust God, clean house, help another alcoholic. The process of taking inventory, however frenetically, had already begun.

After leaving the hospital, I spent the next year going to AA meetings every night without fail. I got involved. I counted days in a home group where I sat in the front row and raised my hand, shared, and asked for help. I made coffee, I arrived early and stayed late, I helped set up and break down, and I collected phone numbers and then actually used them. I read literature, took suggestions, and became a member of the Fellowship.

I couldn't wait to do this mythical Fourth Step I kept hearing about. It seemed to tower in the distance with great monolithic significance. I heard, "If you don't do a Fourth, you'll pick up a fifth," and "You're only as sick as your secrets." I did a lot of writing, trying to sort out everything that was happening to me. So, the business of putting pen to paper did not seem so daunting.

I found it quite helpful. Some fellow AAs seemed genuinely terrified at the thought of writing a Fourth Step, but I was looking

forward to the adventure. Of all the Twelve Steps it seemed to glow the brightest, or fiercest.

Ultimately, in the course of eleven years of sobriety, I've done three thorough inventories of myself. A Fourth Step is comprised of three main components: resentments, fears, and sex. Fear and sex were all-too-familiar subjects for me, but this resentment jive, what was that all about? The word was not part of my lexicon. I knew it had something to do with annoyance or anger but, perhaps because I was so disconnected from my emotions, the concept didn't exist for me.

One day I came across the French word "ressentiment" and something clicked. If you break the word apart, you have "sentiment" (feeling) and "re" (again). When the time came, I managed to list hundreds of people (individuals and groups), places, institutions, principles, phenomena, and ideas that I resented. Oh, resentment. Now I get it.

I heard in a meeting that an inventory simply took stock of what existed, not the how's and whys. If you were a grocery clerk checking the shelves, you would only note thirteen cans of tomatoes. You wouldn't say, "Well two cans are dented, and one has a label half torn off, and I don't care for this brand so much." You put down only: Thirteen cans of tomatoes. Check. It took me a while to get the idea. I'll tell you how I finally got there.

The sponsor I was working with suggested I write a sex history in order to illuminate my troubles. I dashed off over sixty pages shying away from no episode, no matter how shameful. Fascinating as it all was, I

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Step Four: Where's My Rocket?

(con't)

*(Continued from page 1)*

don't know how much it really helped to keep me sober. Ultimately, I worried it was merely a document of shameless exhibitionism masquerading as honesty. However, I did feel tremendously unburdened and much less embarrassed, and having crystallized my plight, I did have a map of the territory.

The next formal inventory I approached took place a few years later when I was again wrestling with my life sober. I did it according to the three-column system outlined on page 65 of the Big Book. Again, although it proved illuminating, in the end I felt no genuine relief or greater clarity. Once again, I was disappointed. Maybe I expected too much. Where was my "rocket to the fourth dimension?"

Some years later, still sober in AA, I fell into a depression. A steady rage took over my imagination, blotting out the usual interior parade of sexy apparitions and soothing ruminations. Life seemed dull and meaningless. I hung on as best as I could. I knew I didn't live in a vacuum and any drastic moves would deeply hurt and upset my few loved ones. Still, I felt alone and disappointed. I knew it was time to drink.

One day, I found my way to an early morning meeting across town where I knew no one. I raised my hand, managed to get called on, and I asked for help. Thank God I had a decent foundation and that I was rewired to go to AA for help, not the bottle. I got a new sponsor, something I had been resistant to for years.

When it came time to sit down and write a Fourth Step, my sponsor told me to ask God to bring me into the process and, when I was done writing for the day, to ask God to take me out of it. That way I wouldn't walk around in morbid reflection. I began by addressing fear, with a list of what my sponsor called the twelve universal fears, including fears of people, financial insecurity, rejection, humiliation, abandonment, and so forth.

I wrote a riff on each one. Then I wrote down all my other fears. Although I had talked about many of these issues, I had never written them all down in one place. I was afraid; what if someone should find this list of my weaknesses and use them against me? Call upon your Higher Power and have a sense of humor!

Having done so much work already in the realm of sex and love, I didn't spend too much time on the subject this time. I wanted to get this resentment list going! Unfortunately, I couldn't keep my comments within the confines of the columns. I kept going off the rails into digressions.

So, I called my sponsor and told him: "I can't do this, I can't keep it simple because it's all too complicated to take apart and spread out in any coherent fashion!" He gave me a pre-columned grid so that I could plug names on each line and then check off applicable attributes which were neatly arranged across the page. There simply wasn't any room to write anything more than a name in column one, "I am resentful at---," and in column two, a "cause" comprised of maybe four or five of my own words. Column three, "Threatens my/Affects my," was divided as: Social Instinct (subdivided into Material, Emotional); Sex Instinct (subdivided into Acceptable and Hidden Relations); and Ambitions (Social, Security, Sexual). After I had all my names and causes written down I went back to the beginning and checked off in the third column all that applied in each instance. Piece of cake.

The fourth column is not illustrated in the Big Book as the first three columns on page sixty-five are. It's dealt with a page later: "To conclude that others were wrong was as far as most of us ever got. The usual outcome was that people continued to wrong us and we stayed sore .... [T]his business of resentment is infinitely grave. We found that it is fatal." I bought all that and read on. I looked at my list again and experienced

what the book says: "We began to see that the world and its people really dominated us." In the book we are told to pray for these people we resent. So, I did that. I have to or else my whole day is ruined.

Then, I looked at my part. The fourth column on the grid I used was labeled "What is the exact nature of my wrongs, faults, mistakes, defects, shortcomings?" It is divided into four checkable boxes: Selfish, Dishonest, Self-Seeking and Frightened, Inconsiderate/Intolerant. I spent a lot of time considering each of these qualities in relation to each specific instance I referenced in column one. In this way, finally, a clear image was formed of my relationship to the world. I remember hearing people in meetings talk of seeing patterns. Only after completing this process myself did I understand what they were talking about. Familiar ideas left their abstract domain and became living elements that could be understood. From here I could move on to practice the following Steps in a practical way.

In outpatient, many would exclaim, "We're being brainwashed!" To which a wise counselor would reply, "Look where you are--you need your brain cleaned!" I call upon God daily now to help me and a casual conversation with the Higher Power has become a regular part of my interior monologue. "Oh, here's that fear of humiliation. God, can you take it away? Thanks .... Oh, there's that pride again, can I get a little help here, please, HP?" That kind of thing.

It's not easy pushing that big rock up the hill each day. I think, Hey, I got out of bed yesterday, I gotta do it again today? Well, yeah.

*Steve K. - New York, New York  
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From the day I attended my first AA meeting I knew that the key to my survival was that I had to change, both attitudes and actions.

My original home group's format was a three-week rotation of Step, Tradition and discussion. Keeping in mind that I needed to change, I started working on the Fourth Step. I wrote my inventory with absolutely no fear; this was going to be an investigation of my behavior that would be used to keep me from repeating my pattern of being just "between drinks."

Being Catholic, I understood the benefit of confessing my sins, so I started a laundry list of bad attitudes and bad actions. Among these was the definite example of a really bad attitude and somewhat messy action--I'd thrown a pie in my brother-in-law's face. Thinking that examples like this were all that was necessary to complete the Fourth Step, I felt that I was making remarkable progress and was all ready to take my Fifth Step.

But before I announced to my sponsor that I was ready to sit down and tell her my list of "sins," I had one of those "light bulb" moments. The Fifth Step wasn't confession as I

used to do it: confess, be absolved and then feel free to do it again. This was the time to analyze the "why" of the action. It's not that I threw the pie; it's, why did I throw the pie? Utilizing the honesty I was learning day by day, I saw clearly that I had thrown the pie because I resented my brother-in-law. He knew an alcoholic when he saw one, and I was so busy keeping it a secret that I feared he would share his opinion with the whole family (as if they didn't know). Having this fear and resentment only brought on tremendous self-pity: "Oh, poor me, why do I have to put up with this miserable individual?" Resentment, fear and self-pity: these were "the exact nature" of my wrongs. Finally understanding the purpose of this Step allowed me to review everything on the list and examine the motive behind each action or attitude.

I had heard that if I didn't take the Fourth and Fifth Steps I could get drunk again. Now I understood; if I didn't take those Steps, I'd never get that personality change necessary for recovery.

Carol K. - Sarasota, Fla.  
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### With Courage \* Step Four

I remember feeling afraid as a kid and thinking that I was a coward--that the mere presence of fear in my life made me a coward. I did not know that one of the definitions of courage was the ability to do the right thing in spite of fear. One particular word in the Fourth Step that I had difficulty with, therefore, was the word "fearless." "Fearless" does not necessarily imply the absence of fear. Fearless means "with courage."

What stops many of us from doing the Fourth Step is fear and pride, and that is certainly what stopped me. In addition, I wanted to be sure I did it perfectly. I didn't know that perfectionism is a character defect; it is in itself an imperfection.

I believe that if I had not tackled the inventory when I did, the guilt could very likely have killed me; and it

wouldn't have been God who was punishing me either. I would have done the job myself. We are not punished *for* our sins, we are punished *by* our sins.

In looking over the inventory with the aid of my sponsor I saw that I had uncovered a lot of fear and resentment. I believe that resentment destroys cells within my body. I learned in a biology class that body cells are constantly dying off and being replenished. What the class did not teach was that under negative conditions such as fear, anger, jealousy, hatred, and resentment the cells die at a much more rapid rate than when we are feeling love.

My Fourth Step also showed me that I had an acid tongue--committing murder by character assassination. In my recovery I am sometimes able to pause before speaking long enough to

ask three questions: "Is it true?" "Is it kind?" "Is it necessary?" I could reduce all three to one question: "Before I say it--would I want it said to me?"

Prior to the Steps I had isolated myself from God and man. People are lonely because they build walls instead of bridges.

Many, many times while jogging I have repeated over and over, "I am beautiful, capable, and lovable." I needed this repetition in order to improve my self-image.

We cannot adequately live in the present, or effectively face the future, if our thoughts are buried in the past.

Ed H. - Brentwood, New York  
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## The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

### Step Four - Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

As with many other members of AA whom I have heard since their experience with the Fourth Step, I wanted to do it very early in my sobriety. With my copy of the "Twelve and Twelve," I attempted to write two lists, my good points on one, my bad points on the other. After three or four days and nights of work and many torn pages, I had a very large bad list and one extremely small good list.

On asking for help from one of the older and more reliable members of my home group, I was very much relieved to hear him say that I probably wasn't ready for Step Four yet, especially since I had been around AA for only about one month. I was told to just keep coming to meetings and to keep asking questions. When I was ready for the Fourth Step, my Higher Power would let me know.

I stayed around AA for another year and a half. I made coffee, helped set up and clean up after meetings. I went to different groups in other areas. After I had three months in, I shared my limited experience, strength, and hope. I read some more AA literature. I went on Twelfth Step calls with other AA members.

Needless to say, all of this activity in AA helped me work on the changes within me which needed to be made. My life became much more manageable and content, to a degree. But there was still that empty feeling of something missing, something I could not quite put my finger on.

One night, while setting up for my group's early beginners meeting, I was talking with one of our old-timers. I mentioned how I had been feeling of late. Not that I wanted to drink or drug. My life seemed pretty okay, no major problems that my Higher Power and I weren't working on. I knew I belonged in AA and was making four to six meetings a week. But there was this empty feeling.

My friend did not blink an eye before I finished my tale, and asked if I had done my Fourth and Fifth Steps yet. My answer was no and that I'd been told that my Higher Power would let me know when I was ready.

Then the person who led the beginners meeting shared how important his Fourth and Fifth Steps had been to him. And the chairperson of the regular meeting

emphasized her Fourth and Fifth Steps as major in her recovery. I began to realize my Higher Power was speaking to me, through other people.

It took two to three weeks of soul-searching to complete my lists but, thanks to my time in AA and the insight into myself from identifying with many AAs, my good list was a little longer than my first try--although it was still six pages shorter than my bad list. At the head of my good list was the fact that I was doing the lists at all.

To share my Fifth Step, I chose a priest because of my early religious upbringing. I made an appointment and until it came I thought of at least a million reasons to cancel it. I did not let these fears overcome me. Well, not until I rang the doorbell of the rectory where my appointment was. All of a sudden I felt I was making a big mistake.

My cunning, baffling, and powerful disease told me that when the housekeeper answered my ring, I should tell her I was looking for a Father Anybody. She would say he was not there and I'd be gone, never to be so stupid to get into a mess like this again. But the door was answered by the priest with whom I'd made my appointment. I was caught.

In the over ten years since that night I've been to many AA meetings. I've read most AA literature and a lot of other material on my disease. I went to college. I've talked with and heard many other AAs who have done their Fourth and Fifth Steps. But I have never found any words to communicate the feelings I had after leaving that rectory. Joy, relief, happiness, excitement, freedom--none come close to describing it. (I did tear up my lists and put the pieces in many different garbage cans on my way home.)

If anyone who's reading this hasn't done a Fourth and Fifth Step and you've been around a while, please think strongly about doing these freedom Steps. I have talked with people who have had slips after years in AA who have said they didn't do a Fourth or Fifth Step the first time around. Or to put it another way that I've heard: If you don't do a good Fourth Step, you may find yourself with a fifth. It does work.

*Pat T. - Williston, Florida*  
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**Area 64**  
**4th Quarter Voting Assembly**  
**October 11th—13th**  
 Burns, TN 615.797.3101—Hotel—\$79 a night + tax  
 Cutoff 8/28 (ask for group rate)  
 Call Phyllis 615.306.3805 or Gary 615.586.0470 for Info

**2013 AREA 64**

TREATMENT COMMITTEE WORKSHOP

HOSTED BY DISTRICT 30

**NASHVILLE, TN**

**Saturday, May 18th, 2013**

**9am-4pm**

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church  
 525 Sneed Rd.  
 Nashville, TN 37221

**9:00** Workshop Opens

**9:15** Area 64 Treatment Committee Chairperson (William M.)

**9:45** Area 64 Delegate (Jay D.)

**10:30** Middle TN Intergroup Treatment Chairperson (Jonathan T.)

**11:00** Bridging the Gap (Allen W.)

**11:45** Lunch

**12:45** Clinical Director (Barbara Larue Adams)

**1:30** Q & A with Area 64 Treatment Committee Officers

**3:00** Scott L.

**Alcoholics Anonymous**

**CONTACT INFO**

JON P. 615-818-9633  
 AMY W. 615-260-3669

**Area 64**

**Public Information Workshop**

**Saturday June 8th**

**1pm—4pm**

Club 62 329 Peachtree St. Nashville, TN 37210

Snacks & Drinks Provided

Al C, Jimmy G & Don R (Speakers)

Info: Jazmine 615.429.2546

**Madison/Inglewood**

**P.O.P. Group**

**Annual Old Timers Dinner**

**May 10th**

Brush Hill Cumberland Presbyterian Church -  
 3705 Brush Hill Rd.  
 Nashville, Tn 37216.

**Dinner 6:30pm**

Meat and drinks will be provided

Please bring a side dish to share

<i><b>CENTRAL OFFICE OFFICERS</b></i>	<i><b>NAME</b></i>	<i><b>PHONE #</b></i>
Chairperson	Cynthia S	407.468.5641
Vice Chairperson	Michael A	615.497.6617
Secretary	Sara B	615.708.0384
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 Manager	Charles C	615.832.1136
Central Office Bookkeeper	David	615.832.1136

<b>FIRST TUESDAY OF EVERY MONTH:</b>	<b>SECOND TUESDAY OF EVERY MONTH:</b>
<b>District 32 &amp; 35 are now combined Meeting</b>	<b>Intergroup Meeting (Central Office)</b>
<b>When:</b>	<b>When:</b>
<b>6:30pm – 7:30pm</b>	<b>5:45pm – 6:45pm</b>
<b>Where:</b>	<b>Where:</b>
<b>Central Office Conference Room 176 Thompson Lane</b>	<b>Central Office Conference Room 176 Thompson Lane</b>

Greetings from Washington D.C.!! My regular article shall resume next month. This is excerpt from Manager's report from March 12, 2013 Intergroup meeting:

Most important report is in area of contributions. We have had mostly low contribution months last 5 of 7 months. As a result, we have depleted our regular checking account from \$7-10,000 to \$1-4,000 since January, 2012. An average quarter in 2012 was \$13,600, last 3 months has been \$11,771. The same period a year ago was \$18,075 plus \$5,000 in individual contributions. Financials reflect a decrease of \$4,648 in cash from February, 2012 to February, 2013. We have not used reserve funds in a long time, but if contributions do not increase, we obviously will be forced to do so. I would like to appeal to groups to either pass basket once weekly for a Central Office contribution or look at your group funds and make a contribution. Thanks for making this important appeal wherever you attend meetings.

Inspired by Alanon's open house around Lois Wilson's birthday, volunteer Billy B. would like to have an open house for our Central Office around Bill's, Bob's or AA birthday. I would like to have around Annual Dinner on the same Friday for convenience of visitors from out of town. November 26th is Bill's birthday, December 11<sup>th</sup> his sobriety date, and June 10<sup>th</sup> marks the founding of AA. We would have refreshments, sale of overstocks, raffle, book packages, etc. Billy B. would chair the event. Let me know if you would like to help or have feedback.

Changes have been made to website offering last 12 issues of Messenger. Go to [aanashville.org](http://aanashville.org); click on Messenger and download this issue plus all of last 12 months.

We have volunteer slots available on Monday afternoon, Wednesday afternoon and Saturdays. Call me for details and training.

I shall be out of office the first two weeks of April, but David shall be able to contact me.

Thanks to all of you for your service and support.

NEW		MOVED	
<b>37015</b>	Valley View 109 Cumberland Street Ashland City Noon all days - M-OD, W-OD/LIT, F-OD	<b>37122</b>	Key to Sobriety Grove United Meth 6485 Central Pike Mt Juliet
<b>37066</b>	G-AA 107 College St Gallatin Mon & Fri 8pm Sun 7pm OD	<b>37160</b>	Women in the Solution - Gateway Church 1304 Madison St Shelbyville
<b>37067</b>	Cool Springs Newcomers Bradford Hlth Svcs 1897 Gen George Patton Dr Franklin Mon & Wed 7pm CD/Beg	<b>37211</b>	Saturday Eyeopener Club 62 323 Peachtree Nashville 9am OD
<b>37076</b>	Women's BB Study Hermitage Pres Church 4401 Lebanon Rd Hermitage Sat 3pm	<b>CHANGES</b>	
<b>37130</b>	Serenity 435 S. Molloy Lane, Murfreesboro 4p Sun	<b>37174</b>	S.O.S. Sunday 6:30pm now at Peace Lutheran 762 Beechcroft Rd Springhill
<b>37148</b>	Portland Unity Fri 6:30pm	<b>37214</b>	Bikers in Recovery now meets at 7:30pm Thurs
<b>37115</b>	Three Legacies 4th Tues is Speaker	<b>37215</b>	LAMBDA Unitarian Church Thurs is now at 8pm
<b>37190</b>	Woodbury Senior Citizens Center 609 Lehman St Woodbury TN Sun 7:30pm OD	<b>CANCELLED</b>	
<b>37211</b>	Safe Place Oasis Church 7533 Lords Chapel Dr Tue & Thurs 6:30pm OD	<b>37129</b>	Serenity Murfreesboro 2:30 Sat OD/GLBS
<b>37211</b>	Steel Magnolia Women's Last Stop Club 2122 Utopia Sun 10am CD/WM	<b>37214</b>	Freedom Hour M-T-T-F 11:30 Meetings
<b>37214</b>	Freedom House - M 7pm OD Sun 10am OD	<b>37214</b>	Donelson Fairway Old Timers
		<b>37214</b>	Old Timers Meeting



Don't take other people's inventory!" chides an AA sponsor to an AA sponsee, sometimes gently, sometimes fiercely. As champions at figuring out the faults of others, we alcoholics in recovery often have to be reminded to look at our side of the equation. "The inventory was ours, not the other man's," says the Big Book on page 67. On the other hand, it is a time-honored axiom that we often see the faults in others that we ourselves have, so perhaps when we take someone else's inventory, we are really taking our own. I decided to test out this proposition, with remarkably good results.

As an experiment, I decided to deliberately take the inventory of a fellow member of AA, then put my name on it. I wrote down exactly what bothered me about that person: he wore his religion on his sleeve, he thought he had practically invented AA, he talked endlessly about politics, even in meetings. My anger toward this person was exacerbated by the fact that his politics and religion were virtually the opposite of mine. I typed up a neat list of his defects of character on my computer. Then, I erased his name from the top of the list and typed in my own. I printed the list and carried it in my schedule book for two weeks, reading it daily. Each day, I saw my name above a list of his defects. The first few days, I told myself these were really his defects, not mine. But after four or five days of reading the list, some insights into my own behavior appeared. I saw that I also talked too much about religion and politics around the meetings and sometimes even in the course of my sharing at meetings. I had offended lots of people doing that, but I had always blamed them, saying to myself that they just didn't like me. I had not looked at how my own behavior might be the cause of their rebuffs and scorn. I saw that I also tended to pontificate at meetings, as if I were a very knowing old-timer who really knew how to work the program. By the end of the two-week period, I knew whose defects I had listed: my own.

More important than even the insight into my own character that this exercise provided, was the change in my relationship with that fellow AA member. Before starting the experiment, I could not be in the same room with him without feeling a great deal of rage. I often avoided his presence for that reason. However, I was involved in a new meeting that he had started, so it was actually necessary for me to interact with him on certain days of the week. During the course of the experiment, I suddenly lost my anger. I felt absolutely no emotion whatsoever toward this individual. I accepted him precisely as he was, neither approving nor disapproving. I was too busy concentrating on the list of defects, which I was beginning to own as mine. By the end of the two weeks, he had changed toward me as well, congratulating me on a fine sharing here, asking for my advice on something there, and generally being an all-around good fellow. It was truly miraculous.

Since that experiment was successful, I have tried the technique twice more when I found myself extremely angry with someone. It has worked just as well as the first time. In each case, I discovered some unpleasant truths about myself, was able to accept the other person without judgment, and made changes in my own behavior and attitudes that have greatly improved my growth in the life of the spirit.

*John B. - San Jose, California*

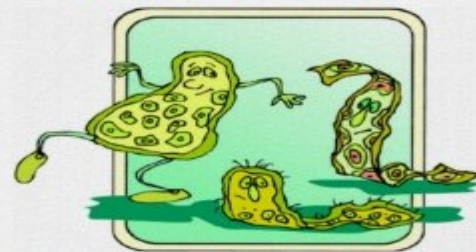
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**ROCK BOTTOM**

*You'll Know It When You Get There.*

**WHY DID THE GERM  
CROSS THE  
MICROSCOPE?**



**TO GET TO THE OTHER  
SLIDE**

**A Question of Safety - Tradition Four**

*Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole.*

"I don't feel safe," someone at a meeting will share, or "Let's keep AA a safe place." And I will think, "Safe from whom? Safe from what? Safe from the outside world?" Perhaps, but it is more likely that the world needs to be kept safe from me should I pick up a drink, given my drinking history. *Safe*. Sometimes the word seems to float lonely, unattached, through the room, seeking a context. Sometimes, hearing the word, I feel, well, unsafe.

I noticed that the business meeting that normally followed the regularly scheduled meeting on the first Thursday of the month did not take place. The next month came and again no business meeting. The same thing the following month. I asked the chairperson about it. "We have business meetings when we feel like having business meetings," he said. I went to another member of the group. "We're not into business meetings," he said.

The group began to seem different. A group officer wandered around with the collections from the previous three weeks seeking to know who the treasurer was. The chairperson's personality seemed to intrude more on the meeting. Vacancies in some service positions went unfilled. The offerings on the literature table looked sparse. It became difficult to share simple things about sobriety at the meeting: the premium seemed to be on wit over sincerity.

Then, at the group's monthly anniversary meeting, the celebrants shared their gratitude for their year or years of recovery. At the secretary's break, the elderly manager of the center where we met asked for a few minutes of the group's time. She spoke with pain and anger. She said that we weren't cleaning up after ourselves. She said that time after time the meeting place was being left in disarray: chairs weren't put away, garbage was not disposed of, the floors weren't swept and mopped. She said that some group

members, when she sought to discuss the problem, gave her the runaround, that they tried to con her with flip answers. "Keep it up and I'm going to put you out of here," she announced to the stunned group.

Each group has the right to be wrong (and the right to be right). Tradition Four tells us so. And yet, among the sweetest words I hear at any AA meeting these days are, "There's a business meeting following our regular meeting tonight. All group officers are asked to attend, and members of the group are encouraged to do so as well." A regularly scheduled business meeting increases the probability of group unity, of an informed group conscience rather than the whims of a few. It increases the probability that group officers will, along with the right to serve, have a sense of responsibility regarding their service commitment. A business meeting is a way of saying that we as members have a right to an accounting of our Seventh Tradition contributions with a treasurer's report. It is a way of allowing the general service representative, through his or her report, to introduce into the consciousness of the group the idea that the group is not an end in itself but part of the service structure beyond it. It is a way of ensuring that we take our inventory so our hosts won't have to. It is a way of saying we care.

Safe from each other and safe for each other, and safe for the person coming in behind us, the alcoholic who still suffers--that is what I think *safe* means. Safe through our Twelve Traditions from the irresponsibility that was such a feature of my active alcoholism.

David S. - New York, New York  
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**DRUNK  
WORDS ARE  
SOBER THOUGHTS**



To people familiar with endless drives for charitable funds, AA presented a strange and refreshing spectacle. . . They pointed out that the irresponsible had become responsible, and that by making financial independence part of its tradition, AA had revived an ideal that its era had almost forgotten.

- Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, p. 165

Group	Mo Amt	YTD Amt
21ST AVEUNE		
24 HOUR		
ANONYMOUS GROUPS	4	99
ANY LENGTHS		
BACK DOOR AA		
BACK ROOM		
BACK TO BASICS		
BAR NONE		
BELLEVUE		20
WINNERS AND BEGINNERS		
BIKERS IN RECOVERY	57	95
BRENTWOOD FULL MOON		
BY THE BOOK (LEBANON)		
BY THE BOOK (DICKSON)	105	105
CAME TO BELIEVE	15	15
CELEBRATE SERENITY		
CHICKEN PLUCKER'S		
CLARKSVILLE		
CLUB 62 UNITY		
COLUMBIA	20	40
COMFORT ZONE		200
COMMUNICATIONS		300
COOKEVILLE		
COOL SPRINGS NEWCOMERS		
CROSSVILLE NON-SMK STEP		
DAILY REPRIEVE		
DAVIDSON RD	600	1,200
DAVIDSON RD WOMEN'S		268
DEKALB CTY FRIENDSHIP		
DICKSON AA		
DISTRICT 9		30
DONELSON YET		
DOWNTOWN LUNCH		
DOWNTOWN y		
DROP THE ROCK		
DRUNKS IN THE PARK		
EAST SIDE SATURDAY		
EASY DOES IT		20
EVERY NIGHT AT 6		
FAIRFIELD GLADE	33	33
FAYETTEVILLE		20
FIRST THINGS FIRST		125
FIVE & FIVE		
FRANKLIN 12 x 12		100
FRANKLIN		433
FREE TO BE	132	132
G.O.D. (GRP OF DRUNKS)		

Group	Mo Amt	YTD Amt
GLADEVILLE GRATITUDE		
GOODLETTSVILLE A.A.		
GRATEFUL ALIVE		125
GRATITUDE		
HAPPY HOUR		10
HARDING ROAD		
HENDERSONVILLE BIG BOOK		
HERMITAGE		
HIGH NOON		
HILLSBORO ROAD	195	195
HUMBLE HOUSE		25
IBI-UBU	100	100
JOELTON MEETING		
KEEP IT SIMPLE BELLEVUE	121	231
KEY TO SOBRIETY		
KICKOFF'S NOT TILL NOON		
LAFAYETTE NEW HOPE		
LAMBDA		
LAST CALL		
LATE LUNCH BUNCH		612
LAVERGNE SOLUTIONS		
LAWRENCEBURG		40
LET IT HAPPEN		
LIFE SAVERS		
LINDEN		
LIVING BY THE PRINT		
LIVING IN THE NOW		
LOVE AND LAUGHTER		
MADE A DECISION		
MCMINNVILLE	100	100
MID-DAY BREAK		200
MT JULIET FELLOWSHIP		
MURFREESBORO		
MUSIC CITY HAPPY HOUR		50
MUSIC ROW		
MUSTARD SEED	50	50
NATCHEZ TRACE MEETING		
NEEDED MEETING CLOSED		204
NIPPERS CORNER MEETING	47	47
NORTH BORO		
NORTHSIDE, CLARKSVILLE		
ONE DAY AT A TIME		350
OUT TO LUNCH BUNCH		
P.O.P.		
PAY DAY		
PEACHTREE		20
PORTLAND UNITY		

Group	Mo Amt	YTD Amt
PRIMARY PURPOSE		64
PULASKI		
RAY OF HOPE		
REBOS (SOBER)		
RIDGETOP BASICS		
ROAD OF HAPPY DESTINY	15	30
ROBERT E. LEE WOMEN'S	100	100
SAT NIGHT ALIVE MEETING		60
SAT NIGHT LIVE	30	30
SEARCH FOR SERENITY		
SEEKING SANITY		398
SERENITY	50	100
SHADE TREE		
SISTERS OF FAITH		
SMITH COUNTY FRIENDSHIP		
SMOKE FREE-Sobriety 1st		
SMYRNA GRATITUDE	100	200
SUNDAY NIGHT BUNCH	100	100
TEMPLE HILLS		100
THE FOURTH DIMENSION		30
THE HUT	20	20
THE STRAGGLERS		71
THE UNITED		100
THE WAY OUT		
TRUDGING THE ROAD		
TURNING POINT		
VALLEYVIEW ASHLAND CITY		
WANGL		
WAVERLY		
WEEKENDERS		
WEST MEADE		
WEST NASHVILLE	130	130
WESTMINSTER		
WHITE HOUSE		
WINNERS AND BEGINNERS		
WOMEN IN THE SOLUTION		50
WOMEN'S AA	368	368
WOMEN'S FREEDOM MTG		375
WOMEN'S SPEAKER MTG		
WOODBURY		
YOUNG GUNS		
YOUNG TIMERS	31	31

	Mo Amt	YTD Amt
TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS	2,523	7,952

MIDDLE TENNESSE CENTRAL OFFICE INCOME STATEMENT
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	FEBRUARY ACTUALS	CURRENT MONTH BUDGET	ACTUALS TO BUDGET- VARIANCE	FEBRUARY Y-T-D ACTUALS	CURRENT Y-T-D BUDGET	ACTUALS TO BUDGET- VARIANCE
<b>INCOME</b>						
LITERATURE SALES	8,744	12,163	(3,419)	22,654	24,325	(1,671)
<b>COST OF GOODS SOLD</b>						
LITERATURE	(5,979)	(8,333)	2,355	(15,801)	(16,667)	866
FREIGHT	(2)	-	(2)	(77)	-	(77)
DIRECTORY	(14)	-	(14)	(214)	-	(214)
<b>TOTAL COST OF GOODS SOLD</b>	<b>(5,994)</b>	<b>(8,333)</b>	<b>2,339</b>	<b>(16,092)</b>	<b>(16,667)</b>	<b>575</b>
<b>GROSS PROFIT - LITERATURE</b>	<b>2,749</b>	<b>3,829</b>	<b>(1,080)</b>	<b>6,562</b>	<b>7,659</b>	<b>(1,096)</b>
<b>OTHER INCOME</b>						
GROUP	2,380	4,833	(2,453)	8,135	9,667	(1,532)
INDIVIDUAL	115	685	(570)	429	1,369	(940)
MESSENGER	56	100	(44)	116	200	(84)
SPECIAL EVENTS	-	-	-	-	-	-
INTEREST	4	17	(12)	9	33	(24)
<b>TOTAL OTHER IN- COME</b>	<b>2,556</b>	<b>5,635</b>	<b>(3,079)</b>	<b>8,689</b>	<b>11,270</b>	<b>(2,578)</b>
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>5,305</b>	<b>9,464</b>	<b>(4,159)</b>	<b>15,251</b>	<b>18,929</b>	<b>(3,675)</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>						
CASUAL LABOR	-	4,443	(4,443)	450	8,886	(8,436)
PAYROLL	4,094	-	4,094	8,188	-	8,188
LEGAL & PROFESSIONAL	145	146	(1)	290	292	(2)
SALES TAX EXPENSE	(1)	-	(1)	3	-	3
RENT	2,255	2,500	(245)	4,509	5,000	(491)
PRINTING	295	400	(105)	560	800	(240)
PAYROLL TAXES	341	325	16	654	650	4
MAINTENANCE	91	67	24	182	133	49
TELEPHONE & FAX	489	500	(11)	976	1,000	(24)
ANSWERING SERVICE	408	200	208	408	400	8
POSTAGE	117	150	(33)	283	300	(17)
OFFICE SUPPLIES	94	208	(114)	242	417	(175)
BANK SERVICE CHARGES	-	-	-	-	-	-
COMPUTER PROJECT	-	83	(83)	179	167	13
INTERGROUP EXPENSE	151	100	51	151	200	(50)
INSURANCE	-	171	(171)	1,216	342	874
SPECIAL EVENTS / FUNC- TIONS	-	-	-	-	-	-
REPAIR & MAINTENANCE	-	-	-	-	-	-
TRAVEL	103	150	(47)	266	300	(35)
DEPRECIATION	18	21	(3)	36	42	(4)
OVER/UNDER	(1)	-	(1)	(6)	-	(6)
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>8,599</b>	<b>9,464</b>	<b>(865)</b>	<b>18,586</b>	<b>18,928</b>	<b>(341)</b>
<b>NET INCOME</b>	<b>(3,294)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(3,294)</b>	<b>(3,335)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(3,335)</b>

BACKROOM	
Alvin S	04.18.11
<b>Bill S</b>	<b>04.04.90</b>
Blake W	04.01.12
Darren H	04.30.10
Eva B	04.14.11
Johnny R	04.06.94
Kidd R	04.06.09
Liz W	04.23.09
Martin B	04.15.00
Matt K	04.01.09
Monty A	04.09.93
Patrick O'R	04.05.98
Rich F	04.27.08
BRENTWOOD FULL MOON	
Angela H	04.02.07
<b>Nat A</b>	<b>04.02.90</b>
Nicole B	04.15.10
Tom S	04.01.04
DONELSON YET	
<b>John W</b>	<b>04.11.91</b>
<b>Mark S</b>	<b>04.15.89</b>
EASY DOES IT	
Brandon	04.15.07
<b>George</b>	<b>04.04.89</b>
<b>Haly</b>	<b>04.23.86</b>
Nick	04.04.09
FELLOWSHIP	
Lisa M	04.20.09
Sonny A	04.28.00
Stephen M	04.15.11
Steve J	04.12.12
FIRST THINGS FIRST	
Laura L	04.13.12
Marcia G	04.08.95
Travis M	04.05.12
GRATEFUL ALIVE	
Ben B	04.01.11
Ben B	04.24.09
Bridgette H	04.25.06
<b>Carolyn S</b>	<b>04.17.90</b>
<b>Chris B</b>	<b>04.08.92</b>
David H	04.01.12
Rasa D	04.26.00
Regina B	04.04.12
IBI-UBU	
Ben W	04.18.12
Lynnsey D	04.03.10
Matt N	04.04.12
Nathan B	04.28.12

KEEP IT SIMPLE	
Blair K	04.13.05
Dave F	04.05.08
<b>Janet G</b>	<b>04.16.89</b>
Jessica L	04.10.12
Joe H	04.06.12
Liz W	04.23.09
Richard D	04.21.11
LATE LUNCH BUNCH	
Alex E	04.23.06
Amy W	04.01.12
Banks C	04.06.12
Chris G	04.06.12
Jenny B	04.17.12
Jon T	04.19.10
Julie C	04.19.10
Leigh Ann D	04.15.05
Ryan C	04.01.12
Wolfe	04.10.12
LOVE AND LAUGHTER	
Derrick S	04.23.09
<b>Jeff W</b>	<b>04.25.89</b>
Mark D	04.01.11
Rachael B	04.01.11
Rob F	04.15.98
MID-DAY BREAK	
Kellie N	04.01.12
Kristy D	04.15.10
Chris S	04.23.10
Jim T	04.01.09
Merriweather H	04.14.12
Lisa C	04.15.12
Melinda D	04.04.08
Eric M	04.16.10
<b>Joe C</b>	<b>04.10.90</b>
Walter J	04.15.08
Sherry G	04.27.04
Lisa M	04.20.09
Lori S	04.10.11
Ronda W	04.30.11
NEW FAITH	
Cindy R	04.23.08
George N	04.25.09
Leon S	04.13.08
NIPPERS CORNER	
Amy A	04.01.12
Jacque M	04.26.95
Mike E	04.23.06
POP	
Andy E	04.28.12
<b>Daniel R</b>	<b>04.15.85</b>
Ed B	04.08.03

NIPPERS CORNER (con't)	
Josh P	04.02.12
<b>Larry S</b>	<b>04.02.87</b>
Lucy A	04.18.12
<b>Marlene R</b>	<b>04.01.89</b>
Tiwana H	04.05.10
Tom S	04.19.98
P.O.P.	
<b>Daniel R</b>	<b>04.15.85</b>
Ed B	04.08.03
Josh P	04.02.12
<b>Larry S</b>	<b>04.02.87</b>
Lucy A	04.18.12
<b>Marlene R</b>	<b>04.01.89</b>
Tiwana H	04.05.10
Tom S	04.19.98
PORTLAND UNITY	
Bob G	04.12.12
Erin M	04.06.05
REBOS	
Amanda A	04.30.12
Bill P	04.03.02
Chris H	04.20.06
Debbie G	04.02.12
James A	04.06.12
Johnny F	04.01.96
RIDGETOP BASIC	
Eric C	04.05.11
Jack L	04.01.11
Vino E	04.28.99
SEEKING SANITY	
Chris W	04.25.10
Malanie J	04.25.07
John H	04.31.11
Kathy B	04.28.94
<b>Van M</b>	<b>04.01.89</b>
Jeff L	04.15.08
SHADE TREE	
Ann T	04.26.09
Balinda G	04.14.07
Bill F	04.17.06
Bo R	04.06.06
Bruce P	04.13.03
Burnette C	04.27.12
Chris C	04.10.07
Chris C	04.21.06
Chris W	04.26.10
David S	04.04.06
<b>Dick H</b>	<b>04.15.83</b>
Greg P	04.14.07
Jack H	04.11.06

SHADE TREE (con't)	
Jamie W	04.15.06
<b>Julie R</b>	<b>04.20.86</b>
Kari W	04.02.05
Kathey P	04.28.94
Kathy B	04.28.94
Kimberly C	04.10.07
Kimberly P	04.09.07
Larry H	04.08.10
Lindsay L	04.01.11
Matthew T	04.10.09
Melissa A	04.03.08
Melissa U	04.16.07
Michael L	04.07.09
Michael W	04.18.06
Mike L	04.07.09
Monty P	04.10.07
Nancy S	04.15.11
Paul G	04.12.06
Regina R	04.18.07
Renita	04.21.06
Rob S	04.25.06
Robert F	04.28.10
Scott M	04.19.12
Steve T	04.26.05
Steven H	04.02.07
SMYRNA GRATITUDE	
Anita M	04.12.95
Dana S	04.08.08
Debbie M	04.21.04
<b>Diane S</b>	<b>04.24.87</b>
<b>Franklin "Doug" S</b>	<b>04.20.93</b>
Joanna C	04.16.12
Monte M	04.21.96
Paul P	04.26.08
<b>Ray S</b>	<b>04.01.90</b>
Regina D	04.07.07
Rob F	04.16.??
Vicki S	04.26.12
ROBERT E LEE WOMEN'S	
Bonnie H	04.23.12
Kayla G	04.11.12
WEEKENDER'S	
Michelle T	04.02.07
WOMEN'S SPEAKER	
Melanie G	04.16.10

APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

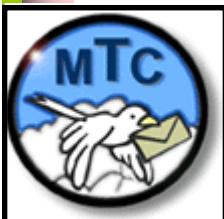
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