November 2026 Volume 57, Issue 11

Lifeline

Experience, Strength, and Hope in Orange County

GRATITUDE: THE ARISTOCRAT OF EMOTIONS

Photo credit: Heather S.

There is a sign hanging in The First Step House of Orange County, a men's detox and recovery outreach, that says it plainly: "Grateful people are happy people — those that aren't, aren't." No hedging, no footnotes. Most of us who have spent any time in the rooms know it's true, even on the days we'd rather not admit it.

The practice of gratitude is particularly germane at Thanksgiving. In AA, as in many churches, we are asked to list the things we are grateful for. For most of us, that makes it an annual event. But if it works so well on Thanksgiving, why stop there? How about monthly? Or even weekly? Or how about daily?

About ten years ago, I decided to do it every day. As part of my morning meditation, after my readings, I write down everything from the previous day that I'm grateful for.

Today I wrote down thirteen things. None of them were the big items that usually make the Thanksgiving list. They were small, ordinary, and every one of them was a gift from God.

Here is what I've discovered after all these years. Because I know I'll be writing my list the next morning, my subconscious mind starts tagging moments as they happen — moments I might not even consciously acknowledge at the time.

Number three was that Susan cooked my breakfast perfectly, exactly the way I love it, without my asking. Great, you might say — but that's just normal life. That's my point. Normal things happen all day long, and we almost never celebrate them.

Here is what I've discovered after all these years. Because I know I'll be writing my list the next morning, my subconscious mind starts tagging moments as they happen — moments I might not even consciously acknowledge at the time. The next morning, as I re-experience them on paper, I see how special I've got it. A kind word, a phone call returned, a breakfast made just right.

So, each day the list gets embedded a little deeper. Over time it overwhelms the little stuff that would otherwise weigh me down. The resentments, the worries, the irritations don't disappear, but they lose their grip because they are outnumbered.

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The Lifeline *is published monthly by the Orange County Intergroup Association*

Purpose: The *Lifeline* Committee is a group of AA members charged with the responsibility of producing and distributing the Orange County *Lifeline*. The *Lifeline* is published monthly and is supported solely through contributions from the AA groups and members of Orange County. The *Lifeline* proposes to meet the following needs of the Orange County AA membership: to inform AAs of service opportunities, events, and announcements; to share experience in recovery, unity, and service; and to report the actions, finances, and meetings of the Orange County Intergroup Association and other Central Office committees.

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—CALL BEFORE YOU TAKE A DRINK—

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For information about **General Service** meetings, please go to the Area 09 website, www.msca09aa.org.

Welcome 2026 SERVICE BOARD

Chair, Mikayla T.
Chair@oc-aa.org

Vice Chair, Mike M.
ViceChair@oc-aa.org

Treasurer, Ryan H.
Treasurer@oc-aa.org

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Special Events, C.J. D.
SpecialEventsCommittee@oc-aa.org

Technology, Ian S.
TechnologyCommittee@oc-aa.org

For more information on service committees, or if you have a situation that requires an immediate answer, please contact Orange County Central Office at (714) 556-4555 or email manager@oc-aa.org.

Like and follow Orange County Intergroup on Facebook

SCAN ME

Public Information Committee meets the **4th Wednesday of the month at 5:30PM** via Zoom (Meeting ID: 851 8320 4725, Password: ocaaPI).

Group Relations Committee meets the **3rd Wednesday of the month at 7:00PM** via Zoom (ID: 896 3413 6745, Password: ocaa).

Lifeline Committee meets the **1st Thursday of the month at 7:00PM** via Zoom (ID: 886 0942 7655, Password: lifeline) *See page 3 for more details.*

Special Events Committee meets the **3rd Thursday of the month at 6:00PM** via Zoom (ID: 318 212 7247, no password.

South Orange County H & I meets the **3rd Wednesday of the month at 6:00PM** (new members' orientation) and **6:45PM** (business meeting), Laguna Beach Canyon Club (small room), 20456 Laguna Canyon Road, Laguna Beach. South County H & I's mailing address is SOCHIC, PO Box 2714, Mission Viejo, 92690-2714. For more information, go to www.sochic.club.

Orange County H & I meets the **2nd Sunday of the month at 4:00PM** (Institutions) **and 6:00PM** (Hospitals) at the Garden Grove Alano Club (9845 Belfast Dr., Garden Grove). Orientation is at **3:15PM** and **5:15PM**. The Committee Meeting is at 6:00, and the meeting opens around 5:40. For more information on Or-ange County H & I, go to www.ochandi.org or email contact@ochandi.org.

The Central Office Committee meets via Zoom (call Central Office for more in-formation).

The OCAA Technology Committee meets the **1st Monday of the month at 6:00PM** via Zoom (ID: 933 6844 2432, Password: ocaatech).

The Orange County Intergroup Assoc. meets the **2nd Wednesday of the month at 7PM** (**6:30** new rep orientation) at Norma Hertzog Community Center, 1845 Park Ave., Costa Mesa.
—IN PERSON ONLY—

Thank you to our board and committee members.

Letter from the Editor

This month, we are focusing on Step Eleven, Tradition Eleven, and Concept XI. I hope you'll read our cover story by Bob A., "Gratitude: The Aristocrat of Emotions." Bob writes about how gratitude will change your life and training yourself to notice all the things to be grateful for during each day. I also hope you'll read Effie R.'s "Miracles Continue to Astound Me" on page 8 as she writes of the beauty of the Eleventh Step.

It is with a heavy heart that we have to say goodbye to Effie R., one of our beloved *Lifeline* Committee members and the soul of our group, who passed away on October 12. Effie has been a part of the *Lifeline* Committee for years, notably for the Alcoholic A and Alcoholic B debates and her poems about sobriety. In the last eight years, since I've been a part of the committee, Effie has written about a Step a month. She has written about faith, spirituality, and love—of our program and humanity—with an emotional depth and honesty I can only be in awe of. With forty-six years of sobriety, she brought hard-won knowledge and understanding of our program to her writing. As an editor, I always appreciated her words, which were thoughtfully chosen and carefully referenced, and how she met every deadline early. She tirelessly cheered on new writers and encouraged others to write for the *Lifeline*. She also interviewed people who she knew had a great story to share. As her friend, I saw how Effie cared about everyone, how she always stopped to offer a kind word and a prayer. Effie made everyone feel special, like you could do anything because she believed in you. I will miss her terribly but am honored to have been her friend.

Thank you as always for reading the *Lifeline*. If you have any questions or comments about the *Lifeline* or an article you've read this month, please send an email to oclifelineeditor@gmail.com with your first name, last initial, and city. We might feature what you write in an upcoming issue. If you would like to sign up to have the *Lifeline* delivered by email every month, you can subscribe at www.oc-aa.org or use the QR code and scroll down to subscribe to the *Lifeline*. Printed copies are available at Central Office, the satellite office, and our monthly Intergroup meetings. Location information can be found on page 2. If you have any suggestions or would like to submit an article, poem, photo, or original artwork to the *Lifeline*, please email me at oclifelineeditor@gmail.com.

Jennifer J.
Lifeline Editor

P.S. The *Lifeline* looks a little different this month as I had to use a different design system. Microsoft Publisher, which I've used for years to design the *Lifeline*, was retired in October. As a perfectionist AA who hates change, I am grateful for our *Lifeline* Committee, Central Office managers, and Tom D., our printer, who gave me extra grace and time this month as I tried to figure it all out.

Orange County Intergroup Association – of Alcohol...
www.oc-aa.org

Share Your Thoughts on Sobriety with the Lifeline

If you'd like to submit an article, poem, or cartoon to be considered for publication, please send all submissions to the email address below by the 15th of the month for the following month, e.g., August 15th for the September issue. The best articles are under 600 words and are often much shorter. If you are unsure of what to write, you can think of a great share at your favorite meeting. You can write on a topic like how you chose your sponsor, your concept of a Higher Power, or tell your story. Not a writer? A committee member can interview you and write your story. You will have final approval on anything published. Please email oclifelineeditor@gmail.com for more information.

The *Lifeline* Committee invites you to join us. *Lifeline* Committee members can help read, write, edit, create, design, or simply offer suggestions for the *Lifeline*. The *Lifeline* Committee meets on the first Thursday of the month via Zoom (ID: 886 0942 7655, Password: lifeline).

In Memoriam

Effie R.

COSTA MESA

Located at the end of the 55 freeway in Costa Mesa next to the Donald Dungan branch of the Costa Mesa Public Library

Orange County Intergroup Meeting
Second Wednesday of the month
7:00PM meeting, 6:30PM new rep orientation
—IN PERSON ONLY—

Info: 714-556-4555, www.oc-aa.org

November meeting will be held on the third Wednesday, 11/18

Norma Hertzog Community Center
1845 Park Ave.
Costa Mesa

Volunteers are needed at Central Office

Please contact Central Office to find out about service opportunities.

714-556-4555
MANAGER@OC-AA.ORG

Our Principles

***Step Eleven*: Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.**

In AA, we have found that the actual good results of prayer are beyond question. They are matters of knowledge and experience. All those who have persisted have found strength not ordinarily their own. They have found wisdom beyond their usual capability. And they have increasingly found a peace of mind which can stand firm in the face of difficult circumstances.

"Thy will, not mine, be done" (Twelve Steps - Step Eleven - (pp. 96-105)).

***Tradition Eleven*: Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films.**

At the level of press, radio, TV, films, and on the internet practicing anonymity stresses the equality of all AA members. Maintaining anonymity at this level puts the brakes on those who might exploit their AA affiliation to achieve recognition, power, or personal gain.

When using social media and other online platforms, AA members are responsible for their own anonymity and that of others. When we break our anonymity in online forums, we may inadvertently break the anonymity of others. Protecting anonymity is a major consideration for A.A. members who are moving online in ever-growing numbers. (Read more in *Anonymity Online and Digital Media* , www.aa.org).

***Concept XI* : The trustees should always have the best possible committees, corporate service directors, executives, staffs, and consultants. Composition, qualifications, induction procedures, and rights and duties will always be matters of serious concern.**

"Members of this group," declares Bill, "not only *support* the leadership of the trustees: they *share* leadership with them." The following are "several principles… which" apply to AA World Services, Inc. and AA Grapevine, Inc.:

1. The status of executives
   No active service can function well unless it has sustained and competent executive direction.
2. Paid workers, how compensated
   Each paid executive, staff member or consultant should be recompensed in reasonable relation to the value of his or her similar services or abilities in the commercial world.
3. Rotation among paid staff workers
   At AA's General Service Office, most staff members' assignments are changed every two years.
4. Full "Participation" of paid workers is highly important.
   In Concept IV, we have already discussed the necessity of giving paid personnel a voting representation on our committees and corporate boards.

[Editor's note: You can read the long form of the Traditions on www.aa.org or on Big Book - Appendices I - The A.A. Tradition - (pp. 561-566) in the *Big Book*. You can also learn more about the General Service Office and how it serves AA on www.aa.org.]

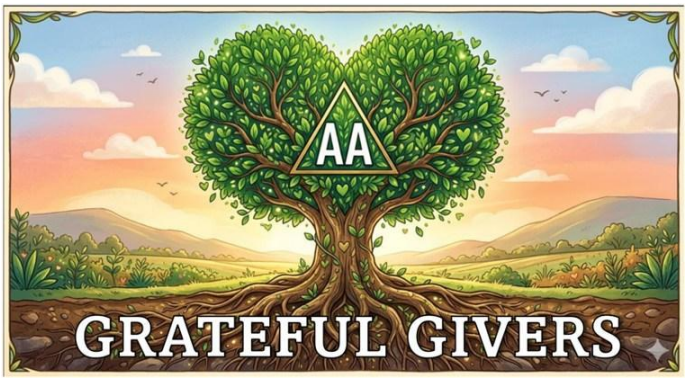
Dave W.

Our Principles

Tradition Ten: Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the AA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.

1. Do I ever give the impression that there really is an "AA opinion" on Anabuse? Tranquilizers? Doctors? Psychiatrists? Churches? Hospitals? Jails? Alcohol? The federal or state government? Legalizing marijuana? Vitamins? Al-Anon? Alateen?
2. Can I honestly share my own personal experience concerning any of those without giving the impression I am stating the "AA opinion"?
3. What in AA history gave rise to our Tenth Tradition?
4. Have I had a similar experience in my own AA life?
5. What would AA be without this Tradition? Where would I be?
6. Do I breach this or any of its supporting Traditions in subtle, perhaps unconscious, ways?
7. How can I manifest the spirit of this Tradition in my personal life outside AA? Inside AA?

(Reprinted with permission from the AA Grapevine)
(Traditions Checklist available from Central Office)
(SMF-131 Traditions Checklist is available from the AA Grapevine *on www.aa.org)*



Grateful Givers are those who have a monthly recurring contribution to support Central Office and help Carry the Message.

Barbie K.	Jennifer J.
Cindy Y.	Ronald B.
Faith B.	Terry M.
Christine L.	Enoch K.
David B.	Robert R.

Please consider becoming a Grateful Giver by visiting our contribution page at:
https://www.oc-aa.org/online-contributions-2/
Please let us know if you want your name listed in the *Lifeline*.

AA Birthdays

Donna F.	Irvine	1 year
Nick M.	Santa Ana	1 year
Mark D.	Huntington Beach	3 years
Linzy T.	Newport Beach	6 years
Chelsea F.	Orange County	11 years

You can celebrate an AA birthday in the *Lifeline* with a donation to Central Office. A donation of any amount is a generous way to celebrate the gift of sobriety and support your Central Office.

In keeping with AA's Seventh Tradition, we only accept contributions from AA members or groups.

Support Your Central Office

@OCAAINTERGROUP

Central Office appreciates your Venmo contributions. The second QR code will take you to the www.oc-aa.org contributions page for more options.

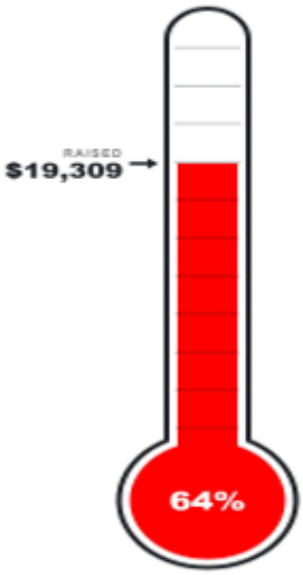
Checks and money orders can be sent to:
ORANGE COUNTY CENTRAL OFFICE
1526 Brookhollow, Suite 75
Santa Ana, CA 92705

venmo

OFFICE CALLS TOTAL=269	CENTRAL OFFICE ACTIVITY SEPTEMBER 2026			
After hour calls not included	General Info	Meeting Info	12 Step Calls	Visitors
CENTRAL/SATELLITE	112	149	8	119

Sept. 2026 Contributions

Goal: $30,000

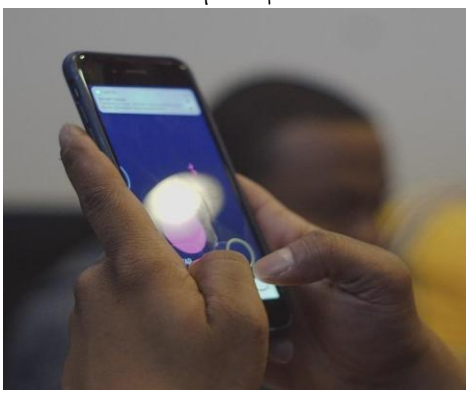


Who wants to look at a picture of a thermometer when we could be enlightened by folks sharing their experience, strength & hope.

<u>But the truth is</u>, all of us could lose not only the Lifeline, but offices could close if we continue to be low on contributions. If this happens, we can't help those who seek a way out of their drinking. <u>Please support Central Office.</u>

We are responsible, when anyone, anywhere reaches out for help, we should be there!

Looking for a service commitment you can do with your phone?



The Orange County Central Office call forwarding program ensures that our help line phones are answered by volunteers 24/7. During hours when the Central Office is closed, calls are forwarded to a call forwarding volunteer's home or cell phone, where the volunteer answers the calls just as if they were sitting in Central Office. This allows Central Office to save money because we do not have to use an answering service. More importantly, the caller will be talking to a member of Alcoholics Anonymous. Two years of sobriety are suggested to volunteer for this service. Please call the Central Office Manager in Santa Ana at (714) 556-4555 or the Satellite Office Manager in Laguna Niguel at (949) 582-2697 to sign up for a brief orientation session.

SHIFTS:
Monday—Friday
•6AM—9AM
•6PM—9PM
•9PM—6AM
Saturday and Holiday:
•6AM—9AM
•1PM—4PM
•4PM—7PM
•7PM—10PM
•10PM—6AM
Sundays
•6AM—10AM
•10AM—2PM
•2PM—6PM
•6PM—10PM
•10PM--6AM

Archives Corner

The Kitchen Table

The kitchen table at Stepping Stones, the historic home of Bill W. and Lois W. in Bedford Hills, New York, is an important part of Alcoholics Anonymous history. It is the table associated with the visit in late 1934 when Ebby Thacher carried a message of recovery to his old friend Bill Wilson, who was still drinking heavily.

At the time, Bill was in a desperate condition because of his alcoholism. He had tried to control his drinking but had been unable to do so. Ebby, who had also struggled with alcoholism, had recently stopped drinking through his involvement with the Oxford Group, a spiritual fellowship that encouraged honesty, self-examination, prayer and helping others.

When Ebby visited Bill at his home in Brooklyn, Bill offered him a drink. Ebby declined. Bill was surprised to find his old friend sober and different from the man he had known before.

Bill describes this meeting in Bill's Story, in the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*. Bill describes the significance of seeing his friend sober and writes about the change in his own thinking that followed.

Ebby's visit did not immediately end Bill's drinking. Within days, Bill entered Towns Hospital in Manhattan for treatment. There, he experienced a profound spiritual awakening that changed his understanding of recovery. He never drank again. The meeting with Ebby was an important part of the events that led to Bill's sobriety and, later, the development of AA.

The table from that Brooklyn home was later moved to Stepping Stones, where it now stands in the kitchen. Visitors can see the table and recall the conversation that helped change the course of Bill's life. The Stepping Stones Foundation identifies it as the table associated with Ebby's visit and Bill's account in the Big Book.

The table is also one of the three designated items or locations in the house where visitors are permitted to take photographs. This makes it a particularly significant stop for AA members visiting the home.

For AA members, the table represents a central principle of the Fellowship: one alcoholic sharing their experience with another alcoholic. Ebby carried the message that recovery was possible, and Bill was willing to listen. The conversation did not provide a complete program of recovery as AA knows it today, but it helped lay the groundwork for what followed.

Mary G.
MSCA09 Archives

"The Secret is, there is no Secret! Working the Steps with a sponsor, going to meetings, helping others, and above all, keeping God and sobriety first have kept me sober almost five years now. I always had heard that things in plain sight are the hardest to find!" "The Secret," Vandalia, Ill., February 2001, *Beginner's Book: Getting and Staying Sober in AA*

Millions of people have recovered in our program from a hopeless state of mind and body. Everything has been simplified for us, so no one can complain that our program is too complex. We can be complex individuals, and certainly the disease is complex and baffling, but our recovery is laid out for us in very simple terms – Unity (meetings and fellowship), Service (commitments and helping others), and Recovery (the steps).

With that said, many of us still try to complicate this by dragging in our personal biases, pride, or ego. Sadly, we have all seen so many people slip because they stopped doing the things that got them sober. Life gets good quickly, and so many fall into the "I'm healed" trap. I've always liked the saying, "Don't let the life AA gave you get in the way of your AA life."

Today, I still do all the little things I did when I first got sober to maintain my recovery. However, that wasn't always the case, and I came close to paying the ultimate price. Life got very good, and it was easy to find excuses not to go to a meeting or stay active with newcomers. My serenity was circling the drain! For me, being "stark raving sober" was incentive enough for me to dive back into the program.

I would not wish that on anyone, but alcoholics usually have to experience this type of pain or discomfort for themselves. I have been given all the keys to a happy and contented life, but it is still up to me to continue believing in and practicing the program process. Only through this "design for living" can we keep the door open to spiritual growth and lasting contentment.

Anonymous

Miracles Continue to Astound Me

What does Step Eleven mean to me, and how is it changing my "whole attitude and outlook upon life" on a daily basis (*Big Book*, p. 84)? The first part of this Step: "Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him" began to change me from the very beginning of my journey into sobriety. Step One became a one hundred percent surrender after almost forty years of denial. The denial, I would later learn, was a protective warm cloak until the Holy Spirit would reveal to me that I am "a real alcoholic" (*Big Book*, p. 21).

My perspective of this part of Step Eleven was: "Fought through pleading and medication to get God to approve of the unconscious state of being in which my twisted, tortured mind viewed Him as sort of a Santa Claus, the sort of Santa Claus mindset I so deeply believed in as a little girl living in a world of fantasy. The fantasy was that if I was good, He would give me whatever I asked for. But if I was bad, I would be punished and go to Hell when I died."

The deception and delusions of these fantasies created fears which I unknowingly buried deep in the recesses of the unconscious realm of my mind. The fears, which were "constantly disclosed" through taking Fourth Step inventories, were unearthed, faced, and overcome via this miracle working process (*Big Book*, p. 164). The Promises in our *Big Book* (pp. 83-84) began to come alive in my spirit, strengthening my daily recovery from a "seemingly hopeless state of mind and body" (*Big Book*, p xiii) to the last one of The Promises. And that Promise is: "We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us which we cannot do for ourselves."

As I continue to seek through prayer and meditation to improve my conscious contact with God, as I understand Him, and pray only for knowledge of His will for me, I am amazed. Miracles continue to astound me as I experience God's power to carry out His will.

Acceptance of the reality in the last Promise began to catapult me into the second part of Step Eleven: "praying only for knowledge of His will for us." In my childhood, adulthood, and into the earlier years of my sobriety, my prayers were definitely not centered around any thought, nor desire, for God's will. I would hear people share at meetings: "As we go through the day we pause, when agitated or doubtful, and ask for the right thought or action. We constantly remind ourselves that we are no longer running the show; humbly saying to ourselves many times each day 'Thy will be done,'" (*Big Book*, p. 88). And I would wonder what they were talking about. I had read those words in our *Big Book* many times, but the revelation of that truth did not become light for me until God began to free me from "grave emotional and mental disorders" by His amazing grace to grant me "the capacity to be honest" (*Big Book*, p. 58). It is through this capacity that I continue to be able to "employ my mental faculties with assurance, for after all, God gave us brains to use (*Big Book*, p. 86).

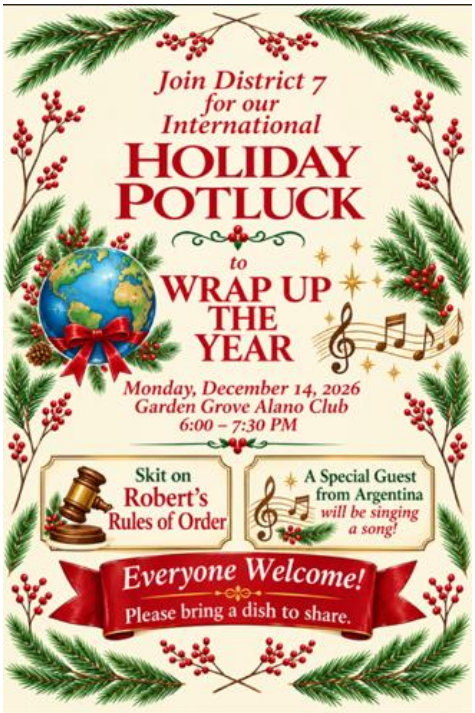
The last sentence in the above paragraph is preceded by "On awakening let us think about the twenty-four hours ahead. We consider our plans for the day. Before we begin, we ask God to direct our thinking, especially asking that it be divorced from self-pity, dishonest, or self-seeking motives" (*Big Book*, p. 86). This is the beginning of the Eleventh Step Prayer, which continues through pages 87-88. It is one of the prayers which I pray every morning before I get out of bed. I have found the words in this prayer continue to cement the fulfillment of the last part of the Eleventh Step "and the power to carry that out." I have no power to carry out God's will until I surrender powerlessness (Step One), not only over alcohol, but also over every person, place, or thing written in my inventories, one day at a time "for a lifetime" (*Big Book*, p. 84).

It requires work and practice "for a long period of reconstruction" (*Big Book*, p. 83). The long period of reconstruction is a glorious transformation from living a life of hundreds of forms of fear into living a life of purity, unselfishness, and loving service for the alcoholic still suffering. As I continue to seek through prayer and meditation to improve my conscious contact with God, as I understand Him, and pray only for knowledge of His will for me, I am amazed. Miracles continue to astound me as I experience God's power to carry out His will.

Effie R.

Central Office Event

GSR District 6 Event



GSR District 7 Event

November Pamphlet of the Month

This pamphlet (P-18) explains the AA service structure in the US and Canada.

[Pamphlets are available for purchase at Central Office for $.70 each **(FREE with the purchase of a book)** and on www.aa.org.]

Concept XI: Competence Is a Spiritual Principle—Unfortunately

If good intentions were enough to run AA, every business meeting would end on time, every committee position would be filled, and nobody would ever ask, "Wait—who was supposed to bring the literature?" Then Concept XI walks in carrying a clipboard.

At first glance, Concept XI looks like the human-resources department of the Twelve Concepts. It talks about committees, directors, executives, staff members, consultants, qualifications, rotation, authority, participation, and fair compensation. That may not sound as thrilling as a spiritual awakening, but anyone who has served in AA knows that spiritual awakenings are sometimes easier to arrange than finding a dependable treasurer.

The heart of Concept XI is simple: the trustees cannot—and should not—do everything themselves. They need capable people throughout the service structure. Not merely available people. Not the loudest people. Not whoever missed the business meeting and therefore could not defend themselves. The best possible people for the work.

AA has no shortage of enthusiasm. We will accept a two-year commitment after being told it requires "about an hour a month." Six weeks later, we own three binders, receive forty-seven emails a day, and have developed fierce opinions about parliamentary procedure. Enthusiasm matters, but Concept XI says it should travel with competence, stability, experience, and the ability to cooperate. Knowing how to operate a spreadsheet is useful. Knowing how to disagree without declaring a spiritual emergency is also useful.

Choosing the right person requires honesty. Human beings tend to select people who make us comfortable: familiar faces, agreeable personalities, and candidates unlikely to mention that our brilliant new plan has no budget, no volunteers, and may violate several Traditions before lunch. Competent people can be inconvenient. They read the materials, ask questions, and remember what was decided last month. Honestly, the nerve.

But the goal is not to build a committee of people who nod attractively. It is to match abilities to responsibilities. Sometimes the right person knows more than we do. This is not a threat. It is called good news.

Technical expertise alone, however, is not enough. AA service also requires an understanding of our principles. A public-relations professional who markets AA like a new energy drink may have impressive credentials but the wrong approach. We practice attraction rather than promotion; we do not need a "Sober and Crushing It!" influencer campaign.

The reverse is also true. AA experience cannot magically reconcile a bank statement, maintain technology, edit a publication, or manage an office. The magic happens when professional skill and AA experience meet—preferably without either side explaining why the other is unnecessary.

Concept XI also distinguishes between forming policy and carrying it out. Committees are good at discussion, group conscience, and hearing minority opinions. They are less effective at minute-by-minute management. Imagine a committee deciding how to answer a ringing telephone: "Before we pick it up, can we hear from the minority?" "Point of information: Do we know who is calling?" "Could we table the ringing until next month?" Eventually, somebody must be trusted to answer the phone.

Responsibility must come with enough authority to do the job. Otherwise, we create the classic service arrangement: "You are completely responsible for this project, but please ask permission before using the stapler." Good leaders know when to act, when to consult, and when to request direction. They should be firm without becoming tyrants and collaborative without requiring a group conscience on paper clips.

Rotation is another safeguard. It makes room for new people, spreads knowledge, and prevents anyone from becoming the permanent ruler of the folding chairs. Yet rotation should serve the work, not sabotage it. Replacing people the moment they finally understand their jobs does not create humility; it creates confusion. Healthy rotation includes training successors, sharing information, and leaving the position stronger than we found it.

Then there is money, a topic capable of turning spiritually awakened adults into suspicious villagers. Concept XI says paid workers and consultants should receive fair compensation. Asking someone to work for less merely because the employer is AA is not spiritual sacrifice when we are volunteering somebody else to make it. AA employees have rent, groceries, and landlords who remain strangely unmoved by the Seventh Tradition. Paid workers should also participate as respected members of the team. A paycheck does not erase dedication or make someone's experience less valuable. If people carry responsibility, they should have an appropriate voice and enough dignity to offer an honest opinion.

Concept XI is ultimately about organizational humility. Leaders must admit they need help. Committees must welcome people who know more than they do. Volunteers must respect professional expertise, and professionals must respect AA's spiritual experience. No organizational chart can eliminate ego or manufacture harmony. Structures help, but our final safeguard is the willingness to practice spiritual principles when personalities collide.

So, choose carefully. Train generously. Pay fairly. Rotate intelligently. Delegate clearly. Then give people room to do the jobs entrusted to them—even when they do those jobs differently than you would. Breathe. You'll be fine.

Brian S.

GRATITUDE: THE ARISTOCRAT OF EMOTIONS

Continued from page 1

An observer might call this a spiritual practice. I'd call it a lifeline.

The *Big Book* and *Twelve and Twelve*, the twin Bibles of AA, both speak of gratitude, though sparingly. One writer in the *Big Book* describes a life where "my family joins me in daily expression of gratitude" (First edition *Big Book*, "Fired Again"). Notice the word *daily*.

The *Twelve and Twelve's* Tenth Step is more prescriptive. It calls for "a genuine gratitude for blessings received" alongside honest regret for harms done (p. 95). It also reminds us that learning daily to spot, admit, and correct our flaws is the essence of character-building.

The *Big Book* tells us something every one of us knows from watching fellow members: we have no permanent cure, only "a daily reprieve contingent on the maintenance of our spiritual condition" (p. 85). Gratitude, practiced daily, is one of the most reliable ways I know to maintain it.

Hazelden Betty Ford once featured one of its long-term associates who was told as a newcomer to get a notebook, write down ten things he was grateful for, and add three new ones every day. He stopped numbering when he passed 5,000. When I first wrote about him, I asked whether that was an extreme practice or something we should all be emulating. I know my answer now.

Gratitude and acceptance are partners. The Serenity Prayer, generally credited to Reinhold Niebuhr, asks for the serenity "to accept the things I cannot change." Acceptance stops the fight. Gratitude goes one step further and finds the gift inside what we've accepted. That is why I once called gratitude "acceptance on steroids."

Aristocrat is the right word for gratitude, because it shapes every other emotion we have. It sits at the head of the table and sets the tone for everyone else in the room. When gratitude is in charge, fear has less to say. Resentment loses its audience. Self-pity can't find a seat.

In my experience, keeping that daily list has produced enormous benefits in my happiness. So don't wait for the fourth Thursday in November. Get a notebook. Write down what you were given yesterday. Then do it again tomorrow.

Bob A.

Chasing the Miracle

A lot of time was spent chasing the miracle over my sixteen years of active drinking. Every time I came home on leave from the Marine Corps, my mother would insist I attend church with her. Every time it was a different church, but four times I felt the call and went forward. My expectation each time was that somehow with that touch I would be made OK. That deep-seated fear of punishment by this Higher Power/God became solid like cement. It just never took.

In 1976, my expectation of being OK was placed on a pill, Antabuse. I took it for ninety days, pretending that life was better without alcohol. Once again, it did not take. After ninety days I just quit taking the Antabuse and began drinking again. I would drink for another four years.

The last half of 1986 found me taking classes to convert to Catholicism so I could get married. My head was so wacked I was doing a paint by number picture of the last supper while I consumed a lot of beer in my room every night. Once again, I had the expectation this would make me OK. It never materialized.

Fast forward to December 24, 1980. I was forced to put the bottle down. I fell into utter despair. Early in January, I made it to the first Alcoholics Anonymous meeting. I walked away with a glimmer of hope that things would be different. But I got angrier and angrier as I continued to attend meetings and those six men talked of relying on a Higher Power/God. I totally expected to be further punished, after all, didn't this Higher Power/God take my firstborn? In spite of my hostility about/at this Higher Power/God, I kept coming to meetings. Those men in that meeting became my Higher Power for a while until I could make the surrender and allow this Higher Power/God into my life. These men kept insisting I needed to work the Steps of our program. Somewhere along my journey in sobriety, a little clarity happened between my ears. What was the common denominator in my series of failed expectations to be made OK? Me. My expectation was always that a touch from the preacher/priest or that a pill to quit drinking would make me OK. Always something on the outside, with nothing given from me. Imagine that not working!

Those men in my early sobriety, along with my sponsors, were tough and called me on my BS. They made it clear I had been given a gift, physical sobriety. Those men in that small room on Okinawa also made it clear that to stay sober I would have to do the footwork. The program of Alcoholics Anonymous is spelled out in our Twelve Steps. There is no guessing about what is required. I just never understood the requirements of the other things. My stint of just not drinking in 1976 with the Antabuse experiment and in early sobriety proved just not drinking was not enough.

In Chapter 5 of our *Big Book*, it states "Selfishness – self centeredness : That we think is the root of our troubles . . ." (p. 62). That was certainly me to a tee. My drinking was just a symptom of my alcoholism. Our Twelve Steps address all this. With time in sobriety and working our Steps, the result was I got to keep my physical sobriety and grow in emotional sobriety. Our program made me OK with myself, and now I am contented within my own skin. The miracle happened while I was not looking.

Take the word alcohol out of alcoholism and you are left with "ism." I have found my "ism's" never went away and still pop up from time to time. Our Twelve Steps allow me to deal with them as they arise. It is contingent upon me to do the footwork required to stay physically and emotionally sober. It has been a good way of life; I hope the same for you on your journey in sobriety. Today I am above ground and sober which means all things are possible.

Trust God, clean house, and help others.

Bill F.

This Holiday Season… I am…

Grateful for turkey thighs,
No DUIs.

Grateful for laughter,
No behind my back chatter.

Grateful for no excuses or bruises.

Grateful for knowing what I have said,
And when I went to bed.

Grateful for no lying or vomiting.

Grateful for full bellies,
And Martinelli's.

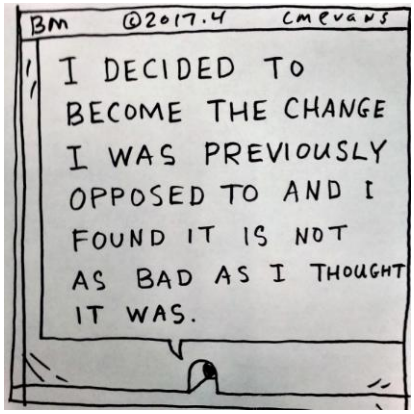
Grateful for second chances,
No sloppy dances.

Grateful for cool whip and pies,
No slips or nose dives.

Grateful that the only flakiness will be from the biscuits.

Grateful that I am not missing this.

Emily B.



Original artwork submitted by Chris E.

Group Contributions to Central Office, September

Suggested Contribution Guide

50%—Central Office 30%—General Service Office 10%—Mid-Southern California Area 09
10%—Local Districts in Area 09

For more information, visit www.oc-aa.org/contributions-guide/ or call Central Office at (714) 556-4555 with any questions.

	SEPT	YTD
ALISO VIEJO		
Tu 9:30A (W) Discussion &		200
ANAHEIM		
We 7:30P-Wed Night Gay		25
Fr 6:30P-Trans & Allies 202		153
Sa 10:00A-AA Discussion,		0
ANAHEIM HILLS		
BREA		
BUENA PARK		
CAPISTRANO BEACH		
Fr 7:00P-Friday Knights Me		0
CORONA DEL MAR		
Tu 6:00P-(W)'s 12x12, 3233	150	502
Tu 7:00P-CDM (M)'s Stag,		1200
W 7:30P-Living Sober Disc		125
Th 6:00P-Men's Happy H		100
Fr 7:30P-Rebels Group of		603
COSTA MESA		
Su 11:30A-Here & Now He		180
Su 12:15P High Noon, 204		100
Su 7:00P-Sun Speaker		100
Mo 12:00P-Clean & Serene		350
Mo 12:30P-Back Bay Men'		1103
Mo 6:00P-As Bill Sees It		100
Mo 7:00p-2850 Men's Stag		700
Tu 7:00P-(M)'s CDM Soup		500
Tu 7:30P-Design for Living,		100
We 12:00P-High Noon Ste		210
We 6:00P-Pass it On (M), 2	172	172
We 8:00P-Recovery Radic		410
Th 5:30P-Women's It's in	150	150
Th 7:00P-Airport Landing		78
Th 7:00P-Thurs Night 1st S		369
Th 7:30P-Men's Stag Cand		350
Fr 6:30P-Women in Solutio		188
Fr 7:00A-DW Mtg		188
Fr 7:30P-Creative Share,		180
Sa 7:00A-A.R.K. 700 Victo		50
Sa 9:00A-Original Men's St	19	556
Sa 9:30A-Charle Street O		125
Sa 6:00P-Sat. Night Refug		422
CYPRESS		
DANA POINT		
Sa-Su 7:00A-Sunrise Group		1876
Mo 5:30P-(W)'s Disc, Ens		517
Tu 7:00A-Men's Stag 33501	100	405
We 7:00A-Men's Stag, Glor	500	1976
We 6P-Pines Park Disc 349		250
We 6:00P-Sisters of Sobrie		280
Th 7:00A-Th Morn Men's To		869
Th 7:00A-Men's Stag Glori		626
Th 1:00P-Seniors & Friend	75	75
Fr 6:00P-The Rabbit Hole,		500
Sa 7:00A-(M)'s 10th Step		548
Sa 9:30P-Pines Park Discussion, 34941 Camino		165
FOUNTAIN VALLEY		
Dly 6:00A-Early Birds Disc	150	2109
Dly 8:30a-How it Works F		40
M-F 6:00A-Solutions FVAC		50
Sa-2P Women's Big Book		65
M-Sa 7:30A-Early Birds HOW		100
M-Sa 7:30AM Attitude Mod		80
M-F 7:00A-As Bill Sees it H	106	530
Su 6:00A-Cover To Cover,		200
Mo 12:00P-(W)'s As Bill Se	38	457
Mo 5:30P-Recoverette's		236
Mo 6:00P-Read n Chat W	110	190
Mo 7:30P-(M) KIS, 1912 Flo		29
Tu 1:00P-Women's Harmo		706
Tu 6:00P-(W)'s 12x12 SS,		475
Tu 7:00P-Beginners (M)'s,	250	3205
Tu 7:00P-Women's Serenit		120
Tu 7:15P-Tues. Night Wom		95
Tu 7:30P-Men's Last Gasp		210
Tu 7:30P-Newcomer (M)'s		194
Tu 7:45P-Tues. Night Wom		20
We 10:30A-Slogan Sisters		490
We 6:30P-(W) Serenity Sis	100	689
Th 10:00A-(W)'s BB Stdy,		125
Th 5:45P-HB Dry Dock		100
Th 7:00P-11th Step Disc.,		400
Th 7:30PM-Triangle Group		1
Fr 10:00A-Step Sisters, 18		252
Fr 6:00P-Big Book Study, 1		900
Fr 6:00P-Men in the Solution	50	150
Fr 9:30P-NOCYPAA, 9812		140
Sa 7:00A-As Bill Sees It Hu		300
Sa 7:30A-(M)'s Book Study	100	975
Sa 7:30A-Camel Group M	150	550
Sa 9:30A-(W)'s BB Study,		80
Sa 10:00A-(W)'s Closed W,		485
Sa 7:00P-Sat Nite Live BB 18		375
IRVINE		
Dly 6:30A-Sunrise Sobriety,		597
M,T,W,F 6:30A-It's A New M	1003	2227
Dly 7:00A-Solutions Group		5575
M-F 12:00P-Take the Steps		10
Su 7:00P-Sunday Night Big B		200
Mo 5:00P-(W)'s Mariners Blue	141	598
Mo 7:00P-Men's Big Book St		250
Mo 7:30P-Mon Women's Disc	170	1274
Tu 6:00P-W's Courage To Ch	163	490
Tu 7:00P-Men's Keep it Simp		310
Tu 7:30P-(M)'s of Irvine, 4949		371
We 12P-Alton Noon Grp Hyb		338
We 6:30P-BB & 12x12, 18422		300
Th 12PM-Mariner's Men's		100
Th 6:30P-Women Wandering		150
Fr 12P-Fri Women's As Bill S		175
Fr 7:00P-Winning Ticket Book		102
Sa 9:15A-12&12 Step Study		90
LAGUNA BEACH		
Dly 7:00A-Canyon Club Attit		2288
Su 7:00A-Whale Watchers	219	2595
Su 10:00A Heisler Park Dis		480
Mo 7:00A-164 & More	277	1028
Mo 6:00P-2 Sides of the Sa		225
Mo 6:30P-Women's BB & 12	100	532
Mo 7:00P-Park Ave. Men's S	194	194
Tu 12:00P-Tuesday Noon Wo	300	650
Tu 5:30P-South Coast Men's	506	3604
Tu 6:30P-Disapproved Liter		115
We 7AM-6th Sense in Action		55
We 12:00P-Anything Goes C	150	400
We 6:00P-Beg Disc, 20456		285
We 7:30P-SC Speaker Mtg,		1580
Th 7AM-Attitude Adjustment		75
Th 6:00P-Women's Stag, 204		63
Fr 6:00P-Happy Hour Hybrid		190
Fr 6:55A-(W)'s Workshop BB,		256
Fr 6:00P-Fri Nite Literature D		513
Fr 7:30P-Here and Now (Hybr		50
Sa 7:00A-Whale Watchers	254	2006
Sa 12:30P-Into Action 20456		256
Sa 7:30P-Sat Night Speaker's	1000	1000
Sa 8:00P-Living Sober Speakers 428 Park Ave.		300
LAGUNA HILLS		
Su 4:00P-11th Step Med, 23		123
Mo 6:30P-Men's BB/Step St		138
Mo 6:30P-W's 12&12 SS,Livi		625
Tu 7:30P-By the Book, 23802		700
Sa 7:00A-Warmer-Upper, 23	136	594
Sa 9:00A-Sat Morning (W) St	50	190
LAGUNA NIGUEL		
Mo 7:00A-(M)'s Back to Basi	213	213
Mo 10:30A-(W) 12 & 12 Study	90	390
Mo 5:30P-(M)'s What's the Pu		360
Tu 6:00P-(W) Emotional Sob		150
Mo 7:00P-Mon Nite Live Only		10
We 6:00P- BB 12&12 Study,	111	429
Fr 7:00A-(M)Back to Basics B	216	5129
Fr 7:00A-Ivy Glenn Men's Stag		250
Fr 10:30A-Friday Morning Wo		400
Sa 9:00A-Meditation Mtg, 29	100	500
Sa 6:30P-Candlelight, 24360		269
LAGUNA WOODS		
Dly 7:30A-Do It Sober, 24442	357	3924
LA HABRA		
M-F 6:15A Topic Disc 631 N.		170
LAKE FOREST		
LA MIRADA		
LAS FLORES		
LOS ALAMITOS		
Su 5:00P-Happy Hour Topic,		120
Sa 6:00P-Saturday Nite Lite		150
MISSION VIEJO		
M-F 12:00P-Disc At Elks. 259	700	2350
Mo 7:00P-AA Way of Life, 26	203	595
Tu 7:30P-By The Book 26001		200
We 9:30A-(W)'s Disc, 26051		362
Th 9:30A-Women's 12 & 12,		760
Th 12:00P-MV (W) BB Study,	229	1629
Th 6:30P-3 G's Meeting, 268		750
Th 7:00P-Sober Ladies Candl		100
Sa 7:00P-Orange County Gr	166	1099
NEWPORT BEACH		
Dly 6:30A-Round Table Disc		1521
M-S 6:30A-Jumpstart Disc, 4		1370
M-Th 12:00P-Nooners, 414 E.		480
M-F 6:30A-Chicken Coop Ro		4000
M-F 6:45A-Attitude Adj, Bays	250	2940
M-F 12:15P-Shark @ Aquatic	917	3168
M-F 5:30P-Fish Out'a Water,		2491
Su 7:15A-(M)'s Early Risers,		518
Su 9:30A-Sandy Survivors, 1	200	575
Su 7P-Speakers NB Alano Cl		909
Mo 6:30P Solid Solutions (W)		389
Mo 7:00P-Over 40 Disc., 109		275
Mo 8:30P-Balboa Island Step		159
Tu 5:30P-Men's Stag St. And		600
Tu 6:30P-Men's Big Book St		73
Tu 7:00P-East Bluff Men's St		725
Tu 7:30P-Balboa Broads, 600	233	408
We 5:45P-Rigorous Honesty		180
We 6:00P-Castaways, 798		75
We 7:30P-Wed Night Men's	25	200
Th 9:30A-Closed Women's 1		202
Th 7:00P-Over 40 Disc 414 E.		200
Th 7:00P-Women's Candleli		60
Th 7:30P-Balboa Speaker Gr	500	1242
Fr 12:15P-AA Business Mtg.		100
Sa 7:00A-Jumpstart Hybrid		1027
Sa 8:00A-Dover Men's Stag, 7		1287
Sa 8:00A-E Z Risers, 2046 M	62	1386
ORANGE		
Su 11:00A-Book Study, 2191		90
Su 7:00P-Sunday Night Spkrs	10	65
Mo 12:00P-12&12&12, OFC		40
Mo 5:30P-Rush Hour Discus		200
Tu 12:00P-Discussion, 2191		100
Tu & Thu 12:00P-Brown Bag	339	739
Tu 7:00P-Women's Keep It S		372
Tu 7:00P-Hart Park Newco		140
Tu 7:00P-Orange Tustin Gro	25	100
Th 12:00P-Discussion, 2191		100
Th 5:30P-Rush Hour Discussi		485
Th 6:30P-Ladies Night Book	9	58
Th 7:00 P-Men's BB Study,		100
Th 7:00P-Th Night BB Study,		100
Th 7:30P-777 (M) Beginner,	160	580
Fri 12:00P-Quality Serenity,	100	200
Fri 10:00P-Drop in the Hat O		100
Sa 7:00P-Visiting Speakers,	100	500
PLACENTIA		
RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA		
M-F 6:30A-Att & Grat, 30605	362	966
Mo 7:00P-Women Staying S		732
Mo 7:30P-Charter (M)'s, 306		450
Tu 7:30P-Old Time AA. 30322		1018
Th 6:00P-Broken Chains, Ca	150	430
Th 7:30P-11th Step Spiritual	229	674
Fr 7:30P-Roads End, 30322	200	600
Sa 6:30A-The Straight Pepper		350
SAN CLEMENTE		
San Clemente Friendship C	125	875
Mo 7:00P-N.O.I. (M)'s, 119 E		3070
Fr 7:15A-(W)'s BB Study, 35		138
SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO		
Dly 6:00A-Taking a Trip, 318		1192
Dly Various- San Juan Meeti		4400
Su 5:00P-One Hour Topic Di	110	533
Mo 5:00P-(W)'s Solutions, 3	306	879
Tu 6:00P-Men's Stag Disc/		750
Th 6:00P-Do the Steps, 322		1203
Th 7:30P-(M)'s Q & A/Gator M	116	1213
Sa 6:30A-Eye Opener, 32202		1000
Sa 8:00A-(M) Black Print Only	340	390
Sa 7:30P-Saturday Night Op	226	826
SANTA ANA		
Su 5:00P-Two or More, 721 N		187
Mo 6:30P-Women's 12&12 S		113
We 7:00P-Women's Solution,		732
Tu 8:00P-Gay Men's Stag, 6		50
Th 6:30P-W's Living Sober BB		234
SEAL BEACH		
Mo 7:30P-Speakers, 500 Mar		1399
We 7:30P (W) Step Study, 1	147	372
Th 6:00P Seal Beach Wome		220
SILVERADO CANYON		
Thu 7:00P-Silverado Canyon	38	327
SUNSET BEACH		
Su 7:15A-Sober Sunday Sunr		168
Su 9:00A-Sober On the Sand,		150
Su 10:00A-Sunset Beach On		139
Su 11:00A-Inner Peace Group, 16865 PCH	155	582
Su 7:00A-Sunset Beach Big		86
Mo 7:00A-Morning Book Stu		107
Mo 4:30P-(W)'s Hour of Po		300
Mo 6:00P-12 & 12 Step Study		50
Tu 7:00A-Attitude Adj. @ Thu		310
Tu 8:00P Nomads Mens Stag,		158
We 12:00P-Noon Promises,		125
Th 7:00A-Thur at Thursdays,		120
Th 5:30P-(W)'s Disc, 16865		300
Fr 12:00P-Drunk Busters, 16	100	600
Fr 6:00P-I Never Had It So G	247	1753
Fr ?-Sunset Beach Thursdays		142
Sat 5P Sunset Beach Discus		60
Sa 7:00P-Rule 62 11th Step		552
TRABUCO CANYON		
Th 7:00P-Silverado Book St	67	167
Sa 10:30A-Womens BB Study, 31820 Las Amigas		446
TUSTIN		
Dly 6:00A-Attitude Modificat	455	3281
Dly 5:30P-Tustin Rush Hour,		2275
MWF 12:00P-Tustin Noon M		700
MWF 12:00P-Spiritual Exper		674
Su 5:30P-The Other 12 and		70
Su 7:00P-Sober & Crazy Sp		609
Mo 9:00A-W's Unity Grp Top		150
Mo 6:00P-W's New Beginnin		151
Mo 7:00P-(M)'s BYOB, 1201 I		350
Tu 7:00P-Tustin BB Stdy, 225	180	774
We 7:30P-Copycats (W) Book		169
Th 9:00A-Women's Step Stu		60
Th 7:00P-Tustin 12 & 12 Stu	90	240
Fr 6:00A-Men's Coffee Meet	250	250
Fr 6:30P-It's in the Book, 225		810
Sa 7:30A-Tustin Acceptance,	250	1500
Sa 12:00P-Tustin Brown Bag		400
VILLA PARK		
Dly 7:30A-Serenity Sunrise,		503
WESTMINSTER		
Mo 6:00 PM-12x12 Beg., 157		150

Continued on page 14

Speaker Meetings

Costa Mesa

6:00PM, Saturday
HYBRID
Saturday Night Refugees
(*12X12* Speaker Meeting)
2144 Thurin St. @ Victoria St.
(Grange Hall)

Meeting ID: 813 9669 8169
Password: GRANGE

7:00PM, Sunday
IN-PERSON
Costa Mesa Speaker Group
2040 Placentia Ave.
(Costa Mesa Alano Club)
Contact: Christy B.

Fountain Valley

7:30PM, Wednesday
IN-PERSON
Mischief Management
(Fountain Valley Alano Club)
16581 Brookhurst St.
Contact: Cole H.

Garden Grove

8:00PM, Thursday
IN-PERSON
AA Speaker Meeting
(Garden Grove Alano Club)
9845 Belfast Dr.

8:00PM, Saturday
IN-PERSON
Saturday Night Live Speaker Meeting
(Garden Grove Alano Club)
9845 Belfast Dr.

Huntington Beach

5:45PM, Tuesday
HYBRID
Sun and Sea AA Hybrid Meeting
20112 Magnolia St. (Christ Pacific Church)
Meeting ID: 882 0896 9623,
Password: Sunandsea
Contact: Cindy S.

Huntington Beach

8:00PM, Tuesday
IN-PERSON
The Solution Is in the Book
Speaker Meeting
19092 Beach Blvd. G-H (HOW Hall)
Contact: Brandon K.

Irvine

7:00PM, Saturday
HYBRID
Turtle Rock Speaker Meeting
1 Sunnyhill
Meeting ID: 269 016 646,
Password: wildbunch
Contact: Joseph C.

Laguna Beach

7:30PM, Saturday
HYBRID
CC Sat Nite
20456 Laguna Cyn. Rd.
(The Canyon Club)
Meeting ID: 402 531 7183,
Password: canyon
Contact: Tim A.

8:00PM, Saturday
HYBRID
Living Sober Speaker Meeting
428 Park Ave. (St. Mary's
Episcopal Church)
(in the back building, Guild Hall)
Meeting ID: 129 629 389 (no password)
Contact: Neil K.

Laguna Hills

7:00PM, Sunday
IN-PERSON
Legacies Group Speaker Meeting
24442 Moulton Pkwy.
(Laguna Country United Methodist
Church)
Contact: Thelegaciesgroup@gmail.com

Laguna Niguel

7:00PM, Sunday
HYBRID
Laguna Niguel Speaker Meeting
24360 Yosemite Road (@La Paz Rd.)
Meeting ID: 451 797 737,
Password: NewYMCA
Contact: Bill W. &
Jesse C.

Lake Forest

7:30PM, Friday
IN-PERSON
Saddleback Valley Fellowship
Friday Night Speaker Meeting
23401 El Toro Rd. (@ Muirlands Blvd.),
Ste. 101
Contact: Vijay

Mission Viejo

7:00PM, Saturday
IN-PERSON
Orange County Group
26051 Marguerite Pkwy.
(Presbyterian Church of the Master)
Contact: Jason B.

Newport Beach

7:30PM, Thursday
IN-PERSON
Balboa Speaker Group
414 32nd St.
(Newport Beach Alano Club)
Contact: Natalie C.

7:30PM, Sunday
IN-PERSON
Speakers
414 32nd St.
(Newport Beach Alano Club)
Contact: Ashley G.

Orange

7:00PM, Saturday
Saturday Night Visiting Speakers
IN-PERSON
395 S. Tustin St.
(Community of Christ Church)
Contact: Matt D. or Chris W.

11/07 Richard
11/14 Keith
11/21 Aurora
11/28 Titus

7:00PM, Sunday
IN-PERSON
Sunday Night Speaker Meeting
of Orange
250 S. Prospect St.
(Revive Covenant Church)
Contacts/bookers: Bree and Owen

Rancho Santa Margarita

7:30PM, last Friday of the month
IN-PERSON
Roads End Participation
Via Con Dios at Santa Margarita Pkwy.
Speaker last Friday of the month

San Clemente

6:00PM, Monday
IN-PERSON
Men's Stag Speaker and
Discussion Meeting
929 Calle Negocio
(San Clemente Friendship Center)
Contact: Tom P.

7:30PM, Friday
IN-PERSON
Friday Night Open Speaker Meeting
202 Aragon
(St. Clement's By the Sea Church)
Contact: Tom P.

Tustin

7:00PM, Sunday
IN-PERSON
Sober & Crazy Speaker Meeting
12881 Newport Ave.
(Grace Harbor church)
Contact: Gary C.

Villa Park

9:02AM, Sunday
IN-PERSON
9:02 Speaker/Participation Meeting
17855 Santiago Blvd.
Contact: Annette H. or E.C.

DISCLAIMER: Listed events, meetings, or flyers are presented solely as a service to our members, not as an endorsement by the Orange County Intergroup Association. We cannot attest to accuracy, relevancy, timeliness, or completeness of information provided. We at OCCO strive to adhere to Traditions Six and Ten on posting events.

Continued from page 12

Fr 6:30P-Women of 5673 Re		200
WHITTIER		
Sa 8:00AM 12 & 12 Book St		20
YORBA LINDA		
UNLISTED GROUPS		
Anonymous Meeting		131
Charle St. First Step House,	140	320
Su 7:00P-Men's Stag Disc 2		154
Mo 4PM-Magic Patio (M) Big		50
Mo 7:00P Women Staying S		229
Tu 9:30A-(W) Double Winners		100
Wed 10:30A-Slogan Sisters	141	141
We 7:00P-Causes & Condit	65	65
We 8:00P-Gay Men's LGBTQ		213
Mo 6:00P-12 & 12 Step Study		120
Fr 8:00P-Anaheim House Ga		147
Fr 8PM AA/Alanon Sunset B		192
Sa 9:30A-Monastery Mtg (Tr		275
WANDERING GROUPS		
We 6:30P Roving Men's Big Bo		450
ZOOM MEETINGS		
Dly 7:00A Attitude Adjust. Can	310	3916
Dly (No Tu) 6AM Not Taking a T		122
Dly 12:00P Men's Back Bay On		167
Dly 6:00A-Upon Awakening,		221
Dly 6:05P-Sunset Lit/Dis Mtg,	134	134
Dly 6:05P-Sunset Meeting		626
Dly (no Sa) 7:00A-Daily Reflect		930
Dly 7:05A-Attitude Adjustment		516
Dly 12:00P-Noon Time Recov		75
Dly 7:00P-Fishbowl Meetings	2	706
Dly Alkie's Winner Circle		369
Dly 7:00A Early Birds		92
Mo 7AM Sunset Beach Zoom M		60
Mo 6:30P-EZ Does It Big Book	28	84
Sa 7AM Whale Watchers Men's	39	39
Sa 12:00P Tustin AWC (Alkies		113
Sa 9:30A-12&12 Study	50	113
Su 7:00A-Attitude Adjustment		2
Su 7:00A-Montage Beach Meet		249
Su 7:00A-Whale Watcher's Z		509
Su 9:30A Sandy Sobriety 7th T		155
Su 6:00P Sunday Night As Bill		135
Su 7:00P Fish Bowl Open Disc	2	2
Tu 5:00P-Grit & Grace (W) Op	100	205
We 5PM- East Meets West		40
We 5:00P-(W) Closed BB SJC		341
We 7:00A Women's Dana Pt. B		1,010
We 7:00A-Women's BB Study		244
We 7:00A-Sunset Beach		60
We Night Bubba Effect Speaker		240
Fr 7AM Ballpark Zoom Mtg. (L	40	57
Fr 7:00P Fishbowl Open Discu		5
Fr 8:00P Friday Night Beginners		5
MISC. DONATIONS		
Birthday Donations	5	1610
AA's 91st Birthday Celebration		91
Intergroup Body Meeting	126	1539
OCAA Convention May 1-3, 20		60
OC H and I, Irvine All Days		28
Piggy Bank-Central Office	33	212
South Orange County H and I, I		27
PERSONAL DONATIONS		
Alison G.		50
Alison J.		5
Allisen P.	250	250
Angie N. Torrance		200
Anna C.		5
Anonymous	60	535
Anthony G.	20	50
Ari N.	5	5
Barbara K. Costa Mesa	25	125
Belen D.		16
Bill F. Anaheim		100
Bethany H.		2
Brett A.		125
Brittany H.		3
Brian S.		21
Byron R. Mission Viejo		50
Carin T.		167
Cathryn F.		1
Chris O.		20
Chris W.	50	125
Christine L. Irvine	50	150
Cindy Y. Brea	50	250
Dave Stef.		10
David B. Fullerton	10	90
Dawn M. Laguna Hills		32
Diana McI.		3
Enoch K. Tustin	10	25
Ellen S. - Costa Mesa		90
Erinn D.		25
Esther S. Lowell, Ma		20
Faith B. Brea	25	155
Gabe S. Laguna Hills		3
Geofrey W.	50	450
Guy K.		5
Jak H.		40
Jeanette W.		20
Jeff & Gabriella D.		1,000
Jennifer J. Costa Mesa	15	91
Jennifer L.		20
Jennifer S.		5
John S. Laguna Beach		100
Jonathan W.		5
John S. Laguna Beach		100
Jonathan W.		5
Joy H.		40
June L. Irvine Q4	75	300
Kevin A.		100
Kim S.		5
King D. Tustin		10
Lee B.		5
Lori S. Huntington Beach		6
Lynn H.		30
Marc T.		0
Marilyn C. San Clemente	25	200
Mateo D.		4
Matthew D.		2
Melissa G.		10
Michael M. Newport Beach	20	20
Michael O. Santa Ana		100
Michelle P.		5
Mo Costa Mesa		40
Nicole M.		2
Paige S.		5
Patricia M. Huntington Beach		1050
Patrick I.		20
Paul S. Orange	175	175
Peter A. Aliso Viejo		50
Randy U.		2
Richard J. Brea		81
Richard K.		5
Robert R.	15	135
Ronald B.	50	352
Saai S.		8
Scott F.	5	13
Stacey C.		2
Tami S.		50
Teresa M. Laguna Niguel	100	800
Thomas P. Huntington Beach	20	130
Tiffany S.		5
Todd B.		100
Tom O		2
Tracy H. (which Zoom?)		200
GROUP INFORMATION REQUESTED		
Receipt #2722, Ck 1632, Date		94
Receipt #2601, Ck 0004, Date		324
Receipt #2600, Cash, 1/2, Ne		50
Receipt #2790, Ck 1125 2/19 K		366
Receipt #2799, Ck 7897, 2/27,		60
Venmo, 3/8, Irvine Men's Stag T		376
Venmo,3/9, BPO Saturday 8am		275
Receipt #2814, Ck 147/ 3/9, N		125
Receipt #2815, Ck 1157, 3/9, N		114
Venmo, 3/16, Zoom? Topic Par		100
Receipt #143 Morning Meditati		1
Venmo 6/1 Clay B need info(		114
Venmo 5/2 Clay B need info(4		128
Venmo Clay B 488063 - no mtg		156
Venmo Chris B no mtg info 6/8		180
Reciept 3159 Kathleen Need m		26
Venmo 7/5 Clay B. need mtg inf		240
Venmo 7/15 Ron W. need mtg i		120
Rct #3138 Ck 1038 need info 7		150
Rct #3136 Ck 1989 need info 7		20
Venmo Robin F Which BtoB Mtg		250
Step Sisters Ch#3150 VOID 8		0
Huggers II Ch#1876 VOID 8/1		0
Rct#3232 Ch64886 $120 mtg?	120	120
Chk 336 David E. Rct3308 mtg i	60	60
Venmo 8/25/26 Deborah S. mt		500
TOTALS	19,307	199,291

Do It Anyway

In doing AA's Step Eleven, *(see p.4)* secular (atheist and agnostic) alcoholics are again faced with the first impression that this Step, as with Steps Six and Seven, can't be completed without a belief in a god or a "higher power." However, when it comes to the Eleventh Step's prayer and meditation, I've overcome any reluctance by honoring my promise to go to any lengths to stay sober, and the saying: Do It Anyway.

Nonreligious newcomers to AA can be uncomfortable with the Big Book's frequent references to Christian beliefs. When I was a newcomer, my first impression of the chapter "We Agnostics," was, "even though you're an atheist/agnostic, if you keep an open mind and avoid 'contempt before investigation' you'll eventually recover from alcoholism—and come to believe in God." In the Twelve and Twelve's chapter on Step Eleven, this implicit message is repeated in the examples of "good results" attained by members who pray for "God's will." Again, we find original AA literature framing any member's continued atheism as resistance and closed-mindedness, and that their recovery will always be incomplete.

Early on, the fellowship, to its credit, addressed these issues, which ultimately led to the creation of Tradition Three. Since then, AA has repeatedly assured secular alcoholics that they're members if they so choose, with no religious strings attached. A clarification was released in 2023 stating that "the essence of AA" isn't any deity or even a higher power but "one alcoholic helping another" and that, "There is room in A.A. for people of all shades of belief and non-belief."

I'm grateful for AA's accommodation for those of us who don't believe in a spiritual higher power as I rejoice for every alcoholic who finds relief in AA. So what does Step Eleven mean to me? Recovery is a journey of seeking and though I don't pray, I still meditate and this has led me to another interpretation of the Eleventh Step as seen in secular AA meetings and in which I find great comfort:

Sought through mindful inquiry and meditation to improve our spiritual awareness, seeking only for knowledge of our rightful path in life and the power to carry that out.

Though I don't pray to any deity or higher power, I participate in every prayer said at AA gatherings. To me, these are fellowship rituals where I humbly reaffirm my acceptance that I can't overcome my alcoholism alone. I also regularly participate in formal group meditation that involves breathing, chanting, loving-kindness, and gratitude as together we focus on staying in the present moment. These mindful practices aid me in finding serenity in the acceptance of life's realities and impermanence (things I can't change), the courage to improve my attitude and behavior by seeking help (things I can change), and the wisdom that stems from my willingness to live by the universal principles that are the core of an honorable and purposeful life (knowing the difference).

My character defects stand in direct opposition to the beneficial actions that help keep me sober—prayer, meditation, and mindful practice—and I often see the same struggle in my fellow AAs. The idea of facing this opposition with contrary positive action was explored by Kent M. Keith in his 1968 secular poem, "Anyway – The Paradoxical Commandments." These were later adapted into a religious version "Do It Anyway" (misattributed to Mother Teresa) that I've seen in the rooms of AA. An example:

The good you do today will be forgotten tomorrow.
Do good anyway.

Inspired by both versions, I've created one for my Eleventh Step that's worked for me for over 15 years. It reminds me that pursuing the principle of awareness associated with this Step requires dedication, patience, as well as gratitude that there are different paths to sobriety in AA—including secular ones. I tell myself:

Step Eleven suggests prayer even though I don't believe in a god.
Pray Anyway.

It suggests I meditate even though I doubt it will help.
Meditate Anyway.

It suggests I seek to improve my conscious contact with something I don't believe exists.
Practice Mindfulness Anyway.

It suggests I pray for knowledge of some non-existent entity's will.
Seek Knowledge Anyway.

Seeking the Eleventh Step's state of enlightenment in a fellowship where most believe in a god can be uncomfortable.
Do It Anyway

And be grateful for what you learn.

Ron B.

Original artwork submitted by Chris E.

November 1
OCAA Intergroup Bowling Event
Irvine Lanes
3415 Michelson Dr.
Irvine, CA
234-380-9304

November 14
Orange County Central Office Open House
11AM-3PM
1526 Brookhollow, Ste. 75
Santa Ana, CA
Flyer, p. 9

December 1
GSR District 6 Holiday Party and Meeting
6-9PM
Community United Methodist Church
6652 Heil Ave.
Huntington Beach, CA
Questions? Call Lucky Lisa, 949-677-3327
Flyer, p. 9

December 14
District 7 International Holiday Potluck
6-7:30PM
Garden Grove Alano Club
9845 Belfast Dr.
Garden Grove, CA
Flyer, p. 9

Please check out www.oc-aa.org/events/ for more upcoming events

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS
ORANGE COUNTY INTERGROUP ASSOCIATION
STATEMENT OF INCOME & EXPENSE
PERIOD ENDING 09/30/2025 UNAUDITED

	Sep 26	Jan - Sep 26
Ordinary Income/Expense		
Income		
Literature Resale	660.00	4,895.84
Bank Adjustments	0.00	0.30
Birthday Donations	5.00	1,723.46
Group Donations	18,582.33	191,816.43
Individual/Fellowship	725.00	6,721.95
Interest Earned	252.96	3,896.22
Literature Sales	4,989.54	50,078.35
Merchandise Sales	-0.01	0.07
Shipping and Delivery Income	0.00	-70.00
Total Income	25,214.82	259,062.62
Cost of Goods Sold		
Cost of Literature Sold		
Cost of Goods Sold	4,689.12	46,530.26
Cost of Literature Sold - Other	0.00	0.00
Total Cost of Literature Sold	4,689.12	46,530.26
Shipping / Misc. Adjustments	0.00	-886.24
Total COGS	4,689.12	45,644.02
Gross Profit	20,525.70	213,418.60
Expense		
Accounting	1,986.75	16,434.25
Auto Expense (all Mgrs.)	49.49	853.11
Bank Charges	0.00	56.00
Convention & Svs Event Expense	0.00	1,319.33
Copier Expense	0.00	302.29
Credit Card Expense	362.25	3,378.40
Freight and Shipping Costs	0.00	0.00
Insurances	475.30	3,402.86
Intergroup Expense	207.47	3,541.40
Internet Expense	185.86	1,660.49
Lease Expense	284.05	2,556.45
"LIFELINE" Expense	1,910.00	16,815.00
Maintenance & Repairs	160.00	1,901.72
Offices' Supplies & Expenses	74.50	3,556.20
Payroll Tax Expense	785.64	7,891.10
Postage	23.60	611.75
Public Info Expense	0.00	1,092.54
Reconciliation Discrepancies	0.00	0.10
Reimb. Health	1,000.00	8,600.00
Rent Main/Satellite Offices	4,520.54	41,808.44
Returned Checks	0.00	200.75
Salaries	11,266.01	97,524.45
Taxes & Licenses	100.00	121.00
Telephone Answer Service	337.43	2,355.79
Telephone Expense	50.00	1,097.73
Utilities	95.56	601.80
Volunteers Coffee & Water	29.50	374.25
Website Expense	1,762.43	5,206.21
Total Expense	25,666.38	223,263.41
Net Ordinary Income	-5,140.68	-9,844.81
Other Income/Expense		
Other Income		
Purchase Discounts	0.00	0.00
Total Other Income	0.00	0.00
Net Other Income	0.00	0.00
Net Income	-5,140.68	-9,844.81

** PRUDENT RESERVE INFORMATION:

Note 1: Per our Bylaws, Article X, Section 1: The financial policy of the Orange County Intergroup Association shall be: Maintain sufficient operating funds plus an ample reserve fund. Ample reserve (prudent reserve) is defined as four to six months of operating expenses based on the annual audit or review. Sufficient operating funds are determined as approximately one month of the monthly expenses, but not more than two months.

Note 2: Prudent Reserve calculation: Year end 2025: $354814 = 1 month = $29567, 4 months = $118271, 6 months = $177402

Current Prudent Reserve: $140680.42 (80% of Maximum Prudent Reserve)

Note 3: Operating Fund Calculation: ST $3075.90 + VM $1301.44 + PP $27.93 + CID $50.00 + COH $100.31 + BOA $24102.93 = $28658.51

November Word Search

Name_____ **Email address** _____
or phone number

D N N P E F O G B Y D J D T D Z H L M C
F Y O Y T Y E P O J G G E H D B Z A X O
P L A I D R O M I R P B T T E N N D K N
D E U I S X C B E N O X Y H E V I S U V
N M Y N G N I E Q R I C V A I K T Y A I
K O P M K W E C G Z M O K L U E Y V I V
V A I O T J X M B E N M N E E Z M B D I
X S B T W J X I I J G G I R T N E P H A
T U E O A Z S N P D H R A H K E O E T L
Z H I R T N H L F X D G H Y S S D X C I
M W V C I P I B W S E K S S C Q L L L T
C L B Y D H R G V Y Y K K Z S Q O C N Y
X N Z C L W I F A I U A T S H Y K Y L C
C X K L N U C G X M E E T A O S W A J I
D E I E W O B T D X I C L P R L F B D I
R Z N J M V S K D B S T P A S L M I I Z
J D K P O E D W O R E M X H E K D B X K
O I Q O V K N V V Q N Z W C M Y L J Q Y
C P B M E I Q U S N E Z I N E D Y X R C
C P X D C M C J W H E P F U N S Y Y J Y

CHAP
OPINION
DENIZENS
ROCKETED
IMAGINATION
MOTORCYCLE
PRIMORDIAL
CONVIVIALITY
DIMENSION
HORSEMEN
ANVIL
STEERAGE

WIN A FREE BOOK OF YOUR CHOICE!

Complete the word search (these words from the *Big Book* or *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* can be forwards, backwards, up, down, or diagonal), and make sure to include your name and phone number or email address. Take a picture of a word search you completed on paper, or take a screen shot of a word search you accessed electronically and used the markup or highlighter feature on your phone or computer, and email it to: lifelinecommittee@oc-aa.org, or mail the completed puzzle to Central Office at 1526 Brookhollow Dr. Suite 75, Santa Ana, CA, 92705. If your answers are correct, your name will be entered into a drawing for a chance to win a free book of your choice from Central Office.

DEADLINE IS DECEMBER 15th

Congratulations to September's winner, Bob C.!