

A declaration of

# unity

This we owe to AA's future;

To place our common welfare first;  
To keep our fellowship united.  
For on AA unity depend our lives,  
And the lives of those to come.

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**HAPPY NEW YEAR**



We are  
going  
to know  
a  
new freedom  
and a  
new  
happiness.

INTERGROUP CORNER

Dayton Area Intergroup met Dec. 11, 1986. Central Office reported income for November as:

Group Contributions	\$1,603.05
Literature Sales	\$9,094.17
	<hr/>
	\$10,697.22
Expenses	\$7,808.54

\* \* \*

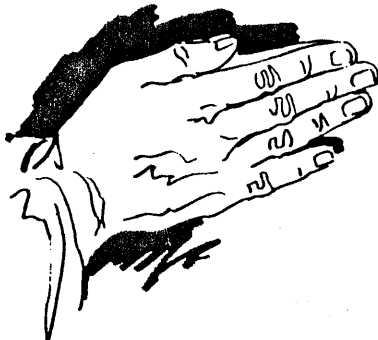
It was announced that Wright-Patterson Hospital's treatment facility is being moved to the VA Center and volunteers are needed to transport patients to outside meetings. For more information, call Les C. (233-8978).

\* \* \*

Intergroup trusted servants for 1987-88 include: Kathy A., secretary; Bill F., archives; Les C., 12th Step List; Frank G. and Bill F., UNITY; Tony S., GSR; Bob C., alternate GSR; Dick P., Special Events. The PI-CP, Institutions, Young People and Grapevine/Literature chairs will be named later.

\* \* \*

Dick P., retiring chairman, thanked Intergroup for the help and support he received during his term of office. He was given a standing ovation.



*20 Seconds of Sanity*

*"When alcohol has beaten you down to your knees, the smartest thing you can do is to stay there and start praying..."*

Barbara S.  
*"The Hummer"*

Some years ago a book called "The Torch Has Been Passed" was published. It dealt with a period of our lives that touched us all. The torch has been passed again, to us. The times are not as tumultuous, and only a few will be affected. Yet our predecessor has touched many and has been the guiding light of this publication for three years and we hope and pray we can follow her path. So, let us begin.

For this new issue of 1987, Kay H. has joined us as staff artist. This year we hope to follow the promises as the monthly theme, hence our first cover. All thoughts, ideas and contributions are appreciated.

*Frank Bill*

#### BILL W. and DAYTON

Bill W. made two visits to Dayton AA during its early years, according to Intergroup files. The first visit was barely a year after AA began here.

According to a letter from Bill to Roy S., one of the local founders, the visit was in November, 1941, and included a trip to "Wright Field" in an attempt to gain the re-instatement of a fellow AA.

The trip was also part of a swing through the Midwest in which Bill tried to see many of the new groups forming, according to an earlier letter from his secretary announcing the visit.

In his letter, Bill reminisced:

"My trip has made me relive some of my early experience in getting a group started. . .the answer is patience and tolerance. We are all fellow travelers, just a bunch of kids trying at long last to grow up."

In March, 1944, Bill returned to participate in an AA anniversary dinner at the Biltmore Hotel. The 12 Traditions had not been written yet so not all the banquet participants maintained anonymity in the newspaper accounts of the event, but Bill, who with Doctor Bob started it all, was simply called:

"One of the national movement founders, who preferred to be designated only as Bill."

## HOW

On page 550 of our book, the storyteller talks about the word how and its application to his recovery. To me, it has been an important part of my recovery. Having been a journalism student in college some years ago, I was told about the 5 Ws and H of writing a newspaper story. I never became that reporter, but writing has always been something I could do. I haven't always followed that basic concept in writing but the H. has become a most important part of my own recovery.

HOW IT WORKS. A thousand, maybe five thousand times, I have heard it read or read it myself but on page 550, it really points out to me the true meaning of the word. H--for Honesty, O--for Openmindedness, W--for Willingness.

HONESTY--the word that my sponsor pointed out to me, after a couple of months in the program, that appears three times in the first paragraph of "How It Works". And he did that by asking me what word appears three times in the first paragraph. I answered "it", "and", "the", because they are the most common words that we all use. I didn't even think about honesty. I wasn't ready. It took a long time to gain a degree of self-honesty and to realize that it is a part of me and my recov-

ery. Without it, I am nothing.

OPENMINDEDNESS--Another thing I thought I had until I looked at those glaring character defects. Judgemental. Intolerance. Self-Centeredness. Most of all, Ego. Until I got to Steps 6 and 7 and gained a small degree of humility, did some of those feelings and defects begin to go away. Not disappear entirely. Another interesting three words in Step 7, WERE ENTIRELY READY, did they begin to go away.

WILLINGNESS -- That is the key to open that doorway to happiness and a brand new way of life that Step 3 tells me I can have.

That is what How means to me and only God and I can achieve -- together.

And that is How It Works for me.

Frank G.

*20 Seconds of Sanity*

*Steps 1, 2 & 3 -- Giving Up.*

*Steps 4, 5 & 6 -- Owning Up.*

*Steps 7, 8 & 9 -- Making Up.*

*Steps 10, 11 & 12--Growing Up.*



## HOW IS "A GROUP INVENTORY" TAKEN?

Many groups periodically take a "group inventory," using one meeting for an honest and fearless discussion of the group's weaknesses--and strengths.

Many groups have written G.S.O. that a group inventory perked up their A.A. activity and made sobriety more exciting and enjoyable--besides getting the message to more and more alcoholics.

The most popular form for taking a group inventory has been the set of questions which the Three Legacies Group, Spokane, Wash., used effectively.

For groups that want to Tenth Step themselves, here is a recent version--suggestions for a program that may bring the group new health and vitality.

1. What is the basic purpose of the group?
2. What more can the group do to carry the message?
3. Considering the number of alcoholics in our community, are we reaching enough people?
4. What has the group done lately to bring the A.A. message to the attention of physicians, judges, members of the clergy, and others who can be helpful in reaching those in need of A.A.?
5. Is the group attracting only a certain kind of alcoholic, or are we getting a good cross section of our community?
6. Do new members stick with us, or does turnover seem excessive?
7. How effective is our sponsorship? How can it be improved?
8. Has everything practical been done to provide an attractive meeting place?
9. Has enough effort been made to explain to all members the need and value of kitchen and house-keeping work and other services to the group?
10. Is adequate opportunity given to all members to speak and participate in other group activities?
11. Are group officers picked with care and consideration on the basis that officership is a great responsibility and opportunity for Twelfth Step work?
12. Does the group carry its fair share of the jobs of helping intergroup? The Grapevine? G.S.O.? Groups in institutions?
13. Do we give all members their fair chance of keeping informed about the whole of A.A.--Recovery, Unity, and Service?

You'll probably want to add questions of your own.

Reprinted from the pamphlet "The AA Group"

## A Big Book "Index"

While not advocating a short-cut through the Big Book, we pass along this index to some topics we hear discussed around the tables.

Acceptance-14, 449-452

Anger - 64-66, 111

Attitudes- 449

Compassion- 108

Disease- 21-23

Easy Does It-516

Fear- 67,68,115,116

Freedom-553

Honesty- 58,115,481,482,507,550

Humility-12,13,63

Inventory-64to69

Insanity-57

Jealousy-82,119,131

Meditation-86

Patience-82,90,111,118,123,126,127

Prayer-63,83,85 to 87,504

Promises-63,83&84,100,115,116,120

Resentments-64,66,117,119,551

Recovery-126&127

Self-Will-60

Self-Knowledge-7

Selfishness-62

Sex-68 to 70,124,134

Steps59 to 60

Serenity-68,544,551&552

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Understanding-570

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79,93,118,124,152,153,158&159,162,218,229,503,550.

## A C C E P T A N C E

After viewing a current film, "Children of a Lesser God," I pondered the meaning of the title as related to the theme of the drama. It dealt with flawed humans, young folks that are deaf. (Being hard of hearing myself and trying to learn to handle that, I have some empathy with them.)

Now I'm not an experienced drama critic, able to delve into the mind of the artist and feel along with him the depths of the human condition he's probing, but I think I may be right in my reading of his title: this "Lesser God" is incapable of giving a "fair shake" to his creatures, his "Children." They are carrying the weight of a handicap that makes them less than human; it's hard for them to be accepted in the "normal" world, and, what's even worse, it's hard for them to accept themselves.

In brief, a person so flawed is faced with the daily question, even though unspoken: "How do I, a 'sub-human,' function in a human world? Am I, already humiliated by many examples of non-acceptance, willing to reach out humbly for help to some who can and do offer such hope?"

Suddenly, at this point in my musings on the characters and events in this powerful story, I was struck by the strong parallel between their condition and mine as an alcoholic. How I too have felt degraded by the scorn of the "normal" world, confused and resentful and angry that I've been denied a "fair deal." And rejecting, by reason of this angry humiliation, the proffered hand for a better life.

Can you see why my sympathy for these unfortunates moved on to empathy? That I felt one with them? I cried unashamedly at their rousing success in an endeavor that, to the "normal," was routine. They were not cured, any more than I have recovered from my disease, but they'd made a step forward in learning to live with their handicap, in self-esteem, and confidence that they could "make it," in the realization that living is a "process" (as we say in our program), a "one-day-at-a-time" effort to cope.

In their acceptance I saw a mirror of my own. As they began learning to look clearly at the real world and their place in it through eyes undimmed by self-pity, they became more willing to take the hand reached out to them in love, and, by this act of honesty and humility, find a measure of happiness. So have I been blessed: I no longer see myself as a creature of misfortune, a blighted "Child of a Lesser God," but I now believe in the love of my Creator, one who wants my joy to sometime be complete. About this there is much I don't grasp, but this I know from concrete evidence: the life I now have is far better than what I've known before. Often when I say, "Thy will be done," it comes to me that, possibly for the first time in my long life, I can understand and mean this well-worn phrase. In these youngsters' exuberance, I saw this oldster's joy at the adventure he's been blessed with. I praise my God for his goodness to me, shown through my brothers and sisters in the fellowship, and I pray that the unaccepting, angry ones who still suffer what I did will find the same gift.

Don S.

## BUT FOR THE GRACE OF GOD

A few weeks ago some of my office mates and I were looking out the window at two drunks staggering down the street. Both were wearing a few weeks or even months of road grime on their proverbial overcoats. Even though it was only 10 o'clock in the morning, these two alcoholics were already drunk.

They managed to stay on their feet by combining their opposing forces. As one fell backward, the other fell forward. Somehow, they were able to move along, but very slowly and precariously.

This is not a particularly unusual scene in the Washington area. This episode in degradation probably repeats itself a few hundred times a day. But, we have become desensitized in varying degrees to these blaring examples of human suffering because it becomes necessary to protect ourselves from their horror. This is a very normal survival technique, but what continues to amaze me are the reactions of some people to the chronic alcoholic.

Some of my co-workers suggested modes of treatment for alcoholism; ranging from Jesus to jobs, exile to execution. Their disgust, disdain and anger are not confined to the office, or even the office building. Even though we know more about alcoholism today than ever before; facts and figures do not always shape our emotional reactions. These responses seem to be immune to even the most confirmed truths coming from the most respected of our medical institutions.

We often hear of an alcoholic who was shunned by his family, and the subject of his drinking was a conversational taboo. His drinking brought shame and guilt, maybe even disgrace to the family. Yet, if another of its members becomes sick with a serious illness such as cancer or heart disease, the family's reaction may be quite different. Relatives may come from far away to lend real and emotional support. In contrast,

the institutionalization of the alcoholic is often a lonely experience as his drinking has alienated family and friends.

Clearly, the symptoms of alcoholism are very different from cancer or heart disease. But they are all very serious medical problems; and while cancer and heart disease are not always fatal, alcoholism is.

Treatment for the alcoholic is not simple or inexpensive. One of the most resilient symptoms of the disease is denial. It is not uncommon to hear of alcoholics being hospitalized on numerous occasions; each time returning to drinking shortly after discharge with the only visible change being that the severity of the symptoms have increased. It is unfortunate, but the newly sober alcoholic often mistakes recovery for cure.

When we go to an A.A. meeting and notice that someone there has been drinking or is actually drunk, the room fills with tension. We are made uneasy and we get angry. For that sick individual becomes a window through which we see things of ourselves when we were drunk. It is not a pretty or glamorous picture, but more often it is embarrassing and degrading.

But it is not the person we are angry with or frightened of, it is the disease itself. We are reminded of how powerful, cunning, and baffling alcoholism really is. We are also reminded that if we are alcoholic now, we will be alcoholic for the rest of our lives. If we are sober today, we have a reprieve, but only on a daily basis.

We can only hope that the alcoholic who is drunk at the meeting will continue to come to A.A. For if he is like most of the alcoholics in the Program, he will not be struck sober at the first meeting he staggers into. And we need him as much as he needs us.

Emilio A.  
Takoma Park, MD.

From the Washington Area Intergroup  
"New Reporter"



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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

- INTERGROUP** ----- meets Thursday, Jan. 8 at 8 p.m. at Otterbein Methodist Church, corner of Xenia and Keowee. Visitors welcome.
- WORKSHOP** ----- A Women's Workshop planning session will be held at 2 p.m., Sunday, Jan. 11 at Alco-Aides Club, upstairs.
- NEW MEETING** ----- Women's Discussion group, 7 p.m. Thursday at Wright State Medical Building adjacent to Greene Memorial Hospital, Wilson Drive, Xenia.
- ANNIVERSARY** ----- Saturday, Jan. 17, at 7 a.m. the New Lebanon Saturday Morning Early (Step) Group celebrates its anniversary with breakfast. Meeting located upstairs at the fire station on U.S. 35.
- MOVING** ----- The Monday Eves Group is moving on Monday, Jan. 5, to Fairmont Presbyterian Church, 3705 Far Hills Ave. Time is 8:30 p.m. Location is basement of church.
- HELP!!** ----- Male and female members in good standing of Southside Club who have at least two consecutive years of sobriety and their sponsors' approval are needed to co-lead Beginners' Meetings at 7 p.m. Mondays, Tuesday and Wednesdays. Meeting topics include: (1) How to Stay Away from One Drink One Day At A Time; (2) Alcoholism, the Disease; (3) How It Works; (4) The Twelve Traditions; (5) AA in Print, and (6) Other Factors in AA Recovery. An organizational meeting is scheduled 7 p.m., Thursday, Jan. 8 at Southside. For more information, call Helen B. at 433-3501 or Ruth Y. at 885-4274.
- DISCONTINUE** ----- The Open AA Step meeting dealing with issues of Adult Children of Alcoholics at 7:30 p.m. Wednesdays at Oakwoods's St. Paul's Episcopal Church has been canceled. Call Judy K. at 275-9556 if there are any questions.