



Heart To Heart

Regina and Area AA Intergroup Monthly Newsletter (Sk. Canada)

Please have all birthdays, celebrations, announcements, poems, and articles for May submitted to the Editor by April 15th for May publication.

www.aaregina.com

STEP FOUR

“Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.”

I am responsible. When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there. And for that I am responsible.



Regina AA Central Office
 Broad St, Business Center
 #107-845 Broad St.
 Regina, Sk. S4R 8G9
 Open: Mon. Wed. Fri.
 12:00-5:00
 aa@sasktel.net
 Closed Statutory Holidays

24 Hr. Answering Service
 306-545-9300

Service Meetings

All members of Alcoholics Anonymous are welcome to attend.

Office Committee
 Monday before Intergroup
 6:30
 Central Office
 Broad St, Business Center
 #107-845 Broad St.

Intergroup
 First Wednesday of the month
 7:30
 YWCA -1940 McIntyre St.

Districts 15, 17, 18
 Second Wednesday of the month
 7:30
 Mount Olive Lutheran Church
 2015 - 4th Ave. N.

Fears 101: Finding Courage through Step Four

“This is fears 101,” a previous sponsor’s voice still rings in my head when I consider Step Four. My first attempt at an inventory was sincere. Yet my digging was shallow. In an attempt to impress, I listed such gems as spiders, sharks, and others one could find by Googling “common fears.” All legitimate anxieties, mind you. I was missing the point, though, going for quantity over quality. Admitting my fear of sharks wasn’t going to help me uncover defects that would keep me from having a connection with a spiritual power or my fellow man. After a harrowing four-year relapse and ultimate return to AA, my desperation was extreme. With the clarity that came with that surrender, I enthusiastically dug deeper into the Fourth Step with my sponsor. I also sought instructions from workshops. By following this experience and direction, I got a firmer grasp. This Step was not just accounting, but *pattern recognition*. What behaviors and attitudes did I have that were not useful to me or those around me? How was I in my own way? Approaching the Step with this attitude, being fearless was easier. I wanted to truly know myself. Then I could continue working to be rid of what made me miserable. I was not so reticent to dig. I learned that I was insecure and judgmental. I feared that I was insufficient in any endeavor. Turning this outward, I tarred the world, its people, and God with this same brush. The Big Book says, “It is plain that a life which includes deep resentment leads only to futility and unhappiness.” That shoe plainly fit me. Now I had a clearer idea why. After sharing my Fourth Step, I was emboldened to take the other seven.

Our Steps promise a spiritual awakening, not perfection. After years of happy sobriety, I stubbornly made decisions that resulted in a less devastating relapse. I am in the midst of a new Fourth Step. More is continuously revealed as we keep practicing recovery. Here are a few things that have struck me this time: First, it was simpler to get resentments down; practicing Step Ten before my relapse meant fewer buried issues. Second, I listed more resentments than I expected to. I *thought* I was practicing Step Ten well! Third, my fears outnumbered my resentments – the opposite of my prior inventories. Last, while seeing more fears, I was bolder about listing them. Courage is, after all, the principle behind Step Four.

Every time I take the Fourth Step, God grants me more faith and removes more dread. My current inventory is in progress. I already feel a difference in attitude. My grip on resentment is more like holding a kite, not a tug-of-war. I attribute this to “praying for the person or thing you resent.” I’ve found that tool to be powerfully effective. My fear of revealing shortcomings is reduced. A friend noted recently, “You’re very forthcoming these days.” I pray that I remain so.

I’ve seventy-five days sober as of this writing, yet I feel a confidence I’ve not had in sobriety. Not my old bravado of the man with too many years and not enough days. The confidence that I am a child of God, no better or worse than any man; that God loves me, no matter how “good” or “bad” I am. I know in my heart that this courage and faith is bolstered by Step Four.

And for the record, I still put sharks on my fears list.

- Jeff S. Reprinted from the April 2017 issue of The COIN



RECOVERY

Step Four

“Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.”

Next we launched out on a course of vigorous action, the first step of which is a personal housecleaning, which many of us had never attempted. Though our decision was a vital and crucial step, it could have little permanent effect unless at once followed by a strenuous effort to face, and to be rid of, the things in ourselves which had been blocking us. Our liquor was but a symptom. So we had to get down to causes and conditions. First, we searched out the flaws in our make-up which caused our failure. Being convinced that self, manifested in various ways, was what had defeated us, we considered its common manifestations.

Resentment is the “**number one**” offender. It destroys more alcoholics than anything else. From it stem all forms of spiritual disease, for we have been not only mentally and physically ill, we have been spiritually sick. When the spiritual malady is overcome, we straighten out mentally and physically.

In dealing with resentments, we set them on paper.

Column 1. We listed people, institutions or principles with whom we were angry. We went back through our lives. (Begin at age 0-10, 10-20, 20-30, 30-40, etc.)

(Close your eyes and imagine people and events walking through a door, how are you feeling? are you angry?)

Column 2. We asked ourselves why we were angry. (Bill’s example on pg 65 shows the cause of our anger in short point form sentences. We are not meant to relive the story!) She’s a nut—she snubbed me. Committed her husband for drinking. She’s a gossip.

Column 3. In most cases it was found that our self-esteem, our pocketbooks, our ambitions, our personal relationships (including sex) were hurt or threatened. So we were sore. We were “burned up.” On our grudge list we set opposite each name our injuries. Was it our self-esteem, our security, our ambitions, our personal, or sex relations, which had been interfered with?

Nothing counted but thoroughness and honesty.

When we were finished we considered it carefully.

The first thing apparent was that this world and its people were often quite wrong. 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. Sometimes it was remorse and then we were sore at ourselves. But the more we fought and tried to have our own way,

the worse matters got. As in war, the victor only *seemed* to win. Our moments of triumph were short-lived.

With the alcoholic, whose hope is the maintenance and growth of a spiritual experience, this business of resentment is infinitely grave. We found that it is fatal. For when harboring such feelings we shut ourselves off from the sunlight of the Spirit. The insanity of alcohol returns and we drink again. And with us, to drink is to die.

If we were to live, we had to be free of anger.

We turned back to the list, for it held the key to the future. We were prepared to look at it from an entirely different angle. We began to see that the world and its people really dominated us. In that state, the wrong-doing of others, fancied or real, had power to actually kill. How could we escape? We saw that these resentments must be mastered, but how? We could not wish them away any more than alcohol.

This was our course: We realized that the people who wronged us were perhaps spiritually sick.

Though we did not like their symptoms and the way these disturbed us, they, like ourselves, were sick too.

Step Four Prayer

We asked God to help us show them the same tolerance, pity, and patience that we would cheerfully grant a sick friend. When a person offended we said to ourselves, “This is a sick man (We say this prayer inserting the name from column 1, Fred is a sick man, Sue is a sick woman). How can I be helpful to him? God save me from being angry. Thy will be done.”

Column 4. Referring to our list again. Putting out of our minds the wrongs others had done, we resolutely looked for our own mistakes. (Not my part but my mistakes) Though a situation had not been entirely our fault, we tried to disregard the other person involved entirely.

Where were we to blame? The inventory was ours, not the other man’s. When we saw our faults we listed them. We placed them before us in black and white.

We admitted our wrongs honestly and were willing to set these matters straight.

Where had we been Selfish, Dishonest, Self-seeking, Frightened

Alcoholics Anonymous bottom of pg 63-top of pg 68

We reviewed our fears thoroughly. (Column 4 of Resentment inventory, Frightened)

Column 1. We put them on paper, even though we had no resentment in connection with them.

Column 2. We asked ourselves why we had them.

Wasn’t it because self-reliance failed us? Self-reliance was good as far as it went, but it didn’t go far enough. Some of us once had great self-confidence, but it didn’t fully solve the fear problem, or any other. When it made us cocky, it was worse.

Perhaps there is a better way—we think so. For we are now on a different basis: the basis of trusting and relying upon God. We trust infinite God rather than our finite selves. We are in the world to play the role He assigns. Just to the extent that we do as we think He would have us, and humbly rely on Him, does He enable us to match calamity with serenity.

Column 3. (In column 1 and 2 were we?) Self Reliant or God Reliant

We never apologize to anyone for depending upon our Creator. We can laugh at those who think spirituality the way of weakness. Paradoxically, it is the way of strength. The verdict of the ages is that faith means courage. All men of faith have courage. They trust their God. We never apologize for God. Instead we let Him demonstrate, through us, what He can do.

Fear Prayer

We ask Him to remove our fear and direct our attention to what He would have us be. (Not do) At once, we commence to outgrow fear. Alcoholics Anonymous pg 68

Now about sex. Many of us needed an overhauling there. But above all, we tried to be sensible on this question. It’s so easy to get way off the track. Here we find human opinions running to extremes absurd extremes, perhaps.

We want to stay out of this controversy. We do not want to be the arbiter of anyone’s sex conduct. We all have sex problems. We’d hardly be human if we didn’t. What can we do about them?

We reviewed our own conduct over the years past.

Column 1. Whom had we hurt?

Column 2. Where had we been: Selfish, Dishonest, Inconsiderate

Column 3. Did we unjustifiably arouse jealousy, suspicion or bitterness?

Column 4. Where were we at fault? What should (Not could) we have done instead?

In this way we tried to shape a sane and sound ideal for our future sex life. Whatever our ideal turns out to be, we must be willing to grow toward it.

Suppose we fall short of the chosen ideal and stumble? Does this mean we are going to get drunk? Some people tell us so. But this is only a half-truth. It depends on us and on our motives. If we are sorry for what we have done, and have the honest desire to let God take us to better things, we believe we will be forgiven and will have learned our lesson. If we are not sorry, and our conduct continues to harm others, we are quite sure to drink. We are not theorizing. These are facts out of our experience.

We got this all down on paper and looked at it.

Column 5. We subjected each relation to this test—was it selfish or not?

Sex Prayers

We asked God to mold our ideals and help us to live up to them.

We earnestly pray for the right ideal, for guidance in each questionable situation, for sanity, and for the strength to do the right thing.

In meditation, we ask God what we should do about each specific matter. The right answer will come, if we want it. Alcoholics Anonymous bottom of pg 68-pg 70

Spiritual Principle
Step Four
COURAGE

If we have been thorough about our personal inventory, we have written down a lot. We have listed and analyzed our resentments. We have begun to comprehend their futility and their fatality. We have commenced to see their terrible destructiveness. We have begun to learn tolerance, patience and good will toward all men, even our enemies, for we look on them as sick people. We have listed the people we have hurt by our conduct, and are willing to straighten out the past if we can. (Step 8) Alcoholics Anonymous bottom of pg 70-71

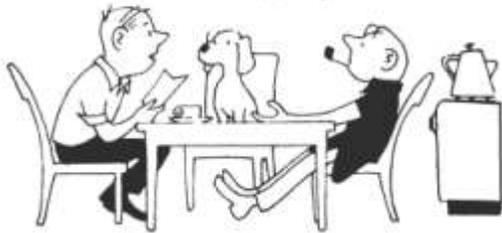
U N I T Y

Tradition Four: It's All About Autonomy

This tradition tells us that “each group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole.” On the surface, this concept is quite simple and straightforward. According to Webster’s Dictionary, autonomy means that individual groups can think and act independently. This eliminates any central authority or hierarchical relationship amongst the thousands of AA meeting groups. Reasonably straightforward. On a much deeper level, investigation of the word “autonomous” yields a more complex meaning. According to Kant, autonomy would mean that AA groups ought to act in accordance with their moral duty rather than selfish desires. I’m not implying that Bill W. had this in mind when writing the Fourth Tradition. Nonetheless, it is a worthy aspiration for those of us who help in the self-management of AA meeting groups. I would like to provide a final perspective by taking from the words of Dr. Bob. On the day before he passed away in November of 1950, Bob told his friend Bill, “Remember Bill, let’s not louse this thing up. Let’s keep it simple.” There is a beautiful, Midwestern, practical country doctor wisdom in those words. Frankly, it sums up all the Traditions. There is no formal organization. There is no control to be exercised over others. We can run our individual groups how we see fit, provided we do not mess up other groups’ efforts to keep the alcoholic sober or act in a manner that reflects negatively on the program as a whole. Whether you turn to Bill W., Dr. Bob, Noah Webster, or Immanuel Kant, it is important to remember that an AA group is its own entity, but should aspire to follow a moral duty and keep it simple.

- JD D. Reprinted from the April 2015 issue of *The COIN*

There are all kinds of groups...
Little groups...

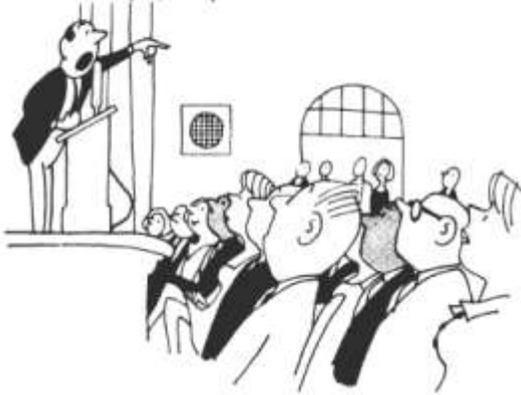


Spiritual Principle
Tradition Four

AUTONOMY

Vibank Roundup
April 6, 2019
Regina Roundup
April 26, 27, 2019

and big groups...



Tradition Four:

With respect to its own affairs, each A.A. group should be responsible to no other authority other than its own conscience. But when its plans concern the welfare of neighboring groups also, those groups ought to be consulted. And no group, regional committee, or individual should ever take any action that might greatly affect A.A. as a whole without conferring with the trustees of the General Service Board. On such issues our common welfare is paramount.

1. Do I insist that there are only a few right ways of doing things in AA?
2. Does my group always consider the welfare of the rest of AA? Of nearby groups? Of loners in Alaska? Of internationalists miles from port? Of a group in Rome or El Salvador?
3. Do I put down other members' behavior when it is different from mine, or do I learn from it?
4. Do I always bear in mind that, to those outsiders who know I am in AA, I may to some extent represent our entire beloved Fellowship?
5. Am I willing to help a newcomer go to any lengths— his lengths, not mine—to stay sober?
6. Do I share my knowledge of AA tools with other members who may not have heard of them?

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Harmony

Joan F....35yrs....April 5, 1984
Alan H.....2yrs....April 12, 2017

Comforted by the Similarities, Excited by the Differences

I've recently had some experiences that showed me how the concept of autonomy in Tradition Four applies not only to meetings, but to sponsorship, and in my personal affairs. After about five months of sobriety, I had taken the steps, and decided to change sponsors because a man had offered to help me study the 12 Traditions. After we had studied the traditions, I asked this man to be my sponsor, but was apprehensive, because I didn't want to repeat the steps. Thankfully, my new sponsor did not ask me to repeat the steps. We reviewed my amends list, and he shared with me some of his experience with the “maintenance” steps of our beloved program. As each group is autonomous, and is free to manage its own affairs, each approach to sponsorship is autonomous. Unless the sponsor is not teaching the program of recovery laid out in our literature, I feel diversity in AA sponsorship techniques should be encouraged. I may not agree with the way certain groups manage their affairs. Sometimes I forget that every group has the right to be wrong. The 12 Traditions, distilled from years of AA experience, have a built-in self correcting mechanism. As the habit of self-reflection called for in the steps puts us in a frame of mind to uncover and discard things that don't work in our characters, the traditions encourage that same process in our meetings. Because of the traditions, all groups can't make the same mistake at the same time. Individual meetings may fail while the fellowship as a whole survives. I recently attended a meeting in a garage in Sugar House, Utah, as well as a meeting at the Triangle Club in Reno. Both groups had unfamiliar formats, but as a visitor, I experienced the same warm welcome and unconditional love that I did when I walked into my first meeting in San Jose. I was intrigued by their differences, and it reminded me that our message is carried in a variety of ways. Because every group is autonomous, I can be comforted by the familiar and excited about the differences. Autonomy has practical applications that extend to our relations with family members, friends, and others. If I don't grant autonomy to the people in my life, giving them the right to be wrong, I end up micromanaging them, effectively playing God. I am not the alpha and omega, the divine facilitator of karma, or the authority on all things human, I am just one man with a desire to stop drinking and a responsibility to share my recovery with those who still suffer. The best solution turns out to be acceptance through autonomy.

- Coree H. Reprinted from the April 2015 issue of *The COIN*

S E R V I C E

Concept Four: Workers Participate in Decisions

People are sometimes surprised by certain facts about AA service, such as: that we have three corporations working for us in New York, that a third of the Trustees responsible for those corporations are non-alcoholics (who serve long hours for no pay), or that we pay our professional staff at those corporations a competitive wage.

And when you tell people about the General Service Conference that's held in New York every spring, where AA's biggest policy decisions are made, two things often surprise them. One is that the 93 elected delegates, sent by the groups, do not have to vote the way the groups tell them to. And another is that up to a third of the people talking and voting at the Conference are not elected delegates, but instead are from the corporations – the trustees, directors, and even a few of those well-paid staff members.

These two things seems to conflict with Tradition Two. If a Higher Power speaks through the groups, shouldn't the groups elect delegates who vote exactly as they are told to? And if someone wasn't elected by the groups, shouldn't we exclude them from voting?

In his writing on Concept Four, Bill imagines that exact scenario: The groups elect delegates who are meek messengers, voting exactly as they are instructed by their areas, and only these obedient robots can speak or vote at the Conference. Everyone else, from the corporate trustees and directors, to the executive editor of the Grapevine and the general manager of AA World Services, to the dozen-or-so alcoholic staffers who handle tens of thousands of our calls and emails every year, would be "called into committee meetings only to make suggestions and reports, answer questions, and receive orders."

Instead, in Concept Four, Bill says that everyone who works at a given level of service should have a vote at that level, including people who do front-line work such as editing a magazine, managing a corporation, and taking calls on group issues, corrections, public information, treatment, accessibilities, and so on. Some of his reasons are simple and practical – because we need their knowledge, because they must do the actual work, because we value them and want them to feel included. Two other reasons come from loftier principles that appear often throughout the Concepts. One is that responsibility and authority should always go together: We never give anybody one without the other. So we "trust our trusted servants" with a real voice and a vote. And the second is that to do otherwise is "tyranny" – ruling by forceful authority. That's just not who we are, and by encouraging our workers to speak up, we reduce the chance that we'll ever become that way. There should rarely be any use of forceful or "ultimate" authority anywhere in our service structure, even as we delegate responsibility and authority from the groups, to the delegates, to the trustees and directors, to the managers and staff. In our group decision process at any of those levels, there should never be any superiors or inferiors. Just AA's trusted servants working together.

Which brings us to Concept Four: "Throughout our Conference structure, we ought to maintain at all responsible levels a traditional 'Right of Participation,' taking care that each classification or group of our world servants shall be allowed a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge."

– Jim F.

Reprinted from the March 2016 issue of *The COIN*

Concept Four

At all responsible levels, we ought to maintain a traditional "Right of Participation," allowing a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge.

1. Do we understand the spiritual principles underlying the "Right of Participation"?

2. What does "in reasonable proportion" mean? Do we understand when it is appropriate for A.A. paid staff to have a vote at the General Service Conference or in our local service structure?

3. Do we expect that, because we are A.A. members, we should be allowed to vote at any group, even if we are not active members of that group?

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Friday, April 26, 2019	
5:30 pm	Registration
7:00— 7:15 pm	Welcome
7:15— 8:15 pm	AA Speaker — Joanne M. (Winnipeg)
8:30— 9:00 pm	Ice Cream Social
9:00—10:00 pm	Open AA Meeting — Balzer Room
9:00—11:00 pm	Entertainment and Fellowship Music provided by Gilbert P. (Regina)
Saturday, April 27, 2019	
9:00 am	Registration
9:30—10:30 am	Open Call up Meeting
10:45—11:45 am	A.A. Youth Speaker — Avery I. (Regina)
12:00— 1:00 pm	Lunch
1:15— 2:00 pm	Al-Anon Speaker — Mark M. (Regina)
2:15— 3:30 pm	A.A. AND Al-Anon Panel Discussion
3:45— 4:45 pm	Open Meeting & Fellowship—Balzer Room
3:45— 5:00 pm	MAIN HALL CLOSED
5:15— 8:30 pm	Banquet
6:45— 7:30 pm	Al-Anon Speaker — Jodi F. (Regina)
7:45— 8:45 pm	A.A. Speaker — Bob K. (BC/Yukon)
9:00—10:00 pm	Open AA Meeting — Balzer Room
9:00—11:00 pm	Entertainment and Fellowship Music provided by Gilbert P. (Regina)

Tickets	
ADVANCE TICKETS (Available until April 19, 2019)	All Inclusive: \$65.00
All Meals, Speakers & Events, both days	
FRIDAY ONLY REGISTRATION (At the Door): \$10.00	Includes Everything on Friday ONLY
SATURDAY ONLY REGISTRATION (At the Door): \$20.00	Everything Saturday except meals (No Lunch or Banquet)
We Accept Cash & E-Transfer Only	
For Information/E-Transfer: courtney2019@aregina.com	
For Tickets:	
Central Office	(306) 545-8300
Jim J.	(306) 525-4064
Christine E.	(306) 546-3230
Dave B.	(306) 535-6446
Accommodations:	
Super 8 by Wyndham - Pk. 1-855-515-1093	
Booking Code: "Lorraine" - \$95.00/night	
Booking Deadline: April 18, 2019	

Intergroup wants to express our appreciation

for those groups and individuals who have made generous financial contributions, and give a special thank you to all the members who volunteer their time to help the sick and suffering alcoholic.

The following Groups made contributions to Intergroup up to February 15, 2019

Ramada, Sunday @9, Fireside,
Vibank, Northside AA

Spiritual Principle
Concept Four
EQUALITY

Examples of Group Contributions to A.A. Service Entities



Heart to Heart is the newsletter voice of Regina area AA. Regina Intergroup as a service to the AA community publishes it. It uses the basic intent of the AA Grapevine policy and mission statement as its editorial policy. Its intent is to enhance an already strong recovery community by providing a vehicle for sharing the combined recovery messages and our experiences, strengths and hopes. You and your group can contribute to its financial survival through your group and tax-deductible donations to Regina AA Intergroup Office. Any of the articles in this publication are the opinion of the writers and do not necessarily reflect official AA position.