



# Heart To Heart

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

www.aaregina.com

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

## 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.”**

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  
a.a@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

St. Paul's Cathedral  
1860 McIntyre St.

Districts 15, 17, 18  
Second Wednesday of the month  
7:30

Mount Olive Lutheran Church  
2015 - 4th Ave. N.

My Understanding of Step Eleven

I have a little over 18 months of AA sobriety. AA has impacted and benefitted my life in ways I could not have imagined 19 months ago. However, since day one, I have not been able come to grips with the notion of “God as I understand Him.” I got through the first ten Steps by paying lip service to the concept of God. I paid that lip service simply so I could get by my sponsor. When I got to Step Eleven, I knew that if I was to be honest with myself, I must resolve my concept of God, and to do that, I must find words to describe “God as I understand Him.”

I am not a religious person, let alone an Episcopalian, but my description of “God as I understand Him” was written by Episcopalian Bishop John Shelby Spong, which I paraphrase as follows:

God is not apart from us but is the very core and ground of all that is. God is not a power beyond this world or a being we could debate. God is neither a divine worker of miracles nor a dispenser of rewards and punishments. God is not a capricious heavenly super parent who comforts us, hears our cries and becomes the Mr. Fix-it for some while allowing others to endure their pain to the bitter end in a radically unfair world.

God is the infinite center of life. God is not a person but rather a spiritual presence in which all personhood flourishes. God is not a being, but rather the power called forth in all creatures. God is not an external personal force that could be invoked, but rather an internal reality that, when confronted, opens us to the meaning of life itself.

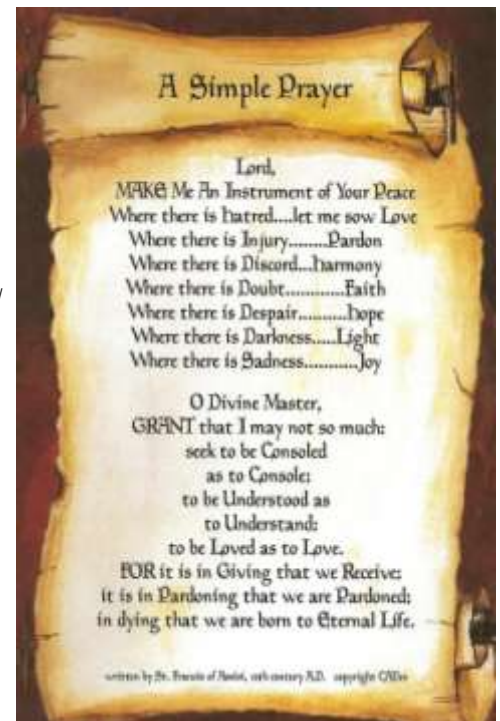
Step Eleven requires prayer. My lifelong understanding of prayer was as a petition to or act of worship of a supreme being that exists somewhere outside of our world. It is a dilemma for me that my lifelong understanding of prayer has no place or purpose in my concept of God.

Spong resolves my dilemma by providing a definition of prayer, which I quote below:

Prayer is the offering of our life and our love through the simple action of sharing our friendship and our acceptance. Prayer is my being calling to the being of another and thus giving that other the courage to dare, to risk, and to be in a whole new way, **perhaps inside a whole new dimension of life....** Prayer is the active recognition that there is a sacred core in every person that **must not be violated.** Prayer is the facing of life's exigencies, which involves us all in the realization that we live subject to a wide array of circumstances over which we have no control. Prayer is not cowering before these circumstances, but rather being willing to meet them with courage. Prayer is the ability to embrace the fragility of life and to transform it even as we are victimized or killed by it. Prayer involves shedding the delusion that we are the center of the universe or that our lives are so important to some external deity that this deity will intervene to protect us. Prayer is a call out of childish dependency into spiritual maturity.

In the 12x12, there is a prayer (the prayer of St. Francis – the Eleventh Step prayer) that contains the words, “...It is better to comfort than to be comforted, to understand than to be understood, to love than to be loved.” The 12x12 goes on to say that by remembering these words, “...we will be following the intent of Step Eleven.” I believe that in taking the actions prescribed by Spong's definition of prayer, I cannot help but to increase my conscious contact with God. I believe that in taking the actions prescribed by Spong's definition of prayer, I cannot help but seek to comfort rather than to be comforted, to understand rather than to be understood, to love rather than to be loved. I believe that by taking the actions prescribed by Spong's definition of prayer, I cannot help but to follow the intent of Step Eleven.

- Dan C. The Coin November 2016



# RECOVERY

## 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.



"My name is John and I haven't had a drink for 36 days."



**Happy Birthday to those celebrating milestones of sobriety...those 24hrs add up!**

### Women's Serenity

Kayla S.....2yrs.....Nov.1,2017

Heather A....7yrs....Nov.21, 2012

### Monday Novalco

Darren S....22yrs..Nov.17, 1997

### 12 STEP WORK AVAILABLE!

Your group can carry the message of recovery to another alcoholic by chairing meetings at Regina Detox

The General Hospital—Liver & Onions Pine Lodge Treatment Center

Contact:

Intergroup Treatment Chair

treatmentfacilitieschair@aaregina.com



**The better I understand God, the less I know God.**

Spiritual Principle  
Step Eleven

**SPIRITUAL AWARENESS**

Step Eleven suggests prayer and meditation. We shouldn't be shy on this matter of prayer. Better men than we are using it constantly. It works, if we have the proper attitude and work at it. It would be easy to be vague about this matter. Yet, we believe we can make some definite and valuable suggestions.

WHEN WE RETIRE AT NIGHT, we constructively review our day.

1. Were we resentful, selfish, dishonest or afraid?
2. Do we owe an apology?
3. Have we kept something to ourselves which should be discussed with another person at once?
4. Were we kind and loving toward all?
5. What could we have done better?
6. Were we thinking of ourselves most of the time?
7. Or were we thinking of what we could do for others, of what we could pack into the stream of life?

But we must be careful not to drift into worry, remorse or morbid reflection, for that would diminish our usefulness to others. After making our review we ask God's forgiveness and inquire what corrective measures should be taken.

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. Under these conditions we can employ our mental faculties with assurance, for after all God gave us brains to use. Our thought-life will be placed on a much higher plane when our thinking is cleared of wrong motives.

IN THINKING ABOUT OUR DAY we may face indecision. We may not be able to determine which course to take. Here we ask God for inspiration, an intuitive thought or a decision. We relax and take it easy. We don't struggle. We are often surprised how the right answers come after we have tried this for a while. What used to be the hunch or the occasional inspiration gradually becomes a working part of the mind. Being still inexperienced and having just made conscious contact with God, it is not probable that we are going to be inspired at all times. We might pay for this presumption in all sorts of absurd actions and ideas. Nevertheless, we find that our thinking will, as time passes, be more and more on the plane of inspiration. We come to rely upon it.

WE USUALLY CONCLUDE the period of meditation with a prayer that we be shown all through the day what our next step is to be, that we be given whatever we need to take care of such problems. We ask especially for freedom from self-will, and are careful to make no request for ourselves only. We may ask for ourselves, however, if others will be helped. We are careful never to pray for our own selfish ends. Many of us have wasted a lot of time doing that and it doesn't work. You can easily see why.

IF CIRCUMSTANCES WARRANT, we ask our wives or friends to join us in morning meditation. If we belong to a religious denomination which requires a definite morning devotion, we attend to that also. If not members of religious bodies, we sometimes select and memorize a few set prayers which emphasize the principles we have been discussing. There are many helpful books also. Suggestions about these may be obtained from one's priest, minister, or rabbi. Be quick to see where religious people are right. Make use of what they offer.

AS WE GO THROUGH THE DAY we pause, when agitated or doubtful, and ask for the right thought or action. We constantly remind ourselves we are no longer running the show, humbly saying to ourselves many times each day "Thy will be done." We are then in much less danger of excitement, fear, anger, worry, self-pity, or foolish decisions. We become much more efficient. We do not tire so easily, for we are not burning up energy foolishly as we did when we were trying to arrange life to suit ourselves.

IT WORKS - IT REALLY DOES.

We alcoholics are undisciplined. So we let God discipline us in the simple way we have just outlined

Alcoholics Anonymous 4th Edition pgs 86-88

AA works for people who believe in God.  
**AA WORKS FOR PEOPLE WHO DON'T believe in God.**  
AA never works for people who believe they are God!

Don't think too much.  
you'll create a problem that wasn't even there in the first place.

# U N I T Y

## Tradition Eleven

Our relations with the general public should be characterized by personal anonymity. We think A.A. ought to avoid sensational advertising. Our names and pictures as A.A. members ought not be broadcast, filmed, or publicly printed. Our public relations should be guided by the principle of attraction rather than promotion. There is never need to praise ourselves.

We feel it better to let our friends recommend us.

Alcoholics Anonymous 4th Edition pg 565



### 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.

1. Do I sometimes promote AA so fanatically that I make it seem unattractive?
2. Am I always careful to keep the confidences reposed in me as an AA member?
3. Am I careful about throwing AA names around—even within the Fellowship?
4. Am I ashamed of being a recovered, or recovering, alcoholic?
5. What would AA be like if we were not guided by the ideas in Tradition Eleven? Where would I be?
6. Is my AA sobriety attractive enough that a sick drunk would want such a quality for himself?

www.aagrapevine.org

### Spiritual Principle Tradition Eleven

## ANONYMITY



### Black and White, or are there Shades of Grey?

“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.” In the current climate of fearless self and company promotion, that sounds ancient and irrelevant! It’s neither.

Tradition Eleven & Public Relations - Intergroup Reps were recently asked to put up some general information about AA around our community; in places like churches, community centers, supermarket bulletin boards, etc. Of course we needed to first obtain permission from the venue. The general idea was to provide public service information, including AA’s local intergroup office phone number. There was some lively discussion around this request, as well as its potential for it to be thought of as ‘promotional’. As I see it in this tradition, we want people to be attracted to AA. We aren’t dragging people off of barstools anymore (we read how well that worked for Bill!) So, is this ‘promoting AA and our Program’ or is it providing valuable information to people who may not be aware of what we do?

The fliers headline is “If you want to drink, that’s your business. If you want to stop, we can help. Alcoholics Anonymous” The representative gave us some history around the use of this phrase which apparently goes back more than 20 years and was approved by AA’s NY General Service Board. Personally, I think the message is great. I’ve heard variations of the same phrase around the rooms for years. In travels to Canada, I’ve seen commercials on both network and cable TV about AA. Of course, they used actors in the roles of alcoholics. Apparently the commercials are very successful in getting the message about recovery to people in remote areas. They are professional and informative.

Attraction not promotion – As our co-founder, Bill W. wrote: “Public information takes many forms – the simple sign outside a meeting place that says ‘A.A. meeting tonight’; listing in local phone directories; distribution of A.A. literature; and radio and television shows using sophisticated media techniques.

Whatever the form, it comes down to ‘one drunk carrying the message to another drunk’, whether through personal contact or through the use of third parties and the media.” From GSO Box 459, AA Guidelines

Attraction? Absolutely! As every newcomer gets to learn - ‘we are not a glum lot’.

Tradition Eleven & Personal Anonymity - “Modern communication in A.A. is flowing from one alcoholic to another in ways that are high-tech, relatively open-ended and evolving quickly. Protecting anonymity is a major concern for members, who are accessing the internet in ever-growing numbers.”

Service material from the General Service Office

What this means to me is that since things evolve rapidly in our society today, we should be even more conscious of our personal anonymity, and the anonymity of our fellows.

“When using digital media, A.A. members are responsible for their own anonymity and that of others. When we post, text, or blog, we should assume that we are publishing at the public level. When we break our anonymity in these forums, we may inadvertently break the anonymity of others.”

Pamphlet Understanding Anonymity, p.5

When it comes to our very robust and healthy fellowship here in the Santa Clara Valley, I feel fortunate. Combined with a fairly well engaged membership we also have many events.

Some events are put on by AA Central Office and others put on by groups. Regardless of the event or venue, we can easily get caught up in the festivities and forget about Tradition Eleven. This is especially true in the area of photographs and social media. We need to remember that we are inside an AA event, and that many people don’t want to show up in the background of someone’s Facebook or Instagram posts. Not everyone is ‘out’ to their families, friends and co-workers. Although it’s illegal, **someone I know well was ‘outed’ in an AA photo and then fired from their job.** There has been a great deal of progress made in the area of education related to alcoholism and addiction; however some parts of society remain ignorant. We must be aware of them and never let up in our quest for education about this deadly disease.

Even if all we are doing is to carry the message to newcomers that they shouldn’t simply take out their phones and snap pictures that should be enough. Once the newcomers have a foothold in AA we get to share with them the principle of anonymity and its spiritual significance.

# S E R V I C E

## Concept Eleven

While the Trustees, acting together as the General Service Board (Great Britain) hold final responsibility for A.A.'s service administration, they should always have the assistance of the best possible committees, service executives, staffs and consultants. Therefore the composition of committees and service assemblies, the personal qualifications of their members, the manner of their induction into service, the systems of their rotation, the way in which they are related to each other, the special rights and duties of our executives, staffs and consultants, together with a proper basis for the financial compensation of these special workers, will always be matters for serious care and concern.

Summarized from *The A.A. Service Manual*, and the pamphlet, *The Twelve Concepts for World Service, Illustrated*.

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 in September 2019

Heartview Group

Harmony Group

Novalco Group

Acceptance is the Answer Group



Concept Eleven Checklist  
*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.*

1. Do we understand how the roles of non-trustee directors and non-trustee appointed committee members help serve and strengthen the committee system?
2. How do we encourage our special paid workers to exercise their traditional "Right of Participation"?
3. Do we practice rotation in all our service positions?

[www.grapevine.org](http://www.grapevine.org)

*"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."*

Concept Eleven is one of the concepts that is devoted to describing the relationship of various service entities and how they work together. The Trustees hold final responsibility for AA's World service administration, but they will always need the assistance of the best possible standing committees, corporate service directors, executive staffs and consultants. The way in which all of these entities are formed and function is handled with great care. In a nutshell, Concept XI boils down to these four guidelines:

- 1) The status of executives: Competent executive direction must always be held by one person with whatever assistance is needed. This one person must have ample freedom and authority to do the job as long as the work is well done. It is inefficient to have too many cooks in the kitchen.
- 2) How to compensate paid workers: Each paid executive, staff member or consultant should be paid in reasonable relation to the value of the similar service or ability in the commercial world. Cheap help is apt to feel insecure and inefficient which may be more costly in the long run. In other words, if you pay peanuts, you may get monkeys.
- 3) Rotation among paid staff workers: The spirit of rotation is exercised by most paid staff members. At AA's General Service Office, most of the staff member's assignments are changed every two years. Each staff member is expected to possess the general ability to do, or to learn how to do, any job in the place except for office management. It can be summed up as "Musical Hats".
- 4) Full "Participation" of paid workers is very important: Paid personnel should enjoy a status that is suitable to their responsibility just as our volunteers do; therefore, they must be able to vote. As Bill Wilson declared, "Members of this group not only support the leadership of the Trustees, they share leadership with them."

Anonymous Desert Lifeline, November 2014

## Thinking of doing some service work?

How about trying something new! We are looking for some dedicated people to join our Public Information/CPC Committee. So what does this committee do?

Our primary purpose is to carry the AA message to the still suffering alcoholic.

The Public Information Committee's service involves conveying AA information to the general public, including media. This does not mean we break our anonymity.

Cooperation with the Professional Community (CPC) services are slightly different, (but work in cooperation with Public Information) in that we distribute AA information to those in contact with alcoholics through their professions. i.e. nurses, doctors, psychiatrists, union representatives, Recovery Institutions, Health Authorities, Justice, Human Resource management, etc... The first requirement to be of service in the committee is: sound sobriety, thoroughly familiar with the AA program, able to provide consistent and accurate information about the Fellowship, an understanding of the 12 traditions, including a firm grasp of the ANONYMITY traditions. Experience in public relations is NOT necessary. It's an exciting committee, but there's lots of work to do and we need more members. Please think about this service. Bring your passion and ideas to our committee it's so rewarding!

Contact: Lorraine Z. email: [infochair@aregina.com](mailto:infochair@aregina.com)

Spiritual Principle  
Concept Eleven

# HUMILITY

THE TASK AHEAD  
OF YOU IS  
NEVER AS GREAT  
AS THE POWER  
BEHIND YOU.

*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.*