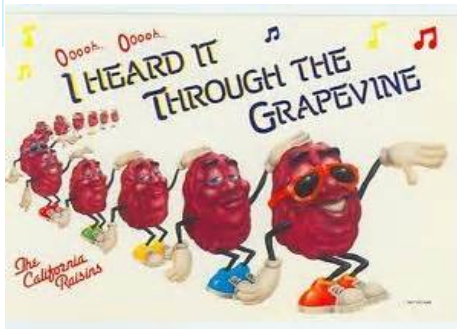


# The Paper III



Gary Brown has retired as Manager of the Indianapolis Intergroup Office as of January 1, 2014. Thanks, Gary for all your service work. You will be missed.

Intergroup's new Manager is Bruce J. who officially started January 13. Of his new position Bruce says:

*I could not be happier, excited & honored to be here. There is a set of pictures sitting on the window ledge that I look at daily of individuals that have deep ties to Indianapolis Intergroup from 1964 until today. I come to work each day not knowing what GOD has in store for me today!*

Be sure and drop by Central Office to meet Bruce. He promises to *Trade anyone an espresso for a warm Long's Donut!!*

*The Service Committee has decided to go with a one person office so there is no assistant manager. Trevor J. who has so responsibly filled that position is leaving March 14. Trevor says his experience at Central Office has been an awesome one. It has also prepared me for the world outside AA. Good luck to you, Trevor. You have been an inspiration to many.*

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## Expanding Your AA Experience

Have you been feeling down lately? Possibly you are new to AA? Maybe you've been around a while but haven't been going to your usual meetings? Or, perhaps you just don't have the same zeal for the program that you once did? In short—have you hit a wall in your recovery? If you've answered “yes” to any of these questions, your sobriety may have become stagnant, but here is good news—there are plenty of ways to expand your AA experience and get more out of the program.

Many alcoholics have their first encounter with AA when they initially step inside the rooms—which can be an overwhelming experience, but a very important one that you must get used to if you plan on keeping your sobriety.

Kirk K., who has two and a half years, thinks it is very important to get to multiple meetings. “Why not just go to a meeting everyday? If you drank every day, why not go to a meeting everyday?” he rhetorically asks. “And I shoot for one a day; sometimes I make it, sometimes I don't. Sometimes I hit three meetings in one day, if I have the time.”

Another alcoholic—Kathleen G.— has been sober for the last 13 years and doesn't go to a meeting everyday, but she has found what works best for her. *I admire people who do 90-in-90 and keep going to meetings everyday, though I was far too stubborn to do anything like that,” she says. “Find the magic number that keeps you serene—that's critical. I've heard that if you're only doing one meeting a week, and you miss that meeting, then you're in big trouble. For me, three meetings a week has been the perfect recipe for me to maintain serenity, and when I don't achieve that, I definitely feel that stagnation—my serenity isn't as high, and going to meetings are what jump me back into serenity.*

A man with seven years of continuous sobriety is Patrick M., who says just showing up at meetings isn't good enough for him.

“I used to go to meetings just before they started and left right after they ended,” he says. “The meetings are extremely important, but the most important part of the meeting, in my opinion, is getting there 30 minutes early and walking up to people, making yourself vulnerable, sticking your hand out and introducing yourself. That's the action that confirms the first three steps instead of just thinking about them.”

The action that Patrick is talking about is what leads to a connection between two alcoholics, which in turn, leads to a sense of belonging—aka being a part of the fellowship.

“I was always a loner,” says Kirk. “Maybe I was so self-centered that I didn't want to get to know anybody—scared of people, even. My survival depends on me getting to know another human being and being accountable to them. I've sat in these rooms for years and didn't have any sponsees because nobody wanted anything to do with me and I really didn't want anything to do with anybody else. Now, my survival is dependent on the fellowship of the program.”

“By sharing the fellowship, it's just such a powerful, cosmic, psychic, spiritual energy—and that's what the book tells you!” Patrick points out. “Bill and Bob were some smart dudes, man! They studied all that (stuff): philosophy, religion, spirituality, and it wasn't until they found the fellowship with other guys that they stayed sober—period.”

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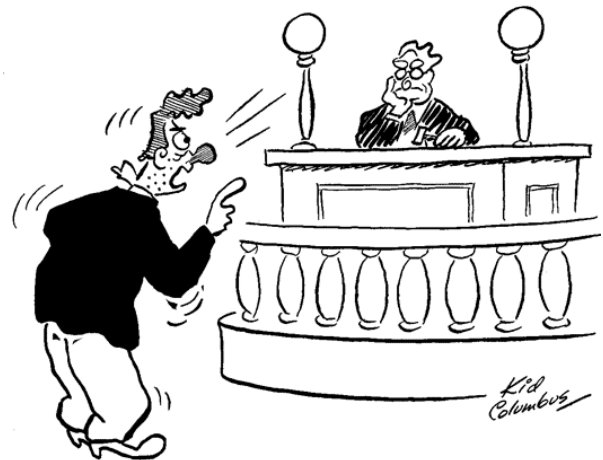
Kathleen points out the possible difficulties in becoming a part of the fellowship. *I wanted other people to reach out to me and to involve me, but it still takes some work to get into the fellowship, she says. I have to be willing to suit-up and show up. If I get myself involved—openly, honestly and willingly—it just somehow happens and you find the people you connect to. What (the fellowship) is a group of human beings that understand the pain and suffering we've experienced. The more I'm willing to be open and honest about my journey, I think it just automatically happens.*

Another very important aspect of going to meetings is to look for the similarities in what people are saying, not the differences. *That was one of my favorite lines when I entered into the rooms of AA," Kathleen says. "It's so tempting to think either: I wasn't that bad, and then to justify, 'Maybe I'm not really an alcoholic?' Or, to say, These people haven't experienced what I've experienced—they don't have a clue! If I'm in that mindset of not relating to people and finding those similarities, I think it keeps me away from acceptance of my own alcoholism.*

*And the other thing that's really cool is that story about all having experienced a crisis together—all having 'gone down on a ship together,' she points out. No matter whether we were in upper-class, or in steerage, or wherever we were on the boat, we have experienced a life-threatening occurrence and nobody knows what that's like but the people who have been on that boat together. Maybe not on the same boat, but we know what it's like to not have a love for life. And the beauty in the similarity is that we all know that pain and the suffering.*

Maurice McK.

## On the Light side



"I demand MY rights... I'm a paid-up member of A.A.!"

## Moving on Up!

The Westside Club has moved and is open for business.

The new address is :

6450 W. 10th Street

Indianapolis, IN

It is conveniently located about 1/2 block from the West 10th St. exit off W465. Parking is located behind the liquor store in front. You can't miss it. Just make sure you go to the back of the building and not the front!

## Thoughts on Tradition Three

In the conference approved AA history book, Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimers (cira. 1980), Clarence S., founder of AA in Cleveland, stated: *That's the trouble, they take it so casually today. I think a little discipline is necessary. I think AA was more effective in those days. Records in Cleveland show that 93 percent of those who came to us never had a drink again . . . Today, it's watered down so much. Anyone can wander in now.* (p. 261)

Of course, the Twelve Traditions were yet to be written in those early days; new AA members were often screened. In February of 1938, Dr. Bob, who was Clarence's sponsor, insisted he get out of his hospital bed, get on his knees and pray before being allowed to become part of the Akron fellowship of nameless drunks, as it were. Dr. Bob feared that uncommitted less-than-serious new members would have an adverse effect on those members already sober.

Bill W. wrote the long form of the Traditions in 1936; they were ratified—in the short form—at the 1950 International Convention in Cleveland. I believe the long form of Tradition Three disclosed a different view than what is generally accepted today. (I notice the long form is no longer included in the fourth edition Big Book) However, the long form states: *Our membership ought to include all who suffer from alcoholism.*

Of course, we no longer decide who does, or does not, suffer from alcoholism. Yet, from this wording, we can interpret a certain cautionary spirit ingrained in the *long* form of Tradition Three.

The next sentence states: *Hence we can refuse none who wish to recover.* A lawyer might interpret this as an open door for all members of society who have problems, but in the true spirit of AA history it is obvious this statement is referring to the problem alcoholism—period.

Bill W., doubtless impressed by the openness of the Oxford Group, wrote Step Twelve in the Big Book Manuscript as such: *“Having had a spiritual experience as the result of this course of action, we tried to carry this message **to others**, especially alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.”* (Bolded text by yours truly) Of course, this wording was changed before the Big Book was published.

The consideration of these different components and views leave me with a better sense of understanding and appreciation of Tradition Three: *“The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking.”*

Bob S.

Richmond, IN



## Become a Faithful Fiver

Remember wasting more than \$5 drinking? Why not contribute \$5 to carry the message?

*Faithful Fivers* are A. A. members who donate \$5 or more per month to help support Indianapolis Intergroup.

Become a Faithful Fiver. Your contribution will help carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous.

### Indianapolis Intergroup Faithful Fiver Form      Date \_\_\_\_\_

YES, I want to help continue to carry our life-saving message of hope.

I will contribute: \_\_ Annually (\$60) \_\_ Quarterly (\$15) \_\_ Monthly (\$5)

Please send email reminder to this email address:

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Enclosed is my contribution of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ Months

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City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number \_\_\_\_\_

**Please make check payable to: Indianapolis Intergroup**

1915 West 18<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite D

Indianapolis, IN 46202

**5 Year**  
Meghan B.

**8 Year**  
Charles P.  
Tom R.

**9 Year**  
Bob B.

**10 Year**  
Wayne C.  
Vin P.

**11 Year**  
Larry L.  
Michael S.

**12 Year**  
Jim H.

**16 Year**  
Mike D.

**17 Year**  
John O.

**18 Year**  
Irena B.

**19 Year**  
Mary C.  
Connie J.



**22 Year**  
Scott R  
**24 Year**  
Tom McA.

**27 Year**  
Shauna B.

**29 Year**  
Bill F.  
Kenny H.  
Kenny H.  
Bob W.

**30 Year**  
Denise D.

**32 Year**  
Huey C.

**35 Year**  
Mike B.  
Jim W.

**37 Year**  
Dorothy  
W.

**38 Year**  
Carol A.

**39 Year**  
Jane C.

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