



Step 9

Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

Step 9 was scary. From the moment I read it, I started planning which amends not to do and which would have the fewest consequences.

Early on, I really latched onto the concept of living amends. Sounded good to me. All I had to do was stay sober and everybody would be happy for me, pat me on the back, and all would be right in the world.

Eventually, a good sponsor was able to get my head back where the body was so we could go through the other eight steps first.

I learned that living amends would be adequate until I did the first eight steps and began the actual amending. After making proper amends, the living ones would be necessary to foster these new relationships. In some cases, the only option was living amends. However, where possible, I had to repair actual damage done.

My process for step 9 amends was guided by the instructions in the literature, and by close supervision of my sponsor. As I approached each, I was primed and ready to try to make things right, keeping my expectations low. I was able to approach persons eye-to-eye, and lay it out. One did pop up unexpectedly, and I was able to make that one off the cuff because of preparation and a little experience.

Reactions were varied. The most awkward one was with my ex-wife. Her sarcasm and skepticism were entirely understandable. However the profound power of this step appeared many years later when she did thank me for having improved relationships with our kids.

As with most of our steps, the challenge of step 9 seemed daunting. But the relief of just doing it made the effort worth it..

anonymous

Step 10

Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

This step for me has far reaching benefits that far outweigh any perceived cost.

Perceived cost for me is this: discomfort. I am not fond of making mistakes, especially interpersonal ones. I am not fond of admitting these mistakes, to myself or anyone else. And I am certainly not fond of approaching anyone to admit my wrong.

So it is this discomfort that motivates me to be vigilant with my behavior towards others, so I don't end up having to do a Step 10. If I behave, I will have fewer occasions for this step.

Having said that, the real benefits of this step are improved relationships with others. If I can quickly admit my fault and try not to repeat it, things should improve for all.

Another benefit is peace of mind. If I harm you and I know it, I tend to chew on the incident/event/occurrence. Some of that chewing is in the realm of beating up on myself. But to be very honest, a good part of it is blaming the offended party for *their* part in the matter. And that blame turns to anger. And that anger turns to resentment. And that resentment might just turn me into a bar.

Promptly admitting it prevents that mental exercise in futility. Admitting it means admitting my part in the matter, not the other person's.

When *I* am wrong, I admit it. Not when you are wrong. Not if you hadn't done that. Not even if you deserved it. When *I* am wrong.

This way, I take care of my wrongs, and generally things will be better.

If not, well, things can go downhill quickly. And I don't want or need that in my life.

anonymous

A Note from the Chair of Board

BOARD ELECTIONS AT THE SEPTEMBER 13 FULL COUNCIL MEETING! ALL INTERGROUP REPS ARE ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND AND VOTE!

There are six slots up for election. If you have 18 months of sobriety and would like to run for the Board, please stop by the Intergroup office and fill out an application. It's a short, one-page form that asks for your name, home group, sobriety date and AA service experience. Board members serve for two years and are required to attend all monthly Board and Full Council meetings, held the 2nd Thursday of each month at 5:30 either in the Intergroup office or at the Fellowship Center.

The Strategic Planning Committee has been working and meeting weekly to develop a long range (3-year) plan for Intergroup. We will have a draft plan ready for review by the groups in September, and will vote on whether to adopt the plan at the November Full Council meeting. We are asking the groups to submit any comments on the proposed plan by Wednesday, October 10. Once we have your comments, we will prepare and distribute the final plan for your consideration. As we have stated earlier, the goal of having a strategic plan is NOT to change anything about Intergroup. Rather, the goal is to outline areas for growth and development so your Intergroup office is prepared to handle whatever needs the groups and the Wilmington AA community identify.

As always, if you have any comments, questions or concerns, please reach out to Linda, Ashley, me or anyone else on the Board.

Yours in service,

Susan P., Board Chair

From the Office

What's Happening from the Intergroup Office

Hello! Ashley and I are working on the bookstore inventory to make sure we have in stock our most requested items. If we don't have something you need in stock, we'll be glad to order it for you.

The *Where & When* pamphlets have been updated. It still has the blue cover, so make sure your copy says JULY.

Our website is up and running. Finding a meeting and directions are available in a simple few clicks. A few new features include a list of upcoming meetings and events on the home page, District 3 and 4 pages (still in progress), and Footworks available online. Visit www.wilmingtonaa.us.

We are also on the Meeting Guide app. It is free to download on your iPhone or Android smartphone. Look for the blue circle with the white folding chair. Where ever you are, you will know where and when is the next meeting and directions.

As always, we need volunteers to answer the phone. Sponsors, this is great service work for your sponsees. The Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day Alkathons, and Gratitude Dance will be here before we know it. Our Events Committee meets the first Thursday of every month at 6pm at the Intergroup Office. If you would like to volunteer, please come!

Remember, our office door is open. Stop by anytime.

In the Spirit of Service,

Linda H. and Ashley F.

Without your contributions, the intergroup office cannot function.

Tradition Nine

A.A., as such, ought never to be organized, but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.

The following paragraphs are taken from [Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age a brief history of A.A.](#)

This one still puzzles a lot of people. How can you have a society that is unorganized, and at the same time organize services? Yet A. A. does it.

When Tradition Nine was first written it said, "Alcoholics Anonymous needs the least possible organization." In the years since then, we have changed our minds about that. Today we are able to say with assurance that Alcoholics Anonymous should never be organized at all. Then, in seeming contradiction we proceed to create special boards and committees which in themselves are organized. How can we have an unorganized movement which can and does create a service organization for itself? Scanning this puzzler, people say, "What do they mean, no organization?"

What we really mean, of course, is that A.A. can never have an organized direction or government. Does not nearly every society on earth give authority to some of its member to impose obedience upon the rest and to punish or expel offenders? Therefore, every nation, in fact every form of society, has to be a government administered by human beings.

To this rule Alcoholics Anonymous is a complete exception. It does not at any point conform to the pattern of a government. Neither its General Service Conference, its General Service Board, nor the humblest group committee can issue a single directive to an A.A. member and make it stick, let alone hand out any punishment.

Groups have tried to expel members, but the banished have come back to sit in the meeting place, saying, "This is life for us; you can't keep us out." Committees have instructed many an A.A. to stop working on a chronic backslider, only to be told: "How I do my Twelfth Step work is my business. Who are you to judge?" An A.A. may take advice or suggestions from more experienced members, but he surely will not take orders. Who is less popular than the old-time A.A., full of wisdom, who moves to another area and tries to tell the group there how to run its business? He and all like him who "view with alarm for the good of A.A. meet with stubborn resistance, or worse still, laughter. "Does A.A. have a real leadership?" The answer is, "Yes, notwithstanding the apparent lack of it." Let's turn to the deposed founder and his friends. What becomes of them? As their grief and anxiety wear away, a subtle slang as "elder statesmen" and "bleeding deacons." The elder statesman is one whose wisdom of the group's decisions, who holds no resentment over his reduced status, whose judgment, fortified by the side lines patiently awaiting developments. the care and custody of the organized General Service Conference.

continued at right

Tradition 10

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

Early A.A. members learned from the experience and collapse of the Washingtonian Society. This Society was a movement of alcoholics who almost found the answer to alcoholism until they started including non-alcoholics. At that time the abolition of slavery was going on and there were many debates and heated arguments amongst the members which eventually led to their collapse.

With this experience in mind, this Tradition ensures that we keep our primary purpose of "helping the suffering alcoholic" at the heart of Alcoholics Anonymous. This principle ensures that our fellowship will agree on how we "carry the message" of recovery and that we remain inclusive of all people no matter what their beliefs are outside of Alcoholics Anonymous. No one member of A.A. ever speaks for A.A. as a whole. Skipping ahead to the Anonymity tradition it insures that we all remain anonymous when we speak about A.A. and we can always experience a safe fellowship to recover in without any prejudices.

Anonymous

continued from left

The bleeding deacon is one who remains convinced that the group cannot get along without him, who constantly connives for re-election to office, and who continues to be consumed with self-pity. A few deacons hemorrhage so badly that they become drained of all A.A. spirit and principles and get drunk. Nearly every old-timer in our society has gone through this process in some degree. I have myself. Happily most of them survive and live to become elder statesmen. This is the real and enduring leadership of A.A. Theirs is the quiet opinion, the sure knowledge, and the humble example that resolves a crisis. When sorely perplexed, the group inevitably turns to them for advice. They become the voice of the group conscience. They are, in fact, the true voice of Alcoholics Anonymous. They do not drive by mandate; they lead by example. This is how Tradition Nine was evolved. This is why A.A. can never be organized under any known forms of government.

But it also remains abundantly clear that we can, and must, create service boards or committees to be directly responsible to those they serve."

With the forming of Tradition Nine the group conscience of A.A. was turned over permanently to the care and custody of the organized General Service Conference. No one person will ever direct or govern A.A. as a whole.

anonymous

Wilmington Area Intergroup, Group Contributions

The Wilmington Area Intergroup Office serves groups in Brunswick, Columbus, Pender, and New Hanover counties to better carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous to the suffering alcoholic.

Your contributions keep the Intergroup Office functioning.

Group Contributions

There are 93 groups in the area served by your Intergroup Office.

Thank you for your Group Contributions for July and August.

10:45 Group	
Across The River	Across the River
Complete Abandon	Breakfast Club
Daily Reprieve	Castle Hayne Group
Each Day a New	Complete Abandon
Beginning	Daily Reprieve
Eustabaphalus	Happiest Hour
Ezy Duz It	Joe and Charlie
Grissetown	Just a Meeting
Happies Hour	Midday
How Dry I Am	New Tabor City
Just a Meeting	Proceed Towards
Leland Morning Ed	Sobriety (PTS)
Men's Night Out	Reaching Out
Midday	Total for August
Midtown	\$1826.35.
New Whiteville	
Oak Island Group	
Ogden Serenity	
Primary Purpose	
Shallotte	
Sisters In Sobriety	
Southport Group	
Southport Men's	
Stay Sober Group	
Sunset Serenity	
Topsail Island	
Turning Point	
Total for July	
\$3223.55	

Faithful Fivers

A good way to help support your Intergroup is to become a Faithful Fiver.

Monthly contributions of \$5.00 (or more) are a painless way to help Intergroup carry the message of sobriety to the A.A. community in this region. (As the door-to-door salesmen used to say, "Heck son, anybody can afford to spend just \$5.00 a month.")

The easiest method is to set up an automatic payment through your financial institution and save wear and tear on your writing hand and postage stamp licking tongue!!

Did you know that you can access *Footwork* online?

wilmingtonaa.us

From the Archives

Benjamin Disraeli, prominent 19th century conservative said "Change is inevitable. Change is constant." Two District 3 and 4 groups with the greatest longevity in the Wilmington Area Intergroup exemplify this thought and inform us of how varied and unpredictable the life of an AA group can be.

Cape Fear Group registered with General Services Office on July 14, 1970 and Carolina Beach/Kure Beach Group on Oct. 9, 1970. In late August of this year, I had the opportunity to interview members of long standing of both groups, Bill M. from Carolina/Kure Beach and Joe I. from the Cape Fear Group. Recently both groups have undergone changes taking them in very different directions.

The Cape Fear Group started out meeting on a sales lot by the American Legion on Carolina Beach Road and then moved to Cape Fear Presbyterian Church on Shipyard Blvd. In November 2009 they relocated to the Fellowship Center on Wrightsville Ave. Meetings were on Thursday nights at 8, with a brief change to 7 to see if an earlier meeting time would bolster attendance. This was not effective. For much of its early existence, the Cape Fear meeting had been the only show in town for a Thursday evening meeting. As sobriety grew in Wilmington and other groups started up, the attendance at this meeting ebbed. Bob H. was a member of this group. His role as Intergroup Director was instrumental in the success of the group according to Joe I. His death contributed to the decline in membership of the group and the decision to close down the Cape Fear Group was made by the 3 remaining members, two active and one inactive.

Carolina Beach/Kure Beach group also started out in a rather untraditional location, the Magistrate's office of the old Carolina Beach Police Dept. located near the Carolina Beach Boardwalk. After a hurricane flooded this building, the group moved to St. Paul's United Methodist Church, with a brief relocation to Kure Beach Lutheran and a return to St. Paul's Youth Activity Center, where they still gather. In 2015 the group took in the TGIF Group which had moved to St. Paul's from Dow Road Chapel because of poor acoustics in the auditorium there. And then in 2016 CB/KB absorbed the Missing Link Group after the death of its founder "Beer Truck" Bill. A group of island residents felt it was important to keep this Tuesday night meeting available to AA's at the beach. CB/KB thrives because many resident AAs at the beach attend other group's meetings even though they may not be members. During the summer months attendance is bolstered by visiting tourists.

For almost 50 years both Cape Fear and CB/KB groups have offered venues for local AAs to practice their sobriety and enjoy the fellowship of others in supportive settings. An expression of profound gratitude goes out to both of these groups for their efforts to serve the AA community.

Carol A., Archivist

INTERGROUP HOLIDAY

SCHEDULE

Please note that the Intergroup office is closed on the following holidays:

New Year's Day
 Martin Luther Kind Day
 Memorial Day
 July 4
 Labor Day
 Veteran's Day
 Thanksgiving Day
 Thanksgiving Recovery Day
 Christmas Eve or Day After Christmas (depending on whether Christmas falls on a Saturday or Sunday)
 Christmas Day

Birthday Club

Birthday. Anniversary. Celebration day. Regardless the name, the anniversary of the date we pick up a white chip and join A. A. is an important one.

A very special way to celebrate and give back is to make a donation to Intergroup.

One dollar for each year of sobriety makes a small dent in our pockets, but has a huge impact on helping out Intergroup. Each one of those dollars is significant, and Intergroup can put each to good use helping carry the message of sobriety.

A more generous approach for a Birthday Club donation is to give a penny for each day sober. There are sobriety count apps out there to help with the calculations. They even factor in leap years!!

It is simple: contact the Intergroup Office to find out how you can make this important contribution.

Dates to Remember

NCCYPAA 1st and 3rd Fridays, 8:15 p.m., Fellowship Center
Intergroup Board of Directors, 2nd Thursdays, 5:30 p.m., Intergroup Office
Full Intergroup Council, 2nd Thursdays of odd-numbered months 5:30 p.m., Fellowship Center
CPC/PI 2nd Thursdays, 4:00 p.m., monthly, Port City Java, Barclay Commons, Shipyard Blvd
Events Committee, 1st Thursdays, 6:00 p.m., Intergroup Office, all welcome

AA at NHRMC

There is an on-going need for volunteers to take meetings into the hospital and for volunteers to engage in twelfth step work with individual patients. Some groups do so on a regular basis.

Please get in touch with either:

Yvonne
 910-523-3501
 Laura
 51513ilm@gmail.com

Wilmington Area A.A. Intergroup

The Wilmington Area A.A. Intergroup office serves Districts 03 and 04 and provides the following:

- A large stock of A.A. books, pamphlets, meeting schedules, medallions, chips, and other items;
- A telephone hotline, with the much-appreciated help of volunteers. This is often the first contact of hope for someone suffering from alcoholism;
- Fellowship activities directly related to AA, such as the Founders' Day Picnic, holiday Alkathons (and meals!), the annual holiday speaker/dance/dinner event, and many others;
- Mailboxes for groups so information is quickly distributed;
- A place for some fellowshiping and perhaps a cup of coffee.
- And, as always, much, much more.

Coastal Plains Fellowship

Sunday, September 9, 2018
 2:00-5:00pm

First Christian Church
 900 Gum Branch Road
 Jacksonville, NC 28540

2:00 Fellowship

3:00 Speaker, Pam V., Wilson, NC

4:00 Buffet Dinner and Dessert

dinner catered, desserts and sides appreciated but not required

This is an open meeting. All are welcome.
 Sponsors, bring your sponsees!!
 Sponsees, bring your sponsors!!

AA Pamphlets of the month

P-16, The AA Group
P-17, AA Tradition-How it Developed

Pick one up at the Intergroup office.

On the Beam—

I remember sitting in one of my first regular meeting halls and seeing two signs on the walls. One read “On The Beam” and the other read “Off the Beam”. At the time I wanted to be like everything that was listed on the sign the read “On The Beam.” Unfortunately, in fact, it was just the opposite. I could identify with almost everything on the other sign. But I remember from early sobriety wanting to strive to be more On The Beam (OTB). To be OTB to me means that I am actually living the program of AA. To me that means a lot more than just not drinking. I have learned that I can’t wish my self OTB either, it takes work. If you have ever tried to balance on a beam and found it hard because your balance is off or you are out of practice, it is just like that for me when I’m trying to live OTB. It just does not come naturally to me. It takes practice and it is not always easy. But to me it is more than that. Sometimes it is not what I want. To be honest, living OTB is almost opposite living than anything I have used to survive through my alcoholic drinking. I was full of fear; faith is the opposite of that. I was frightened and dishonest; it takes honesty and courage to live OTB. In my years of sobriety, I have found that when I am working with others, hitting my knees in prayer, regularly attending meetings, practicing the 12 steps of AA, I am “practicing my balancing act” of living OTB. When I am living in self-will, not praying or going to meetings, and am not reaching out my hand to another alcoholic, then I am regularly falling off the beam. In reality (for me) I am out of balance with man and God.

In my experience I can not be out of balance and be OTB. As I read the list and try to grasp the perfect ideal of living OTB, it seems impossible. The 100% truth to me is that it may be impossible for me to live in perfect balance OTB, but for today I practice more and more to live OTB, and when I do that I fall off the beam a lot less, and life just seems a lot less difficult.

Brian B

On the Beam	Off the Beam
Honesty	Dishonesty
Faith	Fear
Courage	Frightened
Considerate	Inconsiderate
Humility	Pride
Giving	Greedy
Calm	Anger
Grateful	Envy
Patience	Impatient
Tolerance	Intolerant
Forgiveness	Resentment
Love	Hate
Selfless	Self-justification
Humility	Self-importance
Modesty	Self-condemnation
Trust	Suspicion
Moderation	Gluttony
Action	Sloth

On The Beam—

As we grow spiritually, maintaining a sober life requires a deep commitment to our principles. If not, we shut ourselves off from the sunlight of the spirit. The process of enlightenment is usually slow. After working the 12 Steps with a sponsor, I now commit myself to living on the beam; balancing my sobriety by attending meetings on a regular basis, working with my sponsor, being of service, maintaining a spiritual connection with my higher power, and staying in contact with the fellowship. Personal responsibility is a keystone of our recovery. Calm, thoughtful reflection on a daily basis keeps me present and aware. Yes, my character defects might present themselves in a moment of distraction, but by practicing the principles of Alcoholics Anonymous, I’m able to turn it over and ask for guidance. As a trained gymnast might practice their skill daily, I too practice my program of recovery daily. With practice, new skills become proficient and the fear of falling off the beam diminishes. Harmony and balance are maintained by following a few simple constructs. At the end of the day, I rest quietly and deepen a conscious contact with God.

Donna C.

On The Beam

When we say someone is “on the beam” in Alcoholics Anonymous, it means they are on the proper track to recovery, working the twelve steps and carrying a message of strength and hope to newcomers.

But the phrase’s origins suggests how deadly getting off the beam can be for people in recovery.

In the early days of using radar to assist in aviation, ground control could only sit helplessly and watch as the pilots they were tracking got lost and crashed when fog or storms rolled in. Since this was prior to the advent of wireless radio, a morse-code based system was put in place: if a pilot approached the airfield too far left, he’d receive a series of “dot dash” tones; too far right and he got “dash dots.”

When the pilot’s heading was locked onto the center of the radar signal, however, the two tones converged into a continuous buzz, what the relieved pilots eventually termed “being on the beam.”

So how does that piece of history apply to you and me? As we navigate life’s daily storms and fog, being “on the beam” in recovery is a matter of life and death — both spiritual and physical.

Speaking only for myself, the people I think are “on the beam” have all worked the program as Bill W. and the first 100 men and women laid it out, committing to seek daily guidance from God as they perceive him. They make meetings, they are of service to their fellows and they try to practice the steps in all of their affairs.

Here’s to your safe landing.

Roddy B.

Why wait?

Why put up with wrinkled, coffee-stained copies? Why chance not getting a copy at all?

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- individual by email.....free*****
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- group by mailbox at intergroup.....free*****
- group by mailbox at intergroup, 10 copies.....\$5.00

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mail or bring this form, along with the correct fee, to Wilmington Area Intergroup.

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