



# Napa Valley Intergroup Newsletter

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## Why Do You Want Recovery — and What Are You Willing To Do To Get It?

I thought that these words were profound when I first heard them. I had to ask myself these questions in earnest. Why did I really really really want recovery and what was I really really willing to do to get it and just how far would I go and when was my quitting point? You know when does it just get too hard and when would I just say F\*\*k it?

Why did I want recovery? I can tell you. I wanted recovery because I was about to lose the people who mattered most in my life, my wife and children. Because I was about to lose my home. I wanted recovery because I had been in jail many times and did not enjoy my jailhouse experience, yet I was on probation and diversion and was still using and drinking and driving on a daily basis. Why did I want recovery, because I had liver disease that was made worse every day that I drank and used? I was ruining everything and everybody around me. I was not managing any of my responsibilities I was not being a father to my children, a husband to my wife, a boss to my employees, a friend to my neighbors or a decent citizen of my town and country.

So I knew what I did not want and I had a pretty good idea of what was causing many of my problems. ”. Yes I wanted to end my old existence, but if I wasn't a drunk and a screw up then who would I be? So my sponsor told me about the two-pronged motivator, the combination punch of “running from” and “going to. I knew how I did not want to live but how then did I want to live. Yes I wanted to experience a better way of life.

Yes, I wanted the freedom of being able to trust myself and my thoughts and my actions. Yes I really did want to be a better man. Yes I wanted to live a life of quality and peace and guilt free, and someone once told me that the path to that life, that I had only dreamt about, was in the 12 steps of Alcoholics Anonymous.

But honestly I had told myself much of this many times before and failed. So my sponsor asked my this question “ Now what are you willing to do, to get what you want? Ahhhh, I said. That was the million-dollar question. Since I was really hurting bad when I came back I said I was willing to do whatever it takes. What ever they say to do I will do. Felling pretty good about my answer; my sponsor then asked me, “ and then what”

What?! I said. You want more? What would happen, he asked, if I did everything right for 30 days or 60 days or even 1 whole year and every thing that I thought should happen did not happen exactly the way I thought it would? What if I did everything right and things actually got worse??? Would I still maintain my focus? Would I still have my resolve? Would I take it to the next level or would I just say F\*\*k it all, like I had in the past.

I thought about it and answered yes , no matter what I would stay and fight. I gave my commitment, one day at a time, and because of the program of AA and some effort of my own, I have not broken that commitment in over 3 years.

Today, when I work with a new sponsee, I ask them why do you want recovery and what are you willing to do for it?

## Happy Holidays – Helpful Hints for Holiday Parties

1. First if you think the party might bother you too much, Don't Go. Missing this party will not affect the rest of your life, getting drunk might.
2. If you are not too sure of yourself but would like to try it or you are obligated to go.... Go late and leave early. Have a plan and a safe ride!!
3. When asked if you would like a drink say..... Sure, Pepsi please.
4. Watch out for the punch!!! On accident I have heard members say they were given a glass of punch and it had alcohol in it, without realizing it they drank it. To me that is not a crime, but drinking the rest of the punchbowl and trying to score with your boss definitely is.
5. NO DISSCUSSION OF WHY YOU ARE NOT DRINKING IS NEEDED. I am taking a break, not drinking tonight, I'm driving, I'm just thirsty for a coke right now. Or my personal favorite "I would but you don't have enough alcohol, drugs or condoms for me" (just kidding).
6. Remember how many awful awful relapse stories your have heard that started out " I thought I would just have one." Don't fool yourself!
7. HAVE A GREAT TIME!! What a concept, going to a party and know what you are doing and remember it the next day!! With no remorse.
8. Always remember who you are and where you came from. Nuff said?
9. 2003 is just around the corner, and all your hard work and dedication will roll right into another great, clean and sober year!!!

• *Matt T. Newsletter Editor*

## Attend an Alkathon During The Holidays

Each year our Intergroup provides a marathon series of meetings on Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Years. These are an excellent way to spend all or part of your holidays, during what is often a challenging time for us.

The Thanksgiving Alkathon will run from 9:00 AM until midnight on Thanksgiving. The Christmas and New Years Alkathons will run all day and night on those holidays. Exact times are not yet established as a chairperson for these Alkathons (see Announcements article below)



## Announcements

### Thanksgiving Alkathon Help Needed

The 2001 Thanksgiving Alkathon will be held on Thursday 11/28/02 from 9:00 AM until 12:00 AM at the Napa Alano Club, 1115 Jordan Lane. . We

## The Newsletter is available on the Napa Valley A.A. Website

You can view or download the newsletter, view current Meeting information and more at:

<http://www.AANapa.org>

have the following service needs for this event:

- Meeting Secretaries
- Meeting Chairpeople
- Dinner Rolls
- Paper Plates & Plastic Utensils
- Salt & Pepper
- Food Donations

If you can help with any of the above, please contact the Thanksgiving Alkathon Chairperson, Leon S. at 255-3613. To Chair or Secretary a meeting you may also use the sign-up board posted at the Napa Alano Club.

## Intergroup Service Positions Are Available

We are seeking nominations for the following Intergroup service positions:

- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Answering Service Chairperson
- Website Chairperson
- Alkathon Chairperson - Christmas 2002 (one-time commitment)
- Alkathon Chairperson - New Years 2002 (one-time commitment)

Suggested minimum term of sobriety for the Secretary and Treasurer is 2 years, and 1 year for the other positions. All commitments are for 2 year terms except as noted. Nominees must be present to accept. Elections will be held at the monthly Intergroup Meeting on the Saturday, December 14.

## Answering Service Volunteers Are Needed

Men are needed to take A.A. Hotline calls in the following timeslots:

- Saturday 6:00 AM to noon

- Saturday 6:00 PM to midnight
- Sunday 6:00 AM to noon

Please email our Answering Service Chairperson, Sarah C. at [faeriebelle@fcs.net](mailto:faeriebelle@fcs.net) or call her at 967-8820 if you are available.

## Events

*Note: Some events are listed for the sake of sociability only, and may not be officially sponsored A.A. functions. In keeping with Tradition Six we do not endorse or lend the A.A. name to related facilities or outside enterprises.*

**November 28 - 9:00 AM - Midnight** - Napa Valley Intergroup Thanksgiving Alkathon. A.A. meetings are held all day on Thanksgiving. Held at the Napa Alano Club, 1115 Jordan Lane. . Note: Meeting Chairpeople and Secretaries are needed for these meetings.

**December 14** - Archives Workday - Walnut Creek. Please attend the December 7 General Service Meeting at the Veterans Home in Yountville, or contact your GSR for further details.

**December 24-25** Napa Valley Intergroup Christmas Alkathon. Round-the-clock A.A. meetings held on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. Held at the Napa Alano Club, 1115 Jordan Lane. For exact times, check the website at [www.AANapa.org](http://www.AANapa.org), or watch for the sign-up board at the Alano club.

**December 31 - January 1** - Napa Valley Intergroup New Years Alkathon. Round-the-clock A.A. meetings held on New Years Eve, and New Years Day. Held at the Napa Alano Club, 1115 Jordan Lane. For exact times, check the website at [www.AANapa.org](http://www.AANapa.org), or watch for the sign-up board at the Alano club.

**December 31** - Lake and Mendocino Counties New Years Dance 6:00 PM Redwood Valley Grange, in Redwood Valley

**January 11-12** - Spanish Forum - Bakersfield. Please attend the General Service Meeting on the first Saturday of the month or ask your Group's GSR for further details.

## Converting The Blues Into Love And Service, Both Inside And Out

“Last year on a Saturday night in May” writes Bill H. of Baltimore, Maryland, “I walked into the meeting I was sponsoring in the prerelease unit for women at a local correctional facility. Sitting there quietly was a young inmate, Angela M., in her late 20s. The oldtimers in A.A. had told me that if I wanted to carry the message to other alcoholics, ‘Look in their eyes and you may just see their heart,’ and how right they were. Angela’s eyes told the whole story: They contained sparks of energy and hope-strong, positive feelings that were conflicted by traces of anger and depression.”

At the time, Bill notes, “my wife was fighting breast cancer, and life was confusing I felt down and wondered if I were actually helping anyone. What happened now showed me that was not my concern-my higher power would determine who needed whose help- and remind me that I was but a piece of the sobriety puzzle.”

As the weeks went along, he continues, “it became obvious that Angela wanted what A.A. offers. To recapitulate her story, she had committed an assault and battery in the Maryland area, then moved to California, where she sobered up in A.A. When it came time for amends, she wrote she wrote a letter to the person she had harmed, returned East and turned herself in. She received a prison sentence of 10 years, eight of which were suspended. When I met her she was serving her time far away from her A.A. friends who helped her get sober. Her dedication to the twelve steps brought her not accolades or joy but incarceration. Nonetheless, she fought the blues and threw herself anew into the program”

Bill and Angela became friends. “We helped each other,” he says. “I suggested that she send a part of her story to the General Service Office for possible inclusion in the newsletter *Sharing From Behind the Walls* and it appeared in the winter 2002 issue. In turn, Angela helped me deal with the pain and despair I was feeling about my wife’s illness. When I left that meeting to start a new one at another location, two A.A. women, Maureen and Joselin, took over as the outside sponsors for Angela’s meeting. They told me she had acquired a sponsor through G.S.O.’s C.C.S. ( Correctional Correspondence Service), in which outside A.A.s correspond with fellow members inside jails and prisons( and wind

up helping each other to stay comfortably sober). In addition, she had started sponsoring several women behind the walls.”

This past April, Bill reports, “I was able to share in Angela’s third anniversary celebration at her meeting. Later in the month she was released into a home- monitoring program that permits her to go out to work but not to A. A. meetings. So Joselin and other members have been taking meetings to Angela at her new residence. At the same time, Angela has made the local Home Monitor Center aware of the need for such meetings; and because of her persistence and caring, others like her will benefit from a new meeting especially for people like her that is sponsored by our Baltimore Institutions Committee.”

“Thanks to a good foundation in A.A., instilled in her in California, Angela has touched the lives of at least 10 people she knows here in Maryland and of hundreds throughout A.A. whom she may never even meet. What an amazing program is this miracle called A.A. There is no limit to what we members can do in recovery and service if we only have the desire.”

- *Reprinted from Box 459 (the General Service Newsletter) August- September*

### Contact Us

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#### Website:

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