



Napa Valley Intergroup Newsletter

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Meeting Hopping

What's happening in Napa Valley recovery these days? Well my view is this: We are strong. I believe this because of the quality of the meetings — the solid sobriety and support that I see at all the meetings that I have attended, and I have attended lots.

Lets see now, according to my scientific calculations (counting on my fingers) there are 64 regular scheduled meeting in Napa, plus 8 Reuniones en Espanol, plus H&I, Birthday meeting (last Wednesdays of the month), a General Service Meeting and let's never forget Intergroup. That's a whopping total of 76 A.A. meetings in Napa and upvalley, 7 days a week.

So let's just take a look at these meetings shall we? I have no direct contact from these meetings so I am going with what I know or what I have heard or what I believe is true.

Monday - The two meetings that I have heard such good things about are the 6:30 am One Day at a time, and the Beginners' Meeting at the Alano club @ 7:00 PM.

Tuesday - One of my first meetings that I attended was the Tuesday night First Step Group at the Detox on Old Sonoma it is a great meeting with a warm feel, also I hear that the Young People's Meeting at 7:30 is so good that you need to get there early to get a seat.

Wednesday – The Daily Reflections Meeting at 12:15 PM and 11th Step Meeting at 8:00 PM are both great.

Thursday - Is that New Life Women's group any good? I heard it was but well... you know.

Friday - My personal favorite meeting is the 12:15 PM Open Book Group. It is a Big Book study with a bunch a drunks. Friday night you might like the Deer Park Discovery Group @ 8:00 PM, big meeting at St. Helena Hospital.

Saturday - Men's Stag Meeting in the morning and the big Saturday Night Speaker Meeting. Ain't no doubt, just be there.

Sunday - If you are not in church or our water-skiing at Lake Berryessa you should check out the 10:00 AM Came to Believe meeting at Tom Foolery's, and then to, give you happy thoughts at night, go to the 5:30 PM Sunset Group.

If your favorite meeting has not been named here, don't get pissed, write me at newsletter@aanapa.org and tell me all about it, maybe you can be become the next Meeting of the Month, and we can tell everyone what a cool and great meeting you have.

An Apology

Well it turns out that I, Matt T., your Napa Intergroup Newsletter editor, don't know everything. Yeah I know, it surprised the hell out me too. But it's true. While I was playing around introducing myself in the last newsletter I made a joke that did offend some of our readers. So in true AA 10th step fashion (when I am wrong, I promptly admit it) I was wrong and sincerely apologize to all people who were offended. (If you did not see the last newsletter, do not go looking for one to see if you should have been offended.)

About Resentments

When I first came to AA, I truly believed I didn't resent anyone. I didn't judge anyone. I didn't expect anything of anyone. And no one ever disappointed me. I was much more mature than the rest of humanity, or so I thought, as I lifted yet another martini to my lips. In other words, I was a broiling mass of anger and resentment buried so deep that I was completely unaware of it. This was probably one of many reasons I kept going out and coming back, out and back, again and again and again. During that painful time, I came to know without any doubt that I was one of those who are "constitutionally incapable of being honest with themselves." The truth hurts! People did disappoint me, I expected far more than I'd admit, I judged a great deal and I resented many. *Particularly* those who could tell me what to do.

Early on this time around (and I hope my last time around), my 4th step revealed to me why I had problems with employers and the things I did (without even realizing it) to insure that those problems would very likely continue no matter where I went or what I did. It wasn't the employer who was wrong, or the occupation I chose that was wrong for me, it was me. Specifically, it was my resentments and anger that were causing me problems with my employers and the way in which I showed these after I'd been working for someone for a while.

Well, about this same time, I left yet another job (after staying the requisite 1 year and after giving the appropriate two week notice), but I was furious. I hated with a passion the man for whom I worked, the things he did and the way he did them. It was so bad, and I was so badly behaved (the inventory is mine, I remind myself), we managed to have a running argument the last three days I was there and I walked out the door without a backward glance, or so I thought. In retrospect, it is a wonder to me that he didn't throw me out before my time was up.

Well, the problem with resentments is that you carry them with you! And this one – in the form of pure, unadulterated hatred -- was driving me nuts!

Worse yet, my former employer had an office on a street corner I often had to pass in my relatively small town. So every time I drove by that corner, I seethed with the righteousness of my resentment. It was he who was wrong, it was he who needed (any) program, it was he who had done whatever, said whatever, acted in whatever way, it was him, him, *him*. You get the drill. Even worse, my anger was getting worse. It wasn't fading. It was making me sick.

In working on the 9th step, I split my amends into the standard three categories. Those I felt would be relatively easy, the harder ones, and the ones I would *never* do, not in a million years, not ever. I wasn't even sure I owed this person an amends, but admitted to my sponsor that there might be something there, given the intensity of my feelings.

I prayed to my higher power for guidance on this subject. I talked to my sponsor about the situation. I prayed some more. Time passed. My higher power works in its own time, not mine, after all.

One day, as my husband and I were driving by the infamous corner, instead of going into the normal litany of my former employer's character flaws, it hit me that my resentments and anger kept getting worse because every time I drove by that corner I was reminded of my own failure. My own personality defects. My own problems as an employee. And for the first time, I saw precisely what I had done and what I needed to make amends for. I talked to my husband about this while we drove home and for once I was not filled with invective against my former employer. I felt compassion for him and for me, and sorrow too. I saw how things could have been different if only I had been different. Or maybe not, whose to say? And especially, I felt badly about those last 3 days. Life is too short to create such havoc.

Well, realizing what I had done was the first step towards being willing to make an amends. Since I had been obsessing about my former employer for so long, and hating him so much, I of course believed that he had been obsessing about me and hating me. (I am not the center of the universe, I've come to realize since, and I am sure he probably

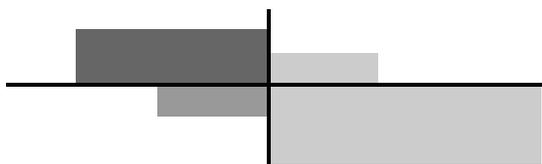
felt great relief to have me gone.) But one day, after I had passed that corner many times thinking now about the amends I needed to make, I decided that if I saw his car outside when I drove by, I would stop and ask to see him. It was somewhat unlikely that this would happen, as he traveled a great deal and was not often in his office.

However, on that particular day, he was. So I stopped. I climbed the stairs, really afraid. While I was waiting for the receptionist to tell him I was there, I reflected on what I would do if he was rude to me, or yelled at me, or threw me out of the office. The amends is about clearing my side of the street, I remembered, and I was determined not to be drawn into an argument. The line in the Big Book that "we do not crawl before any man" came to me and gave me courage.

I'm happy to report that my amends to my former employer went well. He came out and shook my hand. Told me I looked good (in relatively early sobriety, I know I didn't). Asked me how I was. After the mandatory small talk, and still nervous beyond belief, I did my amends in the way my first sponsor taught me. "I have come to apologize for my behavior while I worked for you, particularly for those last three days. I've been thinking a lot about it and I behaved very badly. I was wrong. I am truly very sorry. I hope you will forgive me." He did.

The wonderful thing about having a resentment is the relief I feel when I do the right thing. Now, when I pass that corner (still, at least once a day) I think of the days I worked there with compassion for the person I used to be and gratitude for the person I have become. I send my former employer a blessing, pray that he might have everything I want and I thank my higher power, the AA fellowship, my sponsor and myself for the willingness to work the steps and my faith that no matter what "all will be well."

- *Contributed by a female member of Napa A.A.*



Service Opportunities

General Services Intergroup Liaison

This is a short-term commitment for the remainder of 2002. The Liaison attends both the General Service Meeting on the first Saturday of each month and also the Napa Valley Intergroup Meeting Meeting on the second Saturday of the month, and communicates what's happening between the two service groups. Two years of continuous sobriety is recommended to hold this position. This is normally a 2-year commitment, but in the present case we are looking for someone to fill the remainder of the current term through the end of this year. If you are interested in this position, please attend the General Service Meeting on the first Saturday of the month or call Larry B. at 257-5465.

Volunteers Needed For Unity Day

Volunteers are needed for Unity Day on August 10, 2002 at the Rutheford Grange. Help is needed in the following sub-committees: Attraction, Beverages, Cleanup, Displays & Literature, Entertainment, Lunch, Parking, Setup, Volunteer Liaison. To volunteer or for further information about the event, contact Grace J. at 967-0967 email gracej@saber.net or attend the General Service Meeting on the first Saturday of the month.

Volunteers for Women's Jail Meetings

To volunteer or for further information call Thelma at 707-944-2779 or Jill at 707-224-6009

Public Information Speakers

Anyone interested in speaking at non-AA functions through General Services-Public Information, please contact Larry B., 257-5465 daytime or 226-6354 Eves. One year of sobriety is required, also Speaker Training, a one hour training program.

Alkathon Volunteers

We need 3 people to help co ordinate the Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Years Alkathons. Call Matt T. @ 707-486 5877/info@aanapa.org.

Events

Some of the events below 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.

July

July 5-7- San Ramon - NCCAA 55th Summer Conference. An annual event sponsored by the Northern California Council of Alcoholics Anonymous. Speakers, Fellowship, Workshops, Raffle, Dance. Registration is \$8.00 per person. You may send registration to Treasurer. NCCAA, P.O. Box 13067, Fresno, CA 93794-3067. Conference is held at the Marriot San Ramon, 2600 Bishop Drive, San Ramon, CA starting on Friday, July 5 at 2 PM and ending on Sunday, July 7 at noon.

August

August 9-11 - Annual Intergroup Campout – Saturday night host Bar-B-Q, chicken and ribs, speaker meeting. Sunday AM spiritual meeting. The campout is held at the Casini Ranch on the Russian River. Contact Bill Del Rio 510-772-0616..

August 10 - Unity Day 2002 – This year's Unity day will be held from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM at the Rutherford Grange on Highway 29. This year's program features a Delegate's Report on the 2002 Conference by Suzanne M. and a panel discussion, "How Service Enhances My Sobriety - from Delegate to Coffeemaker." Volunteers are needed for this event to chair the following sub-committees: Attraction, Beverages, Cleanup, Displays & Literature, Entertainment, Lunch, Parking, Setup, Volunteer Liaison. To volunteer or for further information about the event, contact Grace J. at 967-0967 email gracej@saber.net or attend the General Service Meeting on the first Saturday of the month.

October

October 26 - Napa Valley Intergroup Anniversary Party – Our annual party includes a speaker meeting, potluck, dance and a raffle. The event

will be held in the evening at the Veterans Home in Yountville.

Please submit event and service opportunity announcements to us at the addresses below.

Freedom through Acceptance

We admitted that we couldn't lick alcohol with our own remaining resources, and so we accepted the further fact that dependence upon a higher power (if only our AA group) could do this hitherto impossible job. The moment we were able to accept these facts fully, our release from the alcohol compulsion had begun.

For most of us, this pair of acceptances had required a lot of exertion to achieve. Our whole treasured philosophy of self sufficiency had to be cast aside. This had not been done with sheer will power; it came instead as a result of developing the willingness to accept these new facts of living. We neither ran nor fought. But accept we did. And then we began to be free.

– from "As Bill Sees It", page 109

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