



# Napa Valley Intergroup Newsletter

Published by the Napa Valley Intergroup

---

Issue #10 July

---

## So how is AA organized??

“AA as such ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve”. Oh boy this looks like fun already, I just can’t wait!!

This article is not a diatribe on the 9th tradition. That is not my purpose at all. I would like to explain how AA is organized. Wait a second!!! You just said AA ought never be organized, what gives??

Well like a true alcoholic you read the first sentence and think you know everything. Whoo Hoo, No organization!! This is my kinda place, well this is your kinda place and there is some organization.

OK here goes. The primary purpose of the individual in AA is to stay sober and help other alcoholics. The primary purpose of the group is to carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous. (And, as my sponsor regularly reminds me, we must never forget our primary purpose.)

AA does use some organizational structure/ service boards to help carry the message. At the group level it is easy to see how AA is organized with literature representatives, secretaries, coffee makers and such, all meeting regularly, at the fabled business meeting. But how does that work for AA as a whole. The organization of AA is like an inverted or upside-down triangle. In fact that’s just what it is. We are all used to

organizations having just one boss at the top. Well in AA the most important and organizationally significant people are us, the alcoholics.

At the bottom of the triangle is the World Service Organization of Alcoholics with offices in New York. How would you like to work in that office and have, if you believe our membership survey, about 1,265,090 bosses to whom you are responsible. And if you don’t believe these folks feel responsible to you the member, just call them on the phone. I am sure you will be impressed by how helpful and willing they are to share all of the experience, strength and hope they have gathered from talking with groups throughout the US and Canada. The Bottom Line: “No One in this entire organization can ever issue a single directive to an AA member, mete out any punishment, or ever expel a member from AA”, EVER!! (even when it looks like we really should ) Hence, not organized.

So who prints the meeting schedules, and takes care of the literature, and handles the money and runs the H& I (Hospitals and Institutions) programs and organizes parties, and outings, and events, and conferences, and etc, etc, etc. There must be some responsibilities and structure and, well... organization, and there is, but when I first came in I did not understand how any of this stuff worked.

The hierarchy of your AA works like this:

It starts with you, the recovering alcoholic, who always has been, and always will be, the most important person in AA.

## NapaValley AA Intergroup Newsletter

Next it goes to the “group” the place where we share our stories of the mud, the blood and the beer. If you’ve never been to a meeting, or it has been so long it seems that way, put down this newsletter and get to a meeting right now!

Here is where it really gets fun: Napa Valley is in AA District #11. They meet the 1st Sat of every month at the Veterans home. There are 3 elected officers the District Committee Member Chair (DCMC) and 2 District Committee Members (DCM). If your group has a GSR this is where they get their information (hopefully).

Dist #11 is part of the California Northern Coastal Area (C.N.C.A.). They meet the 4th Sat at the Petaluma Community Center. Our Area has 4 general assemblies per year. The fall Area assembly will be Sat Nov 8, at the Calistoga fairgrounds. This year they will be doing an inventory among other things and next fall will be elections of new Area officers.

There are a total of 6 AA service Areas in California.

California, Oregon, Washington, Alaska, Idaho, Nevada and Arizona and New Mexico make up the Pacific Region.

The General Service Office (GSO) is in New York, and is made up of various other regions throughout the US and Canada.

The GSO history dates back to 1938. The GSO is a repository for AA shared experience and know-how. It fulfills our primary purpose by: 1) providing service, Information, and experience to groups worldwide; 2) publishing literature 3) supporting the activities of the General Service Board

of AA: and 4) carrying forward the recommendations of the General Service Conference.

The ultimate authority is a loving God, as we understand him.

Recap: You > Your Meeting > Dist 11 > CNCA > Pacific Region > GSO > God > you again. Got it?

Now we have to talk about Intergroup. This is where the local AA groups can have representation and is a conduit for the local group to receive and send information to the other local clubs, the area, district, and H & I.

While Intergroup is very important, it is not officially part of AA’s organizational structure. Some geographic locales have no Intergroup at all; some have fully staffed Intergroup central offices. It varies.

Hopefully your group has an active Intergroup representative. Napa Valley Intergroup meets the second Sat of every month at 10am, upstairs at the Alano club. It is a business type meeting, with a chairperson who facilitates the meeting, and a secretary who records the motions and is responsible for the “minutes”. One tradition is read and discussed at every meeting, and then the elected chairpersons are called on for their respective reports.

NOTE: Intergroup, is an open meeting.

The Napa Valley Intergroup elected chair positions are: Treasurer, Literature, Answering Service, Campout, Newsletter, Birthday meeting, Alkathon, Anniversary party, and Website. There are also GSR (General Service Rep) and H&I liaisons who keep Intergroup up to date on what is happening at their level. Finally they review any old or pending motions/actions, and then open the floor up for any new motions or discussion. And that’s it.

## NapaValley AA Intergroup Newsletter

Napa Valley Intergroup directly supports the 67 different Napa Valley AA groups or meetings. Also we are available, to the world, on line, for any questions about Napa Valley AA.

It is important to note that the in Napa these positions are volunteers. It is these people dedication to this program and to their individual program and commitment to service that keeps AA working and viable for you and me.

Now that you do know who they are and what they do... Is service part of your daily program? Are you willing to do for others what so many have done for you? I firmly believe that service helps maintain good sobriety.

### ~Gratitude~

I am reading a book titled, Adult Children of Alcoholics, written by Janet Geringer Woititz, Ed.D. It was written in the early 80's, & was on the New York Times best seller list. As most of us know by now, alcoholism is a family disease. We now know that our alcoholism is a genetically transmitted disease for which there is no cure, only treatment. Many of us grew up in an alcoholic family, which most often made life painfully difficult.

In the early years, our self-image is shaped by our family experiences; some are healthy, but many are not so healthy. She writes, "What children of alcoholics seem to have in common a low self-esteem." For me, I suffered from terminal low self-esteem. I was tremendously self-conscious, as in not measuring up, or always feeling less than. There is a poem in this book by Marya DePinto, that captured the way I felt for years. I wanted to share it with you.

Searching eyes,  
Questioning all corners of the room  
in split seconds

Brows which aspire  
to the heights of the forehead;  
darting, cool and somewhat unsure fingers  
examining the air around her  
reassuring her doubtful mind  
of the truth of her existence;

Seeing herself in the mirrors of others' minds  
She rarely believes her own  
accepting her existence as a reflection  
the haze rarely clears,  
the mirror is a glass  
and her soul is bare

Does she know that she is her own  
For real

How tragic are these feelings, to feel as if we existed only as a reflection? After reading this book, I learned that not only can the cycle of alcoholism be broken, but the cruel patterns so often associated with alcoholic behavior can be broken as well. How? Through education for starts. Talking openly with other adult children of alcoholics is very healing as well.

As an adult child of an alcoholic, I devoured this book & learned a great deal about identifying my misguided behaviors. I also learned that there are solutions for changing our learned behavior patterns. In the case of low self-esteem, we can learn how it shows itself, & in this book, we will find very specific suggestions as to ways to change.

Do we want to get better? Do we want to make the necessary changes to lead a more meaningful life? Are we

## NapaValley AA Intergroup Newsletter

willing to go to any lengths? The more this alcoholic learns about the harm done growing up in an alcoholic home, the better my chances are in breaking the cycle in my own home.

My wife's grandmother passed away in April. She was 94. On the back of the bulletin printed for her memorial service, I found a poem that I liked. This was taken from a book, Dawn Before Darkness, written by Anthony Padovano. My mother-in-law tells me this is a well written book on the subject of waiting.

We shall become spiritual persons  
on that morning  
when we laugh & sing  
for the right reasons  
And when we weep  
not because we have  
lost something  
But because we were  
given so much

To me, this about gratitude.

~Anonymous Contribution

### ~Announcements~

The Tom Foolery building will no longer be available for meetings as of the end of August. A number of meetings from the Alano Club will also be actively looking for new locations in the next 4-8 weeks. Consult your meeting schedule, and with a home group member of these meetings to verify location before attending. Anyone knowing of any available meeting space may contact:

Elmer (707)252-7482 (Tom Foolery)  
Anyone (707)252-1421 (Alano Club)

NAPYPAA would like to thank everyone who volunteered, attended, and contributed toward making their first event a glowing success!

### ~Events~

#### **Aug 1 & 2**

7th Annual N.V. Intergroup Campout  
Cassini Ranch on the Russian River  
Must purchase tickets by July 18th.  
Call Larry or Michelle P. 253-7132

#### **Sept 8**

CNCA Area Assembly  
Calistoga fairgrounds

#### **Oct 25**

54th Napa Valley Anniversary Party  
Grant Hall @ Veterans Home  
5:30 pm - 11pm  
Potluck, Childrens costume parade,  
sobriety countdown, Sharing session  
8 pm -11 pm Karaoke and Dance!!  
COMMITTEES NEEDED!!  
Questions call Larry B. 257-5465

### ~Contact Us~

#### **Address:**

Napa Valley Intergroup  
P.O. Box 10948  
Napa, Ca. 94581

#### **Phones:**

(707) 255-4900 - Napa  
(707) 963-HOPE (4673) - Upvalley

#### **E-Mail:**

info@aanapa.org -General Info  
newsletter@aanapa.org -Newsletter  
webmaster@aanapa.org -Webmaster

#### **Napa AA Website:**

<http://aanapa.org>