

RECOVERY TIMES

Vol. 38, No. 8, August 2013

The Alcoholics Anonymous San Fernando Valley Central Office Monthly Newsletter



AA Helped to Change Her Inner Soundtrack

It's not a pleasant place to be sometimes, here inside my head. This is where my disease pulsates with toxic whispers of self-hate, resentments and fears.

It's a scary place where obsessive thoughts run wild. Meetings, meditation and prayers can often silence the damning inner chatter – sometimes for days -- but the voices eventually return. A critical remark, an unreturned phone call or a couple pounds gained is sometimes all it takes to awaken that insidious monster within my head.

And though I hear many of my fellows within the rooms speak of a similarly damning voice within their heads, in

the midst of the cruel mental volley, I feel so deeply alone.

It often makes me feel ashamed. I still hold on to my belief that I have some control over this voice inside my head. But I do not. I am an alcoholic. These unwelcome internal visits are simply part of my disease. I can find reprieve but there is no cure.

This is the voice that led me to drink, to use, to act out – all futile attempts to silence the incessant chatter. This is the voice that wants me dead.

But I don't want to die. No more.

I have seen the beauty that lies behind the silenced voice. The serenity and joy that emerges when the voice retreats – defeated by my mental list of gratitude, my prayers, my unwillingness to suffer in silence.

It is not a pleasant place to be sometimes, here inside my head. But when the voices eventually subside (as they always do) and they are replaced with the songs of joy, hope, compassion and my God's intense love, there is no other place I would rather be than here inside my head.

—Kim K., Long Beach, Calif. Copyright c. 1944-2012. AA Grapevine, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Reprints by Permission Only.



CALENDAR OF A.A. EVENTS

Pacoima Group Alcathon: August 9-11, 2013 12502 Van Nuys Blvd., Pacoima, CA

Hot August AA Dance, August 24, 2013, 10 p.m., Burbank Group, 3217 Winona Ave., Burbank, CA

35th Annual Ventura County A.A. Convention, Aug. 23-25, 2013, Hyatt Westlake Plaza, 880 S. Westlake Blvd., Westlake Village, CA.

The 4th Annual "Take Your Sponsor to Breakfast" Breakfast, September 28th, DAV, Woodland Hills.

10th Annual Santa Clarita Valley AA Convention: October 18 – 20, 2013, Valencia Hyatt & Santa Clarita Conference Center.

SERVICE COMMITTEES SCHEDULE:

- **SFV Central Office Board Mtg: Sept. 4, 2013,** 6:30 p.m., Valley Central Office
- **SFV Intergroup: Mon., Sept. 9, 2013,** New IGRs: 6:30/7 p.m., St. Innocent Church., 5657 Lindley Ave., Tarzana
- **Gen Svc, Dist. 1 (1st Wed.) Sept. 4, 2013,** 6:30 p.m., 7552 Remmet, Canoga Park
- **Gen. Service, District 2: (1st Tues.) Sept. 3, 2013,** 6:30 p.m., 4011 Dunsmore, La Crescenta
- **Gen. Svc Dist. 7: (2nd Sat.) Sept. 14, 2013,** 9 a.m., Women's Club:33201 Agua Dulce Cyn Rd, Agua Dulce, CA
- **Gen Service, District 11: (1st Mon.) Sept. 2, 2013,** 6 p.m. New GSR 6:30 p.m., 315 W. Vine Street, Glendale,
- **Gen Service, District 16: (1st Mon.) Sept. 2, 2013,** 6:15 p.m. meeting, 15950 Chatsworth, Granada Hills.
- **Gen. Svc., District 17 : (1st Mon.) Sept. 2, 2013,** 6 p.m. New GSRs/6:30 p.m. Bus. Mtg, 5000 Colfax, Noho.
- **SFV H & I: (3rd Monday) August 19, 2013:** 7 p.m. Orientation/8 p.m. Bus. Meeting, 5657 Lindley Ave., Tarzana
- **SFV AA Convention Planning Committee:** Tuesday, August 20, 2013, 7 p.m. St. Innocent, Tarzana(see above)

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES IN THE SAN FERNANDO VALLEY:

Central Office needs telephone volunteers for all shifts (esp. midnight – 9 a.m.). If you have a year or more of continuous sobriety, you can sign up at the office or online: www.sfvaa.org/involve.html or call Central Office: 818 988-3001.

Public Information Committee: Provides information to the general public about what A.A. does & doesn't do. Need volunteers, especially young people and Spanish-speaking AAs, for health fairs and to speak at schools & businesses.

SF Valley Hospitals and Institutions Committee: Carry the message of A.A. into hospitals, prisons and treatment facilities to those who are unable to get out to meetings. See information above (SFV H & I).

San Fernando Valley Convention Committee: Volunteers are welcome to participate in the planning of the 2014 Convention. The committee meets on the 3rd Tuesday of every month starting in April.

San Fernando Valley Young People in AA: Committee Meeting is held the 1st Sunday of each month at Unit A., 10641 Burbank Blvd., NoHo.

San Fernando Valley Intergroup: The SFV Central Office coordinates a monthly meeting for all Intergroup reps on the 2nd Monday of each month at St. Innocent Church, 5657 Lindley Ave., Tarzana. If your meeting/group does not currently have an Intergroup Rep, please consider appointing someone to represent your meeting. Intergroup reps provide an important service to the group by sharing information on upcoming AA events in the Valley. **To serve as an Intergroup Rep, call Central Office: 818 988-3001.**



A.A. Central Office maintains LIVE 24/7 PHONE SERVICE for A.A.s. Visit:

www.sfvaa.org to find meeting info, upcoming events, service meeting info, or download a copy of Recovery Times. **Want to be of service?** Why not answer phone calls and help others?

HAS YOUR MEETING CHANGED? Please provide meeting updates in writing to:

**The Valley Central Office,
7417 Van Nuys Blvd., Ste. E.
Van Nuys, CA 91405.**

Quotes from Our Founders

"Our fellowship has been permitted to achieve -- though still in miniature -- the 'one world' dream of philosophers. Ours is a world in which we can hotly differ, yet never think of schism or conflict as a solution." AA Co-Founder, Bill W., July 1960, "AA Tomorrow"

"Great modesty and humility are needed by every AA for his own permanent recovery. If these virtues are such vital needs to the individual, so must they be to AA as a whole." AA Co-Founder, Bill W., March 1946 "Our Anonymity Is Both Inspiration and Safety"

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Heard in Meetings:

"WORRY IS AN EXCESS OF ENERGY AND DOESN'T CONTROL THE OUTCOME. GOD WILL COME THROUGH TO PROVIDE A SOLUTION."

"The bottle never demanded credentials or conformity -- neither has AA."

"If all I have is a dollar in my pocket and I'm at a meeting, logic tells me to save it for myself for later. If I give it to AA, and have faith in the process, it will come back to me in ways I can't even imagine."

"I have two factories in my head: One that manufacturers sh____ and one that buys it!"

Intergroup Board Meeting:

July 8, 2013

OPENING: Andre W.

- Andre W. opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. with *The Serenity Prayer*
- Norm read "*The Twelve Traditions*".
- Dawn H., Recording Secretary, accepted a motion for approval of Minutes from June's Intergroup Meeting; the minutes were approved as submitted.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Brian H.

- Central Office is in the black \$2,370.03 MTD, and in the black \$10,168.69 YTD.
- Reflected in the YTD total is \$6,578.24 in group donations toward computer/moving expenses, for an actual YTD total of \$3,590.45.
- Brian thanked the groups for their ongoing support.
- A full Treasurer's Report is available in the *Recovery Times*.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY'S REPORT: Bob F.

- Everything is running smoothly at Central Office. Relocation options are being explored, and we hope to identify potential new locations soon.
- Our volunteer staff is currently running well, but Central Office can always use new volunteers. Interested parties should contact Larry at Central Office.
- Date for changes to the new meeting directory is July 24th.
- Everything is running smoothly with the www.sfvaa.org website.
- Everything is superb with *Recovery Times*.

Bill S. welcomed three new Intergroup Representatives

Gary – representing the We Are Responsible group.

Lynne – representing the West Valley Friday Night Group

Richard – representing the Saturday night Feelings Discussion Group.

IGRs were reminded to encourage recruitment of IGRs from meetings that are not currently represented. There are currently 300+ groups in the Valley but only 50-60 meetings represented monthly at IGR.

Orientation for new IGRs begins at 6:30 p.m. prior to IGR Meeting.

SERVICE REPS:

San Fernando Valley Hospital & Institutions Committee: Daniel

- All is going well with H&I in the SFV.
- New volunteers and panel leaders are needed for prison clearance. Interested parties can contact Daniel directly, or attend the upcoming H&I meeting for more information.
- Santa Clarita Valley AA Convention: Bernard B.
 - The 10th Annual Santa Clarita Valley Convention is coming up October 18-20.
 - There will be a movie night fundraiser on July 27th, and details are available on the convention website: <http://www.scvaaconvention.org>
- San Fernando Valley AA Convention: Dawn H. The 39th Annual S.F. Valley Convention is next Jan. 31 – Feb. 2nd.

SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES (continued)

- This year's theme is "The Music of AA", and the colors are lavender and grey.
- Upcoming fundraisers include a BINGO Night on August 10th at St. Innocent's, and flyers will be available next month.
- The Convention Planning Committee meets next Tuesday, July 16th, at 7:00 p.m. at St. Innocent, and all are welcome to attend.
- Dawn reminded the IGRs once again that this year, all convention participants who wish to attend the Friday Night Opening Ceremony and the Saturday afternoon Longtimers Meeting **MUST** be registered.

OLD BUSINESS: Literature Sales are CLOSED the last Friday of each month. Central Office doors remain open; phones are still answered. Reminder for groups to send meeting changes **IN WRITING** to Central Office.

NEW BUSINESS (None)

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM AA GROUPS & SEVENTH TRADITION:

Jim: The Pacoima Group is hosting its 58th Anniversary Alcathon August 9-11. Flyers are available on the back table.

Bob F.: The annual Take Your Sponsor to Breakfast Breakfast will take place Saturday, September 28th at the Disabled American Veterans Hall. Tickets will be available exclusively through Intergroup, and will be available in August. There are several conventions taking place over the next few months. The Foothill Round-Up is July 26-28. The 62nd Annual So Cal Convention is October 4-6 in Rancho Mirage.

Andre W.: Reminder that Groups should bring at least 350 flyers for upcoming events. Flyers must be for "AA-related events" (defined as "an event that includes an AA Meeting as part of the event")

ACKNOWLEDGE BIRTHDAYS FOR THE MONTH OF JULY – (51 YEARS OF SOBRIETY!)

- Paula – 6 years on 7/21
- Gary – 6 years on 7/23
- Michele – 12 years on 7/29
- Bill – 27 years on 7/28

CLOSING: Motion to adjourn was recognized and seconded. Meeting adjourned with *The Lord's Prayer* at 7:21 p.m.

2015 INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

July 2 - 5, 2015 Atlanta, Georgia

The 2015 International Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous will be held July 2 - 5, 2015 in Atlanta, Georgia with the theme "80 Years – Happy, Joyous and Free." A.A. members and guests from around the world will celebrate A.A.'s 80th year at this event with big meetings held Friday night, Saturday night and Sunday morning in the Georgia Dome. Other meetings, scheduled or informal, will take place throughout the weekend in the Georgia World Congress Center and local hotels.

We know many are excited about the International Convention and eager for detailed information. As the time gets closer, additional information about the Convention and Atlanta, our host city, will be provided. Convention registration and housing reservations will open in fall 2014. **Stay tuned!**

CELEBRATING AN A.A. ANNIVERSARY? By making a \$1.00 donation for every year of your sobriety, you can support Central Office in reaching out to alcoholics all over the county. Please send your donation in during the month of your birthday so we can acknowledge you in the correct issue of Recovery Times. For April we thank the following for their contributions: **Darren G. - 6 years and Paul D. - 7 years.**



DEATHS (THINGS WE CANNOT CHANGE) If you are aware of the passing of a member of our Fellowship, please call us at (818) 988-3001 or email an obituary to: sfvaa.org.

Please Support Your Central Office by sending a representative from your group to the Intergroup monthly meetings. We meet the 2nd Monday of every month at **St. Innocent Church at 5657 Lindley in Tarzana.** Please Come! We would love to see you!



Newsletter Subscriptions:

If you would like a copy of our **Recovery Times** mailed to you, please mail us your name and address along with a \$7.00 check to cover cost & delivery to:
San Fernando Valley Central Office, 7417-E. Van Nuys Blvd., Van Nuys, CA 91405.

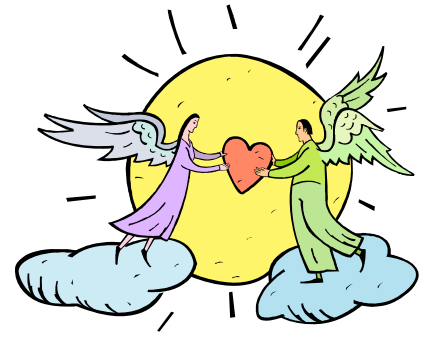
Tell us whether it is for a new subscription, a renewal, or if you are enclosing an additional contribution. Please also give us your former address if you are moving.

THANK YOU!

Got a story, poem or artwork that is A.A.- related that you want to share? Stories should be 250-500 words. Please email to Editor of Recovery Times at: xnowisthetime@aol.com or mail/deliver to Central Office. Submission does not 'guarantee' publication.

Finding You

Twenty-one years ago, I walked in the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous not aware I was an alcoholic. I am grateful no one talked at me - insisting I needed to do anything or believe in anything. My mistrust would have sent me out of the rooms. Sudden suggestions from a group of loving men and women who included me through invitations to various social gatherings and meetings, was where I was able to begin to see that alcohol was not a solution to my restless discomfort.



From my earliest childhood memories, I always sensed life was difficult. I believed I had been mistakenly left here on this planet in a cold world whose sole purpose was to torment, torture, and tease me for the intent to constantly hurt my pride. This concept was reinforced because of congenital physical and mental skill deficiencies which continually made me the “odd person out.” This further created bitter jealousy of the success I saw other children achieve without difficulty.

When I listened to the other members, I had difficulty at first seeing the similarities. I didn't necessarily have many of the experiences they shared in regards to alcohol, yet I was convinced I was an alcoholic. I understood bewilderment, terror, frustration, loneliness, hopelessness, despair and fear. I could never understand how it was that, time and time again, I would try to control or try to stop only to find myself drinking again - drinking to escape the reality of the conditions of my life without seeing that my thinking always preceded the drink.

I stayed sober for a considerable period of time -- nearly 8 years. I had done my Steps and regularly attending meetings, actively being of service. Why did I relapse? I had only thought I had gotten rid of self, leveled my pride, and admitted my wrongs. That was the answer. I only thought. There was no abandonment to a Higher Power. When I had asked God to remove my difficulties, I wanted to pick and choose which difficulties he would remove. For me the difficulties became 10-fold. I was having trouble with relationships and I lived in constant fear.

After 4 months of attempting to trying control drinking (mind you still attending regular meetings), I saw I was failing miserably. I stood up as a newcomer. It was there in the darkest corner in the closet talking to my shoes; I knew exactly the nature of my wrongs and saw my delusion. I had not gotten rid of the “One Old Idea.” I had not done a thorough self-examination. Somehow I glanced over the more glaring questions: Why do I believe or how did I come to believe in these resentments and fears? Why did I believe the old ideas? Were they fact or were they fiction? I am hopeless and doomed to repeat the patterns unless I could have a psychic change. That is precisely what happened.

I launched into 13 years of continual self-examination uncovering every dark corner. Where have I been dishonest, selfish, self-seeking, inconsiderate or frightened? Where had I caused harm, jealousy, suspicious or bitterness? I stepped onto a new, more solid ground and a faith in God. He does answers prayers in the 23rd hour and 59th minute.

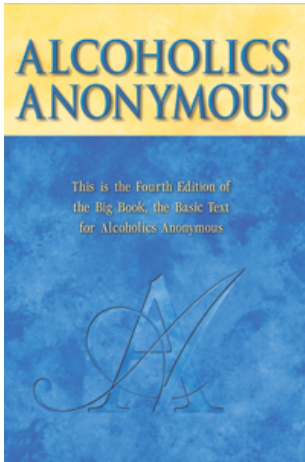
Through these years, I have tried to make sense of the terrible experiences of childhood molestation, emotional and physical abuse and the witnessing of repeated horrific violence including murder. Why did I hide behind hologram glasses thinking you could not see my shame, my fear, and my guilt?

Despite all these things, Alcoholics Anonymous showed me a loving God. I had to study what Love is. I try to be the embodiment of that message “Love.” I am powerless to stop violence. I am powerless to change others. I shared with you all that I am my imperfections. I truly believe before I came to this planet, God and I sat down and talked. He told he was going to leave me here and what my difficulties were going to be - that I

would be lost in the darkest for a long time and the only thing that would heal my soul was love. He asked me if I would do this for Him. As with any child who wants to please and love their parent I said, "Yes I will." He responded, "It's okay to be afraid, I am here right beside you. Look up, heaven is inside of you. Look for Me, take the first step and I will take 1000 steps towards you and you will find you. That is Love."

My name is Pamela and I am an alcoholic, a ragamuffin whose cheese has fallen off her crackers, her suitcase handle is duct tape, and her books were missing pages from the meaning of her life.

Pamela P., Santa Clarita, CA



IS A.A. FOR YOU?

Only you can decide whether you want to give A.A. a try — whether you think it can help you.

We who are in A.A. came because we finally gave up trying to control our drinking. We still hated to admit that we could never drink safely. Then we heard from other A.A. members that we were sick. (We thought so for years!) We found out that many people suffered from the same feelings of guilt and loneliness and hopelessness that we did. We found out that we had these feelings because we had the disease of alcoholism.

The 12 Steps through Word Search. Each month, Recovery Times features the Tradition of the Month. In August we are featuring Tradition Eight: ***"Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers."*** Can you find all the words?

T	S	A	N	O	N	Y	M	O	U	S	B	U	T	O
C	R	C	E	N	T	E	R	S	H	A	T	F	I	U
S	E	R	V	I	C	E	F	O	R	E	V	E	R	R
A	M	E	F	E	C	T	U	I	J	J	L	E	J	H
C	A	A	T	R	I	L	S	P	E	C	I	A	L	T
A	I	U	Y	K	D	F	O	E	M	P	L	O	Y	T
C	N	O	N	P	R	O	F	E	S	S	I	O	N	S
N	O	N	P	R	O	F	E	S	S	I	O	N	A	L
E	W	O	R	K	E	R	S	R	C	O	D	E	I	N
R	G	E	T	A	L	C	O	H	O	L	I	C	S	I

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

