



NEWS FROM THE CENTRAL SERVICE OFFICE OF SOUTHERN COLORADO

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Office hours Monday-Friday 10 am to 4 pm. Closed some holidays. Call to verify.

September 2016

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **CSO Monthly Business Meeting** 1st Wednesday of each month at 6:00 PM at the CSO. All groups are encouraged to send a representative.
- **District 8 Meeting** 3rd Saturday of the month at 1:30 pm. At the Central Service Office.
- **Unity Day**, Sept 17, Wesley Methodist.
- **Hit and Run** to Westcliffe, September 30th, meet at the Pueblo Alano Club at 4:30
- **Ocsoberfest**, October 7-9, Pueblo Convention Center
- **Area 10 Election Assembly**, November 11 - 13, Aurora, CO

Treasurer's Report

July 1st balance	\$625.06
Revenue	\$967.85
Expenses	\$813.18
Aug 1st Balance	\$779.73
Revenue	\$628.60
Expenses	\$698.70
Sept 1st Balance	\$709.63
Misc Fund	\$1000.00
Prudent Reserve	\$2500.00

BILL W. ON UNITY

During the 1940s, Bill would write articles in the Grapevine on the principles that would become the 12 Traditions. Below is one such article from December 1947.

Editorial: On the 1st Tradition

"Each member of Alcoholics Anonymous is but a small part of a great whole. A.A. must continue to live or most of us will surely die. Hence our common welfare comes first. But individual welfare follows close afterward."

Our whole A.A. program is securely founded on the principle of humility--that is to say, perspective. Which implies, among other things, that we relate ourselves rightly to God and to our fellows; that we each see ourselves as we really are--"a small part of a great whole." Seeing our fellows thus, we shall enjoy group harmony. That is why A.A. Tradition can confidently state, "Our common welfare comes first."

"Does this mean," some will ask, "that in A.A. the individual doesn't count too much? Is he to be swallowed up, dominated by the group?"

No, it doesn't seem to work out that way. Perhaps there is no society on earth more solicitous of personal welfare, more careful to grant the individual the greatest possible liberty of belief and action. Alcoholics Anonymous has no "musts." Few A.A. groups impose penalties on anyone for non-conformity. We do suggest, but we don't discipline. Instead, compliance or non-compliance with any principle of A.A. is a matter for the conscience of the individual; he is the judge of his own conduct. Those words of old time, "Judge not," we observe most literally.

"But," some will argue, "if A.A. has no authority to govern its individual members or groups, how shall it ever be sure that the common welfare does come first? How is it possible to be governed without a government? If everyone can do as he pleases, how can you have aught but anarchy?"

The answer seems to be that we A.A.s cannot really do as we please, though there is no constituted human authority to restrain us. Actually, our common welfare is protected by powerful safeguards. The moment any action seriously threatens the common welfare, group opinion mobilizes to remind us; our conscience begins to complain. If one persists, he may become so disturbed as to get drunk; alcohol gives him a beating. Group opinion shows him that he is off the beam, his own conscience tells him that he is dead wrong, and, if he goes too far, Barleycorn brings him real conviction.

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If your group or the AA community have a special occasion or event that you would like in the newsletter, or a flyer that you would like distributed with the newsletter please contact CSO with the information. If your group is not getting the newsletter, also contact CSO to be placed on our distribution list.

So it is we learn that in matters deeply affecting the group as a whole, "our common welfare comes first." Rebellion ceases and cooperation begins because it must; we have disciplined ourselves.

Eventually, of course, we cooperate because we really wish to; we see that without substantial unity there can be no A.A., and that without A.A. there can be little lasting recovery for anyone. We gladly set aside personal ambitions whenever these might harm A.A. We humbly confess that we are but "a small part of a great whole."

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LEADERSHIP IN A.A.

At the beginning of the long form of the Twelve Traditions, there is a statement that says, "Our A.A. experience has taught us that:" (*Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* pg. 189). When I was in the Navy we had a similar statement, "Navy regs (regulations) are written in blood". These two statements imply that I look for a solution to future problems only after I am presented with an unforeseen situation. The Twelve Traditions evolved out of issues that the early members of A.A. dealt with. The essays for each tradition describe the early problems we, as a society, dealt with that resulted in the tradition. Experience is invaluable in Alcoholics Anonymous.

In the second tradition, there is a discussion of leadership in A.A. There is also an essay on leadership that Bill W. wrote that is included in Concept IX (See *The A.A. Service Manual and Twelve Concepts of World Service* pg. 38). When I read these items, I need to decide what kind of leader I am. Am I an "elder statesman" or a "bleeding deacon"? Do I listen to the voice of the group conscience or do I act on my own?

When I was early in sobriety, I was sure that what I had done was the only way it could be done. If someone did not do it my way, I thought they were wrong. I then got into service at the district and area level and discovered the twelve traditions and the twelve concepts for world service. They are two sets of principles intended to guide the leadership of our society. I try to utilize these principles as an example when I am in service. It is my responsibility to learn them and apply them to the decisions I make in Alcoholics Anonymous.

Even after years of sobriety, I still find that I have to fight my own desires. I have to pause and decide how the traditions or concepts apply to the particular situation I am facing and steer toward that ideal. I still fall short. I am not always the leader I want to be, but I am able to analyze the situation and (hopefully) learn from my mistakes. This way I am able "to be of maximum service to God and the people about us (me)." (*Alcoholics Anonymous* pg. 77).

NOTICE: The September monthly District 8 meeting will be held during Unity Day, September 17, at Wesley United Methodist Church, 85 Stanford Ave., Pueblo.

DISCLAIMER

This Newsletter is a publication of the CSO of Southern Colorado. It is about, by, and for the members of A.A. Opinions expressed herein are not to be attributed to Alcoholics Anonymous. Publication of an article does not imply endorsement by either A.A. or the CSO, except where indicated.