

GAAZETTE

Our meeting in print.

About MAICO

The mission of MAICO (Madison Area Intergroup Central Office) is to help A.A. groups within its service area (South Central Wisconsin) carry the A.A. message. MAICO helps coordinate and facilitate communication and cooperation among individual A.A. groups, area 12-step and other committees, and components of the A.A. service structure. MAICO provides needed services that are beyond the scope and ability of any individual A.A. group, and is at all times responsible to the groups it serves.

Carrying the Message: The Art of Twelfth Stepping

Twelfth Stepping is an art that never goes out of style. While some of the methods may have changed over the years (think cell phones, e-mails, and Web Sites versus telephone booths, typewriters, and newspaper announcements), carrying the message to the still-suffering remains at the heart of Alcoholics Anonymous.

As outlined in the Big Book, in the chapter "Working With Others," "Practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics. It works when other activities fail... To watch people recover, to see them help others, to watch loneliness vanish, to see a fellowship grow up about you, to have a host of friends—this is an experience you must not miss...Frequent contact with newcomers and with each other is the bright spot of our lives."

The basic building block in Alcoholics Anonymous has always been the lifesaving communication between one alcoholic and another. As Bill W. described it, "From the beginning, communication in A.A. has been no ordinary transmission of helpful ideas and attitudes. It has been unusual and sometimes unique. Because of our kinship in suffering, and because our common means of deliverance are effective for ourselves only when constantly carried to others, our channels of contact have always been charged with the language of the heart."

From an historical perspective, this transmission of hope passing from one alcoholic to another, often described in early A.A. literature as a "chain reaction," got its start when Bill W., who had recently been in and out of treatment with Dr. Silkworth for his own alcoholism, received a visit from Ebby T., an old friend and former drinking buddy. Ebby had found a way to get sober with the help of the Oxford Groups and arrived on Bill's doorstep one day with a message of hope he wished to impart. Currently hungover and floundering in the throes of his own illness, for some reason Bill was ready to hear what Ebby had to say.

"In November of 1934, I was visited by Ebby. He was an old friend, an alcoholic, and my sponsor-to-be. Why was it that he could communicate with me in areas that not even Dr. Silkworth could touch?"

"Well, first of all, I already knew that he himself was a hopeless case—just like me. Earlier that year I had heard that he too was a candidate for the lockup. Yet here he was, sober and free. And his powers of communication now were such that he could convince me in minutes that he really felt he had been released from his drinking compulsion. He represented something very different from a mere jittery ride on the water wagon. And so he brought me a kind of communication and evidence that even Dr. Silkworth could not give. Here was *one drunk talking to another*. Here was hope indeed."

Ebby proceeded to tell Bill his story, carefully detailing his drinking experiences of recent years, establishing a powerful bond of identification. He then outlined the steps he had taken in gaining the sobriety he currently enjoyed.

"None of Ebby's ideas were really new. I'd heard them all before. But coming over his powerful transmission line they were not at all what in other circumstances I would have regarded as conventional clichés for good church behavior. They appeared to me as living truths which might liberate me as they had liberated him. He could reach me at depth."

Ebby's visit, powerful as it had been, did not prove the impetus or the ability for Bill to quit drinking, however, and ultimately he found himself under the care of Dr. Silkworth once again. It was during this final stay that Bill underwent the transformative spiritual experience that allowed him, finally, to achieve sobriety.

As Bill noted, "With this illumination came the vision of a possible chain reaction, one alcoholic working with the next. I was convinced that I could give to fellow sufferers that which Ebby had given to me."

For months afterwards Bill tried to carry the message. But nobody sobered up, and a wonderful lesson came out of the experience. Bill was painfully learning how *not* to communicate.

"No matter how truthful the words of my message, there could be no deep communication if what I said and did was colored by pride, arrogance, intolerance, resentment, imprudence, or desire for personal acclaim—even though I was largely unconscious of these attitudes.

"Without realizing it I had fallen pretty heavily into these errors. My spiritual experience had been so sudden, brilliant, and powerful that I had begun to be sure I was destined to fix just about all the drunks in the world. Here was pride. I kept harping on my mystical awakening, and the customers were uniformly repelled. Here was imprudence. I began to insist that every drunk should have a 'bright-light uplift' just about like mine. I ignored the fact that God comes to man in many ways. I had begun in effect to say to my clients, "You must be as I am, believe as I believe, do as I do.' Here was the sort of unconscious arrogance that no drunk can stand!"

Eventually, Bill altered his approach to include the medical facts about alcoholism he had learned from Dr. Silkworth, about the allergy an alcoholic has to alcohol and the compulsion that compels him to continue drinking.

Soon thereafter, Bill found himself in a telephone booth in the lobby of the Mayflower Hotel in Akron, Ohio. "I was tempted to take a drink for the first time since my hospital experience. That was when I first realized that I would need other alcoholics to preserve myself and maintain that original gift of sobriety. It was not just a case of trying to help alcoholics. If my own sobriety were to be maintained, I had to find another alcoholic to work with. So when Dr. Bob and I sat down for the first time fact-to-face, it was a very different act. I said, "Bob, I am speaking because I need you as much as you could possibly need me. I am in danger of slipping back down the drain."

From that meeting, the spiritual chain reaction that grew from Ebby and Bill, to Dr. Bob in Akron has stretched to countless alcoholics around the world. Said Bill of the vital communication, "One of the first insights Dr. Bob and I shared was that all true communication must be founded on mutual need. Never could we talk down to anyone, certainly not to a brother alcoholic. We saw that each sponsor would have to humbly admit his own needs as clearly as those of his prospect. Here was the foundation for the A.A.'s Twelfth Step to recovery, the Step in which we carry the message."

Not long ago, in an effort to increase local Twelfth Step efforts, the St. Paul, Minnesota, Intergroup newsletter carried an article titled "Tips on Making Twelfth Step Calls," stating, "When a Twelfth Step call is received, we begin with the assumption that another human being's life is at stake, literally. This means that, without delay, this call is to be answered at once." Some other suggestions were also offered: When making a Twelfth Step call, arrange for another AA member to accompany you. Maintain anonymity. Congratulate the prospect on wanting to do something about his or her drinking problem. Provide some A.A. literature. Tell what you used to be like, what happened, and what you are like now.

Whether the communication with a new prospect takes place in person, over a cell phone or on the Internet, the art of twelfth stepping remains the same. As stated in A.A.'s Tradition Five, "The unique ability of each A.A. to identify himself with, and bring recovery to, the newcomer in no way depends upon his learning, his eloquence, or any special individual skills. The only thing that matters is that he is an alcoholic who has found a key to sobriety."

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Need that Special Gift

Remember MAICO has a wide selection of conference and nonconference literature, medallions, and gifts for that special someone.

T-Shirts Book Covers Medallions Coffee Cups
Wallet Cards Bookmarks Key Chains DVDs
Literature: AA, Al-Anon, and Grapevine

MAICO, the Madison Area Intergroup Central Office only accepts Cash or Checks

MAICO NEEDS YOUR HELP

MAICO is expanding our office to include literature and merchandise in the room across the hall. We need a donated literature display rack or ideas and muscle to build one. As always we are grateful for people willing to help on the day the literature is moved.

Call the MAICO office to volunteer at 608-222-8989

FYI – the 2010-2011 South Central MAICO Meeting directory will be available in January.

Upcoming Events

2009 & 2010

Some event flyers on www.aamadisonwi.org or www.area75.org

- Dec. 20 – Third Sunday Breakfast, Open AA meeting**, Ramada, 1 N. Main St., Fond du Lac, Breakfast begins at 10am, Speaker at 11am, Speaker: Karla S. from Fond du Lac, Breakfast \$8.00, coffee \$1.50
- Dec. 31, 2009 – Jan 1 – WICYPAA No-Slumber Party Lock-In**, Fitchburg Serenity Club, 6048 McKee Rd., Fitchburg. 10pm to 6am, meetings, games, Wii, movies, Karaoke, tons more fun. Lindsay:608-658-7864
- Dec. 31, 2009 – New Year’s Eve in Portage**, 117 E. Cook St. (former Rhyme’s Drugstore), 6pm: Bing, billiards, appetizers, social hour 8pm –Speaker: Stan – Lyndon Station, 9pm – Turkey a la king, please bring a dish to pass. For “Night Owls” there will be a midnight meeting.
- Jan. 3 – Barneveld Appreciation Dinner**, United Ch. of Christ, 104 S. Jones St., Barneveld. 6:30pm Supper, 7:30pm – Speaker . Rear entrance, basement. Supper provided by Group, bring yourself and a newcomer.
- Jan. 22 – 24 - WICYPAA Conference, Chula Vista Resort, Wisconsin Dells, WI.** www.wicypaa.org
- Jan. 24 – Area 75 Winter Service Assembly**, Madison Senior Center, 330 W. Mifflin, Madison
- Feb. 11 – 14 - 46th International Women’s Conference**, Language of the Heart, Orlando, Florida
www.internationalwomensconference.org
- Feb. 27 – Campbellsport Tues & Fri Night 28th Annual Open AA meeting**, United Christian Ch., 228 Forest St. Campbellsport. Doors open 5pm, potluck meal 6pm, please bring a dish to pass, AA speaker: Barb R. Waupun. Door prizes, coffee, soda, food, and good fellowship provided.
- Mar. 13 – Lomira Wed. Night Grp Annual Open Speaker Meeting & Potluck**, Trinity United Methodist Ch., 400 Church St., Lomira (Hwys 67 & 41), Social Hour: 4pm, Potluck Dinner: 5pm, Speakers: 6pm, Al-Anon: Kay B. & AA – Bob B. from Kenosha. Please bring a dish to pass. Ham, Sloppy Joes provided
- Mar. 20 – 34th Annual Badger Intergroup**, Waukesha Exp Center, Speaker: Clancy I. from Los Angeles, Ca. Tickets: \$24.00 ea. Social Hour: 5:30pm, Dinner: 6:30pm, Speaker: 8pm, Dance to follow. If you would like to sit at a table together, you must mail your registration in together by Feb. 10. Less than 1 table by Feb 20.
- Mar. 21 – Area 75 Delegates Workshop**, Madison Senior Center
- Apr. 10 – Dist. 9 Mini-Conference**, St. Rose School, Cuba City, WI. Theme: “Go to any Lengths”
- Apr. 11 – Are 75 Pre-Conference Assembly**, Madison Senior Center
- Apr. 18 – 25 – General Service Conference**, New York, New York
- Apr. 23 – 25 – 23rd International AA Men’s Conference**, Cleveland, Ohio. Local Madison contact: Ron M. 608-242-0395 or 608-347-4402. Conference web site: www.IAAMCCLEVELAND.COM
- Apr. 30 – May 2 – Area 75 Spring Conference**, Olympia Resort, Oconomowoc, WI.
- Jun. 13 – Area 75 Summer Service Assembly**, Madison Senior Center
- Jul. 1 -4 - AAWS International Convention, San Antonio, TX** – Reg. forms & You can register on line at www.aa.org which opens Sept. 1, 2009 , look for International Convention logo

Thank You's
October 23, 2009 to December 11, 2009

General Fund

12 & 12 Grp
Beloit Happy Hour Grp
Beloit Mon. Nite Thumpers
Beloit Thurs. Night Grp
Freedom Grp
Ft. Atkinson Mon Wed Fri Morning
Grace Lunch Grp
Mineral Pt. Grapevine Grp
Mon Sat at 511 Grp
Monona Serenity Grp
Monroe Early Birds
Monroe Wed Night Big Book
Montello Grps
New Glarus Sobrietyfest
Orfordville Promise Grp
Phoenix Grp
Rock River
Serenity at Six
Slip Nots
Sunlight of the Spirit (SOTS)
Sun Prairie Thurs. Big Boo Study
Waupun Tues. Night
Waunakee Wau-na Meeting

Sun Prairie Schooners
Sun Prairie Grp
Sunlight of the Spirit (SOTS)
Traditions Grp
Wed. High Noon
Women's Serenity – Thurs & Sat

Individual Donations

Anonymous donations

Memory of Craig L

Anonymous donation

MAICO Corrections/Treatment Fund

Caring & Sharing Grp
Early Risers Grp
Sunlight of the Spirit (SOTS)

Answering Service

Kathy W.

Faithful Fivers

Larry L.

Gratitude Month

Anonymous Donations
Baraboo Red Circle
Baraboo Wed Afternoon Reflections
Beaver Dam Mon 6pm
Dan
Fitchburg Sunrisers Grp
Foxhall Recovery
Freedom Grp
Janesville Mid Morning Grp
Janesville Trinity Grapevine
Mon Night Step
New Glarus Sobrietyfest
Rock River

2009 Holiday Events at local Clubs

With the Sixth Tradition in mind, we offer the following for your information only:

**Fitchburg Serenity Club, 6048 McKee Rd.,
Fitchburg – 608-271-9817**

Christmas Eve – regular meetings
Christmas Day – Dinner at 2pm, bring dish to pass
New Year's Eve – 7pm – Annual Bill W. talk with Bake Sale
New Year's Day – regular meetings

**511 Club, 511 North Carroll, Madison- extra
meetings all days – 608-256-9682**

Christmas Eve – open Noon to 10pm, Bingo 3pm
Christmas Day – open Noon to 10pm, Christmas Dinner
3pm, bring a dish to pass, donations helpful

New Year's Eve – open Noon to how long it takes??
New Year's Day – open Noon to 10pm, Bingo 3pm

**Monona Serenity Club, 4933 Prairie Dock Dr.,
Monona**

New Year's Eve – Pot Luck 6pm-8pm, 8pm meeting

**12 & 12 Drop In Center, 402 W. Delavan Dr.,
Janesville – 608-314-1090**

Christmas Eve 6pm through Christmas Day 6pm -
Alkathon

WHAT IF WE STOPPED DONATING? *By tongue in cheek*

Like many businesses, AA will now be charging for some things that used to be free, such as

- 1) Being rocketed into the Fourth Dimension--\$49.99 per trip, fuel surcharge applies, extra baggage. Not included. Fifth dimension trips optional. "Straight to the Moon, Alice"- still free, See your sponsor for details.
- 2) Sponsorship – was free, NOW \$9.99 per month, with 4 visits/15 phone calls per month free, after that, \$2.00 each.
- 3) Membership Dues now \$29.99/month, 10% discount for a 1-year plan.
- 4) Seating charges – Each seat now \$1.00 per meeting, with a 20% discount for the 90-in-90 plan.
- 5) The "Pink Cloud" was free, NOW \$14.99 per cloud, with a \$5.00 per event environmental cleanup fee. These are the NEW ozone-free Pink Clouds that do NOT add to global warming.
- 6) Coffee to be \$1.50 per cup, with a 10% discount for 5 or more cups.
- 7) Hugs now will be \$2.50 EACH.
- 8) Conscious contact with GOD now \$9.99/month, with the first 450 minutes free, then 0.10 cents/minute fee over. New "double your minutes for life" plan is a low \$49.99 one time charge – holidays and weekends extra. See the current rate schedule, as GOD is VERY busy.
- 9) Accidental "Cell phone going off during meeting charge" now set at \$25.00 per ring (not per call).
- 10) "I've Been Thinking" fees to now be \$3.00 each, with a relapse re-entry fee of only \$99.99 each, if you're lucky enough to make it back into the rooms.

Humorous article reprinted with permission from the October issue of the Akron Intergroup News.

**For This,
We Are Responsible**

We need your help and cooperation if we are to keep up to date about meetings and groups in the area we serve. Please let us know of any changes to the meetings you attend or to your group so we can pass the information along to our readers. Call MAICO with any changes that you know of or fill out this form and send it to MAICO, 6033 Monona Drive, Suite 204, Madison, WI 53716-3963.

Provide as much of the following information as is possible

New___ Change___ Help___ Discontinued___

Group name (if any)_____ Open___ Closed___

Smoking___ Non-smoking___ Signed___ Accessible___

Day and time of meeting _____

Location_____

Type of meeting_____

Group contact person_____

Contact's phone number_____

Also, let us know of any changes in your group's contact person(s):

Name_____

Position _____

Phone number_____

Group name (if any)_____

Day and time of meeting_____

Location_____

MAICO

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