

December 2009

Garden Island Sobriety

'Step Twelve'



“Having had a spiritual awakening, as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.”



He said: What exactly do we mean by a “spiritual awakening”, anyway? We’ve heard it over and over in meetings, read it in the book and heard it in conversations with each other that AA is a spiritual program. I guess what we are doing is re-programming our brains with a new set of values based on spiritual principles. We all knew that a mere moral attitude failed us when it came to controlling and enjoying our drinking. Despite our most sincere religious convictions, all our prayers and pleadings got us nowhere in our futile attempts to drink like normal people. Well, we all agree that religious and spiritual are two different things, but how?

The major difference between spiritual and religious for this alcoholic is that religion focuses more on the salesmanship of their particular prophecies to the masses and spirituality puts more emphasis on what the individual can glean from teachings and principles themselves and how they can apply it to their lives. Most religions have a set of spiritual principles, or what we call in AA a plan for living, but, most of the message gets blurred when charismatic personalities use them to fulfill some personal agenda. This can, and has, happened in AA as personalities take more precedence than the principles we are trying to share with each other. In AA there is no uniformed preacher on a pulpit telling us how to run our lives according to his interpretation of the sacred text. We are no more than a bunch of drunks who don’t drink. We have found that the strength of fellowship yields amazing results if we keep focused on our own recovery and the newcomer who seeks out our help.

We do not stand on street corners spouting off about one prophecy or another warning the masses



She said: Action is the key word. We have already done *plenty* of action leading up to Step Twelve. In fact, that is how we had a spiritual awakening. It is the “result of these steps”, which we have worked to the best of our ability to get us to the crown jewel - Step Twelve! But is it the end of the winding, turning, twisting road we have been following, the final piece of the pie? Not even close. **If anything it is** the beginning of the true essence of Alcoholics Anonymous. We must continue to do our very best to be of service to our fellows, both in and out of the program. *This is* what will help us grow spiritually, and keep us close to the God of our understanding. What a gift!

In these days of uncertainty in a troubled world, it is undeniably easy to “fall off the beam”, to become sidelined by fear. I know I certainly have this last year between the economy and my husband’s heart attack. Many times I became indifferent, letting my desires for emotional and material security lead my thoughts and actions, escort me away from the peace and serenity I know from evidence that comes from *true* right living... .being of service, practicing the principals in *all my affairs*.

It is through my AA foundations that I was, and still am, able to redirect my attitudes and old instincts. Through the rooms. Through you folks, one and all. Through my Higher Power who gave me the strength that I alone could never get.

So, once I’m “back in the saddle”, which sometimes takes minutes - sometimes longer, I am able to know deep in my soul the wonderful, amazing gift I have of sobriety. Then, just for today I am able to pay it forward to the next alcoholic, to my family, to my community. I am truly able to “live usefully and walk humbly under the grace of God.”

(He Said: continued) of impending doom if they do not repent. The closest we come to that is handing out pamphlets after the meetings. There is no "Salesman of the Year" award in AA. There is no charismatic leader or president or CEO here either. We know that despite how much we learn or how much time we have accumulated our next drunk is only one drink away. I, personally have seen too many alcoholics with 20 years or more sobriety who could quote page number and chapter of the Big Book by heart then go get drunk with hellish vengeance. I have also seen atheists attain 20 years or more. I've seen people who have never worked a Step in their life stay sober and also hard core "Step-Nazis" get drunk!

We are sober alcoholics who have worked the Steps, understand the spiritual principles and apply them to our daily lives. We try to be an example of those principles by living them. The most important spiritual principal is to place the needs of others above our own. We are of the mindset that happiness and fulfillment comes in serving others. I cannot tell you about any other alcoholic or non-alcoholic's spiritual awakening, only my own. I have come to a place where I do not 'want' or 'need' any longer and that is the result of working the Steps and developing a relationship with a power greater (or other) than myself. Having this constantly evolving relationship has created a life void of unreasonable fear and doubt. My old values have been replaced with a set of new ones. So, now, I want to share that knowledge with others to help them. By myself or with others I can spread the message to those who seek it.

It's been said that we can't give away what we don't have. I think everybody, at every level in their recovery, has something to offer. But, it is of little use for us to go off trying to rescue the wicked, tortured souls armed with only good intentions. Even in the Bible, in the first book of Timothy, there is a passage that states: "New converts should not become preachers lest they become conceited and fall to the ways of the Devil". That tells me that even then they knew about the phenomena of what we call the "Pink Cloud". This is a euphoric state of mind that clouds our reasoning and makes us think that we are ready to charge forward and save the world. I liken this to bringing a knife to a gunfight. My question is this: "How can we (continued on Page 8)

(She Said: continued) It has been a very unique pleasure being of service by sharing my experience, strength and hope to you readers over the last twelve months. A very sober, useful happy holiday season to you all and a special thanks to Linda B. for her "actions" every month to put this newsletter together.

In loving service, ~ Kathie G.

Happy Birthday

| | | | |
|-------------------|-------|------|--------|
| Carol O. Anderson | 11/19 | 1981 | 28 yrs |
| Niamala | 11/21 | 1987 | 22 yrs |
| Danny L. | 11/24 | 1995 | 14 yrs |
| Tom F. | 11/6 | 1995 | 14 yrs |
| Lani A. | 11/15 | 1996 | 13 yrs |
| Barry | 11/21 | 2005 | 4 yrs |
| Bob | 11/8 | 2006 | 3 yrs |
| Chris S. | 11/13 | 2006 | 3 yrs |
| Jeanie | 11/3 | 2007 | 2 yrs |
| Scott C. | 11/26 | 2007 | 2 yrs |
| Mark G. | 11/3 | 2007 | 2 yrs |
| | 11/4 | 2007 | 2 yrs |

Coming in December

| | | | |
|----------|-------|------|--------|
| Lopaka | 12/13 | 1972 | 37 yrs |
| Carl K. | 12/19 | 1981 | 28 yrs |
| Peggy S. | 12/19 | 1986 | 23 yrs |
| Eddie F. | 12/13 | 2005 | 4 yrs |
| Erica J. | 12/13 | 2005 | 4 yrs |
| Big Matt | 12/16 | 2006 | 3 yrs |

Birthday Celebrations South Shore

- Koloa Monday Women's 'Na wahine ku pono' 5:00 p.m. Last Monday of month. CAKE & POTLUCK.
- Aloha Group - 7:30 p.m. Last Tuesday of the month - CAKE FOR BIRTHDAYS!

East Side

- Hui Ohana - 7:00-8:00 a.m. Last Saturday of the month. CAKE FOR BIRTHDAYS!
- Steps to Freedom - 6:30 p.m. Last Monday of the month. CAKE & POTLUCK (7:30-8:30 pm meeting).

North Shore

- North Shore Aloha Group - 7:30 p.m. Last Monday of the month - CAKE FOR BIRTHDAYS!
- Princeville-Hanalei Group - 7:30 p.m. Last Thursday of the Month - CAKE FOR BIRTHDAYS!

Kauai A.A. Meetings

For Newcomers



Photo ~ Alejandro

Nawiliwili Beach Park, Lihue

(Beside Anchor Cove's parking lot)

"Happy Hour" Meeting 5:00 pm
Every Monday through Saturday !

~ ALSO ~

NEW AA MEETING ON KAUAI



THE EARLY BIRDS

MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY

5:30 am

AT NAWILI WILI PARK

(Next to Anchor Cove at the same picnic tables
where Happy Hour meets)

A Newcomer Asks About:

"The Group Inventory"

I'm sure by now, folks at meetings are starting to talk about doing a "Group Inventory". What is it? Simply put it is a fourth step for the group, but instead of searching out our character defects we're looking to see how well we follow the traditions of AA. (Yes, its time to read those darn traditions.) But, First Things First! Have you chosen a home group yet? It's not a forever choice , just choose a group you feel most at home in.

So your home group is ready for a Group Inventory. The questions you'll be asking yourselves are located in the green pamphlet, 'The AA Group...Where it all Begins. The questions are on p. 27 and 28 but there's lots of good stuff in there so you *might* want to read it all. There are 13 questions like, "Are all members given the opportunity to speak" and "What are we doing to carry the message?" But the most important question to you newcomers is question 4, "Do newcomers stick with us, or does turnover seem excessive?"

This is really YOUR question. A bunch of us old folks can sit around talking about how great it is and you newbies just don't get it, but that's just silly. Why did you choose your group? What's working, what's not? You may even choose to attend the inventory of a group where you had a bad experience and explain what happened. Sure it hurts but its growth. Remember, your voice is important in this process! After completing the inventory, your General Service Representative (GSR) will be heading to Oahu in January to share about your groups results. By sharing what's working with everyone in the state every home group can grow stronger. And every alcoholic still suffering has a better chance of finding (or not running into) what you have found in your group.

If you're still not sure which group should be your home group talk it out with your sponsor or run it by a GSR. There is also a great book from the Grapevine called "The Homegroup: Heartbeat of AA". You may just want to check out a bunch of these inventories and see which group you like best.

Just remember to participate, we older kids might think we've got it going on, but your fresh eyes might see something we missed. It's your turn to help us grow.

~ Lu

**GET YOUR ANSWERS STRAIGHT FROM
THE A.A. LITERATURE**

E-MAIL YOUR QUESTIONS TO:

KeptItSimpleKauai@gmail.com

'Keep It Simple' meets Tuesday nights at 7:30
At the First Hawaiian Church in Kapaa.



A Newcomer's Story:

"Just Can't Imagine..."

I just can't imagine my life without alcohol....

In the beginning of my sobriety, this was my thinking. "All the fun times are gone" I thought. "How will I get through the evening without alcohol?" I thought, "How will I function after a stressful day?" I thought, "How will I drown out these thoughts when I can't sleep?" I thought, "How will I be able to face situations I'm not comfortable in?" I thought, "How will I be able to get through the family functions?" I thought, "How will I...? What will I...?" And on and on it goes.

I just can't imagine my life with alcohol now. I have 3 + months of sobriety now, am no longer scared and can't imagine how I was able to function at all when I was drinking. I didn't really. I was a zombie in a shell of a body. Turns out I have more fun without the booze. I CAN get through the evening without it. I AM able to function after a stressful day without it. I don't have to drown out the thoughts because I am learning to deal with things as they come (and sleep on it now). I AM able to face situations that make me uncomfortable with a clear head and clear conscience. I actually enjoy the family functions. Can you imagine? I can.

~ Kris L. 7/8/2009

~ PROMISE ~

You promised to make me happy
to take All the hurt away
You promised me a lot of things
Just to make me stay
You promised that you would be my friend,
To help heal the pain
You promised that you would keep me safe
My shelter from the rain
You promised you would be there
Every night and every day
You also promised other things
That you forgot to say
You promised me pain discomfort and tears
You promised me a past
That will haunt me for years...
You promised to keep me prisoner
To never set me free
You promised me a funeral,
You took a friend from me
You promised me loneliness
You promised me strife
But one promise I had to break
Was your promise to take my life
Though you're not human
You have ten times the strength of man
You bring destruction to anyone
That holds you in their hand
I'm glad that I am rid of you
Though you were hard to beat
And now I can stall tall and proud
On my own two feet
It's sad to think of the others
That will live with your misery
But there is one promise I make to you
Those others won't be me!

~ Crystal O.



Oldies but Goodies

~Hear it from the Old-Timers~

Step 12 should culminate with my practicing these principles in all my affairs. The best way for me to stay sober is to help another alcoholic. There are many ways to be of service; going to a meeting early and setting up chairs, making coffee, being the literature person, being a sponsor and the list goes on. For me, the joy I get from working with a sponsee is beyond explanation. I love my kids, each and every one of them. I love being able to help them have a better understanding of the Big Book and see many of them have a "spiritual awakening" as the result of working the Steps. I try to stress with those I work with that this is a program for living.

I must remember my principles in ALL my affairs and that means in dealing with those people outside of Alcoholics Anonymous too. If I am to "carry the message" I must be a role model, I must walk the walk. When I tell someone I am going to do something, I had darn well better do it and not have a million excuses why I can't do it. I must walk the walk (as they say in the rooms of AA) otherwise I am blowing hot air and pretty soon I will start to float.

I am so grateful to the God of my understanding, to the program and fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous, to those who went before me and for my sobriety. Each day I say and try to do what it says on pages 86 and 87 of the Big Book. I ask God to direct my thinking. I ask God to guide me, step by step, free from self-will and selfish acts. I ask Him to remove my defects of character and help me to be the person He would have me be. When in doubt, I pause and ask for an intuitive thought or a plan of action, then I let go and let God.

I thank you all for allowing me to share my thoughts this past year through the Newsletter of AA here on Kauai. I hope one of you will step up and take this commitment for next year. This is what being of service is about. It is allowing the rotation of jobs so that each person may have the opportunity to be of service.

May the God of your understanding keep you safe throughout the holidays and coming New Year.

Aloha, and Mahalo, ~ Jerrie S.
Step Sisters is my home group



2009

Christmas Eve at Lydgate Small Pavilion

- ★ 6:00 pm Potluck, Beverages Provided
- ★ AA Meetings & Convention Speaker Tapes
- ★ Karaoke

Christmas Day at Lydgate Large Pavilion

- ★ 11:00 am Potluck, Beverages Provided
- ★ AA Meetings & Convention Speaker Tapes
- ★ Fellowship and Fun!

Happy New Year

2010

New Years Eve at Poipu Beach Park

- ★ 6:00 pm Potluck, Beverages provided
- ★ AA Meeting & Convention Speaker Tapes
- ★ Karaoke (& HOTEL FIREWORKS NEARBY)



"Kid Kits"



Keep It Simple Group announces that they have representatives collecting coloring books and other quiet activities for kids at AA meetings. They have a big activity box with a huge amount of crayons and glue but extra coloring books, construction paper or craft items (picked up at after Christmas sales) would be great additions.

If you would like "Kid Kits" for your meetings just ask us and we'll deliver them at District or Intergroup meetings or 'whatever'.

email KeepItSimpleKauai@gmail.com



MAKELE SEZ:

“S.L.I.P.

“SOBRIETY LOOSES ITS PRIORITY”



Concepts Checklist

Concept XII (Prudence):

The Conference shall observe the spirit of A.A. tradition, taking care that it never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that the sufficient operating funds and reserve be its prudent financial principle; that it place none of its members in a position of unqualified authority over others; that it reach all important decisions by discussion, vote, and, whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; that its actions never be personally punitive nor an incitement to public controversy; that it never perform acts of government, and that, like the Society it serves, it will always remain democratic in thought & action.

- ✓ How do we guard against becoming a “seat of perilous wealth or power?”
- ✓ How do we practice prudent use of our Seventh Tradition contributions and literature revenue?
- ✓ Do we insure the spiritual liberties of all A.A. members by not placing any member in the position of absolute authority over others?
- ✓ Do we try to reach important decisions by thorough discussion, vote and, where possible, substantial unanimity?
- ✓ As guardians of A.A.’s traditions, are we ever justified in being personally punitive?
- ✓ Are we careful to avoid public controversy?
- ✓ Do we always try to treat each other with mutual respect and love?



Got Literature?

COME TO THE INTERGROUP MEETING!

- *Books *Pamphlets *GIS Newsletter
- *Kauai AA Meeting Schedules.

Kauai Intergroup

Next Meeting is December 5th, 9:30am
At The Lihue Neighborhood Center

Intergroup Officers

- Chairperson - Anonymous
- Alt. Chair - Tom R.
- Treasurer - Mike C (temporary)
- Secretary - Kathryn B. (temporary)
- Literature - Mark M.
- Alt. Literature - Danette M.
- Hotline Chair - Dana M.
- Events - Kathryn B.
- GIS News. - Linde B.

SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO:

Kaua’i Intergroup
PO Box 3606, Lihue, HI 96766



Request a newsletter
by e-mail

District6newsletter@hotmail.com



Bring HOPE to Hina Mauka

AN OPPORTUNITY FOR SERVICE

Hina Mauka Lihue / Outpatient Program

1st & 3rd Wed. of every month - 11am - 12 noon

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The holidays are officially upon us and that means increased pressures from family, friends, businesses and even the fellowship!

November's District meeting was an excruciatingly long affair because of these pressures and I want to take this opportunity to thank and recognize all those who participated. For me the most outstanding part of that meeting is that NO ONE LEFT EARLY!!

This is a testament to the fact that we have a very dedicated core of trusted servants who really make the phrase "going to any lengths" an integral part of their recovery. Each one of them deserves our thanks!

Here is a brief look at what we discussed and the deadlines associated with each:

- Submission of stories for Special Needs pamphlet (December 15)
- Reorganizing our agenda to put Group Reports first (written reports due December 12)
- Conference Committee on Self-Support questions due December 12.
- Inventory Assembly January 16-17. All GSR's should have an inventory prepared.
- Corrections questionnaire (due 3/27 @ Inform the Delegate Assembly)
- For the General Service Conference due 3/27):
  - 1.) Agenda Selection Process discussion &
  - 2.) Theme for the 2011 General Service Conference, presentation & workshop topics.
- Two concerns about the Garden Island Sobriety regarding anonymity and non-affiliation. Reports due December 12.

Almost all of these matters have additional information available about them on the Area website, [www.area17aa.org](http://www.area17aa.org).

In addition to the above, we are attempting to prepare a district-wide inventory to be shared throughout Area 17. Everyone's thoughts are hereby solicited!

Also, copies of the 2009 General Service Conference Final Report were distributed to those GSR's who attended November's meeting. If you or your group does not have access to one, please contact me; I have 9 copies left!

And that reminds me: the report indicates that contributions were somewhat less than expected last year (over \$44,000 less!). That shortfall and inflationary pressure are two elements which have caused the fellowship to raise prices on literature. During this season of giving, please don't forget our fellowship. Preliminary review suggests Kauai AA is very supportive, but we can always do more to show our appreciation for an organization that has given us so much.

I truly hope all enjoyed the Thanksgiving celebration and that sobriety continues to bless each of you throughout this holiday season.

~ In service, Jim D

**Next District Meeting December 12<sup>th</sup>  
9:30 am, 3146 Akahi St., Lihu`e**

## Kauai District Cash Flow

October 11, 2009 to November 14, 2009  
(District Meeting to District Meeting)

|                                            |            |
|--------------------------------------------|------------|
| Starting Balance                           | \$ 2537.69 |
| <hr style="border-top: 1px dashed #000;"/> |            |
| Income                                     |            |
| Workshop Refund                            | \$27.19    |
| TGIF Veterans Cntr.                        | \$100.00   |
| Daily Reflections Wed.                     | \$25.00    |
| Came to Believe Wed.                       | \$20.00    |
| Hui Ohana                                  | \$155.23   |
| 12th Hole Group                            | \$36.00    |
| Steps to Freedom                           | \$121.65   |
| Princeville/Hanalei                        | \$175.00   |
| Koloa Aloha Group                          | \$100.00   |
| 3rd Tradition Kapaa Library                | \$15.00    |
| Step Sisters                               | \$52.00    |
| Exp., Strength & Hope                      | \$30.00    |
| Interest 9/19 to 10/20                     | \$ 0.10    |
| Income Total                               | \$857.17   |
| <hr style="border-top: 1px dashed #000;"/> |            |
| Payments                                   |            |
| District Meeting Rent Q4                   | \$ 45.00   |
| Payments Total                             | \$ 45.00   |
| <hr style="border-top: 1px dashed #000;"/> |            |

(See page 8 for Summary)

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## DISTRICT 6 CASH FLOW SUMMARY FOR 2009

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Start. Balance Oct. 11, '09: \$2537.69  
Income Total: \$ 857.17  
Payments Total: \$ 45.00  
Balance \$3349.86

Prudent Reserve: -\$ 500.00

Available Funds: \$ 2849.86

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### SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO:

#### Kaua'i District Committee

PO Box 1503, Kapa'a, HI 96746

Please include "District 6" & "Group Name" on check



## District 6 Committee

DCM - Jim D. -- [DCM6@area17.org](mailto:DCM6@area17.org)

Alternate DCM - Susan O'N.

Treas - Courtney P.

Secretary - Michele K. [kauaidistrictsixsec@gmail.com](mailto:kauaidistrictsixsec@gmail.com)

Grapevine - Alejandro

Archives - Mathea A.

CPC - Bart D.

Public Relations - Lu

## Service is Sobriety

Our Area 17  Delegate is

Elizabeth M.

[delegate@area17aa.org](mailto:delegate@area17aa.org)

## Send Area Contributions

ADDRESS IT EXACTLY LIKE THIS:

Hawaii Area Committee

#2107

575 Cooke St., Suite A

Honolulu, HI 96813

Please include "District 6" & Group Name on ck.



**HE SAID:...** tell others about how to rid their defects if we don't know enough about our own. Are we taking on 12 sponsees to help 12 alcoholics or are our egos so fragile that we need them as AA status symbols? Is this the way to show a good example? I think not. Granted, nobody in AA is perfect. If we were then we wouldn't need AA, would we? My point is how are we going to show someone how to pick peaches if we've never picked a peach in our lives?

**There is plenty to** do in AA until we have completed and understand the spiritual principles that are laid out in the 12 Steps. Service commitments abound in this fellowship. Getting in the habit of serving others will certainly send us on our way towards this spiritual awakening we all talk about. Availing ourselves without concern for acknowledgement is a good start. This is why I do not believe in the concepts of Heaven or Hell. Serving others because of a promise or threat of what happens to us in the afterlife is not service...it's self-serving and impure. Serving because it's the right thing and because it needs to get done is.

**We surrendered to the** nature of our disease, built a relationship with a power greater than ourselves and endeavor to triumph over our own character defects rather than obsessing with the faults of the world around us. We make amends to those we've harmed and made amends to our own behavior. We installed daily inventory into our routine as well as sought to improve our bond with our own understanding of a Higher Power. Understanding, loving and then applying these principles to our daily lives is what I would consider a spiritual awakening. Sharing this with others who struggle with Alcoholism and seeing them blossom into useful, productive human beings is a reward higher than the highest high for anyone here on earth, in my book.

**We are now part** of the solution rather than the problem. We have become that power which the lack of used to be our dilemma.

**It has been an** honor and a privilege to share my thoughts and experience in this column over the last few months. My sincerest hope is that someone out there has been helped from my viewpoints. I've enjoyed all your comments and your good wishes but now it's time to step aside and let the next writer take over and spread the message to those who seek it.

Aloha, Uncle Tim