

Here's How

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Sponsor Your Sponsees into Service:

GET BUSY—STAY SOBER

Into Action — “AA is more than a set of principles; it is a society of alcoholics in action. We must carry the message, else we ourselves can wither and those who haven't been given the truth may die.”

— *As Bill Sees It*, p.13

What are you waiting for? Your sponsees just may need something other than going to meetings to get them out of their own heads. What about suggesting to each sponsee that they become involved in service beyond the group level? Put them in the middle of Chicago AA.

See them widen their eyes as they view the bigger picture of AA, through participation in one of Chicago AA's many service opportunities. And, of course if you haven't already put your own big toe into this great pond of service: what a marvelous way to show sponsees that you “walk the talk”!

For example, the work of the Public Information (PI) Committee is one way that you can carry AA's message. PI is focussed on conveying AA information to the general public — including the media — and, in Chicago, also through visits to schools.

PI is contacted by middle and high schools throughout the metropolitan area to provide speakers to talk about AA and how it works. Imagine if you and your sponsee could do this service work together. Once your sponsee has a year of continuous sobriety, he or she could be ready to convey how AA worked in his or her life to a group of teens. You could both share the reality of stage fright — being sober and talking in front of teenage groups is indeed a true test of meeting the challenge of living life without alcohol!

Another PI service opportunity is staffing a booth for AA at health or community service fairs. You could pick up your one-year-sober sponsee (or your

sponsee could chauffeur you) and attend an event where you answer the public's questions about AA and getting sober. After a few hours, you and your sponsee would know each other even better. In the down times, you could possibly get some Step work done!

You may want to suggest to your sponsee that he or she participate in service, solo. This is a way that your sponsee can meet lots of other alcoholics from all over Chicago. If your sponsee has a problem with “terminal uniqueness,” he or she may meet another alcoholic who is equally terminally unique. Just imagine what a great conversation they will have! Doing service outside of the group certainly gets the sponsee's mind off himself or herself and into thinking about many other things — possibly even the alcoholic still suffering.

When my sponsor suggested I follow in her steps and get involved in service beyond the group level, she was involved in lots of AA stuff. I didn't argue; at that point I was so willing/desperate that I immediately signed up for my first commitment: taking meetings into a halfway house for HIV-/AIDS-diagnosed women who were trying to get sober.

My sponsor also thought I should do PI. After getting to the PI training meeting, I was soon speaking to DUI class participants and junior college classes. Later on, I got involved in Corrections; of course my sponsor was also involved in taking meetings into jail.

When I was 10 years sober, my sponsor told me that she thought I was finally mature enough to become a GSR. Now, that recognition on her part was almost mind expanding — but, after attending my first GSR meeting: I got “right sized.”

Needless to say, I am here to report that it may be because of these actions that I manage to stay sober. My sponsor taught me well: get involved — or risk getting drunk.

Active sponsorship is all about carrying the message. Sponsoring your sponsees in service beyond the group level lets the general public know AA is ready

to extend the hand of fellowship to the alcoholic still suffering.

Note: The next PI Speaker Information Session will be held on Thursday, January 27th, 2005 at Central Office — 200 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago.

Time: 5:45 P.M. — 7:45 P.M. Pizza will be served.

Terry L.,
incoming PI Chair

Witnessing Miracles

The miracles of the program, I've witnessed them. New people coming to the Program, bent out of shape, with that washed out and hopeless look. Then see them slowly but surely grasp the AA Program and start working the suggested Steps.

I begin seeing a changed person that is very noticeable. First, the physical appearance changes for the better. They carry themselves more upright with a spring in their step. A gleam in the eyes replaces that empty and hopeless look. They care about their appearance and also look better.

Mentally, the foggy mind clears up they start talking with more purpose and reason. Finding that they have much in common with others around them, they become more sociable.

Many in the beginning have difficulty with the God word. After a period of time, however, you hear them speaking of a God of their understanding. Then the continuing transformation from a compulsively-drinking alcoholic to a sober one with new direction in life.

It's been said that each of us who is working the AA Program successfully is a miracle. By sharing our experience, strength, and hope with new people: we keep these miracles happening.

Just keep passing the principles of the program on. As for me, I'm looking for the next miracle to take place.

Jerry W.,
a grateful recovering alcoholic

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Here's How Newsletter

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CASO Corner

Well, another year has passed; it was my first full year as Office Manager. During the year, I think we have made some really big improvements in the Office and its operations. I am looking forward to the next twelve months, when, step by step, we hope to make the Office even more responsive to the needs of the fellowship.

What are some of the most important advances we've made? From our point of view, the biggest advances have been made in Group Services. Through the work of the Group Services Coordinator, Celeste O., we have been able to get on top of the changes and updates of

Group information that continuously flow in. As servants of the Area, we have also brought the District and Area information up to date. While we still make mistakes, the data is accurate and current. That has been a huge accomplishment. If any Group, District or Committee needs information, we will do our best to provide it in a timely manner.

You can now submit Group change information or register new Groups, delete Groups or register Group Officers online at www.ChicagoAA.org; select "Forms" on the menu bar on the left. All Chicago Group forms are available. Thanks to Webmaster Jack V. for his great work on the website.

Another big advance is in the Accounting Department. Laura G. has the CASO books in order and has given us accurate and readable financial reports on a consistent basis. The annual reports for 2004 should be published in the next issue of *Here's How*.

You should know that we respond to every donation by sending a receipt, usually within 24 hours. If you or your Group makes a donation, you should get a receipt promptly. If you don't, please contact us immediately. Note that the "donations" database and the "Member & Group" database are in two different programs and our coordination between the two has not always been satisfactory. One of our big goals for this year is to get these databases coordinated.

The Bookstore looks a lot different than it did at the beginning of 2004—and I hope it will change as much in 2005. Peter H., Bookstore Manager, has beefed up the Bookstore and is working to respond to your needs. Let us know how we can better serve you.

You should know that you don't have to come down to the Loop to use the Bookstore. The entire catalog is online, in color, at our website (www.ChicagoAA.org). You can print it and mail in your order or you can fax or call us. We'll promptly mail it out to you. Look for an online bookstore this year, where you will be able to order directly by credit card from the website. Steve J. is leading the move toward an online Bookstore.

The Office itself is also looking better. Mike M. is responsible for that. We have

worked hard to make the Office more user-friendly to those stopping by—whether they come to attend our regular AA meetings (M-F AT 12:10 PM; TU & TH at 2:30 PM) or to shop or attend a Committee meeting. All the service meetings are online at www.ChicagoAA.org, as are Chicago AA-related events. John B. has helped beautify the office by keeping the plants in top shape.

Mike is also responsible for the Volunteer program. Nellie P. has a central role in training Volunteers to answer the telephones. We are working hard to ensure that every shift is covered. We have three Volunteer shifts per day (9 AM to 1 PM, 1 to 5 PM, 5 to 9 PM), seven days a week. The weekend and certain evening slots are the hardest to fill. We are looking for Groups to sponsor a shift. The Group ensures that a trained member covers the shift. The individual could change each week, but the Group makes sure the Volunteer shift is covered. If your Group is interested in sponsoring a shift, or if you as an individual want to Volunteer, please call Mike or Bruce at (312) 346-1475. Individual Volunteers can do many things, from answering phones to helping out in the Bookstore to accepting administrative and clerical responsibilities in the Office.

Also, please let us know what you would like to see from your Central Office this year. We are always available to talk to you. If you prefer, you can write (CASO, 200 N Michigan Ave., Suite 501, Chicago IL 60601) or email (CASO@ChicagoAA.org). Thank you for all the support you have given us.

Bruce P, CASO Manager

New Bookstore Hours

Hello, my name is Peter and I want to tell you what's happening here at the Chicago Area Service Office (CASO) Bookstore.

In an effort for our members and customers to continue to carry our great legacy (AA literature), we have composed an online catalog of the things we sell at the CASO Bookstore. This catalog is in

color and purchases can be made via mail, fax, email and telephone. Just go to www.chicagoaa.org and look for the Bookstore link. If you do not have internet access, please call me at the number below and I'll be happy to send a catalog to you.

The CASO Bookstore has new hours: Monday through Friday 8:00 AM – 5:30 PM; Saturday Hours are eliminated.

New Items: I'm excited to let everyone know that the CASO Bookstore now sells Gift Certificates! Please call me for details.

On Sale While Supplies Last: All Chicago Open Coffee Mugs – regularly \$6.00; *sale price* \$3.00. CASO Coffee Mugs – regularly, \$6.00; *sale price* \$3.00. All Chicago Open Tee-Shirts, (Color; black – Sizes; small, medium, large, and extra large) – regularly \$10.00; *sale price* \$5.00. Meeting-Makers (MeetingMakers are custom-made carrying cases that hold 12-Step books, literature, and more.) Colors; black, blue and red) – regularly \$20.00; *sale price* \$15.00.

Thank You. Peter H.,

CASO Bookstore Manger

tel: (312) 346-8451 fax: (312) 346-5477

Delegates' Report

DECEMBER 2004

Much faster than I could have imagined, almost two years have passed. My term as Delegate is near the end. . . . On December 4, 2004 we elected a new Delegate, Alternate, Area Chair and Alternate Chair. No doubt each person beginning his or her new term will be a little nervous and apprehensive. Most alcoholics are looking to make everything perfect and would like to please everyone at all times. . . . *For...Get...It!*

We have made significant steps forward in the past two years, and we will move the envelope forward even more in the very near future. . . . It looks to me that the groups have taken control of Area 19 and I hope we never look back. The discussion that has occurred this year at our assemblies has been outstanding. We have moved forward, taking steps to put in place an Area Secretary and Alternate.

Our Structure Committee has brought forward several proposed changes which should smooth our operations.

There will soon be some proposals to ensure that every GSR has a vote at our assemblies. And, if these proposals are adopted, this should take place within the next six months. One group, One vote. . . .

Personally, I would like to see us change the format of our Sharing Session. . . . This could be moved to a weekend: with all District meetings, all Committee Chairs, and anyone interested in our service structure in attendance. . . with the power to make recommendations. . . . I don't think most members are willing to attend service meetings when the committee has no power to do anything. . . . Who wants to sit in a meeting for two or three hours, listening, with no power to rectify any problems which are brought up – or even the authority to make recommendations? . . . AA is a program of action.

I really enjoy the more formatted speaker meetings where I hear about how, with the help of a sponsor, home group, the Power of God, and following the Steps suggested to them that the speakers have become useful members of society and of service to others.

Later, I would like to see us do something about the number of assemblies each year. . . . Most of the Areas in the United States and Canada have only four assemblies each year – often with a meeting in the preceding month to set the agenda for the assembly. This could easily replace our Sharing Session. With our District meetings in the same months, this would give us four months each year when we have no meetings at the Area or District level. . . .

I think we run members away from service at the Area level by expecting them to attend too many meetings. Well, these are some of my thoughts as we move forward to a new panel of officers. . . .

I am much indebted to all of Area 19 for the opportunity to serve for the past few years at the Area, District and Group levels. . . . It has helped me to remain sober for a few 24 hours more. . . . When I was new, I always went to bed as early

as I could so I could have one more day. . . . My days as Panel 53 Delegate are just about over, but tonight I am not going to bed early. . . . To tell you the truth, I hate to see these days end. . . .

Don B.

Panel 53, Area 19

Literature Committee

The mission of the Literature Committee is to encourage Chicago-area AA groups to provide AA literature and ensure that this literature is available at AA workshops and conferences. Additionally, the committee recommends approval or disapproval of non-conference-approved items available in the CASO Bookstore (such as coins, jewelry, and books published by outside publishers).

With a mandate from the Area to increase Bookstore sales in 2005, the Literature Committee needs your help to figure out – and carry out – that work. As a beginning, the Literature Committee reviews books which are being considered for sale in the Bookstore. These reviews are submitted at Assembly meetings, and cover the following criteria:

AA's Primary Purpose – Is the message of this material *How To Stay Sober and Recover From Alcoholism?* Is it contrary to the core principles of AA (disease concept, Traditions such as anonymity, etc.)? If so, which principles are violated? Why is this book helpful if it does contradict the principles?

Spirituality – Does this material contradict the core message of AA (that spirituality is the solution)? Does it teach spiritual principles?

Inclusiveness – Is this material exclusive? If so, how? Does it have offensive language? Does it discuss outside issues? Is it controversial?

Discussion of 12 Steps – Does it support/dilute the 12 Steps? Is it based on personal experience? Is it a fresh translation? Is it supplemental material? Is it a workbook?

Historical Value – Is it historically accurate and pertinent? Did the original 100 members use this material?

Books will be sold in the Bookstore as

soon as they're approved by the Assembly.

Because the Literature Committee doesn't have enough time to fully present their reviews to the Assembly, Chairperson Denise A. has asked *Here's How* to publish the reviews (see below): so that all Chicago-area AAs may feel invited to give their feedback.

The Literature Committee has additional concerns. How do they encourage Chicago-area meetings (which do not show up at District meetings) to provide approved literature? Do all Chicago-area special events sell this literature?

Following the directives of the Assembly, the Literature Committee researches all the issues which need exploration – as their guidelines are developed. Regarding that research, Denise cheerfully volunteers, “How does AA ‘do it’? Ask us: we’ll find out!” She can envision a time when the committee oversees the creation and production of Chicago-area service booklets (such as the GSR workbook).

The Literature Committee is composed of one delegate from each of the Chicago-area Districts, as well as one representative from CASO. Delegates serve for 2 years. The committee chairperson may appoint special members, as needed. Denise is proud of her committee, which has successfully taken on an immense amount of work. But there's still more to learn!

Currently, the Literature Committee meets on the second Wednesday of the month. Denise asks that you send your Delegates to the January meeting, since the Literature Committee will be holding its elections for Co-Chair and Secretary at that time.

Pat W.

Book Review

“My Name is Bill”

Susan Cheever

Simon & Schuster, 2004—306 pages; \$24

Reason for Review: Book has been requested by Bookstore customers.

Recommendation: This well-written, absorbing biography recounts the life and times of Bill Wilson, the co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous. In so doing,

Cheever very definitely sends the message that AA is the means to stay sober and recover from alcoholism.

Spirituality: The book clearly teaches that spiritual principles were the foundation of Bill Wilson's sobriety. It is also clear that Bill Wilson had his own struggles with the concept of God – having rejected formal religion as a youth. Yet, only after having had a spiritual “white light” experience, was he freed from the bondage of alcoholism.

Inclusiveness: The material is not exclusive, nor does it contain offensive language or discuss controversial issues.

The book portrays Bill Wilson in all his humanity – which might offend those who want to portray him as a plaster saint. He is a disgusting drunk who suffers one bottom after another. His written pledges in the family Bible, to never drink again, almost become a joke. Once he gets sober, he struggles with his character defects.

Is it controversial to reveal that, in the six weeks before he died of emphysema, when he had round-the-clock nursing care, he several times asked for “a shot of whiskey”? Who knows the pain-killing properties of booze better than a recovered drunk?

Discussion of The 12 Steps: This biography clearly shows how the 12 Steps grew out of the guiding principles of the Oxford Group, modified by the contributions of early AA members. Better than some other books, it also shows how the 12 Traditions were distilled by Bill from the experiences of members and groups.

Historical Value: The book appears to be historically accurate and pertinent. The book drew on the AA archive in New York, the Stepping Stones Archive, and other sources (25 of the 306 pages are notes on sources).

Cunning, Baffling, Powerful

When I hear or see someone in the Program with some sobriety time, who has relapsed, I am reminded how cunning, baffling, and powerful alcohol can be. Without help, it's too much for us. You never know when the insane thought or desire to pick up again may hit you. Even though it's been proven time and time again that there isn't a situation or circumstance that a drink will make better.

Thankfully, most return to AA for a new start. The danger is that some never make it back, as they perish in some alcohol-related effect.

I've never heard of anyone relapsing that went back to social or controlled drinking. The compulsion takes over where one is too many and a 1,000 isn't enough.

Making that decision in the 3rd Step, I've found that we're under protective care. Somehow things work out, no matter what problems besiege us. Just don't drink.

As for those who slipped and came back, I like to think they just had a false start. Which, by the way, happened to me in my early days of AA. Since then, I've doubled my life span by making the Fellowship and Program a way of life.

I have many things to be grateful for. The least not being: I haven't had a hang-over in years – when once they were a sick way of life. I remember the false prayer I used to echo, “Please, God, get me over this one – and I'll never drink again!” Only to mutter the same thing the very next morning.

United we stand, alone we fall down drunk.

I've heard it said, “Show me a grateful alcoholic – and I'll show you a sober one.” I am reminded of a prayer that an early inspiration of mine, Jim McL., ended his talks with: “For those here looking for sobriety: ‘Please, God, may you find it’ – and for those here who already have sobriety: ‘Please, God, may you keep it!’”

Jerry W.,

a grateful recovering alcoholic



The Art of Maturity

The condensed experience of men reveals these discoveries about the art of mature living.

That life is too short to be wasted in hatred, revenge, fault finding, prejudice, intolerance and destruction.

That only the affirmative approach inspires progress. We should cultivate a calm nature, expectant of good.

That our basic direction should always be toward wholeness of life. The great life is built on deep and enduring values. Like a giant tree, we should grow from within.

That no outstanding work is done alone. Miracles can be achieved when we don't care who gets the credit.

That we should not dodge reality or turn our backs on situations that must be faced. Private bravery is the price of personal victory.

That moderation in all things is a good rule. It is wise to live a balanced and varied life without permitting anyone or anything to enslave us.

That a few troubles and a little pain are good for us and help us to grow. We should not complain that the rosebush has thorns but should rejoice because it bears roses.

That time is the great healer of hurts, sorrows and disappointments. When one door closes another will open if we don't lose heart.

by Wilfred A. Peterson (reiterated by Jerry W. for contemporary times)

P.S. To AA Members: I was struck by the thought how this outlook on life is so much in tune with the AA Program.



The Balloonist

A man is flying in a hot air balloon and realizes he is lost. He reduces height and spots a man down below. He lowers the balloon further and shouts, "Excuse me, can you help me? I promised a friend I'd meet him half an hour ago, but I don't know where I am!"

The man below says, "Yes. You are in a balloon, hovering approximately thirty feet above this field. You are at latitude forty-two degrees north and longitude eighty degrees west."

"You must be a sponsor," says the balloonist.

"I am," replies the man. "How did you know?"

"Well," says the balloonist, "everything you have told me is technically correct, but I have no idea what to make of the information, and the fact is I am still lost."

The man below says, "You must be a sponsee."

"I am," replies the balloonist, "but how did you know?"

"Well," says the man, "you don't know where you are or where you are going. You have made a promise which you have no idea how to keep, and you expect me to solve your problem. The fact is you are in exactly the same position you

were in before we met, but now it is somehow my fault."

Heard at Joe & Charlie's
Big Book Study Workshop
in Chicago, November 2003

An Old-Timers Prayer

God, keep my ego from convincing my mind that my sobriety has earned me the right to speak in every meeting – no matter what the topic – and keep me from building a resentment when I am not allowed to. Keep my mind free from the recital of endless details – and give me wings to get to the point. Remind me to guard confidences – and keep still when I feel that it is necessary to share information "just for someone's own good." Release me from the need to straighten out everyone else's thinking and program.

God, I ask for the grace to listen to newcomers. Please help me to remember the patience with which others listened to me when I was new. Please seal my lips to giving advice – and help me to remember to share my experience, strength, and hope. Remind me that my purpose is to fit myself to be of maximum service to You and my fellows.

Help me to remain teachable, God. Teach me (again!) the lesson that, occasionally, it is possible that I may be wrong – and remind me of the freedom that I gain when I am able to promptly admit it, and make amends where necessary. Help me to remember the difference between making amends and saying "I'm sorry." Help me to be a worker among workers,

a friend among friends, and a drunk among drunks. Keep me from being a bleeding deacon, God – and help me to walk the path towards being an elder statesman. Keep me ever mindful that I cannot manage my own life. I don't want to be a saint, God, show me the way to seek You – so that I may continue to grow along spiritual lines.

Remind me to put Rule 62 into practice in my life. It is so easy to take myself too seriously.

Keep me free of gossip, character assassination, and judgment. Remind me that although I have humbly asked, my character defects and shortcomings arise when I least expect them. Help me to walk with serendipity, to see the good things in unexpected places, and talents in unexpected people – and give me the grace to tell them so. Help me to see that You love each of Your children and that You do not need my opinion of them or suggestions on what they might deserve. Help me to be willing to accept Your answers to my prayers – whether or not they are the answers that I thought I wanted. You know that I have trouble with acceptance sometimes, God – so there are times when You will need to help me to be willing to be willing. Show me how to walk through life with grace, dignity, and my head held high – carrying Your message and practicing these principles in all my affairs.

And God, thank you for the people whom You have put in my life. My belly-button-family and my AA family. My sponsor, my sponsees, my brothers, my sisters, the people of my homegroup, the men and women who first reached out their hands to welcome me into the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous when I was new to the program – and those who reached out to welcome me when I was new to the town.

I know today, God, that I could not have walked these steps to get from where I was when I walked in the door to the man I am today – if it were not for the blessings You have given me through Your precious children.

Thanks, God.

Your Friend, Anonymous

Each and Every Day

Together, we are guided by our Higher Power,
all we need to do is pray.

Our souls, reaching for a spiritual awakening –
as we listen to what God has to say.

We honor You with our whole beings,
surrendering to You,
each and every day.

You nourish us with strength and humility
and lead us back after we stray.

You give us the tools we need
to help others along the way.

We ask you to keep our compulsions,
fears,
and willfulness far, far away.

As we move toward a more perfect unity
in the Fellowship of AA!

We give You the control, the credit, and
the praise
Each and Every Day.

Mary Rose N.

More will be Revealed

Hi! My name is Jerry. After many years of uncontrolled and addictive drinking I found myself in an alcoholic treatment facility at Lutheran General Hospital. They informed me I had become a victim of a total disease: "alcoholism."

I had reached a point of complete bankruptcy – physically, mentally, emotional and spiritually. My own personal recovery began when I recognized and accepted the fact that I was a sick person who needed help. The staff at Lutheran General said the good news was that my disease was completely treatable. They said that the best chance for recovery was the AA Program.

I had tried AA a few years before my hospitalization. I had stayed sober only two months before relapsing into my addiction. I really didn't understand and grasp the Program at all: it was the strong support and encouragement I received

from members of that group that I stayed sober at all.

What I didn't have then was the HOW of the Program: The Honesty of accepting the fact that I had become a compulsive alcoholic and needed help. The Open-mindedness to try to figure out and understand what was being said at meetings. Then identifying and applying what was said to me. The Willingness to follow through on that solution, by working the rest of the AA Program.

Everything changed for me when I reached a point of surrender and took seriously the fact that I needed help. Upon my release from the hospital, two AA people, Marsh and Ted, were there to take me to a meeting. Marsh, who became my sponsor, said we were going to go meetings in 90 days. The more meetings I attended, the more was revealed to me.

At first, much that was said went over my head: they talked about things which had never occurred to me as being directly related to my disease. Slowly, but surely listening with an open mind, the pieces began to fall in line. I began to understand how my thoughts and actions lead to another drink.

Some said I had to change every thought and action – if I wanted to get sober. It was said to me somewhat humorously, but was closer to the truth than not.

Although the members of the AA Fellowship were powerful examples and a strong source of strength, they were not enough. The ultimate power came from believing in a loving God of my understanding.

At first God meant: Good Orderly Direction. Then, at one of the meetings, I had my spiritual awakening. The meeting room appeared to light up and I felt the presence of an all-encompassing spirit throughout the whole room. It's then that I made the decision to turn my life and will over to this power greater than myself.

You might say I was making the commitment to working the rest of the Program and its Steps. Much more was to be revealed to me as I went along. It became clearer and clearer what I had to do to stay sober. "One Day At A Time."

Jerry W.,

a grateful recovering alcoholic

Extreme Makeover Program

The current TV show, "Extreme Makeover," is popular with the viewing public. The show's premise is twofold: they take a physically-unattractive adult and give him/her a face lift; additionally, they rebuild that person's house to have all the commodities and comforts a home could need.

Alcoholics Anonymous has its own successful program of Extreme Makeover – in effect since the 1930's! The only requirement to participate is a desire to stop drinking. The makeover process and HOW it works is detailed in the Big Book called *Alcoholics Anonymous*. The Program works the same today as it did in the beginning – and is now practiced all over the world.

For those who completely give themselves to this simple program: a physical, mental, emotional and spiritual change occurs.

By simply not drinking: our physical being starts to look better. That haggard and burnt-out look disappears. Hangovers and relief remedies are no longer a part of our daily routine. A smile returns to our face. That empty and spaced out look in our eyes is replaced with a gleam of hope. We carry our chins higher and start walking with purpose and direction.

With alcohol out of our system: we begin to think with a clearer mind. We see where our attitudes and actions have led to another drink.

To change, we would have to get rid of the character defects which kept us in our alcoholic prison. We would need to start thinking and acting in a more positive and constructive way. And start mending the wreckage of the past: with amends wherever possible, without hurting others. People serving in health care services refer to this as "a catharsis of self-inventory."

As our life begins to change for the better, we sense that a power greater than ourselves oversees the whole makeover process. Putting our personal lives in order, we begin to see that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves. We experience a spiritual awakening:

where we turn our will and our lives over to this God of Our Understanding.

There may be those who are new or not otherwise familiar, who may think that the promises of makeover are extreme. Those of us who have gone through this transformation process know that it works if you work it.

Our suggestion for those out there in the throws of extreme active alcoholism, is to give the AA Program a chance. You'll be amazed how your life can change for the better when you are free of alcohol addiction.

Jerry W., a grateful member of the AA Program



TELEPHONE CALLS FOR SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER & NOVEMBER 2004

| | |
|------------------------|------|
| Help for themselves | 153 |
| Help for others | 598 |
| Meeting information | 3696 |
| Fellowship information | 227 |
| Literature | 1068 |
| Miscellaneous | 2421 |
| Total | 8163 |

NUMBERS OF TELEPHONE VOLUNTEERS AT CASO BY SHIFT FOR SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER & NOVEMBER 2004

| | Mo | Tu | We | Th | Fr | Sa | Su |
|---------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 9A-1P | 42 | 32 | 33 | 26 | 30 | 6 | 12 |
| 1P-5P | 23 | 32 | 29 | 26 | 26 | 8 | 9 |
| 5P-9P | 14 | 12 | 22 | 12 | 9 | 12 | 5 |
| Totals | 79 | 76 | 84 | 64 | 65 | 26 | 26 |

Grand Total 420



The Longest continuous running meetings

Living Room Group (09-0036)
Sunday night, Oak Park

Shorty's Breakfast (04-0948)
Sunday morning, Chicago, South

Acorn Group (09-0042)
Thursday night, River Forest

Cellar Dwellers (18-1335)
Chicago, NW

3rd & 11th Step (14-0174)
Thursday noon, Chicago Loop

Naperville Step (23-0000)

Hard Heads #1 (09-0105)
Saturday morning, SFC, Forest Park

Blackstone #1 (20-1138)
Wednesday night, Chicago

Muddy Rivers (15-4366)
Monday night, Des Plaines

Maple Hill Group (12-2045)
Tuesday night, Long Grove

Firehouse Group (100-3073)
St. Charles

Sober Now (08-0745)
Bobby Wright MH Center

Evans Avenue Old-Timers
Monday evening

 Print, Clip and mail

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