

# Michigan City Daily Reprieve

## Step 4

**M**ade a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves. Step Four is the vigorous and painstaking effort to discover what the liabilities in each of us have been, and are. By discovering what my emotional deformities are, I can move toward their correction. Without a willing and persistent effort to do this, there can be little sobriety or contentment for me.

Everyone has the capacity for growth, and for self-awareness, through an honest encounter with reality. When I don't avoid issues but meet them directly, always trying to resolve them, they become fewer and fewer.

Daily Reflections April 1

The Area District 21 Business Meeting and the Public Information Meeting - 7 PM on the 2nd Thursday of every Month at the Michigan City Christian Church at 11232 W. Earl Rd. Next meeting: April 14, 2011

## Tradition IV

*“Each Group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A.*

*As a whole.”* With respect to its own affairs, each A.A. Group should be responsible to no other authority than its own conscience. But when its plans concern the welfare of neighboring groups also, those groups ought to be consulted. And no group, regional committee, or individual should ever take any action that

might greatly affect A.A. As a whole without conferring with the trustees of the General Service Board. On such issues our common welfare is paramount.



## The Fourth Promise

We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace.

## Concept IV

**Throughout our Conference structure, we ought to maintain at all responsible levels a traditional “Right of Participation,” taking care that each classification or group of our world servants shall be allowed a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge.**

# APRIL BIRTHDAYS



Nika R	4/1/1976	35 years
Jana T	4/2/1987	24 years
Pat C	4/7/2009	2 years
Calvin B	4/10/2009	2 years
Carl H	4/23/1993	18 years
Nancy R	4/23/2006	5 years

**Happy Birthday to All!**

To publish announcements of AA Birthdays celebrated by members each month, send name and number of years to:

District 21, P.O. Box 58, Michigan City, IN 46360  
or email to [district21mc@comcast.net](mailto:district21mc@comcast.net)

**Northwest Indiana South Shore  
Conference & Banquet  
Saturday, April 9th  
Woodland Park Oakwood Hall -  
Portage, IN**

Doors Open @ 6:00 P.M.      Tickets \$20.00  
Banquet @ 6:30 P.M.      See Angie D or Dave S

## **39th Annual Dunes House Banquet**

April 16th  
Salvation Army  
201 Franklin St., Michigan City, IN

Doors open @ 5:30 P.M.      Tickets \$15.00  
Dinner @ 6:00 P.M.

## **The Traditions Checklist**

### *Tradition Four*

*Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole.*

1. Do I insist that there are only a few right ways of doing things in A.A.?
2. Does my group always consider the welfare of the rest of A.A. Of nearby groups?
3. Do I put down other members' behavior when it is different from mine, or do I learn from it?
4. Do I always bear in mind that, to those outsiders who know I am in A.A., I may to some extent represent our entire beloved Fellowship?
5. Am I willing to help a newcomer go to any lengths-his lengths, not mine-to stay sober?
6. Do I share my knowledge of A.A. Tools with other members who may not have heard of them?

AA Grapevine January 2011 issue

**New Meeting  
The After Lunch Bunch  
Wednesday @ 1:30 P.M.  
St. Anthony's Hospital**

**Dunes House Breakfast  
Pancakes, Sausage & Gravy  
Saturday -May 14th  
10:30 A.M.  
Donation \$5.00**



# Step Four

“Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves”

You want to hear a hush come across an AA meeting; bring up Step 4 among a group where not many have yet taken this step. Even among those who have taken the Step, many, myself included, wonder if they have actually done it correctly. Now, obviously, a main reason people tend to fear Step 4 is that they know Step 5 is around the corner. I heard someone say once, “I can admit anything to myself and to God, hidden to privy, but if I have to air out my dirty laundry to another human being, if I had any ego left after that, than I didn’t do it right. All AA’s 12 steps ask us to go contrary to our natural desires... they all deflate our egos.

The Big Book goes into great detail as to how this Step is to be taken. Again, people do it in different ways. I don’t think it is of great importance as to how one actually gets started; the main point is that one actually does get started. I was raised Catholic and in Catholicism we go to confession where we admit our sins and ask God for forgiveness. I tend to look at Step 4 as a way to prepare properly for a well thought out, meaningful confession. First we are asked to look at the flaws in our make up which caused our failure and this is done by listing our resentments, what caused them, how I am affected by them and what my role was in that relationship. Before I took this step, if you asked me about someone I had a resentment at, I could tell you exactly what happened and why I was right and they were wrong. Step 4 made me take a look at what my role was in that relationship. Most of my resentments pointed to a common theme which was that I would be helpful to others and their job was to feed my ego, telling me what a great guy I was, but also now they owed me. If I, for whatever reason, needed something from them and they were unable to produce for me on command, that they were a piece of crap. Step 4 forced me to look at my role in these unhealthy relationships for the first time and was extremely enlightening.

With as much confusion as there seems to be, concerning this step, I would think the 12 and 12 would be a “How To” on how the step should be taken, but it is not. The 12 and 12, in Step 4, speaks mostly to the misuse of natural, God given instincts. The desires for sex relations, material and emotional security and companionship are perfectly necessary and right and surely God given. Our natural instincts are good; it is the misuse of these instincts that get us into trouble.

The Big Book speaks of the dangers associated with “Fear” and says it should be classified with stealing—that it seems to cause more problems. It asks us to list our fears and has us ask why we had them. A common reason for these fears is the reliance on self but we are taught to rely on an infinite God rather than our finite selves. We begin to outgrow fear when we allow God to demonstrate through us. In reviewing our sexual inventory we are to review our conduct over the years and take a look at whom we may have hurt, and where we had been selfish, dishonest or inconsiderate. We ask God to mold our ideals and help us live up to them.

My experience with Step 4 was a very cleansing process. I was not fearful to share this inventory with my sponsor. I tell those that I sponsor that they are not bound to do their 5<sup>th</sup> step with me, that they may choose to do it with a priest or some other trustworthy source. The point is, is that it is shared and from this point spiritual progress can take place.

# A Lesson in Getting Along with Others from Tradition Four

The 12&12 talks about group autonomy in Tradition Four. The book says each group is allowed to make its own mistakes. The Thesaurus relates autonomy to independence, self rule and sovereignty. To me the lesson is, I get along a lot better with others when I allow them to make mistakes and treat them with independence, self rule, and sovereignty.

It goes a lot easier for me when I allow others to make mistakes. In the past a lot of my anger was directed at others for their mistakes. Sometimes these mistakes did cause me harm, but more often they were only some sort of minor, remote threat to me, usually no big deal, and often times having nothing to do with me at all.

Not condemning them in my mind for making a mistake is really forgiveness. A lot of times in literature it appears to be inferred the forgiveness we receive because of the forgiveness we give will occur, on Judgment Day. However I have been persuaded the forgiveness we receive begins to happen right now.

When I allow other people to make mistakes, it's been easier for me to accept my own mistakes. The mystical part about not being critical of others is as I allow others to be who they are, they seem to be not nearly so judgmental of me. Who knows, maybe the whole thing is in my mind? Maybe today is Judgment Day?

Of course it's easier to get along with people when they are doing what I think is best or if we share the same standards on most things, but sooner or later something crops up on which we do not agree and can cause friction in a relationship.

Treating others with independence and granting them the right of self rule kind of go hand in hand and basically means not asserting my will on them. Is it humble of me to think my judgment of what is best for them is better than what their own judgment of what is best for them would be? Letting go of my control issues makes things a lot easier for me. Treating them with sovereignty, not only allowing them to make their own choices but allowing them to think whatever they want to think, does build strong relationships.

It's been said we should treat others like they are God's favorite child. It's only human to have a favorite. I would submit it is truly Divine to be able to love everyone equally, but I do believe God can do it. God is able to love all His children like they are His favorite, so I need to treat each and everyone like they are special, because in God's eye we are.