

March 2010

Garden Island Sobriety

'Step Three'

"Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him."



She said: Back in the day I had the best job in the world. I was a lifeguard on the ordinarily very placid Long Island Sound, within walking distance of where I grew up. It was a "Town" beach and you could only use it if you lived locally. Part of what made it such a great job was that most folks in the area were accomplished swimmers. We mainly dealt with kids pelting Seagulls with rocks, tiny bikini clad girls who fainted after not eating sufficiently, and making sure the old ladies who gathered there every day at 3:00 pm sharp did not fall before setting up their beach chairs on the rocky terrain. There was not much of importance that I noticed in those days, my alcoholism was in full throttle, but after they made me the "swimming instructor" I did notice something amazing.

In order to make the leap from "beginner" to "advanced beginner" my little troop of swimmers were charged with proving that they could back float for a sufficient amount of time to indicate mastery of that skill. As the summer progressed I couldn't help but notice that my "star" pupils in terms of behavior, attendance, and effort, were shockingly poor floaters. Even more perplexing was the relative ease with which the more "challenging" pupils picked it up. In reality NONE of the students were challenging, it was more the condition of the teacher that presented the biggest impediment to learning. At the time I could not imagine a fate more torturous than trotting into the frigid water to teach swimming lessons each morning with the monstrous hangovers that accompanied my early progression. Little did I know my disease was just getting warmed up. But I digress. What does all this have to do with Step Three you ask? Well it represents an apt metaphor for my understanding of it.

The children who "tried" to make themselves float tensed up, went stiff as boards, and promptly (cont. p 2)



He said: How do I work the Third Step? There is a prayer on page 64 of the Big Book called the Third Step Prayer. It goes like this: *God, I offer myself to thee--to build with me and do with me as thou wilt. Relieve me of the bondage of self that I may better do thy will Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of thy power, thy love, and thy way of life. May I do thy will always.*

This prayer is so beautiful. It really sums up the program. I love that every gift that is prayed for is qualified by whom that gift will help. "... (we) are careful to make no request for ourselves only. We may ask for ourselves, however, if others will be helped. We are careful never to pray for our own selfish ends," (from Chapter 6 Into Action, Alcoholics Anonymous). Service to others was always on the tongue and pen of the authors of AA.

I say the Third Step prayer in the morning on most days. I also ask God to help me put my good where it will do the most and to help me be the best Will L. I can muster.

So, if God can do anything, see anything, and help with anything then I should have no worries. Nothing happens in Gods world by mistake, right? The universe is conspiring to shower me with blessings constantly, right? I believe it. So why do I worry all of the time??? I worry when my ego doesn't dig where things are going, usually over some specific outcome I was hoping for. This is called, 'taking my will back'. It is a daily human occurrence and should be greeted lovingly when it rears up. If I didn't make mistakes I wouldn't need this program in the first place.

My sponsor once told me that if I am really working my 3rd Step I will have no fear. What is fear? For me it boils down to: I am afraid to lose what I have or think I am not going to get what I want. Every fear can be reduced to those simple terms. Fear is an insult (cont. p 2)



~ St. Patrick's Day

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AA Hotline 245-6677

(She Said cont.) sank like stones. They "knew" how to do it, and were frustrated and upset when they thought they failed. The class "cut-ups" were an entirely different story. These "wanderers" were kids who were genuinely interested in everything about the water and the beach, but for whom the ceaseless babbling from the instructor was just too much. Every effort to wrangle them back into the fold of the structure of swimming lessons was met with a redoubling of effort to have their own authentic experience of the water driven by natural curiosity and a spirit of playful discovery. They did not need anyone to teach them to float because they sensed on some level that I could not; one cannot willfully insist on floating and thereby make it happen; one must relax into dependence on a power greater than oneself and then allow that alignment to support the posture. The more one struggles or attempts to exert control over the process instead of making a decision to allow the buoyancy to hold one up, the more quickly the floating ends.

Everyday I make a decision to turn my WILL and my LIFE over to the CARE of GOD AS I UNDERSTAND HIM. I try to remember that I am not keeping myself sober by learning facts about God or sobriety, by attending meetings, by helping others, or by any other intellectual or physical action I take in the material realm. At first I didn't like that idea. I thought sobriety was a gift God gave you if you behaved in accordance with some standards of acceptable behavior. I also used to think you needed to define God to use a higher power. These days I have come to experience my higher power "tamquam ignotum"; a terribly impressive Latin term that means simply "to know God as the unknown". I accept that my mind can't comprehend God and that the legitimate use of images is to express the truth, not possess it. I experience God each day and thus have come to "know" and recognize my Higher Power through the heart, not the head, through experience, not doctrine, and through progress rather than perfection. We float. I sink.

~ Ally S., Kauai

(He Said cont.) to God's plan. Fear is mistrust in God. It has been my experience that God's plan for me is wildly bigger, better wetter and wilder than any plan I have ever had for myself. I just have to go along with it. My plan for myself was to smoke enough pot and drink enough Makers Mark to turn into Bob Marley's bass player. It didn't work.

So the Third Step gives me a chance to symbolically turn my will back over to God on a daily basis. I have lots of problems, they are for you God. I have great joy and success, all for you God. I have a busy mind and a strong body and loving heart, all for you God. Hook us up so that we can spread the good news!

~ Will L., Kauai



Letter To The Editor

As a practicing member of Alcoholics Anonymous I fully subscribe to the tenets and precepts associated with A.A. I believe in the philosophy and practice of protecting fellow member's identity so that they may remain truly "Anonymous." Anonymity, at the end of the day, is a paramount concept in our organization; more than that, anonymity is the cornerstone upon which our organization was founded and continues to thrive into the 21st Century.

Regrettably, due to some ongoing, unbecoming conduct by some group members at meetings, a resultant ethical dilemma has arisen, specifically whether to identify the violator(s) and "out" the offender(s). As such, I believe it's time that we have some frank, honest dialogue on conduct protocols and what is both ethical and acceptable among group members as they interact with each other at meetings, before and afterwards as well. I argue it is time to add a sexual harassment section into the by-laws as I note that there is nothing in our by-laws or Big Book that addresses or deals with sexual harassment by group members.

Regrettably, out of pure necessity, I am forced to speak out in this forum as I was recently assaulted and battered by another group member after the evening meeting that I frequent had terminated. By the grace of God, despite being pinned down, pummeled, and having a few ribs broken by this "Anonymous" member, I was able to break free, drop my personal affects, run for my life and escape.

Despite being in shock and traumatized by this attack, my first reaction was to seek and receive

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by e-mail**



District6newsletter@hotmail.com

medical attention for cuts, bruises, and broken ribs...my ribs are still taped as I write this today. While recovering from this unprovoked attack which left me physically beaten black and blue, emotionally scared, and psychologically traumatized,

I stayed at home and put up barriers to keep people at bay. I didn't want them to know what had happened to me. I didn't go to work and screened my phone calls. I didn't volunteer at my local youth center nor go to any A.A. meetings, despite being a member of the administrative body of our community. During this time of recovery and soul searching, I contemplated my situation and what I should do

What exactly is the "right" way to handle this situation in light of my group leadership position. Would it cause to me defile "the core tenant" of anonymity that the organization is built upon? Aside from "ousting" him (if that is the action I am to take), I may be "ousted" as well. Therefore it poses quite a dilemma to this day. During my hiatus, I contemplated various violations (sexual harassments) as suffered by me and other female members while attending group functions. There are a number of women in my local groups who feel victimized by men who take liberty with forceful "breast hugs," pats on the buttocks and excessive contact. Some engage in sexual innuendo while others make crude, sexually overt comments, conducting themselves in a juvenile-like manner. Recently, as I mentioned earlier, one member seriously crossed the line and attacked me after a meeting.

I realized that all infractions, large and small, deserve attention and need to be addressed if they are offensive; if not, these actions are thus condoned and therefore only continue to escalate, as was the case with me. I would argue that had there been posted, set, distinct sexual harassment guidelines and sanctions in place, codified by the organization, I would likely not have suffered the attack that night. Nor, do I think, would the lesser variety of infractions be taking place. They most certainly would be mitigated if they were brought to light. How do we do this and remain true to our anonymity? This is a "grey area."

I looked for answers in our literature... regrettably, I found NONE! There is nothing about proper conduct, etiquette, or what to do if an un-demarcated line has been crossed! In light of this testimony, it's time for A.A. to address this issue and to clearly define acceptable meeting etiquette and what is proper conduct and decorum for all its members. These

findings need to be written, codified and published in the handbook so that what is "acceptable conduct" is clearly defined and presented to its members. We need to have a sexual harassment policy that deals with reporting and sanctioning members who violate the code. It is time to bring this organization into the modern era and make it a safe place for all, not just those who can fend off an unwanted advance or subsequent attack.

On a closing note, I have yet to decide as to whether or not I will go to the authorities about this attack. I am truly torn, as I just want to be left alone, to regain my peace, and also to remain anonymous. To my dismay, the man still attends some of the same meetings I frequent and my seeing him is quite horrifying, to say the least. **Finally, I am not** a victim, I am a survivor. I hope that my experience can shed some light on these unaddressed issues and bring the necessary change to fruition within our wonderful organization. I believe it's time to be proactive and bring our organization into the modern era by laying out some ground rules that are clearly demarcated and posted for all our members to see and hopefully subscribe to as well. If we don't take heed now, when? It's time for dialogue and action...let's take a negative and turn it into a positive. ~ In Humility, an Anonymous Survivor

Happy Birthday

Lucky	2/10	1981	29 yrs
Billy A.	2/14	1982	28 yrs
Denise	2/8	1984	26 yrs
Fran M.	2/14	1986	24 yrs
Annie B.	2/15	1998	12 yrs
Jeff S.	2/14	2002	8 yrs
Janice M.	2/5	2005	4 yrs
Susan C.	2/24	2007	3 yrs
Arthur D.	2/1	2008	2 yrs
Pat C.	2/16	2008	2 yrs
Mark A.	2/29	2008	2 yrs
David A.	2/23	2009	1 yr
Matt	2/24	2009	1 yr

About Publishing Birthdays

They are published the month after their occurrence.

If you know of someone who has moved off island, their birthday date has changed or you want a birthday published in the GIS newsletter please contact Jerrie S. at luv2bnh@hawaii.rr.com

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!



For Newcomers

Dear Aunty:

I have been disturbed by some AA members critiquing other people's shares right before the end of the meetings. Other times members argue or give advice to others. Is this okay? ~ *Curious on Kaua'*

Dear Curious:

Concerns such as yours are usually discussed at the Group's business meeting, or conducting a Group Conscience.

Most AA Groups discourage crosstalk – "...giving direct advice to others who have already shared, speaking directly to another person rather than to the Group, telling another member what to think or how to act, and questioning or interrupting the person who is sharing and speaking at the time... Avoidance of cross talk is considered a safety feature

of the meetings. Unlike group therapy, Alcoholics Anonymous members share **their own** experience, strength, and hope with one another, rather than telling others what to do or what they should think."

Carrying on a private (and frequently not so quiet) side conversation while another member is sharing can be distracting and rude.

From Step Twelve in Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, page 110:

Nor is this the only kind of Twelfth Step work. We sit in A.A. meetings and listen, not only to receive something ourselves, but to give the reassurance and support which our presence can bring".

A few excerpts from The Big Book may also inform:

"A man may criticize or laugh at himself and it will affect others favorably, but criticism or ridicule coming from another often produces the contrary effect." pg 125

"... that there are no fees to pay, no axes to grind, no people to please, no lectures to be endured – these are the conditions we have found most effective." pg 18-19

"Aside from fellowship and sociability, the prime object was to provide a time and place where new people might bring their problems." pg 160

Our Fifth Tradition reminds us that each Group is autonomous except in matters affecting other Groups or AA as a whole.

A Newcomer Asks: : "Who Am I Now?"

When I first got sober I had no idea who I was. Before, I had been a drunk, homeless, nasty person with A LOT of character defects. But the more 24 hours that past the more I realized I had no idea who I was without a drink in my hand. I knew I didn't want to be the person I was before. I knew I wasn't the person people thought I was. But I had no idea who I wanted to become.

As I slowly came to believe in my Higher Power it became clear that it was decision time. Not knowing myself what the future might be, I took a flying leap and asked Him (It, whatever) to guide my feet while walking this path. I memorized the Third Step Prayer, saying it over and over again as I struggled to stay away from people, places, things and especially the

committee inside my head. Now I keep it simple with "Thy will be done".

Sure, I run into old faces; some at Walmart, some of them here in the rooms. They know who I am and what I've done. Some of them see the change and treat me with respect again, and some don't. There's nothing I can do about that. Although a few slaps have been earned, thankfully I've kept my hands to myself, and that's not me, that's God.

Today I didn't have a drink and I didn't use a drug. I kept my hands to myself, paid for what I want, and went home with the man I love, not the one who paid. I don't think of myself anymore as the person I was and think of the person I can decide to be. Today I am a Sober Woman of a Loving God (my Higher Power, insert yours here) and for that I am truly thankful.

~ Lu, Kauai



MAKELE SEZ:
Poor me, Poor me ...
Pour Me A Drink!



KAUAI A.A.
MEETING PLACES

~ THE KOLOA LIBRARY ~



Photo ~ Alejandro

MEETINGS HELD AT THE KOLOA LIBRARY:

SUNDAY 10:00 am - STEPS 3&11 Speaker/Meditation

MONDAY 5:00 pm - Na Wahine Ku Pono – Women's

SATURDAY 6:00 pm – Sobriety In Paradise



Big Island Bash

SPEAKERS CONVENTION

April 23 - 25, 2010

The 22nd Annual Big Island Bash will be held

at the Sheraton Keauhou Bay Resort & Spa

For Registration, Schedule of Events &

Accommodations Go to www.bigislandbash.com

★ 2010 ★

International Convention of
ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

July 1-4 in San Antonio, Texas

Theme: "A Vision for You."

Celebrating A.A.'s 75th year Anniversary

<http://www.aa.org/>



Meeting Updates

★ **NEW MEETINGS:**

"Nooners" in Koloa at 12:00 pm

Meetings are held on Wednesdays and Fridays at the old Salvation Army in the Koloa Building.

★ **REQUESTING SUPPORT:**

Koloa Speaker Meeting – Tuesdays 7:30 pm at the Koloa Union Church.

Exp. Strength & Hope – Fridays 10:00 am at the First Hawaiian Church in Kapaa.

★ **SCHEDULE CHANGE:**

The Sunday 3/11 - Please be aware that this meeting is back at its original time of 10:00 am, held at the Koloa Library.

Concept III – Trust

To insure effective leadership we should endow each element of A.A. - the Conference, the General Service Board and its service corporations, staffs, committees, and executives - with a traditional "Right of Decision."

This really means that we ought to trust our responsible leaders to decide, within the understated framework of their duties, how they will interpret and apply their own authority and responsibility to each particular problem or situation as it arises. (p 15) **But for so long** as our world services functions reasonably well – and there should always be charity for occasional mistakes – then trust must be our watchword, otherwise we shall wind up leaderless. (p 15)

References: The A.A. Service Manual Combined with Twelve Concepts for World Service by Bill W. 2005-2006 Edition - Reflecting Actions of 2005 General Service Conference.

The above was presented to Hawaii Area 17 at the Inform the Delegate assembly April 2006 by Francesca P. (alternate delegate) and given as "an expression of an individual". ~ Contributed by Shoshanah B.

"Back to Basics" ~ A Workshop Series ~

March 3, 10, 24, 31

Keep It Simple Group announces a workshop series to be held 7:30pm at the Kapaa First Hawaiian Church. It is a beginner's Step workshop based on meeting formats from the 1930s and 40s compiled by AA Wally P. Although the book is not conference approved the majority of the learning is directly from the Big Book. We encourage older members to participate and help guide newcomers through this intense step study experience.

Interested volunteers can get more information:

- ~At 'Keep It Simple' meetings
- ~By Email KeepItSimpleKauai@gmail.com or
- ~By calling Lu 639 0349 or Roy 346 6211.

St Patricks Day

POT O LUCK!

CORNED BEEF AND POTATO DINNER

Wednesday, March 17th

At Lydgate Large Pavillion, 6:30 pm

Bring your favorite Side Dish or Dessert!

"We can look at the world in the eye. We can be alone at perfect peace and ease..." AA, p75



- **GET YOUR FLASHLIGHT**
- **GET YOUR HIKING SHOES**
- **WE ARE GOING HIKING!**

Tuesday March 30, 2010, 6:30pm

**Join the NIGHT HIKERS for a
FULL MOON HIKE AT KUILAU TRAIL**

Trail Length: 2.1 mi.

Difficulty: Moderate

Elevation: 640 ft

THERE WILL BE A MEETING AT THE SHELTER
Directions: From Coco Palms, drive on Kamulu Road through the Wailua Homesteads and towards the Arboretum. The Trailhead will be to the right side of the road, just a few yards before the Arboretum.

DON'T FORGET YOUR CANTEEN & JACKET

Questions? DIAL 652-3128

Kauai Intergroup

Next Intergroup Meeting March 6th
9:30am, Lihue Neighborhood Center



Got Literature? We Deliver!

OR COME TO THE INTERGROUP MEETING!

*Books *Pamphlets *GIS Newsletter
*Kauai AA Meeting Schedules Available!

What is "AA approved" literature?

GSO approval is only considered for books published by AA World Service in NY. The list of books with conference approval is not a list of what may or may not be used in meetings but a list of literature the conference feels accurately reflects AA's basic message.

In 1978 the AA General Service Office described what "Conference Approved" means in their Box 4-5-9 newsletter (Volume 23, No 4).

"It does not mean the Conference disapproves of any other publications. Many local A.A. central offices publish their own meeting lists. A.A. as a whole does not oppose these, any more than A.A. disapproves of the Bible or any other publications from any source that A.A.'s find useful.

What any A.A. member reads is no business of G.S.O., or of the Conference, naturally."

The General Service Conference has also dealt with the meaning of the term "Conference Approved" in a "Conference Approved" pamphlet (SM F-29) called: *Conference-Approved Literature*. Here it is explained this way:

"Conference-approved-What It Means to You. The term has no relation to material not published by G.S.O. It does not imply Conference disapproval of other material about A.A. A great deal of literature helpful to alcoholics is published by others, and A.A. does not try to tell any individual member what he or she may or may not read."

Books like the Original Manuscript and the First Edition of the Big Book are not Conference Approved Literature since there was no conference at the time they were published.

SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO:

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



Intergroup Officers

Chairperson - Anonymous

Alt. Chair - Tom R triumph@hisemail.net

Treasurer - Mike C. temporary)

Secretary - Henry M.

Literature - Mark M.

Alt. Literature - Danette M.

Hotline Chair - Dana M. 639-2755

Events - Kathryn B 634-4185 kbankhi1@yahoo.com

GIS News. - Linda B linbonds@msn.com

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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.



Service is Sobriety

Our Area 17



Delegate is

Elizabeth M.

delegate@area17aa.org

DCM CORNER

MARCH 2010

The following is the report I presented at the Committee Meeting on Oahu February 20, 2010. Again, I hope it conveys the enthusiasm I have for playing a role in our remarkable fellowship!

The February, 2010 committee meeting for District 6, Area 17 was a robust meeting with eleven GSR's attending. This meant that over half of Kauai's meetings were participating in the service structure of our fellowship. What a great material expression of the faith that this fellowship works!

In addition, the group reports reflected action and more action carrying the message to the still suffering alcoholic: a Superbowl party, Valentine's brunch, Cinco de Mayo celebration, moonlight hikes, the meeting in the water, and two new "nooner" meetings in Koloa. Also, there will be at least three Kauaians attending PRAASA in two weeks.

Our standing committee reports reflected still further efforts as we now have an archives board for display at local events, groups taking responsibility for literature racks, consideration being made for an order of back issue Grapevines, meetings being held in the jail and several members active in the recovery community.

Unfortunately, all this good news was overshadowed by a couple of untoward discussions. *It is amazing how quickly we forget one simple fact we all have in common: namely, that **none of us got here because someone else drank too much!*** It's so easy for us to want to fix the other fellow!

Fortunately for me (and all of District 6), those who came before me left an agenda in which we begin each meeting with a review of the Tradition and Concept of the month, so next month we can begin the meeting by reviewing the simple fact that "The only requirement is a desire to stop drinking," and perhaps that will help us to again place "Principles before personalities" as we prepare for the Inform the Delegate Assembly.

Thank you so much for this opportunity to grow!
~ Jim D

District 6 Committee

DCM - Jim D. - DCM6@area17.org

Alternate DCM - Susan O'N. 212-1858

Treas - Courtney P. cpeiz@mail.com

Secretary - Michele K. kauaidistrictsixsec@gmail.com

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Archives - Mathea A. MatheaAllansmith@gmail.com

CPC - Bart D. 651-9623

Public Relations - Lu 639-0349 lu.pairofaces@gmail.com

**Next District Meeting March 13th
9:30 am , 3146 Akahi St., Lihu'e**

Kauai District Cash Flow

January 10, 2010 to February 13, 2010
(District Meeting to District Meeting)

Starting Balance	\$ 2168.91
<hr/>	
Income	
Interest 12/19 to 1/20	\$0.13
Hui Ohana	\$184.86
Income Total	\$184.99
<hr/>	
Payments	
Archives	\$61.98
Bks for new Salt Pond mtg.	\$39.00
PO Box 1503 for 2010	\$ 75.00
Payments Total	\$ 175.98
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SUMMARY FOR 2009

Starting Balance Jan. 10, 2010:	\$ 2168.91
Income Total:	\$ 184.99
Payments Total:	\$ 175.98
Balance	\$ 2177.92
Prudent Reserve:	-\$500.00
Available Funds:	\$1677.92

~ Prepared by Courtney P.

SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO:

Kaua'i District Committee

PO Box 1503, Kapa'a, HI 96746

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

