

THE MESSAGE

Boulder County Intergroup | www.bouldercountyaa.org

Serving the Alcoholics Anonymous Community of Boulder County

5401 Western Ave. Suite D, Boulder, CO 80301 303-447-8201

What Is Intergroup?

An Intergroup or Central Office is a vital A.A. Service that represents a partnership among groups....

The office exists to aid the groups in carrying out the A.A. message to the alcoholic who still suffers.*

Looking for an opportunity to do service work and grow in your program? Please consider donating your time and talents as service work back to the most important organization in your life.

All are welcome to attend Intergroup meetings on the last Tuesday of the month, 7:00 p.m. at Shepherd of the Hills Church, 7077 Harvest Road in Gunbarrel.

Training for new volunteers is offered by appointment. To schedule a training session, contact Mike at

volunteer@bouldercountyaa.org.

Thank you!

*(Reprinted from AA literature with permission of A.A. World Services, Inc.)

No Opinion

Tradition Ten

“Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.”

An excerpt from the 10th Tradition in the 12 x 12:

“Let us reemphasize that this reluctance to fight one another or anybody else is not counted as some special virtue which makes us feel superior to other people. Nor does it mean that the members of Alcoholics Anonymous, now restored as citizens of the world, are going to back away from their individual responsibilities to act as they see the right upon issues of our time. But when it comes to A.A. as a whole, that’s quite a different matter. In this respect, we do not enter into public controversy, because we know that our Society will perish if it does. We conceive the survival and spread of Alcoholics Anonymous to be something of far greater importance than the weight we could collectively throw back of any other cause. Since recovery from alcoholism is life itself to us, it is imperative that we preserve in full strength our means of survival” (p. 177).

As a whole, AA has remained true to this Tradition by not getting caught up in controversies and opinions about those things that are not part of AA. But what about in our personal relationships? Can I keep my opinion to myself if the subject isn’t within the sphere of my own life? Do I give little corrections to my loved ones? Do I think that my way of doing things is really the only right way? In a time when the rest of our lives can be overwhelmed with divisiveness and hostility, let us work to preserve the thing that binds us together, our common goal of staying sober and helping others to recover. And then Live and let Live.

Step Nine: Growing into Humility

Some of my most profound spiritual experiences have come about as a result of making amends. There is a reason that the Big Book says “we will be amazed before we are halfway through” in reference to Step Nine (p. 83). Most of these experiences have been painful as well. I think the Ninth Step stretches us in the direction of honesty and humility, which is not natural for us, so it hurts at the time.

Early in sobriety, I heard people talking about how much better they felt after making amends. Inspired by their stories, I wrote a letter to a woman I had been living with during the worst years of my drinking. She had moved away to start a new job and we had finally separated for the last time after seven tumultuous years. I called her a few days after sending the letter, probably hoping to myself that my letter would be so full of growth and wisdom after four months of sobriety that she would want to get back together. She told me that my letter had been very hurtful and asked me not to contact her again.

Crushed, I met with my sponsor and his sponsor. Of course they pointed out that I had not finished Steps Four through Eight yet, and that the steps are in an order for a reason. My grand-sponsor also smiled and asked “Did you harm her by mail?” So I learned that we have to be spiritually ready before making amends or we risk doing more harm. They also pointed out that we need to discuss our Eighth-Step list carefully with a sponsor before making any direct amends. Trying to make amends prematurely did more harm and left me feeling more remorseful than when I started. It’s a miracle I didn’t drink over it.

Six years later, I had done the work, and the Steps had begun to do their work on me. I was scheduled to give a presentation at a conference where the woman I had written the letter to was also going to be presenting. I talked about it with my sponsor (the same one) and he told me that God would decide if it was time to make those amends. We talked through what I might say if the chance arrived.

As it turned out, I found myself face-to-face with her in a hotel lobby. She smiled and came over to

give me a hug. I asked if we could talk, and we found a quiet corner. I made a stumbling attempt to say what needed to be said and to do the amends for real. Then came the hard part: “Is there anything I have left out?” She talked for half an hour. I realized in that moment how deep the selfishness of alcoholism can be. Even after praying and reflecting for years, I was oblivious to much of the emotional and spiritual harm I had done. Then came the second hard part: “What can I do to make it right?” She told me that she had some things of mine and she wanted me to come get them. So I made arrangements and drove about 700 miles to do that. I had dinner with her and her new husband, and the healing process began. I no longer have to feel pangs of remorse when I think of her.

I have had to make amends to two employers. The first was a man who had to fire me because I was drinking on the job. We met in his office, and I asked how I could make things right. He told me that he had a brother with a drinking problem and asked me to get him a copy of the Big Book. The second was a man who was my supervisor for years and I had to make amends for my behavior in sobriety. (Stopping drinking has not prevented me from continuing to do things for which I need to make amends.) This was a man who had been at the top of my Fourth-Step resentment inventory for years. We had a chance to meet at a large business meeting, and I was able to make direct amends. After fighting with each other for years, something changed. I stopped second-guessing him and criticizing him behind his back. Our relationship began to heal. A few years later, his job was eliminated in a restructuring, and I was able to give him some support and help him transition into a new career. I now consider him a friend.

As much as we might want to, we can’t accelerate the spiritual process of making amends. I had to do the work first and be truly ready to be of service to others. I had the wrong idea in early sobriety and I thought amends were for the purpose of assuaging guilt and making us feel better about ourselves. Now I know that “our real purpose is to fit ourselves to be of maximum service to God and the people about us” (p. 77).

~Michael G

Individuals and groups are needed now to help staff the office. All Central Office volunteers must have at least 9 months of continuous sobriety and receive training.

Current Needs

Karen, office manager, has regular office hours on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, 11 am - 2 pm.

Central office is staffed over the lunch hour every week day.

We are currently looking for these shifts to be covered:

- Weekdays, 9 - 11 am
- Saturdays, 11 am - 1 pm
- **Thank you** to the volunteers who staff the Central Office! And to the groups who cover shifts: Robbers Roost, Principles Before Personalities, Home Girls, Campus Group, and Eye Openers.

Thank you to the following groups, who made contributions to Intergroup In July and August of 2017: Burning Desire / Centennial Peaks / Cherry Creek Prom / Davidson Mesa / Design for Living / Erie #1 / Erie Early Risers / Eye Openers / Fellowship You Crave / Literature Ladies /Louisville Group / Tuesday Night Men’s Group Boulder

Nightwatch

Nightwatch volunteers help to answer calls to Central Office during hours when the office is closed. As a Nightwatch volunteer, you have calls forwarded to your phone from 7pm to 7am (or later).

We are currently looking for coverage on Tuesday and Saturday nights.

Nightwatch Coordinator: Aaron
nightwatch@bouldercountyaa.org

We connect to alcoholics in these important ways:

1. Central Office facilitates 12 step calls.

Central Office receives calls and emails from alcoholics needing help. Our 12 step volunteers are available to call on those still-suffering alcoholics who have reached out. Volunteers cover the phones from the office during the day and over night through Night Watch, routing calls directly to our volunteers.

2. Central Office helps alcoholics find meetings.

Meetings in Boulder County are listed on our website (about 1,000 visits per month) and in printed schedules. We distribute about 4,000 printed meeting schedules each year.

3. Central Office is where you can purchase AA literature and medallions.

Central Office stocks and sells AA books, pamphlets, and our newsletter, *The Message*, as well as chips commemorating lengths of sobriety.

4. Central Office provides opportunities for service.

You can contribute by participating in 12 step calls, answering phones at the office, taking a Night Watch shift, and participating in workshops and events.

5. Through our Bridge the Gap Committee, Intergroup connects with Boulder County alcoholics returning from treatment who are looking for someone to help them get started in AA.

6. Intergroup publishes a monthly newsletter, *The Message* to inform Boulder County alcoholics about local AA events, workshops and other AA news. The Message also publishes personal stories from local AA members.

7. Intergroup provides workshops on a variety of topics. Last year, Intergroup sponsored the New Year’s Eve party as a way to give Boulder County alcoholics a safe and fun place to celebrate. Our plan is to do this again in 2017!

Each AA member who contributes their time and other resources, such as financial contributions, carries the message of Alcoholics Anonymous.



Help Intergroup Carry *The Message*

The Message is the newsletter of Boulder County Intergroup. *The Message* serves Intergroup by providing a source of news and information about AA activities and service opportunities throughout Boulder County.

Groups

Send us information about group events, workshops, celebrations, anniversaries.

District 24 and 34

Send us information about workshops, open service positions, elections, events.

Intergroup and District Committee Chairs

Send us information about committee projects, needs, workshops, panels.

Individual Members

Share your experience, strength, and hope with a step, tradition, or concept.

Contact *The Message*

thessage@bouldercountyaa.org

Central Office Volunteer Training

Saturdays 11 am - 1 pm

October 7

November 4

December 2

Contact Michael H [303-817-5101](tel:303-817-5101)
Volunteer@BoulderCountyAA.org

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