

PROSPERITY TIMES

Northern California Debtors Anonymous Newsletter and Meeting List

April-June 2009

Web Resources

Are you aware of the resources at your fingertips on our Northern California DA web site, ncdaweb.org?

The newest addition to our site is the recording of this year's 2009 Winter Lights. If you were unable to attend you can download nearly all of the speakers, shares and meditations in MP3 format on the "Resources and Literature" page. Listen to them on the spot or record them to a CD or digital recording device of your choice.

In addition to being able to locate a meeting by city or day of the week, you can also download the latest "Prosperity Times", email it to friends, or peruse back issues of "Prosperity Times" in the archives. The Meeting Formats and Readings page features literature, including:

- The 12 Signs of Compulsive Debting
- The 12 Steps of Debtors Anonymous
- The 12 Traditions of Debtors Anonymous
- The 12 Concepts of DA Service
- The 12 Tools of Debtors Anonymous
- The 12 Promises of Debtors Anonymous
- Signs of Compulsively Debting in Business
- Additional Tools of Business Debtors Anonymous
- Recovery in Business Debtors Anonymous
- Signs of Compulsive Spending
- Signs of Compulsively Underearning

And the "Special Events" page provides space for listing your meeting's fundraiser or other special event.

Our web site receives nearly 1000 unique visitors each month! By far, most people are looking for meeting details. Please check the listing details of your meeting and notify registrar@ncdaweb.org if you notice any inaccuracy, please communicate the correct information completely. One email will alert BOTH the "Prosperity Times" editor and the WebGuardian. Many people benefit from the accuracy of the listings on our site.

In Fellowship, Jacob NCDA WebGuardian

NCDA Intergroup 45% Donations from Meetings January – December 10, 2008

Meeting	Donation Total
#116 Oakland Tuesday 7:30 p.m.	\$153.23
#153 San Francisco Saturday St Peters Church	\$263.86
#156 Menlo Park BDA	\$457.93
#157 Mountain View Sunday	\$ 50.00
#173 Mill Valley Wednesday 7:30 p.m.	\$166.50
#176 Corte Madera Thursday noon BDA	\$381.66
#224 San Jose	\$100.79
#247 Berkeley Focus on Visions	\$175.50
#248 Berkeley Thursday	\$251.50
#368 Walnut Creek BDA	\$212.79
#406 San Francisco Tuesday Step Study	\$335.46
#408 San Francisco Sunday p.m.	\$ 30.60
#419 San Rafael Tuesday p.m.	\$729.36
#468	\$112.50
#604 San Francisco Wednesday BDA	\$141.00
#817 Burlingame Friday	\$ 25.00
#822 Grass Valley	\$ 25.00
#923 San Rafael BDA	\$128.33
#1009 Palo Alto Tuesday p.m.	\$ 31.14
#1036 Oakland Saturday a.m.	\$ 90.00
#1091 San Francisco	\$ 45.00
#1110 Monterey	\$ 40.00
San Rafael Monday p.m. Visions	\$ 80.00
Murphy's Thursday	\$ 16.16
	\$4043.31

THANK YOU ALL!!

← These funds make these resources are available.

We Came to Believe in a Power Greater Than Ourselves...

Stories of Recovery

Using the Traditions:

For about a year now, one of the meetings I attend has been wrestling with the issue of DA's Steps and Traditions specifically referring to God and Higher Power in male-gender terms (*i.e.*, "Him" in Steps 3 and 7, "Him" and "His" in Step 11; and "He" and "Himself" in Tradition 2). Some members of the group see these terms as discriminatory, exclusive and/or, at the least, outdated. Some members feel the references undercut the spirit of finding one's own Higher Power as they suggest that any concept of a Higher Power must be in the form of a male being. Some members feel triggered by hearing God referred to in male-gender terms. Some members feel that in a program focused on valuing ourselves, it is important for everyone to be equally valued equally and the male references in the Steps and Traditions preclude this.

Other members feel that the Steps and Traditions were adopted from AA and should be used in their original form as the foundation of our fellowship. Some members feel that if people are triggered by the male-gender references, they can and should work that out in their individual step work. Some members feel that if any changes are made to the wording of the Steps and Traditions, it opens the door for anyone to rewrite the Steps and Traditions and alter the foundation of our program. Still others feel that, while they might like to see the male-gender references changed, they feel that change should only come from the DA World Service Organization.

Currently the meeting uses a modified version of the Steps and Traditions that changes the "Him" to "God" in Steps 3, 7 and 11; the "His" to "God's" in Step 11; and "as He may express Himself" to "as may be expressed" in Tradition 2. The group conscience approved this modified version provided that the changes were specifi-

cally noted in footnotes so that people could see exactly what was changed from the official version. The meeting also adopted a preamble to the Steps that states that the Steps and Traditions were modified by the group conscience vote of the meeting in order to have gender neutrality. Some members feel that this modified version should not be permitted at all because it is not the official DA World Service version.

The business meeting discussions have at times been very respectful, thoughtful and illuminating and at other times very heated and emotional. The group has yet to find any clear answers and today the discussion continues. But the saving grace has been that members know that the Traditions are where we need to turn to inform our discussions.

Some of the traditions we have looked to in these discussions are:

Tradition 1 – *Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon D.A. unity.* If a group uses a version of the Steps and Traditions other than that authorized by DA World Service, does that undermine the unity of DA as a whole? If a group uses the official DA version when members feel discriminated or excluded by the male-gender references, does that undermine the unity of the meeting and interfere with people's ability to achieve personal recovery?

Tradition 2 – *For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority--a loving God as He may express Himself [may be expressed] in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.* What happens when the group conscience as expressed in an individual meeting is different than the group conscience as expressed at the DA World Service level? Since the members representing DA at the World Service level are trusted servants and do not govern, should/must meetings follow their recommendations no matter what? What are meetings to do if they have tried to get the World Ser-

vice Organization to change the language in the Steps and Traditions but change has yet to come about?

Tradition 4 - *Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or D.A. as a whole.* Is modifying the Steps and Traditions to remove the Him/His language within a group's autonomy? If a meeting clearly indicates that the Steps and Traditions were changed by group conscience vote and indicates what and when the changes were made, is that enough to keep the issue from affecting other groups or DA as a whole? Does having meetings with gender neutral language in the Steps and Traditions allow people to find home meetings that they are comfortable with when they might otherwise be turned off from DA as a whole by the language in the official version?

Tradition 5 - *Each group has but one primary purpose-to carry its message to the debtor who still suffers.* Does using a modified version of the Step and Traditions interfere with the group's primary purpose of carrying the message to the debtor who still suffers? What do we do about the debtor who suffers because of not earning as much as her male counterpart and feels that DA supports or is at least indifferent to gender discrimination? What about the debtors who suffer because of powerful messages about money, earning, debting and spending they received because of his or her gender and needs a supportive environment to work these issues out?

While the group so far has found no easy answers to these issues, the discussion has focused the members on the importance of having traditions and using them. Perhaps if other groups have struggled with or found ways to address these issues, they could share their experience, strength and hope with their Intergroup Service Representatives and General Service Representatives so we can all learn from each other in the fellowship.

~Anonymous

Please do feel free to make copies of
P *T* and share it with
 others. You may also download and print it
 from:
www.ncdawebsite.org

My Favorite Tradition:

For our group purpose there is but one authority – a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.

It took time for me to realize how important the traditions are to me personally, and how beautiful and brilliant they are. One of my favorites is Tradition Two. Without this tradition, I most likely would not have stayed in D.A.

I have a deep distrust toward organizations that have domineering leaders who enforce harsh rules and have hefty demands of money and time from their followers. The second part of Tradition Two, “our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern,” made all the difference for my feeling safe enough to stay in D.A.

When I came in to the rooms I was only given a warm welcome, the invitation to keep coming back, and suggestions on how to get the most out of the program. No demands were placed on me by the leadership of the meeting - no one tried to control, or pressure me or any other members of the group.

It made me feel at ease that our leaders are our equals in the fellowship of D.A., and that they are giving humble service because they want to share the gifts of the program, not for money or power. Tradition Two has been a critical piece in my recovery in D.A. – it allowed me to feel safe enough to stay and begin to use the tools, work the steps, and also give back as a “trusted servant” as well. And as a result I have received many amazing gifts of the program, and I am building a wonderful and prosperous life.

~Anonymous

Stories of Recovery

Working the Traditions:

When I first came to DA it was the Steps that intrigued me the most. Sure, we read the traditions at every meeting, but I really didn't listen to them. The Steps are written in past tense, as though I had already done them, and that didn't make them so daunting. I thought the Traditions were just a list of rules, and I know how to behave, so they seemed to be read out loud for others benefit.

I have come to know that the 12 Traditions are much more than that. They are the glue that holds our fellowship together; the commonality that we all measure ourselves by. I don't compare myself to the person sitting next to me at a meeting, I compare myself to the Traditions! And no, I do not always measure up to them, but they are the ideal that I strive for inside and outside a meeting.

I have been to meetings in my travels that did not seem "healthy" to me, and sure enough I'd come to find that they do not read all or any of the traditions at every meeting!

I realize that no group can "Work the Traditions" perfectly, but no one works the Steps perfectly

Group Donations

It is suggested that each group, after meeting its own needs and establishing a prudent reserve, send a 7th Tradition donation:

- ◇ **45% to the local Intergroup**
NCDA Intergroup
PO Box 423058
San Francisco, CA 94142-3058
- ◇ **45% to the General Service Offices**
General Service Office-DA
PO Box 92088
Needham, MA 02492-0009
- ◇ **10% to the General Service Rep**
NorCal DA GSR
PO Box 423136
San Francisco, CA 94142

Share your Recovery...

The **P** **T** welcomes your personal story of experience, strength and hope in the DA program.

Please send your submission as a Word document or in the body of an email. Length may be 300-650 words.

Please send to:

prosperitytimes@ncdaweb.org

Or mail to:

**NCDA PO Box 423058, San Francisco, CA 94142
Attn: Prosperity Times Editor**

Next theme: The 12 Steps

Please submit no later than June 10, 2009

Thanks from the Editor

either. The point is that we try, and when we fall down we make amends and do it better the next time.

~Editor

A call to Assist!!

Hello All,

This is the first edition of **P** **T** that I have edited and so far I am thoroughly enjoying the experience. I would very much like to hear your thoughts on content and layout. I have not changed any submissions that have been included, and do not intend to in the future. If your submission is worth printing then it is worth printing as you intended it to be.

This edition will print 350 copies and the price NCDA is paying is \$.63 cents per copy, including paper and meeting list insert.

Yours in DA,
~Editor