

Step 8

“Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.”

“Steps Eight and Nine are concerned with personal relations. First, we take a look backward and try to discover where we have been at fault; next we make a vigorous attempt to repair the damage we have done; and third, having thus cleaned away the debris of the past, we consider how, with our newfound knowledge of ourselves, we may develop the best possible relations with every human being we know.

This is a very large order. It is a task which we may perform with increasing skill, but never really finish. Learning how to live in the

greatest peace, partnership, and brotherhood with all men and women, of whatever description, is a moving and fascinating adventure. Every A.A. has found that he can make little headway in this new adventure of living until he first backtracks and really makes an accurate and unsparing survey of the human wreckage he has left in his wake. To a degree, he has already done this when taking moral inventory, but now the time has come when he ought to redouble his efforts to see how many people he has hurt, and in what ways. This reopening of emotional

wounds, some old, some perhaps forgotten, and some still painfully festering, will at first look like a purposeless and pointless piece of surgery. But if a willing start is made, then the great advantages of doing this will so quickly reveal themselves that the pain will be lessened as one obstacle after another melts away.

These obstacles, however, are very real. The first, and one of the most difficult, has to do with forgiveness. The moment we ponder a twisted or broken relationship

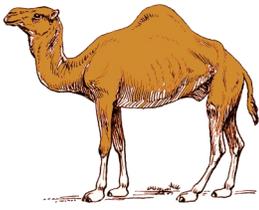
(Continued on page 2)

Tradition 8 Long Form

“Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever non-professional. We define professionalism as the occupation of counseling alcoholics for fees or hire. But we may employ alcoholics where they are going to perform those services for which we might otherwise have to engage nonalcoholics. Such special services may be well recompensed. But our usual A.A. Twelfth Step work is never to be paid for.”

“ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS will never have a professional class. We have gained some understanding of the ancient words, “Freely ye have received, freely give.” we have discovered that at the point of professionalism, money and spirituality do not mix. Almost no recovery from alcoholism has ever been brought about by the world’s best professionals, whether medical or religious. We do not decry professionalism in other fields, but we accept the sober fact that it does not work for us. Every time we have tried to professionalize our Twelfth Step, the result has been exactly the same: Our single purpose has been defeated.

Alcoholics simply will not listen to a paid twelfth-stepper. Almost from the beginning, we have been positive that face-to-face work with the alcoholic who suffers could be based only on the desire to help and be helped. When an A.A. talks for money, whether at a meeting or to a single newcomer, it can have a very bad effect on him, too. The money motive compromised him and everting he says and does for his prospect. This has always been so obvious that only a very few A.A.’s have ever worked the Twelfth Step for a fee.”



I am responsible. When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there. And for that: I am responsible.

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Stepping Stones is a monthly newsletter of the Ninth District Intergroup with the office located at: 6640 Eastex Freeway, Suite 149A, Beaumont, TX 77708. It is about, by and for the members of the Fellowship of AA. Opinions expressed herein are Not to be attributed to AA as a whole, nor does publication of information imply any endorsement by either AA or the Ninth District Intergroup.

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Contributions from our readers is encouraged. Submissions are edited for space and clarity only. Contact information is required and anonymity is respected. ■

Concept VIII

“The Trustees of the General Service Board act in two primary capacities: (a) With respect to the larger matters of over-all policy and finance, they are the principal planners and administrators. They and their primary committees directly manage these affairs. (b) But with respect to our separately incorporated and constantly active services, the relation of the Trustees is mainly that of full stock ownership and of custodial oversight which they exercise through their ability to elect all directors of these entities.”

“Since our Trustees bear the primary responsibility for the good conduct of all our world service affairs, this discussion deals with the basic concepts and methods by which they can best discharge their heavy obligations. Long experience has not proved that our Board as a whole must devote itself almost exclusively to the larger and more serious questions of policy, finance, group relations, public relations and leadership that constantly confront it. In *these more critical matters*, the Board must of course function with great care and deliberation. Here the Board is expected skillfully to *plan, manage, and execute*.

It follows, therefore, that the close attention of the Board to such larger problems must not be subject to constant distraction and interference. Our Trustees, as a body, cannot be burdened with a mass of lesser matters; they must not concern themselves with the endless questions and difficulties which arise daily, weekly and monthly in the routine conduct of the World Service Office and of our publishing enterprises. In these areas the Board cannot possibly manage and conduct in detail; it must delegate its executive function.

Here the Board’s attitude has to be that of custodial oversight; it cannot be the executive. Hence the Trustees are the guarantors of the good management of A.A. World Services, Inc. and the A.A. Grapevine, Inc. They discharge their custodial obligation by electing the directors of these services, a part of whom must always be



AA GRAPEVINE

The International Journal of Alcoholics Anonymous



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

Grapevine Online Exclusive

One scary guy

AA is full of surprises. An old-timer remembers the day he got a really big one



One day, when I had been sober about nine years, a newcomer called me and asked if I would take him to a meeting. At that time, I had slowed down on going to meetings and had not been to that meeting in several years. It was the group's anniversary night. Anniversaries had always been terrific for me—great speakers, great food and a friendly atmosphere. I hoped this newcomer would enjoy it. So I said, "Let's do it."

The meeting was as I remembered it: good speakers, good food and an energizing atmosphere. As the members were chatting and milling around, a lady who I remembered from years ago came over to me and said, "Every time you came into the meeting years ago, you scared the heck out of me." I gently and emphatically told her she had the wrong guy. "I have witnesses," she replied, which baffled me, because back then I was desperately just trying to hang on to my sobriety. I was

sure she was mistaken but she got several women from the group to support her observations of my former behavior.

So I sought out an old-timer and co-founder of that group. I felt comfortable with him and explained my predicament. I told him what people were saying about me and I said I was sure they were mistaken. The old-timer started laughing. He said it was true that I was very argumentative. In fact, he told me how his sponsor had suggested that he stop arguing with me—we were ruining the meeting. He added that his wife, who was also a member but was ill in bed, would get a big laugh out of what I was saying.

Wow! His recollection of my past behavior was totally different from mine. That was the first time I really heard and understood how other people saw me.

But it wasn't all bad; there were positives. Everybody seemed happy to see me and

they were not frightened. And what the old-timer told me was an opportunity to process new and positive information about my AA journey. The kindness of the people at that meeting was a gift to me, along with the knowledge that slowing down and attending fewer AA meetings was a huge mistake.

Had that newcomer not asked me to attend that meeting, I would not have learned from these honest observations. This was truly a "wink" from my High Power. These wonderful and helpful members put me back on the balance beam. I have stayed sober and active in AA for 50 years now because they embraced me those many years ago.

Every life experience gives us the opportunity to learn more about ourselves. My experience that day was an eye-opener for me. God truly does work through people.

Bob D.

Haverhill, Mass..

Group Contributions — July 2016

Group	Month	Y to D	Group	Month	Y to D
A New Beginning (Woodville)	\$0.00	\$30.00	Mustard Seed	\$224.00	\$434.00
Anahuac	\$0.00	\$0.00	New Life	\$0.00	\$0.00
Bolivar	\$0.00	\$0.00	Newton	\$0.00	\$0.00
Bridge City	\$0.00	\$100.00	Nueva Vida (Port Arthur)	\$0.00	\$0.00
Buna	\$0.00	\$0.00	Orange	\$20.00	\$70.00
Cornerstone	\$200.00	\$200.00	Pecan Groves	\$0.00	\$0.00
Dam Group (Hwy. 225)	\$0.00	\$0.00	Pineywoods	\$15.00	\$70.00
Deweyville	\$0.00	\$0.00	Primary Purpose	\$0.00	\$30.00
Downtown	\$0.00	\$0.00	Rule #62 Young Peoples Group	\$0.00	\$0.00
Fellowship	\$0.00	\$0.00	Serenity	\$317.60	\$789.77
Fresh Start	\$0.00	\$75.00	St Francis	\$0.00	\$100.00
Friends of Bill (Port Author)	\$0.00	\$0.00	The Buck Stops Here	\$0.00	\$0.00
Jasper Noon	\$0.00	\$0.00	TLC	\$0.00	\$201.60
Jasper Serenity	\$0.00	\$0.00	Un Dia A La Vez	\$0.00	\$0.00
Keep It Simple	\$0.00	\$0.00	Vidor	\$0.00	\$0.00
Kirbyville	\$143.20	\$331.44	West End	\$0.00	\$100.00
Kountze Daylight	\$0.00	\$20.00	Winnie (Unconditional Love)	\$170.00	\$380.00
Lewis Drive	\$0.00	\$0.00	Way Out	\$0.00	\$0.00
Lufkin	\$0.00	\$0.00	Women's Gratitude Group	\$0.00	\$0.00
Lumberton Singleness of Purpose	\$0.00	\$150.00	Woodville	\$0.00	\$0.00
Mid County (Nederland)	\$0.00	\$40.00			
Murray Street	\$8.30	\$59.20	Totals	\$1,098.10	\$3,181.01

**We want to sincerely thank you for your contributions. Please address your gifts to:
 Ninth District Intergroup Association — 6640 Eastex Frwy., Ste. 149A — Beaumont, TX 77708
 Phone: 409-832-1107 — Fax: 409-898-8977 — E-mail: intergroup9@att.net — Web: aabeaumont.org
 If you see mistakes, please call, write or come in. We want to be accurate and ask that you verify your totals.**

Would You Be On Our 12 Step List?

Home Group: _____

Name: (Please Print) _____ Male/Female: _____

Address: _____

Phone: Home: _____ Work: _____ Cell: _____

Area In Which You Will Serve: _____

Car Available: Yes _____ No _____ Languages Spoken _____

Times Available: (Circle Choices Please) 8 AM – 6 PM 6 PM – 12 MDN 12 MDN – 8 AM

Days Available: (Circle Choices Please) SU M TU W TH F SA

Addresses AA Entities

Ninth District Intergroup

6640 Eastex Frwy, Suite 149 A
 Beaumont, TX 77708

District 90 GSR Committee

PO Box 21279
 Beaumont, TX 77720-1279

Southeast Texas Area 67

PO Box 130433
 Houston, TX 77219-0433

AA General Service Office

PO Box 459
 New York, NY 10163-0459

Opportunities For Service

SHARE THE MESSAGE IN THE COUNTY, STATE AND FEDERAL FACILITIES

We need men and women to go into the County jail on Sat. @ 11:30 each week. There is also a need for men to go into the State and Federal facilities on a weekly basis or even just once a month to give current volunteers a much needed break. Each facility requires a background check before you enter. To find out more information please come to the monthly CSR meeting and talk with the correction committee members or call Intergroup @ 409-832-1107.

TREATMENT FACILITY COMMITTEE

We need volunteers to go into both the men and the women's facilities. Come to the next

Announcements

Next District 90 GSR Meeting
September 4, 2016 At 2:00 PM
West End Group
1235 Crockett, Beaumont, TX

Everyone is encouraged and welcome to attend.

Next 9th Dist. Intergroup Meeting
October 16, 2016 At 2:00 PM
Westgate Memorial Baptist Church
6220 Westgate Drive, Beaumont, TX

Everyone is encouraged and welcome to attend.
Meeting is held in the rear of the building.



Happy Birthday To You!!!

Lumberton Singleness of Purpose

August 28, 2016

Eat at 6, Meet at 7

Celebrant: Joe M. - 20 years

Speaker: Mike F. - Orange Group

DEAR EBBY

Dear Ebby: My home group has members who are pretty different from each other. I am working on my first year of sobriety, and I am amazed at all the different kinds of people in our group! And we seem to, for the most part, get along pretty well. I've read some of the Traditions and know a little about them. What are your thoughts on this matter? *Amazed in Alabama*



Dear AIA: It is pretty amazing. In Chapter 2, *There is a Solution*, the second paragraph explains that. It starts, "We are average Americans. All sections of this country and many of its occupations are represented, as well as ... We are people who normally would not mix." My mind was so foggy when I got here that when I heard that I thought they had drank their whiskey straight up!

Dear Ebby: I was in a meeting the other night and I heard someone sharing about her sponsor asking her to write a goodbye letter to alcohol. I thought it might help me. Have you ever done this? *Goodbye Girl from Garden State*

Dear GGS: Yes, I did. But it took me three attempts. I was crying so much on the first two, the ink ran all together! Bon voyage, alcohol!!! (Haven't seen it since.) *Yeah!*



THE FUNNY BONE

Who's nuts?

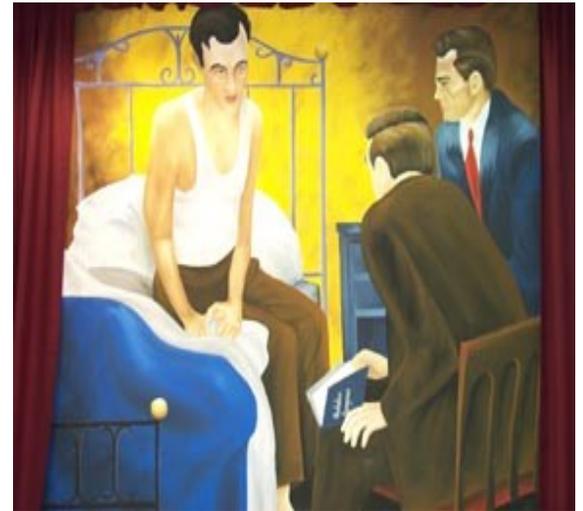
A guy walks into a bar, sits down and hears a small voice, "You look nice today." A few minutes later he again hears another small voice say, "That's a nice shirt." So the guy asks the bartender, "Who is that?" The bartender says, "Those are the peanuts. They're complimentary."

From the Grapevine, June 2016

Oh brother!

Robert was very nervous all through his wife's pregnancy. The worst happened when he rushed his wife to the hospital and learned she was having twins. The poor guy fainted. When he came to, he was told that his brother had been there and named his children. "My brother named my babies?" Robert cried. "Why, he's a complete drunk! He's hardly ever sober. What silly name could he have given my daughter?" "He named her Denise," said his wife. "Oh, Denise," Robert said, relieved. "That's a nice name. I like Denise. I feel so much better. What did he name my son?" "Denephew," she said.

From the Grapevine, June 2016



8th Step Principle Reflection Brotherly Love

8th Promise

Self-seeking will slip
away.

