

Step 1

“We admitted we were powerless over alcohol - that our lives had become unmanageable.”

Who cares to admit complete defeat? Practically no one, of course. Every natural instinct cries out against the idea of personal powerlessness. It is truly awful to admit that, glass in hand, we have warped our minds into such an obsession for destructive drinking that only an act of Providence can remove it from us.

No other kind of bankruptcy is like this one. Alcohol, now becomes the rapacious creditor, bleeds us of all self-sufficiency and all will to resist its demands. Once this

stark fact is accepted, our bankruptcy as going human concerns is complete.

But upon entering A.A. we soon take quite another view of this absolute humiliation. We perceive that only through utter defeat are we able to take our first steps toward liberation and strength. Our admissions of personal powerlessness finally turn out to be firm bedrock upon which happy and purposeful lives may be built.

We know that little good can come to any alcoholic

who joins A.A. unless he has first accepted his devastating weakness and all its consequences. Until he so humbles himself; his sobriety—if any—will be precarious. Of real happiness he will find none at all. Proved beyond doubt by an immense experience, this is one of the facts of A.A. life.

This principle that we shall find no enduring strength until we first admit complete defeat is the main taproot from which our whole Society has sprung and flow-

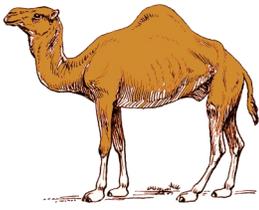
(Continued on page 2)

Tradition 1

“Each member of Alcoholics Anonymous is but a small part of a great whole. A.A. must continue to live or most of us will surely die. Hence our common welfare first. But individual welfare follows close afterward.”

The unity of Alcoholics Anonymous is the most cherished quality our

Society has. Our lives, the lives of all to come, depend squarely upon it. We stay whole, or A.A. dies. Without unity, the heart of A.A. would cease to beat; our world arteries would no longer carry the life-giving grace of God; His gift to us would be spent aimlessly. Back again in their caves, alcoholics would reproach us and say, “What a great thing A.A. might have been!” Does this mean some will anxiously ask, “that in A.A. the individual doesn’t count for much? Is he to be dominated by his group and swallowed up in it?”



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.

Inside this issue:

Step 1—Tradition 1	1
Concept 1	2
Stories (Grapevine)	3
Contributions	4
District Info	5
January Happenings	6
SETA Convention	7

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 I

“The final responsibility and the ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.”

The A.A. groups today hold ultimate responsibility and final authority for our world services — those special elements of over-all service activity which make it possible for our Society to function as a whole. The groups assumed that responsibility at the St. Louis International Convention of 1955. There, on behalf, of Dr. Bob, the Trustees and A.A.’s old-time leaders, I made the transfer of world service responsibility to our entire Fellowship.

Why, and by what authority was this done? There were reasons of stark necessity for it, and there were further reasons which have to do with A.A.’s fundamental structure and tradition.

By the year 1948 our necessities had become clear enough. Ten years earlier—in 1938—helped by dedicated friends, Dr. Bob and I had commenced work upon a world service structure. Our first step was the creation of a trusteeship for A.A. as a whole. We called this body the Alcoholic Foundation; and in 1954 it was re-named The General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous.

This trusteeship was designed to inaugurate and maintain all of those special services for A.A. as a whole that could not well be performed by single groups or areas. We envisioned the writing of a uniform A.A. literature, the development of a sound public relations policy, and a means of handling the large numbers of pleas for help that might follow in the wake of national and international publicity. We thought in terms of aiding new groups to form and of furnishing them with counsel based upon the experience of the older and already successful groups. We thought there would be a need for a monthly magazine and also for translations of our literature into other languages.

By 1950 nearly all of these dreams for world service had come true. In the dozen years following the creation of The Foundation, A.A. membership had jumped from 50 to 100,000. The A.A. Traditions had been written and adopted. A confident unity had pretty much replaced fear and doubt and strife. Our services had unquestionably played a large and critical role in this unfoldment. World service, therefore, had taken on crucial meaning for A.A.’s future. If these vital agencies were to collapse or bog down, our unity within and the carrying of our message to innumerable alcoholics without, would suffer serious and perhaps irreparable damage. Under all conditions and at any sacrifice, we would have to sustain those services and the flow of life blood that they were pumping into the world arteries of our Fellowship. Among the A.A. groups it had been proven that we could survive

AA GRAPEVINE

The International Journal of Alcoholics Anonymous



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



Grapevine Online Exclusive

Back to the surface

Feelings and events may take her down, but she now has the tools to come right back up

All my life I remember having that feeling of a constant undertow in my soul. I felt it all the time. Sometimes playing music would quell it. Sometimes reading would distract me from it. Sometimes going for a bike ride or a long walk would push it down for a while. But it always came back. It felt normal to me to have that feeling in my gut. When I was about 14 years old, I discovered that when I drank, though that undertow didn't completely disappear, I just didn't feel it. Of course, it always came back once I sobered up. But I knew exactly how to fix that: I drank.

For more than 27 years, I drank when I was happy, sad, mad or glad. Eventually, it took more and more effort and alcohol to put wet blankets on the fires that drinking had started in my life. When I was 39, I entered the rooms of AA. I was completely bankrupt on the inside. The noise in my head was deafening. It was as if someone had stuck me in a crate and pumped in music, laughing, talking, swearing and yelling at the highest volumes possible. I truly thought I would catch fire and explode at any minute, but as much as I wanted to, I did not drink.

When I was about nine months sober, my then 14-year-old daughter attempted suicide for the first time. There aren't enough words to describe the emotional devastation that caused. It was almost too much to bear. I remember driving to the hospital behind the ambulance, crying and saying the Serenity Prayer and blaming myself for being such a horrible mother. My alcoholism told me that a drink would make me feel better. But

then I remembered my sponsor's words: "We are sick people trying to get well, not bad people trying to get good." Though I was devastated, my program kicked in and my HP granted me the strength to reach out to the Fellowship. I made phone calls, I wrote about it, I shared about it in meetings, and I worked very closely with my sponsor. More importantly, I did not drink.

Over the next two years, my daughter's mental illness took her to even darker places. There were at least five more serious self-harm/suicide incidents that resulted in as many involuntary commitments to psychiatric hospitals. The emotional upheaval for my family and myself was nothing like I'd ever experienced. Before I got sober, my natural instinct during times like these was to drink, to numb, to escape, to run, because I was afraid to feel my feelings. Even though I was grateful to be sober, I had a lot of shame for being an alcoholic and for feeling as though I failed this human being I had created. My guilt overwhelmed me and threatened to diminish any glimmer of gratitude I had.

For months my head cried out for a drink but my soul cried out for recovery. However, my gratitude was not completely extinguished. Today, I call this glimmer of gratitude "hope." I stayed close to AA, joined the no-matter-what club and I did not drink.

It's been about 18 months since the last hospital stay for my daughter. However, that doesn't mean this will never happen again or that everything in my house is complete Zen. But I've made huge progress,

because I now have a way to cope with this life that I'm so maladjusted to. As a family, we got outside help, as the Big Book suggests.

I have to keep in the forefront of my mind that I'm an alcoholic. Today I know that the emotional and mental twists that alcoholism has grooved into my mind can only be repaired by our spiritual program. AA has given me an incredible ability to function as a human being when these times come. I pray, I cry, I feel, I process, I get busy, I call my sponsor, I attend meetings regularly and I share honestly. And most importantly, I do not drink, no matter what. The biggest lie my alcoholism has ever told me is, "Your life will be horrible forever and you will always feel that awful undertow."

In the beginning of my recovery, I was devastated and debilitated by even the tiniest of things. It would take months to recover from one emotional hangover. As soon as I got over one, another one would come. After working the Steps and learning how the Traditions work as puzzle pieces to a contented life with the world outside my head, my Higher Power has shown me exactly what's possible if I only continue on this path. I didn't believe my sponsor when she told me, "The sky is the limit." I thought that was the oddest thing I'd ever heard. But it's true. The world is a big wonderful place when we choose to see it that way.

-- -Crystal B.

USA

Group Contributions — December, 2016

Group	Month	Y to D	Group	Month	Y to D
6 O'Clock	\$150.00	\$150.00	Murray Street	\$0.00	\$75.81
A New Beginning (Woodville)	\$30.00	\$30.00	Mustard Seed	\$0.00	\$624.00
Anahuac	\$51.00	\$51.00	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	\$0.00	\$100.00
Cornerstone	\$0.00	\$200.00	Pecan Groves	\$0.00	\$0.00
Dam Group (Hwy. 225)	\$0.00	\$0.00	Pineywoods	\$15.00	\$100.00
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	\$50.00	\$50.00	Serenity	\$0.00	\$892.58
Fresh Start	\$0.00	\$213.00	St Francis	\$0.00	\$398.20
Friends of Bill (Port Author)	\$0.00	\$0.00	The Buck Stops Here	\$0.00	\$50.00
Jasper Noon	\$0.00	\$300.00	TLC	\$0.00	\$312.80
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	\$0.00	\$384.64	West End	\$0.00	\$100.00
Kountze Daylight	\$0.00	\$20.00	Winnie (Unconditional Love)	\$137.00	\$612.00
Lewis Drive	\$0.00	\$0.00	Way Out	\$20.00	\$20.00
Lufkin	\$0.00	\$0.00	Women's Gratitude Group	\$0.00	\$0.00
Lumberton Singleness of Purpose	\$0.00	\$275.00	Woodville	\$0.00	\$0.00
Mid County (Nederland)	\$0.00	\$40.00			
			Totals	\$273.00	\$5,129.03

**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

January 8, 2017 At 2:00 PM

West End Group

1235 Crockett, Beaumont, TX

Everyone is encouraged and welcome to attend.

going

Next 9th Dist. Intergroup Meeting

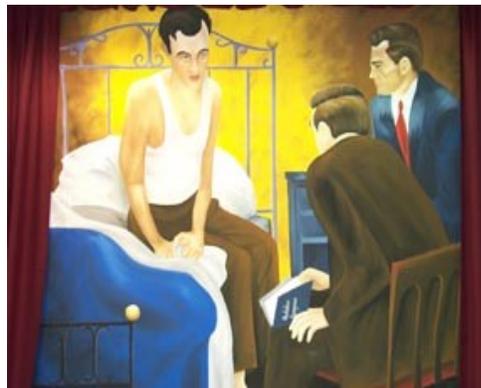
January 15, 2017 At 2:00 PM

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.



1st Promise

We are going to know
a new freedom and a
new happiness

1st Step Principle

Honesty

St. Francis Eating/Speaker Meeting Jan. 14, 2017

Wesley UMC, corner of Folsom & Major Drive

Fellowship: 6:00

Eat: 6:30

Speaker: 7:30

**Kathy M.
From Houston**

*Child Care
Provided*



55th Annual SETA Convention

January 20-22, 2017

The Spiritual Life is not A Theory...

Registration

Registration fees:
 AA/Al-Anon Early \$15
 On-site \$20
 Alateen/Child Free
 Coffee Tag \$5
 Sat. Dance Only \$12
 Dance included in registration fee

Early Registration:
 Open through Dec.31, 2016
 Onsite Registration
 Opens 2pm on Friday

Friday

8:00 p.m. AA Speaker- Josh A., Beaumont, TX.
 9:30 p.m. Ventriloquist/Comedian-Jack F., New York, NY

Saturday

9:00 a.m. AA Speaker- David B., Austin, TX.
 10:30 GSO Speaker- Yoli F., San Antonio, TX.
 1:30 p.m. Al-Anon Speaker-Mandy S., Austin, TX.
 3:00 p.m. CFC Speaker-TBD
 4:30 p.m. Spanish Speaker-Dorindo L., Alexandria, VA
 7:30 p.m. AA Speaker-Ginna M., Silsby, TX
 9:30 p.m. Dance – DJ Melanie

Sunday

11:00 a.m. AA Speaker-Sherry B., Austin, TX.

Hotel convention room rate \$99 per night/Hotel cut-off date December 29th 2016

Contact hotel be sure to mention the convention Phone 281-875-2222

Hotel: Houston Hilton North 12400 Greenspoint Drive Houston, TX. 77064

Note: Most associations like to hold conferences/conventions. In AA, a conference/convention is an important opportunity to share the AA experience in a broad way. There are many AA conferences held around the world. One of the most common misconceptions of these gatherings is that they are AA meetings, and since there are no dues or fees for AA membership; there should be no fee to attend these conferences. Conventions and conferences are special events, not regular meetings. They require months of planning, preparation, and money to present. Since most events are in hotels/convention centers, the hotel/convention center will require that the group purchase coffee and food. Other expenses include travel and lodging for conference for speakers, printing of flyers, programs and schedules, postage and supplies. A large event requires a substantial amount of money. Attendance at a convention/conference is voluntary, furthermore attending as part of a group is optional, but as responsible AA members we must "pay our own way!"

Full Name _____
 Home Group _____
 Full Name _____
 Home Group _____
 Address _____
 City/State/Zip _____

Badge Name _____
 AA Al-Anon Alateen
 Badge Name _____
 AA Al-Anon Alateen
 Phone _____
 E-mail _____

Quantity	Type	Price	Est. Cost
_____	AA / Early Registration	\$ 15.00	\$ _____
_____	Al-Anon / Early Registration	\$ 15.00	\$ _____
_____	Alateen / Child (Please Indicate Quantity)	FREE	
_____	Coffee Tag	\$ 5.00	\$ _____
_____	Saturday Dance Only	\$ 12.00	\$ _____
	Scholarship Donation		\$ _____
	TOTAL DUE		\$ _____

Alateens must have permission slips!
 Please indicate special needs in space provided below.
 Spanish translation will be provided

**Early Registration is Closed at this time.
 You will have to register on site.
 For Hotel Reservations call the Hotel Directly
 at 281-875-2222 .**