

# Step 9

# Stepping

## Step 9

**“Make direct amends to such people wherever possible except when to do so would injure them or others.”**

*GOOD judgement, a careful sense of timing, courage and prudence — these are the qualities we shall need when we take Step 9.*

*After we have made the list of people we had harmed, have reflected carefully upon each instance, and have tried to possess ourselves of the right attitude in which to proceed, we will see that the making of direct amends divides those we should approach into several classes. There will be those who ought to be dealt with just as soon as we become reasonably confident that we*

*can maintain our sobriety. There will be those to whom we can make only partial restitution, lest complete disclosures do them or others more harm than good. There will be other cases where action ought to be deferred, and still others in which by the very nature of the situation we shall never be able to make direct personal contact at all.*

*Most of us begin making certain kinds of direct amends from the day we join Alcoholics Anonymous. The moment we tell our families that we are really going to*

*try the program, the process has begun. In this area there are seldom any questions of timing or caution. We want to come in the door shouting the good news. After coming from our first meeting, or perhaps after we have finished reading the book “Alcoholics Anonymous,” we usually want to sit down with some member of the family and readily admit the damage we have done by our drinking.*

*Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions—Page 83-84*

## Tradition 9 Long Form

**“A.A., as such, ought never organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.”**

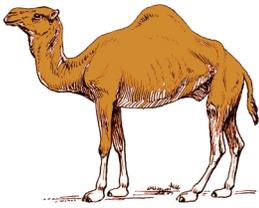
WHEN Tradition Nine was first written, it said that “Alcoholics Anonymous needs the least possible organization.” IN years since then, we changed our minds about that. Today, we are able to say with assurance that Alcoholics Anonymous — A.A. as a whole — should never be organized at all. Then, in seeming contradiction, we proceed to create special service boards and committees which in themselves are organized. How, then, can we have an unorganized movement which can and does create a service organization for itself? Scanning this puzzler, people say, “What do they mean, no organization?”

Well, let’s see. Did anyone ever hear of a nation, a church, a political party, even a benevolent association that had no membership rules? Did anyone ever hear of a society which couldn’t somehow discipline its members or enforce obedience to necessary rules and regulations? Doesn’t nearly every society on earth give authority to some of its members to impose obedience upon the rest and to punish or expel offenders? Therefore, every nation, in fact every form of society, has to be a government administered by human beings. Power to direct or govern is the essence of organization everywhere.

Yet, Alcoholics Anonymous is an exception. It does not conform to this pattern. Neither its General Service Conference, its Foundation Board\*, nor the humblest group committee can issue a single directive to an A.A. member and make it stick, let alone mete out any punishment. We’ve tried it lots of times, but utter failure is always the result

*Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions—Page 172-173*

*\* in 1954, the name of Alcoholic Foundation, Inc., was changed to the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous, Inc., and the Foundation office is now the General Service Office.*



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 IX

**Good service leaders, together with sound and appropriate methods of choosing them, are at all levels indispensable for our future functioning and safety. The primary world service leadership once exercised by the founders of A.A. must necessarily be assumed by the Trustees of the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous.**

*The AA Service Manual/ 12 Concepts for World Services—pg. 36 of the Concepts Section*

**No matter how carefully we design our service structure of principles and relationships, no matter how well we apportion authority and responsibility, the operating results of our structure can be no better than the personal performance of those who must man it and make it work. Good leadership cannot function well in a poorly designed structure. But weak leadership can hardly function at all, even in the best of structures. But once we have created a basically sound structure, that job is finished, except for occasional refinements.**

**With leadership we shall have a continuous problem. Good leadership can be here today and gone tomorrow. Furnishing our service structure with able and willing workers has to be a continuous activity. It is therefore a problem that in its very nature cannot be permanently solved. We must continuously find the right people for our many service tasks. Since our future effectiveness must thus depend upon ever-new generations of leaders, it seems desirable that we now proceed to define what a good service leader should be; that we carefully indicate in each level of service, especially in our Board of Trustees, what special skills will always be required; and that we review our present methods of finding and choosing that leadership.**

*Excerpts from The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Services—pg. 36 of the Concepts Section*



# AA GRAPEVINE

The International Journal of Alcoholics Anonymous



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

## Grapevine Online Exclusive

God willing, we may never again have to deal with drinking, but we do have to deal with sobriety every day.

The idea is not new. I first heard it a dozen years ago from a speaker who was then an old-timer in AA. But I've been giving it a lot of thought recently, because it is an important concept. I know it is not understood outside our Fellowship, and I suspect it is not too well recognized inside, either.

The old-timer said, "AA does not teach us how to handle our drinking; it teaches us how to handle sobriety."

He went on to explain: "AA doesn't teach us how to handle our drinking. Most alcoholics know, long before they come through the doors of their first meeting, that the way to handle their drinking is to quit. People have told them so. And almost every alcoholic I know has stopped drinking at one time or another – maybe dozens of times! – when he went on the wagon, or took a pledge, or perhaps when he was hospitalized or jailed. So it's no trick to stop drinking; the trick is to stay stopped.

"No, AA doesn't teach us

how to handle our drinking. It teaches us how to handle sobriety – which is what none of us could handle in the first place, and that's why we drank."

What a simple idea! But what a marvelous expression of the way AA works! It has so many advantages and clears up so much misunderstanding about our Society of recovered drunks.

First of all, it explains the need for a continuing program of recovery. One of the commonest questions we get from nonalcoholic friends is "You haven't had a drink in 'X' years, so why do you still have to go to meetings?" In my own case, it's true that I haven't had the slightest desire for a drink in many years. And the reason is that my continuing, regular attendance at AA meetings and my effort "to practice these principles" in all my affairs teach me how to live comfortably, productively, happily – without seeking these attributes in a bottle.

This concept also explains the puzzling and paradoxical fact that the halls of AA are crowded, not with shivering

### March 1975, "Learning to Handle Sobriety"

ing for a belt of booze, but with healthy, clear-eyed, smiling people. On Twelfth Step calls, I've had prospects ask, "I've stopped drinking, so why should I go to AA?"

I reply, "I have also stopped drinking – long ago – and so have other members of AA. We find it essential to attend meetings to improve ourselves, to improve our relations with other people, and to learn to practice a better way of life. That's the only way we can be sure we won't slip into drinking again."

Indeed, this concept of learning how to handle sobriety is useful in explaining the need for what we in AA often refer to as our "way of life." To the newcomer, as well as to the outsider, this phrase often sounds pompous or supercilious. But a new way of life is what we must find if we are to handle sobriety successfully.

Bob P. (CT)

*Group Contributions — August 2018 & Year To Date 2018*

Group	Month	Y to D	Group	Month	Y to D
6 O'Clock	\$0.00	\$0.00	Lumberton Singleness of Purpose	\$0.00	\$240.00
A New Beginning (Woodville)	\$0.00	\$0.00	Mid County (Nederland)	\$0.00	\$200.00
Anahuac	\$0.00	\$32.00	Murray Street	\$0.00	\$212.13
Bolivar	\$0.00	\$0.00	Mustard Seed	\$0.00	\$949.00
Bridge City	\$0.00	\$0.00	New Life	\$0.00	\$0.00
Buna	\$0.00	\$0.00	Newton	\$0.00	\$0.00
Cornerstone	\$0.00	\$10.00	Nueva Vida (Port Arthur)	\$0.00	\$0.00
Deweyville	\$0.00	\$0.00	<b>Orange</b>	<b>\$10.00</b>	<b>\$80.00</b>
Downtown	\$0.00	\$0.00	Pecan Groves	\$0.00	\$0.00
Fellowship	\$0.00	\$873.48	Pineywoods	\$0.00	\$45.00
Fresh Start	\$0.00	\$525.00	Primary Purpose	\$0.00	\$80.00
Friends of Bill (Port Author)	\$0.00	\$0.00	Serenity	\$0.00	\$221.36
Hope Group	\$0.00	\$219.00	St Francis	\$0.00	\$600.00
Jasper Noon	\$0.00	\$0.00	The Buck Stops Here	\$0.00	\$0.00
Jasper Serenity	\$0.00	\$0.00	<b>TLC</b>	<b>\$194.00</b>	<b>\$405.00</b>
Keep It Simple	\$0.00	\$0.00	Un Dia A La Vez	\$0.00	\$0.00
Kirbyville	\$0.00	\$98.00	Vidor	\$0.00	\$0.00
Kountze Daylight	\$0.00	\$0.00	West End	\$0.00	\$66.00
Lewis Drive	\$0.00	\$132.73	Winnie (Unconditional Love)	\$0.00	\$292.00
<b>Liberty</b>	<b>\$50.00</b>	<b>\$150.00</b>	Way Out	\$0.00	\$0.00
Lufkin	\$0.00	\$0.00			
			<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$254.00</b>	<b>\$5,297.97</b>

**We want to sincerely thank you for your contributions. Please address your gifts to:  
 Ninth District Intergroup Association — 4224 College St — Beaumont, TX 77707  
 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**

4224 College St  
 Beaumont, TX 77707

**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 30, 2018 At 2:00 PM**  
**West End Group**  
**1235 Crockett, Beaumont, TX**

Everyone is encouraged and welcome to attend.

**Next 9th Dist. Intergroup Meeting**  
**October 21, 2018 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.

### *From a Fellow Member:*

I tie a string round me each day and stand upon life's edge.  
I hand the free end of my string to GOD; Then I step off the edge.

I walk boldly by step by step; you see my day is full,  
And should I wander toward the wrong path, HE gives me a pull.

I shy from acts that would bring shame; yet I have to right to pride.  
I treat the world with kindness you see GOD'S standing by my side.

I seek his will for me each day; over all my petty schemes.  
Convinced He wants far more for me than all my greatest dreams.

Wayne M  
1/2004

**ATTENTION  
DATE HAS CHANGED TO  
NOVEMBER 10TH**



**District 90 Gratitude Dinner  
November 3, 2018**

Hosted by: St Francis / Co-Hosted by: Fellowship  
Westgate Baptist Church  
6220 Westgate Dr., Beaumont, TX 77706

**“Grateful for Blessings Received”**  
12&12 Page 95

5:00 pm Al-anon Speaker – Danae G. Beaumont, Tx  
6:30 pm Dinner begins  
7:30 pm Raffle  
8:00 pm AA Speaker – Danny B. Spring, Tx

*Gratitude*  
is not only  
the greatest of virtues,  
but the parent of all the others.  
- Cicero

Dinner Tickets \$10





**Happy Birthday To You!!!**

**Lumberton Singleness of Purpose  
Sunday, September 23, 2018  
Eat at 6—Meet at 7**

**Mid-County  
Saturday, September 22, 2018  
41st Anniversary  
\*\*\* SEE FLYER AT  
[aabeaumont.org](http://aabeaumont.org) (Events) \*\*\***

**Fellowship  
Friday, September 28, 2018  
Food and Fellowship—6:30 pm  
Meeting—8:00 pm**



**9th Step Principle  
Justice**

**9th Promise**

**Self-Seeking  
Will Slip Away.**

