

Step 2

“Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.”

The moment they read Step Two, most A.A. newcomers are confronted with a dilemma, sometimes a serious one. How often have we heard them cry out, “Look what you people have done to us! You have convinced us that we are alcoholics and that our lives are unmanageable. Having reduced us to a state of absolute helplessness, you now declare that none but a Higher Power can remove our obsession. Some of us *won't* believe in God, others can't, and still others who do believe that God exists have no faith whatever He will perform this miracle. Yes, you've got us over the bar-

rel, all right — but where do we go from here?”

Let's look first at the case of the one who says he won't believe — the belligerent one. He is in a state of mind which can be described only a savage. His whole philosophy of life, in which he so gloried, is threatened. It's bad enough, he thinks, to admit alcohol has him down for keeps. But now, still smarting from that admission, he is faced with something really impossible. How he does cherish the thought that man, risen so majestically from a single cell in the primordial ooze, is the spearhead of evolution and therefore

the only god that his universe knows! Must he renounce all this to save himself?

At this juncture, his A.A. sponsor usually laughs. This, the newcomer thinks, is just about the last straw. This is the beginning of the end. And so it is: the beginning of the end of his old life, and the beginning of his emergence into a new one. His sponsor probably says, “Take it easy. The hoop you have to jump through is a lot wider than you think. At least I've found it so.

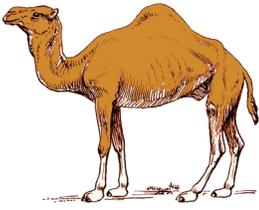
Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions

Tradition 2

“Four our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority — a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience.”

Where does A.A. get it's direction? Who runs it? This, too is a puzzler for every friend and newcomer. When told that our Society has no president having authority to govern it, no treasurer who can compel the payment of any dues, no board of directors who can cast an erring member into out darkness, when indeed no A.A. can give another a directive and enforce obedience, our friends gasp and exclaim, “This simply can't be. There must be an angle somewhere. “ These practical folk then read Tradition Two, and learn that the sole authority in A.A. is a loving God as He may express Himself in the group conscience. They dubiously ask an experienced A. A. member if this really works. The member, sane to all appearances, immediately answers, “Yes! it definitely does.” The friends mutter that this looks vague, nebulous, pretty naïve to them. Then they commence to watch us with speculative eyes, pick up a fragment of A.A. history, and soon have the solid facts.

Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions



I am responsible.
When anyone, any-
where, 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: 4224 College St Beaumont, TX 77707 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 II

When, in **1955**, the A.A. groups confirmed the permanent charter for their General Service Conference, they thereby delegated to the Conference complete authority for the active maintenance of our world services and thereby made the Conference — excepting for any change in the Twelve Traditions or in Article **12** of the Conference Charter — the actual voice and the effective conscience for our whole society.

The AA Service Manual/ 12 Concepts for World Services—pg. 8 of the Concepts Section

It is self-evident that the thousands of A.A. groups and the many thousands of A.A. members, scattered as they are all over the globe, cannot *of themselves* actually manage and conduct our manifold world services. The group conscience is out there among them, and so are the needed funds. The power of the groups and members to alter their world service structure and to criticize its operation is virtually supreme. They have all of the final responsibility and authority that there is. The operation is really theirs; they really own it. This has been true ever since the groups took over from the founders and old-timers at St. Louis in **1955**.

But an ultimate authority and responsibility in the A.A. groups for world services — if that is all there were to it — could not amount to anything. Nothing could be accomplished on that basis alone. In order to get effective action, the groups must delegate the actual operational authority to chosen service representatives who are fully empowered to speak and to act for them. The group conscience of A.A. could not be heard unless a properly chosen Conference were fully trusted to speak for it respecting most matters of world service. Hence the principle of amply delegated authority and responsibility to “trusted servants” must be implicit from the top to the bottom of our active structure of service. This is the clear implication of A.A.’s Tradition Two.

Excerpts from The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Services—pg. 8 of the Concepts Section

AA GRAPEVINE

The International Journal of Alcoholics Anonymous



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

Balancing act

On a cold, rainy day, a longtime member gets a powerful lesson about letting go

In mid-December, I was going out to lunch with some friends. It was a cold, nasty day with freezing rain all morning. I knew how bad the ice was, but I thought I was being careful. From my car to the entrance was only 10 steps. I went down after nine. I landed on my right hip. It was a hard hit. I was sure the hip was broken. It really hurt.

After doctors ordered X-ray was told that my hip was not broken, but there was a hairline fracture in my pelvis. No surgery was necessary, just complete rest for the right leg for six weeks. I felt very fortunate.

But what was I to do for the next six weeks? After 32 years of sobriety and AA, I knew what I had to do. I decided I would start six weeks of intense Third Step work. Why? Because when I hit the pavement, I got a hard lesson about who was in control. My fall exposed any thought that I was in control as a fiction. In one second, my whole life could change.

For me, the Third Step is a constant effort; it's a way of life. It reminds me that I need to start every day giving myself to God and recognizing that he is in control. My fall and my long time in recovery was a gift. I was pushed into a rich, deeper experience of God.

When bad things happen, we can turn them around with our attitude. If God is in control of my balance, I am in control of my attitude. We turn our life over to God in the Third Step. I cannot do a Third Step on Tuesday and think that this will last forever. I'm lucky if it lasts till noon. Every day, I must renew this action. Every morning, I can think about how I am giving my life to God today.

After my fall, it was clear. I had to sit in a convalescent home and give up my privacy. I had to do what I was told. This did not sit well with me. But this is where God wanted me. Give up on control, Jimmy.

So I decided to use the convalescent time to consider who I am in life. I had been telling people that I am getting old. When my hip hit the ground, I saw that I am not just *getting* old—I have arrived.

So, how do I give myself to God in my old age? For one thing, I should not have been in a parking lot during a freezing rain. I cannot keep living as I have been living. I am an 82-year-old priest who does not want to retire. As a pastor, I am having too much fun. So, what do I have to change? 1) Stay out of bad weather; 2) no driving at night or on long trips; 3) eat sensibly, three meals a day (though I hate breakfast); and 4) open myself to future changes, which include no driving and life in an assisted-living home.

We all know people who've made these changes and are still happy, people who seem to be happy under any circumstances. I want to be one of them. The Third Step can get me there.

When I came to AA, I knew I had to stop drinking. I was willing to try. I figured drinking only occupied about 10 percent of my life. The Third Step, for me, meant that I had to turn that 10 percent of my life over to God. Then, in time, I realized that God didn't want 10 percent; he wanted my whole life, the whole thing. I told my sponsor that I had not signed up for that. "Yes, you did," my sponsor said. "You just did not know it."

Letting go became a whole way of life. The Third Step dares me to give up control and to give up thinking about it all the time. Then, with that done, to give up ego and the desire to be in control, along with lustful thoughts, pride and obsession to be always right. The list goes on and on.

Hitting the pavement and breaking a bone brought me to new territory. God, through the Third Step, is telling me I have to let go of my previous lifestyle and accept old age. I should not have been walking across a parking lot during the freezing rain. I should have been home that day looking out the window. I cannot keep doing what I've always been accustomed to doing. I am old and that means a lot of letting go.

I want to enter into old age intentionally. I see many people just let old age fall on their heads and then they think, Why is this happening to me? I know that when I really get into the depths of the Third Step, I will see old age as a gift.

So, breaking a hip is a gift? When I hit the pavement, I certainly didn't think so. But I began to see that this was a gift pushing me into old age, accepting its limitations. If I am giving my life to God, I need to listen to what he's trying to tell me.

"Hey, Jimmy, change your ways," I imagine him saying. "You're not 45 anymore. The life you have now is still a gift, even with its limitations." Everything depends on attitude. Letting go is not only a spiritual effort, it is my road to happiness.

My body is different now. But I am different as well. I still do not want to retire. I still have something to give to my congregation. In my preaching, I will sneak in a bit of Step Three. They know that my spirituality is basically the Twelve Steps, with a tinge of Catholicism. I love my work. I hope to have four or five more years in me—if I stay off the ice!

James O.

Parchment, Michigan

From the February 2019 magazine.

Group Contributions — January 2019

Group	Month	Y to D	Group	Month	Y to D
6 O'Clock	\$0.00	\$0.00	Lumberton Singleness of Purpose	\$0.00	\$0.00
A New Beginning (Woodville)	\$0.00	\$0.00	Mid County (Nederland)	\$0.00	\$0.00
Anahuac	\$0.00	\$0.00	Murray Street	\$0.00	\$0.00
Bolivar	\$0.00	\$0.00	Mustard Seed	\$0.00	\$0.00
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	\$0.00	Nueva Vida (Port Arthur)	\$0.00	\$0.00
Deweyville	\$0.00	\$0.00	Orange	\$10.00	\$10.00
Downtown	\$0.00	\$0.00	Pecan Groves	\$0.00	\$0.00
Fellowship	\$400.00	\$400.00	Pineywoods	\$0.00	\$0.00
Fresh Start	\$50.00	\$50.00	Pin Oak Group	\$0.00	\$0.00
Friends of Bill (Port Author)	\$0.00	\$0.00	Primary Purpose	\$0.00	\$0.00
Hope Group	\$0.00	\$0.00	Serenity	\$0.00	\$0.00
Jasper Noon	\$200.00	\$200.00	St Francis	\$480.97	\$480.97
Jasper Serenity	\$0.00	\$0.00	The Buck Stops Here	\$0.00	\$0.00
Keep It Simple	\$0.00	\$0.00	TLC	\$0.00	\$0.00
Kirbyville	\$0.00	\$0.00	Un Dia A La Vez	\$0.00	\$0.00
Kountze Daylight	\$0.00	\$0.00	Vidor	\$0.00	\$0.00
Lewis Drive	\$0.00	\$0.00	West End	\$0.00	\$0.00
Liberty	\$0.00	\$0.00	Winnie (Unconditional Love)	\$0.00	\$0.00
Lufkin	\$0.00	\$0.00	Way Out	\$0.00	\$0.00
			Totals	\$1,140.97	\$1,140.97

**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 GSR 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.

Announcements

Next District 90 GSR Meeting

March 3, 2019 At 2:00 PM

West End Group

1235 Crockett, Beaumont, TX

Everyone is encouraged and welcome to attend.

Next 9th Dist. Intergroup Meeting

April 28, 2019 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.

**MAIL, FAX OR EMAIL YOUR ANNOUNCEMENTS,
GROUP NEWS AND OTHER SUBMISSIONS TO THE
NINTH DISTRICT INTERGROUP**

73rd Annual TexAs State Convention

June 7-8-9, 2019 - Houston, TX

"We absolutely insist on enjoying life." -p132, Alcoholics Anonymous

AA Speakers

James H., Corpus Christi, TX
 Amalia C., Newington, CT
 Karl M., Covina, CA
 Diana M., W Largo, FL
 GSO., New York, NY

Al-Anon/Alateen

Al-Anon Speaker - TBA
 Alateen Speaker - TBA



Website

Please make hotel reservations directly with:

Westin Galleria Hotel

5060 West Alabama
 Houston, TX 77056
 (713) 960-8100 or (800) 937-8461

\$129 Room Rates

Mention 2019 TX State Convention

Cut-off for \$129 room rate is May 20, 2019

<https://book.passkey.com/e/49628525>

Convention Attractions

- 1st Timer Contest
- Hospitality Rooms
- Al-Anon Luncheon & Speaker
- Marathon Meetings
- Archives Room
- Saturday Night Dance
- Fellowship, Food, and FUN!!!
- Spanish Translation Provided

PRE-REGISTRATION DEADLINE FOR AL-ANON LUNCHEON AND CONVENTION: MAY 20, 2019

Onsite Registration Fee is \$35 per person at the door.

Full name: _____

Home Group: _____

Full name: _____

Home Group: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Use this form and send payment to:
 Texas State Convention
 PO Box 10784, Houston TX 77206

Badge name: _____
 AA Al-Anon Alateen

Badge name: _____
 AA Al-Anon Alateen

City/State/Zip: _____

Email: _____

Register

# _____ AA/Al-Anon @ \$30 before May 20	\$ _____	<p><u>Alateens must have signed permission forms!</u></p> <p>Please indicate any special needs on pre-registration form. Spanish translation will be provided.</p>
# _____ Al-Anon Lunch @ \$28 before May 20	\$ _____	
# _____ Alateen @ \$5 before May 20	\$ _____	
# _____ Saturday Dance only @ \$10	\$ _____	
Scholarship donation	\$ _____	
TOTAL DUE	\$ _____	<p>Special needs: _____</p> <p>Email address: _____</p>

Email: 2019txstate@gmail.com

Website: txaaconvention.org

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

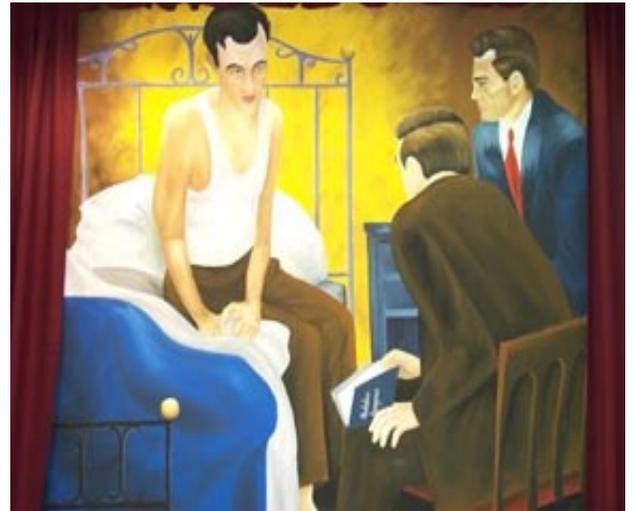


FELLOWSHIP GROUP

BIRTHDAY NIGHT WILL BE
FRIDAY FEBRUARY 22ND AT 8:00PM
FOOD AND FELLOWSHIP AT 6:30PM

FELLOWSHIP GROUP HAS A SPEAKER
NIGHT THE 2ND
FRIDAY OF EVERY MONTH AT 8:00PM

BIRTHDAYS IN DAYS



2nd Step Principle

Hope

2nd Promise

We will not regret the
past nor wish to close
the door on it.

