

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 as 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
Pages 25,26

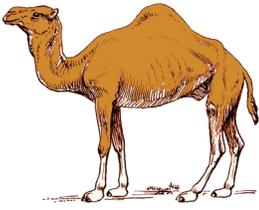
Tradition 2

“For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority — a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servant's they do not govern”

Where does A.A. get its 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 outer 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

Page 132



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.

Inside this issue:

Step 2—Tradition 2	1
Concept 2	2
Stories (Grapevine)	3
Contributions	4
District	5
AA Promises	6
2nd Promise, Principle	7

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



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FEBRUARY 2021 | SPONSORSHIP

Just Following Suggestions

BY: DON S. | MOUNTAIN CITY

Someone wrecked his new car, and boy did they need a good cussing out! Luckily, his sponsor had a better idea

At six months sober, I had just finished cleaning and waxing my newly purchased but used Maverick. That car was the answer to my prayer, which went: “God, please, show me how I’m going to commute to work now that I have landed my first real job in sobriety.”

The Maverick looked really good as I glanced out at it through my bedroom window. Except, right at that exact moment a beautiful light blue Mercedes backed into its rear left fender!

Immediately, my temper spiked and I felt outrage. But then I remembered (miraculously) that my sponsor, Jay, had told me to call him anytime my feelings started to take control. “Don, call me before you act on a strong emotion,” he would say.

So I did. I called Jay immediately and blurted, “Some woman just backed into my car after I spent all afternoon clean-

ing and waxing it and I’m going down there to make sure she knows that I know what she did!”

“No,” Jay said. “Write your name and phone number on a piece of paper and take it to her. Tell her that you can’t talk right now, but give her your contact information and tell her to please call you later. Then, you turn around and leave.”

“What?” I sputtered in response. “That doesn’t make any sense. She was in the wrong and she needs a good cussing out.”

“Just do it, Don,” he said. “We’ll talk about it later.” Reluctantly, I did just as he said, though his advice made no sense to me at all.

That evening he and I spoke after our AA meeting. “Jay, help me understand what you told me to do today,” I asked.

“Don, you called me with a problem, and I offered a way to behave that is consistent with the principles we practice in AA,” Jay explained. “What you did was humble, hopeful and faithful and there is no requirement for you to understand.”

I thought about that, and then replied, “I’m committed to what you told me to do because it is different than the life I had before—even though it makes no sense to me at all.”

Returning home after the meeting, I found a message on my answering machine from a Mr. Leigh who said he was the husband of the woman who damaged my car earlier that day. He left his phone number and said, “We will do whatever is needed to make this right if you just call me.”

The next day I called and was invited to their house. Mr. and Mrs. Leigh welcomed me warmly and apologized for my inconvenience. They gave me a

check for \$200, and Mr. Leigh gave me the address of the car repair shop he owned. He said he had the best body repairmen in town who would “get right on” fixing the damage to my car.

After I left their house, I felt like I’d been treated so well by them. I had always been consistently disappointed by the way people treated me. Now, it felt good to be treated well.

A year later, still following my sponsor’s suggestions that “made no sense,” I entered a classroom for the first time in 25 years. I was enrolled in an 8:00 a.m. writing class at our community college. As I watched all the other students arrive and find seats, I felt more and more conspicuous. I was 42 years old and none of the other students were older than 23 or 24.

Right then the professor, Mrs. Edna Leigh, walked in, looked at everyone and walked directly over to my desk. “I saw your name on the list of students” she said. “And hoped you were the Don I knew who had once given me his name and number...and here you are. Thank you for being here and helping me be more comfortable with a room full of youngsters. Every semester I feel too old to be here.”

That woman taught the first class on my return to school and was the most encouraging person in my academic pursuits for the next 10 years. She became my very good friend.

As I continued following my sponsor’s suggestions, I earned a degree in social work while working as a paraprofessional in the field of substance abuse recovery. Subsequently, I earned a master’s degree in rehabilitation counseling.

What Jay told me to do had finally made sense.

Group Contributions — January 2021

Group	Month	Y to D	Group	Month	Y to D
6 O'Clock	\$0.00	\$0.00	Lumberton SOP	\$0.00	\$0.00
A New Beginning	\$0.00	\$0.00	Mid County	\$0.00	\$0.00
Any Lengths	\$0.00	\$0.00	Murray Street	\$0.00	\$0.00
Anahuac	\$0.00	\$0.00	Mustard Seed	\$0.00	\$0.00
Bolivar	\$0.00	\$0.00	New Life	\$0.00	\$0.00
Bridge City	\$0.00	\$0.00	Newton	\$0.00	\$0.00
Buna	\$0.00	\$0.00	Nueva Vida (Port Arthur)	\$0.00	\$0.00
Cornerstone	\$0.00	\$0.00	Orange	\$0.00	\$0.00
Deweyville	\$0.00	\$0.00	Pecan Groves	\$0.00	\$0.00
Downtown	\$0.00	\$0.00	Pineywoods	\$0.00	\$0.00
Fellowship	\$0.00	\$0.00	Personal Stories Group	\$0.00	\$0.00
Fresh Start	\$0.00	\$0.00	Port Arthur	\$0.00	\$0.00
Friends of Bill	\$0.00	\$0.00	Primary Purpose	\$0.00	\$0.00
Hope Group	\$0.00	\$0.00	Serenity	\$400.00	\$400.00
Jasper Noon	\$0.00	\$0.00	St Francis	\$0.00	\$0.00
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	Unconditional Love	\$0.00	\$0.00
Lifeline	\$0.00	\$0.00	Way Out	\$0.00	\$0.00
Lufkin	\$0.00	\$0.00	Totals	\$400.00	\$400.00

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

Would You Be On Our 12 Step List?

Addresses AA Entities

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

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. Come to the next District 90 GSR Meeting

Announcements

Next District 90 GSR Meeting

March 7, 2021 At 2:00 PM

West End Group

1235 Crockett, Beaumont, TX

Everyone is encouraged and welcome to attend.

Next 9th Dist. Intergroup Meeting

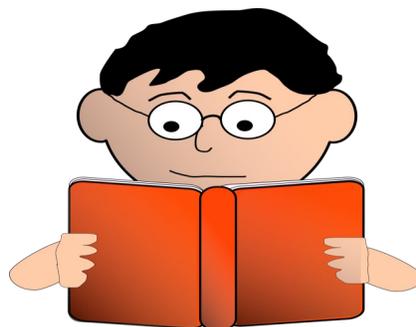
April 18, 2021 At 2:00 PM

West End Group

1235 Crockett, Beaumont, TX

Everyone is encouraged and welcome to attend.

**MAIL RECIPIENT PLEASE MAKE THIS MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
OF STEPPING STONES AVAILABLE TO YOUR GROUP**



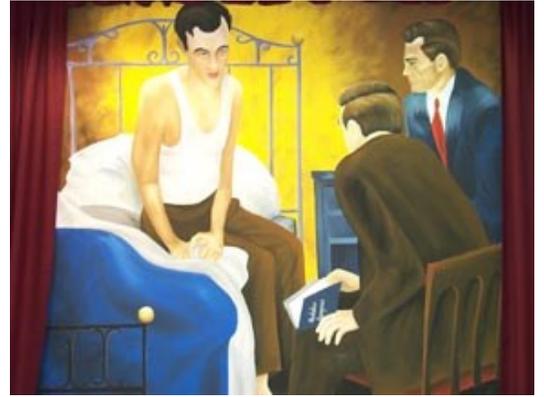
THE PROMISES

If we are painstaking about this phase of our development, we will be amazed before we are half way through.

We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness. We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it. We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace. No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others. That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear. We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows. Self-seeking will slip away. Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change. Fear of people and of economic insecurity will leave us. We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us. We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.

Are these extravagant promises? ***We think not.***

They are being fulfilled among us—sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly. They will always materialize if we work for them.



Intergroup would like to congratulate everyone who is celebrating a birthday in February !!!



2nd Step Principle

Hope

2nd Promise

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



We are not a glum lot.