

Step 4

“Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.”

Creation gave us instincts for a purpose. Without them we wouldn't be complete human beings. If men and women didn't exert themselves to be secure in their persons, made no effort to harvest food or construct shelter, there would be no survival. If they didn't reproduce, the earth wouldn't be populated. If there were no social instinct, if men cared nothing for the society of one another, there would be no so-

ciety, So these desires — for the sex relation, for material and emotional security ,and for companionship — are perfectly necessary and right, and surely God-given.

Yet these instincts, so necessary for our existence, often far exceed their proper functions. Powerfully, blindly, many times subtly, they drive us, dominate us, and insist upon ruling our lives. Our desires for sex, for material and emotional

security, and for an important place in society often tyrannize us. When thus out of joint, man's natural desires cause him great trouble, practically all the trouble there is. No human being, however good, is exempt from these troubles. Nearly every serious emotional problem can be seen as a case of misdirected instinct.

Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions—Page 42

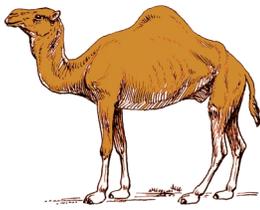
Tradition 4

“With respect to its own affairs, each A.A. group should be responsible to no other authority than its own conscience. But when its plans concern the welfare of neighboring groups also, those groups ought to be consulted. And no group, regional committee, or individual should ever take any action that might greatly affect A.A. as a whole without conferring with the trustees of the General Service Board. On such issues our common welfare is paramount..”

AUTONOMY is a ten-dollar word. But in relation to us, it means very simply that every A.A. group can manage its affairs exactly as it pleases, except when A.A. as a whole is threatened. Comes now the same question raised in Tradition One. Isn't such liberty foolishly dangerous?

Over the years, every conceivable deviation from our Twelve Steps and Traditions has been tried. That was sure to be, since we are so largely a band of ego-driven individualists. Children of chaos, we have defiantly played with every brand of fire, only to emerge unharmed and, we think, wiser. These very deviations created a vast process of trial and error which, under the grace of God, has brought us to where we stand today.

Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions—Page 146



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: 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 IV

Throughout our Conference structure, we ought to maintain at all responsible levels a traditional “Right of Participation,” taking care that each classification or group of our world servants shall be allowed a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge..”

The AA Service Manual/ 12 Concepts for World Services—pg. 15 of the Concepts Section

The principle of “Participation” has been carefully built into our Conference structure. The Conference Charter specifically provides that the Trustees, the Directors of our service corporations, (A.A. World Services, Inc. and The A.A. Grapevine, Inc.) together with their respective executive staffs, shall always be voting members of the General Service Conference itself.

Exactly the same concept is borne in mind when our General Service Board elects the Directors of its wholly-owned active service corporations, A.A. World Services, Inc. and The A.A. Grapevine, Inc. If it wished, the General Service Board could elect none but its own Trustees to these corporate directorships. But a powerful tradition has grown up to the effect that this never ought to be done.

For example, A.A. World Services, Inc. (which also includes the A.A. Publishing division) currently has seven directors, only two of whom are Trustees. The other five non-Trustee. Directors comprise three volunteers, both expert in office management and publishing, and two directors who are paid staff members: the general manager and his assistant. The general manager is traditionally the president of A.A. World Services, Inc. and his assistant is a vice president. For communication linkage, the editor or a staff member of the Grapevine or his nominee is invited to attend A.A. World Services, Inc. meetings.

Therefore the active management of A.A. World Services, Inc. and its publishing division is composed of Trustees whose mission is to see that these projects are properly managed; of volunteer experts who contribute their advice and professional experience; and of two paid office executives who are charged with getting most of the work done. It will be seen that each member of every classification, is a director, and so has a legal vote; that each corporate officer bears a title which, both practically and legally, denotes what his (or her) actual status and responsibility is.

Excerpts from The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Services—pg. 15 of the Concepts Section

AA GRAPEVINE

The International Journal of Alcoholics Anonymous



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



APRIL 2021 | FUN IN SOBRIETY

A Gentle Hand

BY: KURT K. | LOCKPORT, N.Y.

A member shares a little advice he got long ago that just might have saved his life

I came to AA in 1982. I was young and didn't know what I didn't know. I was headstrong and thought I knew more than those who came before me, especially when it came to problems other than alcohol. I didn't care much about the Traditions at that point in my recovery. I had the idea I'd outlive those oldtimers and then we would do things my way in AA.

When I introduced myself at meetings back then, I would say, "I'm Kurt and I'm a cross-addicted alcoholic, or I'm a poly addict."

I heard all the jokes people made at my expense about being addicted to "girls named Polly" and addicted to "crosses." I refused to listen to what they were really trying to tell me or to give in to the pressure to conform. I thought I was such a rebel and I loved flaunting my uniqueness. I could have very well ended up "terminally unique," as the saying goes.

Then came the night that a man named Don C. came up and put his hand on my back. Don was a small man who always had a cigar in his hand. He always seemed to have a smile and a gentle way about himself.

Because of Don's small stature, in World War II he served as a gunner in the ball turret of a B-17 Flying Fortress bomber. This was the most dangerous job on that very dangerous plane. Those fellows in the ball turrets were the primary targets of enemy fighters because those gunners were their greatest threat.

Don had no fear or hesitation about sharing his concerns with a scruffy-looking, 250-pound, 17-year-old know-it-all who stood all of five feet, 11 inches.

His hand on my back stopped me dead in my tracks. Don very gently said to me, "You can call yourself anything you want here in the rooms and we can't really stop you. But one thing you should consider is that each time you do that, you distance yourself from those around you." He added, "Not a physical separation, but an emotional one. You're making yourself different from your fellows. The problem with this is that there will come a day when you will need us. And if you continue to distance yourself you'll create a chasm that'll be impossible for either of us to reach across. And that may cost you your sobriety and maybe even your life."

Don didn't yell at me or sneer at me or tell me about how I was being disrespectful to the Traditions or those who came before me. With love, he showed me what the personal consequences

of my behavior might be.

They say there are two ways to move someone forward in AA. One is with a good swift kick in the pants and the other is with a pat on the back. I have needed both in my recovery, but that night his gentle hand on my back changed my life.

This issue I'm writing about was really settled back in a Grapevine article published in February 1958 and written by our cofounder Bill W. The article later was developed into an AA brochure called "Problems Other Than Alcohol." It's well worth the read. We each must protect AA's primary purpose and Traditions so that AA will be here for generations to come. My home group has even incorporated part of the article in our opening readings.

"Sobriety—freedom from alcohol—through the teaching and practice of the Twelve Steps is the sole purpose of an AA group. Groups have repeatedly tried other activities, and they have always failed. It has also been learned that there is no possible way to make non-alcoholics into AA members. We have to confine our membership to alcoholics, and we have to confine our AA groups to a single purpose. If we don't stick to these principles, we shall almost surely collapse. And if we collapse, we cannot help anyone."

From that day when Don placed his hand on my back until this one, I have only introduced myself as Kurt, an alcoholic.

Group Contributions — March 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	\$250.00	Murray Street	\$0.00	\$0.00
Anahuac	\$0.00	\$0.00	Mustard Seed	\$0.00	\$462.00
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	\$40.00	\$80.00
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	\$50.00	\$50.00	Port Arthur	\$0.00	\$0.00
Friends of Bill	\$0.00	\$0.00	Primary Purpose	\$0.00	\$0.00
Hope Group	\$0.00	\$702.46	Serenity	\$0.00	\$400.00
Jasper Noon	\$0.00	\$0.00	St Francis	\$400.00	\$400.00
Jasper Serenity	\$0.00	\$0.00	The Buck Stops Here	\$0.00	\$0.00
Keep It Simple	\$0.00	\$0.00	TLC	\$0.00	\$223.20
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	\$100.00	\$100.00
Liberty	\$0.00	\$50.00	Unconditional Love	\$0.00	\$0.00
Lifeline	\$0.00	\$0.00	Way Out	\$0.00	\$0.00
Lufkin	\$0.00	\$0.00	Totals	\$590.00	\$2,717.66

**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?

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. Come to the next GSR meeting

Announcements

Next District 90 GSR Meeting

May 2, 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**



74^{1/2} ANNUAL
TEXAS STATE CONVENTION
 ★ JUNE 11-13, 2021 ★ FORT WORTH, TX ★
A VISION FOR YOU

Register online at txaconvention.org through May 28th

HOTEL INFO

Hilton Fort Worth
 815 Main Street
 Fort Worth, Texas 76102

Rates from \$139 available until
 May 13, 2020. Request rooms for
 "Texas State Convention."

Call (817) 870-2100

Book online: txaconvention.org

REGISTER

FULL NAME _____

- AA Al-Anon Convention First-timer
 Alateen Special Needs

NAME on BADGE _____

HOME GROUP _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____

ZIP CODE _____

EMAIL _____

PHONE _____

QTY	SUBTOTAL
_____ @ \$30 = \$ _____	Pre-registration
_____ @ \$24 = \$ _____	Al-Anon luncheon*
_____ @ \$35 = \$ _____	Banquet dinner*
	\$ _____ Scholarship donation
	\$ _____ Total

***AA Banquet and Al-Anon luncheon seating is very limited, please purchase early.**

Please include attendee badge information for each registration, luncheon or banquet dinner purchased. Badges required for all functions; Spanish Translation, ASL interpreter, archives, speaker CD's available; all meetings are non-smoking, hospitality rooms closed during all speaker meetings.

Early registration closed after May 28th; on-site registration \$35.

SCHEDULE

FRIDAY JUNE 11:

- 2:00 pm** Registration Opens
- 5:00 pm** Hospitality Opens
- 6:00 pm** Old-Timers Panel
- 8:00 pm** AA Speaker
Amy D., Louisville, KY
- 9:30 pm** Young People's Meeting

SATURDAY JUNE 12:

- 9:00 am** Area Delegates Report
- 10:00 am** GSO Speaker
Rick W., New York, NY
- 11:00 am** Alateen Speakers Emily P. & Noah L., Fort Worth, TX
- 11:00 am** Al-Anon Luncheon
- 1:00 pm** Al-Anon Speaker
Larcine G., Hawthorn, CA
- 2:30 pm** AA Speaker
Victor V., Springdale, AR
- 4:00 pm** Corrections Panel
- 4:00 pm** Alateen Discussion Meeting
- 6:30 pm** Banquet Dinner
- 8:00 pm** AA Speaker
Beth H., Cary, NC
- 9:45 pm** Karaoke & Dance

SUNDAY JUNE 13:

- 8:30 am** AA History
Dano B., Fort Worth, TX
- 10:00 am** AA Speaker
Adam T., Santa Monica, CA

**Program subject to change*

Make checks payable to:
 Texas State Convention 2020
 PO Box 122794
 Fort Worth, TX 76121

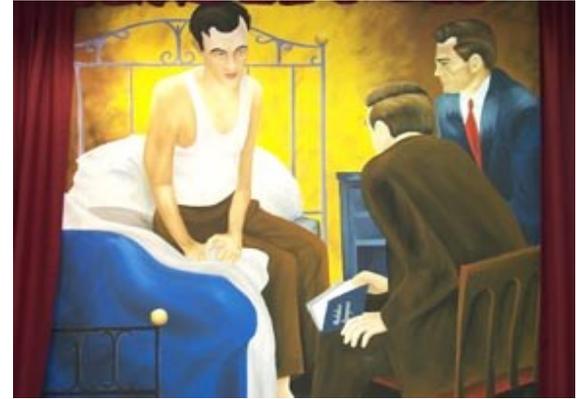
Pre-registered attendees will have their badges, luncheon tickets, banquet tickets & programs waiting at the registration table.

7th Tradition Statement: One of the most common misconceptions of these gatherings is that they are AA meetings, and that since "There are no dues or fees for AA membership," there should be no fees to attend. Conventions are special events, not regular meetings. They require months of planning and preparation and money to present. This convention is self-supporting. The cost of the convention is paid through registration fees, and as responsible AA members we must pay our own way.

***If you have a paid registration for the TSC in 2020 you are already registered for the 2021 Convention.**



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



4th Step Principle

Courage

4th Promise

No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others.



We are not a glum lot.