

## Step 8

**“Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.”**

*“Steps Eight and Nine are concerned with personal relations. First, we take a look backward and try to discover where we have been at fault; next we make a vigorous attempt to repair the damage we have done; and third, having thus cleaned away the debris of the past, we consider how, with our newfound knowledge of ourselves, we may develop the best possible relations with every human being we know.*

*This is a very large order. It is a task which we may perform with increasing skill, but never really finish. Learning how to live in the greatest peace, partnership, and*

*brotherhood with all men and women, of whatever description, is a moving and fascinating adventure. Every A.A. has found that he can make little headway in this new adventure of living until he first backtracks and really makes an accurate and unsparing survey of the human wreckage he has left in his wake. To a degree, he has already done this when taking moral inventory, but now the time has come when he ought to redouble his efforts to see how many people he has hurt, and in what ways. This reopening of emotional wounds, some old, some perhaps forgotten, and some still painfully*

*fester, will at first look like a purposeless and pointless piece of surgery. But if a willing start is made, then the great advantages of doing this will so quickly reveal themselves that the pain will be lessened as one obstacle after another melts away.*

*These obstacles, however, are very real. The first, and one of the most difficult, has to do with forgiveness. The moment we ponder a twisted or broken relationship with another person, our emotions go on the defensive.”*

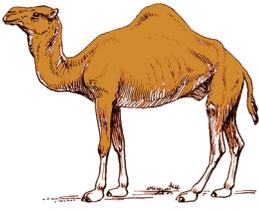
*Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions—Page 77-78*

## Tradition 8 Long Form

**“Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever non-professional. We define professionalism as the occupation of counseling alcoholics for fees or hire. But we may employ alcoholics where they are going to perform those services for which we might otherwise have to engage nonalcoholics. Such special services may be well recompensed. But our usual A.A. Twelfth Step work is never to be paid for.”**

*“ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS will never have a professional class. We have gained some understanding of the ancient words, “Freely ye have received, freely give.” we have discovered that at the point of professionalism, money and spirituality do not mix. Almost no recovery from alcoholism has ever been brought about by the world’s best professionals, whether medical or religious. We do not decry professionalism in other fields, but we accept the sober fact that it does not work for us. Every time we have tried to professionalize our Twelfth Step, the result has been exactly the same: Our single purpose has been defeated.*

*Alcoholics simply will not listen to a paid twelfth-stepper. Almost from the beginning, we have been positive that face-to-face work with the alcoholic who suffers could be based only on the desire to help and be helped. When an A.A. talks for money, whether at a meeting or to a single newcomer, it can have a very bad effect on him, too. The money motive compromised him and everything he says and does for his prospect. This has always been so obvious that only a very few A.A.’s have ever worked the Twelfth Step for a fee.”*



**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 Street, 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 VIII

**“The Trustees of the General Service Board act in two primary capacities: (a) With respect to the larger matters of over-all policy and finance, they are the principal planners and administrators. They and their primary committees directly manage these affairs. (b) But with respect to our separately incorporated and constantly active services, the relation of the Trustees is mainly that of full stock ownership and of custodial oversight which they exercise through their ability to elect all directors of these entities.”**

*The AA Service Manual/ 12 Concepts for World Services—pg. 31 of the Concepts Section*

“Since our Trustees bear the primary responsibility for the good conduct of all our world service affairs, this discussion deals with the basic concepts and methods by which they can best discharge their heavy obligations. Long experience has not proved that our Board as a whole must devote itself almost exclusively to the larger and more serious questions of policy, finance, group relations, public relations and leadership that constantly confront it. In *these more critical matters*, the Board must of course function with great care and deliberation. Here the Board is expected skillfully to *plan, manage, and execute*.

It follows, therefore, that the close attention of the Board to such larger problems must not be subject to constant distraction and interference. Our Trustees, as a body, cannot be burdened with a mass of lesser matters; they must not concern themselves with the endless questions and difficulties which arise daily, weekly and monthly in the routine conduct of the World Service Office and of our publishing enterprises. In these areas the Board cannot possibly manage and conduct in detail; it must delegate its executive function.

Here the Board’s attitude has to be that of custodial oversight; it cannot be the executive. Hence the Trustees are the guarantors of the good management of A.A. World Services, Inc. and the A.A. Grapevine, Inc. They discharge their custodial obligation by electing the directors of these services, a part of whom must always be Trustees.”

*Excerpts from The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Services—pg. 31 of the Concepts Section*

# AA GRAPEVINE

The International Journal of Alcoholics Anonymous



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

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**AUGUST 2021 | SENIORS IN AA**

Amateurs Anonymous

BY: W.H. | NEW YORK, N.Y.

*A member learns the importance of not being an expert on everything—not even AA. He's just an alcoholic*

What dismays me about my early days in Alcoholics Anonymous is the extent of intellectual arrogance and grandiosity that I brought with me.—defects that were quickly enlisted in what was to become an ongoing tournament: me vs. the Eighth Tradition.

The word “nonprofessional,” in AA parlance, means that I ought to act in a way that neither affirms nor implies that I am something other than a recovering alkie in a Fellowship of recovering alkies. It means that if professional help is what I need, I should go where such help is available—outside AA. Seems clear enough. Yet before I was 90 days sober, I had become legal advisor to a fellow newcomer who was then in the divorce court; I advised another AA to stop taking the medication that a qualified doctor had prescribed; and I counseled two AAs in a lover's quarrel.

I've learned enough since my entry into AA, in 1960, to stay out of those arenas, but there is still another that can take me by surprise. True, I no longer play doctor or therapist where medications or relationships are con-

cerned, and I don't give legal advice, but I can still catch myself wondering whether the latest newcomer in my home group is really an alcoholic. On what basis would I question anyone's qualification? What else, except my expertise on AA and on alcoholism itself. Old habits die hard!

I try to be particularly careful when introducing newcomers to the Twelve Steps. It seems to me that one of the reasons the Steps were suggested in the first place was to avoid professionalizing them. In my zeal to encourage newcomers to get involved with the Steps I sometimes talk about them as if they are the be-all and end-all. Looking back at my own beginnings, I think that if anyone had told me, even by inference, that I had to get on with the Steps, I wouldn't have stopped long enough to remark, “What an order! I can't go through with it.” I simply would've run like hell.

Sometimes I complain about the way officers conduct the business of my home group and set myself up as an expert on the AA group. Heaven help me, but there were times when I was so sure I knew everything there was to know about AA history that I would actually hook my thumbs in my vest like a 19th century politician when speaking from the podium.

Another area where I am made particularly aware of the Eighth Tradition is in speaking to non-AA groups. I have found myself on panels with experts in the field of alcoholism and have been introduced as an expert myself. I make it a point to remember something I was told by a member of our local intergroup public information committee: We need to maintain our amateur standing. There is a practical side to this as well. Being nonprofessional means I don't have to worry about giving a letter-perfect presentation every time.

Tradition Eight also suggests that our service centers may employ spe-

cial workers. Some of the experience that helped formulate this Tradition was played out in the days of the 41st Street Clubhouse when members had a hard time distinguishing between Twelfth Step work and office employment. This was in the early 1940s. The controversy was still all very new, but I can just imagine the air turning blue with resentment as they tried to understand that the secretary, for instance, was not being paid to stay sober or to do Twelfth Step work, but to answer the phone, write letters, keep records of business transactions and so forth.

Newcomers still ask, as I did, why we have paid AA workers (professionals). As it was pointed out to me, the staff at our local intergroup office, for example, is not paid to do Twelfth Step work. By opening up and helping to keep open the doors to institutions and correctional facilities, by collecting data on local groups and publishing updated meeting directories, along with many other fundamental activities, the intergroup staff is paving the way for Twelfth Step work. It makes my Twelfth Step work that much easier. And carrying the message of hope and recovery is the real “business” of AA. But why a paid staff? Why not volunteers? To attempt to conduct such an enterprise on a solely volunteer basis would be highly impractical. As for hiring AAs, who better to hire than people who know AA best!

Just for today, it is a good idea for me to stick close to simple basic AA as I encounter it in my home group and at others. Every single recovering alkie at every single meeting tells me, by word or deed, that nonprofessionalism in AA is one of the best ideas we ever had. (Incidentally, my friends are quick to remind me of it whenever I get too big for my AA britches!).

## Group Contributions — July 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	<b>Mid County</b>	<b>\$49.47</b>	<b>\$129.47</b>
Any Lengths	\$0.00	\$550.00	<b>Murray Street</b>	<b>\$70.00</b>	<b>\$70.00</b>
Anahuac	\$0.00	\$55.00	<b>Mustard Seed</b>	<b>\$462.00</b>	<b>\$1,386.00</b>
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	<b>Orange</b>	<b>\$20.00</b>	<b>\$140.00</b>
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	\$350.00	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	\$800.00
Jasper Noon	\$0.00	\$250.00	St Francis	\$0.00	\$700.00
Jasper Serenity	\$0.00	\$0.00	The Buck Stops Here	\$0.00	\$0.00
Keep It Simple	\$0.00	\$0.00	TLC	\$0.00	\$497.20
<b>Kirbyville</b>	<b>\$80.00</b>	<b>\$210.00</b>	Un Dia A La Vez	\$0.00	\$0.00
Kountze Daylight	\$0.00	\$0.00	Vidor	\$0.00	\$50.00
Lewis Drive	\$0.00	\$0.00	West End	\$0.00	\$100.00
Liberty	\$0.00	\$100.00	Unconditional Love	\$0.00	\$33.70
Lifeline	\$0.00	\$0.00	Way Out	\$0.00	\$0.00
Lufkin	\$0.00	\$0.00	<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$681.47</b>	<b>\$6,123.83</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**

### 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 September Meeting**



**August 29, 2021 at 2:00 PM**

**West End Group**

**1235 Crockett, Beaumont, TX**

Everyone is encouraged and welcome to attend.

### **Next 9th Dist. Intergroup Meeting October 17, 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

## **MID County 44<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

**908 Boston Avenue**

**Nederland, Texas 77627**

**September 18, 2021**



**9:00 AM Donut Meeting**

**10:00 AM Registration**

**11:00 AM Speaker (AA) Lisa Q.**

**12:00 AM Lunch-Hot Dogs**

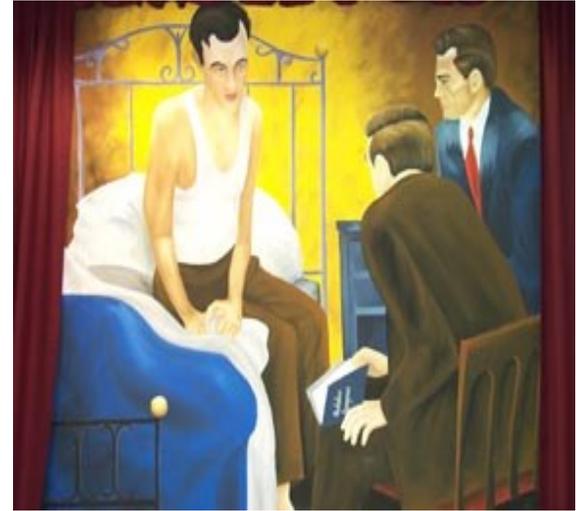
**2:00 PM Speaker (Al-Alon) Brianna L.**

**4:00 PM Washer Tournament**

**6:00 PM Dinner-Brisket/Covered Dishes**

**8:00 PM Speaker (A.A) Malana Q.**

**9:15 PM Raffle**



Happy Birthday To You!!!

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



**Mid County Group Birthdays  
8-31-2021**

- Gerald T. - 40 years
- DC - 3 years
- Billy T. - 2 years
- Donna N. - 32 years
- Ashly D. - 11 years
- Richard Y. - 7 years
- Chuck G. - 8 years
- Rhea - 7 years
- Monty - 1 year
- Jennifer -1 year

**8th Step Principle  
Reflection  
Brotherly Love**

**8th Promise  
Self-seeking will  
slip away.**



**We are not a  
glum lot.**