

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

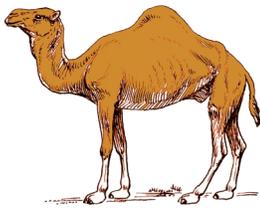
Tradition 4

“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.

Inside this issue:

Step 4—Tradition 4	1
Concept IV	2
Stories (Grapevine)	3
Contributions	4
District	5
St. Francis Eating / Speaker Meeting	6
Birthdays, 4th Promise, 4th Step Principle, SETA assembly dates	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 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 2022 | WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND? | STEP FOUR

Another One Bites the Dust

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

Another journey through Step Four helped him let go of old resentments—and the first one began with Mom

Resentment is a bitch. But it can also turn out to be a gift in disguise. That's what has happened to me a couple of times, in powerful ways, and I'm just now beginning to understand and appreciate.

I recently started my Steps again with a new sponsor on the other side of the country, where I live part of the time. My longtime sponsor here in the east suggested I think about going through them again with someone else. He wasn't firing me. We get to have as many sponsors as we need or want.

So my new Step sponsor got me through the first three Steps in a series of long, heart-changing and, frankly, amazing conversations. We took about two hours per Step. It was all very old school, one drunk helping another. It seemed so much simpler than I'd experienced before. Not necessarily easier, but simpler.

I asked about moving on to Step Four. I was expecting a worksheet, instructions, directions and assignments. She said, "Do the Fourth Step just like it says in the Big Book." And there it all was in the Big Book. "Oh," she added, "and when you do your resentments

list start with your parents. For most of us they're kind of always there."

My mother is always first—in all things, quite frankly. She was beautiful and talented and frustrated and angry and creative and productive—and often sedated. When a woman in 50s and 60s America had a lot of strong opinions and dreams, what she often got was a bottle of sedatives, also known as "mother's little helper." And she drank.

We didn't have booze in the house generally, except for that old bottle of scotch my father kept for emergencies. It was awful and probably the only liquor I never learned to like. So Mom snuck sherry and port into the kitchen cupboards, ostensibly for cooking.

In our family there was usually a little wine at the larger gatherings, but Mom was sure to be unsatisfied with that, so she loaded up before the party started, planning to have a public "glass or two" at the event. We discovered this ploy when one time she miscalculated and passed out face first on the lawn on her way into the party.

I spent many long nights soothing her weeping heart, listening to her tales of frustration and regret, being her best friend. Later I found out in various ways that she was not my best friend. That's when my first major resentment was born, and it blossomed in the bottom of a glass of (better) scotch for years.

Recently, I realized that the skills that go into being the best friend of someone who isn't my best friend were the foundation of my first real and significant professional successes. As a consultant, I started working with high-strung, talented people. I helped them by being their best friend, advisor and confidant while all they gave me was money. Sometimes I found it hurtful, but it worked really well and propelled me professionally. And now I get to choose not to do those things. And I'm much more at peace with my mother because of those experiences. She's been gone a decade and it's amazing how much better we're getting along

now.

When I got sober I had a huge fear of having to give up my entire career. There's a lot of alcohol in my business world and I just couldn't see how I might navigate, stay sober and still do my job. I started to resent my sobriety big time, and at the same time I became willing to do anything not to die. I was humiliated. Sure I'd have to be willing to go all the way back to do what I did in my 20s and work behind a counter for an hourly wage. That was not what I wanted, but I'd worked so hard at that age and learned so much. It was not what I wanted, but I was ready to go to those lengths. I was resentful as all get out, but ready.

Not long ago, I gave training and education seminars to 400 people for a huge company. I spoke about the very basic principles of that work I did behind the counter so many years before. At a nice, high hourly fee I was indeed back to my business beginnings, but in a significantly new and better way. It was my sobriety that made it possible and helped me to enjoy the experience. In that way, another resentment bit the dust.

As I was being introduced at the seminar where I spoke, the woman who brought me in to the client said that while he was very practiced and knowledgeable in many other parts of the business, she'd been frustrated by how difficult it was to teach herself what I'd been able to impart in our first 10 minutes together. As I was relating this story during a qualification at a favorite AA group in a nearby town, I suddenly teared up.

That's exactly what AA has done for me. It taught me, sometimes in just a few moments, through the heartfelt words of experience, strength and hope of other sober drunks, how to live my life in the way I'd spent years trying to teach myself to do without success.

Now, I'm watchful for other resentments that might have a surprise treasure buried somewhere deep inside. And, as ever, I'm extremely grateful to AA for giving me a new life filled with the joys of seeing things in other, better ways.

Group Contributions — March 2022

Group	Month	Y to D	Group	Month	Y to D
6 O'Clock	\$0.00	\$0.00	Lufkin	\$0.00	\$0.00
A New Beginning	\$0.00	\$0.00	Lumberton SOP	\$160.00	\$160.00
Any Lengths	\$0.00	\$0.00	Mid County	\$40.00	\$460.00
Anahuac	\$0.00	\$0.00	Murray Street	\$0.00	\$0.00
Bolivar	\$0.00	\$0.00	Mustard Seed	\$0.00	\$462.00
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	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	\$0.00	\$100.00	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	\$0.00	\$400.00
Jasper Noon	\$0.00	\$400.00	St Francis	\$600.00	\$689.09
Jasper Serenity	\$0.00	\$0.00	The Buck Stops Here	\$0.00	\$0.00
Keep It Simple	\$0.00	\$0.00	TLC	\$211.00	\$211.00
Kirbyville	\$0.00	\$200.00	Vidor	\$0.00	\$0.00
Kountze Daylight	\$0.00	\$0.00	West End	\$125.00	\$125.00
Lewis Drive	\$0.00	\$0.00	Unconditional Love	\$0.00	\$0.00
Liberty	\$0.00	\$50.00	Way Out	\$0.00	\$0.00
Lifeline	\$0.00	\$0.00	Totals	\$1,176.00	\$3,337.09

**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 — E-mail: steppingstones@abeaumont.org — Web: abeaumont.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. Come to the next GSR meeting

Announcements

Next District 90 GSR Meeting

May 1, 2022 At 2:00 PM

West End Group

1235 Crockett, Beaumont, TX

Everyone is encouraged and welcome to attend.

Next 9th Dist. Intergroup Meeting

~~April 24, 2022 At 2:00 PM~~

Cancelled

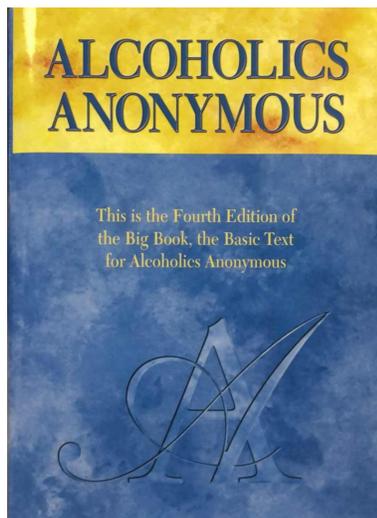
West End Group

1235 Crockett, Beaumont, TX

Everyone is encouraged and welcome to attend.

**** Next Intergroup Quarterly Meeting July 17, 2022 ****

Intergroup has received a delivery of hard cover Big Books (B1).



St. Francis Group Eating/Speaker Meeting



APRIL 16th



At Wesley UMC

3810 N. Major Drive

6:00 Fellowship



6:30 Potluck Supper

7:30 Speaker Jenny L.

from Dallas



Bring your favorite
dish & a friend
& join us for
fun, food & fellowship





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



SETA Assembly Dates

2022

April 9-10

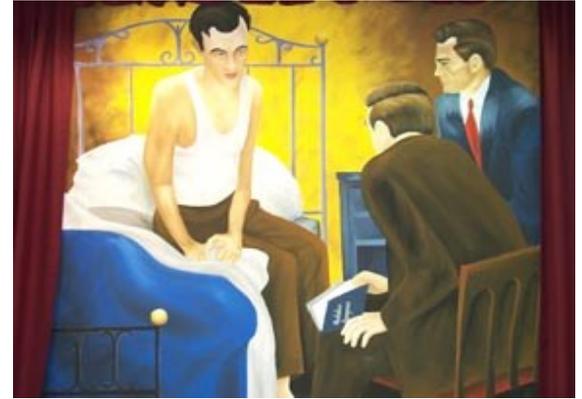
July 9-10

October 1-2

**DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel
Houston Intercontinental**

**15747 JFK Boulevard
Houston, Texas, 77032, USA**

281-848-4000



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.**