

Step 5

“Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.”

All of A.A.’s Twelve Steps ask us to go contrary to our natural desires... they all deflate our egos. When it comes to ego deflation, few Steps are harder to take than Five. But scarcely any Step is more necessary to longtime sobriety and peace of mind than this one.

A.A. experience has taught us we cannot live alone with our pressing problems and the character defects which cause or aggravate them. If we have swept the searchlight of Step Four back and forth over our careers, and it has revealed in stark relief those experiences we’d rather not remember, if we have come to know how

wrong thinking and action have hurt us and others, then the need to quit living by ourselves with those tormenting ghosts of yesterday gets more urgent than ever. We have to talk to somebody about them.

So intense, though, is our fear and reluctance to do this, that many A.A.’s at first try to bypass Step Five. We search for an easier way— which usually consists of the general and fairly painless admission that when drinking we were sometimes bad actors. Then, for good measure, we add dramatic descriptions for that part of our drinking behavior which our friends probably know about anyhow.

But of the things which really bother and burn us, we say nothing. Certain distressing or humiliating memories, we tell ourselves, ought not be shared with anyone. These will remain our secret. Not a soul must ever know. We hope they’ll go to the grave with us.

Yet if AA.’s experience means anything at all, this in not only unwise, but is actually a perilous resolve.

Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions—Page 55

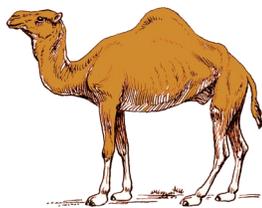
Tradition 5 - LONG FORM

“Each Alcoholics Anonymous group ought to be a spiritual entity having but one primary purpose — that of carrying its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.”

“SHOEMAKER, stick to thy last!”... better do one thing supremely well than many badly. That is the central theme of this Tradition. Around it our Society gathers in unity. The very life of our Fellowship requires the preservation of this principle.

Alcoholics Anonymous can be likened to a group of physicians who might find a cure for cancer, and upon whose concerted work would depend the answer for sufferers of this disease. True, each physician in such a group might have his own specialty. Every doctor concerned would at times wish he could devote himself to his chosen field rather than work only with the group. But once these men had hit upon a cure, one it became apparent that only by their united effort could this be accomplished, then all of them would feel bound to devote themselves solely to the relief of cancer. In the radiance of such a miraculous discovery, any doctor would set his other ambitions aside, at whatever personal cost.

Just as firmly bound by obligation are the members of Alcoholics Anonymous, who have demonstrated that they can help problem drinkers as others seldom can. The unique ability of each A.A. to identify himself with, and bring recovery to, the newcomer in no way depends upon his learning, eloquence, or on any special individual skills. The only thing that matters is that he is an alcoholic who has found a key to sobriety. These legacies of suffering and or recovery are easily passed among alcoholics, one to the other. This is our gift from God, and its bestowal upon others like us is the one aim that today animates A.A.’s all around the globe.



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 5—Tradition 5	1
Concept 5	2
Stories (Grapevine)	3
Contributions	4
District	5
75th Anniversary	6
Texas State Convention	
Birthdays, 5th Principle, 5th Promise, SETA Assembly Dates, Lewis Drive Group 14th Anniversary	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 V

Throughout our world service structure, a traditional “Right of Appeal” ought to prevail, thus assuring us that minority opinion will be heard and that petitions for the redress of personal grievances will be carefully considered.

In the light of the principle of the “Right of Appeal,” all minorities — whether in our staffs, committees, corporate boards or among the Trustees — should be encouraged to file minority reports whenever they feel a majority to be in considerable error. And when a minority considers an issue to be such a grave one that a mistaken decision could seriously affect A. A. as a whole, it should then charge itself with the actual *duty* of presenting a minority report to the Conference.

In granting this traditional “Right of Appeal,” we recognize that minorities frequently can be right; that even when they are partly or wholly in error they still perform a most valuable service when, by asserting their “Right of Appeal,” they compel a thorough-going debate on important issues. The well-heard minority, therefore, is our chief protection against an uninformed, misinformed, hasty or angry majority.

The traditional “Right of Appeal” should also permit any person in our service structure, whether paid or unpaid, to petition for the redress of a personal grievance, carrying his complaint, if he so desires, directly to the General Service Board. He or she should be able to do this without prejudice or fear of reprisal. Though in practice this will be a seldom exercised right, its very existence will always tend to restrain those in authority from unjust uses of their power. Surely our workers should cheerfully accept the necessary direction and disciplines that go with their jobs, but all of them should nevertheless feel that they need not silently endure unnecessary and unfair personal domination.

Concerning both “Appeal” and “Petition,” I am glad to say that in A.A.’s world services these valuable practices and rights have always been put to good use. Therefore I am committing them to writing only by way of helping to confirm and enlarge their future applications.

Excerpts from The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Services—pg. 20 of the Concepts Section



AA GRAPEVINE

The International Journal of Alcoholics Anonymous



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



MAY 2022 | 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CONCEPTS | TRADITION FIVE

Where are the Newcomers?

BY: VICTORIA F. | PRINCETON, N.J.

A member wonders if her group could explore some new ways to fulfill its primary purpose

What's wrong with an AA group that attracts few newcomers? My dearly beloved home group seems to have this issue at the moment, and while I am preparing myself to call for a group conscience meeting to see if we can work on the solution to our Tradition Five issues, I'll take this opportunity to flesh out some of my own thoughts on the matter.

Granted, oldtimers in AA can very well "still suffer" from our disease of alcoholism in all its gory manifestations without ever picking up a drink. I should know. It's been 32 amazing years since my last drink, and yet I can still suffer from resentments, self-pity, discouragement and self-centered fear. Fortunately, my wise sponsor—who has fewer years of sobriety than I, but whose quality of life I deeply respect—reminds me often that I need to work the

Steps on my day-to-day challenges. And when I heed her advice, the challenges pass and I feel more grateful, joyous and free.

Well, this can apply to my wonderful home group as well. Yet some of the group members I've informally polled are not interested in participating in a group conscience meeting. They've told me they feel uncomfortable around controversy. As with anything in AA, they are free to opt out of group conscience meetings (or business meetings, as some call them) and there's no pressure to participate.

I am relatively new in this group, as I have recently moved to the area, and yet I love many things about it, and thus made it my home group right away.

I'm trying not to seem pushy or come across like a "bleeding deacon," but it has recently come to light that our membership is dropping, and I can see very well that we are top-heavy with oldtimers. Rarely does a newly sober man or woman come in our doors and stick. Our treasury is having a hard time keeping up with expenses and we have not given to the General Service Office, district or Inter-group of late. These are warning signs to me that maybe we're forgetting our primary purpose. How can we make ourselves more attractive to newcomers? How can we shoemakers "stick to thy last" by putting the emphasis on carrying the message rather than appeasing our own comforts by keeping the status quo, even if it may involve some temporary controversy and—ugh—dreaded change?

If we end up doing things slightly different than "how they've always been done," is that not a risk we're ready to take? If we experiment in improving our efforts to carry the message and no newcomers arrive, attrition continues and the meeting still stagnates and fizzles. oh well, perhaps its usefulness has run its course. I, for one, will find other meetings by which to fulfill my personal recovery needs. At three decades, I find I need more weekly meetings to keep me on track—never fewer.

So I will continue my gentle, patient yet firm attempts to guide my group toward collective recovery as I would guide a new member as a sponsor. I know from much painful experience that if I cannot successfully carry the message to a particular alcoholic, I must not become fixated on their success or failure, but must move on to the next willing sponsee who asks me for help.

In other words, I can carry the message of Tradition Five to my group, make suggestions, hope that as a group we'll find the willingness and faith to move forward by admitting to ourselves and others that the old ways may not be working, and become willing to change the things we can. If I'm seen as a pushy deaconess, so be it. This is not about my sobriety alone; it's about how I can be a more effective member of a more effective group. God grant me the strength to speak up and call for that group conscience meeting soon!

Group Contributions – April 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	\$0.00	\$160.00
Any Lengths	\$0.00	\$0.00	Mid County	\$0.00	\$460.00
Anahuac	\$0.00	\$0.00	Murray Street	\$0.00	\$0.00
Bolivar	\$0.00	\$0.00	Mustard Seed	\$342.00	\$804.00
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	\$0.00	\$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	\$0.00	\$689.09
Jasper Serenity	\$0.00	\$0.00	The Buck Stops Here	\$0.00	\$0.00
Keep It Simple	\$0.00	\$0.00	TLC	\$0.00	\$211.00
Kirbyville	\$0.00	\$200.00	Vidor	\$0.00	\$0.00
Kountze Daylight	\$0.00	\$0.00	West End	\$0.00	\$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	\$342.00	\$3,679.09

**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 2407
James A. Farley Station
New York, NY 10116-2407

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

June 5, 2022 At 2:00 PM

West End Group

1235 Crockett, Beaumont, TX

Everyone is encouraged and welcome to attend.

Next 9th Dist. Intergroup Meeting

July 17, 2022 At 2:00 PM

West End Group

1235 Crockett, Beaumont, TX

Everyone is encouraged and welcome to attend.


*The Lewis Drive Group
Welcomes You to Celebrate Our
14th Anniversary*



"We will know peace"

May 21, 2022

4737 10th Street

Port Arthur Texas 77642

*Raffles all
doing the
day!!!*

Friends & Family Day

3:00pm-7:00pm

Guest Speaker: TBA 5:00 pm

Dinner Served @ 7:00 pm

Birthday Celebration @ 8:00 pm





There is a solution.

Join Us.

Announcing the 75th Anniversary of The Texas State Convention.

Join us for the 75th Anniversary of The Texas State Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous. We have curated amazing speakers from all over the country. Enjoy a weekend of incredible panels, meetings and a fantastic dance party as we celebrate recovery Texas-style. Don't miss this opportunity to mix and mingle with friends in recovery from all over our great state (and country).

Who?

Featuring:

Erica C. from Cambridge, MA
Lillie H. from Portland, ME
Georgia B. from Montrose, CA
Tim R. from Chicago, IL
Bob B. from Minneapolis, MN
Beau B. (GSO Speaker) from Neptune, NJ

When & Where?

June 17-19, 2022

Austin Hilton in Downtown Austin
550 East Fourth Street
Austin, TX 78701



How Do I Register?

Visit our website for full details, agenda and to get your earlybird ticket. **We can't wait to get together.**

txaaconvention.org/register

75



Happy Birthday To You!!!

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



SETA Assembly Dates

2022

April 9-10

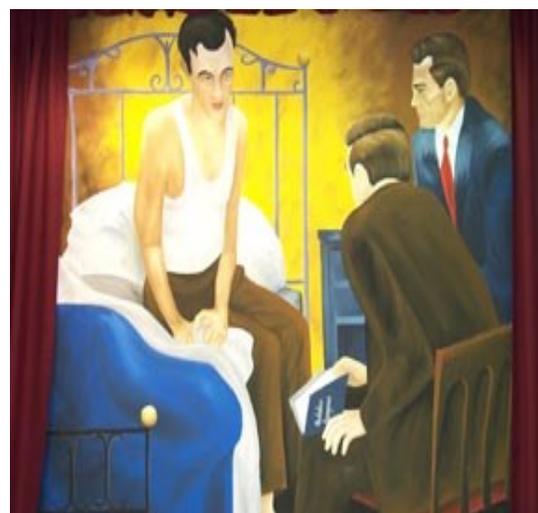
July 9-10

October 1-2

**DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel
Houston Intercontinental**

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

281-848-4000



5th Step Principle Integrity

5th 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.**