

## Step 9

**“Made direct amends to such people wherever possible except when to do so would injure them or others.”**

GOOD judgement, a careful sense of timing, courage and prudence — these are the qualities we shall need when we take Step 9.

After we have made the list of people we had harmed, have reflected carefully upon each instance, and have tried to possess ourselves of the right attitude in which to proceed, we will see that the making of direct amends divides those we should approach into several classes. There will be those who ought to be dealt with just as soon as we become reasonably confident that we can main-

tain our sobriety. There will be those to whom we can make only partial restitution, lest complete disclosures do them or others more harm than good. There will be other cases where action ought to be deferred, and still others in which by the very nature of the situation we shall never be able to make direct personal contact at all.

Most of us begin making certain kinds of direct amends from the day we join Alcoholics Anonymous. The moment we tell our families that we are really going to

try the program, the process has begun. In this area there are seldom any questions of timing or caution. We want to come in the door shouting the good news. After coming from our first meeting, or perhaps after we have finished reading the book “Alcoholics Anonymous,” we usually want to sit down with some member of the family and readily admit the damage we have done by our drinking.

Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions—Page 83-84

## Tradition 9 Long Form

**“A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.”**

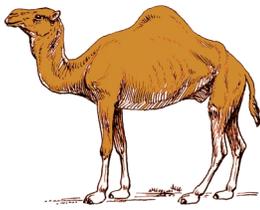
WHEN Tradition Nine was first written, it said that “Alcoholics Anonymous needs the least possible organization.” In years since then, we changed our minds about that. Today, we are able to say with assurance that Alcoholics Anonymous \_\_ A.A. as a whole \_\_ should never be organized at all. Then, in seeming contradiction, we proceed to create special service boards and committees which in themselves are organized. How, then, can we have an unorganized movement which can and does create a service organization for itself? Scanning this puzzler, people say, “What do they mean, no organization?”

Well, let’s see. Did anyone ever hear of a nation, a church, a political party, even a benevolent association that had no membership rules? Did anyone ever hear of a society which couldn’t somehow discipline its members and enforce obedience to necessary rules and regulations? Doesn’t nearly every society on earth give authority to some of its members to impose obedience upon the rest and to punish or expel offenders? Therefore, every nation, in fact every form of society, has to be a government administered by human beings. Power to direct or govern is the essence of organization everywhere.

Yet, Alcoholics Anonymous is an exception. It does not conform to this pattern. Neither its General Service Conference, its Foundation Board\*, nor the humblest group committee can issue a single directive to an A.A. member and make it stick, let alone mete out any punishment. We’ve tried it lots of times, but utter failure is always the result

*Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions—Page 172-173*

*\* in 1954, the name of Alcoholic Foundation, Inc., was changed to the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous, Inc., and the Foundation office is now the General Service Office.*



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 IX

**Good service leaders, together with sound and appropriate methods of choosing them, are at all levels indispensable for our future functioning and safety. The primary world service leadership once exercised by the founders of A.A. must necessarily be assumed by the Trustees of the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous.**

*The AA Service Manual/ 12 Concepts for World Services—pg. 36 of the Concepts Section*

No matter how carefully we design our service structure of principles and relationships, no matter how well we apportion authority and responsibility, the operating results of our structure can be no better than the personal performance of those who must man it and make it work. Good leadership cannot function well in a poorly designed structure. But weak leadership can hardly function at all, even in the best of structures. But once we have created a basically sound structure, that job is finished, except for occasional refinements.

With *leadership* we shall have a continuous problem. Good leadership can be here today and gone tomorrow. Furnishing our service structure with able and willing workers has to be a continuous activity. It is therefore a problem that in its very nature cannot be permanently solved. We must continuously find the right people for our many service tasks. Since our future effectiveness must thus depend upon ever-new generations of leaders, it seems desirable that we now proceed to define what a good service leader should be; that we carefully indicate in each level of service, especially in our Board of Trustees, what special skills will always be required; and that we review our present methods of finding and choosing that leadership.

***Excerpts from The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Services—pg. 36 of the Concepts Section***

# AA GRAPEVINE

The International Journal of Alcoholics Anonymous



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SEPTEMBER 2022 |  
YOUNG & SOBER |

### When You Can't Say No

BY: ANONYMOUS | ST. LOUIS, MO.

*A sponsor shares what he learned about relationships when he was a young newcomer*

A new sponsee of mine once told me that he'd heard that there was some kind of a ban on sex or relationships in early sobriety and that he didn't think he could do that. Maybe it was my pride that kept me from saying, "Yeah, I couldn't do that either."

I wish now I had said that. And I also wish I had added, "And here's how I stayed sober when that didn't work out."

My first year of sobriety was a pink cloud where I sort of worked on the First and Second Steps and maybe some of the Third. My life was so different. I was happy being sober, even while not doing much consciously for my sobriety.

And then, there she was. She was only drunk a little of the time we spent together, and she didn't do drugs around me. She invited me over night after night. She was pretty and she was seemingly happy that I was who I was sober.

I didn't know back then how codependent I was, like so many of us are. Looking back, I see that even when I tried to get out of that relationship, knowing it was not good for me, I was drawn back into it.

When the relationship finally ended around the end of my first year sober, I

couldn't seem to express to anyone how deeply and seriously I felt that I wouldn't survive the breakup. That might have been my first "sober bottom."

Thoughts about alcohol and other forms of suicide trickled into my mind, like water leaking through cracks in a dam. I told an uncle of mine who was visiting that I was getting these drinking thoughts again. He simply said that he'd never heard of anyone dying from not drinking, but he'd heard of plenty of people dying from drinking.

After that, I finally engaged with AA. My experience in sobriety seemed so completely different from the experiences of my two older brothers, who had gotten sober in AA before me, and different from the experiences of some of my former drinking buddies who'd gotten sober in AA. In my view, these other sober AA members I knew all seemed tough, strong and driven by an integrity I didn't have. I felt they had what it took to stay sober, and I didn't.

Despite all that, I started going to meetings regularly, hanging on one day at a time. I knew I needed to actively work the Twelve Steps, but I couldn't make sense of them because I saw my world now in terms of that lost relationship. I was convinced that everything in my life was wrapped up in what she and I had done behind closed doors. I felt like my feet were poking out over the abyss, with no "broad highway" in sight.

When my sponsor sat with me and shared about the Big Book he'd given me, it did eventually start to click, but only distantly. First Step, check. Second Step, check. I do believe that he believes. I'm doomed, but I do believe, I guess.

My sponsor suggested I go off by myself and say the Third Step Prayer. And in my apartment—which had not had any visitors since she was there—I knelt and prayed, feeling like I might as well pray because nothing mattered anyway.

And then it started to hit me that really, I had always been this alone. I had always been aware of that sense of an

abyss, that dam that wouldn't hold, this disease talking to me lethally. Those fears were always there when I was on my own. Whatever had brought me through that first year sober, it surely wasn't her. Had it sent her my way? Maybe. Who knows?

I had no faith at that moment that anything would help me or that the Third Step Prayer would bring relief. I'd always lived with a storm brewing inside me. But I kept praying. Why the hell not pray before my mind finished killing me? But then suddenly, I was not alone anymore. Right then an eye of living calm opened up inside of me.

When it came to my Fourth Step, I delayed completing it again to a nearly fatal point, given how close I got to taking a drink or to getting shot by the husband of my "girlfriend." But with the lifesaving help of a kind, patient sponsor who gave me a recording of one of the Joe and Charlie talks on Step Four (including their wonderfully down-to-earth sharing about sex), I began to change or be changed.

I was shown that my sick relationships had never been about sex for me. My character defect of codependency was handed down through generations of alcoholism and other mental illnesses on both sides of my family. A lot of us were raised to be everything to someone, to find someone to save no matter how it harmed us. The woman from that first relationship in my sobriety had been in crisis—and I had moved into hers, out of the family crises I had gotten drunk in.

Could I survive that kind of sick situation today? I hope to God I don't ever have to find out. And I will add that through frequent praying for the right sexual ideal, like it says in the Big Book, I've been blessed with tremendous progress in relationships. I've been single for most of my sobriety now. And that's OK.

So if another sponsee talks to me about having a relationship in early sobriety, I hope to not just say, "Don't do it." I hope I will add something like, "But if you can't help it, here's how I survived it."

## Group Contributions — August 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	\$40.00
Anahuac	\$0.00	\$120.00	Murray Street	\$0.00	\$0.00
Bolivar	\$0.00	\$0.00	<b>Mustard Seed</b>	<b>\$342.00</b>	<b>\$1,146.00</b>
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	<b>Orange</b>	<b>\$20.00</b>	<b>\$160.00</b>
Deweyville	\$0.00	\$0.00	<b>Pecan Groves</b>	<b>\$10.00</b>	<b>\$40.00</b>
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	\$880.00
Jasper Noon	\$0.00	\$400.00	St Francis	\$0.00	\$989.09
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	\$221.15
Lewis Drive	\$0.00	\$0.00	<b>Unconditional Love</b>	<b>\$643.00</b>	<b>\$643.00</b>
<b>Liberty</b>	<b>\$50.00</b>	<b>\$150.00</b>	Way Out	\$0.00	\$0.00
Lifeline	\$0.00	\$0.00	<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$1,065.00</b>	<b>\$5,460.24</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 — E-mail: [steppingstones@abeaumont.org](mailto:steppingstones@abeaumont.org) — Web: [abeaumont.org](http://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 AM 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 25, 2022 at 2:00 PM**



**( October meeting )**  
**West End Group**  
**1235 Crockett, Beaumont, TX**

Everyone is encouraged and welcome to attend.

**Next 9th Dist. Intergroup Meeting**  
**October 16, 2022 at 2:00 PM**

**West End Group**  
**1235 Crockett, Beaumont, TX**

Everyone is encouraged and welcome to attend.

**ST. FRANCIS 31<sup>ST</sup> ANNIVERSARY**  
**OCT. 15, 2022**  
**6:00 Fellowship**  
**6:30 Eat**  
**7:30 Speaker**  
**COVERED DISH DINNER**  
**MEAT PROVIDED**  
**Child care provided**  
**SPEAKER: KARL M. FROM COVINA, CA**  
**Wesley UMC**  
**CORNER OF MAJOR DRIVE & FOLSOM**  
**In the Cafeteria**

Mid County Group  
45th Anniversary  
Saturday September  
24th 2022



908 Boston Avenue  
Nederland, TX 77627

9:00A.M. Donut Meeting  
10:00A.M. Registration  
11:00A.M. Rodger S.  
Mid County Group  
12:00P.M. Hot Dog Lunch  
2P.M. Al-Anon Speaker Carole L.

4:00P.M. Washer Tournament  
6:00P.M. Brisket Dinner  
8:00P.M. A.A. Speaker  
Holly G. Lufkin Group  
9:00P.M. Raffle



Happy Birthday To You!!!

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



## 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**



**9th Step Principle**

**Justice**

**9th Promise**

**Self-Seeking  
Will Slip Away.**



**We are not a  
glum lot.**