

## Step 4

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

**C**reation 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 society. 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.

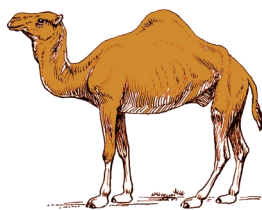
*Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions—Page 42*

## 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.



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
GSR, Intergroup meeting dates	5
77th Texas State AA Convention	6
Birthdays, 4th Promise, 4th Step Principle	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.

Quotations and artwork from AA literature are reprinted with permission from AA World Service, Inc. and/or The AA Grapevine, Inc.

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*

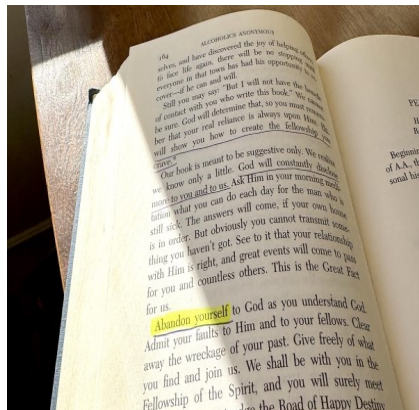


# AA GRAPEVINE

The International Journal of Alcoholics Anonymous



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



APRIL 2024 | HAPPY BIRTHDAY  
BIG BOOK! | SPECIAL SECTION

## Black & Blue & Yellow

BY: JUDITH N. | MARYSVILLE,  
WASHINGTON

*Celebrating 50 years of sobriety, she took down her book and marveled at the marks she made that mattered most*

It was my 50th AA anniversary month and time for a good annual house cleaning. So I got down my original Big Book, a sixth printing of the Second edition, to reminisce. I was struck by the fact that there were few highlighted sections throughout its 164 pages. Just some pencil, black pen, blue highlighter and blue pen underlines. The Big Books I see in meetings today seem to be full of highlights everywhere.

I sat down and paged through my book and was intrigued to see the notations I had made. I immediately recalled where my first underline was. It was marked in faint pencil, per-

haps as if I wasn't sure the statement pertained to me. You know the one at the beginning of the chapter "More About Alcoholism" about how the delusion that I was like other people had "to be smashed." I then went to look for the black pen underlines, recalling that tough second year of sobriety when I toiled with the Third Step and my disintegrating atheism. In that same chapter, the book suggested that failure was sure to happen if I didn't enlarge my spiritual life. And in "We Agnostics" the book begged me not to let any prejudice against spiritual terms keep me from AA's spiritual tools. The black underlines in my old fragile book brought me to tears, mementos of the struggle in those early years to stay sober and become teachable.

Now it was on to my blue highlights. Boy, they sure brought back those early hopeful years of discovering new faith, doing those housecleaning Steps and learning to do a Tenth step every night, even while Steps Six, Seven, Eight and Nine were ongoing. My highlighted passages in "How It Works" reminded me that I must be rid of selfishness above all else. I even singled out a phrase that's still a vital part of my

angry mind's mantra today: The grouch and the brain-storm are "the dubious luxury of normal men." I had also marked the sentence, "We avoid retaliation or argument." And on the last page of "A Vision for You" a single blue highlight stands out: "The answers will come, if your own house is in order."

As I reviewed my old book, I became lighthearted. I then sought out my blue pen underlines, knowing that they were made later when I began walking with my new God, sponsoring women as sick as I had been, and hoping to be able to repay what I had been given. My underlines told me that faith had to be accompanied by self-sacrifice. The blue pen-marked phrase I saw in "Working with Others" I hope to take to my grave: "Your job now is to be at the place where you may be of maximum helpfulness to others."

And finally, one blue pen mark in "A Vision for You" underlines two words which I finally came to understand and have since attempted to fulfill in my life. Today I'm making a commitment by marking them again with a new yellow highlighter: "Abandon yourself."

## Group Contributions — March 2024

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	\$0.00
Any Lengths	\$0.00	\$0.00	Mid County	\$0.00	\$0.00
Anahuac	\$0.00	\$50.00	Murray Street	\$0.00	\$0.00
Bolivar	\$0.00	\$200.00	Mustard Seed	\$0.00	\$305.00
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	<b>Orange</b>	<b>\$20.00</b>	<b>\$60.00</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	\$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	\$0.00
Jasper Noon	\$0.00	\$342.00	St Francis	\$0.00	\$0.00
Jasper Serenity	\$0.00	\$0.00	The Buck Stops Here	\$0.00	\$0.00
Keep It Simple	\$0.00	\$10.04	TLC	\$0.00	\$0.00
Kirbyville	\$0.00	\$0.00	Vidor	\$0.00	\$0.00
Kountze Daylight	\$0.00	\$0.00	West End	\$0.00	\$0.00
Lewis Drive	\$0.00	\$0.00	Unconditional Love	\$0.00	\$354.00
Liberty	\$0.00	\$50.00	Way Out	\$0.00	\$0.00
Lifeline	\$0.00	\$0.00	<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$20.00</b>	<b>\$1,471.04</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 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 5, 2024 At 2:00 PM

West End Group

1235 Crockett, Beaumont, TX

Everyone is encouraged and welcome to attend.

### Next 9th Dist. Intergroup Meeting

April 21, 2024

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





# 77<sup>th</sup> Texas State AA Convention

## The Main Object...

### June 21-23, 2024

Voice of the Convention – Wayne L. (Lakeside Group, Rockwall, TX)

#### Friday June 21

- 2:00 PM On-site registration opens
- 5:30 PM **Old Timers Meeting**
- 7:30 PM AA Speaker  
Marian G. (Knoxville, TN)

**The Westin Hotel**  
4545 W. John Carpenter Fwy  
(Hwy 114)  
Irving, TX 75063  
972-929-4500

*For room accommodations,  
request the rate for the  
"Texas State Convention"*

**\$129 per night**  
*single or double*

*Book before June 6 to ensure availability.*

#### Saturday June 22

- 9:30 AM Al Anon Speaker  
Nancy S. (Topeka, KS)
- 11:00 AM AA Speaker  
Erin B. (Cleveland, OH)
- 2:30 PM NETA, NWT, A,  
SETA, SWTA Delegates
- 3:00 PM GSO Speaker  
Diana L. (New York, NY)
- 7:30 PM AA Speaker\*  
Jimmy A. (Spring  
Lake Heights, NJ)

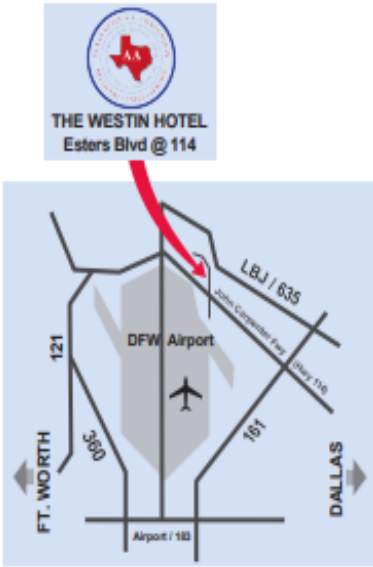
*Ice Cream Social Sat. Night  
After Meeting*

**Register online at:**  
[txaaconvention.org](http://txaaconvention.org)

*Or use the form below and send payment.*

#### Sunday June 23

- 9:30 AM AA Speaker  
Mike S. (Topeka, KS)



*\*An ASL interpreter will be available  
for the Saturday night meeting.*

✂ DETACH AND RETURN

### Registration Fee: \$20 per person

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Name on Badge \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Additional Registrations**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Name on Badge \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Name on Badge \_\_\_\_\_

Registration @ \$20 each = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Scholarship Contribution = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**MAIL FORM & PAYMENT TO:** Texas State Convention  
500 Tanglewood South  
Irving, TX 75061  
*Make checks payable to: Texas State 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.**