

## 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.

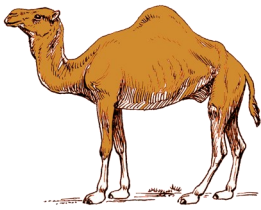
*Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions—Page 42*

## 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.



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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 1984

## An Agnostic Turns It Over

By: S. D. | Modesto, California

Excerpts from a letter to a newcomer

IF YOU WORK the Steps as suggested, but without a Higher Power, the day will come when you feel as if you've done it all for nothing. Let me quit saying "you," and tell you about *me*.

I told you before that I'd had a hard time with this HP stuff. Then, when it finally happened, I floated for a long time, going to meetings, saying "good stuff" at the tables, staying sober, but nothing else. I didn't work the program, didn't worry about an inventory. I figured my God would let me know when to start writing.

One morning, I woke up in the pits of despair. I had no thought of drinking, but I couldn't see the advantages of sobriety, or even of my existence. I wasn't suicidal or contemplating a drink, simply questioning the reason for my being. I felt that I was worthless, that I hadn't really given anything to the world, that, indeed, I had nothing to give. I felt like a blank page in the book of mankind.

At the same time, I've always had this sixth-sense that I was born with a mission--unrevealed to me, but *there* nevertheless. It has made me feel like a special person all my life. Maybe this is my survival tactic. If you ever hear my story, you'll know why I had no reason to feel special. And it's a basic human need.

At any rate, the day came when my "mission" faded into the fog of depression. It stayed there until I did my searching and *very* fearful inventory. The fear was triggered by a bigger fear. It wasn't the inventory; rather, it was the commitment to change. Once I did the inventory and had all my character defects on paper, the next step would be to work at their minimization. (We strive for progress, not perfection!) Most of my defects had been used for survival. How could I not use them and come away sane and breathing regularly?

The "Twelve and Twelve" talks about God's will and self-will. (I just discovered this last night, and was so glad!) It says about newcomers and the Third Step, ". . . it appears that there are certain things which only the individual can do. All by himself, and in the light of his own circumstances, he needs to develop the quality of willingness. When he acquires willingness, he is the only one who can make the decision to exert himself." Here's the good part! "Trying to do this is an act of his own will."

Later, it says, "It is when we try to make our will conform with God's that we begin to use it rightly . . . We had tried to bombard our problems with it [willpower] instead of attempting to bring it into agreement with God's intention for us."

And so, when you do your Fourth Step, arm yourself with phone numbers. And I can't tell you strongly enough the importance of starting now, especially if you've been entertaining thoughts of drinking.

Use the social system (the pure theory, not the real world's version) as God's intention for you, and conform with the philosophy of Plato if you must. Pick a true and good theory. Turn your will (and indeed, your life) over to the care of the winners in the program. *The winners*. They're easy to spot--they're usually intimidating as hell on first impression!

But listen to what they say, and follow their directions. And above all, exercise that part of self-will that is willingness.

## Group Contributions — March 2025

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	\$65.00
Anahuac	\$0.00	\$0.00	Murray Street	\$0.00	\$0.00
Bolivar	\$0.00	\$0.00	Mustard Seed	\$0.00	\$375.00
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>\$40.00</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	\$0.00	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	\$600.00
Jasper Noon	\$0.00	\$513.60	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	\$0.00	<b>TLC</b>	<b>\$255.00</b>	<b>\$255.00</b>
Kirbyville	\$0.00	\$84.00	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	\$283.00
Liberty	\$0.00	\$50.00	Way Out	\$0.00	\$0.00
Lifeline	\$0.00	\$0.00	<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$295.00</b>	<b>\$2,285.60</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 4, 2025 At 2:00 PM

West End Group

1235 Crockett, Beaumont, TX

Everyone is encouraged and welcome to attend.

### Next 9th Dist. Intergroup Meeting

April 13, 2025

West End Group

1235 Crockett, Beaumont, TX

Everyone is encouraged and welcome to attend.

# 78<sup>th</sup> Annual TexAs State Convention

August 15-17, 2025 – Houston, TX

“Service is Love in Action”

### AA Speakers

Donny M., Winnepeg, CA  
Tammy Z., Spruce Pine, NC  
Racy J. (GSO), NYC, NY  
Wayne H., Frisco, TX  
Hector H. (Spanish) El Salvador

### Al-Anon

Magdalena E., Seattle, WA



### Royal Sonesta Hotel

Houston Galleria Area  
2222 W. Loop South  
Houston, TX 77027  
713-627-7600 (Direct)  
800-766-3782 (Reservations)

### \$149 Room Rate

Convention Code 081525TXSAA  
Cut-off for \$149 rate is 7/18/2025  
Self-Parking: \$22.50/day

### Convention Attractions

- 1st Timer Contest
  - AA Meetings
  - Archives Room
  - Hospitality Suite
  - Spanish Speakers & Workshop
  - Spanish Translation *(Bring your own earbuds)*
- The famous Houston Galleria and numerous restaurants within walking distance of the hotel!*

Website: [txaaconvention.org](http://txaaconvention.org) | Email: [info.houstontsc@gmail.com](mailto:info.houstontsc@gmail.com)



## 44th ANNUAL DISTRICT 90 CONVENTION August 8th, 9th & 10th, 2025

CONVENTION SPEAKERS	
Fri. 08:00 PM	Stephen P - Lansdowne, PA
Fri. 10:00 PM	TBA - Local From District 90
Sat. 08:30 AM	Four Faces Of Al-Anon
Sat. 10:00 AM	Joe Mc. - Galveston, TX
Sat. 04:00 PM	Laura S. - Austin, TX
Sat. 08:00 PM	Chris R. - Ingram, TX
Sat. 10:00 PM	Dance
Sun 10:00 AM	Iron Mike - Bacliff, TX

2355 IH 10 Access Rd South  
MCM ELEGANTE & CONFERENCE CENTER  
(GPS) 2355 Executive Blvd, Beaumont TX 77705  
**409-842-3600**

Room Rates: \$107.00 Plus Tax  
Suites: \$134 Plus Tax  
Cabana Balcony View: \$147.00 Plus Tax  
Early Deadline: July 15, 2025

**ONSITE REGISTRATION**  
Pre-Registration Ends - July 15, 2025  
AA/AL-ANON \$20.00 ea AL-ATEEN \$5 ea  
Dance Only \$5 ea. Coffee inc/w registration  
Dance admission included with registration  
\*\*Dance Only\*\* tickets will be sold at the  
ballroom entrance door Saturday night

Hospitality Suites ... Sobriety Countdown ... First Timers Contest ... Door Prizes...  
Marathon Meetings... Ice Cream Social...  
We strive to be self supporting, please contribute to the coffee kitty and the Hospitality Suite cans

<p>Name1: _____ Email: _____ Address: _____ City, State, Zip: _____ Badge Name: _____ Home Group: _____ Check One: <input type="checkbox"/> AA <input type="checkbox"/> Al-Anon <input type="checkbox"/> Alateen <small>Check if needed: <input type="checkbox"/> ASL Interpreter <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish Translator <input type="checkbox"/> Special Accom/Needs</small></p>	<p>Name2: _____ Email: _____ Address: _____ City, State, Zip: _____ Badge Name: _____ Home Group: _____ Check One: <input type="checkbox"/> AA <input type="checkbox"/> Al-Anon <input type="checkbox"/> Alateen <small>Check if needed: <input type="checkbox"/> ASL Interpreter <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish Translator <input type="checkbox"/> Special Accom/Needs</small></p>												
<table style="width: 100%;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Pre-Registration</th> <th>Amt. Enclosed</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> AA @ \$15.00 Each</td> <td>\$ _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Al-Anon @ \$15.00 Each</td> <td>\$ _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Alateen @ \$ 3.00 Each</td> <td>\$ _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Sponsorship Donation</td> <td>\$ _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>TOTAL ENCLOSED</b></td> <td><b>\$ _____</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><b>Alateens must have signed permission slips</b></p>	Pre-Registration	Amt. Enclosed	<input type="checkbox"/> AA @ \$15.00 Each	\$ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Al-Anon @ \$15.00 Each	\$ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Alateen @ \$ 3.00 Each	\$ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Sponsorship Donation	\$ _____	<b>TOTAL ENCLOSED</b>	<b>\$ _____</b>	<p style="text-align: center;">Make Checks Payable To And Mail Registration Forms To: District 90 Convention Treasurer PO Box 1591 Groves, TX 77619</p> <div style="text-align: right;"> <p><small>Online Registration QR Code</small></p> </div>
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We urge everyone to pre-register and book any rooms before the July out-off date where possible. This helps keep registrations fees low/max. convention exp./hospitality/available scholarships - that we serve and Carry the Message.



INTERGROUP WISHES EVERYONE THAT IS  
CELEBRATING IN APRIL A  
**HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!!**

April 2019 Grapevine|  
**At Wit's End**

**Keeping track**

Did you hear about the new wrist fitness-tracker designed for alcoholics? After every 12 steps, it resets to zero.

—*Ken O., Denver, Colorado*

**Back for seconds**

A man walked into a bar and ordered a drink. After the bartender handed him his drink, the man got up from the bar stool, and headed straight for the patio and poured out his entire drink.

He immediately walked back over to the bar and ordered another. Puzzled, the bartender asked, “Is everything OK? You didn’t even take a drink of the one I handed you.” The man replied, “Oh yes. You see, the drink I poured out was my first one; it’ll get you every time!”

—*Kelly M., Medford, Oregon*

**My kind of alkie**

AA says that we are people who normally would not mix.

Well, that’s sure true for me. I drank mine straight up.

—*David L., Columbus, Ohio*

**Bad connection**

Sponsor to newcomer: Every morning I want you to ask, “God, is this the day I’m supposed to drink?”

Newcomer: Hmm...what if the answer is yes?

Sponsor: Call me! You have a bad connection.

—*Robert P., Amity, Oregon*



**Dealing with Resentments**

As Bill Sees It, page 39

Resentment is the Number One offender. It destroys more alcoholics than anything else. From it stem all forms of spiritual disease, for we have been not only mentally and physically ill, we have also been spiritually ill. When our spiritual malady is overcome, we straighten out mentally and physically.

In dealing with our resentments, we set them on paper. We listed people, institutions, or principles with whom we were angry. We asked ourselves why we were angry. In most cases it was found that our self-esteem, our pocketbooks, our ambitions, our personal relationships (including sex) were hurt or threatened.

“The most heated bit of letter-writing can be a wonderful safety valve—providing the wastebasket is somewhere nearby.”

ALCOHOLICS ANNOYMOUS, pages 64-65  
LETTER, 1949



**We are not a  
glum lot.**