



The Triangle

FEBRUARY 2017

2nd Step: Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

2nd Tradition: For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority – A loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience.

2nd Concept: The General Service Conference of A.A. has become, for nearly every practical purpose, the active voice and the effective conscience of our whole Society in world affairs.

The Second Step—A Measure of Hope

If the First Step is a measure of our despair, the Second is a measure of our hope. The First Step is the admission and acceptance of our defeat—total, absolute defeat. With all our resources, we can't stay sober; with the best intentions and with the utmost determination, we still find our lives crashing down around our heads. Indeed, we are powerless over alcohol, and our lives are unmanageable.

But if we are powerless over alcohol, then who or what will keep us sober? And if we cannot manage our own lives, then who or what will guide us, help us return to some sort of rational existence?

In answer to both questions, the Second Step says: a power greater than ourselves can restore us to sanity.

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~ A.A. Needs Our Support! ~

Please remember to include your group's Service Number:

HMB District 9

HMB Area 48

A.A. World Services

P.O. Box 8112

118 Polar Plaza #114

P.O. Box 459

Utica N.Y. 13505

Amsterdam N.Y. 12010

New York N.Y. 10163

Announcements

All are Welcome Group: Our Savior Lutheran, 1640 Genesee St. Utica

- Speakers for January
 - February 7th – Janet K.
 - February 27th – Dan E.
- would like to remind the women there is a literature meeting on Sunday afternoons at 1:30p

Saturday Night Serenity Group: The first Saturday of each month is a speaker meeting. First Assembly of God, 9427 Maynard Drive in Marcy. This month's speaker is Tyler.

Speakers Needed to go into the Insight House and share your experience, strength, and hope. Contact Tom A. or your GSR for more information. Or send an email to District9Treatment@aahmbny.org

1st Tradition Group Mohawk Valley Alano Club, downtown Utica, Thursday 7 p.m. Step meeting format from 12 & 12 study to a Back to Basics beginners curriculum. With heavy emphasis on the 1st 3 steps... newcomers and experienced AA's are needed

Northeast Regional AA Service Assembly (NERAASA) February 24 – 26, 2017, Sheraton Framingham Hotel & Conference Center, 1657 Worcester Rd, Framingham, MA 01701
(flyer available at <https://aahmbny.org/regional-events/>)

Dolgeville's Saturday Night Group needs our support! They meet at 26 E Faville Ave in Dolgeville on Saturday nights. Meeting time has changed to 7:30pm.

Note from the Editor: This year I will be making some changes to how the Triangle dispenses its information. You may have noticed I have been including several links to webpages recently. There are two reasons for this; 1. To save space, and 2. Our Area has a functioning website that is easily accessible. We should be supporting it, using it, and telling others about it. Already, whenever I ask a visitor how they found a meeting, they tell me, "I found it online." I have included some usage stats of our website on the next page.

From now on I will be supplying two versions of the newsletter: a regular version and a longer version which will be *online only* at the aahmbny.org website. It will include items such as event flyers, area news, and longer stories that simply do not fit into the regular version. If your group does not receive the copies of the Triangle that I distribute at the District Meetings, or you need more copies, you can simply access it and print it via the website. If you have any questions, comments, concerns, or submissions, give them to your GSR or attend the District Meetings (last Wednesday of each month @ Our Savior Lutheran, 6.30pm).

Area Events Calendar 2017

<u>Month</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Host</u>
January 14	HMB Area Inventory Day	Defreetsville, NY
February 24-26	NERAASA	Framingham, MA
March 4	Fellowship Day	Hudson, NY
March 10-12	NERD (Delegates & Alternates)	
April	Delegate's Day of Sharing	ADK Cluster – District 13 (5, 10 19)
May	HMB Area Assembly	Central Cluster-District 14 (4, 8)
June 2-4	NERF	Mars, PA
June	Joy of Service Day	H. V. Cluster-District 16 (3, 7, 11, 15, 17)
August 4-6	NYS Informational Workshop	Rochester, NY
September	HMB Election Assembly	Eastern Cluster-District 2 (1, 18)
October 14	HMB Area Assembly	Oneonta, NY
November 3-5	HMB Convention	Fishkill, NY
November	Fellowship Day	Western Cluster-District 12 (9)

Our Area Website's Web Report – from the HMB AREA 48 Assembly Minutes 8/8/16

Web Report: Usage stats last 30 days:

1174 sessions
 722 unique viewers
 2,640 pages viewed
 50% are returning visitors
 49.5% are first time visitors

Most commonly viewed is the Home Page, followed by events, district websites, meetings, district newsletters, HMB Newsletters, and district events.

40.3% are on phones, the rest are on PCs

HMB Area 48

2017 Meeting Schedule Order Form

Hudson Mohawk Berkshire Area 48 of Alcoholics Anonymous
2017 HMB Meeting Schedule Book Order Form



Inquiries to: al treasurer@ahmbny.org



No Shipping to PO Boxes
 Schedules are \$.40 ea.
 (Minimum order 10)

Shipping Costs*:			
10-100	\$12.00	601- 900	\$40.00
101-200	\$15.00	901-1200	\$50.00
201-300	\$20.00	1201-1500	\$60.00
301-600	\$30.00	1501-1800	\$70.00

For every additional 100 over 1800 add \$4.00
 *Due to the high price of shipping, it is recommended that groups with small orders combine with other small order groups to maximize savings.

PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY

Name: _____ Group or Organization: _____

Street Address: _____

City/Town: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Contact Person: _____ Email: _____

Phone: (____) _____

Quantity: _____ x \$.40 = \$ _____

Shipping & Handling (see box above): \$ _____

Total Enclosed: \$ _____

**MAKE CHECKS
 PAYABLE AND MAIL
 ORDERS TO:**

**HMB MEETING
 SCHEDULES
 PO BOX 3
 CASTLETON, NY 12033**

Some Facts to Think About:

- Currently about 40% of groups contribute to the General Service Office
 - Costs of Services provided by G.S.O. (as of 2016) are approximately \$7.15 per member per year
 - Gross profit from A.A. literature sales account for over 50% of G.S.O.'s income
 - Your contributions help ensure the future of our Fellowship worldwide
-

Contributions:

Group Contributions to GSO for District 9

- October to December: \$1194.33
- 14 of 39 Groups contributing (35.90%)
- For the same period last year: \$791.00
- 11 of 39 Groups contributing (28.21%)

Group Contributions to Area 48, January through December 2016

- Clinton: \$100.00
- Holland Patent: \$40.00
- Central: \$200.00
- First Step: \$300.00
- Drunks Along the Mohawk: \$110.00
- Acceptance Womans: \$80.00
- Mohawk Spiritual: \$30.00
- All Are Welcome: \$160.00
- Outsiders: \$170.00
- First Tradition: \$30.00
- Morning Serenity: \$38.33

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With that single, simple statement, the Second Step lays the spiritual cornerstone of AA: If we are to recover from the physical, mental, and spiritual disease called alcoholism, we must come to believe in and rely on a force outside ourselves.

This is not easy for most of us to do, and for many it takes time. Fortunately, the Step is very careful to use the wording “Came to believe.” Some of us come to believe almost instantly; others take weeks or months; still others take years. There is no set timetable, and there is no reason to feel guilt over inability to accept the Second Step immediately, with all its ramifications. On the other hand, though, if we do not work toward an acceptance of the Step, if we ignore it or kick it under the rug and hope it goes away, we cut the spiritual heart out of the program.

So, by hook or by crook, we come to believe. But believe in what?

In three things: the existence of a force outside—and greater than—ourselves; the fact of our own insanity; the ability of the greater power to take care of that insanity.

For reasons which someday someone may explain far better than I can, many or even most alcoholics seem to have trouble with the word “insanity,” though the track record of any practicing alcoholic—even the part we remember—should be proof enough that we are at this stage somewhat different from the normal. To many, the word conjures up visions of men in white coats, or patients chasing butterflies across Happydale, or any one of a dozen forms of psychotic behavior. But a word is only a word, and “insanity” can refer to any kind of behavior that is at variance with what is generally accepted as normal.

Our obsessive, compulsive behavior in relation to alcohol can hardly be termed normal. Nor can the things we do while drinking. Nor can many of the habit patterns, mental processes, or just plain hangups we have after we stop drinking.

Any discussion of the Second Step will show that the word “insanity” means, to different people, that we were insane while we drank, or before we started drinking, or at all three stages. These differences of opinion become unimportant in the light of this statement: If we were insane while we drank, the craving to return to that life must be equally insane, and if there was or is some problem that adds fuel to the craving, then the problem must be eliminated.

But the solution offered by that statement is not as easy as it looks. To put it crudely: A truly sick mind cannot repair itself; in fact, many times it can’t even see what’s wrong.

The human mind has a marvelous ability to protect itself from outside influences. Although the conscious portion of the mind may have a sincere desire to find out what’s wrong and to fix it, the subconscious part will block any such effort by putting up a bewildering variety of misleading motivations, misinformation, and misdirections. The more important—the deeper—the particular hang-up is, the higher and thicker this wall will be. If the problem is big enough, the conscious, thinking mind will not even be aware of its existence, and the mind that does become aware will still be powerless to do much about it.

The knowledge of that helplessness in trying to cope with our own problems by ourselves is an integral part of the First and Second Steps. The Second Step states very clearly that our

insanity can be taken care of, our sanity restored, by a power greater than ourselves. Once we have become aware of our own irrationality and our inability to cope with it singlehanded, it then becomes a question of searching out a solution that is outside—and greater than—ourselves.

It would be hard to overemphasize the importance of this search for an acceptance of a power, a force, an influence that is outside ourselves. The Step refers to a power greater than ourselves. Obviously, if we are unable to solve our problems alone, the power must be greater than we are in order to bring about anything much worthwhile. However, babies have to creep before they can walk, and walk before they can run. It is tough merely to begin to look outside ourselves for any kind of force or power, let alone a greater power. In fact, it is hard for some of us to accept the idea that there is anything outside ourselves.

That last statement deserves some explanation. A rational, thinking, conscious mind has no trouble with the idea that each person, thing and force has a separate and distinct existence. We can say (and believe), “I am. You are. He is.”

However, the subconscious or unconscious mind often rejects this idea. It says, “I am, but you exist only as I think about you.” Extreme? Hardly. One of the most powerful tools in AA is the process by which one alcoholic identifies with another. First, this identification consists merely of recognizing that there are people who exist independently of our own minds. Then the process goes further: It identifies another alcoholic as a similar human being. But the basic identification is with another human being as a separate entity.

Once that log jam has been broken up, the rest of the process is relatively easy. Once we become aware that there are other people and

things—and forces—outside ourselves, it becomes a matter of searching until a power that does some good is found. Eventually, through any one of a wide variety of spiritual experiences, the power is recognized as the basic driving force of the universe.

Disposing of the whole concept of acquiring a greater power in one or two sentences may seem abrupt, but is anything else worth saying? Those who have had a spiritual experience already know all about it, while for those who have not yet had one, an outpouring of words would have no real meaning.

The search for a higher power and the nature of that power, when found, are very personal matters. Many of us have no trouble in accepting God as our Higher Power; many others shy away from the word “God,” but have no trouble accepting the presence of some sort of universal force; still others look upon our AA group or all of AA s a power greater than ourselves.

In all these cases, though, we have acquired a belief in some force that is external, more powerful than we are, and capable of helping us return to sanity. This implies that the external, more powerful force is a force for good, an orderly force capable of making sense out of the chaos of reality, and bringing order to our own chaotic lives.

The final stage of a full acceptance of the Second Step is to come to believe that this greater power—a good and orderly greater power—will indeed actually help us. We have already accepted the idea that this force can do the job. Now we must become convinced, completely convinced, that the power will do it.

Once again, words are hardly an adequate method of trying to express belief. Those who have thrown themselves on the mercy of the

court, so to speak, know that the higher power will do exactly as the Step says. But that statement is no help at all to those who haven't.

What may help is a very brief description of one member's struggles with the Second Step.

I came into AA as an agnostic—or, rather, I didn't believe in anything much, but I wanted to. Although I couldn't begin to accept the concept of God, I certainly liked the serenity and obvious peace of mind I saw in those who did believe.

As my time in the program grew, this desire grew. Also increasing day by day was my pain—pure, unrelieved pain—not physical pain, but a longing inside my brain and my heart for something above and, most important, beyond me.

My group and the whole AA program helped, and as time went by I began to perceive some sort of order where there had been only confusion, some sense of guidance where there had been only a labyrinth of blind alleys.

Then one day (on the Garden State Parkway, as unlikely as that sounds) all the pieces fell into place. Whatever barrier had blinded my vision, preventing me from seeing the true nature of things, was gone. For the first time in my life, I became aware of the all-pervading presence of an incomprehensibly vast power.

Then, too, I became aware that I was only one infinitely small—but vitally important—part of the universe. Infinitely small because I was one tiny soul on one planet going around one sun in one galaxy of countless billions, but vitally important because the entire, immense

universe would be very, very, very slightly different without me, as it would be different without any of us.

The vision, if I may call it that, was momentarily staggering, but only momentarily. The essential rightness of my vision sustained me, and still sustains me. If I am a part of the whole—even a tiny part—I belong here.

And if I belong here, all I have to do is find out exactly what I am supposed to be and do. For me as an alcoholic, part of this answer is obvious. The universe has the ability—in fact, it makes it a rule—to eliminate the bad and the sick, and since the alcoholic is indeed a sick person, the universe—or society—will eliminate him. Therefore, to drink is for me to deny my higher power.

But that is only part of the problem, although perhaps the most important part. I personally conceive of the universe as a very orderly place; to achieve a serene and happy existence, all that is required of me is to be aware of this order and fit myself into it. This is a lot easier said than done, of course. So, in AA, after the Second Step there are ten more designed to help accomplish this.

But once we have accepted, as ineluctable fact, our powerlessness over alcohol, and once we have come to believe that a greater power will give us all the help we need, we have made two giant steps along the road to recovery.

P. S., Greenwich, CT

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