



The Triangle

SEPTEMBER 2017

9TH Step: Made direct amends to such people, wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

9TH Tradition: A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.

9TH Concept: Good service leadership at all levels is indispensable for our future functioning and safety. Primary world service leadership, once exercised by the founders, must necessarily be assumed by the trustees.

The Road from Reno

On a cross-country trip with his parents, a son learns a valuable lesson while making amends to his mom

As the plane took off my father asked, "Is it going to bother you if I use these two free drink coupons on this flight?" He wasn't going to drink them, but they were free and he was a frugal man. I was just about two years sober and the last thing he wanted to do was to put my sobriety at risk. At my first AA birthday he had asked my sponsor, "How much do I owe you?" That was the only way he knew how to say thank you. We are not wealthy by any means, and I had lived on my own for more than 20 years, but he was grateful for what AA had done for me and my family.

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~ A.A. Needs Our Support! ~

Please use the following addresses – and don't forget your group's ID #

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

Looking for a meeting? Call our district's hotline: (315)226-3501

Announcements

District 9 Meetings that Need Our Support:

- LITTLE FALLS 7:30 PM WEDNESDAY OPEN DISCUSSION
512 EAST GANSEVOORT ST
- DOLGEVILLE 7:30 PM SATURDAY OPEN DISCUSSION
26 EAST FAVILLE AVE

September District Meeting: On the 27th (Wed) at Our Savior Lutheran, Downstairs at 6:30pm. The following District Positions are currently open:

All are Welcome Group: Our Savior Lutheran, 1640 Genesee St., Utica, 6:30pm

Speakers for June:

- TBA – September 11th
- Cheryl G. – September 25th

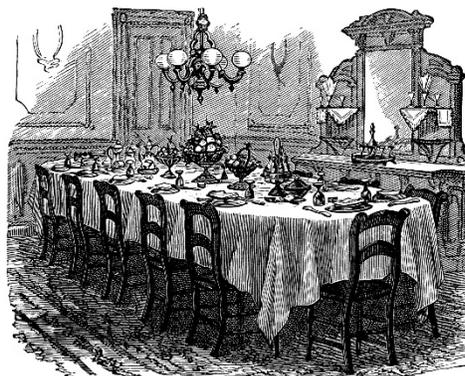
Also, there is a 12 & 12 study in the parlor on Tuesday's at 6:30pm

Working Through The AA Steps: With The "Back To Basics" Method, Thursdays @ 7 pm, Mohawk Valley Alano Club, AA's First Tradition Group, 6 Cottage Place, Utica, 13502 (Church Auditorium Rear Basement)

District 9 Annual Spiritual Dinner

Saturday November 11th

At the Roselawn
Restaurant
446 Main St.
in New York Mills



Coffee....5:30pm
Dinner....7:00pm
Speaker....8:00pm

(ticket prices and speaker info tba)

For a complete list of area events, go to ***district9.aahmbny.org*** → ***Events***

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This trip was part of the process of making amends to my parents. My mother had asked me if I'd help drive a car back from Reno, Nevada. She had purchased it from her brother's estate. I said yes, of course. I had my wife's OK to go; she knew I needed to do it (thank God for Al-Anon).

In Reno everything happens around the casino. My uncle's wife was part of a group of older ladies who ate breakfast in the casino, went back for lunch, and then, after a nap, went back for dinner to play a bit of keno. So I had to spend quite a bit of time in the casino. To my surprise, I never had a thought of drinking.

I escaped the temptations of the "Biggest Little City in the World," and we drove back to our hometown of Memphis, Tenn. in Mom's new car. It was a long trip, and I drove the biggest part of it. It was the least I could do for my parents; after all, they had rescued me time and time again. I even had them smuggling in food on the weekend, while I was in the penal farm, or as I lovingly called it, the Shelby County Country Club, where I did a one to three-year sentence for crimes related to my drinking. In other words, I owed them a lot more than I could ever pay back by driving from Reno to Memphis. My father and I had had those frank and honest talks about what I had done and about how I could make it right. We both had admitted our faults, and I had done what was necessary to clean my side of the street. Of course, me staying sober was the biggest part as far as he was concerned. I was very grateful to have been able to get that one under my belt.

As we were driving back from Reno, Dad and I were in the front seat and Mom was in the back seat. Everything was just rolling along; life was good. I had talked to my wife and son back home and they were eagerly anticipating my return, all as a result of the new lease on life AA had given me. As the conversation in the front seat turned to the past, I thought maybe this was the right time to have that frank and honest talk with Mom about all of my faults and past misdeeds—to clear the air, so to speak. It seemed to be the perfect opportunity to make "direct amends" to her, so I launched into some of the

details of my past transgressions, and said that, if I could, I'd go back and redo things. I added how much I regretted doing those things.

Then I looked into the mirror, and I saw the look in her eyes. I knew immediately that these things I was bringing up caused her to remember the dark days of the decades before I entered AA. I could see the pain that I was putting her through as she remembered those times when she didn't know if her baby was dead or alive. Not to mention the time when her youngest son was sentenced to the state penitentiary for the crimes he had committed while under the influence. And did I need to make her remember the time when she brought my two children from my first marriage to visit me at Christmas, in a gymnasium inside that penitentiary? Those were just a handful of the situations I had forced her to endure. I knew immediately I had no right to bring up those painful memories. Trying to right the wrongs of my past, I was causing her more pain.

Thank God for good sponsorship, because Jack and I had discussed the Ninth Step and what it says about making "direct amends" to people, "except when to do so would injure them or others." The rule of thumb is: hard on us, easy on others. I don't have the right to hurt those people any more, and I have to bear the burden on my own two shoulders.

With Mom I have continued to make those amends by doing whatever I could to be of service to her. For many years, I called her every day and would go by whenever she needed something, or just whenever I thought I could help in any way—even when she didn't ask.

Before my father died a few years ago, I was able to help Mom take care of him and make the arrangement for his funeral, like a good son should. And thanks to making amends to him, I was "square" with him and could say good-bye without any regrets.

Three years later, when my mom got sick, I was there for her too. The result of that was that she decided she didn't have to live alone. Finally, she consented to me building a wing for her on the back of my house and getting her

out of the old neighborhood. I don't have the right to rob her of her independence to satisfy my need to know she is taken care of. Her apartment is totally self-contained, except for the laundry room, which we share. Mom has her own entry to a garden area and flowerbed, so she can do the gardening she loves so much. Her place has many windows, so she can have plenty of light to paint. Some folks use the term making "living amends" when you can't have one of those frank and honest talks. But

really, isn't changing the way we do things the true spirit of making direct amends? I'll never be able to undo my past, but I don't have to continue to be haunted by it if I just follow the path that has been laid out for me by those who trudged the road before me.

– Don A.
Germantown, Tennessee

CHECKLIST - Questions for Tradition 9:

1. Do I still try to boss things in AA?
 2. Do I resist formal aspects of AA because I fear them as authoritative?
 3. Am I mature enough to understand and use all of the AA program – even if no one makes me do so – with a sense of personal responsibility?
 4. Do I exercise patience and humility in any AA job I take?
 5. Am I aware of all those to whom I am responsible in any AA job?
 6. Why doesn't every AA group need a constitution and bylaws?
 7. Have I learned to step out of an AA job gracefully – and profit thereby – when the time comes?
 8. What has rotation to do with anonymity? With humility?
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Thoughts on Step 9:

"The question of how to approach the man we hated will arise (they're talking here about someone on our resentment list). It may be he has done us MORE harm than we have done HIM and, though we may have acquired a better attitude toward him, we are still not too keen about admitting our faults. Nevertheless, with a person we dislike, we take the bit in our teeth. It is harder to go to an enemy than to a friend, but we find it much more beneficial to us. WE GO TO HIM in a helpful and forgiving spirit, confessing OUR former ill feeling and expressing OUR regret." – *Big Book, p.77*