

The Gateway Newsletter, District 14

Altamont, Duaneburg, Guilderland, Niskayuna, Schenectady, Scotia

February 2012

HMB Area 48, New York



A Power Greater Than Ourselves

Step 2

Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

Tradition 2

For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.

Concept 2

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 its world affairs.

Upcoming Events

- ◆ January 28, 2012: Sponsorship Workshop, Schenectady United Methodist Church - see page 5 for info.
- ◆ March 2-4, 2012: NERAASA - Crown Plaza, Albany - see page 4 for info.

Lack of power, that was our dilemma. We had to find a power by which we could live, and it had to be a *Power greater than ourselves*. Obviously. But where and how were we to find this Power?

Well, that's exactly what this book is about. Its main object is to enable you to find a Power greater than yourself which will solve your problem. That means we have written a book which we believe to be spiritual as well as moral. And it means, of course, that we are going to talk about God. Here difficulty arises with agnostics. Many times we talk to a new man and watch his hope rise as we discuss his alcoholic problems and explain our fellowship. But his face falls when we speak of spiritual matters, especially when we mention God, for we have reopened subject which our man thought he had neatly evaded or entirely ignored.

We know how he feels. We have shared his honest doubt and prejudice. Some of us have been violently anti-religious. To others, the word "God" brought up a particular idea of Him with which someone had tried to impress them during childhood. Perhaps we rejected this particular conception because it seemed inadequate. With that rejection we imagined we had abandoned the God idea entirely. We were bothered with the thought that faith and dependence upon a Power beyond ourselves was somewhat weak, even cowardly. We looked upon this

world of warring individuals, warring theological systems, and inexplicable calamity, with deep skepticism. We looked askance at many individuals who claimed to be godly. How could a Supreme Being have anything to do with it all? And who could comprehend a Supreme Being anyhow? Yet, in other moments, we found ourselves thinking, when enchanted by a starlit night, "Who, then, made all this?" There was a feeling of awe and wonder, but it was fleeting and soon lost.

Yes, we of agnostic temperament have had these thoughts and experiences. Let us make haste to reassure you. We found that as soon as we were able to lay aside prejudice and express even a willingness to believe in a Power greater than ourselves, we commenced to get results, even though it was impossible for any of us to fully define or comprehend that Power, which is God.

Much to our relief, we discovered we did not need to consider another's conception of God. Our own conception, however inadequate, was sufficient to make the approach and to effect a contact with Him.

Alcoholics Anonymous, pp 45-46



“It is certain that all recipients of spiritual experiences declare for their reality. The best evidence of that reality is in the subsequent fruits. Those who receive these gifts of grace are very much changed people, almost invariably for the better.”

Bill W., Talk, 1960

“...Step Two gently and very gradually began to infiltrate my life. I can’t say upon what occasion or upon what day I came to believe in a Power greater than myself, but I certainly have that belief now.”

“Came to believe!” I gave lip service to my belief when I felt like it or when I thought it would look good. I didn’t really trust God. I didn’t believe He cared for me. I kept trying to change things I couldn’t change. Gradually, in

disgust, I began to turn it all over, saying: “You’re so omnipotent, you take care of it.” He did. I began to receive answers to my deepest problems, sometimes at the most unusual times: driving to work, eating lunch, or when I was sound asleep, I realized that I hadn’t thought of those solutions—a Power greater than myself had given them to me. I came to believe.

Daily Reflections, February 1

Tradition Two Checklist, from the AAGrapevine

For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.

1. Do I criticize or do I trust and support my group officers, AA committees, and office workers? Newcomers? Old-timers?
2. Am I absolutely trustworthy, even in secret, with AA Twelfth Step jobs or other AA responsibilities?
3. Do I look for credit in my AA jobs, praise for my AA ideas?
4. Do I have to save face in group discussion, or can I yield in good spirit to the group conscience and work cheerfully along with it?
5. Although I have been sober a few years, am I still willing to serve my turn at AA chores?
6. In group discussions, do I sound off about matters on which I have no experience or little knowledge?

As Bill Sees It We Cannot Stand Still (page 25)

In the first days of A.A., I wasn’t much bothered about the areas of life in which I was standing still. There was always the alibi: “After all,” I said to myself, “I’m far too busy with much more important matters.” That was my near perfect prescription for comfort and complacency.

Grapevine, June 1961

How many of us would presume to declare, “Well, I’m sober and I’m happy. What more can I want, or do? I’m fine the way I am.” We know that the price of such self-satisfaction is any inevitable backslide, punctuated at some point by a very rude awakening. We have to grow or else deteriorate. For us, the status quo can only be for today, never for tomorrow. Change we must; we cannot stand still.

Grapevine, February 1961

Hope

Few indeed are the practicing alcoholics who have any idea how irrational they are, or seeing their irrationality, can bear to face it. Some will be willing to term themselves “problem drinkers,” but cannot endure the suggestion that they are in fact mentally ill. They are abetted in this blindness by a world which does not understand the difference between sane drinking and alcoholism. “Sanity” is defined as “soundness of mind.” Yet no alcoholic, soberly analyzing his destructive behavior, whether the destruction fell on the dining-room furniture or his own moral fiber, can claim “soundness of mind” for himself.

Therefore, Step Two is the rallying point for all of us. Whether agnostic, atheist, or former believer, we can stand together on this Step. True humility and an open mind can lead us to faith, and every A.A. meeting is an assurance that God will restore us to sanity if we rightly relate ourselves to Him.

Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions, pp 32-33



Looking for 12 & 12s

District 14 is looking for 12 & 12s for jails. If you or your group would like to make a donation of a gently used 12 & 12 or a new 12 & 12, please contact Tammy D. at D14News@yahoo.com

Are You a Trusted Servant?

The District is looking for trusted servants to fill the following district positions: Special Needs/Accessibility; Alternate Functions; Literature; Bridging the Gap; Corrections-Women's. If interested, send an email to Tammy D. at District14DCM@yahoo.com

UNITY DAY - Add Your 2 Cents

The first Unity Day was held in the summer of 1997. Throughout the past 14 years there have been different venues for this event. This year the co-chairs, Fred C. and George D., are looking for volunteers to participate on the Unity Day Committee to help plan the event. They need help with planning the event and particularly with identifying a location for the event. If you have ideas and would like to participate on the committee, let your voice be heard by contacting district14functions@yahoo.com This is a great service opportunity!

“Do not let any prejudice you may have against spiritual terms deter you from honestly asking yourself what they might mean to you.”

Bill W., Alcoholics Anonymous, page 47

District 14 Trusted Servants

D.C.M. Tammy D.
 Alternate DCM/Records..... John C.
 Treasurer George D.
 Cooperation with the
 Professional Community Brian J.
 Corrections-Men’s Wilbur S.
 Functions Fred C.
 Newsletter Editor..... Michelle C.
 Public Information..... John C.
 Secretary Karen K.
 Treatment Mike H.
 Grapevine Representative..... Lois M.
 Records & Archivists..... Wyatt W.
 Special Needs/Accessibility.....
 Alternate Functions.....
 Literature.....
 Bridging the Gap.....
 Corrections-Women’s.....

Our Twelfth Step - carrying the message - is the basic service that the A.A. Fellowship gives; this is our principal aim and the main reason for our existence. Therefore, A.A. is more than a set of principles; it is a society for alcoholics in action. We must carry the message, else we ourselves can wither and those who haven't been given the truth may die.

Hence, an A.A. service is anything whatever that helps us to reach a fellow sufferer - ranging all the way from the Twelfth Step itself to a ten-cent phone call and a cup of coffee, and to A.A.'s General Service Office for national and international action. The sum total of all these services is our Third Legacy of Service.

Services include meeting places, hospital cooperation, and intergroup offices; they mean pamphlets, books and good publicity of almost every description. They call for committees, delegates, trustees, and conferences. And, not to be forgotten, they need voluntary money contributions from within the Fellowship.

*by Bill W. (1951)
 A.A.'s Legacy of Service
 The A.A. Service Manual*

PASS IT ON - Share your stories of experience, strength and hope. To submit a newsletter article, send it to Michelle C. at d14News@yahoo.com

HELP US MAKE A DIFFERENCE! - The February District meeting will be held on Monday, February 20 from 7:35-9:00 p.m. at the Scotia United Methodist Church.... The meeting is open to all A.A. Members!

SPONSORSHIP WORKSHOP

On Saturday, January 28, 2012 from 10:00 am-2:00 pm District 14 and the Wonderful Wednesday Women’s Group present EXPERIENCE IN SPONSORSHIP - A workshop exploring the differences between sponsoring newcomers and those who’ve been in AA for a while. For additional information, see flyer on page 5.

NERAASA - March 2-4, 2012

The purpose of NERAASA is for General Service Representatives (GSR’s), District Committee Members (DCM’s), Area Officers, Area Committee Members, District Committee Members, and Intergroup/Central Office Representatives of the Northeast Region to discuss General Service Conference related issues and concerns affecting A.A. as a whole, as well as pertinent aspects of recovery, unity and service common to the areas of the Northeast Region. NERAASA is a weekend of Panel Presentations and Floor Discussions on Issues Affecting A.A. Today; the Northeast Regional Trustee’s Report; Saturday Dinner followed by an A.A. Speaker Meeting. In addition, there are several Round Table Sharing Sessions throughout the weekend. For additional information, go to <http://neraasa.org>

NEW MEETING!
 JOIN US on
The BROAD HIGHWAY...



Open - Women - Step & Tradition
Sunday 8 pm
 Delmar Presbyterian Church
 Delaware & Cherry Aves
 Big Book - 12&12

HMB District 14 and the Wonderful Wednesday Women's Group present ...

Experiences in Sponsorship

A workshop exploring the differences between sponsoring newcomers and those who've been in AA for a while

featuring local and out-of-state speakers, Q&A session, and concurrent men's and women's panel discussions in separate rooms

10:00 am - 2:00 pm
doors open at 9:30 am

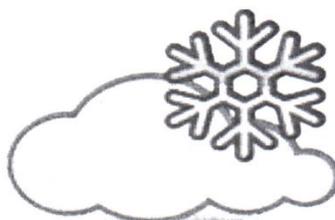
Saturday, January 28, 2012

Schenectady United Methodist Church
603 State Street, Schenectady, NY 12305
Corner of State Street and Lafayette Street, next to MVP

Provided for Participants:
water, coffee, tea, cookies and light lunch, pens and paper

**suggested
donation of \$5.00**

*don't got it?
don't sweat it ...
all AAs welcome!*



*contact the Capital District
Central Office for news about
weather-related cancellations:*

(518) 463-0906

www.AAalbanyny.org

**50/50 raffle and
a "cuss jar"**

*Grapevine and
AA Literature table*

SEATING IS LIMITED ... RSVP STRONGLY ENCOURAGED

To RSVP, email your first name and last initial to district14functions@gmail.com