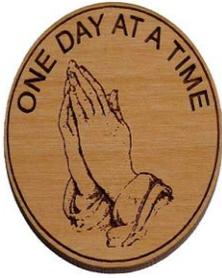


# The Gateway Newsletter, District 14

Altamont, Duaneburg, Guilderland, Niskayuna, Schenectady, Scotia

March 2012

HMB Area 48, New York



### Step 3

Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him*.

### Tradition 3

The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.

### Concept 3

To insure effective leadership, we should endow each element of A.A. – the Conference, the General Service Board and its service corporations, staffs, committees, and executives—with a traditional “Right of Decision.”

## Upcoming Events

- ◆ March 2-4:  
NERAASA - Crown Plaza, Albany
- ◆ March 30-April 1:  
EACYPAA, Holiday Inn, Saratoga Springs
- ◆ July 20-22:  
43<sup>rd</sup> NYS Convention, Marriott Hotel, Albany

## God As We Understood Him

Selfishness—self-centeredness! That, we think, is the root of our troubles. Driven by a hundred forms of fear, self-delusion, self-seeking, and self-pity, we step on the toes of our fellows and they retaliate. Sometimes they hurt us, seemingly without provocations, but we invariably find that at some time in the past we have made decisions based on self which later placed us in a position to be hurt.

So our troubles, we think, are basically of our own making. They arise out of ourselves, and the alcoholic is an extreme example of self-will run riot, though he usually doesn't think so. Above everything, we alcoholics must be rid of this selfishness. We must, or it kills us! God makes that possible. And there often seems no way of entirely getting rid of self without His aid. Many of us had moral and philosophical convictions galore, but we could not live up to them even though we would have liked to. Neither could we reduce our self-centeredness much by wishing or trying on our own power. We had to have God's help.

This is the how and why of it. First of all, we had to quit playing God. It didn't work. Next, we decided that hereafter in this drama of life, God was going to be our Director. He is the Principal; we are His agents. He is the Father, and we are His children. Most good ideas are simple, and this concept was the keystone of the new and triumphant arch through which we passed to freedom.

When we sincerely took such a position, all sorts of remarkable things followed. We had a new Employer. Being all powerful, He provided what we needed, if we kept close to Him and performed His work well. Established on such a footing we became less and less interested in ourselves, our little plans and designs. More and more we became interested in seeing what we could contribute to life. As we felt new power flow in, as we enjoyed peace of mind, as we discovered we could face life successfully, as we became conscious of His presence, we began to lose our fear of today, tomorrow or the hereafter. We were reborn.

*Alcoholics Anonymous, pp 62-63*

## THIRD STEP PRAYER

“God, I offer myself to Thee—to build with me and to do with me as Thou wilt. Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Thy will. Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of Thy Power, Thy Love, and Thy Way of Life. May I do Thy will always!”

*Alcoholics Anonymous, page 63*

# LOVE AND TOLERANCE

*God grant me the serenity  
to accept the things I  
cannot change, courage to  
change the things I can,  
and wisdom to know the  
difference.*



On awakening let us think about the twenty-four hours ahead. We consider our plans for the day. Before we begin, we ask God to direct our thinking, especially asking that it be divorced from self-pity, dishonest or self-seeking motives.

*Alcoholics*

*Anonymous, page 86*

*Love and tolerance of others is our code.*

*I have found that I have to forgive others in all situations to maintain any real spiritual progress. The vital importance of forgiving may not be obvious to me at first sight, but my studies tell me that every great spiritual teacher has insisted strongly upon it.*

*I must forgive injuries, not just*

*in words, or as a matter of form, but in my heart. I do this not for the other person's sake, but for my own sake. Resentment, anger, or a desire to see someone punished, are things that rot my soul. Such things fasten my troubles to me with chains. They tie me to other problems that have nothing to do with my original problem.*

*Daily Reflections, March 20*

## Tradition Three Checklist, from the AAGrapevine

The only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking.

1. In my mind, do I prejudge some new AA members as losers?
2. Is there some kind of alcoholic whom I privately do not want in my AA group?
3. Do I set myself up as a judge of whether a newcomer is sincere or phony?
4. Do I let language, religion (or lack of it), race, education, age, or other such things interfere with

my carrying the message?

5. Am I overimpressed by a celebrity, a doctor, a clergyman, an ex-convict? Or can I just treat this new member simply and naturally as one more sick human, like the rest of us?
6. When someone turns up at AA needing information or help (even if he can't ask for it aloud), does it really matter to me what he does for a living? Where he lives? What his domestic arrangements are? Whether he had been to AA before? What his other problems are?

## As Bill Sees It: Resolving Fear (page 61)

Fear somehow touched about every aspect of our lives. It was an evil and corroding thread; the fabric of our existence was shot through with it. It set in motion trains of circumstances which brought us misfortune we felt we didn't deserve. But did not we often set the ball rolling ourselves?

*Alcoholics Anonymous, pp.67-68*

The problem of resolving fear has two aspects. We shall have to try for all the freedom from fear that is possible for us to attain. Then we shall need to find both the courage and the grace to deal constructively with whatever fears remain.

*Grapevine, January 1962*

## An AA Member Shares about the Sponsorship Workshop

On the morning of January 28, 2012, I was running around like a banshee. I had to crawl out of bed at the crack of dawn (7:00am ... on a SATURDAY!); quickly say the Third Step Prayer while thinking of all the stuff I have to do before the workshop starts at 10:00; drive to the Schenectady United Methodist Church to open the doors for our set-up volunteers; zoom to Dunkin' Donuts to grab some munchkins; debate whether or not to continue my abstinence from drinking caffeine and settle on a hot chocolate; zip over to Scotia to pick up our literature rack; drive to Barnes n' Noble and find the self-help section all by myself; grab the one and only copy of the Big Book I could find; ask the cashier if they had any hard cover editions and try not to laugh when she said that they don't come in hard cover; kick myself for paying \$17 for a book I could have bought the night before at the Friday Big Book meeting for a third of the price; narrowly avoid a homeless woman begging for change outside of the store; mumble something about my disgust for pan-handlers under my breath; realize that I have a baggie of \$20 in quarters, dimes and nickels in my purse to be used as a joke about the 'cuss jars' during my welcome remarks at the workshop; feel guilty for being such a selfish jerk; catch up with the woman, give her my change and wish her a happier day; pat myself on the back for being such a great human being; jump back in my car and head for the church; curse all the slow drivers in Schenectady; realize that the driver in front of me, the one driving on all four lanes of State Street and stopping short every 20 feet, was drunk; slow way down and then pass him as soon as it felt safe; look down at the clock and realize that at 9:30am, this man is either still drunk from the night before or has been drinking all morning; remember how I used to drive drunk despite what I told everyone else; realize how very fortunate I am that instead of trying to get home safely without killing myself or others, I'm heading to a room full of drunks who have recovered from a hopeless state of mind and body and who will help me stay sober for another day; realize how very fortunate I am that my sponsor helped me build a relationship with my God; thank my God for giving me the life I have today; choke back tears of gratitude because it will mess up my mascara; get back to the church and kick myself for not buying enough munchkins; as my husband if I have anything in my teeth; tell myself that the butterflies in my stomach are just my God's way of reminding that He's there with me; ask Him to help me find the right words to say to everyone as I walk to the front of the room; remind myself not to take it personally if everyone doesn't laugh at my jokes and that, despite all my flaws, they really do like me; turn on the microphone; take a deep breath; smile ... GO!

Despite all this craziness in my head leading up to our district's first workshop of the year, Experiences in Sponsorship was a success! More than 60 AA members attended from all over the greater capital region and beyond. Our guest speakers, Cyndi T from South Burlington, VT and Ian K from Greenland, NH, were terrific. Not only did they do a fine job of sharing their experience, strength and hope from the perspectives of both a sponsor and a sponsee, they kept us very entertained!

We shared a delicious meal and treats all day, thanks to the hard work of our district's Alternate Treasurer/Alternate Functions Chair/GSR for the Clubhouse Group, Mike J, as well as many volunteers from the Wonderful Wednesday Women's (WWW) Group, led by Judy Z.

After lunch, the women and men participated in separate discussions facilitated by Rita M from the WWW Group and Lisa J from the Duanesburg Group, and Ron B and Brian J from the Friday Big Book Group, respectively. Here we heard from local AA members about their experiences in sponsorship and talked about what to look for in a sponsor, what to do when a sponsee stops calling, what to do when a sponsor stops calling, the importance of "carrying the message and not the mess", and much more.

At the end of the day, we called the winning 50/50 ticket (which, coincidentally, was worth \$50 ... is that odd or is that God?), and then did a sobriety countdown. Pat L, a woman with 31 years of sobriety from District 1, gave a Big Book signed by everyone in attendance to Cory, a man with 26 days sober who came to the workshop to find a sponsor. Seeing the smile on his face was worth every one of those 1700 pennies! I hope that we use the momentum gathered from this day as a springboard for planning our next workshop this fall. We'll be putting out the call for topic ideas and volunteers very soon!

I would like to again say thanks to my fellow workshop committee members (George D, Mike J, Judy Z, Gerry W and Mark E), our fellow District 14 trusted servants, volunteers from the groups in our district (especially the WWW Group, who co-sponsored the workshop), and our local and not-so-local speakers for helping to make this day possible! I'd also like to thank Wyatt W, our district's Archivist/Records/Alternate GSR for the Niskayuna Fresh Start Group, for providing the audio equipment. We had a couple of snags in our attempt to audio record the event, but were able to have a bit of the day preserved for the future.

Please contact me if you'd like an audio CD of the speakers. Hey ... maybe we should do a District 14 time capsule as part of Unity Day?!?!?! Someone remind me to bring this up at our next district meeting on March 19!!! And the craziness continues ... Respectfully submitted by Tammy D, District 14 DCM,

[District14DCM@yahoo.com](mailto:District14DCM@yahoo.com)

## 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.....

### **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](mailto:District14DCM@yahoo.com)

**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](mailto:d14News@yahoo.com) by the 25<sup>th</sup>.

**HELP US MAKE A DIFFERENCE!** - The March District meeting will be held on Monday, March 19 from 7:35-9:00 p.m. at the Scotia United Methodist Church... The meeting is open to all A.A. Members!

### **Unity Day**

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, contact [district14functions@yahoo.com](mailto:district14functions@yahoo.com)

## **Our Twelfth Step—Carrying the Message...**

District 14 Cooperation with the Professional Community (CPC) and Public Information (PI) committees need your help. They are tasked with informing professionals, others that may be in contact with alcoholics, and the general public about A.A.. What we are, where we are, what we can do, and what we cannot do. A vital and necessary service in our community. If you would like to take part in carrying the message, contact Brian J at [CPCDistrict14@yahoo.com](mailto:CPCDistrict14@yahoo.com).

### **Did you know?**

New York's Hudson Mohawk Berkshire Area 48, which our district is part of, is one of 93 AA General Service Conference areas in the United States and Canada. Area 1 is Alabama/NW Florida ... Area 93 is Central California. The full list can be found at: [http://aa.org/lang/en/aasite\\_finder.cfm?origpage=72](http://aa.org/lang/en/aasite_finder.cfm?origpage=72)

## **NERAASA - March 2-4, 2012**

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>

## **EACYPAA -**

### **Friday, March 30 - Sunday, April 1, 2012**

The Eastern Area Convention of Young People in A.A. is being hosted at the Holiday Inn, Saratoga Springs, NY. Over 800 attendees are expected. For more information, go to: [www.eacypaa.org/](http://www.eacypaa.org/)

## **43<sup>rd</sup> NYS Convention - July 20-22, 2012**

This year's convention is being hosted by our very own Area 48 and will be held in Albany, NY at the Marriott Hotel, 189 Wolf Road. Pre-registration deadline is June 28. For convention itinerary, registration, room reservations, etc., go to the following website: [http://www.aahmbny.org/events/State-NYSConventionFlyer-201207\\_20-22.pdf](http://www.aahmbny.org/events/State-NYSConventionFlyer-201207_20-22.pdf)