



The GATEWAY



HMB Area 48, New York – District 14
Altamont, Duaneburg, Guilderland, Niskayuna,
Rotterdam, Schenectady, Scotia

February 2014

BELIEVE IN SOMETHING, WE ALL HAVE

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 II

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.

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. As soon as we admitted the possible existence of a Creative Intelligence, a Spirit of the Universe underlying the totality of things, we began to be possessed of a new sense of power and direction, provided we took other simple steps. We found that God does not make too hard terms with those who seek Him. To us, the Realm of Spirit is broad, roomy, all inclusive; never exclusive or forbidding to those who earnestly seek. It is open, we believe, to all men.

When, therefore, we speak to you of God, we mean your own conception of God. This applies, too, to other spiritual expressions which you find in this book. Do not let any prejudice you may have against spiritual terms deter you from honestly asking yourself what they mean to you. At the start, this was all we needed to commence spiritual growth, to effect our first conscious relation with God as we understood Him. Afterward, we found ourselves accepting many things which then seemed entirely out of reach. That was growth, but if we wished to grow we had to begin somewhere. So we used our own conception, however limited it was.

We needed to ask ourselves but one short question. "Do I now believe, or am I even willing to believe, that there is a Power greater than myself?" As soon as a man can say that he does believe, or is willing to believe, we emphatically assure him that he is on his way. It has been repeatedly proven among us that upon this simple cornerstone a wonderfully effective spiritual structure can be built.

SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE

The terms "spiritual experience" and "spiritual awakening" are used many times in this book which, upon careful reading, shows that the personality change sufficient to bring about recovery from alcoholism has manifested itself among us in many different forms.

Yet it is true that our first printing gave many readers the impression that these personality changes, or religious experiences, must be in the nature of sudden and spectacular upheavals. Happily for everyone, this conclusion is erroneous.

In the first few chapters a number of sudden revolutionary changes are described. Though it was not our intention to create such an impression, many alcoholics have nevertheless concluded that in order to recover they must acquire an immediate and overwhelming "Godconsciousness" followed at once by a vast change in feeling and outlook.

Among our rapidly growing membership of thousands of alcoholics such transformations, though frequent, are by no means the rule. Most of our experiences are what the psychologist William James calls the "educational variety" because they develop slowly over a period of time. Quite often friends of the newcomer are aware of the difference long before he is himself. He finally realizes that he has undergone a profound alteration in his reaction to life; that such a change could hardly have been brought about by himself alone. What often takes place in a few months could seldom



SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE - CONTINUED

have been accomplished by years of selfdiscipline. With few exceptions our members find that they have tapped an unsuspected inner resource which they presently identify with their own conception of a Power greater than themselves.

Most of us think this awareness of a Power greater than ourselves is the essence of spiritual experience. Our more religious members call it "God-consciousness."

Most emphatically we wish to say that any alcoholic capable of honestly facing his problems in the light of our experience can recover, provided he does not close his mind to all spiritual concepts. He can only be defeated by an attitude of intolerance or belligerent denial.

We find that no one need have difficulty with the spirituality of the program. Willingness, honesty and open mindedness are the essentials of recovery. But these are indispensable.

FAITH

THE SHARED GIFT

A.A. is more than a set of principles; it is a society of alcoholics in action. We must carry the message, else we ourselves can wither and those who haven't been given the truth may die.

SERVICE MANUAL, P. 6

Faith is more than our greatest gift; its sharing with others is our greatest responsibility. May we of A.A. continually seek the wisdom and the willingness by which we may well fulfill that immense trust which the Giver of all perfect gifts has placed in our hands.

GRAPEVINE, APRIL 1961

WORSHIPERS ALL

We found that we had been indeed worshippers. What a state of mental goose flesh that used to bring on! Had we not variously worshipped people, sentiment, things, money, and ourselves?

And then, with a better motive, had we not worshipfully beheld the sunset, the sea, or a flower? Who of us had not loved something or somebody? Were not these things the tissue out of which our lives were constructed? Did not these feelings, after all, determine the course of our existence?

It was impossible to say we had no capacity for faith, or love, or worship. In one form or another we had been living by faith and little else.

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, P. 54

SEEING IS BELIEVING

The Wright brothers' almost childish faith that they could build a machine which would fly was the mainspring of their accomplishment. Without that, nothing could have happened.

We agnostics and atheists were sticking to the idea that self sufficiency would solve our problems. When others showed us that Godsufficiency worked with them, we began to feel like those who had insisted the Wrights would never fly. We were seeing another kind of flight, a spiritual liberation from this world, people who rose above their problems.

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, PP. 52-53, 55

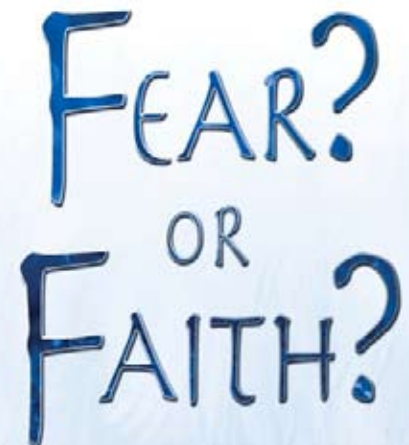
GOD WILL NOT DESERT US

LETTER, 1966

"Word comes to me that you are making a magnificent stand in adversity -- this adversity being the state of your health. It gives me a chance to express my gratitude for your recovery in A.A. and especially for the demonstration of its principles you are now so inspiring giving to us all.

"You will be glad to know that A.A.'s have an almost unfailing record in this respect. This, I think, is because we are so aware that God will not desert us when the chips are down; indeed, He did not when we were drinking. And so it should be with the remainder of life.

"Certainly, He does not plan to save us from all troubles and adversity. Nor, in the end, does He save us from so-called death -- since this is but an opening of a door into a new life, where we shall dwell among His many mansions. Touching these things I know you have a most confident faith."



FEAR?
OR
FAITH?

MEETING TOPICS

Acceptance
Attitude of gratitude
Belief in a Higher Power
Complacency
Dependence
Fear
Forgiveness
Freedom through sobriety
Hope
Humility
Identification
Inventory
Letting go of anger
Living one day at a time
Making amends
Meditation
Open-mindedness
Participation and action
Patience and tolerance
Practice these principles in all our affairs
Principles before personalities
Resentments
Rigorous honesty
Serenity
Service
Sponsorship
Staying away from the first drink
Surrender

SERVICE CORNER

TIME VERSUS MONEY

TWELVE CONCEPTS, PP. 66-67

Our attitude toward the giving of time when compared with our attitude toward giving money presents an interesting contrast. We give a lot of our time to A.A. activities for our own protection and growth, but also for the sake of our groups, our areas, A.A. as a whole, and, above all, the newcomer. Translated into terms of money, these collective sacrifices would add up to a huge sum.

But when it comes to the actual spending of cash, particularly for A.A. service overhead, many of us are apt to turn a bit reluctant. We think of the loss of all that earning power in our drinking years, of those sums we might have laid by for emergencies or for education of the kids.

In recent years, this attitude is everywhere on the decline; it quickly disappears when the real need for a given A.A. service becomes clear. Donors can seldom see what the exact result has been. They well know, however, that countless thousands of other alcoholics and their families are being helped.

"Though many of us have had to struggle for sobriety, never yet has this Fellowship had to struggle for lost unity. Consequently, we sometimes take this one great gift for granted. We forget that, should we lose our unity, the millions of alcoholics who still do not know might never get a chance." *Letter 1940*

"We used to be skeptical about large A.A. gatherings like conventions, thinking they might prove too exhibitionistic. But, on balance, their benefit is huge. While each A.A.'s interest should center principally in those about him and upon his own group, it is both necessary and desirable that we all get a larger vision of the whole.

"The General Service Conference in New York also produces this effect upon those who attend. It is a vision-stretching process." *Letter 1956*

CONTRIBUTIONS TO A.A.

DISTRICT 14

PO Box 494
Schenectady, NY 12301

HMB AREA ASSOCIATION

RTE. 30, #114
118 Polar Plaza
Amsterdam, NY 12010

GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE

PO Box 459
Grand Central Station
New York, NY 10163

CAPITAL DISTRICT CENTRAL OFFICE

575 Broadway, Room 128-130
Menands, NY 12204
Phone: 518-463-0906

Please remember to use your group # when sending contributions.

DISTRICT 14 TRUSTED SERVANTS

D.C.M.
 Alternate DCM Gregg V.
 Treasurer Ben M.
 Cooperation with the
 Professional Community Mel M.
 Corrections-Mens Matt W.
 Functions Fred C.
 Alternate Function Kate H.
 Newsletter Editor Dave B.
 Webmaster Tammy D.
 Public Information Lou N.
 Secretary Karen K.
 Treatment Gerry W.
 Alternate Treatment George D.
 Grapevine Rep. Gail L.
 Records & Archivists Wyatt W.
 Literature
 Bridging the Gap Jack B. & Joe A.
 Corrections-Womens Alana L.
 Special Needs/Accessibility Lois M.

HELP US MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

**The February District
meeting will be held on
Monday, February 17
from 7:35-9:00 p.m. at the
Scotia United Methodist Church.**

The meeting is open to all A.A. Members!

District 14 is looking for trusted servants to take on positions. It is a great way to stay sober and is very rewarding to be able to give back.

If interested, contact
district14dcm@yahoo.com
for more information

TREASURER'S REPORT 1/20/14

Beginning Balance: \$886.26
 Income: \$75.00
 Expenses: \$0.00
 Ending Balance: \$961.26

UPCOMING EVENTS

NERRAASA

February 21-23 2014
 801 Greenwich Ave, Warwick, RI
 Crowne Plaza Hotel

HMB AREA 48 FELLOWSHIP DAY

March 15, 2014 - 9:00 am - 3:00 pm
 Hosted by the
 Hudson Valley Cluster Districts (3, 7, 11, 15, 16, 17)
 105 Mary's Ave., Kingston, NY
 Senior Residence Auditorium, Benedictine Hospital

HMB AREA 48 MAY ASSEMBLY

May 18, 2014 - 9 AM - 3 PM
 267 Fort Hunter Road, Amsterdam, NY
 Florida Town Hall

DISTRICT 14 UNITY DAY

Saturday, August 2nd 2014, Central Park, Pavilion,
 Schenectady. Food, Fun, Fellowship, 11am to 3 pm.



FRIDAY BIG BOOK GROUP

25 years - 2/1/89
 Friday @ 8:00 pm
 Grace Lutheran Church
 Church 1930 Hillside Avenue, Niskayuna

GLENVILLE MEN'S 11TH STEP GROUP

24 years - 2/3/90
 Saturday @ 9:15 am
 Immaculate Conception Church
 Rte 50, Glenville

MORNING WAKE UP GROUP

29 years - 2/16/85
 Monday thru Friday @ 8:00 am
 First United Methodist Church
 603 State Street, Schenectady

UNITY GROUP

25 years - 2.3.1989
 Monday 12:00 pm
 Union Presbyterian Church
 1068 Park Avenue, Schenectady

SUMMIT GROUP

38 years - 2/7/76
 Tuesday 7:00pm
 Trinity Reformed Church
 705 Curry Road, Rotterdam

YOUNG PEOPLE'S GROUP

30 years - 2.22.1984
 Wednesday 7:30pm
 Stanford Methodist Church
 1569 State Street, Schenectady

The 63rd HMB Area 48 Convention

“A DESIGN FOR LIVING”

The 63rd HMB Area 48 Convention was held November 1st, 2nd, & 3rd 2013 at the Hotel Utica in Utica, NY. The theme for the convention was “A Design for Living” with Panels and Workshops discussing the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous. The Western Cluster (Districts 9 & 12) Hosted the event. The Convention Co-Chairs were Brenda O., District 12 and Tammie E., District 9.

To help clarify just what HMB Area 48 encompasses; is that New York State is divided into 4 Areas. HMB stands for Hudson-Mohawk-Berkshire, and the boundaries extend East along the NY-MA/VT border, South to Dutchess and Ulster Counties (Poughkeesie, New Platz), West to Madison and Oneida Counties (Oneida, Utica) and North to Franklin and Clinton Counties along the Canadian border. HMB Area 48 is the largest (in geographic terms) in New York State, and is divided into 18 districts, with approximately 740 AA groups.

People began arriving around noon on Friday Nov.1st to start setting up Registration in the Lobby, Hospitality on the Mezzanine Area, and an Archives Displays in the Washington Executive Boardroom. The Workshops and Panels were held in The Saranac Room and The Crystal Ballroom. Each night an Alcolthon was held in The Lafayette Room.

The Convention officially got started with an Early Bird Meeting at 4:00pm in the Saranac Room. The Chairpersons were Bob E. and Lynne P., both from District 9.

After Dinner, the Workshops and Panels got started. Each Workshop and Panel is led by a Moderator, followed by three Speakers, each are given 10 minutes to speak, with a Reader/Timer keeping track. Basically, Workshops follow the 12 Steps of AA, with speakers describing their own experiences. While Panels follow the 12 Traditions, with speakers providing factual information regarding AA.

Workshop 1 was in the Crystal Ballroom with the topic; “Our Primary Purpose” with Jim F., District 12 as the moderator and Mary B., District 12 as the Reader/Timer. “Are We Effectively Reaching the Newcomer” was the topic for Gary B., District 12. Then Erma G., District 9 followed with “Has the AA Message been Watered Down?”. Then, Tara C., District 8, discussed “Carrying the Message, not the Mess”.

Meanwhile, Panel 1 started in the Saranac Room with the topic : “Service – Giving of Ourselves” with Cindy B., D9 as the Moderator and Mike P., D9 as Reader/Timer. Tommy E., D1 was the first Speaker with “I am Responsible”. Followed by Gary P., D12 with “ Helping Others” and Bob Mc., D12, on “Service in AA”.

At 8:00pm the Kick-Off Speaker Meeting was held in The Saranac Room. It was Chaired by Pat L., D1 and also Area 48 Chairperson. The Speaker was Ray C., D9 (Illion, NY). Ray has over 29 years of sobriety.

From 9:30 to 12:30, D.J. Cheri G. provided Entertainment in the Saranac Room, while the Alcolthon in the Lafayette Room went from 9:30 to well after midnight.

Saturday, November 2nd, had 2 Panels and Workshops in the morning. Workshop 2 was in the Crystal Ballroom and their topic was “Giving Up- Honesty, Hope & Faith” with Les B., D4 as Moderator along with Joe. M., D1 being the Reader/Timer. “Step 1: Surrender to Win” as by John D., D13. Then “Step 2: A Belief in Something Bigger” by Mike H., D17. Followed by Paul O., D5 with “Step 3: A New Boss”.

At the same time, Panel 2 was in the Saranac Room discussing “ Our Experience Has Taught Us.” With Leslie R., D9 as the Moderator, with Victoria B., D16 being the Reader/Timer. The first Speaker was William T., D1 with “Do We Really Need Each Other?”. Guy K., D7 continued with “Governed By Love.” And Donna G., D1 finished with “We Are a Motley Crew.

After a 15 minute break, Workshop 3 began “Owning Up- Courage, Integrity & Willingness” as the topic. The Moderator was Joe F., from D2 and his Reader/Timer was Tim J., of D11. The 3 Speakers were Andrew D., D12 about “Taking Inventory”. Laura H., D10 with “Candid Confession” and Dawn M., D9 , talking about “Readiness to Abandon Our Defects.”

Lunch was served from 11:30am to 1:00pm in the 1912 Restaurant.

Saturday afternoon was action-packed with 3 Workshops and 2 Panels. Don S., D19 and also Area 48 Corrections Chair, hosted the Corrections Workshop in The Lafayette Room. Meanwhile, Workshop 4 had the Topic: "Cleaning Up- Humility, Love, and Justice" with Jeannie S., D15 as The Moderator and Herb S., D1 as Reader/Timer. Maria E., D18 spoke about "Asking that Our Flaws be Removed.". She was followed by Bill W., D16 talking about "Who have We Harmed? Are We Ready?". Patrick G., D12 finished with "Restitution and Atonement." Meanwhile, Panel 4 was involved with "AA Is Not For Sale/ To Those We Serve." Debbie W. from D4 hosted as Moderator and Sally A. D16 as Reader/Timer. Tom R., D9 spoke about "Where Money & Spirituality Mix". Deb W., D16 talked about "Sobriety is the Payoff.", and Thea H-B., D7 discussed "Divine Order."

Events continued with Workshop 5 meeting in The 1912 Restaurant: The Topic was "Keeping Up- Perseverance, Spirituality, and Service." The Moderator was Mike C., D7 and Will D., D1 as Reader/Timer. First Speaker was Jessie T., D19 "Exercising Self-Discovery." Second Speaker was Tammy D., D14 "Becoming One with our Higher Power." (Go, Tammy, Go!) Last, but not least, was Pete R., D13 "Service-Awakening into Sober Usefulness."

Panel 5 proceeded in the Saranac Room with the topic "Like A Rock." The Moderator was Connie W., D2 and Amanda, D5 as Reader/Timer. The 3 Speakers were Mike L., D5 on "Our Greatest Danger Lies Within Ourselves", followed by Hawk R., D4 with "Anonymity, Our Silent Guardian", then Don S. D19 with "The Spiritual Substance of Anonymity."

Of course, there was The Old Timer's Panel in The Saranac Room to top off the afternoon, with LR (D12) as the moderator.

Saturday Evening brought the Banquet held in The Saranac Room. Followed by both Brenda O. from D12 and Tammie E. from D9 speaking as Co-Chairs of the Convention. They introduced Ellen M. of Attleboro, MA as the Keynote Speaker. Her sobriety date is April 1, 1984, and spoke elegantly about the trails ,tribulations, and triumphs of her life in AA.

Following Ellen was the Sobriety Countdown. That's when Tammie and Brenda start out calling who's got the most time in Sobriety, then counting down each year, then month, and right down to just days. The person with the longest time in AA was Hawk D4 with 59 years, and a Dawn with 1 day!!! The entire crowd rose to their feet cheering and applauding Dawn, which brought her (and many others) to tears of joy. What an exhilarating, memorable experience for someone's 1st day in AA!!

The festivities continued in the Saranac Room with entertainment provided by Mike D., D9, and his band "Playing Again"; a Rockin' 6 piece band of AA members that had people dancing past 1:00am. It was the night that Daylight Savings Time ended, so we got to turn the clocks back an hour, and a little more time to sleep.

Sunday, the 3rd had a Meditation Meeting in The Saranac Room, with Chairs Kelly W. and Michelle L., both from District 9. The closing event was the Spiritual Speaker Meeting. Keith D. Dist7 and Area Delegate was Chair, and in his introduction spoke about what an honor and privilege it has been for him to serve our HMB Area in many different positions before rotating out as Area Delegate. A special thanks to Keith for all his Service to AA. Charlie C., from Cooperstown (D8) and also Past Delegate was the Spiritual Speaker. Charlie's sobriety date is February 26, 1988. He is also our Area Archivist, and has been doing a tremendous job in preserving the many artifacts and memorabilia of HMB Area 48.

That brought the Convention to officially close just before noon. For everyone who attended, it was a fabulous weekend of spiritual fellowship, and learning and experiencing more on how the 12 Steps, Traditions, and Concepts of Alcoholics Anonymous truly is "A Design For Living".

Many thanks and lots of gratitude to all who volunteered their time and service to help make this Convention possible. The HMB Area 48 Convention for 2014 will be Oct. 31-Nov. 2 and will be hosted by The Eastern Cluster District 1,2, and 18 (Albany, Troy, Rensselaer). Hope to see y'all there.

In Service, Wyatt W. District 14 Archivist and HMB Area Alternate Archivist.

Thanks to Charlie C., and Tammie E. for their kind support and assistance.

Whew! That's all folks.

HERE ARE THE PHOTOGRAPHS OF HOTEL UTICA AND HMB AREA 48 ARCHIVE DISPLAYS DURING THE CONVENTION NOV. 1-3 2013.



The Saranac Banquet Room.



The Main Lobby of Hotel Utica. The Registration table was setup next to the Stairway. There was Hospitality Volunteers serving beverages and snacks upstairs along the Mezzanine floor. Grapevine and AA Literature were also available here.



A Beautiful and Ornate Piano built by "Boardman & Gray Albany, NY". I had a wonderful time playing such an exquisite and fine-crafted instrument. The sound of music filled the air and resonated throughout the Lobby and the Mezzanine.



Conference Table used to display early editions of "Alcoholics Anonymous", including First Printing and First Editions.



The Crystal Ballroom.



Displays of Dioramas, photographs, news articles and artifacts of Bill W. and Dr. Bob.



“Gary P. Archivist from District 12 (Old Forge) brought his collection of AA memorabilia dating back to the 1940’s. A Feb. 1963 Harper’s Weekly article “Alcoholics Anonymous: Cult or Cure”. and “The AA Secretaries Handbook” circa 1950 typed by Bill W. are among the treasure trove displayed.”



“EXTRA!, EXTRA! read all about it” Articles from the Madison, Wisconsin newspaper “The Journal-Herald” dated May 17, 1942, with the title “Alcoholics Anonymous, national organization without officers or dues.”



Scale Model of Dr. Bob’s home; 855 Ardmore Ave., Akron, Ohio. This was built by Michael L., former Area Archivist. The wood used to make this Diorama actually came from a shed on Dr. Bob’s property!!



Marty Mann exhibit on the Left. Handmade signs for AA meetings. Diorama of Dr. Bob’s home in Akron, Ohio.



The Main Lobby of Hotel Utica. The Registration table was setup next to the Stairway. There was Hospitality Volunteers serving beverages and snacks upstairs along the Mezzanine floor. Grapevine and AA Literature were also available here.