



The Triangle

August 2018

8th Step: Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.

8th Tradition: AA should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.

8th Concept: The trustees are the principal planners and administrators of overall policy and finance. They have custodial oversight of the separately incorporated and constantly active services, exercising this through their ability to elect all the directors of these entities.

Sofa Sweet Sofa

From the August 2014 Grapevine magazine.

**Once the couch and liquor were her best friends.
Now she can't get enough of the sun**

I'm not a people person. I play one at work—but that's not really me. At the end of my drinking career, I would just sit on the sofa and drink until I passed out. I used to go out and drink with people from work, but that stopped after scary encounters driving home and many mornings wondering whether my car was in the driveway. It was easier and cheaper to just drink on the sofa. The summer before I got sober, I didn't see anybody much but my husband.

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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

P.O. Box 8112

Utica N.Y. 13505

HMB Area 48

118 Polar Plaza #114

Amsterdam N.Y. 12010

A.A. World Services

P.O. Box 459

New York N.Y. 10163

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

Announcements

August District Meeting: August 29th (Wed), 6:30pm at Our Savior Lutheran

Group Anniversary Dates: August

- Chadwicks Serenity Group – 8/15/91
- Primary Purpose Group – 8/15/08

HMB 48 Fall Voting Assembly: October 13, 2018, 9:00AM – 3:00PM, United Presbyterian Church, 25 Church St, Amsterdam. For a list of proposals visit <https://aahmbny.org/proposals-voting-assembly/>

HMB Convention 2018: October 26-28th, 2018 at the Radisson Hotel, 200 Genesee St. Utica, NY 13502. Visit <https://aahmbny.org/a-a-area-48-hmb-hudson-mohawk-berkshire/> to see the flyer.



Name: _____ Phone: _____ Address: _____ City: _____ State: ____ Zip: _____ Email: _____ (Please print clearly)		\$25.00 Registration - \$25 \$ _____ Fri Dinner - \$22 \$ _____ Sat Breakfast - \$11 \$ _____ Sat Lunch - \$18 \$ _____ Sun Breakfast - \$11 \$ _____ Sat Banquet: Please circle one Beef - \$29 Chicken - \$26 Vegetarian - \$26 \$ _____ Total Enclosed
Anniversary Date: AA _____ Alanon _____ Other _____ Home Group: _____ (Please specify program) Badge Name Preference: _____		Make Checks Payable to: 2018 HMB Convention Mail to: 2018 HMB Convention PO Box 91 New Hartford, NY 13413
Interested in serving? _____ as a panelist _____ as a moderator _____ as a timer _____ in a skit _____ as a greeter _____ on Long-timer's panel (25+ years only)	Special needs list below: (ASL/Translation/Dietary/ Other) _____ _____ _____	

~ Does your home group want to make donations to the 2018 HMB Area 48 Convention? ~
 Make checks payable to: **HMB Area Convention, Bring it to the District Mtg or mail it to:**
HMB Area Convention
P.O. Box 91, New Hartford, NY 13413

Traditions Checklist – Tradition 8

1. Is my own behavior accurately described by the Traditions? If not, what needs changing?
2. When I chafe about any particular Tradition, do I realize how it affects others?
3. Do I sometimes try to get some reward—even if not money—for my personal AA efforts?
4. Do I try to sound in AA like an expert on alcoholism? On recovery? On medicine? On sociology? On AA itself? On psychology? On spiritual matters? Or, heaven help me, even on humility?
5. Do I make an effort to understand what AA employees do? What workers in other alcoholism agencies do? Can I distinguish clearly among them?
6. In my own AA life, have I any experiences which illustrate the wisdom of this Tradition?
7. Have I paid enough attention to the book *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*? To the pamphlet *AA Tradition—How It Developed*?

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If I had known that at my first AA meeting everyone was going to come up and talk to me, I wouldn't have gone. I'd been hiding for a long time so no one would find out that the weight of my secret life was becoming intolerable. But I instantly loved the meetings. I didn't need to pretend to be someone I wasn't. As I went to more and more, the message got through that I needed to hook into the Fellowship. After a couple of weeks of not drinking, I welcomed those meetings.

I loved that one of my meetings was just for women. I had generally preferred the company of men, and I never really had women friends, so this was new and very interesting. I was given a lot of phone numbers and was encouraged to call them, but that was way too much. What would I say? What would we talk about? Before I made my first call I wrote down the topics I would bring up. My calls didn't go the way I thought they would. But, like lots of things in AA, they went much better than I had planned.

The women suggested that I get a sponsor, but that was not going to happen. I had a Big Book; I could read. The Steps looked interesting, and there was

stuff about them in the Big Book and in the "Twelve and Twelve." I could do that on my own. "How It Works" was read before every meeting, but rigorous one-on-one, up close and personal honesty was just too much for me.

I started on the Steps by myself and got pretty easily through One and Two. But I just couldn't do Step Three. By that time it had sunk in that "Those who do not recover are people who cannot or will not give themselves to this simple program." I'd gotten the honesty part, and that was a refreshing change for me from the lies of my past. However, I knew I really could not turn my life over to anyone, much less God. To ask for help was out of the question. I didn't realize at the time that that was a big part of my problem.

Then I got into some trouble at work and I didn't know what to do. For the first time, I saw that AA gave me an option to talk to someone about it. I went to a meeting and the woman who led it made wonderful sense to me. She was classy and smart and seemed to be everything I thought I wasn't. To the woman who used to spend each night getting

loaded on the sofa, it was unthinkable to ask this classy lady to spend her time helping me. But to the woman who now spent nights in AA meetings, it seemed possible. It was one of the hardest things I ever did, but after the meeting I asked her to be my sponsor (that was much easier than asking her to help me). She said yes, and it was done. I couldn't take it back, but somehow I was curiously relieved.

I know now that was the turning point in my recovery. Not only was my sponsor more than I had expected, but that relationship changed me in ways I never could've imagined. For me, that one action turned everything around. I quit fighting. I hadn't intended it, but I had actually turned my will and my life over to a Higher Power, AA, and this stranger who had agreed to help me.

I listen to a lot of speaker tapes, and in one of my favorite ones, a guy is asked what the difference is between people who get sober and those who don't. His answer? Those who make it do things they don't think are going to work. That was so true for me. At first, I didn't believe I had a problem; I just drank too much. Then I decided not to do 90 meetings in 90 days because I had other things to do that were more important. And why should I call people? I also didn't need a sponsor because, basically, I knew it all. And I believed I could do the Steps by myself, yet I got stuck on the very one that requires giving up our own ways and our old ideas.

So my program went nowhere until I started doing the things I didn't think I needed to do. The rest came pretty easily after that. I began to let others teach me and I learned from the experience of people in the program who had made the same mistakes I had.

I started staying after meetings to talk to people—that was hard. I volunteered in AA, led meetings, made coffee and started to sponsor newcomers. I learned how to scuba dive and went on trips with my new friends in the program. I reconnected with old friends, people who were real friends before my drinking got ugly. Now I go camping and do things with them too. I built new relationships with my family. I started running, riding a bike and getting in shape. I even rode with friends by bicycle from Houston to Austin in two days! I never dreamed I could do that. Today my life is rich and full. I almost never sit on the sofa anymore.

I read an article about lab rats raised in solitary conditions that were offered drugs. The rats kept pressing the lever for more and more of the drug even though it was killing them. The researcher said that when they "enriched their environment, gave them access to sweets, and let them play with other rats, they stopped pressing the lever." That was me. By isolating myself with few options, and no life really, I fell deeper and deeper into drinking. AA put people in my life, and provided me with experiences and tools. All I needed to do was pick them up.

It's been over 26 years of continuous sobriety since I walked into that first meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous. So many wonderful things and fabulous people have been in my life since then. Today, I have lots of options, many skills, and successes that show me I can tackle hard things. I also have people to encourage and help me when I'm baffled. It's still hard for me to call people for no reason, or to arrive 10 minutes early before a meeting to chat with people. But I keep coming back.

**-- Paula C.
Houston, Texas**