



# The Triangle

A limited number of paper copies of this newsletter are available by emailing:  
[district9altnewsletter@aahmbny.org](mailto:district9altnewsletter@aahmbny.org)

## 36 Principles - Number Eight

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

**Tradition 8:** Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.

**Concept 8:** The trustees are the principal planners and administrators of over-all 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.

*"Reprinted with permission of A.A. World Services, Inc."*

### MAIL CONTRIBUTIONS TO:

District 9 PO Box 8112 Utica, NY 13505	AAWS PO Box 459 NY, NY 10163
Area 48 118 Polar Plaza #114 Amsterdam, NY 12010	

## Just Be Myself

*from the August 2020 Grapevine*

A long-time member and past trustee shares about his journey serving beyond the group as a gay man

I arrived in AA in 1989, frightened and lonely. As a young gay man, I wasn't sure how I would be received, so I attended meetings for LGBTQ members (referred to at the time as Gay & Lesbian groups).

Within a few months, I began branching out to other meetings, timidly at first. Unknown to me, the General service conference had approved the pamphlet "AA and the Gay/Lesbian Alcoholic" just a few weeks before I got sober. The pamphlet began showing up in meetings in the fall of that year.

As I branched out beyond the Gay & Lesbian groups, I noticed that pamphlet in the literature racks of the meetings I was trying out, and whenever I saw it, I let out a sigh of relief. The presence of that pamphlet at mainstream meetings made me feel welcome and relieved my fear.

I didn't know anything about the service structure or the conference at that time, but I know today that the Conference had done a great service to me and my fellow LGBTQ members and prospects by developing that pamphlet. It's the type of pamphlet I refer to today as a Third Tradition pamphlet. Its purpose is to reinforce our message that the only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. It's a means of extending a welcoming hand to alcoholics who are wary about how they may be received in AA.

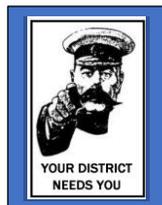
As I made my way through the steps and got involved in service, my experience in AA healed the shame that I had long carried about being gay. I was welcomed with open arms wherever I went in AA. I had the same opportunities as any other member, and I began to make my way into the service structure. The old-timers at my group encouraged me to become our group's general service representative. (GSR).

*(Continued on page 4)*

### Call for members who wish to carry the message beyond the home group

Everyone is welcome to attend the next District 9 Group Conscience meeting (currently via Zoom)  
 6:30pm Wednesday August 26, 2020  
 Meeting ID: 828 4622 9923  
 Password: 441898

It has been said: "Some of the finest people I know are in AA; and some of the finest people in AA are in service."



### Current Service Positions Available:

DCM, Alt DCM, Archives, Bridging the Gap, Cooperation with the Professional Community, Public Information, & Treatment.  
 Please see page 2 for service descriptions

**DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS**

**The Monthly Group Conscience meeting** is held on the last Wednesday of the month at 6:30 pm via Zoom. Monthly minutes and treasurers reports are currently being distributed via email; if you would like to receive a copy, please contact [district9secretary@aahmbny.org](mailto:district9secretary@aahmbny.org) or [district9dcm@aahmbny.org](mailto:district9dcm@aahmbny.org) and request to be added.

**Accessibilities** continues to be as active as possible during the pandemic. Zoom meetings will continue as an alternative venue even as regular meetings begin to reopen, as some members are not comfortable meeting face-to-face yet, and some may never be. There is a need to take a meeting to Richard S, who is currently homebound. If you are Interested in helping with this please reach out to [Andy P.](#)

**Corrections** is working to get literature into many of the state facilities as meetings are still on hold and no one is allowed in. It may be quite some time before meetings will be allowed behind the walls again. Now would be a good time to sign up to be a **Corrections Correspondent**. For more information on how you can help, please contact [Tom C.](#)

**Functions** for District 9 have all been put on hold until further notice. The only date still on the agenda is the Area 48 Fellowship Day, scheduled for September 12, which will be held virtually. Volunteers with some technical zoom experience will be needed to help monitor the rooms. If you are interested in volunteering for this, please contact [Andy P.](#)

**Grapevine** has an abundance of back issues available to any treatment facilities that may want them. Requests may be sent to the [Area 48 Grapevine Chair](#).

**District 9 Website** is now up and running. A new spreadsheet will be added soon that will reflect all meetings that are reopening and what safety precautions they are practicing. Please check it often as it will be updated as new information is received. You can also access the [Safe Practices by Group](#) spreadsheet directly. Don't lose that link and check back often.

**GSR's**, if you are new to service don't forget to register with the [District Records Keeper](#) so that your information can be entered into the Area 48 database and you will start receiving newsletters, announcements and pertinent information. Due to ongoing issues with the new GSO database, there is currently no interface so you should also register directly with [GSO Records](#).

**CURRENT SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES IN DISTRICT 9:**

**DCM & Alternate DCM:** The District Committee Member is an essential link between the groups GSR's and the Area's Delegate to the General Service Conference. As Chairperson of the district committee, made up of all the GSR's and other various trusted servants in the district, the DCM is exposed to the group conscience of that district. As a member of the area committee, the DCM can pass on a consensus of the district's group conscience to the area delegate and the area committee.

**Archives** supports the collection and preservation of any and all materials of historical interest with respect to District 9 and groups in District 9.

**Bridging the Gap** supports the work of connecting with potential members currently incarcerated or in inpatient facilities that have reached out for help and are scheduled for release within District 9.

**Cooperation with the Professional Community** supports the work of informing professionals and future professionals about AA. What we are, where we are, what we can do, and what we cannot do.

**Public Information** supports the work of informing the general public about the AA program – what we are, what we do and what we offer in terms of helping the still sick and suffering alcoholic. We carry the message by getting in touch with and responding to the media, schools, industry, and other organizations which can report on the nature and purpose of AA and what it can do for alcoholics.

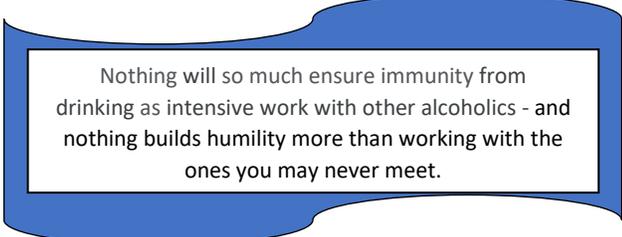
**Treatment** supports the work of individual members and groups who carry the AA message of recovery into treatment facilities and outpatient settings.

**GROUP NEWS:**

The following groups have now resumed regular face-to-face meetings. Each group has formulated their own safe plan for gathering. Please check the [Safe Practices by Group](#) google spreadsheet to find out exactly what each group is doing.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <a href="#">1<sup>st</sup> Tradition</a> | <a href="#">Men of Dignity</a>         |
| <a href="#">All Are Welcome</a>          | <a href="#">New Hartford Group</a>     |
| <a href="#">Central Group</a>            | <a href="#">Outsiders</a>              |
| <a href="#">Chadwicks Serenity</a>       | <a href="#">Pass It On</a>             |
| <a href="#">Clinton Group</a>            | <a href="#">Sat Night Serenity</a>     |
| <a href="#">Drunks Along / Mohawk</a>    | <a href="#">Sobriety by a Dam Site</a> |
| <a href="#">Floyd Group</a>              | <a href="#">Unity Group</a>            |
| <a href="#">Floyd-Stittville HP</a>      |  |

If your group is not listed here or the information not correct, you can either email [altnewsletter@aahmbny.org](mailto:altnewsletter@aahmbny.org) or comment directly on the spreadsheet with your contact information so you can be reached if further clarification is needed. And don't forget to notify the [District Records Keeper](#) when your meeting does reopen.



**TRADITIONS CHECKLIST FROM THE AA GRAPEVINE**

*These questions were originally published in the AA Grapevine in conjunction with a series on the Twelve Traditions that began in November 1969 and ran through September 1971. While they were originally intended primarily for individual use, many AA groups have since used them as a basis for wider discussion.*

**Tradition Eight: Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.**

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?

*Reprinted with permission of A.A. Grapevine, Inc.*

**How Well Do You Know The Grapevine?**

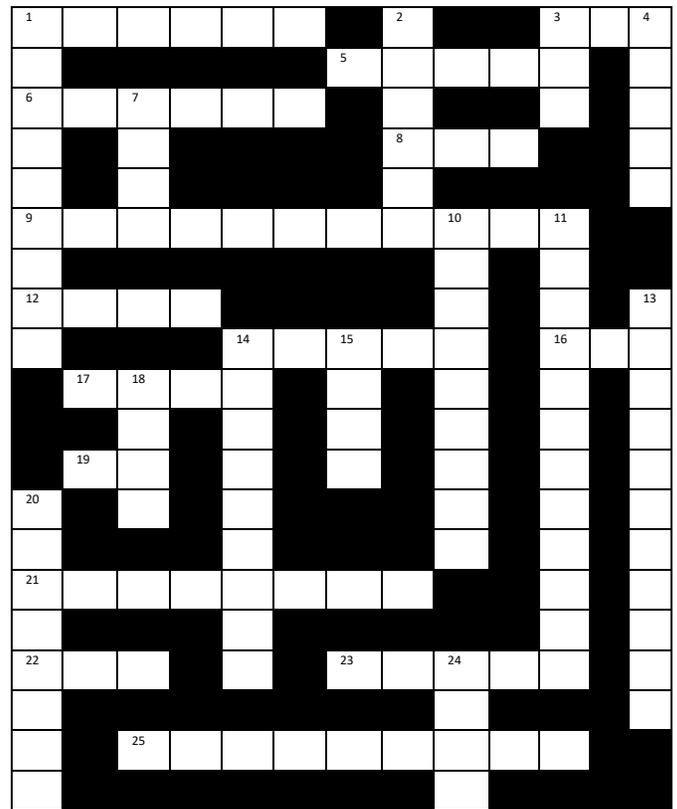
(These are all titles of published compilations)

**Across:**

1. Making \_\_: Finding new freedoms righting the past
3. Sober & \_\_: LGBTQ members share ES&H
5. Voices of \_\_ in AA: Stories from the female membership
- 6 (&24d). \_\_ of \_\_-Term Sobriety: Old Timer's stories
8. \_\_ Twelve Traditions: Members experiences with the core principles of the program
9. One on One – AA \_\_ in Action: ES&H of working with individual members
12. \_\_ Me to your Sponsor: Jokes & Cartoons
14. Young & \_\_: The joys & challenges of joining at an early age
- 16 (&10d). \_\_ Home Group: \_\_ of AA: Experiences that illuminate belonging to a group
17. \_\_ by Step: Experiences of working the program
19. \_\_ Our Own Words: Stories of young AAs in recovery.
21. \_\_ of the Heart: All of Bill W.'s writings
22. \_\_ Best of Bill: Reflections on faith, fear, honesty, humility & love
23. A Rabbit \_\_ into a Bar: Sobriety jokes & cartoons
25. \_\_ Sobriety: ES&H on how the program guides us to mature mentally

**Down:**

1. No Matter What: Dealing with \_\_ in Sobriety: ES&H when facing tough issues
2. Happy, \_\_ & Free: The lighter side of sobriety
- 3 (&18d). \_\_ Big \_\_: Atheist & Agnostic Members share their ES&H
4. \_\_ you for Sharing: 60 years of letters to the Grapevine
7. \_\_ Action: How members practice the program in their daily lives
- 10 (&16a). \_\_ Home Group: \_\_ of AA: Experiences that illuminate belonging to a group
11. Forming True \_\_: Using the tools to improve & repair relationships
13. & I Am \_\_ – The Hand of AA: Stories of carrying the message



14. \_\_ Awakenings: Stories of journeys of the spirit
15. Beginners \_\_: ES&H on getting and staying sober in AA
- 18 (&3d). \_\_ Big \_\_: Atheist & Agnostic Members share their ES&H
20. AA in the \_\_: ES&H from those that serve their country
- 24 (&6a). \_\_ of \_\_-Term Sobriety: Old Timer's Stories

[Answer Key](#)

## ***Just be Myself***

*(Continued from page 1)*

I had recently started dating a guy in AA who was involved in general service, and that made serving as a GSR look even more attractive to me. Our relationship deepened in tandem with our involvement in service. We registered our domestic partnership with the state of California in 2005, while he was serving as our area delegate. We married a few years later while I was serving as alternate delegate and I went on to serve as our area delegate the following term. The service position of our delegate is both joyful and exhausting and having partner who has been through the experience and who knows what I'm going through can really help. Sometimes boy meets boy on AA campus, and things turn out pretty well! In 2014, I was elected Pacific Regional Trustee and I was both elated and terrified. One of my concerns was about how open I should be about my sexual orientation as I carried out my service. I knew I would be visiting all the areas in the region and would likely be invited to share my personal recovery story on many visits. Since ours is a program of rigorous honesty, I really don't know how to tell my story without speaking openly about sneaking into gay bars when I was underaged, about my broken-hearted pursuit of various guys when I was drinking, about the men and women in the Gay & Lesbian groups who carried the message to me, and about the power of the Steps to remove our defects and make possible a true partnership with another human being – in my case a relationship with another man.

In my new role as trustee, however, I had some fear that as I made my way around the region, I might not always be met with the same acceptance that I had experienced in meetings in Southern California. So, I talked with my sponsor about it and he encouraged me to just be myself.

My first event was in a state that I regarded as one of the most culturally conservative in the region. When I shared who I am with openness and honesty, I knew instantly that being fully out was absolutely the right choice. At that event, I had an experience that would repeat itself frequently as I traveled around the region. LGBTQ members came up to me and thanked me, some with tears in their eyes, for sharing openly as a gay man. Sometimes I would be told in a whisper, "I can't be out in AA because of where I live, but your story gives me hope that everything will be OK." It gave me one of the greatest feelings I experienced in AA – the feeling of being useful.

And then an amazing thing happened. At my first conference as a trustee, the Conference approved a recommendation to update the pamphlet, "AA and the Gay/Lesbian Alcoholic." I was assigned to the trustee's literature committee and was given the gift of being part of the subcommittee that worked on the pamphlet revision. Reading the new stories that were sent in filled me with gratitude. The submissions were deeply moving and the members who sent in their stories did such a great job of carrying the AA message. Our efforts ultimately resulted in the revised pamphlet, titled, "[LGBTQ Alcoholics in AA](#)," following the 2018 Conference, which was my last Conference as trustee.

My AA experience had come full circle. As a frightened new member in 1989, I was made to feel welcome by the original "Gay and Lesbian" pamphlet and through my participation in service I got to have a hand in developing a pamphlet that I hope will be useful in extending the hand of AA to the suffering alcoholic today.

I think of a young, LGBTQ drunk in a small town somewhere, perhaps where there are not LGBTQ meetings. I picture that person doing a web search on Alcoholics Anonymous LGBTQ and being able to read our updated pamphlet at [aa.org](#). Or perhaps that prospective member stumbles into a meeting where the literature person has included the pamphlet in the literature rack to welcome them.

I imagine that seemingly hopeless drunk reading that pamphlet and the wonderful stories in it identifying with the experiences that our members have shared, and receiving the message of hope. And for that I am so very grateful.

Joel C, San Diego, CA

*Reprinted with permission from August 2020 Grapevine*