



THE STAND



FEBRUARY 2012 THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTHWEST TEXAS AREA 68 DISTRICT 12 OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS ISSUE FOURTEEN

Step One, Part Two: Unmanageability

Last month I did a little piece on step one. I focused on powerlessness, but in fact, step one has two parts. This month, with the suggestion of a friend, I'll share some of my experience on unmanageability.

Step one says "We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable." What does unmanageability look like in an alcoholic of the hopeless variety? My immediate thought was page 52 of the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous, where it describes the bedevilments. I had trouble with personal relationships, I could not control my emotional nature, I was prey to misery and depression, I could not make a living (not to say I could not make money, I had plenty of that, but I could not really live), I had a feeling of uselessness, I was full of fear, I was unhappy, and I could not seem to

be of any real help to other people. And here is the kicker: this is me without the booze! When I did drink, which was all the time in those dark days at the end, those bedevilments were still there, but I was ok for the moment if I had the booze, right before oblivion. When I tried not to drink, all these things would crash into me with the force of an 18 wheeler straight out of hell.

Sure my life became unmanageable on the outside, but the real unmanageability, the spiritual malady, was on the inside, and I can remember this feeling from an early age. In step three, on page 61 in the Big Book, it talks about how we alcoholics can confuse our outside "manageability" with our internal condition. "Is he not a victim of the delusion that he can wrest satisfaction and happiness out of this world if he only manages well?" I could

pay my bills, keep a relatively clean house, physical one, not spiritual, and function somewhat in the land of the living, but the internal condition, that internal unmanageability, was kicking my butt, and eventually, outside and inside came tumbling down.

To understand this unmanageability, in one's own heart, not intellectually, is key in having a first step experience. Hit home to those that you work with and sponsor that this is what the program treats, and when one works the twelve steps with honesty, an open mind, and willingness, we straighten out spiritually, then mentally and physically, not the other way around.

by 
Critic F.

NEED SERVICE WORK?

We need volunteers, food, and support for the CFC Conference: 2/17-2/19.

Before there was a Houston Intergroup, before there was a 12x12 printed...even before General Service Office was conceived, there was an active group of alcoholics meeting regularly in Kerrville. The history of recovered alcoholics runs deep here and now it's our chance to show the rest of the Area just why Kerrville is so special!

The Southwest Texas Area 68 Correctional Facilities Conference is happening the weekend of February 17-19, and even though you may not personally take meetings into jails, it's still a good service opportunity to help facilitate those who can and do. It's still 12 step work, helping Alcoholics Anonymous function.

We need you! We are asking local AA's to bring dishes, puddings, cakes, whatever kind of food or item you can think of. We will have raffles; if you have something you can donate or ideas for us to purchase, bring them. We need people: AA Ambassadors to help steer Conference attendees and usher people throughout the hotel and spread our good cheer and good will. We need volunteers to help with some of the set ups during the events. We are going to have fun with this as we put Kerrville Recovery in the light for all to see.

This conference is a special opportunity; not many Districts get this type of event and it could be 10 years before we have this event here again. Come out and join us host the Area 68 CFC conference. We have great speakers, good fellowship and most importantly, fun...in sobriety. So even if jails and institutions aren't your thing (anymore), come out and make it possible for someone else to share the message. Or if you want to take meetings into jails, this might be the first step in bringing a much needed message to those who actually can't make it to a meeting on the outside.

****Questions? Contact the Volunteer Coordinator: Stephan M. (830) 777-3140 or email him at: djunior@gmail.com****

To make a much needed donation, you can contact CFC Committee Chairperson: Clay E. (830) 496-0003 or clay Eaton2@yahoo.com. The next planning committee meeting is this Saturday 2pm, at the 720 Club.

****Special need for: AA Service Ambassadors the day of the conference. ****

Concept of the Month

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.

Do we have an understanding of the history of the General Service Conference (the "Conference")?

What is a Conference Advisory Action?

Does our home group's G.S.R., D.C.M., area delegate report back to the group on the highlights of the Conference and Conference Advisory Actions?

Is our group meeting its wider Seventh Tradition responsibilities?

What is the Corrections Committee?

The purpose of a correctional facilities committee is to coordinate the work of individual AA members and groups who are interested in carrying our message of recovery to alcoholics behind the walls, and to set up means of smoothing the way from the facility to the larger AA community. Correctional facilities committees function within the service structure : General Service Office and central service office (also known as an Intergroup) or in our case, at the District level. When jails and correctional facilities in Kerr, Bandera, Gillespie, Kerr, Kendall and Kimble Counties, it's the responsibility of SWTA 68 District 12 to be that helping hand and share the message of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Some alcoholics aren't lucky enough to be able to go to meetings when they want to. They are in prison. They have limited contact with the shared experience that our Fellowship offers through its meetings. Would you like more information regarding AA in a Correctional Facility? Please contact your local Correctional Facilities Committee, your DCM or GSR, or email the Area 12 Corrections Facilities Committee.

How do I contact the Corrections Committee: Jerry B: vancise@ktc.com

SWTA 68 News

Area 68 Conference on Correctional Facilities will be hosted by District 12, Feb.17-19, at The Inn of the Hills. Area 68 is approx. 36 Districts (one-fourth of Texas). This is an annual Workshop for Education and Certification (if desired)---the Conference follows the Area model including Speakers, other workshop offerings other than certification, Hospitality Room, Entertainment, Raffles, and Business meeting following the event. The Conference Committee is in need of financial support other than registration receipts to host this event. Individual Groups may underwrite registration for those interested who otherwise could not attend. The CFC Conference was highlighted in one of the Winter Workshops offered to incoming GSRs (attendance demonstrated that it is a primary concern in the message of sobriety). 222 were registered at the Winter Meeting---67 were GSRs. District 12 had 5 Groups represented to vote as GSRs.

There is a Power in "Presence" - example: District 12 made of GSR's, Committee Heads, Officers, those group Members participating in Service Structure in committee - Present. Efficiency is Singleness of Purpose - Carrying the Message - Involvement, Representation, Contact, Communication, Combination - SYNERGY: Strength that is Greater Than the sum if individual strength - Potential produced in process - Focus, Faith in AA - a faith that comes in belonging, knowing, experiencing, understanding, and Doing! The "Presence" becomes "One" - A "We" program made of Individuals (hard to explain - not difficult to experience).

Jerry B.
servant

THE MOTHER OF AA - PART I

We have all the heard the old saying "behind every great man is a great woman." This was certainly true in the case of AA co-founder Dr. Bob and his wife, Anne Ripley Smith. She is perhaps the most underrated and least mentioned of our fellowship's early pioneers. However, without her quiet contributions behind the scenes, it is doubtful that Alcoholics Anonymous would have gotten off the ground. Her role was so vital to our society's early development that Bill Wilson referred to her as the "Mother of AA".

Anne Robinson Ripley and Dr. Robert Smith were married on January 25, 1915. Anne had some reservations about tying the knot because of the young physician's drinking problems. However Bob showed signs of improvement and Anne wrongly thought his drinking problem was behind him. For more than two decades she watched her spouse grapple with alcohol and pills. However, she never lost hope that someday he would be delivered.

In 1933, Frank Buchman and his Oxford Group held a week long revival in Akron. It was an event that transformed Anne's life. While attending a meeting in the lobby of the Mayflower Hotel (the same hotel Bill would stay in during his fateful trip to Akron two years later), she heard group members' powerful stories of how their lives had changed by following a simple program of action. Anne left the hotel convinced that she found the answer.

For the next two years the Smiths attended Oxford Group meetings run by Henrietta Sieberling. Even though Bob continued to struggle, Anne threw herself into the Oxford movement. She surrendered her life to God, made her amends and faithfully read

scripture and listened for God's voice each morning. So when Henrietta phoned and said she'd just had a telephone call from a New Yorker who needed an alcoholic to visit, they both saw God's answer to their prayers. The famous visit between Bill and Dr. Bob occurred the next day at Henrietta's home.

We all know the effect this meeting had on Dr. Bob. However, few realize the tremendous influence Anne had on Bill and the shaping of the program that was about to spring to life. Broke and out of work, Bill moved into the Smith's home and stayed for three months. He had been an Oxford Group member for only five months while Ann had been a devoted member for more than two years. Still struggling with his spirituality, Bill joined Anne and Bob in their Quiet Time and in the evenings spent time with Henrietta and the other Oxford Group. These activities had a profound effect on Bill.

In a talk after Anne's passing in 1949, Bill said Anne was, "... quite literally, the mother of our first group, Akron Number One. Her wise and beautiful counsel to all, her insistence that the spiritual come before anything else, her unwavering support of Dr. Bob in all his works; all these were virtues which watered the uncertain seed that was to become A.A. Who but God could assess such a contribution? We can only say that it was priceless and magnificent. In the full sense of the word, she was one of the founders of Alcoholics Anonymous."

Next month: Part II - Anne Smith's Journal and the Big Book

by Paul W.

Unreasonable Fears Grapevine Article - July 2010

Fear was my constant companion when I was still drinking. I had panic attacks. I couldn't deal with stress. I was afraid to live - and I couldn't master suicide. The fear was so great at one point that I took off work for a month. I couldn't function, and I was still drinking to try to control the fear.

When I got sober I was still very afraid. However, as I worked the Steps, I found the fear dissipating. It wasn't totally gone, but I could function. My sponsor suggested I do a fear inventory. I would concentrate on that part of my illness that was still bothering me. This was great. It was OK to write down that I was afraid of spiders and couldn't even get close enough to one to kill it. I had lived in California all my life but was getting panicky that an earthquake might hit.

I was afraid of success and of failure. When I finished the inventory and gave it away, I felt more relief.

As the years went on and I stayed sober, life brought me new fears to deal with and old fears that hadn't yet been removed. When each one surfaced I shared about it. I was no longer ashamed to admit how afraid I was of many very irrational situations and things. Other people seemed to relate and admitted they had fears, too.

I saw that fear was a character defect, so I modified my Seventh Step Prayer. After "remove every single defect of character," I added, "and every unreasonable fear." Learning how to cope with fear has been a great blessing of my 20 years of sobriety. The most important thing I do is to continue to work the Steps.

Jeanne L. - Brea, California



THE LAST HOUSE ON THE BLOCK

by Alex P.

"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?'" (Big Book, p. 47)

The irony of this question is that I have long acknowledged things that have power over me – alcohol being only one of many. Relationships (family and intimate), employers and money, and the whole aggregate of the legal system, have all neatly shown how much power they have over me. I have acted and reacted in ways that show my essential powerlessness in regards to these people and institutions. But the Power to which the authors are referring at this point is the one they describe on page 45: "a power by which we could live" and "a Power greater than yourself which will solve your problem." The care and concern of loved ones, threats to remove or restrict my freedom, financial insecurity and embarrassment – none of these were potential deterrents to my drinking. I had reached the point where consequences no longer mattered, and so the power of these finite, human things, became ineffectual.

So I needed a new Power in my life. Lead in to my favorite sentence in the Big Book: "Obviously." The authors promise is that this "chip of a book" was written precisely to enable me to get this power. And then they go and bring up the word "God". We are all familiar with the host of circumstances and experiences that cause us to have issues with the word God:

family religious beliefs (or lack thereof), the perceived actions and attitudes of some people of faith, or simply a mind unable to comprehend that which is essentially incomprehensible and so dismisses it out-of-hand.

God – *as we understand Him* – tells me that my limited, damaged, human brain is incapable of truly fathoming this Source of Power. And that's okay. Honestly, I am no scientist. I cannot tell you precisely how electricity - or alcohol for that matter - works. But my knowledge hasn't prevented me from using either of those things. I believe in the powers of electricity and alcohol. And even without my belief, they still work. And even when I had no belief in God, this Power was still at work in my life.

It is interesting that so many of us get to that point of misery and hopelessness and then become resistant to or flat out deny ourselves of the one thing that can help us. We acknowledge our powerlessness yet try to determine the means by which we must be saved: not *God*. Anything but God.

"When we became alcoholics, crushed by a self-imposed crisis we could not postpone or evade, we had to fearlessly face the proposition that either God is everything or else He is nothing. God either is, or He isn't. What was our choice to be?" (Big Book, p. 53)

Essentially, this program is about what works and what doesn't. For me, hopelessness became the key to my willingness to believe. We are told again and again that we must be thoroughly crushed by our own efforts before we can receive help. The crisis I could no longer postpone or evade was ME. I could and did run from everything else in my life; but I always caught up with myself. Having tried every other way possible to achieve and maintain sobriety, I reached what a friend calls "the last house on the block." I didn't have a choice but to accept spiritual help if I wanted to live. And you assured me that there was no need to complicate things. No secret rituals or forced dogma: only a simple belief in the possibility that something outside of myself could restore me to sanity. On paper this is a pretty easy trade-off. But, as is my tendency with most things, I make the whole process surrounding Step Two much more difficult than it requires. In actuality, I am willing to believe many things for which I have no direct physical evidence.

My favorite quote is from a famous scientific theorist: "When the solution is simple, God is answering." It is much simpler for me to try a way of life that involves mere willingness to believe than it is for me to continue to struggle and convince myself of a million reasons not to.

My own history proves that. And, really, what else do I have to lose?

Come Along With Us - A Memorial to Jim A

One of the most gentle, quiet, and unassuming members of Alcoholics Anonymous I have ever met, passed out of this life January 11, 2012. Jim A., known as "Trudge" by some, was a member of the Brown Bag Group in Kerrville Texas but enjoyed a variety of meetings regularly: 2211's Birthday and Speaker meetings, Guadalupe Group's Sunday morning meeting and meetings all around the state.

Jim sobered up in March of 1984 and came to Kerrville in the 90's to take care of his ailing mother and stayed after her death. Jim made a big impact on the recovery community in Kerrville and all of Texas. He loved the program of Alcoholics Anonymous and had dedicated his life in service to his fellow man. Here are a few of the service positions he held while living in Kerrville: Home Group: Secretary, Treasurer, GSR District 12: Webmaster (Jim created the District website), Treasurer, Public Information chair, Alternate DCM, and Archives chairperson Hill Country Roundup: Registration mail out support every year Other 12 step programs: started meetings and kept the doors open for Nicotine Anonymous and Codependent's Anonymous.

In addition to these positions, Jim rarely went to a meeting or an Area Conference without taking a newcomer or younger member. He always said that he had been given a gift and he always invited newer members to "come along with us". Just as Bill and Lois did in the early days of AA, Jim and his wife Sallie opened their home to AA members in need. He also took in his uncle with Alzheimer's until Gil's disease became too advanced. Even then, Jim would take him to the Saturday night speaker and birthday meetings and out to eat after, as well as picking up and bringing his laundry to the nursing home.

Jim A. embodied the spirit of AA. The greed and hatred so rampant in today's world cannot exist when met head on with the spiritual light of a higher power that shines through those people like Jim who have incorporated the principles of the 12 steps of Alcoholics Anonymous in their daily lives. So in Jim's words, "Come Along with Us."

Anonymous

SIMPLE RULES

ACROSS

5. Go to _____

8. Ask God for _____ in the morning

9. Honesty, Openmindedness, _____

11. Call phone _____

13. _____ the Big Book

14. Don't _____

DOWN

1. Get _____ numbers

2. Look for the _____ not differences

3. Put _____ in your mouth

4. Follow a few simple _____

6. Get a _____

7. _____ God at night

10. Take the cotton out of your _____

12. Come _____, stay late

<http://stores.ebay.com/Cheryl's-Bookmarks>

Announcements

January's Birthday Celebrants

Ingram Sol.

Mindy G. 1 yr.
Kevin K. 18 mo.
Stephan M. 18 mo.
Tanya D. 2 yrs.

Have a sobriety birthday coming up.
We would like to help you celebrate.

Send Birthdays to
newsletter@aa12.org

SWTA 68 Annual CFC Conference

February 17-19, 2012

Friday, February 17 5:00 pm—Registration Desk Opens 6:00 pm—Hospitality Room - Snacks 7:00 pm—Welcome & Introduction 7:15 pm—Open Mic / Round Robin Speaker Meeting - Raffle - AA Meeting	Saturday, February 18 7:00 am—Registration Desk Opens 7:00 am—Hospitality Room - Snacks 8:00 am—Opening Ceremony Speakers - Panel - Raffles - Meetings - Workshop
Sunday, February 19 7:00 am—Coffee & Rolls in Hospitality 8:00 am—Opening Ceremony Speaker Meeting - Ask-It-Basket - Business Meeting	Pre-Register and Save This Year's Rates Are: Pre-Registration - \$10.00 Registration At The Door - \$12.00 PRE-REGISTRATION MUST BE POST MARKED BEFORE FEB. 15, 2012 RESERVATIONS 1001 Junction Hwy Kerrville, Texas 78028 www.innofthehills.com Rooms \$75.00 per day For Reservations Call (800) 895-0000 or (800) 260-5590 ASK FOR CFC CONFERENCE RATES Reservations Must Be Made BEFORE February 15, 2012 to receive Conference Rates Speakers - Workshop Chris R. - Ingram Martha W. - Kerrville Clay E. - Kerrville Larry M. - Austin Traditions Workshop Charlotte S. - San Antonio If you have Questions, contact: Clay E. (830) 496-0003 Area 68 CFC Chairman—Jauca W. (512) 522-1360

Please visit **www.aa12.org** for more information and downloadable flyer and sign up form.

Please submit questions or comments to
newsletter@aa12.org

District 12 Trusted Servants

DCM Jerry B.

Alternate DCM Linda H.

Secretary Leslie C.

Alt. Secretary William A.

Treasurer Edie T.

Archives TBD

Correctional Facilities TBD

Grapevine Shirley B.

Help Line Perry C.

Newsletter Mike S.

Public Information Tamby E.

Cooperation with Professional Community Sandy T.

Spanish Meeting Coordinator Jose B.

Treatment Facilities Andrew B.

For email and contact information please visit
www.aa12.org

AA Service Opportunities

HELP WANTED!!

Awesome service opportunity! Reach out to fellow AA's in treatment facilities.

"GIVE BACK WHAT YOU HAVE BEEN GIVEN!"

H&I sign-ups will be held at the 2211, Kerrville, TX

**Sunday, Feb. 19th at 3pm
DON'T MISS IT!**

THE GRAPEVINE

Get your subscription TODAY!!

For more information contact

Shirley B.

Please submit all
AA Service Opportunities to:
newsletter@aa12.org

District 12 Public Information Committee

Education and Planning Meeting

Educational topic for October will be:

"Traditions Checklist"

Wednesday, Feb. 15th @ 6pm
at

AA Meeting Room
at St. Peter's Episcopal Church,
Corner of Main St. and Tivy St. next
door to the Cottage Shop in Kerrville

SPANISH SPEAKING MEETING EVERY SATURDAY

@ 2PM

2211 located at 2210 Bandera Hwy,
Kerrville, TX 78028

UPCOMING AA EVENTS

AREA 68

WHERE

WHEN

Austin Roundup

Austin

Feb. 3-5

2012 SWTA 68 CFC Conference

Kerrville - Inn of the Hills

Feb. 17-20

DISTRICT 12

WHERE

WHEN

2012 SWTA 68 CFC Conference
Planning Committee Meeting

Kerrville - 720 Club

Feb. 4
2 pm

District 12 Monthly Meeting

Fredericksburg - United
Methodist Church

Feb. 12
2 pm

H & I Signup

Kerrville - 2211

Feb. 19
3 pm

AA Humor

Two men were sitting next to each other at a pub. After a bit, one guy looks at the other and says, "I can't help but think, from listening to you, that you're from Ireland." The other guy responds, "Yes, I am from Ireland!" The first guy says, "So am I! And where about from Ireland might you be from?" The other guy answers, "I'm from Galway." The first guy responds, "And so am I! And what street did you live on in Galway?" The other guy says, "I lived on Coach Street in the east part of town." The first guy says, "So did I! And to what school did you attend?" The other guy answers, "Well, I went to St. James." The first guy gets really excited, and says, "So did I. What year did you graduate?" The other guy answers, "Well, now, I graduated in 1975." The first guy says, "I can hardly believe our luck at ending up in the same bar tonight. Can you believe it, I graduated from St. James's in 1975 as well." About this time, another guy walks into the pub and asks for a whiskey. He asks the bartender, "Hows it going?" The bartender says, "It's going to be a long night tonight, the Callahan twins are drunk again."

District 12 Newsletter Focus

To inform the AA community of information pertaining to District 12, Area 68, and GSO and to enlarge group participation.