



THE STAND



MARCH 2012

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTHWEST TEXAS AREA 68 DISTRICT 12 OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

ISSUE FIFTEEN

Restored to Sanity

In keeping with the past two articles, I thought I might as well continue with relating some of my experience with each of the twelve steps. If anything, I'll have something to write on for at least a year.

Let us now look at Step Two: Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity. What does this actually entail, and how is the wording important? Well, in light of the first step, we admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable, it means that we are screwed, and there is a solution. If we have become convinced of Step One, Step Two grows almost organically

out of the fact that we are beyond human aid when it comes to our disease. At this point we are not relieved of our obsession to drink, but we admit that the only thing that can relieve us is a Power greater than ourselves. Having exhausted every human resource in the quest to solve his or her drink problem, this is that first bending of the waist for the hopeless alcoholic in the motion of picking up that spiritual kit of tools. Also, we don't need to have a concept of what that Power might be to do this, all we need to know is that it is NOT A DOOR KNOB!

Restore us to sanity...That seems to imply that we are insane. And we are, when it comes to alcohol.

This is succinctly put to us in the Big Book when it describes the behavior of our good friend the Jaywalker. The mental obsession will not let us choose whether we will walk in front of that big rig, it hurts too good, and the physical allergy keeps us coming back for more. This is the insanity they are talking about. We might be crazy in other areas of our lives, but the focus of the program is on our insane behavior around alcohol.

If you are convinced of Step One, there is nowhere else to go except Step Two. Clever little program.

by 
Critic F.

Grapevine Article - July 2010

Binge Thinker

Before I was powerless over alcohol and my life had become unmanageable, I was powerless over unhappiness and my life had become unmanageable. I turned to alcohol in my late 40's as the best self-help option I thought I could find. Often, my unhappiness seemed to melt as I drank. But drinking became an ever more elusive and flawed solution to my unhappiness. It began to create unhappiness of its own. My overall unhappiness was eventually much greater than what I had evaded and yet not solved at the beginning of my alcoholism. Now what?

Maybe the best way to feel was happy. How was that possible?

Long before I was a binge drinker, I was a binge thinker. I tended to think incessantly, as if this were an essential part of staying alive. My mind either had no "off" switch, or, if it did, I had no idea where it was. In this constant banter, I could find all sorts of resentments to chew on, grudges to hold, victimization to ponder and catastrophes to protest. Life was unfair, people were the harbingers of much injustice and unkindness, and I was justifiably withholding my seal of approval by not accepting what was.

I create thoughts. I can do so from default behaviors (what I have come to otherwise recognize as "character defects"), or I can create thoughts within the awareness of having choices. Awareness for me is realizing that I am not my thoughts.

Rather, I observe my thoughts and their creation and content. If I need not be run by my conditioned default thinking, then have I discovered the choice of observation and constructive thinking?

Once I learned to meditate, as encouraged in Step Eleven, I was able to find the "off" switch to my thinking when that thinking is neither needed nor useful to me. I can use thought, rather than have my thinking use me. "Awareness," I believe, is the most accessible doorway to what has been referred to as "spirituality" throughout my life and in AA.

Ken T - Ames, Iowa

Concept of the Month

Concept III

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."

Do we understand what is meant by the "Right of Decision"?

Do we grant it at all levels of service or do we "instruct"?

Do we trust our trusted servants — G.S.R., D.C.M., area delegate, the Conference itself?

Please submit questions or comments to
newsletter@aa12.org

After telling my sponsor, "I desperately need the problem removed," he said with a smile, "You're right, but what do you think the problem is?" I said, "That's simple, alcohol." To which he replied, "No Scott, your problem is Lack of Power, and if the problem is removed, it means you will then have Power working in your life."

Step One convinced me that I was powerless and by the time I reached Step 10 I had Power in my life and I learned an incredible lesson. The serenity I had searched for would not come as a result of simply removing my problems. Serenity would come as a result of Power in my life to face those problems without a drink. Page 132 says it well when it states "We have recovered and been given the power to help others." My life now has power with a purpose and the delusional world of alcohol I had lived in has been replaced by "a great sense of purpose, accompanied by a growing consciousness of the power of God in my life." Pg.130. - Scott B.

DCM CORNER

The Area workshop in Edinberg in January introduced New Delegate, Area Officers, chair-committee Heads, DCMs, GSRs, to each other. 67 GSRs (5 from District 12) were present with DCMs in a registration of 222. Training workshops in all areas of service and responsibility were presented. Noteworthy of these were PI, Newsletter, TF, and CF. The Newsletter workshop had our THE STAND at hand as a model representation. The Corrections workshop gave opportunity to encourage those present to pass the word for registration for the Area Corrections Workshop weekend in Kerrville the middle of February. This past year, ever since Clay E, CFC co-chair with Josie, came back from the last Area CF Conference (2011): he has led District 12 in preparation for our "Hosting" this annual Area event February 17-19, 2012.-----It was marvelous!!!!Extremely successful in all areas of planning first, then in Participation by the Area--167 registrants, more than \$750.00 in literature for corrections. SUPPORT from GROUPS Individuals, an "In House" raffle of 'self-supported' items--more than \$1200.00, carried the District through it's budget: Hotel, Hospitality, Attraction. UNITY AT WORK. The service part was the best--good-will between workers, compliments by participants to the value of the information shared and the inspiration they would 'take home'. THANK YOU just won't cover it; it was participation in blessing. (the credit is in the "hands-on" 1:1 volunteer work done by individuals and groups who "just found a place to help": if it needed done they did it!)---[some of it started at 04:30am]. For this, there is no appropriate appreciation--service as service speaks for all who give away what they have. And the strength and unity of A.A. continues.

Jerry B.
servant

THE 12&12: SIXTY YEARS

The fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous entered a period of transition in 1944. It was then that a series of events began which would cause co-founder Bill Wilson to reinterpret his approach to working the 12 Steps. The results of his philosophical shift are still with us today.

During the spring of that year, Bill and his wife Lois took a three month cross country tour, visiting most of the AA groups in existence at that time. Upon returning to New York, Wilson fell into a deep depression. This was troubling to many AA members, some of whom accused Bill of not working the program. Eventually, Wilson began to wonder the same thing. In reflecting about this period of his life, he once said, "I used to be rather guilt ridden about this...I blamed myself for (my) inability to practice the program in certain areas of my life."

However, Bill did not turn to the Twelve Steps for relief. Instead he began therapy with Dr. Henry Tiebout, a psychiatrist who specialized in the treatment of alcoholics. It is probably no coincidence that Tiebout was already a staunch supporter of AA. He particularly liked the concept of "ego deflation at depth" as a means of curing alcoholism.

However, in treating alcoholics Tiebout put more emphasis on understanding the psychological causes than on implementing spiritual cures. Wilson underwent therapy with either Tiebout or his associate, Frances Weeks, until 1949. Their influence on Bill was undeniable. The end result was that Wilson moved away from the "religious conversion" approach practiced by the early Akron group and adopted a more psychological view of working the steps.

This first became apparent in 1952 with the publishing of Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. Many of AA's older members were highly critical of the new book because they felt it did not insist on a spiritual experience as the answer to the problems of the alcoholic.

A perfect example can be found in the instructions for taking a Fourth Step inventory. The Big Book unequivocally states that selfishness is the root of the alcoholic's problems. Its inventory requires the alcoholic to identify and get rid of character defects that block him or her from a personal relationship with God. In fact, such a relationship is promised to the alcoholic who completes the steps.

According to the 12 & 12, the root of the alcoholic's problems is not selfishness, but rather instincts that are out of balance. The 12&12 version contains no promise of freedom from selfishness, or a new life of intimacy with a Higher Power. Instead, recovering alcoholics should be content with gradual progress over a long period of time.

However the most controversial change was the 12&12's suggestions for taking Step Three. Referring to the difficulty that many AA's have with turning their will and life over to the care of God, Bill wrote, (Many people) begin to solve the problem by the method of substitution. You can, if you wish, make A.A. itself your Higher Power. Many members have crossed the threshold just this way.

Bill undoubtedly hoped that many alcoholics who used AA as their higher power would eventually adopt a more spiritual concept. However, other members were afraid this "method of substitution" made it possible for newcomers to feel that they were honestly working the Steps without ever turning their lives over to the care of God.

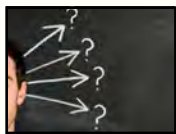
Today, many now see the 12&12 as a companion to the Big Book which broadens and deepens our knowledge of the Steps. Others see it is a radical departure from the purity of the AA message and dismiss it as product of Bill's depressed mind. It seems that even after the passage of sixty years, the 12&12 is still a hot topic of debate in some circles.

by Paul W.

Take Meetings into Treatment Facilities

Having been a patient at a treatment center, I know first hand what a good meeting can mean to someone newly sober. I had no idea what living without alcohol looked like, I thought the party was over. Then I saw some fresh eyed people show up to do an H&I Meeting, guys and girls I could trust...living life without drinking. Remembering it as it was yesterday, I asked a man questions about living sober, in the hill country. It made a big difference to me and now I can return the favor, bringing meetings to those men and women still suffering, them wondering what life will be like sober.

We need volunteers to take meetings into the local treatment centers! We have a special need for women to help carry the message to other women patients! We need sober men and women that can keep an appointment! If you've worked the twelve steps of Alcoholics Anonymous and had a spiritual awakening or are currently working on getting one, YOU have something to share! The H&I sign up is monthly, every third Sunday at 3pm at the 2211 sober club: 2210 Bandera Hwy (TX 173 @ Loop 534) in Kerrville, 78028. See you there!



DECISION-MAKING

by Alex P.

Most of the decisions in my life were non-decisions. Specifically choosing the best course of action in any given situation was often overwhelming, so I generally just did nothing and let the chips fall where they may. Inaction was the easier, softer way: the means by which I could abdicate personal responsibility for my life and consequences. And when I did choose, it was invariably from a position of self – what did I want, what did I think I needed, and how was I going to make it happen? Never did my decision-making involve concern for the well-being of others (nor, in reality, for myself).

So I get into these rooms and you suggest I make the biggest decision of all: to turn my will and my life over to the care of God! Immediately, my back stiffens and I'm ready to run in the opposite direction. It wasn't that I didn't believe in God; that's not my experience. I just didn't trust Him. And I was convinced that I wouldn't want what God had in store for me. What if I had to go live on a mountain in forced celibacy? Or work at a job I hated feeling unfulfilled just to learn humility

and gratitude? What about my grandiose plans and self-righteous dreams? Weren't these worth having and fulfilling? Was God going to give me what I wanted? This whole business seemed like a trick to get me to give up what made me, ME.

Well, in a sense, that has been proven to be the case. Because the truth is that I can't operate on both self-will and God's will simultaneously. Ego and surrender are incapable of peacefully coexisting. At any given moment, I am either living and interacting with others from a position of having my demands met or seeking to be of service to God and to them. The problem is that self is such a familiar and comfortable friend that I am often oblivious to its presence and influence. Living through God's will for my life is an unnatural and supernatural phenomenon. But it is the most important decision I can make.

It really boils down to a question of reliance doesn't it? Who or what have I been relying on in the past? Waiting for this person, this relationship, this place, this job, this status to fix me proved a

disappointing proposition. It just didn't work. I remained restless, unfulfilled, and full of longing and regret.

My recovery (and hence, my life) are dependent upon an act of capitulation and surrender: "the act or process of deciding by making a judgment". Well, the easiest judgment I can make is that my attempts at running my life and your life ended in shambles. This realization leads to the possibility that there could be a better way. And then I make the greatest leap of faith in my life: that what you offer in this program really works.

I heard a woman share at a meeting once: "God always gives me the desires of my heart. Either He grants me what I want or else He changes my desire to match His own." This simple statement is the promise of the Third Step of our program. The things I sought and fought for: love, freedom, happiness, and companionship are all good and wonderful things. The mistake I made was thinking I could achieve them on my own.

District 12 is currently seeking persons to serve as committee chairs for the following committees:

Archives & Correctional Facilities

If you would like to volunteer, please come to the next district meeting at the 720 Club on Mar. 11th.

District 12 CFC Committee Members,

On behalf of SWTA 68, I would like to thank each of you for your hard work and dedication in hosting the SWTA 68 CFC Conference last weekend in Kerrville. District 12 and the Committee were awesome and the Conference was highly successful, in that we had an outstanding turnout and trained more members in the Volunteer Training Orientation than ever. Thanks to each of you for serving SWTA 68.

I look forward to seeing you all again over the next two years in our combined Correctional Facility work in "carrying the message behind bars".

Again, thanks to each of you for a job well done. If I can be of service in your CFC Work, please do not hesitate to contact me.

In Love and Service,

Janice Woods SWTA 68 CFC Chair

**SWTA 68 Annual
CFC Conference**

ON THE BEAM



E C N A R E L O T H F G C O P
T Y F A I T H Q O L O N A M A
U R T K C C X N K H R I L P T
F M U S I O E Y A T G V M P I
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ACTION
CONSIDERATE
FAITH
GIVING
HONESTY
LOVE
MODESTY
SELF-FORGIVENESS
TRUST

CALM
COURAGE
FORGIVENESS
GRATEFUL
HUMILITY
MODERATION
PATIENCE
TOLERANCE

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

Announcements

February's Birthday Celebrants

Ingram Sol.

Marissa L. 1 yr. Patty R. 20 yrs.
 Jeff M. 1 yr. Madeline A. 25 yrs.
 Tom G. 1 yr. Alan U. 4 yrs.
 Tommy D. 4 yrs.

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

Send Birthdays to
newsletter@aa12.org

District 12 Meetings

Month	Location	Facility
Jan	Ingram	The Outpost
Feb	Fredericksburg	United Methodist
Mar	Kerrville	720 Club
Apr	Lake Hills	United Methodist
May	Medina	Medina Group
June	Center Point	The AA Hall
July	Stonewall	Stone Sober
Aug	Bandera	Community Church
Sep	Boerne	Boerne Noon Group
Oct	Boerne	40700 IH10
Nov	Kerrville	2211 Club
Dec	Fredericksburg	St Barnabas

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, Mar. 18th 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

Wanna Get Involved?

The Newsletter Committee is
 currently seeking volunteers
 for upcoming Newsletters.
 Please contact Mike S. if you
 would like to join the team.
newsletter@aa12.org

SPANISH SPEAKING MEETING EVERY SATURDAY

@ 2PM

2211 located at 2210 Bandera Hwy,
 Kerrville, TX 78028

UPCOMING AA EVENTS

AREA 68

WHERE

WHEN

SWTA 68 Spring Conference

Round Rock

Mar. 30 - Apr 1

DISTRICT 12

WHERE

WHEN

District 12 Monthly Meeting

Kerrville - 720

Mar. 11
 2 pm

H & I Signup

Kerrville - 2211

Mar. 18
 3 pm

AA Humor

**God grant me the laughter
 to help me see the past with perspective,
 face the future with hope,
 and celebrate today---
 without taking myself too seriously.**

District 12 Newsletter Focus

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