

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

INSIDE THIS
ISSUE:

Concept XI	1
Tradition Eleven	2
Note From The DCM	4
Gratitude Month	4
Step Eleven	6
AA Contacts	7

DISTRICT12
NEWSLETTER FO-
CUS — TO IN-
FORM THE AA
COMMUNITY OF
INFORMATION
PERTAINING TO
DISTRICT 12,
AREA 68, AND
GSO AND TO
ENLARGE GROUP
PARTICIPATION.

THE STAND

VOLUME 9, ISSUE 11

November 2016

Concept XI

The trustees should always have the best possible committees, corporate service directors, executives, staffs, and consultants. Composition, qualifications, induction procedures, and rights and duties will always be matters of series concern.

This concept reinforces the idea that “Alcoholics Anonymous deserves the very best.” High expectations of the General Service Board can only be met if the board has the excellent support from GSO and Grapevine executives and staff, and non-trustee directors and committee members. Bill W. writes a long essay detailing how this infrastructure is in place. “Members of this group,” declares Bill, “not only *support* the leadership of the trustees: they *share* leadership with them.”

Several sound management principles are outlined by Bill. First, each service corporation is led by an executive having ample freedom and authority to do their job. Next, each executive, staff member, and consultant should be compensated fairly based upon the market for their abilities in the commercial world. Also, the twelve paid service staff members at GSO rotate assignments every two years ensuring flexibility and a well-trained staff. And lastly, as stressed in Concept IV, key paid personnel have a voice and vote on committees, corporate boards, and the General Service Conference.

The 65th GSC Committee on Trustees wrote an additional committee consideration referencing this concept, encouraging the Board and the Fellowship to identify, attract, and encourage a wide range of competent individuals to serve Alcoholics Anonymous.

James H.
P64/A68 Southwest Texas

NOTE: I mistakenly inserted Concept Eleven {XI} instead of Concept Nine {IX} in September’s newsletter. Concept IX can be found in a special one-page insert in this issue. Sorry for any confusion this may have caused. The online version of the September newsletter contained the correct Concept.

Tradition Eleven

Morning Prayer:

God, direct my thinking today so that it be empty of self pity, dishonesty, self-will, self-seeking and fear. God, inspire my thinking, decisions and intuitions. Help me to relax and take it easy. Free me from doubt and indecision. Guide me through this day and show me my next step. God, show me what I need to do to take care of any problems. I ask all these things that I may be of maximum service to you and my fellow man. In the spirit of the Steps I pray.

NIGHTLY PRAYER:

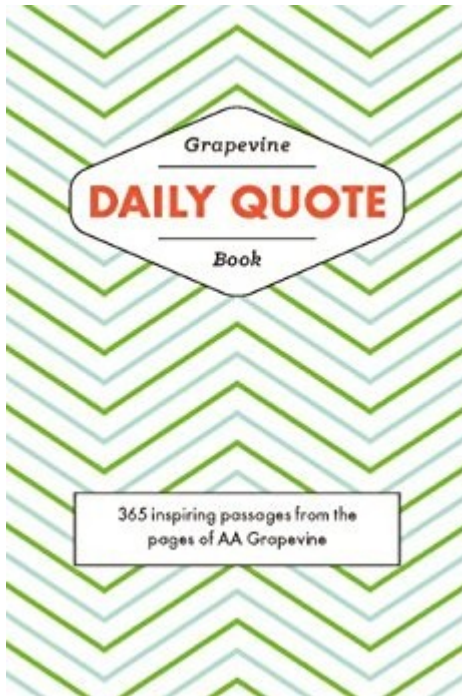
God, forgive me where I have been resentful, selfish, dishonest or afraid today. Help me to not keep anything to myself but to discuss it all openly with another person - show me where I owe an apology and help me make it. Help me to be kind and loving to all people. Use me in the mainstream of life, God. Free me of worry, remorse or morbid (sick) reflections that I may be of usefulness to others .

Derived from Alcoholics Anonymous pg 86.

“Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.”

Without our many friends A.A. would not be what it is today. Almost from the very beginning we received favorable publicity of every description from many of our friends. Early on, this led to vast numbers of inquiries about our Fellowship from alcoholics and their families seeking recovery, to clergy, and doctors, professionals, employers and others wishing to discover what can be done to help the suffering alcoholic. It was in this environment that we found it our responsibility to develop the best public relations policy for Alcoholics Anonymous. Through many painful experiences, we arrived at what that policy ought to be. Rather than the usual promotional practices, we found that we had to rely on the principle of *attraction rather than promotion*. With our Fellowship being mainly composed of self-centered self-promoters, we knew we had to exercise self-restraint. And the way this played off was truly amazing. It resulted in more favorable publicity than we could have ever have afforded. We had resorted to idea that it would be better to let our friends praise us, rather than promoting ourselves. We became a society that wished to publicize its principles and its work, but not its individual members. For many years now the spiritual principle of anonymity has served us well. But it is important that we remember that we are anonymous, not invisible. We are not a secret society. We have to be able to work with professionals and the public, with Corrections and Treatment entities and let people know who we are, and where we are, and what we do. We have to be able to conduct our twelfth step work, and we can't do that if we clothed in secrecy. We are anonymous at one level, at the level of press, radio, and films. Tradition Eleven is more than a good public relations policy, and more than our denial of self-seeking. Tradition Eleven is a constant reminder that personal ambition and personal agendas have no place in A.A. Tradition Eleven reminds us that every A.A. member is an active guardian of our Traditions and our Fellowship.

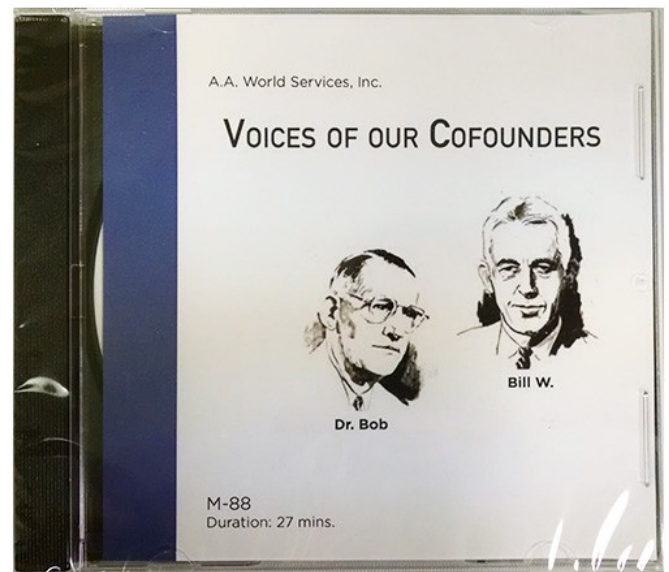
Jonathan Smith SWTA 68 – Alternate Delegate



**Suggested Reading
Grapevine Book of
the Month**



**Suggested Reading
Pamphlet of
the Month**



**Suggested Reading
AA CD of
the Month**

Q. What is the origin of introducing oneself with the statement “I am an alcoholic” at A.A. meetings?

A. As with the origins of other customs in A.A., this is something of a mystery. However, we came across a *Box 4-5-9* article on the subject in the April-May 1987 issue:

“Who was the first to start a meeting or a qualification with the statement, ‘I am an alcoholic’? How did the worldwide custom begin? As late co-founder Bill W. used to observe, “Nobody invented A.A., it just grew.” And so probably did its classic introduction at meetings.

‘Many members ask us these questions,’ says G.S.O. archivist Frank M. ‘Unfortunately, only a few of the early-timers are left, and not many of them are able to provide plausible theories. So we can only speculate.’

According to an early friend of A.A., the late Henrietta Seiberling, the expression dates back to meetings of A.A.’s forerunner, the Oxford Group Movement, which had its heyday in the early 1930s. Mrs. Seiberling, a nonalcoholic who had sought spiritual help in the Oxford Group meetings, introduced Bill to A.A.’s other founder, Dr. Bob, then struggling to get sober in the Oxford Group. At small meetings, the members knew one another and didn’t need to identify themselves. But in the large, public meetings, where there was ‘witnessing’ along the lines of an A.A. talk today, personal identification became necessary. Chances are that someone at some time said, ‘I am an alcoholic,’ but Mrs. Seiberling wasn’t sure. Nor did she remember that the phrase was used at early A.A. meetings in Akron before publication of the Big Book. In fact, she said, the word ‘alcoholic’ was rarely uttered, at least in Akron. People referred to themselves as ‘drunks’ or ‘rum hounds’ or ‘boozers’ or other choice epithets reminiscent of the Temperance Movement that gained adherents during Prohibition.

An early New York A.A. first heard the expression as ‘I am an alcoholic and my name is...’ According to his recollection, that was after World War II, in 1945 or 1946. And it is a matter of record that, in 1947, a documentary film entitled “I Am an Alcoholic” was produced by RKO Pathé.

From then on, as Bill would say, the custom just grew.”

Tradition Ten: Long Form

Our relations with the general public should be characterized by personal anonymity. We think A.A. ought to avoid sensational advertising. Our names and pictures as A.A. members ought not be broadcast, filmed, or publicly printed. Our public relations should be guided by the principle of attraction rather than promotion. There is never need to praise ourselves. We feel it better to let our friends recommend us. better to let our friends recommend us.

Note From Your DCM

Happy Thanksgiving.

At the last District meeting, Cherie Rowlands, Area Treatment Chair, shared about her responsibilities and what she has been doing the past 8 months.

The next District meeting will be Dec 11, 2016 at the 720 Club at 2:00pm. Hope you will be there! Mark it on your calendar!

Love and service— Sandy T. , D.C.M.

Gratitude Month: Our Chance to Say 'Thank You!'

"The idea is in the air that AA might adopt Thanksgiving week as a time for meetings and meditation on the Traditions," AA co-founder Bill W. wrote in the November 1949 issue of the Grapevine (The Language of the Heart, p. 95) shortly after publication of the Twelve Traditions. In fact, the idea had already taken hold earlier in the decade when, each fall, the General Service Board hosted small Gratitude Dinners-precursors of the larger, more elaborate Gratitude Luncheons that would be held during the '60s as an initiative of the trustees' Public Information Committee. The first official recognition of an A.A. Gratitude Week, specifically designed to coincide with Thanksgiving week in the U.S. (Canada celebrates in October), occurred in 1956, when the Sixth General Service Conference approved the motion, stipulating that "this action be noted in the annual pre-Thanksgiving appeals to the groups for funds to help support A.A.'s worldwide services." Three years later, Bill urged in a letter, "Gratitude should go forward, rather than backward ... if you carry the message to still others, you will be making the best possible repayment for the help given to you." (As Bill Sees It, p. 29). The motivation behind AA's Gratitude Lunches was threefold: to express personal gratefulness for the gift of sobriety; to carry the message of AA to other alcoholics; and to express appreciation to our professional friends for their numerous articles, books and radio and TV interviews relating to AA in the year just past. It was hoped, in the words of a General Service Office memo circulated at the time, that the luncheons would "advance A.A.'s public relations by bringing editors, publishers, writers and broadcasters in personal contact with sources of reliable information on the movement." Held without fail in November at New York City's Roosevelt Hotel, the luncheons were always well-attended. A typical list of invitees to the 1965 luncheon included representatives of The New York Times, McCall's Magazine, Medical World News and The Christian Science Monitor. Bill W. always addressed the gatherings, as did the late "Dr. Jack" Norris, then serving as AA's Class A (nonalcoholic) trustee chairman. A discussion period followed the proceedings, an ample selection of AA literature was available for the taking, and in 1965 Bill sent an autographed copy of A.A. Comes of Age to every guest. The luncheons were discontinued in 1968, but the concept of gratitude persisted and expanded in scope. For decades now, A.A.s in the U.S. have set aside all of November as Gratitude Month-marking the occasion with special contributions to G.S.O. In the spirit of the Seventh

Continued on Page 5}

Tradition AA is self-supporting through its members' contributions, and frequently turns away money from well-meaning outside contributors. This means that the active input of every AA is vital to the life of the Fellowship. Grateful for the sobriety they've been given and eager to pass it on, AA.s are busier than ever in Twelfth Stepping and service. They are reaching out in greater numbers to Loners, people with special needs, members of minority groups and previously unreached alcoholics. It is clear from their sharing that an overwhelming number of A.A.s-along with many of our professional friends-find their own special ways to say thank you during Gratitude Month and, indeed, all year long. Writes one member: "Enclosed is a check for Gratitude Month, because I want AA to be there for all those who need it, just as I did." From another: "The enclosed check is from my own pocket, to help groups in correctional facilities like mine . Some of us are struggling to turn our lives around. We begin the process in here ourselves, and by reaching out." And a nonalcoholic missionary wrote from India, "It is a matter of great encouragement and satisfaction that your AA has been a rich resource of guidance, help and light for a number of organizations dealing with problems related to alcohol. ... " Besides observing Gratitude Month, many a member uses the AA Birthday Plan "to give back what's been given to me," as one wrote. And from another grateful A.A:

"I want to say thanks today for my life and my family's--for all of us alcoholics in recovery," he wrote.

"Enclosed is an anniversary check, because I want the hand of A.A. to be there for all who need it."

Like him, many members celebrate their A.A. birthdays by sending in a gratitude gift to G.S.O.- usually a dollar or two for each year of sobriety. Some groups follow this Birthday Plan by collecting contributions from members on a voluntary basis throughout the year, or until the number of dollars matches the members' total years of sobriety. On the group's anniversary, the money collected is sent to G.S.O. as a birthday contribution. Gratitude. It's a weighty, high-dignity word, but in truth its close companions are humor and joy. As Bill W. observed early on in the Big Book (p. 132),

"Outsiders are sometimes shocked when we burst into merriment over a seemingly tragic experience out of the past. But why shouldn't we laugh? We have recovered, and have been given the power to help others." What greater cause could there be for rejoicing than this?

Box4-5-9: Reprinted with permission November 2000

A FEW MONTHS AGO we printed readers' suggestions of ways to say "no" to a drink if offered one. T. M. sent in a few more: No thank you, I might forget where I parked my car. . .if I'm going to blow my diet, I'd rather eat junk food. . .I'm saving all my brain cells for science. . .I don't look good in lampshades. . .my life is weird enough already. And finally, just plain "no."

Words of wisdom: C. M. of Atlanta, Georgia offers the following: She doesn't need AA for her drinking problem anymore, it's her living problem she can use help with now.

Ham on Wry Grapevine Online A.A. Grapevine, Inc. Reprinted with permission

How does your group support newcomers?

Giving a newcomer a packet full of great AA info tailored just for them, along with a meeting list and phone numbers is a great start!

Public Information Committee has put these together for you to get you started.

**Call or text Kathleen K. PI Chair, for more info.
(830) 377-5890**

If your group has an event coming up and would like it in the newsletter, please contact:

Pjmcdan@yahoo.com

Step Eleven:

“Sought through prayer an meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood God, praying only for knowledge of God's will for us and the power to carry that out.”

A Process of Repetition: Step Eleven

I had admitted powerlessness over alcohol and had gone to the group willing to do *anything* to keep from drinking. After 20 years of social and alcoholic drinking, including brief periods of dryness, followed by worse drinking, anguish, remorse, and physical illness, I had stopped drinking and didn't understand how. Following two weeks of drinking around the clock and becoming an animal, for some reason I didn't understand, I was unable to take another drink. And I wanted to keep it that way.

I dragged myself to AA still in a fog, still weak, unable to eat, but able to listen. I'd been to AA meetings before and hadn't heard a word about how not to drink. This time I heard: "Ask for God's help in the morning and thank him at night." I started to do this. One who had scoffed at prayer was praying, and it was working! I was not drinking! Seven days, 90 days, six months. I became secretary of the Step meeting and one year later I was allowed to have the Step meeting at my house.

Through Steps Four, Five, Eight, and Nine I started getting rid of my biggest anger-- which was against my husband. I had to start forgiving him and I did it every day. I forgave minor irritations that once made me angry. When we stood saying the Lord's Prayer at the end of meetings, I forgave him. When I had reacted angrily to him I used the Tenth Step and apologized to him.

Today we have a new relationship. We are beginning to communicate with each other. I am becoming a better partner in the real sense of the word. With God's help, I have reduced a little self-pity and some self-importance. I have begun to trust my husband again by trusting God.

With four years of Step meetings, besides losing a lot of fear, anger, and the compulsion to drink, I have lost a lot of guilt feelings. All my life I had been bogged down with guilt. I had the feeling "everything was my fault." The feeling that my words could cure or kill; that everything depended upon me and my efforts; that I was responsible for other peoples' lives and actions. First I asked God to forgive me for my drinking. Almost every day, as guilty thoughts came up, I forgave myself. I did several Fourth and Fifth Steps and continually asked God's forgiveness. The feelings of guilt began to leave me. To really accept God's forgiveness I had to continue my spiritual reading and I used the TV ministries. I became a born-again Christian and at four years sober I had a miraculous feeling of freedom.

Much of my guilt has disappeared just like the compulsion to drink. Without so much guilt, I am able to start saying no to people, to situations, and it is becoming easier. It is still difficult with my sons and my sponsor in AA, but it has to be learned. I am not such a people-pleaser as I used to be. I had to please everybody at an AA meeting; even everybody on the highway when I drove my car!

What has helped me most with the Eleventh Step and all the Steps has been going over and over the Steps with the same group, week after week for the last four years. Also my spiritual reading every morning has helped me find a "loving God as I understand him." With four years of sobriety, I can now pause long enough to calm my emotions and feel that love, that power which stopped me from drinking. I look forward to more spiritual improvement, more peace and serenity, through more sobriety and more AA meetings.

**“SELF-SUPPORT: WHERE
MONEY AND SPIRITUAL-
ITY MIX”**

***WHERE TO SEND YOUR
GROUP’S 7TH TRADI-
TION CONTRIBUTIONS***

DISTRICT LEVEL SUPPORT -

DISTRICT 12 TREASURER
P.O. BOX 290556
KERRVILLE, TX 78029-0556

AREA LEVEL SUPPORT -

SWTA 68 TREASURER
P.O. BOX 720651
MCALLEN, TX 78504

WORLD SERVICE SUPPORT -

THE GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE
GRAND CENTRAL STATION
P.O. BOX 459 NEW YORK, NY
10164-0423

District 12 Trusted Servants

DCM - Sandy T.
Alt DCM - Tracy Mc.
Treasurer - David S.
Alt Treasurer - Brian M.
Secretary - Sarah J.
Alt Secretary- Whitney W.
PICPC - Kathleen K.
CFC - Marty M.
H&I - Jim W.
Newsletter- Patrick Mc.
Grapevine– Ladara
Archives - Jayson J.
Bilingual - Greg M.
Webmaster - David H.

SWTA 68 Panel 66 Area Officers &

Committee Chairs

Delegate	Denise T.	delegate@aa-swta.org
Alt. Delegate	Jonathan S.	altdelegate@aa-swta.org
Chairperson	Michael P.	chairperson@aa-swta.org
Alt. Chair	Cathy H.	altchair@aa-swta.org
Area Registrar	Barbara R.	registrar@aa-swta.org
Secretary	Rae T.	secretary@aa-swta.org
Treasurer	Dean D.	treasurer@aa-swta.org
Archives	K.C. H.	archives@aa-swta.org
Grapevine/La Vina	Mari G.	grapevine@aa-swta.org
Treatment	Cherie R.	treatment@aa-swta.org
Bilingual	Mario R.	bilingual@aa-swta.org
Newsletter	Sonia D.	newsletter@aa-swta.org
Webmaster	Rob. C.	webmaster@aa-swta.org
C.F.C	Randall T.	cfc@aa-swta.org
P.I./C.P.C.	Larry L.	pi-cpc@aa-swta.org
SWTA 68 WEBSITE		http://www.aa-swta.org

HELP WANTED

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 720 Club, Kerrville, TX 3rd Sunday of the Month

**WE NEED YOU! HELP CARRY THE MES-
SAGE BY SHARING YOUR STORY WITH
THE DISTRICT! ALSO LOOKING FOR
GROUP HISTORIES, UPCOMING GROUP
EVENTS, AND SUGGESTIONS! REMEM-
BER, THIS IS YOUR NEWSLETTER! BE A
PART OF IT! Contact:**

Pjmcdan@yahoo.com

Grupo El Libro Azul

(The Blue Book Group)

Reunión en Español

(Meeting in Spanish)

6:30 pm

Todos los Martes

(Every Tuesday)

En el Club 720

(At the 720 Club)

980 Barnett

AA District 12
Texas Area 68

HOME COMMUNITY MEETINGS ACTIVITIES SERVICE NEWSLETTERS CONTACTS

24-Hour Help Line
(833) 815-3300

Welcome to
Alcoholics Anonymous
Southwest Texas Area 68 - District 12

WELCOME TO DISTRICT 12 ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

...serving Bandera, Gillespie, Kerr, Kendall, and Kimble counties in the hill country of Texas.

Anybody can look at the schedules and events here, but if you want the full benefits of the site as a District 12 A.A. member, **please** register and login. The more District 12 A.A. members who sign up, the more useful the site becomes!

GET INVOLVED!

There are many opportunities to get help or to help other alcoholics in our district.

To learn more about service opportunities [click here](#)

Check out the NEW WEBSITE!!

www.aa12.org

The more who register,
the more useful the website.

Post or Update Your Meetings!
Post Events!

Everyone who registers can be notified!