

# The Stand

Volume 12 Issue 3

March 2019

The official newsletter of the Southwest Texas Area 68, District 12 of A.A.

## Step Three

*"Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him."*

Practicing Step Three is like the opening of a door which to all appearances is still closed and locked. All we need is a key, and the decision to swing the door open. There is only one key, and it is called willingness. Once unlocked by willingness, the door opens almost of itself, and looking through it, we shall see a pathway beside which is an inscription. It reads: "This is the way to a faith that works." In the first two Steps we were engaged in reflection. We saw that we were powerless over alcohol, but we also perceived that faith of some kind, if only in A.A. itself, is possible to anyone. These conclusions did not require action; they required only acceptance.

Like all the remaining Steps, Step Three calls for affirmative action, for it is only by action that we can cut away the self-will which has always blocked the entry of God-or if you like, a Higher Power-into our lives. Faith, to be sure, is necessary, but faith alone can avail nothing. Therefore our problem now becomes just how and by what specific means shall we be able to let Him in? Step Three represents our first attempt to do this.

**If your group has an event, please share  
it with the newsletter. If you are  
Having a special celebration let us  
know so we can include the  
Information in the next  
Newsletter. Send to  
ibrrcmad@aol.com**

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## **An “Historic” Invitation to Cuba for Alcoholics Anonymous For Immediate Release**

**January 25, 2019**

From November 7-9, 2018, almost 100 doctors, addiction specialists, social workers, nurses and medical students gathered for the Third International Meeting Against Drug Addiction (“Lifestyles vs. Toxic Habits”) held in the city of Guantánamo, Guantánamo Province, Cuba. They came from Spain, the Dominican Republic, and Colombia, as well as from the Cuban provinces of Havana, Cienfuegos, Holguín, Granma, and Santiago de Cuba. And, for the first time, Alcoholics Anonymous was there.

“We were invited by the Cuban Health Ministry to participate,” says Dr. Peter Luongo, the Class A (nonalcoholic) trustee of the General Service Board whose experience in the alcoholism treatment field extends over 30 years and who is currently Executive Director of the Institute for Research, Education and Training in Addictions (IRETA). “I think all of us recognized that this was historic.” While A.A. meetings have been held for years in Cuba — and the country has its own General Service structure — there has until now been no official recognition of Alcoholics Anonymous as a civil organization by the Cuban government, which means A.A. has not been able to have an official office or even a telephone line, despite the fact that the country has an estimated 1,700 members and 100 groups.

Scott H., A.A.’s Trustee-at-Large for Canada — who in a previous trip to Cuba saw “the hunger for A.A.” — believes that the conference “is definitely a step in the right direction, maybe even a tipping point” for A.A. in Cuba. He and Dr. Luongo both credit Dr. Anselma Betancourt Pulsan, the alcoholism specialist who was chair of the organizing committee for the conference, as being instrumental in securing the invitation for Alcoholics Anonymous.

A highlight of the conference was Dr. Luongo’s talk “Healthcare Professionals and A.A.,” in which he outlined the ways in which A.A. and the medical profession can work together to help address the problem of alcoholism. He pointed out that, despite his years of training on addiction, he never really learned anything about alcoholism until he met sober alcoholics who were in A.A. and working in the treatment field. “I learned from them how important it is to incorporate Alcoholics Anonymous into the way we treat alcoholics.”

For more information, contact the Public Information desk at the General Service Office at [publicinfo@aa.org](mailto:publicinfo@aa.org) or (212) 870-3119.

**Pre General Service Assembly  
April 5-7, 2019  
Seguin, Texas**

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Greetings District 12!

I'm grateful to be alive today, how about you!?! I woke up grateful, and love it when that happens, giving all the credit to the Sunlight of the Spirit!

It has been a busy month, getting the word out about the need for a PI/CPC (Public Information/Cooperation with the Professional Community) chair person, no takers for that chair to date.

We do have a new Archivist, Lara S and turned over all of the materials at hand to her.

I distributed New Group Forms, as well as applications to carry the message to the alcoholics behind the walls in Bandera and Kendall counties.

Attended the 2019 SWTA 68 CFC (Corrections Facilities Coordinator) Conference in Killeen, Texas with Sandy T and Kara. What a super time we had at the conference and learned a lot about what we do to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers behind the walls, while adhering to our Twelve Traditions. Just a few of the workshops that were attended: "Sure Beats Sitting in a Cell"; "Working Within the Traditions"; "Sharing/Carrying the Message Behind the Walls". And while we attended workshops there was a "TDCJ Volunteer Training Orientation" happening which brought in about 150 (additional) people for that training. This training is required in order to take meetings behind the Prison Walls.

There was a lot of attention to our new chair position "Accessibilities". This addresses the needs of the handicapped community getting the message.

Tracy  
DCM Dist 12

## Concept Three

*As a traditional means of creating and maintaining a clearly defined working relation between the groups, the Conference, and A.A. General Service Board and its several service corporations, staffs, committees and executives, and of thus insuring their effective leadership, it is here suggested that we endow each of these elements of world service with a traditional "Right of Decision."*

A background for this Concept, you should be familiar with the Conference Charter and the Bylaws of the General Service Board, both of which are found in the The A.A. Service Manual. For, except for the specific directions in these documents, every trusted servant and every A.A. entity-at all levels of service-has the right "to decide...how they will interpret and apply their own authority and responsibility to each particular problem or situation as it arises."

That is, they can "decide which problems they will dispose of themselves and upon which matters they will report, consult or ask specific directions."

This is "the essence of "The Right of Decision."

But this right also means the Fellowship must have trust in its "trusted servants." If the groups instruct their G.S.Rs rather than giving them a "Right of Decision," then the General Service Conference is hamstrung. As Bill points out, "our Conference delegates are primarily the servants of A.A. as they should...cast their votes...according to the best dictates of their own judgement and conscience at that time."

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## Tradition 3

“The only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking.”

As with all traditions, this tradition came about due to the growth of groups and the experience of the groups with the many different people that were coming to Alcoholics Anonymous. After the publication of the Jack Alexander article in the *Saturday Evening Post*, the membership in AA began to grow rapidly. The members of AA were in fear of our program falling apart due to the vast amount of people coming into the rooms that were not pure Alcoholics. As this occurred the member put into place requirements for membership. It became apparent that the rules were not consistent throughout the groups so those in New York asked the groups to send in their membership requirements in hopes of making it universal. After the rules were sent in, it was determined that most of the early AA members would not have been accepted into the program if they had to meet these requirements. Thus came the long form of the third tradition.

“Our membership ought to include all who suffer from alcoholism. Hence, we may refuse none who wish to recover. Nor ought A.A. membership ever depend upon money or conformity. Any two or three alcoholics gathered together for sobriety may call themselves an A.A. group, provided that, as a group, they have no other affiliation.”

When talking with new comers I am reminded that not all of “us alcoholics” come into AA with the thought that we are really alcoholics. We come from all walks of life, all educational backgrounds and all different belief systems (if any). Who are we, the members of Alcoholics Anonymous, to judge those that come through our doors for help? I know when I first came into the program I actually stuttered when I said I was an alcoholic. I knew that

**If you have a drinking problem and want help  
Call the helpline anytime  
210 828-6325**

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## **“SELF-SUPPORT: WHERE MONEY AND SPIRITUALITY MIX”**

DISTRICT LEVEL SUPPORT -

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

AREA LEVEL SUPPORT -

SWTA 68 TREASURER P.O. BOX  
3136 EARLY, TX 76803

WORLD SERVICE SUPPORT -

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

## **District 12 Trusted Servants**

DCM- Tracy M  
Alt DCM-Kathleen K  
Secretary-Mary Alice  
Alt Secretary-Courtney  
Treasurer-Al P  
Alt Treasurer-Patrick M  
PI/CPC-Robert S  
TFC-Brian B  
CFC-Kara G  
Newsletter-Maddy A  
Archives-Lara S  
Grapevine-Joseph N  
Webmaster-Sam L

[www.aa12.org](http://www.aa12.org)

**If you would like to carry the message to Treatment  
Centers please come and sign up on the  
2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month at 720 Club at 4:00 pm**

**If you haven't done so, sign up on the District 12  
Website. The meeting schedule for our district  
Is on the website and meetings have to be validated  
annually or they fall off the schedule. Please help keep the  
schedule up to date.**

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