

THE STAND

Official Newsletter of SWTA 68, District 12

14 May 2023

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*"Whenever anyone
anywhere reaches out
for help, I want the hand
of A.A. always to be
there, and for that, I am
responsible" ·*

Greetings District 12 Family!

I hope you all are having an enjoyable May so far! As you will remember, last month at the district meeting I shared with you a lot of information regarding some recent resignations at GSO and subsequent information that I took notes on from the delegate's report at the spring area assembly in Marble Falls. I have since typed up my notes to provide our district secretary Ellie. If anyone is interested in receiving a copy, please send me an email at district12@aa-swta.org.

There is no new information at this time, but our Delegate, Barbara, did email all of the DCMs on May 4 to let us know that she was home from the 73rd General Service Conference. She reported that it was an intense week, with over 5 hours of discussion on Trustee-related matters alone, but that thing ended well and good committee work was done. Barbara will be attending our district meeting on July 9 to give her report. I hope to see you all there! She will also give her report at the Summer Workshop in Brownwood July 21 – July 23.

As always, please reach out to me with any questions or comments. Thank you all for your valuable service to Alcoholics Anonymous.

In love & service,

Courtney L.

Tradition Five

"Each group has but one primary purpose - to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers."

From Alcoholics Anonymous Great Britain and English Speaking Continental Europe,
SHARE Magazine > May 2021 > Tradition Five

OUR co-founder Bill W. said that it is better to do one thing well than many things badly. The thing that AA does is one alcoholic helps another. That's it. In the old days, people thought AA did so well with helping alcoholics, maybe it would become a new world religion. Today the drunks, tomorrow the world! But no, "Shoemaker, stick to thy last." We can't save the world. We have one primary purpose, to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

Today, it means that when I'm in a meeting, I can't fix someone's depression, marital problems, financial problems, etc. I can only do one thing well - talk about my experience with alcoholism and what I have done to maintain my recovery. I heard old-timers talk about this in several of their open talks and it really freaked me out - which led to me making some big changes in how I spoke at tables, how I worked with newcomers, and how I practiced my Programme. They stressed, over and over, "...to carry its message...". "What's the message you're carrying?" The message is, of course, the AA Programme of recovery - the Twelve Steps, the promise of a spiritual awakening if they're followed, recovery from alcoholism, and all the cool Fifth, Eleventh and Twelfth Step Promises plus all the others that are sprinkled throughout the Big Book. They really got me when they suggested that if someone new walks in the door and they're getting beaten-up by alcoholism - isn't it safe to say they were led here for AA's proven Programme of recovery? That being true - who do I think I am to show them 'my version' or to show them some alternative programme of recovery? Was I willing to risk their life upon 'my programme'? Anyway, I freaked out a bit when I realised the error of my ways, which got me back into the Big Book with some renewed motivation. I made the decision that I was now willing to put someone's life on the line with nothing other than the AA Programme. To be fair, I still tell them what I do. AA-in-the-book-stuff or not, but I'm careful to let people know it's just what I do and what works for me.

Tradition Five

"Each group has but one primary purpose - to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers."

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Another thing this Tradition reminds me is that it doesn't say it's just for the newcomer who's suffering. Sometimes, the alcoholic who's suffering is an old-timer, mid-timer, or the guy with a year or two sitting across from me. This Tradition asks me just how much courage do I have? - do I have the courage and the humility (yep, both at the same time) to carry the message to the guy with two, five or ten times longer time since his last drink than me? Can I do it in a way that's attractive and doesn't come off as egotistical? For that one, I've found I need a lot of divine intervention because, for whatever reason, anyone who's got substantially more time than me intimidates me. I get somewhat nervous about trying to carry the message to them.

Finally, this Tradition reminds me that I'm not the problem solver, God is. This is part of the "...carry its message..." deal mentioned above but it's really important so I say it again. I can only do so much through my experience. My willingness is the key and understanding of the Tradition along with Step Twelve work. On the telephone, over coffee, articles and at meetings through my shares to the floor. My ego wants to think I have all the answers, wants to give advice and shout out recovery but also my self-centred fear stops me because, "Why would anyone want to hear from me?" I'm torn! I won't grow spiritually if I stop myself short because of fear. This is a constant reminder that God works through me, to help the alcoholic who is suffering. God is where the real juice is, that's where the real serenity comes from - not from me. I carry God's message through the teachings and practices of the Twelve Steps.

MATTHEW W, Road to Recovery, Plymouth

The Traditions

From the Foreword of the 12 & 12: "A.A.'s Twelve Traditions apply to the life of the Fellowship itself. They outline the means by which A.A. maintains its unity and relates itself to the world about it, the way it lives and grows."

Tradition 5 Short Form:

"Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers."

Tradition 5 Long Form:

"Each Alcoholics Anonymous group ought to be a spiritual entity having but one primary purpose—that of carrying its message to the alcoholic who still suffers."

It is the great paradox of A.A. that we know we can seldom keep the precious gift of sobriety unless we give it away. This Tradition delineates pretty clearly our individual primary purpose, as well as the group's. Each of us is but a small part of the whole, but by joining AA's primary purpose to our own, we become something bigger than our individual selves.

Am I willing to surrender my old primary purposes?

To work this tradition means that I am willing to say "yes" to this question and rearrange the rest of my priorities. Devoting myself to a new primary purpose means that I am willing to let go of many old ideas. I have many thinking patterns that are automatic that I need to change in order to consecrate myself to a new primary purpose.

Step-Tradition Parallel

The relationship of the fifth step to the fifth tradition is that the fifth step taught me the exact nature of my wrongs, "I'm not in charge." In the fifth tradition I learned just the opposite, I learned what my exact nature should be: my talent to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers, my primary purpose.

In the fifth step I learned what's wrong about me and in the fifth tradition I learned what's right about me. What's right about me is my ability to carry the message when no one else can because of the experiences that I have had which were transformed into a message of hope in the fifth step. My alcoholism is my greatest talent, not my talents as a husband, father, son, or my job. I can fulfill my primary purpose for being born by carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

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This is a picture I took at the Mayflower Hotel in Akron Ohio on a my trip in 2021. I was going to Maine to make amends to my oldest daughter.

On Mothers Day in 1935, from the Mayflower Hotel Lobby. Bill W made a call from this phone using a church directory to St. Paul's Episcopal rector. He reached Rev Tunks and then Henrietta Seiberling who arranged his meeting with Dr. Bob.

For this Alcoholic, this is the true basis of Tradition 5 and Alcoholics Anonymous. "One



Traditions Checklist

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

Tradition Five Checklist

1. Do I ever cop out by saying, "I'm not a group, so this or that Tradition doesn't apply to me"?
2. Am I willing to explain firmly to a newcomer the limitations of AA help, even if he gets mad at me for not giving him a loan?
3. Have I today imposed on any AA member for a special favor or consideration simply because I am a fellow alcoholic?
4. Am I willing to twelfth-step the next newcomer without regard to who or what is in it for me?
5. Do I let fear get in my way by not addressing issues in my home group when members are disrupting meetings and getting in the way of our group carrying the message to the still suffering alcoholic?
6. Do I help my group in every way I can to fulfill our primary purpose?
7. Do I remember that AA old-timers, too, can be alcoholics who still suffer? Do I try both to help them and to learn from them?

Southwest Texas Area 68 Events

76th Annual Texas State AA Convention

June 9 –11, 2023

San Antonio, Texas

Visit <https://txaaconvention.org> for updates, agenda, and registration.

District 2 Treatment Workshop

June 24 @ 12:00 PM - 4:30 PM

1142 Eikel St. New Braunfels, TX 78130

2023 Summer Workshop

July 21 - July 23

Adams Street Community Center

511 E Adams Street Brownwood, TX 76801

Flyer Coming Soon!

Southwest Texas Area 68 Events

2023 PI/CPC Conference

August 4 - August 5

New BRAUNFELS

Stay tuned for more details!

2023 SW Regional Forum

September 29, 2023 @ 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Radisson El Paso Airport Hotel El Paso, TX

Stay tuned for more details!

2023 Fall Conference & Voting Assembly

October 20 - October 22

Hosted by District 5

Hilton Garden Inn Temple Medical Center

Southwest Texas Area 68

Events

2025 International Convention in Vancouver

July 3, 2025 - July 6, 2025

The 90th anniversary of Alcoholics Anonymous will be celebrated at the 2025 International Convention in Vancouver, BC, Canada, July 3 – 6, 2025.

The theme of the 2025 International Convention is “90 Years – Language of the Heart.”

General registration and housing information will be available on the International Convention webpage in early 2024. Actual registration site links, forms, and hotel booking links will be communicated to the Fellowship in August/September 2024.

<https://www.aa.org/international-convention>

Please see our page for news releases: <https://www.aa-swta.org/2025intconvention>

Group Events.

The 2211 Group has:

- Speaker Meetings the second Sat. of the month at 6:00 PM
- Beginners Meetings Tuesdays at 8:00 pm
- Men's Meetings Wednesdays at 7:00 pm
- Woman's Meetings Thursdays at 5:30 pm
- Group Conscience the last Saturday of the month at 11:15 AM
- Birthday Night the last Saturday of the month with a pot luck dinner at 7:00 and birthday meeting at 8:00pm
- Big Book Studies Sundays at 8:00 pm

Bandera Group has:

- Speaker Meeting, second Sat. of the month, 7:00-9:00 pm
- Open discussion meetings at Noon, Monday—Saturday
- 12 and 12 Meeting Monday 8:00 pm
- Grapevine Meeting Tuesday 8:00 pm
- Big Book Meeting Wednesday 8:00 pm
- NA Meeting 6 Thursday 6:30 pm
- Open Discussion Meeting Thursday 8:00 pm
- Open All Woman's Meeting Friday 6:30 pm
- Popsicle Stick Meeting Friday 8:00 pm
- Open Discussion Meeting Saturday 8:00 pm
- Open Discussion Meeting Sunday at 8:00 pm