

District 12 Newsletter

September 2016

Step Nine

"Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others"



Have a safe Labor Day weekend

Step Nine: Captain Chaos

An AA realizes the high cost of "freebies"

I made up my own definition for the word "freebie" when I was in my late teens and already an alcoholic. The word described when I got out of doing something I really didn't want to do, but didn't want anyone to know it. For instance, if someone else had to cancel a meeting that I didn't want to show up for--it was a "freebie." Not only did I get out of it, but I also got credit for doing something I didn't do. Does that make sense?

Then, along came sobriety, the Steps, and my sponsor. My sponsor said, "You better do a Fifth before you pick up a fifth." I did my Fifth Step right before my first anniversary. Although it took months for me to do Steps Six and Seven (a story of its own involving stealing but finally making it through the grocery store without grazing), I finally got to Steps Eight and Nine. My first wife was on my list of amends. When the kids were teenagers, we'd gotten divorced, after being married for over seventeen years. When I was coming up on a couple years of sobriety, I went to see her to make amends. She said, "Oh, I know what you're going to do. I'm just glad you're sober, and you don't have to do this." The book says we don't push anyone who doesn't want it. Wow, I thought, a great big freebie.

Years of sobriety followed this experience, and it was not a bad life by any means, especially compared to the life I'd lived as a drunk. I kept my sponsor, even when his company gave him a new assignment and he moved. I became friends with Jim P. If I couldn't reach my sponsor, Jim was there. He was an active old-time twelfth-stepper. I still had a big resentment about my first marriage, and Jim said I needed to pray that she'd get the things I wanted for myself. I said that she'd already gotten all my things (money and material things). But he said he was also talking about security, peace of mind, and, in general, the things I'd robbed myself and my family of in my years of alcoholic terrorism. I'd pray, because I believed Jim, but I didn't have faith in a Higher Power. Things changed, but very slowly.

Five more years passed. One day, I was talking to my sponsor about a problem I was having. Before I finished, he said, "Tell me about your Ninth Step with your first wife." Whoa. I said, "This problem has nothing to do with that." I reminded him that my first wife said that she didn't want to hear it. He replied, "We need to work on it now." He said I needed to do a Ninth Step with my first wife.

There was a lot of work for me to do. I had to list the nature of the harms I had done --the miserable life in our home as a result of my alcoholic drinking. I was unpredictable and kept the house in turmoil. My family even had a name for me: Captain Chaos. Pretty flattering, huh? The things I'd taken from the family were the things that, years before, Jim had told me to pray about. My sponsor and I talked about it every week for a few months.

Finally, I was ready. We decided that I was going to ask her to have lunch with me. My daughter was having a party for one of my grand-kids in a couple of weeks. My sponsor said while we were all at the party, I could ask my first wife to go to lunch. When the day arrived, there just wasn't the right opportunity. I looked across the room and saw my first wife and her new husband opening the door to leave. I yelled out her name and asked, "Will you go to lunch with me?" The whole room took a breath and stood still, waiting for her reply. "Sure. Give me a call," she said.

Two weeks later, in a restaurant, I made a real Ninth Step amends, and she listened. Things aren't the greatest between us, but we can at least speak civilly to each other. The amends helped my now-adult kids and grandkids, too.

First Jim, and then my sponsor, taught me, with their experience, strength, and hope, about what is important in life, what the book Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions says at the start of Step Eight. "Steps Eight and Nine are concerned with personal relations." People and relationships, my part in them, and how I treat others, are important in my life. Jim used to say, "When I came to AA, I loved things and used people. But since I've been in AA, I've learned to love people and use things." Jim passed a month short of fifty-three years of sobriety a few years ago. He taught me so much.

With the help of AA, my sponsor, and Jim, I've come to realize how expensive a "freebie" can be. To know "a new freedom and a new happiness," I need to watch out for that easier, softer way that can distract me from working the Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous.

-- Skitch F. Albuquerque, New Mexico

AA Northern Illinois Area 20 Big Book Conference

"A Design for Living"

Guest Speakers: Bob B. St. Paul, MN — Carleen L. Helena, MT

Saturday October 29, 2016

9:00 am to 4:00 pm — Registration Begins at 8:00 am

Wheaton Bible Church

27W500 North Avenue, West Chicago, Illinois 60185

For Questions and Volunteer Opportunities Contact:
niabigbookconference@gmail.com or Jason at 312.834.1819

EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALENDAR IN A NUT SHELL!

Date	Event
Saturday Sep. 17th	District 62 Hosts the Fall Assembly at the Lord of Life Church in La Fox, IL Registration 8:00 a.m., Meeting 9:00 a.m., Lunch will be available All GSR's should attend; All A.A. Members are welcome
Sunday Sep. 18th	District 12 Business/GSR Meeting 3:30pm GSR Orientation, 4:00pm District Business Meeting Vista West Medical Center Cafeteria, 2615 Washington St, Waukegan, IL 60085
Saturday Oct. 15th	Dist. 23 Hosts the Fall Committee Meeting at the Lord of Life Church, La Fox Registration 8:00 a.m., Meeting 9:00 a.m., Lunch will be available All GSR's should attend; All A.A. Members are welcome
Sunday Oct. 16th	District 12 Business/GSR Meeting 3:30pm GSR Orientation, 4:00pm District Business Meeting Vista West Medical Center Cafeteria, 2615 Washington St, Waukegan, IL 60085
Saturday Oct. 29th	23rd Annual NIA Big Book Conference, "A Design for Living" Host: District 62 Wheaton Bible Church, 27W500 North Avenue, West Chicago, IL 60185 Speakers: Bob B. from St. Paul, MN and Carleen L. from Helena, MT Event runs from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm; Registration at 8:00 am

District 12

Business/GSR Meeting.

**WHERE: Vista West Medical Center
2615 Washington St
Waukegan, IL 60085**

**WHEN: Every 3rd Sunday of the Month
3:30 pm GSR Orientation/Traditions Meeting
4:00 pm Business/GSR Meeting**

All A.A. Members are invited to attend.

Learn about what is happening in our district and the many types of services that we offer.

Bunch of Nuts Meeting needs support

Tuesdays at 7:00pm

St. Marks Church

Delany Road & York House Road

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED 12 STEP WORK

Sponsor Panel: ATP 1 st & 3rd Saturday 12:45-2pm

Back to Basics: ATP 2nd & 4th Saturday 12:45-2pm

Drug Court: 1:30pm Wednesday Court 204

Mental Health Court: 9:00am Monday Court 220

Veterans Court: 9:00am Friday Court 201

Detox: ATP 7:30pm Wednesday, 2:00pm & 7:00pm Sunday

For Info Contact: Frank M. @ 224-730-3045

VOLUNTEERS WE NEED A COMMITMENT!!!

Lake County Work Release

Tuesday and/or Thursday

Once or twice a month 7:15 pm

Both men and women needed

For more info contact: Les 847-336-3275

Email copy of forms to: paulperini@att.net

Help Needed at Vista West Psyc Ward Meeting

Meetings are Tuesday Evening & Sunday Morning

Come to the Vista West Cafeteria at 7:00pm on Tuesday to find out the times and procedures for the Sunday meeting

A.A. Contacts

General Service Office:

<http://www.aa.org>

Northern Illinois Area 20:

<http://www.aa-nia.org>

District 12 Website:

<http://www.dist12.aa-nia.org>

District 12 Answering Service:

847-623-9660

Northern Illinois Area 20 - District 12: P.O. Box 8882 - Waukegan, IL 60079-8882

Newsletter Submissions should be sent to Dist12.Newsletter@gmail.com

District 12 Officers (Confidential – this information is for A.A. Use only)

If you are interested in one of the positions listed as OPEN, please contact an officer.

Position	Chair	Phone	Email	Alternate Phone	Email
DCM	Ken C..	847-693-0970	kenc693@yahoo.com	Paul P.	847-849-3928 paulperini@att.net
Secretary	Kris M.	224-627-9768	kris.miller30@yahoo.com	OPEN	
Treasurer	Dave H.	224-627-5153	dhall711@att.net	Ron K.	847-623-0953 ronkdist12@att.net
Answering Service	Steve N	847-623-5076	stephenmordstrom@gmail.com	Byron W.	847-744-2325
Archive	Tom B.	847-363-4363	tomhat609@gmail.com	Roy K.	847-293-4616
Bridging the Gap	Ray L.	847-917-6442	r.leeper@sbcglobal.net	OPEN	
Corrections	Frank M.	224-730-3045	aboutme615@gmail.com	Les M.	847-336-3275
CPC / Treatment	Bill W.	224-456-9455	whwoolridge@msn.com	Dick M.	847-404-3713. dick71308@ameritech.net
Directory	Karen F.	847-609-7354	k.finkel@comcast.net	OPEN	
Grapevine	Jackie S	224-247-8963	spencerjackie61@yahoo.com	Pete O.	224-381-9992 peter.ochoa@73.com
Literature	John M..	TBA	Contact thru District 12 Website	OPEN	
Newsletter	Mike H.	847-848-4855	dist12.newsletter@gmail.com	OPEN	
Public Information	Francis K.	847-505-2555		OPEN	
Special Events	Terry V.	847-650-2251	enchantedattic@hotmail.com	OPEN	
Webmaster	OPEN			OPEN	