

District 12 Newsletter

January 2017

Tradition One

“Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.”



Tradition One: The Tremendous Fact

ONE—Each member of Alcoholics Anonymous is but a small part of a great whole. AA must continue to live or most of us will surely die. Hence our common welfare comes first. But individual welfare follows close afterward.

Long form Tradition One, Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions

This Tradition plays a significant role in my life as a member of Alcoholics Anonymous. My personal recovery is dependent upon the group itself. Notice how the word "depends" here implies a healthy reliance.

I relied on drinking, alcoholic thinking, and my own bad behavior throughout my drinking career and it brought a great deal of pain and misery to my life. Loneliness sucked me into the deepest sea. I felt my alcoholism was a unique case, because at the age of eighteen I was introduced to this wonderful Fellowship and couldn't get it. But why couldn't I grasp what the people in AA had? Because I didn't have a desire to stop, nor did I ever want the people in AA to get to know me. I suffered from that terminal uniqueness that separates me from others and from the God of my understanding.

I saw the gleam in your eyes. I heard the deep-rooted laughter which came from your gut and your hearts. I became resentful. "This can never work for me," I thought, committing the sin of pride in reverse. I wanted what you had but did not want to do the work to get it. For instance, I didn't want to be "a part of," get a sponsor, find a home group, and work the Steps to the best of my ability. It was only through desperation that I became willing to try a few things. Alcohol had whipped me. It was time to do something different in my life. I couldn't imagine growing old, if I survived, and practicing my alcoholism.

This Tradition reminds me that I am a small part of a great whole. Therefore, I believe the living principle is humility. However, this Tradition does not imply that the individual does not count. Here at my particular home group, I have learned how important individuals are to me. I have seen sponsors approach newcomers and immediately get them

Happy New Year

It Works if you Work it!
One Day at a Time!
Let Go and Let God!
Get a Sponsor don't go
it alone....

started in service. This is absolutely vital in my recovery because if I do not have you people I cannot stay sober. I say this out of personal experience. How often I have tried to do this thing on my own. How often I have relied on my own twisted thinking. This is where the group and people like you remind me that if I want to recover, I should start following directions--however grudgingly.

I've used the principles behind this Tradition when I go to other meetings. Out of experience I know that each group is run a little differently. At a meeting the other day I sat for a couple of minutes, waiting for someone to lead the table. I finally asked, "Who is going to lead?" An elderly lady said she was waiting for the two women at the end of the table to finish their conversation. I replied, "Why don't you tell them to finish?" She told me to be nice. This taught me that I am to be considerate of each group, even for what I think is not important. As my sponsor once reminded me, I am a guest at other meetings.

As Bill Sees It states: "The AA Traditions are neither rules, regulations, or law." However, I know if I don't follow these spiritual principles, I will turn to the bottle again. That is why AA needs no rules. People like me know they will ultimately destroy themselves if they don't follow the Steps or the Traditions. The "Twelve and Twelve" states: "The unity of Alcoholics Anonymous is the most cherished quality our Society has. Our lives, the lives of all to come, depend squarely upon it. We stay whole, or AA dies. Without unity, the heart of AA would cease to beat; our world arteries would no longer carry the life-giving grace of God; his gift would be spent aimlessly."

Let us also consider exactly how to protect our common welfare. What exactly does welfare mean? My opinion is that our common welfare represents our primary purpose--to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers. The best way to preserve our common welfare is by our group conscience. Our collective group conscience votes on specific issues and the majority rules. It is essential that our common welfare not be threatened by our misdirected instincts--instincts that are often demonstrated at our business meetings. We must be careful not to let our desire for prestige and our ambitions interfere with the welfare of AA as a whole.

I am going to close with a passage from the Big Book that beautifully describes the sources of unity: "We are people who normally would not mix. But there exists among us a fellowship, a friendliness, and an understanding which is indescribably wonderful. We are like the passengers of a great liner the moment after rescue from shipwreck when camaraderie, joyousness, and democracy pervade the vessel from steerage to Captain's table. Unlike the feelings of the ship's passengers, however, our joy in escape from disaster does not subside as we go our individual ways. The feeling of having shared a common peril is one element in the powerful cement which binds us. But that in itself would never have held us together as we are now joined. The tremendous fact is that we have found a common solution."

-- Sarah C.
Southgate, Michigan

Reprinted from AA Grapevine

EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALENDAR IN A NUT SHELL!

Date	Event
Sunday Jan. 3rd	Tri-County Mini-Conference Planning meeting will be held at 12:30 PM at the Kenosha Alano Club, 630 56th St, Kenosha, WI 53140 .
Weekend Jan. 15th to Jan. 17	24th Annual We Are Not Saints Convention Holiday Inn North Shore, 5300 W. Touhy Ave., Skokie, IL 60077 Online registration is preferred. Visit wearenotsaints.com
Saturday Jan. 16th	Northern Illinois Area 20 Winter Committee Meeting Lord of Life Church in La Fox, Illinois Registration at 8:00 AM, Call to Order at 9:00 AM, Lunch will be available
Sunday Jan 17th	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 Jan. 28th	Hinkley Big Book Study Group 19th Anniversary Pork Chop Dinner Hinkley First United Methodist Church, 801 N. Sycamore St. Hinkley, IL 60520 Fellowship 4:00 PM, Serving 4:30 PM, Kickoff 6:00 PM

District 12

Business/GSR Meeting.

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

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

Help Needed for Vista West Psyc Ward Meeting

Meetings are Tuesday Evening & Sunday Morning

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

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

Want to be Published

Send your Traditions articles to
Dist12.Newsletter@gmail.com

Deadline for the February issue is Jan. 12th

A.A. Contacts

General Service Office:

<http://www.aa.org>

Northern Illinois Area 20:

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

District 12 Website:

<http://www.aadistrict12.com>

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	Paul P.	847-849-3928	paulperini@att.net	Pete O.	224-381-9992	peter.choa73@yahoo.com
Secretary	Kris M.	224-627-9768	kris.miller30@yahoo.com	Tracie J.	847-847-9201	tracie_jahnke@yahoo.com
Treasurer	Jackie S	224-247-8963	spencerbox@comcast.net	Karen F.	847-609-7354	k.finkel@comcast.net
Answering Service	Steve N	847-623-5076	stephenrordstrom@gmail.com	Mike C.		
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	Byron W.	847-744-2325	
Corrections	Frank M.	224-730-3045	aboutme615@gmail.com	Les M.	847-336-3275	
CPC / Treatment	Dick M.	847-404-3713	dick71308@ameritech.net	OPEN		
Directory	Ryan P.	630-731-5377	ryan.james.531@gmail.com	OPEN		
Grapevine	OPEN			OPEN		
Literature	John M..		Contact thru District 12 Website	OPEN		
Newsletter	Mike H.	847-848-4855	dist12.newsletter@gmail.com	Jackie R.	224-610-6646	jacquelinea1241@gmail.com
Public Information	Francis K.	847-505-2555		OPEN		
Special Events	Terry V.	847-650-2251	enchantedattic@hotmail.com	Suzanne A.		
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