

District 12 Newsletter

December, 2013

Step Twelve

“Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.” 12x12 p.106



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It Works if you Work it!

One Day at a Time!

Let Go and Let God!

Get a Sponsor don't go it alone....



Are We Forgetting Twelfth Step Calls?

I WAS LUCKY! One of the first women I met in AA knew no limits when it came to reaching out to still-suffering alcoholics. Shortly after I joined the Fellowship, she became my sponsor, and her message was clear. She said that I was self-centered, that I was wallowing in self-pity, and that I could overcome this--by trying to help other alcoholics.

I had seen the movies *The Lost Weekend* and *Days of Wine and Roses*, so I was familiar with Hollywood's version of carrying the AA message, and it appealed to me. I've always liked high drama, so I enthusiastically agreed to go along with her on Twelfth Step calls early in my sobriety. We went on many calls together, armed with "care packages"--soup, honey, tea, juice, and handfuls of AA literature. The women we called on were a far cry from Lee Remick, and Hollywood forgot to mention that most alcoholics seem to have dogs that haven't been outside for days.

Alcoholics also change their minds; there were many times when we were welcomed less than graciously in spite of the fact that the alcoholic had called for help and we had canceled plans in our efforts to "go to any length." A few of the people we called on did get sober. Most did not; I hope they reached out for help later and found AA.

But my sponsor was right. It was hard for me to feel sorry for myself when my energies were focused on helping another drunk. Most important, I stayed sober. Twelfth Step calls taught me about myself and my illness. I'll always remember the help I received from an indigent woman in the alcoholic ward of the city hospital. She may have been only forty-five or fifty, but she looked very old. I was there because it was my night to make coffee for the weekly AA meeting. She was lying on her bed exposing her toothpick legs, which were covered with wine sores. She was so weak that she could barely walk, so I offered to take her to the meeting in a wheelchair. She responded, "No thanks, honey. I've never been so bad that I needed the AAs."

I heard myself answer, "Thank God I *was* bad enough to need AA, and it sure has helped me."

It's been several years since I've been on what we think of as a Twelfth Step call, and I'm not sure why. Maybe it's because I've neglected to let the intergroup office know that I would welcome an opportunity to carry the message.

With AA growing at a rate of fifteen new groups daily, Twelfth Step work is still taking place, but perhaps in different forms. The AA General Service Office lists 540 area and local public information committees and more than 300 additional public information contacts. By talking to non-AAs in schools, churches, and service clubs, by providing literature displays at health fairs, and by placing AA public service announcements on TV and radio and getting articles about AA into local newspapers, these twelfth-steppers are reaching thousands of alcoholics hidden in the general public.

More than 200 committees on cooperation with the professional community are carrying the AA message to physicians, medical students, members of the clergy, psychologists, social workers, educators, and people in labor and management.

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Tradition Twelve (Long Form)

And finally, we of Alcoholics Anonymous believe that the principle of anonymity has an immense spiritual significance. It reminds us that we are to place principles before personalities; that we are actually to practice a genuine humility. This to the end that our great blessings may never spoil us; that we shall forever live in thankful contemplation of Him who presides over us all. 12 x 12 p. 192

Are We Forgetting Twelfth Step Calls? — Continued

Approximately 200 institutions committees are carrying the AA message to hospitals, treatment centers, and correctional facilities.

With the proliferation of treatment facilities that took place in the 1970s, we aren't seeing many alcoholics holding half-empty cups of coffee at their first meeting because they are shaking too hard to hold full cups. Thank God, it's been at least ten years since I've seen a new member go into an alcoholic convulsion at a meeting. But there is still plenty for us to do if we want what co-founder Bill W. described as the "undreamed rewards" we receive as we try to help another alcoholic--one who is "even blinder" than we.

We can let local treatment centers know that we welcome opportunities to introduce alcoholic patients to AA, that we are available to serve as temporary or interim sponsors upon their discharge.

We can be available to meet a fellow member who found sobriety inside the walls. With 1,100 AA groups in prisons and jails, there is always a need for outside members to provide that crucial AA contact the day an inmate is released.

Corresponding with inmates, sharing with an AA Loner, making coffee, talking at a meeting, sponsoring a newcomer, serving as the link between your group and AA as a whole--there are many ways to make Twelfth Step calls.

Old-timers talk about the days when early AAs literally went to any length to help other alcoholics. There's the story about a traveling salesman from New York who once rode a bus 450 miles out of his way because the AA General Service Office had received a plea for help from someone with a drinking problem. Even today, Loners write about receiving help from another Loner who has traveled a day or more over rarely used dirt roads. Those AAs understood the meaning of "reaching out" to another alcoholic.

I think of those stories, and I feel concern about recent discussions in my home group. Much emphasis is put on reaching out--but the stress is on reaching out *for* help rather than *to* help. Many of the newcomers, and some who are not so new, talk about how AA members are letting them down. One feels "abandoned" because her sponsor is going on vacation. Another is hurt because no one invited her to go for coffee after last week's meeting. They feel unsatisfied and turned-off by AA because they reached out *for* help to deal with every conceivable problem, and did not receive the attention they were seeking. I am uncomfortable as I listen, and I know that I said those things, too. Again, I was lucky--my sponsor told me that I would get better if I stopped thinking about myself and reached out to help others, and it worked!

The primary purpose of every AA group is to carry the message to the still-suffering alcoholic. Maybe it's time to make some old-fashioned Twelfth Step calls in my own group, so that nondrinking but still-suffering alcoholics I see every week can know the joy of truly living sober.

Yes, we do have central/intergroup offices to answer calls in most of our cities and hundreds of committees on public information and cooperation with the professional community to spread the word. But let's not forget that our Fellowship got its start because a drunk named Bill sought help *for* himself by reaching out to help another drunk named Dr. Bob.

L. F. Manhattan, NY - A.A. Grapevine Vol. 39 No. 10, March 1983



A.A.'s Responsibility Statement

“I am responsible. When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. always to be there. And for that: I am responsible.”

EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

GET READY!!!!

24th Annual McHenry Soberfest

**November 22-24, 2013
Grand Geneva Resort
Lake Geneva, WI**

**AA Conference, Banquet, Dance,
Alcathons, Panels, Step Workshops,
Literature, Archives, Meditation Room**

Register online: www.soberfest.org

MERRY CHRISTMAS/ HAPPY HOLIDAYS

District 12

Invites you to have dinner with Santa



***When: December 8, 2013
Where: Gurnee Community
Church
4555 Old Grand Ave.
Gurnee, IL 60031***

Time:

***2:00—Coffee
2:30 - Speaker—Kristina K., Gurnee
3:30—Dinner
4:00—Santa and Raffle***

***Bring a dessert to pass. There will be gifts
for kids 10 and under. Please come and
join us for some Holiday cheer!
For more info call Karen F. 847-609-7354***

District 12 Meeting

Third Sunday of every month at 4:00PM at Vista Medical Center West, 2615 Washington Street, Waukegan, Illinois 60085. All alcoholics are welcome and group GSRs are strongly encouraged to attend.

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: Pete 224-381-9992

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED 12 STEP WORK

St. Therese Psych Unit Meeting

Sunday 10 am Tues 7 pm

Sponsor Panel - ATP

1st and 3rd Saturdays 12:45 til 2 pm

Drug Court

1:30 pm Fridays Court 202

Mental Health Court

9:00 am Mondays Court 220

Veterans Court

3rd Friday at 9:00 am Court 220

SAP

SAP Bldg. 1:00 pm Thursdays

Detox

ATP 7:30 pm Wednesday

For Info Contact: Frank M.@ 847-336-2775

The District 12 Open Speaker Breakfast

Victory Hospital
(also known as Vista Medical Center East)

Cost: \$7.00

Start time is 8:30 AM
1st Sunday of every month

LADIES PLEASE VOLUNTEER FOR 12 STEP WORK— YOUR HELP IS NEEDED!!

**Answering Service
Sponsor/Sponsee
12 Step Calls**

2014 NIA Spring Assembly & Conference

Hosted by Districts 10, 11, and 12

March 28, 29 & 30th, 2014

Holliday Inn, Gurnee, 60031

Needs Your Help

We need Volunteer's to be Greeter's, Chairs for Alcathon Meetings, and Groups to Host Hospitality Rooms for 2 Hour Slots.

This is a Great Service Opportunity!

Our Next Planning Meeting Will be Held Before the Start of the District 12 Holiday Party
So Come on Out to Learn More About How You Can Help and Share in the Holiday Cheer!

When: December 8, 2013

Where: Gurnee Community Church

4555 Old Grand Ave.

Gurnee, IL 60031

Time: 1 :00



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, Illinois 60079-8882

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	Mike H.	847-848-4855	Mike.henneberry@gmail.com	OPEN		
Secretary	Terry V.	847-650-2251	enchantedattic@hotmail.com	OPEN		
Treasurer	Ron K.	847-623-0953	crkytasaari@att.net	Sue D.	847-502-1007	susie12956@aol.com
Answering Service	Berto G.	224-280-5235		Bonnie P.	224-440-3620	bonniepetterec@gmail.com
CPC / Treatment	Frank M.	847-336-2775		Francis K.	847-744-0793	
Corrections	Pete O.	847-662-8737	Peter.ochoa73@yahoo.com	Lavonne G.	224-538-0228	lavonnegreen60@gmail.com
Grapevine	James T.	224-730-2681	JamesT1956@yahoo.com	OPEN		
Public Information	OPEN			OPEN		
Literature	John M.		Contact through District 12 Website	OPEN		
Newsletter	Felicia H.	224-717-2424	felicia2657@gmail.com	Nick P.	847-872-6727	nicholas_prins@sbcglobal.net
Directory	Martin C.	773-870-4010	claussenmartin@aol.com	OPEN		
Archive	Marlene	224-545-1495	grubbsmarlene@gmail.com	OPEN		
Special Events	Karen F.	847-609-7354	k.finkel@comcast.net	OPEN		
District Breakfast	Jimmy F.	847-609-7354		Jimmy P.	224-538-1689	jimipinkstaff@yahoo.com
Webmaster	Beth B.	224.522-1676	pollockburke@gmail.com	Brian M.	847-736-0403	brianm959@yahoo.com