



COFFEE POT TALK



NDIAA NEWSLETTER



21B TROLLEY SQUARE
WILMINGTON, DE 19806
302-655-5113
NDINEWSLETTER@GMAIL.COM



Feature Article

The Solution

It was my friend
It made me feel pretty
It made me feel funny
It made me feel like I was somebody
Most of all
It washed away all of the pain that was buried deep down inside of me
So deep that nobody could touch it
Not even me
Sometimes I didn't even know the pain was there
Other times it hurt so bad I could barely stand it
It was my friend
My solution
I told it my deepest secrets
I looked forward to it everyday
I thought about it all the time
My mouth watered when it was close
It filled a hole that had grown bigger and bigger in my soul
The hole started out as a dot
Over the years it grew
Each time it grew
I placed a rock in front of that hole
Finally I built a wall
The only thing that could penetrate that wall was my friend
It would protect me
Ease my pain
Make me forget
Little did I know
There was another solution
A better solution
One with more love than I could have ever imagined
One filled with faith and hope
Filled with people that understood
People that felt the way I did
They showed me a better way of life
They brought me out of the darkness and guided me to the light
In that light, I found a Higher Power
One that is forgiving, loving and kind
I found my lost soul
Filled that hole inside of me
Forgave myself
Learned how to love again

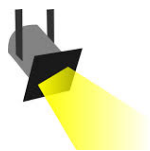
Our principals

Step 3: "Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him."

Tradition 3: "The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking."

Concept 3: "To insure effective leadership, we should endow each element of A.A. - the Conference, the General Service Board and its service corporations, staffs, committees, and executives - with a traditional "Right of Decision."

There is a solution
A better solution
Just climb the 12 steps, one at a time and enjoy the view



Literature Spotlight

On March 7, 1988 a Presidential Proclamation declared the month of March as Women's History Month. Spotlight on Literature for this month will very briefly highlight two A.A. publications: a pamphlet, Women in A.A., P-5 and a Grapevine book, Voices of Women in AA: Stories of Experience, Strength & Hope.

“Voices of Women in AA is a collection of 61 stories from Grapevine. The soft cover book begins with articles by or about women who contributed to AA early in its history, followed by stories by some of the program’s earliest female members. Sections are devoted to spirituality, sponsorship, life changes, relationships, family, careers and friendships. The collection concludes with a chapter devoted to women’s meetings. The stories demonstrate the various ways women alcoholics—often with great courage—find sobriety in AA and embrace the program to live rich and rewarding lives.”

Women in A.A., P-5 is a 2018 revision that replaces the pamphlet, A.A. for the Woman, P-5. A Letter To A Woman Alcoholic, P-14 – originally published in Good Housekeeping magazine, March 1954, has been discontinued and is no longer in print. This dated letter addressed mainly housewives who tended to be “closet alcoholics”.

The topics, **Do you have a drinking problem?**, followed by **You are not alone** comprise the introduction to twelve women’s stories in the pamphlet, Women in A.A. Their poignant, heartfelt tales reveal the pains and struggles that led these individual women to a life of sobriety in Alcoholics Anonymous. Each story is headlined with a quote.

Some examples: “Despair settled in...” , “I could quit for a while, but always started back up again”, “This breaking of promises to my children...” “I tried to drink myself to death... to block out the misery and pain I felt.” “I felt that my luck would soon run out...I didn’t want to go to prison” “By the end of my drinking...I had threatened patients, been drunk on duty, contemplated murder...” “I ran the streets for ten years and became a hard, mean, clueless alcoholic.”

How it works and **Where to find A.A.** are the concluding topics in this beneficial, informative pamphlet. Just a reminder: You can read and download A.A. pamphlets at the website, aa.org.

Love and support in service,
Sheila D



PRIN-CI-PLE

A rule or belief governing one's personal behavior.

Our Other 24 Principles

In this article, we will discuss the A.A. Tradition and Concept of the month. The main hope is to help us all, myself included, grow in "Understanding and Effectiveness." As the writer of this article, I feel it necessary to clarify that I am by no

means an expert in our Traditions and Concepts. All that I have to share is my own experience and the literature that has helped me. I eagerly suggest reading up and discussing anything with your sponsor that you feel does not reconcile with our literature. I will do my utmost to make sure I note any A.A. Conference Approved Literature that I reference.

Tradition 3: "The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking"

In continuing on with this monthly study in our Traditions we arrive at Tradition Three. This tradition looks at the matter of membership requirements. For added clarity, I like to rely upon the way the tradition is written in the original long form.

The long form of the 3rd Tradition states;

"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."

In the later days of our drinking careers many of us had become quite isolated and lacked a sense of belonging. I know for myself there was an increasing sense of loneliness as my world became smaller and smaller. My ability to connect with other people seemed to diminish as my reliance upon the bottle became greater. Even when I would go out seeking companionship my drinking was so out of control I would often be asked, or told, to leave many places. Those instances did more to cement my feelings that I did not belong. And yet, upon entering A.A. it was those very things which caused me to feel separate from others that ultimately qualified me for my membership here.

The spirit of this tradition is inclusivity. It ensures that the doors of A.A. will be open to any person who has a problem with drinking and wants to stop. As stated in the pamphlet A.A. Tradition How it Developed: *"If alcohol is an uncontrollable problem to him and he wishes to do something about it, that is enough for us"*.

This tradition opens the doors for us all. When drinking has defeated us and we seek help in A.A. no other aspect of our life matters. One of the greatest things about A.A. is that we do not care how much money you have or do not have, we do not care what your religious beliefs or non beliefs are, we do not care what your race is, we do not care what your sexual identification or orientation is, we do not care what your nationality or ethnicity is, we do not

care whether you have been to prison, rehab, asylum or any other place, we do not care about any other problems or circumstances that you may have in your life. The only thing we care about is that you have a drinking problem and a desire to stop drinking! So no matter who you are, no matter what your race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, beliefs or background if you have a problem with drinking and a desire to stop drinking, you are welcome in Alcoholics Anonymous!! It is exemplified in our Big Book:

"We are average Americans. All sections of this country and many of its occupations are represented, as well as many political, economic, social and religious backgrounds. 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 leave our other affiliations or desires to affiliate in some other way aside. We come together on the basis of a common problem with a common solution. Whenever two or three of us get together for the purpose of staying sober and helping other alcoholics achieve sobriety we can call ourselves members of an A.A. group.

In Tradition three we are asked to sacrifice our need to define our membership by anything other than people who have desire to find help with their drinking problem. We do this to ensure our unity. For when we start to specialize or separate by our seeming unique differences, we slowly and incrementally begin to disunify ourselves, and as is stated in Tradition one "A.A. must continue to live or most of us will surely die".

Concept 3: "As a traditional means of creating and maintaining a clearly defined working relation between the groups, the Conference, the 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."

The most evident principle of Concept three is mutual trust. As with many of our 12 Concepts there is a clear relation between this concept and Tradition two. This is especially evident with the segment of Tradition Two which states *"Our leaders are but trusted servants"*. If we are to work together for the greater good of carrying the A.A. message to the alcoholic who still suffers, we have to be willing and able to trust our leaders. When our groups, districts, and areas vote for our leaders it is because we trust in their experience and dedication to serve Alcoholics Anonymous. Our co-founder Bill W is quoted in the pamphlet, *The Twelve Concepts for World Service illustrated*:



"Our entire A.A. program rests squarely upon the principle of mutual trust. We trust God, we trust A.A., and we trust each other"

As part of the trust that we have for our leaders, we, through these concepts, provide them with certain rights. In Concept three that is the "Right of Decision".

From the groups at the top of our service structure to the trustees at

the bottom, this “Right of Decision” is given to all of our trusted servants. When we as members of our respective A.A. homegroups vote in a new G.S.R. we are giving them this right. We give them not only the right to make decisions in the best interest of our homegroup, but more importantly the right to make decisions that are in the best interest for the whole of Alcoholics Anonymous. That right of decision is then passed down to our Area delegates to use at the General Service Conference and then further down to the trustees of the General Service Board.

There is an undeniable amount of trust included in this right. We trust that consideration will be given and a respectable decision will be made as to which matters can be acted upon in the moment by the trustee, delegate or G.S.R. and which matters should be brought back to the conference, area or homegroup for additional guidance, discussion and consideration.

It is a necessary right in order to ensure that A.A. business can be handled in an efficient and timely manner. Anyone who has had any experience with A.A. service can attest to the fact that agenda items can take years to get through the process of becoming an advisory action. Without the “Right of Decision” A.A. would be decades behind on important actions. Our leaders must be able to act on their own accord at times in order to keep A.A. evolving in its ability to carry our message.

The trust that we give our leaders in the right of decision is not without responsibility though. We do trust that proper A.A. policies and procedures will be followed and we expect transparency from our leaders. We as members want to know, and are entitled to know the how and why of the actions that our trusted servants take. This is clearly noted in the A.A. Service Manual; “

“The “Right of Decision” should never be made an excuse for failure to render proper reports of all significant actions taken; it ought never be used as a reason for constantly exceeding a clearly defined authority, nor as an excuse for persistently failing to consult those who are entitled to be consulted before an important decision or action is taken.”

So in this concept we see that we do give our Trusted Servants a great amount of freedom, but as always with any great freedom comes great responsibility!

Brendon M
Sobriety Date: 02/25/2011
Member at Large, NDIAA

Literature for reference: *Alcoholics Anonymous (Big Book)*; *A.A. Comes of Age*; *12 Steps and 12 Traditions*; *The A.A. Service Manual 2018-2020 Edition*; *The Twelve Traditions Illustrated (P-43)*; *The Twelve Concepts for World Service illustrated (P-8)*; *The A.A. Group... Where it All Begins (P-16)*; *A.A. Tradition, How it Developed (P-17)*; *Concepts Checklist (SMF-91)*

Tips for Staying Sober on St. Patrick's Day

1. Write a gratitude list including all things green
2. List at least 5 reasons you got sober
3. Know your boundaries and practice them
4. Go on a virtual hike with a friend
5. Treat yourself to something special (sleep in, go get some ice cream, take a bubble bath)
6. Pray
7. Binge watch something on TV or watch a movie
8. Visit an animal shelter and pet the animals
9. Get your phone list out and set up a zoom dinner party where everyone cooks Irish food
10. CALL YOUR SPONSOR
11. Go to a meeting in Ireland (AA Ireland Website <https://www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie>)





Into Service....

Name: Emmy K

Sobriety date: 4/13/12

Home Group: Sisters in Serenity

Service Position: Homegroup Member

Length of service commitment: As long as God sees fit

Sobriety requirement: None

Service Position Responsibilities:

Traditionally, most A.A. members through the years have found it important to belong to one group which they call their “Home Group.” This is the group where they accept service responsibilities and try to sustain friendships. And although all A.A. members are usually welcome at all groups and feel at home at any of these meetings, the concept of the “Home Group” has still remained the strongest bond between the A.A. member and the Fellowship.

With membership comes the right to vote upon issues that might affect the group and might also affect A.A. as a whole—a process that forms the very cornerstone of A.A.’s service structure. As with all group-conscience matters, each A.A. member has one vote; and this, ideally, is voiced through the home group.

Over the years, the very essence of A.A. strength has remained with our home group, which, for many members, becomes our extended family. Once isolated by our drinking, we find in the home group a solid, continuing support system, friends and, very often, a sponsor. We also learn firsthand, through the group’s workings, how to place “principles before personalities” in the interest of carrying the A.A. message.

Excerpted from “The A.A. Group . . . Where It All Begins”, a pamphlet published by A.A. World Services and available online here https://www.aa.org/assets/en_US/p-16_theaagroup.pdf





Stone Cold Sober

Promises are tricky things for us alcoholics. Many of us made many promises during our drinking days, to stop drinking, stop hurting people, stop doing whatever the bad behavior was again. The problem is, we usually did not keep our word. We lost the trust of others and even of ourselves. Our disease dictated our behavior in spite of our best efforts and deepest desires.

The first time I was told to look at the AA Promises in the *Big Book* on page 83-84, I could not find them. I was expecting them to be numbered and listed like the steps, which they are not. It's only one paragraph, but it packs a big punch. Once I did figure them out, I thought they were nonsense - like in the *Wizard of Oz*, "pay no attention to the man behind the curtain." They could not be real.

What I have learned, after a few 24 hours in AA is that they do happen, but not all at once, and some of us do not get every single promise fulfilled. Some come and go - the longer we stay in the rooms, the more, "life on life's terms" happens to us. We may come into the program and find financial security only to be laid off from a job years later. The point is, we are now sober and have the life skills, as it says in our literature, to face this issue with "faith and fortitude" and have the capacity to seek and find security once again.

Sadly, the one Promise that has never come true for me is that I still regret the past and wish to close the door on it. This in spite of working the steps and cleaning house, but I keep coming back. They say don't give up five minutes before the miracle. I have learned sometimes it takes a lot longer and ask you to stay strong with me and not give up a year, a decade, or a quarter century before the miracle happens.

One of the key words in the Promises is "painstaking." This means it is not easy or comfortable. It is a lot of hard work and introspection, it's following direction and learning to really live the steps, not just hear them read once a week at a meeting. So basically, it comes down to "this I must earn."

On a positive note, it has been a gift to see how my experience can benefit others over and over again. My feelings of uselessness have disappeared. I am interested in my fellows and self-seeking has slipped away (I wasn't much but I was all I thought about during my drinking. It was all about me all the time.) Sometimes I even intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle me.

Are these extravagant promises? In my heart I think not, but on a bad day I might give you another answer. That is when it is important to stay connected to our fellows and watch the Promises come to fruition in their lives, to see that it works when they really work it.

What the Promises does not include is a guarantee that we will never drink again. I always temper the Promises with the writing on the next page, page 85, that reminds us "we are not cured of alcoholism" and that we only have a daily reprieve contingent on the maintenance of our spiritual condition. So, no matter how many Promises are granted in our lives, we cannot rest on our laurels for all we have is today, and the work ahead for tomorrow.

As always, this is just one alcoholic's experience, strength, and hope. Take what you like and leave the rest. I wish you faith and patience, faith that it works and the patience to let it.

In fellowship, Maria



Through the Eyes of Newcomer

Hi everybody, happy new month. This month I'd like to talk to everybody about how my relationships in my life have changed and grown since I've gotten sober and started attending AA meetings. Now, when I was actively drinking I was a very selfish person, and all I thought about was how my choices and decisions and interactions with others affected me. At that time I thought that I was a kind, caring person, and I also believed that I was not hurting anyone else but myself. In the big book they say that thinking is trying to be a director of a play, trying to control the interactions and feelings and

lives of all those characters in a play. I never realized that was exactly what I was doing - the big book was describing me! Now I know that it is going to take time to address and fix the hurt that I have caused and that used to make me wither with fear. The thought of going to my father and telling him that I was going to listen to the pain I had caused him and what situations that I had disappointed or let him down during. Going to friends who numerous times tried to get me into rehab or get me to go to the meetings because they cared about me, but I turned my back on them and betrayed them on numerous occasions. Even telling all of you would have made me run to a liquor store. But now I have a freedom! That freedom comes from meetings. I'm not exaggerating, I am speaking from my heart. When I go into meetings and I tell them what I'm feeling or sharing what part of my day might have made me want to drink and especially sharing small triumphs and beautiful miracles that are happening in my life since I decided to get sober and surrender my will my life and my future to a power greater than myself. By sharing in the meetings it took away the shame that kept my chin down. It eased the weight on my shoulders that literally caused me physical pain. And it all started with not thinking of myself. I was now going to talk to these people explain to them that I don't know why I did the things I did. I couldn't tell them why I couldn't stop drinking because I didn't know until I came into my first AA meeting and raised my hand and said my name is Danielle and I am an alcoholic. The freedom that that allowed me I am a writer that cannot put it into words.

When it came to my father all I ever wanted to do was make him proud. And when I knew that I was doing things that caused him pain and hurt I thought that the disappointment that I projected towards him was earned. I deserved it. Now today I live with my father. We sit and we talk. That is a miracle. I see it happening in my life, and when they told me not to leave before the miracle happened they were right! So many times when I wanted to pick up a bottle or turn into a liquor store I remembered the distance that was between my father and I that isn't there anymore. Now I am not claiming that everything is perfect and that there is not still work to be done but that work is worth it. And I'm doing it sober. With my brothers we are closer than we have ever been. They are my best friends my confidant and my protectors. They listen when I talk and when I'm hurt I am able to address it with them or they can address it with me without any recriminations. That is a miracle. They now know of things that I was so ashamed and embarrassed about and thought that I would rather die than have anyone find out about. But today living sober is worth it.

Now I'll be honest, there are friends who made the choice that they no longer want to meet in their lives I do hope there's no longer any animosity however I know all I can do is the next right thing, and they had the right to their decision. And that's okay with me. My amends did not make everything I did right, but they also did make it so I could live with them. This program is not the cure I thought it was, it is a lifestyle that I needed because I am an alcoholic, and I cannot do this alone. I need you who is reading I need my family, and I also need myself.

Going to meetings and living is sober life sometimes it's not a walk in the park sometimes it's a busy highway and it's constant, that's how my brain works. But the miracle is because of this program I now have ways of slowing down traffic so that I can cross the street safely. That is a miracle.

To the newcomer or to the one that is still struggling, or to the one that is suffering all I can say is that I'm here. You don't have to do this alone, this program, the big book, your sponsor, and this fellowship all work together with my Higher Power to perform miracles. If there is anything I can do or the next person in this program can do to help you find peace and surrendering to your higher power please reach out. You are worth it. I am worth it. We are worth it. And then through The eyes of this newcomer, that is a miracle! I'll see you next month!

Love and Service
Danielle

AA GRAPEVINE, Inc.

COMING SOON – IN LATE APRIL – 2 NEW BOOKS!



Free on the Inside: Stories of AA Recovery in Prison features powerful stories by sober members of Alcoholics Anonymous who have experienced AA in prison—while either currently serving, formerly incarcerated, or as outside AA members carrying the message inside. Great for alcoholics looking for recovery in prison and for those who want to help them. **Item #GV43**



Women in AA (Spanish-language) is a collection of stories taken from the pages of Grapevine and La Viña. The first two chapters were translated from Grapevine's *Voices of Women* and are by or about women who contributed to the development of AA in its early stages. The stories taken from La Viña for the remaining chapters were written by Spanish-speaking members of AA from around the world. Great to use for meetings. **Item # SGV37**

Price: \$11.50 each/5 or more copies \$10.50 each

Customer Service

English 800-631-6025; Spanish 800-487-2092; French 212-870-3456

www.aagrapevine.org/2-new-books

www.aalavina.org/2-nuevos-libros

New Meetings

During this difficult time, please see the Intergroup Website (www.ndiaa.org) for current Zoom meetings.

Newsletter Stuff Needed

If you would like to contribute to the Newsletter, please email Emmy K at NDINewsletter@gmail.com Here are a few examples of how you can contribute:

- ~ Feature articles
- ~ Sneak Peak into Service articles
- ~ New Column Ideas
- ~ Cartoons or Rule 62 submissions
- ~ Fellowship opportunities
- ~ Groups needing support
- ~ New Meetings
- ~ Topics you would like to see covered in the Stone Cold Sober or Literature Spotlight columns
- ~ Longtimer volunteers for interviews



Anniversary Club: We do it One day at a Time....

Bob A. 7/9/90
Bob M. 1/17/83
Brendan D. 5/3/09
Brenda A. 2/23/85
Carel B. 4/26/04
Carolyn W. 7/15/82 Christopher K. 1/03
David C. 2/1/94
David G. 7/6/99
David F. 11/23/07
David K. 12/03/72 45 yrs.
Debbie H. 03/16/91
Doris S. 04/80
Doug W. 2/28/91
Ed H. 01/28/96
Franny C. 05/07/96
Fred M. 5/5/90
Gail R. 06/04/92
Jaime B. 08/08/04
Jaffrey H. 11/24/96
Janice S. 12/25/2010
Jason B. 4/20/09
Jim S. 04/10/88
Kara G. 11/8/12
Kathy O. 6/11/97
Ken H. 11/4/97
Ken P. 09/20/83

Kerry O. 04/20/08
Laura R. 6/21/95
Leslie D. 2/20/1990
Liza F. 1/20/05
Marilyn M. 6/26/99
Marie R. 9/6/83
Mary Ellen S. 1/24/10
Melissa S. 06/23/08
Mike M. 4/20/91
Nancy V. 2/21/05(Deceased)
Patricia K. 12/17/87
Patsy M. 1/6/88
Phyllis M. 03/09/88
Sally C. 10/15/95
Shirley U. 3/19/76 41 yrs.
Stanley B. 03/05/79
Suzanne M. 04/04
Tenney W. 5/15/82
Tom H. 07/02/04
Tom McD. 01/16/96
Tracy D. 2/28/2013
Valerie S. 2/3/89
Walt A. 01/94
Wes J. 4/21/75 42 yrs.
Wes M. 2/1/94

ATTENTION FAMILY!!!!!!

Would you like to celebrate your anniversary, show your fellows how the program works (one day at a time) and contribute to your Northern Delaware Intergroup at the same time? The Anniversary Club is easy to join. Here's how it works....you can email the information below to Jamie at mainoffice@ndiaa.org or fill out the form and mail it to 21B Trolley Square, Wilmington DE 19806.. A small donation of \$1 per year sober is all it costs to have your name and anniversary date printed in the Newsletter every month for a whole year:

Anniversary Club Contribution Card	
Sobriety Date	_____
Home Group	_____
Name	_____
Contribution	_____

BE POSITIVE

