



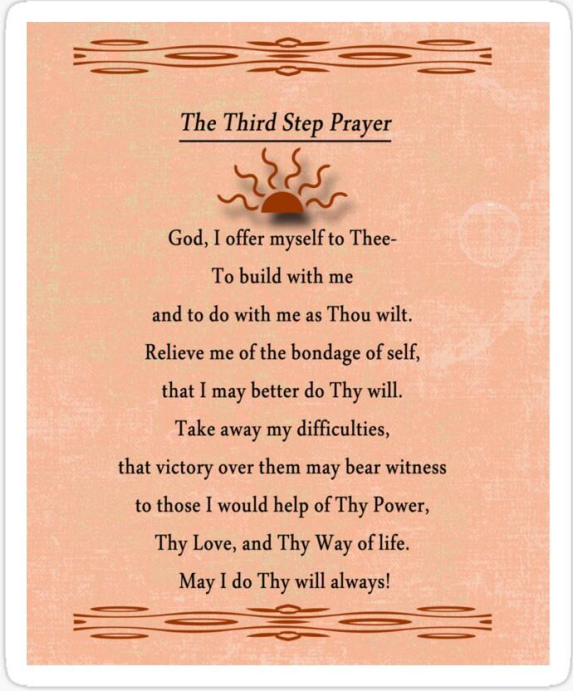
# Coffee Pot Talk

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## NDIAA Newsletter

March 2022  
21B Trolley Square  
Wilmington, DE 19806  
302-655-5113

[NDINEWSLETTER@GMAIL.COM](mailto:NDINEWSLETTER@GMAIL.COM)



### The Third Step Prayer

God, I offer myself to Thee-  
To build with me  
and to do with me as Thou wilt.  
Relieve me of the bondage of self,  
that I may better do Thy will.  
Take away my difficulties,  
that victory over them may bear witness  
to those I would help of Thy Power,  
Thy Love, and Thy Way of life.  
May I do Thy will always!

### Witness

I need a witness for my travels  
A soul to help me see  
To listen, notice, and care  
To be all that I can be

Walk with me, my friend  
And share joys and trials  
Come to Pray, cry, and laugh  
As we trudge along the miles  
-Sally T

## Third Step Perspectives...

I used to think step 3 was this act I had to do. Every morning and every night I should just include it in my prayer and don't get me wrong, I love the 3rd step prayer, but in the all the things that have "gone wrong" or changed in my life in sobriety I think I started to look at step 3 more like a relationship of trust. The same way I'd trust my friends to be there for me or trust that a seatbelt will protect me in a car, I trust my higher power with my life. Now, when my life

isn't going the way I plan it or something feels absolutely terrifying I get this panic for a moment and then a sense of relief because I trust that as long as I'm sober and I keep that relationship open with God, everything is going to be okay. Usually, it's better than how I imagined it.

Chelsea D.

7 lines on step 3

7 lines and the third holy way, a way of faith.

Line 2. One key only, one door, insert key. Free will always a choice.

Baby steps, practice, acceptance. A life time, no way round.

At times the door slams shut again, losing the third holy way.

A loud line 5. god help!

Fear cries out, so undone. Being held together, hp and "we".

Help, help me. Open door full of light.

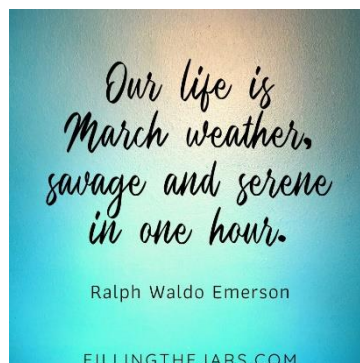
DB

Early on I was taught as the step is read: Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him. My will is my thinking and my life is my behavior. So when I turn my thinking and my behavior over to the care of God as I understand Him how can I possibly go wrong?

Well I have to remember I'm selfish and self-centered that is the root of my troubles. Driven by a hundred forms of fear, self-delusion and self-pity I step on the toes of my fellows and they retaliate. When this happens I ask myself "Where's God?" right where I left Him, somewhere behind me as I rushed off into my world. I right myself by reciting the 3rd step prayer and I'm hand in hand with God again.

Julie Wilson

11/6/13



## Our Principals

Step 3	Tradition 3	Concept 3
<p>“Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over the care of God as we understood Him.”</p>	<p>“The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.”</p>	<p>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.”</p>



### What is the Difference between Intergroup and Area Service?

At a recent North Delaware Intergroup of AA (NDIAA) meeting, a new representative asked, “What is the difference between Intergroup and Area service?” These two equally important service structures often get confused by members of our fellowship.

The most direct answer is that Intergroups are local, stand-alone organizations that perform the services that Home Groups can not perform easily on their own. The General Service Structure, which is broken into 93 Areas across the United States and Canada, was created by our founders, Bill W. and Dr. Bob, to carry on the work of AA as a whole.

**“The Northern Delaware Intergroup organization exists to aid all AA groups in their primary purpose to carry the AA message to the alcoholic who still suffers.** Intergroup shall also assist in the administration and coordination of AA activities common to the **various groups comprising its membership**, including the maintenance of an Intergroup Office. The purpose of this office is to function as a centralized resource for the AA community at large and

to assist with the appropriate coordinating functions necessary for the effective implementation of the AA program in the area Intergroup serves which is defined as **New Castle County and surrounding areas.**” (NDIAA Bylaws)

**Our state is Area 12 in the General Service structure.** Each year, our elected Delegate is given an agenda of new business items, submitted by Home Group members from all of the 93 Areas. This new business is then discussed at an annual conference, known as the General Service Conference, held in April each year. From that GSC emerge recommendations, or Advisory Actions, for ‘next steps’ to the General Service Board.

To summarize, NDIAA is performing duties for home groups within New Castle County, DE. Area 12 General Service Assembly is our link to AA as a whole, and communicates between home groups and the General Service Conference. Why do we need this connection? Why is the General Service Conference necessary to us, drunks in DE?

The late Bernard B. Smith, nonalcoholic, then chairman of our board of trustees, and one of the architects of the Conference structure, answered that question superbly in his opening talk at the 1954 meeting:

“We may not need a General Service Conference to insure our own recovery. We do need it to ensure the recovery of the alcoholic who still stumbles in the darkness one short block from this room. We need it to ensure recovery of a child being born tonight, destined to alcoholism. We need it to provide, in keeping with our Twelfth Step, a permanent haven for all alcoholics who, in the ages ahead, can find in A.A. that rebirth which brought us back to life.

We need it because we, more than all others, are conscious of the devastating effects of the human urge for power and prestige which we must insure can never invade A.A. We need it to insure A.A. against government, while insulating it against anarchy; we need it to protect A.A. against disintegration while preventing over-integration. We need it so that Alcoholics Anonymous, and Alcoholics Anonymous alone, is the ultimate repository of its Twelve Steps, its Twelve Traditions, and all of its services.

We need it to ensure that changes within A.A. come only as a response to the needs and wants of all A.A., and not of any few. We need it to ensure that the doors of halls of A.A. never have locks on them, so that all people for all time who have an alcoholic problem may enter these halls unasked and feel welcome. We need it to ensure that Alcoholics Anonymous never asks of anyone who needs us what his or her race is, what his or her creed is, what his or her social position is.”

(The AA Service Manual – BM-31)



## Literature Spotlight

The **Jack Alexander Article About A.A.**, P-12, is the subject of Spotlight on Literature for March 2022. This pamphlet is aptly subtitled **The Article that Marked a Milestone in the History of A.A.** Following its publication in *The Saturday Evening Post*, 81 years ago this month, when Alcoholics Anonymous was barely six years old, our society grew by leaps and bounds. On March 12, 1941, Ruth Hock, first non-alcoholic secretary of A.A., wrote to Dr. Bob, A.A. co-founder, to update him on what was going on in New York. She said that the office had become swamped, 918 inquiries in 12 days, as a direct response to the article. Who was Jack Alexander and what did he say to elicit such an overwhelming response?

Jack Alexander was a well-known journalist for *The Saturday Evening Post*. In 1941, the *The Saturday Evening Post* was the most widely circulated weekly magazine published in the United States. Alexander was approached by the magazine's owner, Judge Curtis Bok, to write an article about an organization, Alcoholics Anonymous, that the Judge learned of from two of his friends. That directive precipitated correspondence between Alexander and Bill W. who was delighted with the prospect of getting the word out to a broad audience. Bill met with Alexander, gave him access to A.A. records and set up interviews with both nonalcoholic trustees of the General Service Board and A.A.s. Jack Alexander got to work and on March 1, 1941, *The Saturday Evening Post* published an article titled **"Alcoholics Anonymous: Freed Slaves of Drink, Now They Free Others"**.

Alexander spent months researching the effects of the disease of alcoholism and the toll it took on human lives. He traveled along the East Coast and into the Mid-West from his publication's home base in Philadelphia where he talked to and observed countless members of A.A. whom he described as, "...unusually

calm tolerant people. Somehow, they seemed better integrated than the average group of nonalcoholic individuals.” He also visited a courtroom where he ... “heard a judge parole a drunken driver to an A.A. member.” His praise for the work of sober alcoholics that he called “drunk-rescuing” of those who desired to be freed from the addiction of alcoholism was unbounded. Alexander was eager to note that this work is “insurance” for the alcoholic who wishes to remain sober him/herself.

“Although it is too early to state that Alcoholics Anonymous is the definitive answer to alcoholism, its brief record is impressive”, said Alexander. He goes on to credit John D. Rockefeller’s small gift and magnanimous support with keeping the fellowship of A.A. on a voluntary, nonpaid basis. He also credits Drs. W.D.Silkworth, Forest Kennedy, A.Wiese Hammer, C. Dudley Saul and R.E. Blaisdell with creating hospital treatment programs for alcoholics and for informing the medical community at large about their effectiveness.

Alexander devotes a considerable amount of the pamphlet to educate its readers about the disease of alcoholism, its symptoms and peculiarities, and the approach of the program of Alcoholics Anonymous in arresting it. He summarizes the 12 Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous, without describing them as such, as the method to sobriety.

Protecting their anonymity, Alexander introduces the founders of A.A., a New York stockbroker and an Akron, Ohio physician as Griffith and Dr. Armstrong respectively. He recounts their stories and details their meeting in Akron and further collaboration. When approaching a prospective member, he characterizes the founders’ suggestions for sobriety as presented “on a strict take-or-leave it basis.”

Using pseudonyms, he details the stories of other early A.A.’s such as “Sarah Martin”, a product of the F. Scott Fitzgerald era. There is also “Watkins”, a shipping clerk injured at his factory job, “Tracy”, a precocious son of well-to-do parents who is a credit manager for an investment-banking firm, and “Brewster” a one-time lumberjack, cowhand, and war time aviator. Most of these individuals are recognizable to those familiar with early A.A. history.

Thirty pages in length, **The Jack Alexander Article About A.A** concludes with a description of various A.A. gatherings (A.A. meetings) declaring that for...” reformed alcoholics, congenial company is now available wherever they happen to be. They are among the most society-loving people in the world, which may help to explain why they got to be alcoholics in the first place”.

You can download a copy of The **Jack Alexander Article About A.A ,The Article that Marked a Milestone in the History of A.A** from the Literature section of the A.A. website, [aa.org](http://aa.org).

Love and support in service,

Sheila D.





## Stone Cold Sober...

I found myself really dragging my feet over the column this month. I could not think of a topic and did not really feel like writing, which is sort of symbolic of my program right now, I'm in a bit of a slump.

Over the years, this happens sometimes. One day we think, "ugh, I don't feel like getting on Zoom" or, "It's snowing, maybe I won't drive to a meeting." And then, no pun intended, it snowballs from there. One missed meeting turns into two, and a pattern starts to emerge of not showing up. Simultaneously, we can get a negative attitude about the meetings themselves. We feel like we can predict what certain people will say and people may annoy us (sometimes I even annoy myself.) This leads to a decrease in participation, not sharing as much, not listening as actively as we could, and reaching out less to newcomers or any fellow AA in need. Other times we may get our feelings hurt, people don't respond to calls or texts, or say something hurtful, and it feels like we're 13 again in a middle school popularity crisis. Perhaps this is TMI, too much information, but I am taking a risk of being vulnerable and writing about this because there are most definitely other members who have had the same experience and fallen into the same trap.

I know enough now, after many years, because although not a slow learner - I am slow to make change, that no matter what is going on, I cannot abandon the program or throw in the towel on AA. Just like any job or relationship that we've had for a long time, there may be bad days, or weeks, or months. Things might lose their excitement, the culture and customs we love can start to feel monotonous, and things can seem to get on our nerves. When this happens, we may be tempted to stop coming around, which can be detrimental to our physical and emotional sobriety. Now I have learned that when we feel attitudes changing, or feel uncomfortable with our current AA "surroundings," we can hang in here and not just drop out - we can make changes. We are very blessed to live in a community with many meetings and opportunities to choose from - we just need to commit the physical and emotional energy to change up our program a little.

First of all, we can be very honest with ourselves, our sponsor, or a trusted AA fellow. It's sometimes easier to say, "I don't care!", than to admit that we are having negative emotions. But in the spirit of working an honest program, we can be fearless in the assessment of our current situation and the character defects that are being triggered. We may realize that it's our right and my responsibility to make changes. We can continue to maintain our program and to be the hand of AA for others. And then, although I do not write about this a lot, we can turn it over to my Higher Power, as we understand, and try to practice the 11th step. What is our Higher Power's will for us in this situation, and we can muster the power to carry it out? We may also try to apply the Serenity Prayer - there are situations we would like to change, that we need to accept. However, there are also factors within our control that we can manage - we can pray for the wisdom to know the difference, and the power to carry out what's best.

We can also switch up our meetings - no home group commitment, or loyalty to a meeting, means we can't also try new meetings too. What a gift that we only have one requirement, a



*desire to stop drinking* - we can go to most meetings, anytime, on Zoom or in person. This month I have been trying a lot of new meetings, a couple were not for me, but a few others really met my needs and I felt like my experience, strength and hope also helped others. Serendipitously, at a Zoom meeting, I found myself reconnected with folks I had gotten sober with but had fallen out of contact with - which has been an amazing gift. The same meeting asked me to consider service, and it has been energizing to take on a role.

We can decide to break out of our little cocoons and call someone we had never reached out to outside of an actual meeting room. I recently took this risk and the person has become a trusted and responsive confidant. Hopefully, I'm helping and supporting them in return. We can also make a point to reach out to at least one person a day, just to check on how they are doing, follow up if they shared they were struggling at a meeting, or to congratulate them on an anniversary - this is how it works. We maintain our sobriety by helping other alcoholics maintain their sobriety. Thanks to texting, this is very easy to do, and most of the fellows seem to appreciate it. Two people have asked for my phone number this month; I hope that they will call me if there is any experience, strength or hope I can offer - the door is open.

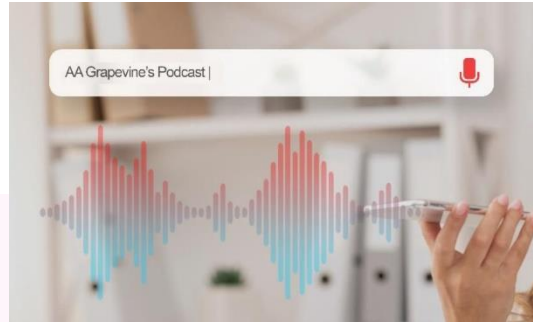
We can "dust off the literature," as we say in the vernacular, and start reading again if we've let that lapse, or never tried it before. Although I go to both *12 & 12* and *Big Book* meetings, I have jumped back into *As Bill Sees It*, a book of Bill Wilson's writings and talks, that has been very helpful over the years and instrumental in my recovery process. I've also gone back to unopened copies of the *Grapevine* and starting reading articles (for our newcomers, *Grapevine*, is an AA-approved monthly magazine and considered "a meeting in print.")

Finally we're all human, No matter how many years we are sober, how much service work we do, or how great a program we work - many of us have ups and downs in the rooms. The key for some of us has been to make changes in actions and thoughts so we do not lose our programs. I have written in this column before about the "AA desert" - where one finds oneself sober, but without a support system and on the outside of the program looking in. Many of us need to stay in the middle, so we don't fall off the edge. If you've fallen off the edge, crawl back up, and welcome back! We're saving a seat for you!

So here's to another hour and another day sober my fellow "trudgers" (from *Big Book*, "trudge the Road of Happy Destiny" together.) It does not say skip or dance, but trudging together we can all make it. To each and every one of you who has contributed to my recovery, in any way large or small - I am enormously grateful. I think I'll keep coming back, and hope you all will too! 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 and service, *Maria*

# Technically Speaking...



Our new podcast, the **AA Grapevine Half-Hour Variety Hour** can be heard anywhere you listen to podcasts. We release a new episode every Monday. Tune in to hear funny, poignant, and always inspiring **“meeting after the meeting”** conversation about getting sober and staying sober in Alcoholics Anonymous.

Available for free wherever you listen to podcast or you can also find it on our website, at [www.aagrapevine.org/podcast](http://www.aagrapevine.org/podcast).

## **Anniversary Club**

Bill C 5/2/78	Ken P 9/20/83
Bob A 7/9/90	Kerry O 4/20/08
Bob M 1/17/83	Laura R 6/21/95
Brendan D 5/3/09	Leslie D 2/20/90
Brenda A 2/23/85	Liza F 1/20/05
Carel B 4/26/04	Marilyn M 6/26/99
Carolyn W 7/15/82	Marie R 9/6/83
Christopher K 1/03	Mary Ellen S 1/24/10
David C 2/1/94	Melissa S 6/23/08
David G 7/6/99	Mike M 4/20/91
David F 11/23/07	Nancy V 2/21/05 (deceased)
David K 12/3/72	Patricia K 12/17/87
Debbie H 3/16/91	Patsy M 1/6/88
Doris S 4/80	Phyllis M 3/9/88
Doug W 2/28/91	Sally C 10/15/95
Ed H 1/28/96	Shirley U 3/19/76
Franny C 5/7/96	Stanley B 3/5/79
Fred M 5/5/90	Suzanne M 4/4
Gail R 6/4/92	Tenney W 5/15/82
Jaime B 8/8/04	Tom H 7/2/04
Jaffrey H 11/24/96	Tom McD 1/16/96
Janice S 12/25/10	Tracy D 2/28/13
Jason B 4/20/09	Valerie S 2/3/89
Jim S 4/10/88	Walt A 1/94
Kara G 11/8/12	Wes J 4/21/75
Kathy O 6/11/97	Wes M 2/1/94
Ken H 11/4/97	

\*\*\* Would you like to celebrate your anniversary, show your fellows how the program works 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 intergroup at [mainoffice@ndiaa.org](mailto:mainoffice@ndiaa.org). 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. \*\*\*

If you ever want to contribute to the newsletter please email Monica at [mon92890@gmail.com](mailto:mon92890@gmail.com)