



# Conscious Contact

## Information and Inspiration From District 10, NIA

Vol. 10 No. 1

Jan./February 2012

- Written and supported by the District 10 NIA fellowship
- Available in color online in PDF format, print version in B&W at meetings
- Contributions from any alcoholic are welcome. See the last page for details.
- Next meeting date: Feb. 26th

Next deadline: Feb. 22, 2012

### Also in this issue:

“Sponsee Information”	2
“Came to Believe”	2
Anniversaries/Events	3
Announcements/Help Wanted	4
A.A. & District Contacts	4



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

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Opinions expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the thinking of Alcoholics Anonymous, NIA, District 10 or the Conscious Contact volunteers.

## “Sanity”

When I was first coming to AA meetings and trying to get a handle on what the Steps meant, in discussions of Step Two there seemed to be far more focus on the elements of insanity than sanity. Because the instances of insane thoughts and behavior concerning the use of alcohol and other drugs were so vivid in my mind, this focus was helpful to me in admitting and accepting my disease. The First Step became clearer with regards to unmanageability when I came out of denial about how insane the thoughts and behavior actually were during active alcoholism. The Big Book tries often to be suggestive and open-minded in describing our thought processes but minced no words when in the chapter “More About Alcoholism” they related the story of the salesman who put whiskey in his milk: “Whatever the precise definition of the word may be, we call this plain insanity. How can such a lack of proportion, of the ability to think straight, be called anything else?” No beating around the bush on that one.

### *“dealing with reality”*

In the 12 & 12, sanity is defined as “soundness of mind”. Although that definition works for many AA’s, this alcoholic, one who didn’t know what soundness of mind felt like, needed more. I knew I wanted to avoid the insanity of my alcoholism, but what was it that I was going toward, what was this “sanity” that I was going to be restored to? Step Two insinuates an ongoing process of restoration. For me the process was that of taking all the Steps of Recovery with another alcoholic, in my case my sponsor. The phrase “the ability to think straight” from page 37 of the Big Book seemed a building block of the definition of sanity as I progressed through AA’s Steps.

The Step Five essay in the 12 & 12 says that “another great dividend we may expect from confiding our defects to another human being is humility” and also reflects that “more realism and therefore more honesty are the great gains we make under the influence of Step Five.” I’ve heard in meetings that dealing with reality (situations which exist vs. ones we wished were happening) is the foundation of sanity. I take dealing with reality as another way of saying “the ability to think straight.” Later in the Step Five essay we are told that “Only by discussing ourselves, holding back nothing, only by being willing to take advice and accept direction could we set foot on the road to straight thinking, solid honesty, and genuine humility.”

Straight thinking, solid honesty, genuine humility – sounds like a definition of the sanity I want in my life.

Gary P.

Ingleside, IL

### *Step One*

*“We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable”*

### *Step Two*

*“Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity”*

### *Tradition One*

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

### *Tradition Two*

*“For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.”*

## Sponsee Introduction

This is what my I tell sponsees the first time we get together.

Because you have entered into a new way of life, you have some new responsibilities;

First of all, never lie to me or any sponsor.

Second, find a job in AA and do it, you'll feel better about yourself.

Further, to the best of your ability;

- a. I want you to stop lying, cheating and stealing, to stop digging the hole any deeper.
- b. You are to stop hurting other people.
- c. Respect others and treat them as you would want to be treated. (Golden Rule)
- d. The only allowable lie for you today is an unavoidable white lie in order to avoid needlessly hurting another's feelings. i.e.: "This green bean casserole is delicious."
- e. I expect you to reach out to the new guy and make him feel welcome, as you were.
- f. You are to carry the principles of AA out from the meetings and into your life.

Lastly, as a famous AA guy; Clancy I, says; "Say what you mean, do what you said you'd do, and if you can't make it, call."

*Mark F. cell 847-529-5203 MF1951@sbcglobal.net*

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### "Came to Believe"

Following next month's theme of the second step, (2nd month of the year) "Came to believe in a power greater than ourselves", I continue to be amazed at just how peaceful my life has become, and how smooth the road has become since I jumped from the "front seat" to the back! It's this realization that not only am I probably wrong about someone or something in a given day, but also that I no longer find myself defending a ludicrous and trivial point of view, just for the sake of being right. I died a thousand deaths on "those" hills as an active alcoholic!

It just truly doesn't really matter to me anymore, and that's the beauty of step two. Most of it was ego-driven B.S. anyway! Driven by a million forms of self-incriminating fear, I spend most of that energy trying to convince myself of my superiority, all the while feeling the "inferiority" of the boy who whistled in the dark. Another part of this step for me is, as that "stage actor" referred to in the Big Book, I was merely an actor among millions. I wasn't the star; it was always God's show that He, graciously, made me look good in! But I took all the credit until the "movie" didn't suit my fancy, then damned be Him for letting me down by giving me a "role" I couldn't or wouldn't play!

No, enough of that, this way, the twelve step way, is a far easier way to survive in the greatest show on earth—living sober! Living a day at a time simply means to me, to show up, be willing to work, and He'll always give you the "part" you need for that day!

Matt S.

*Thought for this Issue...*

*“Those who look closely soon have the key to this strange paradox. The A.A. member has to conform to the principles of recovery.”*

*Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, pg . 130*

### Anniversaries!!



Denise H.	2/1—19 Years!
Brian A.	2/5—2 Years!
Kim F.	2/5—5 Years!
Gary P.	2/11—11 Years!
Wally Z.	2/16—36 Years!
Marty M.	2/28—5 Years!

The Round Lake Area Alano Club is hosting a **Super Bowl Party**  
 Sunday, February 5th - Doors open at 3pm  
 Game starts at 5:30pm  
 Super Bowl Basket Raffle valued at \$100.00  
 Food, games & 50/50 Raffle  
 Come for fun, fellowship and football!

Contact: Jeff S. 847-456-0134



### The Clipboard

Calendar for 2012— District 10, NIA 20

See information for these and other events at: <http://www.district10nia.org/Clipboard/events.pdf>



January 28, 2012—NIA Winter Committee Meeting, La Fox, IL

February 25, 2012—Public Information Workshop-Serenity House, Libertyville, IL from 1pm-4pm

March 2-4, 2012—NIA Spring Conference-Orland Park, IL

# Heard At Meetings

" When I got here, I was not a vision for you!" Anonymous

*Be Part of Conscious Contact*

All alcoholics are welcome to contribute to Conscious Contact. We'd be happy to publish your stories, poems, artwork and cartoons as long as they pertain to recovering from alcoholism. Maximum length is about 600 words. Send your material to:

newsletter@district10nia.org or to  
P.O. Box 854, Libertyville, IL 60048.

## Help/Support Wanted

A.A. Meeting – OPEN A.A. meeting to be held every Thursday from 6:30pm – 7:30pm at the meditation room inside Condell Hospital in Libertyville, IL. The OPEN format will allow us to reach out to Alcoholics and their family members, as well as the doctors and nurses who attend to them. The meeting needs support and an eventual permanent rotation of chairpersons to keep going. Bring literature, speaker leads, Big Book readings to share with the group. All A.A.-related “burning issues” welcome!

Support Needed-New Meeting-”Spiritual Kindergarten”-starting Tuesday, Oct.4-7:00pm at Crossroads Church, 1350 IL-Rt 137, Grayslake-for info call Jessica C.224-217-7676

Treatment Center support needed – calling all District 10 groups! Looking to branch out and help in your community? Consider “adopting” a treatment center to support. We currently have almost 2 dozen facilities in District 10 that need the following: speakers for leads, people to drive inpatients to meetings, meeting chairpersons, all A.A. approved literature, cases of Big Books/12&12/Living Sober, general A.A. support. If you and your home group are interested in helping with a treatment facility in District 10, please call Steven B. at 847-769-2812.—**ADDITIONAL help is needed to speak at one of the NICASA groups in Round Lake or Buffalo Grove**

**Starting Jan.2-Apr.1, 2012-ALL Meetings at the Joy Lutheran Church, Gurnee will be held at Lakeland Church, 440 N. Hunt Club Rd in Gurnee (No. of Washington) Check with the contact in the Directory for meeting times.**

THE GRAPEVINE needs subscribers—only \$28.97 per year—makes a great gift.

**Monday Night Jail Meetings Need Support—Lake County - 7:30pm—volunteer applications are located under “Committees” on the NIA website. Great opportunity for service work. Young people are encouraged to participate. Please contact Bill W. at 224-456-9455 for further information.**

### A. A. Contacts

**District 10 answering service: 847-362-1811**

District 10 Treasurer: P.O. Box 854, Libertyville, Illinois 60048 <http://www.district10nia.org>

NIA Treasurer: NIA Treasurer, NIA Ltd., PO Box 3926, St. Charles, IL 60174-3926, <http://www.aa-nia.org>

General Service Office: P.O. Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10164, <http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org>

AA Grapevine, Inc.: Box 1980, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163, <http://www.aagrapevine.org>

**2011 District 10 Officers (Confidential—this information is for A. A. use only.)**

**Every alcoholic is welcome at District 10 meetings, held on the fourth Sunday each month at St. Gilbert’s Catholic Church, 301 E. Belvidere Rd in Grayslake—5:30 Tradition Meeting –6:00pm District meeting. See <http://www.district10nia.org> or call one of these committee members for details.**

Office	Chair	Phone	Email Address	Alternate	Phone	Email Address
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