



Conscious Contact

Information and Inspiration from District 10, NIA

Vol. 18, No. 01
January 2019

- Next District Meeting
Sunday, Jan. 27
- Submit content for the next
issue no later than Jan. 15th

Any member of AA may contribute content for this newsletter. Page 4 includes information on how to submit content for publication.

In this issue

Page 2: 'Feeling again'

Page 3: Calendar of Events

Page 4: District contacts and how to submit content for this newsletter



"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."

Northern Illinois Area 20
District 10, P. O. Box 854
Libertyville, IL 60048

www.district10nia.org

www.aa-nia.org

www.aa.org

www.aagrapevine.org

Answering Service

847-362-1811

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

How Did I Get Here?

I asked *myself* that question countless times over the years, "how did I get here?" I asked that all the way leading up to the day someone pointed me in the direction of Alcoholics Anonymous. The question I asked everyone else before that was "Do you think I am an Alcoholic?" No one gave me a straight answer. Some of those closest to me suggested that I find out for myself. That merry-go-round went on for quite some time.

There were lots of events that led up to that question. The question almost always was preceded by hangovers, remorse, forgetfulness, black outs, shames, frustrations, misunderstandings, etc. For me it was the unanswerable question. At least, so I thought. I

knew deep down what the answer was, but it was my refusal to admit it. I just needed someone else to tell me, so I could tell them that they were wrong! I didn't have a problem with alcohol. I had a problem with controlling alcohol. That was not such a big deal. I had experienced many things in life that would give me the rationalization that everything was going fine. I grew up in an affluent suburb of Chicago. I had two loving parents who gave my sister and me the best of what they and life had to offer. I was afforded an excellent education, which I may have taken for granted from time to time. - T.L.

Continued Page 2

2019-20 District 10 Officers, Committee Members

At the Oct. 28 District Meeting, several more people were elected to serve a two-year term beginning Jan. 1, 2019. Here are all District positions. The word "OPEN" indicates positions that have not yet been filled. Any A.A. member can volunteer for an open position, or join a committee, by indicating that at a monthly District meeting. The next meeting will be held on Jan. 27 at St. Gilbert's Catholic Church, 301 E. Belvidere Rd, Grayslake.

Position	Chair	Alternate
DCM	Kevin A.	Michael L.
Secretary	Tom K.	OPEN
Treasurer	Janet J.	OPEN
Accessibilities	Rachel B.	Dave H.
Answering Service	Victoria H	OPEN
Archives	Steve R.	Peter S.
Bridging the Gap	Carl S.	Cori S.
Corrections	Mark H.	Larry L.
C.P.C.	Terri G.	Mike B.

Position	Chair	Alternate
Directory	Kim C.	OPEN
Events	Andrea M.	Brandon B.
Grapevine	Judd H.	OPEN
GSR Contact	Earl N.	OPEN
Literature	Kim T.	Robin B.
Newsletter	Alex E.	Tad L.
Public Info.	Angelina K.	Bernadette L.
Treatment	Tony P.	Christina H.
Website	Charles K.	Sporty Rob S.

Step One

"We admitted we were powerless over alcohol — that our lives had become unmanageable."

Tradition One

"Our common welfare should come first, personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity."

Feeling again

In her darkest days of drinking, she couldn't feel beauty in a sunset or a rose. But now she's getting sober and her insides are awake

AAgrapevine January 2019

Even before I picked up a drink, I already had problems with living. I felt black inside, that nothing good could stick to me. I would hear people talk about how beautiful a sunset was or how amazing the smell of a garden-grown rose was, but I just didn't get it. I'd smile and nod and agree with people, but on the inside I felt nothing.



I was sharing with an AA friend the other day that the only time I remember feeling anything inside me was walking home from a party one winter at 3 a.m. It was after a snowfall when everything was blanketed in white and the Christmas lights were on. They glowed through the snow. No one was around and the silence was so deafening that I felt it pierce through the blackness of my insides. I could really feel it.

As I told my friend the story, I felt a little sad, sad that I lived like that at one point in my life. And sad because I didn't think I would ever be able to experience that again, because now at 3 a.m., I'm safe at home sober and sleeping!

Just like an alcoholic to dwell on the one thing that won't be happening again rather than all the many good things that are happening now that I'm getting sober!

The other day as I was walking along the pier by Lake

Ontario, I was reminded of that conversation I had with my friend. It was Sunday morning and I was walking to my AA meeting, which meets at the hospital. I looked out over the lake and I had this amazing moment. The view was breathtaking. The water was sparkling, the sun was reflecting on the water and a sailboat was going by. The sky was

beautiful blue with fluffy clouds. I actually felt my insides move. My breath was actually taken away for a moment. I remember thinking how lucky I am to live in a town that's on Lake Ontario where I can have this beautiful view every single day.

The next day that nice feeling stuck with me. I was completely moved by something so beautiful. I could actually feel it in my insides.

The work I've done in the program so far—the Steps, talking to my sponsor, helping at my home group, talking with other newcomers, praying, journaling and trying to practice these principles in my affairs—has helped remove that blackness inside me. I now get to live with the light and beauty this program has to offer. I now get to experience it every single day, not just on a random, messed-up Saturday morning.

— G.V.

Burlington, Vermont

How Did I Get Here? - Continued

I graduated from college, had a job that became a career, married, kids, house. All the trappings of what one might believe to be the success. Somewhere along the line at a young age the samplings of booze were intriguing enough. The feelings it produced were just enough to mask what was really going on inside.

Alcohol was not my problem, it was my answer! It was the great equalizer for me. It allowed me to be a chameleon that got me into any group I wanted to be a part of and some that I didn't. Where was the problem in that? I didn't think alcohol could possibly be bad or have control over me. It just helped, plain and simple. The problem was I needed more and more of it; it was starting to affect my soundness of mind. I slowly started to recognize that my thinking was the problem. Liquor and beer helped quiet the seemingly unending conversations in my mind. I went to multiple counselors and therapists over the years. During the intake processes there was a common question on the form: "How many alcoholic drinks do you have per day?" My answer was *never* honest. The very people I was turning to for help, I was lying to. They were asking me a question designed to help them help me. How in the world were they going to be able to do that if they didn't have the right information about who I was and what I wanted? I just wanted to stop feeling the way I

did, and keep drinking, easy right? I did realize that when I stop drink for an extended period of time, which was few and far between, the negative chatter and feelings became more manageable...hmmm.

To make a long story short, I ended up back at a counselor's office after one "last" fight with the wife. I told him the truth this time, as much as I could, of that morning. Once I finished talking, he looked at me and asked, "Do you think you are an Alcoholic?" He said that he knew where "I" could go find out. I couldn't believe his nerve! Couldn't he just answer my question and tell me how to drink responsibly? Instead, he called a local meeting house to find upcoming meetings for that evening and suggested I go *-that night*. Eight or nine hours passed before my first AA meeting arrived. I went in, was greeted, I got to the back row, and sat down. They asked if anyone was new. I'm not sure how it happened, but out of my mouth came my name and, "I am an Alcoholic." A new "me" was born that day. I have fallen since then, but I finally was able to be honest with myself. It took that long and I thank God it wasn't longer.

— T.L.

Events		
Jan. 11-13, 2019 4 p.m. Friday on-site registration begins	27th Annual We Are Not Saints Convention www.wearenotsaints.com for information. registration@wearenotsaints.com	Holiday Inn Chicago 5300 W. Touhy Ave. Skokie, IL 60077
Jan. 26, 2019 4 p.m. Fellowship 4:30 p.m. Dinner 6 p.m. Kick off	22nd Anniversary Pork Chop Dinner Hinckley Big Book Study Group Free Event AA Speaker Carla R. Tujunga, CA. Donations Accepted	Hinckley First United Methodist Church 801 N. Sycamore St. Hinckley, IL 60520
Jan. 27, 2019 5:30 p.m. Traditions 6 p.m. GSR meeting	District 10 GSR Meeting	St. Gilbert's Church 301 W. Belvedere R. (Rt. 120) Grayslake, IL 60030
Feb. 8-10, 2019 4 p.m. Friday on-site registration begins.	Heart to Heart Women's Retreat Speakers: Chris C., Coshocton, OH (A.A.) & Ellen C., Addison, TX (Al-Anon)	Bishop Lane Retreat Center Rockford, IL
Feb. 10, 2019 6 p.m. Appetizers and Desserts 7:30 p.m. Speaker	The Foxhall Group of Alcoholics Anonymous Speaker: Debbie D from Concord, CA	Wesley United Methodist Church 21 E. Franklin Naperville, IL



ICYPAA

61st ICYPAA will be held in Boston from August 22 to 25, 2019

www.icypaa.org for registration

The International Conference of Young People in Alcoholics Anonymous (ICYPAA) was founded for the purpose of providing a setting for an annual celebration of sobriety among young people in AA. Since its inception, a growing group of people, who at first would not consider themselves as "young people," has become regular attendees. The number of young people suffering from alcoholism who turn to AA for help is growing, and ICYPAA helps to carry AA's message of recovery to alcoholics of all ages. This meeting provides an opportunity for young AA's from all over the world to come together and share their experience, strength, and hope as members of Alcoholics Anonymous. AA members who attend an ICYPAA return home better prepared to receive young people who come to AA looking for a better way of life.



CELEBRATING GRAPVINE's 75th ANNIVERSARY

The International Journal of Alcoholics Anonymous

aagrapevine.org/75thanniversary available January 21st, 2019

SUBMIT YOUR STORY— Prison Issue - Doing AA Service with prisoners (due Jan. 10); African American AA members' stories (due Feb. 10); Getting sober when you're young (due March 10)

Words of Wisdom from the A.A. Grapevine & A.A. Literature

“My first sober lesson was learning to believe I was not evil and damned.”—Montrose, Colorado, January 2019, “I’m sober in spite of the relief I once depended on booze to give me ,” “I dare to believe God exists and that God cares.” *My imperfect self.*

“God reveals as much truth as you can live up to.”—Hazelden Foundation, 2005: *Drop the Rock*



Answering Service (Oct. 22 – Dec. 3 Statistics)		Chair: Victoria H.	Alternate: Open		
Total Calls	50	Meeting Info	16	General Info	4
Spanish	0	12-Step	8	Treatment Facility Info	0
Solicitor	0	Wrong Number	3	Halfway House Info	0
Hang-up	12	Other Districts	7	Al-Anon	0
Will call back	0	Website	0		

How to Submit Content to the *Conscious Contact* newsletter

1. Go to <http://district10nia.org/>
2. Hover over the “District Services and Committees” menu, and then click on the “Newsletter” submenu
3. Provide your name and either a phone number or email so that we can contact you if we have questions. Then type

District 10: PO Box 854, Libertyville, IL 60048**Northern Illinois Area:** NIA 20, Ltd., PO Box 524, Crystal Lake, IL 60039-0524**General Service Office:** PO Box 459 Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163**District 10 answering service:** 847-362-1811**2018-19 District 10 Officers (Confidential—this information is for A. A. use only.)**

Every member of AA is welcome at District 10 meetings.

5:30 p.m. Tradition Meeting, followed at 6 p.m. by the District meeting.

The first District 10 meeting of 2019 will be on Jan. 27, 2019. For more details, go to www.district10nia.org.

The article on page 1 includes a list of “OPEN” District committee positions that we are looking to fill for the 2019-2020 period.

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