



Vol. 16, No. 11
November 2017

- Next District Meeting:
Sunday, Dec. 10
- Submit content for the next
issue no later than Nov. 15

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

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"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

Conscious Contact

Information and Inspiration from District 10, NIA

Step Eleven: Knowledge and Power, But Not Ours

I haven't checked with anyone about this, so I may be wrong, but I see how the name of this newsletter, *Conscious Contact*, could have come from Step Eleven.

That step suggests that we seek knowledge of a Higher Power's will for us, and the power to carry that out. Prayer and meditation are the suggested tools to use.

The chapter on Step Eleven in *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* goes into detail on the difference between prayer and meditation, and offers some guidance on how to do both.

If you are anything like me, you may have not seen the "how" of prayer and meditation as the main barrier to working Step Eleven. It instead may have been an unwillingness to take Step Three to heart in all areas of our lives: "Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him*."

Appendix II of the *Big Book*, "Spiritual Ex-



perience," lists three essentials of recovery that form the acronym H.O.W.—Honesty, Open mindedness and Willingness.

The chapter states, "Most of us think this awareness of a Power greater than ourselves is the essence of spiritual experience. Our

more religious members call it "God-consciousness."

I have come to understand that my knowledge of God is not, by itself, enough. I have to actively seek knowledge of God's will and ask for the power to carry out my part. The difficult part for me, even after decades of sobriety, is subordinating *my* will to His.

As the *Twelve and Twelve* states, "We well remember how something deep inside us kept rebelling against the idea of bowing before any God." It's no wonder that people often suggest that we pray and meditate on our knees, bowing! — Tom K.

Step Eleven

"Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out."

Tradition Eleven

"Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films."

Tradition Eleven: Guardians of the Fellowship

I've worked as a reporter on a daily newspaper, in Public Relations, and once sang a self-written love song to my wife on a Chicago radio station. My focus always was on making a name for myself and attracting attention to me or, in the P.R. job, to promote the company that employed me.

When I joined A.A. and heard Tradition Eleven, I learned the importance and value of a P.R. policy based on attraction and personal anonymity at the level of media. This was a different focus and took the spotlight off of selfish, self-centered me. We don't "sell" A.A. to a newcomer because that wouldn't work for any alcoholic, and also we offer the program as a gift that the newcomer has to decide to accept for themselves. It doesn't work any other way. The *Twelve and Twelve* states, "This Tradition is a constant and practical reminder that personal ambition has no place in A.A. In it, each member becomes an active guardian of our Fellowship."

See page 2 for an article written by a retired broadcast journalist. He shares his experience as someone who faced the issue of anonymity when his own face was well-known by friends and strangers alike.—Tom K.

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.

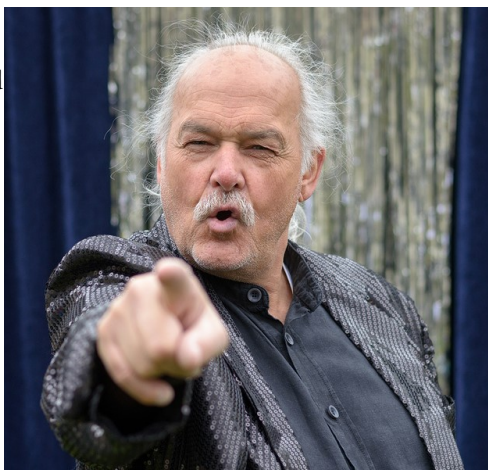
‘Hey Aren’t You...’ Anonymity When ‘Everybody Knows Your Name’

The guy at the door recognized me right away. “You can’t come in here.” I was finally ready to do something about my drinking and was nervously stumbling into my first A.A. meeting and they wouldn’t let me in. “Reporters are not allowed. This is for alcoholics only.”

I quickly explained I was not there as a television reporter looking for a story. Never at a loss for words on the boob tube, I found myself struggling to describe my feelings at that moment. The years of bad decisions, close calls and abject despair that had led me to this former fire station seeking help. “Is this your first meeting?” the guy barring the door asked. I nodded affirmatively. “Well, come on in. Welcome to a new way of life.” He put his arm around me and escorted me to a seat.

A few minutes later, I uttered the fateful words: “I’m so-and-so and I’m an alcoholic.” As soon as the phrase left my lips, I felt like a 16-ton yoke had been lifted from my shoulders. I was, at last, where I should have been years earlier. I felt, instantly, at home. I didn’t know it at the time, but I had just worked the first step of the A.A. program.

My television career began before the proliferation of cable.



There were basically six channels to watch on Chicago TV. So, if you watched TV news, you were probably familiar with my work. Actually, the audience was probably more familiar with me than I thought. Countless times in my early years in the program, someone would come up to me after a meeting and say, “I’ve been watching you for years and I knew you’d get here sooner or later.” I used to sign autographs after meetings. “Don’t tell anyone where you got this,” I would admonish them.

Anonymity, of course, is at the core of the A.A. program. Publicly, I strongly adhere to Tradition Twelve of the program. I was

pretty open about my drinking in the old days. Why and how I stopped is no one’s business but mine. Today, there seems to be a move toward “outing” oneself in the mass media. Maybe it’s a way to let bosses know it’s safe to employ a former drunk.

At meetings and with close friends and associates, I am much more open about “carrying the message.” As I learned early on, this is a “we” program. Now, long retired and happily sober, I am still a regular at A.A. meetings. I rarely get recognized because of my former visible job. I am just another garden-variety drunk, and that’s the way it should be.—Anonymous

What Is ‘The Next Right Thing’? Answers from A.A. Literature

How many times in AA meetings have you heard, “do the next right thing?” My old friend Big Book Kenny, (who has gone to the “Big Meeting in the Sky”), had a sticker on his brief case that was loaded with AA literature that said, “It’s in the book.”

After much searching the book, I think I have found answers for what is the next right thing in both the A.A. Big Book and the *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*.

The first next right thing is in the Big Book, page 164, second paragraph from the top. The answers are not exactly word-for-word, but just look for the word “right.” “See to it that your relationship with Him is right, and great events will come to pass for you and countless others.”

The next set of right things is in the *Twelve and Twelve*. At the end of Step Twelve, on page 125 in the first paragraph from the top it says, “For it is only by accepting and solving our problems that we can begin to get right with ourselves and with the world about us, and with Him who presides over us all. Understanding is the key to right principles and attitudes, and right action is the key to good living; therefore the joy of good living is the theme of A.A.’s Twelfth Step.”

So, the list of next right things for me is:

- 1) My relationship with God.
- 2) Accepting and solving my problems.

- 3) Practicing the principles (steps) and having a good and grateful attitude.
- 4) Doing the right action.

My friend Chris T. says the next right thing is also following Dr. Bob’s prescription for sobriety:

- 1) Trust God
- 2) Clean house
- 3) Help others

—Tim S.

CORRECTION:

The article, “More About Crosstalk and Keeping A.A. Meetings Healthy,” published in the October 2017 issue, incorrectly named Brenda E. as the article author.

The article actually was submitted via our online form, without contact name, email or phone number. While we are glad to honor anonymity in print, we need contact information for all submissions in case we must edit or clarify content.

The online form has been modified so that it now requires a first name and either an email or phone number. Email addresses and phone numbers of article authors will never be published, and the name will be withheld upon request.



THE GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE
POST OFFICE BOX 499
GRAND CENTRAL STATION
NEW YORK, NY 10163-0499

A reminder during this month of Thanksgiving that A.A. members can express gratitude for their sobriety with a “Birthday Contribution” (formerly “Remember November”) to the A.A. General Service Office (G.S.O.).

Some members contribute a dollar for each year of their sobriety, while others give a penny for each day

of their sobriety — the amount is up to each individual; however the G.S.O. cannot accept more than \$3,000 per year from any individual member. **NOTE:** Northern Illinois Area 20 prefers that individual groups contribute directly to the G.S.O. so that the Area 20 treasurer is not burdened with this task.

Birthday contribution envelopes are available at no charge from G.S.O. (FR-2 for group contributions, and FR-5 for individual members), or birthday and recurring contributions can be made on G.S.O.’s A.A. website at <https://www.aa.org>.

Events

Nov. 4, 2017 8 a.m. Registration 9 a.m. Conference begins	NIA Big Book Conference	First United Methodist Church 801 N. Sycamore St. Hinckley, IL 60520 Doug A. or Tracy F.
Nov. 5, 2017 1 p.m. Speakers 2 p.m. Dinner	Zion Benton Alano Club Anniversary Dinner Speakers: Jessie R. (A.A.), Annie R. (Al-Anon) 50/50 raffle	228 Sheridan Road Winthrop Harbor, IL 60096 847-746-9842
Nov. 10–12, 2017 5:30 p.m. Friday Registration 6:30 p.m. Friday Conference begins	National Corrections Conference Purpose is for A.A. members involved in correction work to meet and hear from corrections professionals, former inmates, and other trusted servants from U.S. and Canada. Registration \$30 Banquet: \$30 Hotel: \$109/night	Doubletree Hotel 1973 Craigshire St. Louis MO 63146 314-434-0100 Conference Chair: John S. www.nationalcorrectionsconference.org
Nov. 11, 2017 8 p.m. Open speaker 9:30 Bowling	See you next Tuesday 12x12 Fall Bowling Event Speaker at Round Lake Alano Club Bowling at Lakes Bowl, Scotch doubles. \$20 per couple	Round Lake Area Alano Club 37023 N. Rt. 83, Lake Villa, IL 60046 Lakes Bowl, 601 Rail Road Ave. Round Lake, IL 60073 seeyounexttuesday12x12@gmail.com
Nov. 17-19, 2017	2017 East Central Regional Forum www.aa.org , click on “For AA Members”	Wyndham Springfield City Centre 700 E. Adams St. Springfield, IL 62701
Nov. 17-19, 2017 5 p.m. Registration opens	28th Annual McHenry Soberfest	Grand Geneva Resort/Timber Ridge Water Park Lake Geneva, WI www.soberfest.org
Nov. 18, 2017 11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.	“Working the Steps in Recovery” Workshop November focus: Step 11	Serenity House of Libertyville 1103 W. Park Ave. (Rt.176) Libertyville, IL 60048 Jim M.
Dec. 9, 2017 8 a.m. Registration	NIA Winter Assembly	Lord of Life Lutheran Church 40W605 IL. Rt. 38 Elburn, IL 60119
Dec. 10, 2017 5:30 p.m. Traditions meeting 6 p.m. District meeting	District 10 November/December GSR Meeting	St. Gilbert’s Catholic Church 301 E. Belvidere Rd. Grayslake, IL 60030
Send event information to Tom K. All other news items should be submitted using the instructions printed at the top of page 4.		



Answering Service (Aug. 28–Sept. 18 Statistics)		Chair: Dave J.	Alternate: Victoria H.		
Total Calls	36	Meeting Info	14	General Info	8
Spanish	0	12-Step	1	Treatment Facility Info	0
Solicitor	3	Wrong Number	2	Halfway House Info	0
Hang-up	4	Other Districts	4	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 your content and click the “Submit” button.

Or email your submission to Tom K.

District 10: PO Box 854, Libertyville, IL 60048

Northern Illinois Area: PO Box 1056, Yorkville, IL 60560

General Service Office: PO Box 459 Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163

District 10 answering service: 847-362-1811

2017 District 10 Officers (Confidential—this information is for A. A. use only.)

For purposes of anonymity, personal contact information has been deleted from this online version.

Every member of AA is welcome at District 10 meetings. The meetings typically are held on the fourth Sunday of every month at St. Gilbert’s Catholic Church, 301 E. Belvidere Rd, Grayslake. 5:30 p.m. Tradition Meeting, followed at 6 p.m. by the District meeting.

For more details, go to www.district10nia.org.

If the word, “OPEN,” appears after a District position, we are looking for someone to volunteer to serve. Learn more about each

Position	Chair	Phone	Email	Alternate	Phone	Email
DCM	Bob P.			Kevin A.		
Secretary	Steve B.			OPEN		
Treasurer	Cori S.			Cindy W.		
Accessibilities	OPEN			OPEN		
Answering Service	Dave J.			Victoria H		
Archives	Rick S.			Steve R.		
Bridging the Gap	Mike B.			Josh R.		
Corrections	Larry L.			OPEN		
C.P.C.	Dee E.			Terri G.		
Directory	Dana T.			Andy H.		
Events	Mike K.			Carolyn G.		
Grapevine	Brandon B.			Mike W.		
GSR Contact	Kim T.			Earl N.		
Literature	Gaza D.			OPEN		
Newsletter	Tom K.			Mark H.		
Public Info.	Michael L.			Peter S.		
Treatment	Carl S.			Dave H.		
Website	Dawn O.			Charles K.		