



Conscious Contact

Information and Inspiration from District 10, NIA

Vol. 18, No. 5

May 2019

- Next District Meeting
Sunday, May. 26th—301 E. Belvidere Rd, Grayslake, IL 60030
- Submit content for the next issue no later than April 15th

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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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

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

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.

Brush off your suit...and your dancing shoes

I often hear people in meetings say they were told when they walked through the doors, "You'd better buy a suit, you're going to go to a lot of funerals."

I know the intent is to emphasize how serious this disease is. I have in fact been to a number of funerals in my time in AA. However, not all were because a member died from the disease. Many have been because I know a lot more people now. My life has become so much bigger. I have

rejoined the stream of life, and part of life is death. So while I have been to funerals, many were to support a friend through the grief of losing a loved one.

I have also been to events to celebrate other life milestones: birthdays, weddings, births, graduations, etc. Since I have joined the fellowship, our two children both graduated from high school, and one graduated from college. Among the people at our parties were dear AA friends.



When I turned 50, yet again a group of people who would not normally mix showed up at my surprise party.

Being sober though the grace of god and the AA fellowship has enriched and deepened my connections with everyone around me. So

The wake-up call

The other night I went with my sponsor, and another A.A. member, to an alcohol treatment program (ATP). The three of us from our Sunday men's group were there to volunteer our support.

When it came to our turn to share, I was still reeling from what I had just heard from the first 4 or 5 members of the group. The "Hole" of incomprehensible demoralization that these young people had dug, frightened even me. Even with the hope and faith I

had built working this A.A. program over the years, I had to fight to keep the "alarmed" look off my face. "*Are you kidding me right now,*" was the constant thought I had when story after desperate story was confessed. As each one shared, I even began to feel hopelessness for their circumstances.

But "kidding myself" is exactly what I would have to do, if I were to think that this kind of "life" could never happen me! The "YETS" are out there for all of us who at one

time or another, were commanded by that addiction; whatever our vice was that we swore we would never ever do. This, I was truly privileged to be reminded of that night.

My hand went up in the air as if by itself Sunday night, when they asked for a volunteer to go to this treatment center the next night. But God did for me (as he always does) what I couldn't (or wouldn't) do for myself. A blast from the past, right smack in the face! I needed a wake-up call

Step Five

"Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs."

Tradition Five

"Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers."

“Why I was so reluctant to do my fifth step...and what I wish someone had told me, before I actually did it!”

It's been a while now since I did my first real fifth step with my sponsor, but the fear and dread I felt that day are still a vivid memory to me. I don't know exactly what I was expecting to have happen that day... but I do know I imagined the whole thing as being a lot worse than it actually was. I didn't realize it at the time, but this would end up being one of the easiest steps I would do in AA.

The truth is my reluctance to do my fifth step really started with my fourth step. I didn't want to do that one either. If it hadn't been for the AA members in my home group throwing pencils at me and asking me “If I was ever going to start working on my fourth step” I'm not sure if I would have done it at all. I was eight months sober at the time, and had convinced myself that I wasn't ready to do a fourth step yet...that I didn't have any resentments...I wasn't even sure I had worked step three perfectly...and the reason I drank so much was somebody else's fault anyway! The fact is, I didn't want to take an honest look at

myself, let alone tell somebody else what I found there.

Later I would have the chance to work with people I sponsored when they did their fourth and fifth steps with me. From that experience I learned I wasn't exactly unique. Just about every alcoholic I've met...and certainly everyone I have sponsored...has had most of the same emotions I had before doing these steps. Let's



face it, if it's done right the fifth step is ego deflating. We come to the realization, if we are honest about it, that it is time to “take off the mask”...the one we wear that says this is the person I want you to believe I am...and we have to expose the person we really are, faults and all.

The good news comes in two parts. First,

most of what I was so concerned about revealing to my sponsor he had heard before...and had done the same, or maybe even worse, himself. With that understanding, I realized I wasn't alone or unique. It was this experience of telling one other person the exact nature of my wrongs, and then believing that what I had done...or failed to do...could be forgiven, that made such a big impact on me that day. With that knowledge, I could start to forgive myself and begin a new sober and fulfilling life. One I still enjoy today.

Secondly, I had thought my fifth step was just some kind of confession. It was much more than that. It was really a form of “moral cleansing”...a chance to start over fresh. It was in reality a new beginning for me. I wish somebody had told me that was what it would be before I did it. I wouldn't have fought quite so hard...or quite so long, in doing it.

Even after doing my fifth step there was still a lot of work to be done of course, to

The wake-up call - continued from pg 1

We sat there, a combined fifty years of sobriety, confronted with the middle portion of step 12. “WE *tried to carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic*”

My sponsor spoke first, then it was my turn. My share was a simple one. I pointed to my sponsor, and said “*Get one of these right away!*” I explained next, how God (as He only can) brought us together after years of knowing each other in the concrete business. We had been separated 10 years or more, I explained to the group. Ten years of my worst miserable drinking, and there he was, at the right time, and right place! That's God I said...*don't ever underestimate his divine grace!*

The last thing I imparted was “*we can't do it alone*” Explaining to them my “baby boomer” status, and how I was taught to “pull yourself up by the boot straps.” I told them that stubborn pride of doing it yourself will kill you! It almost did me. WE all need each other, that's why we're here. Humble yourself to this fact, and you have a decent chance of “making it.”

In talking on the way home to my sponsor, I told him I believe the more years away from the drink we have, the more “selfish pride” has a chance of setting in. The X about of years, and “I got this” attitude, are a recipe for relapse. This I have personally seen on more than one occasion. My hand went up that

My First Knot

Looking back, I think step five is very similar to when I learned to tie my first shoe lace. It was so...hard to loop the strings. They fumbled around in my fingers and it was really frustrating. I just wanted to quit. Some really close people coached me through it, though. Then one day, eureka I did it!!! I ran to mom and said look, look I tied my own shoes!!! She looked down and said, “great job, but you put them wrong feet.” I sure know how to make a big deal of a little thing.

Events

May 4, 2019 8:30 am—3 pm	Pre-General Service Conference Workshop	Lord of Life Church 40W605 IL Route 38 Elburn IL 60119
May 11, 2019 5pm—11pm Cover 5.00	30th Annual McHenry's Soberfest FunRaiser & Dance 5pm—Doors Open 7pm—Speaker Speaker—Rovanne D. from —Racine, WI Food & Raffles/Dance/Fun! Fun! Fun!	McHenry Township Hall N. Richmond Rd. Johnsburg, IL Michael, Paul H.
July 12-14, 2019 Rooms for 109.00 to 119.00 Reg. cute off: June 12,2019 Group Code: XAA Overflow Hotels Available	2019 East Cetral Regional Forum Hosted by Area 33 Coffee Supplied by Area 33	Sheraton Detroit Metro Airport Hotel 8000 Merriman Road Romulus, MI 48174
October 18-20, 2019 Rooms for 103.00 Reg. cute off: Sep. 25, 2019	Into ACTION 2019 Hosted by Area 75 & East Central Regional Conference Conferences Food Friends	Crowne Plaza Milwaukee Airport 6401 South 13th St. Milwaukee, WI 53221 Nany H. Chris S.
August 9th-11th, 2019 Rooms from 99.00 to 109.00 Reg. cut off: Aug. 1, 2019 Banquet: 40.00	46th Annual A.A. Illinois State Conference Hosted by District 43 and Northern IL Area 20 8/9: 2:00 pm Conference Start 8/9-11: Registration Desk Hours: Friday 2:00—9:00 pm Saturday 7:00 am—8:00 pm Sunday 7:00 am	Sheraton Lisle-Naperville Hotel 3000 Warrenville Rd. Lisle, IL 60532 Erik L George C.


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.

AAGRAPEVINE

The International Journal of Alcoholics Anonymous

CELEBRATING GRAPVINE's 75th ANNIVERSAR
<https://grapevine.espstores.com/subscriptions>
Words of Wisdom from the A.A. Grapevine & A.A. Literature

"Perhaps for some, 'How It Work' has become a tired, overworked bit of dogma, an opportunity to daydream. But not for this alcoholic. I get more out of those words with each passing day. The words don't change, but I do."—"How It Work' Works for Me," Paradise, California, October 2003, Beginners' Book: Getting and Staying Sober in AA



Answering Service (March 25, 2019 to April 22, 2019 Statistics)				Chair: Victoria H.	Alternate: Sarah F.
Total Calls	69	Meeting Info	34	General Info	5
Spanish	1	12-Step	10	Treatment Facility Info	1
Solicitor	1	Wrong Number	3	Halfway House Info	0
Hang-up	11	Other Districts	2	Al-Anon	1
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.

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**2019-20 District 10 Officers (Confidential—this information is for A. A. use only)**

Every member of AA is welcome at District 10 meetings—

Saint Gilbert’s Church “look for District 10 signage:” 301 E. Belvidere Rd, Grayslake, IL 60030

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

The next District 10 meeting of 2019 will be on May 26, 2019. 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 and the volunteer commitment at an upcoming District meeting, or by contacting a District committee member.

Position	Chair	Phone	Email	Alternate	Phone	Email
DCM	Kevin A.	-	-	Michael L.	-	-
Secretary	Tom K.	-	-	Mary M.	-	-
Treasurer	Janet H.	-	-	Jeff B.	-	-
Accessibilities	Rachel B.	-	-	David H.	-	-
Answering Service	Victoria H.	-	-	Sarah F.	-	-
Archives	Steve R.	-	-	Peter S.	-	-
Bridging the Gap	Carl S.	-	-	Cori S.	-	-
Corrections	Mark H.	-	-	Larry L.	-	-
C.P.C.	Terri G.	-	-	Mike B.	-	-
Directory	Kim C.	-	-	Sherry H.	-	-
Events	Andrea M.	-	-	Brandon B.	-	-
Grapevine	Judd H.	-	-	Amy S.	-	-
GSR Contact	Earl N.	-	-	Dana T.	-	-
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.	-	-