



Conscious Contact

Information and Inspiration from District 10, NIA

Practice practice practice

Vol. 18, No. 6

June 2019

- Next District Meeting Sunday, June. 23rd—301 E. Belvidere Rd, Grayslake, IL 60030
- Submit content for the next issue no later than June 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

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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.

I had recently taken over the secretary job for my home group. I was elected unanimously, as no one else wanted the job. I got to the meeting about 15 minutes early so I could get the coffee started and get organized for the start of the meeting. At that time, I had about seven years of sobriety and considered myself lucky for having found a home group I enjoyed so much. Most everybody there was really friendly and we had a couple of characters who could always be counted on for a good story or joke.

So I got myself organized and I was just kind of sitting there waiting for everybody else to show up. Then a guy walked in. I had never seen him before. He took a seat and I greeted him. It happened to be summer and this guy was wearing a tank top and shorts and he looked incredibly fit. We made small talk for a while and I finally said, "You look so fit, you look like you might be a professional athlete."

"Oh, yes, I play semi-pro basketball," he said. "I am hoping to

find a spot somewhere on an NBA team."

I wished him luck, and we discussed how difficult it was to make it as a professional athlete.

The other members started showing up for the meeting and I was just about ready to get it started when the athlete turned to me. "I



think I've figured out what these meetings are about," he said. "Really, and what would that be?" I asked.

"Meetings are practice for how to get through life," he answered. "When we practice basketball, we drill over and over again so that when we get into a game we do the right thing automatically without having to think about it. Meetings are just like that. If we go to enough meetings, we prac-

tice up for life. Then we do the right thing automatically."

I was stunned. I realized that he was just exactly right. I had often thought that if I could just act the way I do at my AA meetings all the time, then I'd surely have less trouble with life.

I turned and looked at him from my lofty perch of several years of sobriety and asked, "Say, you seem to have a pretty good grasp of what goes on in AA. How long have you been sober?"

"I have three months," he said, "and I am really enjoying sobriety." When I heard that I figured that I should just shut up and get the meeting started.

That man slipped away after the meeting and I never saw him again. I learned a lesson that day. Someone doesn't have to have 30 years of sobriety to be able to teach me something about AA. And like the man that day, I'm still going to meetings and I'm practicing for life.

-- Art H.

Mount Prospect, Illinois

"God has given me this day to use as I wish; Alcoholics Anonymous shows me how to live it without a drink."

"Changes for the Better," Somerville, Massachusetts, September 1995, In Our Own Words

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Step Six

"Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character."

Tradition Six

"An A.A. group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose."

IGNORANCE, an excuse no more...

Step six: “We were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.”

To me step six is one of the more challenging steps to act on. There isn't much on it in the Big Book, one short paragraph. The lack of substance in the Big Book given can make it easy to run roughshod right through. This seemingly miniscule step though, in comparison to the other steps, is a woolly mammoth.

Step one I admitted my powerlessness over alcohol. By the time I walked into AA my lack of power was so evident that even I couldn't ignore it anymore. Everything that I had worked to accomplish in my life at age 32 was either lost or in the process of being lost. **Step two**, sounded really enticing: I was without soundness of mind and it scared me. I believed in God, so why not stretch my belief a little further. **Step three**; I could get behind the idea of giving my will over to the care of God. I could let It be my guide; I knew I didn't have the answers. **Step four**; write out my character defects with the guidance of a sponsor. This was difficult. At the time, it was a mountain to climb. Before I knew it though, I was onto step five and four didn't look so bad. **Step five** took me two sessions with my sponsor, we ran out of time in our first meeting. I found myself very interesting. I had a lot to say about

me and my sponsor had a lot to say about him. We learned a lot about each other in those two briefings. Not to mention I felt like I completed some hazing ritual and now actually belonged to AA afterwards.

Then comes, in my opinion, a purposefully glossed over step, **step six:** “We were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.” I believe step six only gets one paragraph in the Big Book because we have a great knack to over complicate things: **K.I.S.S.** (Keep It Simple Stupid). Once the obsession to drink was lifted, I was able to see things a little more clearly. God then guided me along a path that gave me the ability to see the defects of character listed out in step four. I consider these my emotional handicaps I ignored through drinking. Through Grace, I am given another miracle, I now get to face my short-comings.

I have had the opportunity to write three step fours under the guidance of my sponsor. Each step four was then followed up with a step five, acknowledged to my God, my sponsor and out loud to myself. What this has given me is priceless. I can no longer justifiably hold onto self-loathing. I have been given the tool of understand-

ing and acceptance of my short-comings.

So how do I start step six? *Become Willing*. I have accepted steps one through three to the core of my existence to be undeniably true. Steps one through three are not steps I work anymore, but instead graciously live and accept as I do the air I breathe. My first action of the morning is to *put myself into a position of willingness*. The fears that kept me in despair are waiting: thirsty and hungry. It is my choice to feed the lies that want my destruction.

Ignorance is no longer a tool I can use for character assassination. No longer can I blame others for my perceived inadequacies. It is not always easy to meet my weaknesses with tolerance and love. For example, exercise is painful and burns when done correctly, who likes that? But I like the results, so starting with the willingness to go to the gym, I can workout.

I have a coach, a team and a process that will lead to success: my sponsor, my AA peeps and my readings. I have an unstoppable force behind me and a training regiment: my God, my prayers and my meditations. My life goals are no longer a sprint meant to be overcome and conquered. Funny thing, No matter how many times

I read the *Tortes and the Hair*, there is only one winner?

I have learned in long distant running that it is about the journey not the finish. Just being able to trot along and not quit means the world for my character building. To have the willingness to accept my responsibilities without an end in sight in love, grace and thankfulness is an attitude I never dreamt of having. All I have to do is follow a guide already written.

How fast can I tattle on myself? I need to be willing to tattle, listen and employ suggestions as if they are guidelines for breathing. I am not perfect, but as I have come to find out, the group conscious is. I find God in the group conscious and in there I find the will and the energy to keep moving forward. I am learning to be willing to accept failures like I never have before: graciously not scornfully. I am nowhere near perfect and am willing to learn not to beat myself up over it. One of my favorite lines ever written is, “I am too stupid to be human and I lack common sense.” Every day I pray for the willingness to give my will over to my Higher Power, and in so doing to give up the old me and become the True ME.

—Honesty First
Grayslake, Illinois

Six Important Guidelines in Life:

1. When you are Alone, Mind your Thoughts.
2. When you are with Friends, Mind your Tongue.
3. When you are Angry, Mind your Temper.
4. When you are with a Group, Mind your Behavior.
5. When you are in Trouble, Mind your Emotions.
6. When God starts blessing you, Mind your Ego.



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.

Events

<p>June 16th Noon till dusk \$5.00 sug. Donation or bring your own dish</p>	<p>Summer Bash with District 12 Speaker Ralph R</p>	<p>Greenbelt Forest Preserve Pavilion A 1110 Green Bay Road North Chicago, IL 60064</p> <p>Flier "Click Me!"</p>	
<p>June 21—23, 2019 Rooms 110.00 Reg. cut off June 14, 2019</p>	<p>Women's Retreat at Lorado Taft > Meals – Friday evening thru Sunday morning (fabulous food, coffee, cinnamon rolls) > Speak- ers > Panel Discussions > Break-out Groups > Crafts > The beautiful outdoors > Fun and friends</p>	<p>Lorado Taft Field Campus NIU 1414 N. River Road Oregon, IL 61061 Diane O. 815.355.1107, Lynn B. 815.382.1778</p> <p>Flier "Click Me!"</p>	
<p>July 12-14, 2019 Rooms for 109.00 to 119.00 Reg. cute off: June 12,2019 Group Code: XAA Overflow Hotels Available</p>	<p>2019 East Central Regional Forum Hosted by Area 33 Coffee Supplied by Area 33</p>	<p>Sheraton Detroit Metro Airport Hotel 8000 Merriman Road Romulus, MI 48174 Contact: 734.729.2600</p> <p>Flier "Click Me!"</p>	
<p>August 9th-11th, 2019 Rooms from 99.00 to 109.00 Registration no later then 8/1: 25.00 Banquet: 40.00</p>	<p>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</p>	<p>Sheraton Lisle-Naperville Hotel 3000 Warrenville Rd. Lisle, IL 60532 Erik L. 630.809.7789, George C. 630.244.5570</p> <p>Flier "Click Me!"</p>	
<p>October 18-20, 2019 Rooms for 103.00 Reg. cut off: Sep. 25, 2019</p>	<p>Into ACTION 2019 Hosted by Area 75 & East Central Regional Con- ference Conferences Food Friends</p>	<p>Crowne Plaza Milwaukee Airport 6401 South 13th St. Milwaukee, WI 53221 Nany H.: 414.801.5184, Chris S.: 414.333.8167</p> <p>Flier "Click Me!"</p>	

“Up to now AA seems to have taken the right turning at each new crossroad. This could scarcely have been our doing alone. Our Fellowship has afforded a convincing proof of that wise old adage which declares that 'man's extremity is God's opportunity.'”

AA Co-Founder, Bill W., November 1961, "Again at the Crossroads", The Language of the Heart



Answering Service (April. 29, 2019 – May 13, 2019 Statistics)		Chair: Victoria H. Alternate: Sarah F.	
Total Calls	40	Meeting Info	16
Spanish	0	12-Step	8
Solicitor	4	Wrong Number	2
Hang-up	4	Other Districts	0
Will call back	1	Website	4
		General Info	1
		Treatment Facility Info	0
		Halfway House Info	0
		Al-Anon	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 June. 23, 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	-	-