

Conscious Contact

Information and Inspiration from District 10, NIA

Vol. 19, No. 05

May 2020

- Next District Meeting
Sunday, May 24—Zoom

- Submit content for the next issue no later than May 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: "Why I was so reluctant to do my fifth step..."

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.aagrapevine.org
Answering Service
847-362-1811

Greetings, Northern Illinois District 10!

And I mean everybody on this journey of recovery and discovery. I miss you all. I miss the hugs and handshakes the jokes the stories. I feel sometimes that lonesomeness, you know, the one we've felt even in a crowded room. I am reasonably healthy and well and hope you are too.

Many meetings have had to shut down. This is not the only time we have been challenged. No it is sadly not. We, our fellowship have had to stay sober through much: Wars—"several", aids, 9/11, SARs, MERs, H1N1 and disasters—"Katrina and others". We did make it through though! We are set with a new set of challenges. This one encompasses a virtual meeting. It is well that we reach out to newcomers, keep our answering service and website up and running. I know we cannot do the things we used to do. The question is what are we doing today? I am reminded that when I was new, money was an issue so going to AA events or club functions required a donation and sometimes I could not donate. I simply did not have the money. I could bake however, so I did: cookies, brownies, and pies. I sat at the door to collect money. I stayed late to clean up.

Today, what can we do? A fella gave a lead last night and it rings true in my head. WE can pick up the phone, even when we don't want to. WE can make a phone call text or send an email. WE can invite someone to our virtual meeting password protected of course. I don't dig trolls. WE can do all these things WE can.

Page fourteen of our Big Book suggests that we ensure our sobriety through work and sacrifice for others. Our twelfth step more than echoes this action. These are uncertain times, they have been uncertain before and we have met those challenges with God's help and the help of the fellowship. It is not easy.

I miss you all, so much. My heart is filled

by the certain knowledge that we will once again stand together in the sunlight of the spirit and the actual sunlight hold hands praying, hug, laugh, and tell a joke or two. I long for that day as I am sure you do too. May God bless and keep you until then.

To business:

- ♦ The Big Book Conference Planning committee will meet virtually. We are still on task to have a Big Book Conference on Oct 24th at CLC. God willing!
- ♦ You should have received an email from our area committee on how and when to log in to express your views on the General Service Conference agenda items. There are many and AA does not do a darn thing without your voice and vote. Take time to see what you can do. It is important.
- ♦ We are working to hold our district meeting virtually and info on that will be out shortly.
- ♦ Please update your meeting information if you have haven't already. Let us know if your meeting is temporarily suspended or moved to meeting virtually. There is a link right smack at the top of the district's home page - district10nia.org - that members can click on to provide this info.

Be kind and careful with one another

- In Service

Kevin P Ashley

District 10 DCM

AAGRAPEVINE
The International Journal of Alcoholics Anonymous



[Online meetings](#)



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.

Step Four

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

Tradition Four

"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!”

Step Five: *Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being, the exact nature of our wrongs.*

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 repair all the damage I had done to my family, my friends, myself, and just about everyone I knew. But with this fifth step I moved past the question of what I was willing to do to clean house...and had started to actually do something about it. Now me, my God, and my sponsor all knew what I needed to be working on. I felt like a real member of Alcoholics Anonymous at last. It was as good a place as any to begin my recovery journey.

- Steve R.

Mysterious Ways MAY 2020 | GETTING INTO GENERAL SERVICE

You never know when an opportunity to carry the message will come. A little prayer to be of maximum service is always a good

I learned a valuable lesson during my early years in recovery: I was not responsible for anyone getting drunk or sober. At that time, the men I tried to help all continued to drink. I began to think something was wrong with me. The experience shared with me by seasoned AA members was that I could only plant a seed and offer the alcoholic a spiritual kit of AA tools. The alcoholic would need to allow the seed to sprout and use those tools.

One day, I arrived early for the noon meeting at my home group. A middle-aged man, Jim, arrived and said he was looking for Larry. Larry used to work at a local detox and was also my sponsor. I told Jim that Larry was my sponsor and asked him if I could help. Jim said he was looking for a sponsor. I told

him that I'd be willing to help him and he accepted my offer.

At that time, Jim was living in a weed patch near the county hospital. He picked that spot because he suffered with bouts of pancreatitis. When the pancreatitis flared up, he was already near the hospital. Jim would panhandle daily for alcohol. But now he'd had enough.

Jim stopped drinking and stayed stopped until the day he died five years later. There's more to this story than a successful Twelfth Step, however. Before Jim quit, he used to drink with a man named Deano, who was chronically drunk and would show up at AA meetings to ask for money to buy more booze. Nearly everyone I knew believed Deano was a hopeless case and would never get sober.

When Deano saw that Jim was sober, he began to think that maybe he could stop too. Deano asked Jim to sponsor him and, after just one slip, Deano took hold of the AA program and he recently celebrated 12 years of sobriety.

God works in mysterious ways. A chance meeting before a meeting changed the lives of three alcoholics: Jim, Deano and me. I often share in meetings that you never know when an opportunity to carry the message will come. A little prayer to make myself fit to be of maximum service is always a good way to start my day.

- WOODY R. | STOCKTON, CALIF

AA Grapevine

Events

April 25-26 All Day Meetings	The Usual Suspects Quarantine Conference Saturday 25th 9am—530pm Sunday 10am—4pm Click HERE for flier	Zoom main meeting room, Meeting ID: 816 096 018, Password: 620435
April 26 6pm	District 10 Virtual Zoom Meeting	Zoom main meeting room, Meeting ID: 985 2630 5107, Password: DISTRICT10
May 2, 9 am–1:30 pm	NIA 20 2020 Pre-General Service Conference Virtual Zoom Workshop	Zoom main meeting room, Meeting ID: 916 774 165, Password: 159009
May 16-19 7pm Daily	General Service Conference Meetings at 7pm Fri, Sat and Sun Click HERE for flier	Zoom main meeting room, Meeting ID: 665 555 906, Password: 306745
July 2—5, 2020	AA International Convention Cancelled	Ford Field Stadium

Hello RecoverySpeakers Friends and Fans,

Over the coming weeks more and more of us will be isolated and for “how long” remains a mystery. We know how dangerous this can be for alcoholics/addicts as well as many other segments of our global community.

We want you to know that RecoverySpeakers does not advertise any product or service. We investigated the option and decided against it. We do not share contacts. Our commitment is to make this recovery resource available to everyone for fun and for free. If you, our users, have any suggestions on how we might better serve the recovery community during this time and going forward, please let us know.

Each day we will feature a talk and we ask you to share with your friends. If you want to share your story with us, let us know: text format or MP3's are fine. Contact us at info@recoveryspeakers.com

You can help by passing along our links and letting your friends, sponsees, sponsors, sober living houses, and anywhere else that could benefit know about us.

For now, stay safe and know that we love you.

Here's a talk by Bill W. From 1965 convention. “I am Responsible”

<https://www.recoveryspeakers.com/1965-toronto-int-bill-w-our-responsibility-to-aas-future/>

Warm regards,
Mike Fitzpatrick
Recovery Speakers

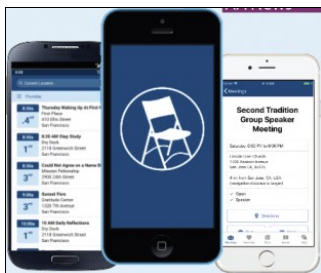


Answering Service (Mar 14 2020 – Apr 20 2020 Statistics)				Chair: Victoria H.	Alternate: OPEN
Total Calls	57	Meeting Info	10	General Info	11
Spanish	2	12-Step	3	Treatment Facility Info	4
Solicitor	1	Wrong Number	0	Halfway House Info	2
Hang-up	10	Other Districts	3	Al-Anon	0
Will call back	0	Website	0	Misc	6

Meeting Guide free mobile app

A free mobile app for iOS and Android. Designed to be simple, fast, and help you find AA meetings wherever you are.

[Meeting Guide 3.0](#) is provided by A.A.W.S. to help people find AA meetings and resources near them. It's Free!



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 808, Streamwood, IL 60107-2971**General Service Office:** PO Box 459 Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163**District 10 answering service:** 847-362-1811**2020-21 District 10 Officers (Confidential—this information is for A. A. use only)**

Every member of AA is welcome at District 10 meetings—

Zoom main meeting room, Meeting ID: 985 2630 5107, Password: DISTRICT10

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 24, 2020. 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 J.			Jeff B.		
Accessibilities	Rachel B.			David H.		
Answering Service	Victoria H.			Mike D.		
Archives	Peter S.			Jeremy L.		
Bridging the Gap	Cori S.			Carl S.		
Corrections	Mark H.			Larry L.		
C.P.C.	Terri G.			OPEN		
Directory	Nathan C.			Sherry H.		
Events	Brandon B.			Amy F.		
Grapevine	Judd H.			Open		
GSR Contact	Earl N.			Kimberly K.		
Literature	Shayna L.			Robin B.		
Newsletter	Alex E.			Tad L.		
Public Info.	Bernadette L.			Christina B.		
Treatment	Tony P.			Christina H.		
Website	Dana T.			Open		