



# Conscious Contact

Information and Inspiration from District 10, NIA

## As Peter Sees It

Vol. 20, No. 2  
March 2021

- Next District Meeting  
Sunday, March 28th at 6PM Zoom, Live  
and or Hybrid TBD
- Submit content for the next issue no later  
than March 23rd

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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Pg. 3: The Glum Lot

Pg. 4 District contacts & How to submit to Con-



"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](http://www.district10nia.org)

[www.aa-nia.org](http://www.aa-nia.org)

[www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org)

[www.aagrapevine.org](http://www.aagrapevine.org)

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 can imagine half my readers thinking, "Oh, isn't that cute. A title like Bill W.'s wonderful book.", while the other half are thinking, "What a presumptuous ass! How dare he use a title chosen by one of our esteemed founders as the title of his wonderful book?". I am not concerned. You see, my late, beloved sponsor, Steve R. told me, "Peter, you are going to hear a lot of truly memorable things from me about the program of AA and how to work it. Occasionally, you might even hear a few good things from other people in AA. None of them are original. They have been floating around AA since practically the beginning. I simply repeat them as if they were mine. So, in that spirit, from time to time, I will present a topic for discussion under the heading: "As Peter Sees It".

Here is the first one. I read an article entitled: "I was thinking" in the Spring 2020 issue of Concepts, our NIA, LTD. Area 20 Service Letter. The author describes a situation that worries him and has bothered me since my First Step Meeting. He laments the fact that so many people (6, 8, 12 or more) think that they should participate in a newcomer's First Step Meeting

The author goes on to make several recommendations for a First Step Meeting. He proposed that there should be a small number of AA members (2-3); the newcomer should be invited to briefly speak first (say why he came to AA). The AA members should listen for feeling type words such as boredom, lone-

liness, or despair so that they might focus their comments on how they also felt when they first came to AA as they tell their stories. The newcomer should understand that he/she may ask questions or make comments at any time especially when the AA members have told their stories. The newcomer should be given a copy of the Big Book and a list of phone numbers that he may contact starting the next day. The newcomer should be asked to provide his phone number so that one of the AA members can call the next day and offer to take him to a meeting. A list of concepts from the Big Book, e.g., Doctor's Opinion, Forward to the First Edition, More About Alcoholism, There is a Solution, and We Agnostics should be reviewed with the newcomer.

I thought this was a wonderful approach to a First Step Meeting and planned to write an article lauding its merits. But then, I did something that my Sponsor often recommended, and I seldom did. I decided to present this plan to someone else. I had the lead at my Friday night Wanderers 123 Meeting, so I presented this plan to them. My group has great diversity in age and in length of sobriety and had several comments. I found that the newer members really did appreciate hearing the stories of AA members even if they included long drunk-a-logs. As newcomers, they identified with the "qualifications" of the AA members. More importantly, several of them reported how they identified with the feelings the AA members had when they first came into AA. Some Wanderers with more **continued pg 2**

**AAGRAPEVINE**  
The International Journal of Alcoholics Anonymous  
<https://grapevine.espstores.com/subscriptions>



[Online meetings](#)



### Step Three

"Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him.*"

### Tradition Three

"The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking."

## As Peter Sees It, continued from page 1

experience recall having as many as 12 – 15 people in their First Step Meetings. There was general agreement that this was far too many, making the meeting long, repetitive, and ultimately boring.

It was the last member to speak that Friday night who made a point that lit a light bulb in my head and made me reconsider my opinion of what a First Step should be. He said that his First Step made him miserable – too many speakers with too many drunk-a-logs. Soon after that meeting, however, he spoke with an AA member who delivered what he needed - EMPATHY. BINGO! That struck me as exactly right!

Let's get a definition of that word. Empathy: the ability to understand and share the feelings of others. It seems to me that this is the real focal point of a First Step Meeting. The AA members are saying, we understand how you feel for we were once where you are now. We once felt the same emotions, fear, bewilderment, frustration, and despair. In fact, each of us can recall those feelings now. We think we have a solution, and we are ready to share it with you now if you really want it. From empathy springs a ray of HOPE. That is the goal of a First Step Meeting.

While each group should structure their First Step meetings as they see fit, it would be wise to limit the number of participants, ask AA members to focus on how they felt as they tell their stories, and minimize attempts to explain how the program works (e.g., introduce Big Book concepts). We simply need to allow enough time for newcomers to experience the empathy that sparks a ray of HOPE. This is the program's "attraction" that we present in a good First Step Meeting. This is the extended hand of AA that offers recovery from a hopeless state of mind and body.

KISS

Peter S.



## The Third Concept

To insure effective leadership, we should endow each element of A.A. - the Conference, the General Service Board and its service corporations, staffs, committees, and executives-with a traditional "Right of Decision."



**Attention GSR's and meetings without them:** Please take a few moments to go to the district website to update your meeting information. Over the last year some new groups have developed and others have changed from live meetings to hybrid meetings. This will help us to update the directory and meeting guides. Please, its important! Just click on the QR code. It will take you to the district form to update your meeting information. Thank you.

## Daily Grapeview Quote (February 16)

“Whether it was pouring coffee in my home group, or going on a Twelfth-Step call, I entered a new pattern of thinking: I thought not only about myself, but about others.”

## Events

<p>March 19, 2021 @ 6:00 pm – 2021 Rhode Island Virtual AA Convention</p> <p>March 21, 2021 @ 1:00 pm Speakers, AA &amp; Alanon, Marathon Meetings, Sobriety countdowns, and much more.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">District 10 Business Meeting Via Zoom</p> <p>March 28, 2021 6pm</p>	<p><a href="http://aa-nia.org/wp-content/uploads/2021-RI-FLYER.pdf">http://aa-nia.org/wp-content/uploads/2021-RI-FLYER.pdf</a></p> <p>Zoom main meeting room, Meeting ID: 985 2630 5107, Password: DISTRICT10</p>
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### THE GLUM LOT

Why did the accountant do so well in A.A.? He was already a friend of Bills!

“I can’t find a cause for your illness,” the doctor said. “Frankly, I think is due to drinking.”

“In that case,” replied his patient, “I’ll come back when you are sober!”

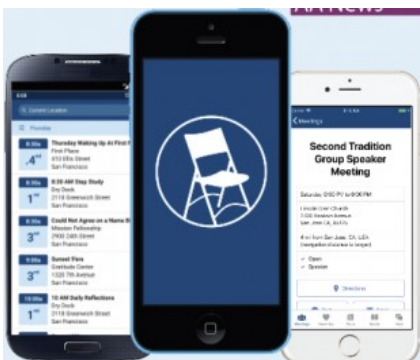


<b>Answering Service January 19, 2021– February 19, 2021 Chair: Janet Jones Al-</b>			
<b>ternate: OPEN</b>			
Total Calls	32	Meeting Info	3
Spanish	0	12-Step	2
Solicitor	0	Wrong Number	0
Hang-up	10	Other Districts	3
Will call back	0	Website	0
Virtual Meetings	5		
		General Info	4
		Treatment Facility Info	0
		Halfway House Info	0
		Al-Anon	0
		Misc	5

#### From the Newsletter Committee Chair

This is just a reminder that this is your newsletter. Everything in it comes from members of A.A. You give the input on what you want to read and what sort of information will be found in these pages. As much as I am enjoying assem

*A vast communications net now covers the earth, even to its remotest reaches... nothing matters more to AA’s future welfare than the manner in which we use the colossus of modern communication. Used unselfishly and well, it can produce results surpassing our present imagination.”*



### 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 your content and click the “Submit” button.

**District 10:** PO Box 854, Libertyville, IL 60048**Northern Illinois Area:** Northern Illinois Area Ltd., PO Box 808, Streamwood, IL 60107**General Service Office:** PO Box 459 Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163**District 10 Answering Service:** 847-362-1811**2021-2022 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

The next District 10 meeting will be on April 25th at 6PM. For more details, go to [www.district10nia.org](http://www.district10nia.org). It will be a hybrid meeting so you may also attend at St. Gilberts Church in Grayslake 301 East Belvidere Rd. Grayslake, IL 60030 Traditions meeting starts at 5:30PM. Masks required.

Position	Chair	Phone	Email	Alternate	Phone	Email
DCM*	Michael L.			Mary R.		
Secretary*	Mary M.			Judd H.		
Treasurer*	Victoria H.			Kim K.		
Accessibili-	Dave H.			OPEN		
Answering Service**	Janet J.			OPEN		
Archives**	Jeremy L.			Matt T.		
Bridging the Gap**	Brett C.			OPEN		
Corrections**	OPEN			OPEN		
C.P.C.**	Amy F.			Matt S.		
Directory**	Tom K.			Nathan C.		
Events**	Brandon B.			OPEN		
Grapevine**	Ted S.			Sharon T.		
GSR Contact**	Tony P.			OPEN		
Literature**	Alex E.			OPEN		
Newsletter**	Tad L.			Peter S.		
Public Info.**	Eric S.			OPEN		
Treatment**	OPEN			OPEN		
Website**	Dana T.			OPEN		

\*District officers \*\* District Committee Chair