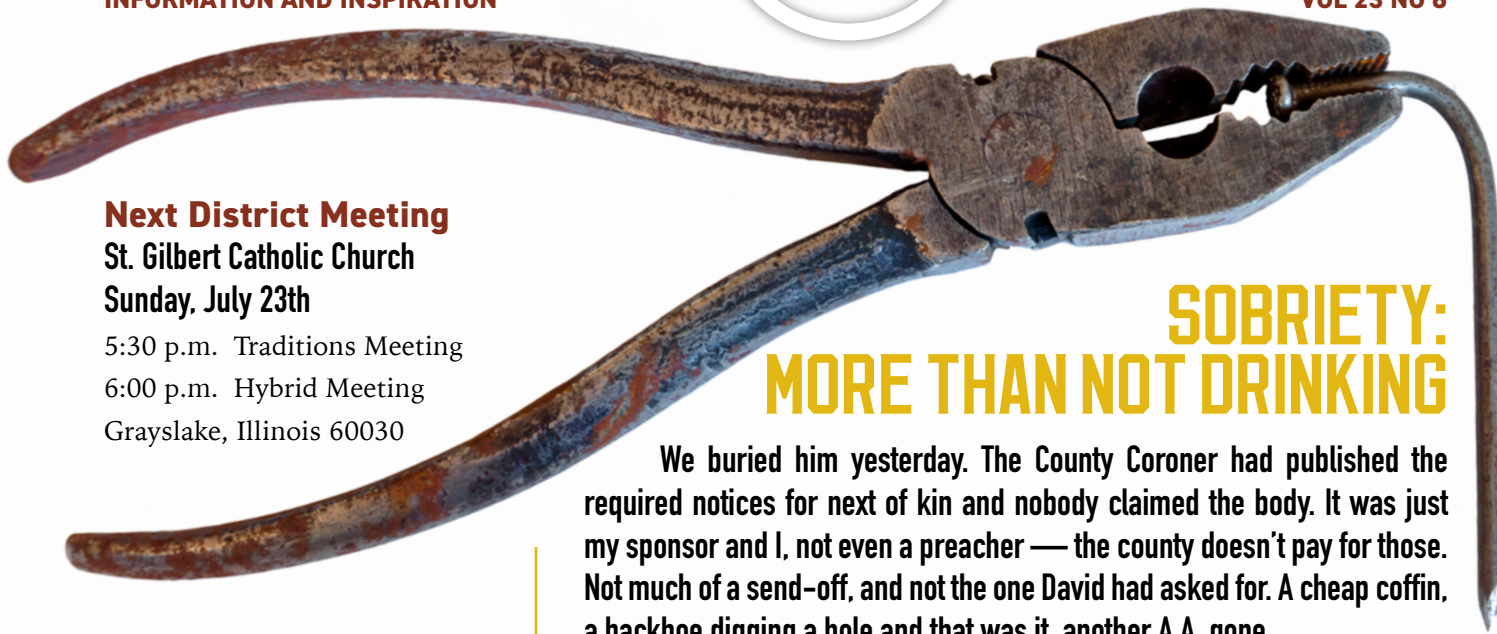


CONSCIOUS CONTACT

INFORMATION AND INSPIRATION

VOL 23 NO 6



Next District Meeting

St. Gilbert Catholic Church

Sunday, July 23th

5:30 p.m. Traditions Meeting

6:00 p.m. Hybrid Meeting

Grayslake, Illinois 60030

SOBRIETY: MORE THAN NOT DRINKING

We buried him yesterday. The County Coroner had published the required notices for next of kin and nobody claimed the body. It was just my sponsor and I, not even a preacher — the county doesn't pay for those. Not much of a send-off, and not the one David had asked for. A cheap coffin, a backhoe digging a hole and that was it, another A.A. gone.

He had been sober for over 20 years and in A.A. over 30 – a stern and rigid man who tried to soften his edges and never could. He was a loner, an isolated man at the edge of life's good things. He hung in there... and in the end, hung himself. I don't know why; I can't know. I know there had been a diagnosis of senile dementia, and I know that the doctor had added cancer to the list.

I've seen A.A.s deal with such things before... I don't know why David decided he couldn't. It isn't the first time I've been through this in Alcoholics Anonymous. I've known several over the years who just up and walked out life's door one day. Sober, but not happy. Sober, but not at peace. Sober, but they died of alcoholism.

Our disease doesn't need us to drink in order to kill us. I wish more folks knew that and appreciated it. Alcoholism is the only disease that is entirely capable of fighting back, of taking care of itself and of emerging in new places and new forms when it isn't properly treated. That's because of the spiritual malady. Most people think that has something to do with prayer or with God. It doesn't. It has to do with our spirit... that force which animates, motivates and propels us.

As an alcoholic, my spirit is ill. It is flawed. My character – or basic nature – doesn't work right. At its root it is a fundamental and irresolvable insecurity... a hole that can't ever be filled. It is an instinct run rampant and a desperate need for acceptance and love that cannot be met.

Content Submissions

Deadline July 17th

Any A.A. member may contribute. Info is on page 4.

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"I am responsible, when anyone, anywhere reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. always to be there. And for that: I am responsible."

877-893-1212

DISTRICT 10 ANSWERING SERVICE

step seven: humbly asked him to remove our shortcomings.

continued on page 2

2 CONSCIOUS CONTACT

continued from page 1

It hurts. It fills one with fear. The selfishness and self-centeredness of the alcoholic lies here — we are totally preoccupied with what is going on with ourselves on the inside. The slings and arrows of experience warped by this need drive us to the fringe, and the voices of the committee in our head keep us there.

We are obsessed with ourselves. From this condition of mind — the insanity of feelings gone haywire — we become self-medicators eventually. We discover alcohol or something else and stuff quiets the voice and provides relief we've never been able to find in any other way. It isn't any wonder we drink or drug the way we do. Some of us don't develop addiction. In attempting to meet these crying demands of our spirit becoming ill, we develop other malformations of behavior and suffer in a hundred different ways.

God broke David's obsession to drink. Though, I don't think David ever truly understood his disease. I say that because I watched him struggle with those old unresolved issues of his heart for years. His rigidity, coldness, aloofness, isolation and difficulty with other people were a reflection of the pain in his heart — of the disease of alcoholism gone deep inside, and still active.

Alcoholism didn't need David to drink in order to continue trying to kill him, and in the end it succeeded. In the end, instead of abandoning self, David abandoned hope and discovered a bitter end.

Our recovery from alcoholism through the Steps must be a threefold process. It is not one dimensional. When we say that we have a triangle (recovery, unity, service), we mean it. In working the Steps, I clear a pathway for two purposes. First, to come into a group of human people and away from the fringe of society where I have spent most of my emotional life. Second, to discover belonging through service to the people within that group. It is only this entire threefold process that heals. This is especially true for those of us who suffer from the spiritual malady to a great degree.

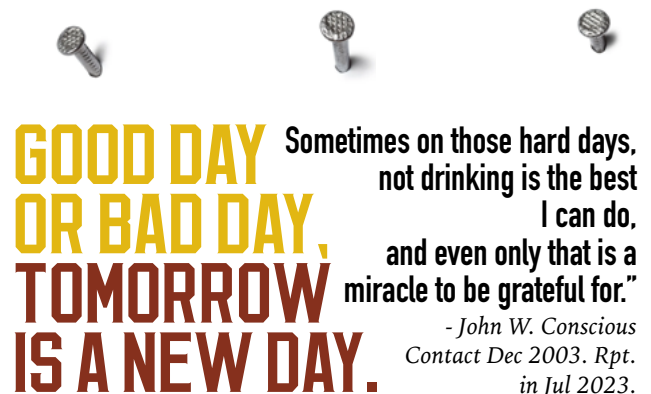
Perhaps the 12th step says it best. "Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps (recovery), we tried to carry this message to alcoholics (service), and to practice these principles in all our affairs (unity)." You see, I cannot hold back. I must not continue to suffer that shyness, aloneness, that overwhelming sense of self in my affairs. I must get involved in a group of people to practice these principles in all my affairs. Only the total approach is healing. Anything less is little more than driving my disease deeper. If I do that, it will continue to eat away and try to destroy me.

It destroyed David. This is a memorial to an old A.A. who gave it his best shot. I think David ended up on the plus side. It wasn't his fault; he seemed to have been born that way. There were a lot of old ideas about self that David could never muster the willingness to let go of.

He is at rest now. It says somewhere that, "no matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others." David cannot speak to his experience any longer; I am speaking in his memory. I think that if David could, he'd say, "Understand your disease thoroughly and work the complete program of recovery!"

Unless you've made other plans, have a great day.

*- Richard S. Conscious Contact Jun 2003:
Rpt. in Conscious Contact Jul 2023.*



Step Seven Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings. **Tradition Seven** Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions. **Concept Seven** The Charter and Bylaws of the General Service Board are legal instruments, empowering the trustees to manage and conduct world service affairs. The Conference Charter is not a legal document; it relies upon tradition and the A.A. purse for final effectiveness.

CONTENTMENT VS. HAPPINESS

If I look for it, contentment is easier to find than happiness...

If the goal of all I do is to make myself happy, I am setting myself up for disappointment in my circumstances and relationships. Disappointment for me leads to self-righteousness, envy, anger and frustration. This is a very dangerous place for me to go, and now I realize that the pursuit of happiness is a bad idea for this alcoholic. I now see that happy, joyous and free is the outcome of living a good and purposeful life. Finding contentment in simple things like honesty, hard work, and acceptance of other people's behavior is the only way I can avoid feeling disturbances in my serenity.

"The chief activator of our defects has been self-centered fear –primarily fear that we would lose something we already possessed or would fail to get something we demanded. Living upon a basis of unsatisfied demands, we were in a state of continual disturbance and frustration. Therefore, no peace was to be had unless we could find a means of reducing these demands."

– Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, pg. 76

Acceptance is the answer. When I understand and internalize that, I have no business attempting to control outcomes; in fact, I can only control the process of what goes on in my head and comes out of my mouth. Everything else is outside of me, and I have no business attempting to "fix" outcomes to make me happier. I don't understand your will and your motivation, and I don't understand my own. Furthermore, I don't know or pretend to understand God's will. I can only accept the situation as it is and find the good in the outcome to maintain my serenity. If I can stick to fixing myself and my perception of the world, the world is not a bad place at all. When I get involved in projecting outcomes and future events, I put myself in dangerous territory that takes me away from that place which is closer to God.

- John W. Conscious Contact Dec 2003. Rpt. in Jul 2023.

EVENTS



Illinois State Conference

August 18-20th
Hyatt Regency
Schaumburg
1800 East Golf Road
Schaumburg, IL 60173
Registration and
Additional Info:
www.chicagoaa.org/isc2023/
hosted by Area 19



Summer Picnic

August 26th



Bonfire Meeting ^(OPEN)

Every 3rd Saturday
May - Oct at 8:00 p.m.
Antioch Recovery Club
466 West IL Route 173
Antioch, IL
7/15 8/19 9/16 10/21
hosted by the Recovered Souls



Fall Breakfast

October 22nd

MEETING SPOTLIGHT

Sober School Meeting

Thursdays at 8:00 p.m.
Antioch Recovery Club
466 West IL Route 173
Antioch, IL



Freedom, humor, experience.

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None of the participants get paid or speak for A.A.

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TuneIn + Alexa or wherever you listen to podcasts.

www.alcoholicsalive.com

Where recovered
members of A.A.
discuss living
A.A. as a
Way of Life.



Have You **CALLED
YOUR
SPONSER
LATELY?**

Bet they'd love
to hear how good
you're doing today!



PUZZLE DIRECTIONS:

Turn from **DRUNK** to **SOBER** in twelve steps.

Summer is here and we're a little short on contributed material for this month's newsletter. But that's O.K. That means we're all enjoying this new life we're being granted today.

*So let's try one of those word games.
You know, where we change one letter
per line until we've got the new word?
Think you can do it? Find solution inside
bottom right corner.*

[illegible]

District Meeting Business

MOTION PASSED:

District 10 Pink Can funds can now be used for literature at other nearby correction facilities in addition to Lake County jail.

MOTION PASSED:

Pink Can literature purchases are limited to A.A. approved literature in an effort to support A.A. GSO, not any private businesses (e.g., Hazelden).

2023 - 2024 District 10 Officers

Confidential – information is for A.A. use only.
All A.A. members are welcome at District 10 meetings.

District Secretary Needed!

**Please ask around
for volunteers!**

Position	Chair	Phone	Email	A	Phone	Email
DCM	Lorrie F.		dcm@district10nia.org	Dawn. O		dcmailto@district10nia.org
Secretary	Christa S.		secretary@district10nia.org	Open		secretaryalt@district10nia.org
Treasurer	Eric W.		treasurerchair@district10nia.org	Open		
Accessibilities	John C.		accesabilities@district10nia.org	Rachel M.		
Answering Service	Felicia J		answeringservice@district10nia.org	James M.		
Archives	Sean M.		archives@district10nia.org	Dean D.		
Bridging the Gap	Jeff S.		btgchair@district10nia.org	Zoya M.		btgalt@district10nia.org
Corrections	Ted S.		corrections@district10nia.org	Chandler W.		
C.P.C.	Open		cpcchair@district10nia.org	Open		
Directory	Brian B.		directory@district10nia.org	Open		
Events	Cindy C.		events@district10nia.org	Open		
Grapevine	Jack D.		grapevine@district10nia.org	Open		
GSR Contact	Karl M.		gsrchair@district10nia.org	Robert B.		
Literature	Jeff C.			Daniel B.		
Newsletter	Katie D.		newsletter@district10nia.org	Paul W.		
Public Info	Robin D.		publicinformation@district10nia.org	Victoria H.		
Treatment	Gina L.		treatment@district10nia.org	Leslie D.		
Website	Mark H.		webmaster@district10nia.org	Bob L.		altwebBL@district10nia.org

OPEN = Volunteer Needed! Learn more about the positions / volunteer commitment at the upcoming District meeting, or by contacting a District committee member listed above.

District 10

P.O. Box 854, Libertyville, IL 60048

Northern Illinois Area 20

Northern Illinois Area Ltd.
P.O. Box 808, Streamwood, IL 60107

**General
Service Office**

James A. Farley Station
P.O. Box 2407, New York, NY 10163

Websites

www.district10nia.org
www.aa-nia.org www.aa.org
www.aagrapevine.org

CONTENT SUBMISSIONS DEADLINE MONDAY, JULY 17TH

1. Go to <https://district10nia.org/>. Click “District Services and Committees”, then “Newsletter”.
2. Provide your name and email or phone, in case we have a question.
3. Type/Paste your content. Click “Select”. That’s it!