

CONSCIOUS CONTACT

INFORMATION AND INSPIRATION

VOL 23 NO 7



8th for a Reason.

When I first walked into the doors of A.A. I remember wanting to reach out to all of my friends and family right away, telling them how great A.A. was and wanting to make (some) of my amends right away.

My sponsor just laughed at this and said, "Why don't you just focus on getting Step One down first – you've got a lot of work to do before you're ready to get to the amends process". The gradual process of working the first seven steps finally made it very clear to me exactly what he was talking about.

The first part of Step 8 was very straightforward – I had already put together a comprehensive list of persons who I had harmed in Step 4 and fully understood just how much wreckage I had caused through my actions. The second part of the step - where I would have to find willingness to actually make those amends - was the trickier part. Was I truly ready and willing to come hat in hand to certain individuals that I knew still resented me and face the outcome regardless? If I had shortchanged any part of Steps 6 & 7, I wouldn't have stood a chance... humbly asking my Higher Power to remove my shortcoming of pride was the only way it was going to happen.

A lot of the amends that I had to make were living amends to friends and family that I still dearly loved but to whom I had caused the most damage. That meant that I had to be willing to take ownership of my past hurtful behavior and work to change how I behaved towards them from that point forward. It was a lot to process and, initially, I was fearful of whether or not I'd be able to do it. This is where the guidance from my sponsor really helped to keep me focused on the task at hand rather than jumping ahead again – I was already worried about what Step 9 would entail before I had fully completed Step 8!

In my experience, the step work that I feared and resisted the most has produced the most healing. The willingness to make those living amends in Step 8 has stayed with me to this day (although some days more than others) and served as a blueprint for living a better life through the program of Alcoholics Anonymous. My living amends has been far from perfect, but the willingness to make those amends one day at a time has helped to repair a lot of the damage done in my past.

- Trey K.



IN THIS ISSUE

8th Step, Tradition & Concept . 2
Any Room Left for Me? 2
Events 3
Treatment Meetings 4
Info and Contacts 4

NEXT DISTRICT MEETING

Sunday, August 27th
 St. Gilbert Catholic Church
 Grayslake, Illinois 60030
 5:30 p.m. Traditions Meeting
 6:00 p.m. Hybrid Meeting

**"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."

District 10 Answering Service
877-893-1212

Any Room Left for Me?

When I found myself at Step 8, I had already taken the previous seven steps (in order!). I admitted that the unmanageability of my life ensued as a result of my powerlessness over alcohol. When I saw I had no power, I found something that did and made the decision to allow the power dynamic to shift. I honestly examined myself for the first time and got down to the causes and conditions —what I was like when left to my own devices. This was a well-rounded picture - a confirmation - of my powerlessness. My sponsor tapped into her experience and helped me see what I wasn't able to grasp on my own. Finally, I asked this new Power to remove what had blocked me off. I tried not to micromanage God's will; instead, I threw up my hands and trusted that I no longer had to be the person I was before. However imperfect, I really tried to do it to the best of my ability!

Having taken the above steps, I was ready to forge ahead. The text Alcoholics Anonymous tells me what I must do and how to do it. "We subjected ourselves to a drastic self-appraisal" in Step 4. I used my Step 4 inventory to make my Step 8 list. I went back to the book for a refresher, and then read ahead. A few sentences stuck out:

"Our real purpose is to fit ourselves to be of maximum service to God and the people about us."

"Now we go out to our fellows and repair the damage done in the past. We attempt to sweep away the debris which has accumulated out of our effort to live off self-will and run the show ourselves."

Though it was suggested that I not worry about Step 9 before completing Step 8, I gleaned some insight as to who should be on my list by seeing the purpose of the amends that were to be made. Even so, I needed to be reminded (more than once) that the other person's part had no part in whether they should be added to my list. My list needed to be about my willingness to make restitution to those I had harmed. I was told it would take courage, humility, honesty and accountability.

So, what of myself? Should I be on my own list? For this alcoholic, the answer was "no." Though it had not yet become a place I naturally arrived at, I understood that, after taking the previous steps, the "self" had to take on a much smaller role in my life. I already spent my entire life looking at myself. I spent a lot of additional time honestly looking at my old self in Step 4 — the self that exists when I operate from a place without God.

I was accountable to no one and not nearly as good as I thought. I saw my imperfections and their source: me! It was evident that I was self-absorbed and fear driven, operating on feelings to avoid said fears —the space between feeling and an action was non-existent. But having done the work and unearthed the problem, how could I blame myself for that which I did not know? Am I even capable of judging myself? Had I really turned my thoughts and actions over to the care of God? Is God everything, or nothing?

Today, I am working on being right-sized. I have compassion for my old, unaware self. I might even give myself a little grace here-and-there. But forgiveness? That is not in my wheelhouse. Instead, I ask God to give me a little power so I can take the necessary actions to right my wrongs with others. I'm already in the process of righting my wrongs with God and myself by taking the actions to practice these principles in all of my affairs. The best I can do is to clean up my side of the street and keep it as clean as possible — hopefully, dissolving some of my ego along the way.

- Katie D.

STEP EIGHT MADE A LIST OF ALL PERSONS WE HAD HARMED AND BECAME WILLING TO MAKE AMENDS TO THEM ALL. **TRADITION EIGHT** ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS SHOULD REMAIN FOREVER NONPROFESSIONAL, BUT OUR SERVICE CENTERS MAY EMPLOY SPECIAL WORKERS.

Events

36TH ANNUAL WOLF RIVER NICOLET AA CAMPING TRIP

August 11 -13th

**Bear Paw Outdoor Adventure
Resort & Campground
N3494 HWY 55, White Lake, WI 54491**

- Booking online is best:
www.bearpawoutdoors.com
- Campsites \$25 per site
(~6 people) per night
- Larger sites available (look online)
- Cabins from \$90 per night
- Friends/family welcome! Rafting,
Hiking, Volleyball, Lake Swimming,
Hot Showers / Bathrooms onsite!
- Saturday night open speaker bonfire!
- We only ask for coffee donations and
a bundle of wood for the Saturday
night bonfire meeting!
- Contact: Casey R. 847-409-8197
caseyj0227@gmail.com
Noah W. 317-361-0384

26TH ANNUAL LIFE'S A BEACH WOMEN'S MEETING

Saturday, August 12th

**North Point Marina in Winthrop Harbor
(signs will direct you!)**

- Fellowship starts at 4:30 p.m.
- Speaker at 5:30 / fellowship to follow
- Speaker Jeanne from Zion, IL
- Bring a chair &
- Bring a Dish/Dessert to pass
- Contact: Colleen M. 262-331-0276
colleenseep@yahoo.com

ILLINOIS STATE CONFERENCE

August 18-20th

Hyatt Regency Schaumburg

**1800 East Golf Rd.,
Schaumburg, IL 60173**

Registration & additional info:
<https://www.chicagoaa.org/isc2023/>
Hosted by Area 19

WAUKEGAN ALANO CLUB'S ANNUAL PICNIC

August 20th 12 p.m. - 4 p.m.

Hinksten Park

810 Baldwin Avenue, Waukegan, IL

- Music with DJ Dread
- Games & Food (Bring a dish to pass)
- 50/50 Raffle & Gift Basket Raffle

A.A. RETREAT

August 25-27th

Villa Desiderata

3015 North Bay View Lane, McHenry, IL

- www.villadesiderata.com
- Overnight
\$210 - 3 days / 2 nights / 5 meals
- Commuters
\$170 - 3 days / 5 meals
- Registration deadline: August 1st
- Contacts: Bill J. 847-404-1448
John C. 815-341-5932
Kandee N. 815-276-3574
Cindy 224-308-3972

DISTRICT 10 PICNIC

Saturday, August 26th

Half Day Forest Preserve

Shelter C, Vernon Hills, IL

- 11:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
- Speaker at 1:00 p.m.
- Fun, games, 50/50 raffle!
- Free admission/Bring a Dish to pass

SERVICE ORIENTATION WORKSHOP!

August 27th 2 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

EDI CLUB

18 West Streamwood Blvd

Streamwood, IL 60107

- Food and snacks will be provided
- Learn about Service Positions

Hosted by Area 20 and District 23

2023 FALL BREAKFAST

Sunday, October 22nd

Parkway Banquets Salon

657 Railroad Avenue, Round Lake, IL

- Coffee: 8:30 a.m.
- Breakfast: 9:00-10:00 a.m.
- 50/50 Raffle
- Bonus prize for ticket buyers!

Train Wrecked Phoenix

By Hope L.

*Going forward then backwards
Always at full speed
Driven by selfish desires
Trying to fill the need
Addictions to deny
But always to feed...
How to self-destruct
had become my daily creed.*

*I Thank God for lifting
my compulsion from alcohol & weed
Don't know how much longer
I could have survived
Trying to control obsessive greed.*

*I was broken beaten & humbled
Train wrecked Indeed!
had to come to terms with my
powerlessness
before I could be freed -
My life is finally getting better - I never
would have believed.*

*I owe A.A. my gratitude
for showing me the way
God had led me here
but your compassion made me stay!*

*Unconditional love and support
have taught me sobriety is worthwhile.
I think for over a decade I'd forgotten
how to smile.*

*As long as I remain honest
humbly remembering to pray
THY WILL BE DONE - not mine
is the ONLY way!*

*I have no doubts about who I am today -
I genuinely owe my life to God and A.A.*

*I can own and survive
feeling my emotions today!
Don't have to numb and hide
Don't have to run away.
I can succeed in living life to its fullest
(it's here I want to stay)
Grateful to God (and all of you)
living the solution of A.A.*

SPOTLIGHT BONFIRE MEETING

(OPEN)

ANTIOCH
RECOVERY
CLUB

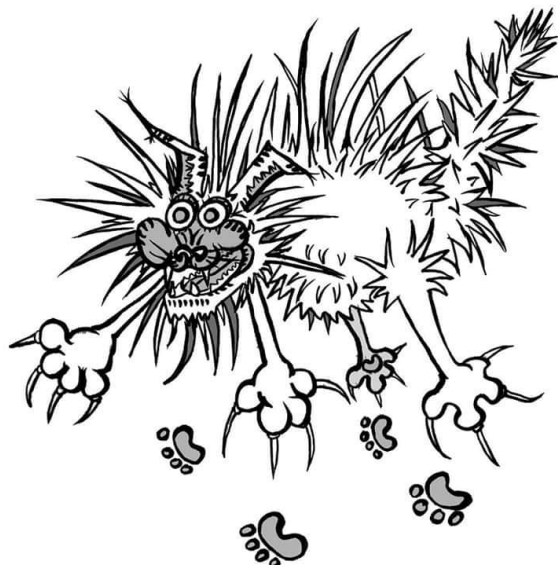
466 W. Route 173
Antioch, IL 60002

EVERY 3RD
SATURDAY
@ 8 P.M.

AUG - OCT

8/19 9/16 10/21

HOSTED BY THE
RECOVERED SOULS



THIS TOO SHALL PASS

Drew D.

Treatment Meetings

ADDICTIONS TREATMENT PROGRAM (ATP),
WAUKEGAN

Monday & Wednesday 7:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Saturday 10:00 a.m.

3002 Grand Ave, Waukegan

Open to the public (co-ed)

GATEWAY FOUNDATION, LAKE VILLA

Men's meeting: Friday 7:00-8:00 p.m.

Women's meeting: Friday 7:00-8:30 p.m.

25480 N. Cedar Crest Dr., Lake Villa

Both are open to public.

WOMEN'S RESIDENTIAL SERVICES (WRS),
VERNON HILLS

Women's meeting: Thursday 7:30-8:30 p.m.

24647 N. Milwaukee Ave., #1576, Vernon Hills

Open for volunteers (see Treatment Chair, Gina L.)

EIGHTH STEP PRAYER God help me to become willing to sweep away the debris of self-will and self-reliant living. Thy will be done for his/her person as well as for me. Amen.

2023 - 2024 DISTRICT 10 OFFICERS

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

Position	Chair	Phone	Email	Alt	Phone	Email
DCM	Lorrie F.		dcm@district10nia.org	Dawn. O		dcmalt@district10nia.org
Secretary	Christa S.		secretary@district10nia.org	OPEN		secretaryalt@district10nia.org
Treasurer	Eric W.		treasurerchair@district10nia.org	OPEN		
Accessibilities	John C.		accessibilities@district10nia.org	Rachel M.		rmechnc@gmail.com
Answering Service	Felicia J		answerservice@district10nia.org	James M.		
Archives	Dean D.		archives@district10nia.org	Sean M.		
Bridging the Gap	Jeff S.		btgchair@district10nia.org	Zoya M.		btgalt@district10nia.org
Corrections	Ted S.		corrections@district10nia.org			
C.P.C.	OPEN		cpcchair@district10nia.org	OPEN		
Directory	Brian B.		directory@district10nia.org	OPEN		
Events	Cindy C.		events@district10nia.org	OPEN		
Grapevine	OPEN		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.

**IN NEED OF
INDIVIDUAL/GROUP
GIFT BASKET DONATIONS
FOR THE 2023
FALL BREAKFAST!**

Please contact
Events Chair, Cindy C.

WEBSITES

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

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

CONTENT SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

1. Go to district10nia.org. Click "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!

DEADLINE AUGUST 21ST

Any A.A. member may contribute.