

CONSCIOUS CONTACT

INFORMATION AND INSPIRATION

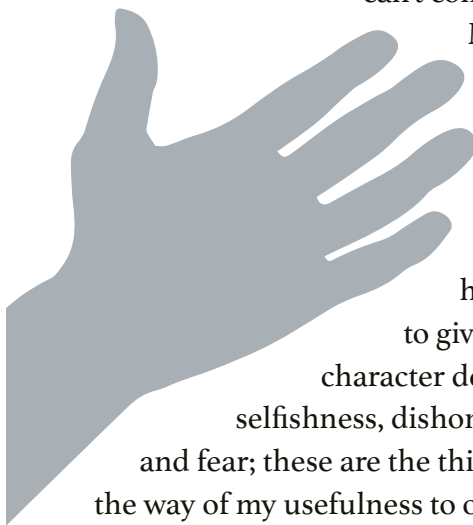
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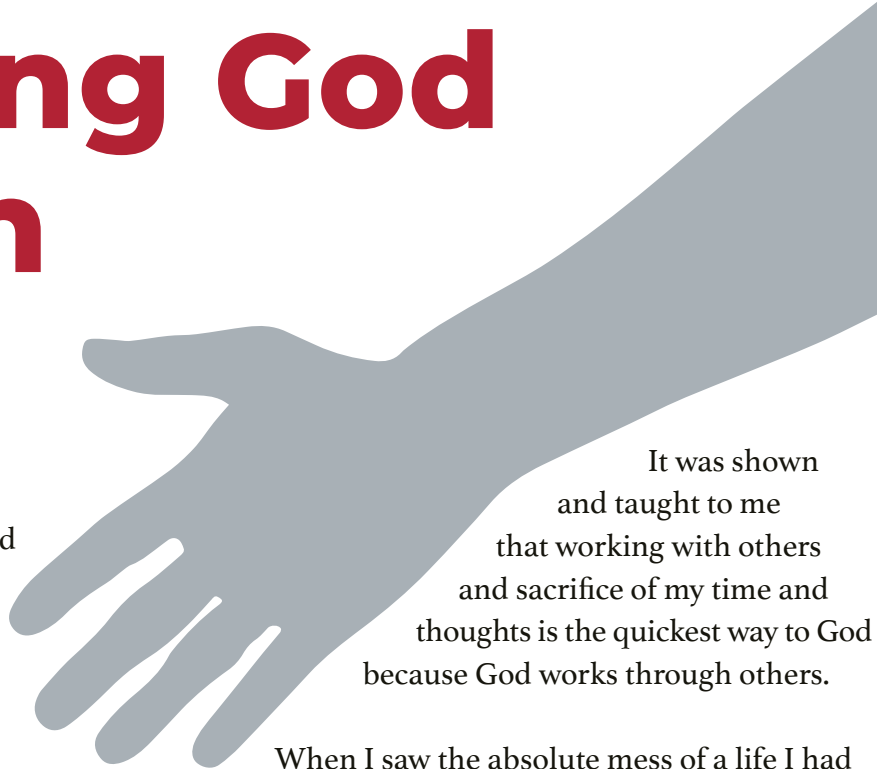
Accessing God Through Others

My name is Paul and I'm an alcoholic. When I arrived at Step 7, my knowledge and understanding of my Higher Power was practically non-existent. Knowing that I had finally done thorough 4th and 5th steps, I knew that the life I had lived was incredibly selfish, dishonest and resentful.

Step 7's principle is humility. The way it was explained to me was that I must now accept that I can't come first any longer.



My Higher Power, others and my program must come first. In order for this to happen, I had to be willing to give up all of my character defects, including selfishness, dishonesty, resentment and fear; these are the things that stand in the way of my usefulness to other alcoholics.



It was shown and taught to me that working with others and sacrifice of my time and thoughts is the quickest way to God because God works through others.

When I saw the absolute mess of a life I had written down in my 4th step, it was very clear that I needed help. By following suggestions, working with others and sharing my experience, I stayed sober - coming up on four years in October. I still say the 7th step prayer daily.

"MY CREATOR, I AM NOW WILLING THAT YOU SHOULD HAVE ALL OF ME, GOOD AND BAD. I PRAY THAT YOU NOW REMOVE FROM ME EVERY SINGLE DEFECT OF CHARACTER WHICH STANDS IN THE WAY OF MY USEFULNESS TO YOU AND MY FELLOWS. GRANT ME STRENGTH, AS I GO OUT FROM HERE, TO DO YOUR BIDDING. AMEN."

God bless,
Paul S., Cleveland, Ohio

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I Can't

After completing steps four and five, I walked away knowing who I was without God and that I didn't have to be that way anymore. I went home and took steps six and seven. I really meant – and felt – every bit of the Seventh Step Prayer. So much so, that I was moved to tears. And even so, a short time afterwards, I wrote down all of my defects. I put them on sticky notes, on the back of bookmarks and scrawled a few on my mirror with dry erase marker. I even wore my watch and hair ties on my opposite wrist as a reminder. Given that I was finally aware of my defects, I figured it was important to keep them in mind on a daily basis so I could do something about them. This is not what step seven asks of me. In fact, step seven tells me to ask God to remove my shortcomings. I guess I missed the memo!

Today, I know that I cannot change these things – believe me, I have tried. Evidence has shown me that knowing what is defective doesn't always stop me from flirting with an old way of thinking. While rare, sometimes it's more than flirting...sometimes the little voice in my head tells me to go full tilt into an old thought or behavior. I'm powerless in these moments. Often, I don't even recognize the bad thought or behavior until I've allowed it to mess with my serenity. Thankfully, this program has taught me how to correct course. I've learned that being aware of what separates me from God is only good for one thing: knowing what to ask God to remove from my life.

This program – as outlined in the book – has changed my life. Prayer has changed my life. Someone in my morning meeting says that prayer is about getting into the right posture; it's about surrender. I can see this now. It is more than an "ask" of God; it's a new behavior. A behavior that acknowledges that I do not have the answers, but I know who does. So, even if prayer doesn't always change the outcome of a situation, it does change me.

My life is a life worth living as a result of new, consistent behaviors – not more knowledge and awareness. These behaviors have weaseled their way into my life by simply following this program. I didn't have to do anything extra. I didn't need multiple books, worksheets, homework or sticky notes. I needed a Big Book, solid sponsorship and the willingness to take suggestions. I'm not saying it's easy, but it was as simple as the book suggests – once I was able to get out of my own way and trust the process.

- Katie D.



Meeting Spotlight

3RD SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH @ 8:00 P.M.

Bonfire Meeting

ANTIOCH RECOVERY CLUB

Bring a Chair!

Treatment Meetings

Gateway – Fridays

MEN @ 7:00-8:00 P.M.

WOMEN @ 7:00-8:30 P.M.

ATP – Co-ed

MONDAYS & FRIDAYS

@ 7:30-8:30 P.M.

SATURDAYS @ 10:00 A.M.

WRS – Women

THURSDAYS

@ 7:30-8:30 P.M.

A Second Chance

My name is Matt S., and today I am a grateful alcoholic. This is an honest appraisal of who I am today, thanks to this wonderful program of A.A. This, however, is in sharp contrast to the miserable, selfish, hopeless user of a year ago. Back then, I couldn't look this pathetic trainwreck of a human being in the mirror. Anger and resentment were my tools of choice to get through any given day.

What began as a teenage experiment gone amok soon propelled this unsuspecting soul into a 35-year alcohol abyss of endless despair and hopeless depression. Alcohol had consumed my every being. Life without drinking was impossible to contemplate. Every waking thought became a relentless battle to control this gremlin in my head, who replaced every sane thought with thoughts of pending doom. I was quickly losing my grasp on reality, until the simplest tasks in life were transformed into monumental undertakings. Concentrating on home and work matters were increasingly more difficult, to the point where they ceased to matter to me.

My children grew before my eyes, as the years disappeared in a time warp of blackouts. I had created my own prison – pain and suffocating misery were my constant companions in the cell that was my life. But the insanity wasn't apparent to this alcoholic; the signs were not big enough. As gigantic and neon as they were, I was still in control in my completely insane mind!

Today, when I look back, I realize I am truly blessed. A.A. has saved my life. I owe everything to my Higher Power (God) and the fellowship of the program. I no longer live in fear, resentment, anger – I live with them. That is to say, I use my new set of tools – given to me in the program – to manage these emotions. I will never conquer them, but more importantly, they will never conquer me so long as I use the spiritual tools provided in A.A. Like it says in the Big Book, we don't have drinking problems, we have thinking problems. And with that in mind, using alcohol to manage these emotions was merely a Band-Aid on the severed jugular vein of insanity. As I work these steps in the program, and each "one day at a time" passes, I realize that I have been given a second chance at this thing called life; I plan on living it – not enduring it. Thank you, A.A.

- Matt S., *Conscious Contact* Apr 2008.
Rpt. July 2024.

Step 7 Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

Tradition 7 Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

Concept 7 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.

Events

2ND WEDNESDAY OF EVERY MONTH

@ 7 p.m. via Zoom

Virtual Corrections Workshop

HOSTED BY AREA 20

Meeting ID: 823 2846 9162 Passcode: 061035

SATURDAY AUGUST 17TH 11:00 A.M. TO 3:00 P.M.

District 10 Summer Picnic

**HALF DAY FOREST PRESERVE, SHELTER C,
VERNON HILLS, IL**

Speaker, Karen F. 1:00 p.m.

Music, 50/50 raffle, speaker . . . bring a dish to pass.

SEPTEMBER 14TH 11:30 A.M. TO 12:30 P.M.

GSR Workshop

**SERENITY HOUSE, 1103 W. PARK AVENUE,
LIBERTYVILLE, IL**

MEETING TUESDAYS AT 7:00 P.M.

Spiritual Kindergarten

1350 IL-137, GRAYSLAKE, IL

Anniversaries & birthdays are celebrated on the last Tuesday of the month.

OCTOBER 4-6TH

Conscious Contact Retreat

ARRIVAL: 10/4 5:30-7:00 P.M. (PIZZA AT 6:30 P.M.)

DEPART: 10/6 @ 10:00 A.M.

Who: A.A. members (age 18+)

SIENA RETREAT CENTER

5637 ERIE STREET, RACINE, WI 53402

www.sienaretreatcenter.org

Cost. \$305.00 (*includes meals & lodging*).

Attendance limited to 50 people & full payment is required to be registered. Bring a snack, drinks to share & warm/comfy clothing.

To register, send name, e-mail & phone number along with payment to one of the following:

Zelle 630-450-2074

Venmo. Tom-W-8

Mail check payable to Siena Retreat Center

c/o MJD, 29201 N. Fairfield Rd., Mundelein, IL 60060

*****NO REFUNDS AFTER SEPTEMBER*****

C.C. requests **short prayers and meditation tips** that you find helpful in your daily practice. **Deadline: 10/14.**
Please submit to: newsletter@district10nia.org

D10 Updates

- There are **ten (10) D10 OPEN committee positions**. Accessibilities is without a Chair or Alternate Chair. Our Secretary is seeking an Alternate Chair. All OPEN positions can be found below.
- Area 20 Delegate, Erik Long, will be at the 7/28 D10 meeting to **present information from the 74th General Service Conference**.
- The **Plain Language Big Book was approved** at the 74th General Service Conference and is expected to be released Fall 2024.
- D10 DCM, Lorrie F., has populated a **binder of D10 group contributions**; file available for review.
- D10 group/meeting contributions from 4/29/2024-5/23/2024: **\$286.01**
- GSO **contributions are up 2.8%**
- GSO's newsletter **Box 4-5-9 will no longer be printed and mailed**, however the electronic version will continue to be distributed; **saving \$35,000**.
- D10 will be hosting the **Area 20 Summer Committee Meeting on 8/3** – ask DCM, Lorrie F., for details
- D10 **Fall breakfast will be held 10/20**. Tickets will be \$25.00. More information to follow!
- Is your meeting or club house **out of directories?** Please reach out to our Directories Chair, Brian B.
- Would you/your group be **interested in donating a gift basket for the D10 Fall breakfast** being held on 10/20? Please reach out to our Events Chair, Cindy C.
- Corrections meetings are happening at Lake County Jail. **Volunteers needed!** Monday & Thursday 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. Documents are live & downloadable via the link at: <https://district10nia.org/committees/corrections-committee/>
- **Grapevine/La Vina issues needed for jails!** Issues can be given to our Corrections Chair, Ted S. at D10 meetings.
- Under the impression that you'll be unable to attend the **2025 International Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous** in Vancouver, B.C., Canada due to a DUI or felony? **Good news!** Canada allows for select restrictions to be lifted if you meet certain criteria. **Visit the below link and pay special attention to #11 for more information.** Be sure to start the process sooner rather than later as the turnaround for decisions may take time. We hope to see you there in July 2025! www.aa.org/international-convention-2025-faqs

CONTENT DEADLINE FRIDAY, JULY 19. Any A.A. may contribute. **1.** Go to district10nia.org. **2.** Click "District Services and Committees", then "Newsletter". **3.** Provide name, email or phone, in case of questions. **4.** Type/Paste your content. Click "Select". That's it! **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** P.O. Box 808, Streamwood, IL 60107
GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE James A. Farley Station, P.O. Box 2407 New York, NY 10163 aa.org/aa-contributions-self-support
 Opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the opinions of A.A., NIA, District 10 or Conscious Contact volunteers.

877-893-1212
DISTRICT 10 ANSWERING SERVICE
VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Next District Meeting
SUNDAY, JULY 28 **St. Gilbert Catholic Church Grayslake, IL**
5:30 p.m. Traditions Meeting **6:00 p.m. Hybrid Meeting**