

CONSCIOUS CONTACT

INFORMATION AND INSPIRATION

VOL 25 NO 9



A Memorable Encounter at the 2000 A.A. International Convention

AS ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS (A.A.) MEMBERS PREPARED FOR THE 2025 INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION IN VANCOUVER, BC, CANADA, FROM JULY 3–6, WE CELEBRATE 90 YEARS OF THE 12-STEP SPIRITUAL MOVEMENT THAT HAS TRANSFORMED COUNTLESS LIVES. THE CONVENTION'S THEME, "ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS: 90 YEARS – LANGUAGE OF THE HEART," INVITES REFLECTION ON A.A.'S ENDURING LEGACY.

For me, this milestone also marks 25 years since a profound experience at the 2000 A.A. International Convention in Minneapolis, MN — a moment that connected me to the roots of our fellowship.

In 2000, I attended my first A.A. International Convention, celebrating 15 years of sobriety. This year, I reached 40 years sober, thanks to my Higher Power, the A.A. fellowship, and the 12 Steps. The Minneapolis convention was a vibrant gathering, with the local newspaper proclaiming that A.A. had "taken over the Twin Cities" with the largest convention in its history.

The energy was electric, with thousands of members from around the world filling the hotels and streets.

One unforgettable moment occurred while I waited for an elevator in my hotel's bustling

lobby. Amid the crowd, an elderly man in a wheelchair, pushed by another gentleman, pressed the "up" button. Suddenly, the man in the wheelchair turned to no one in particular and declared in a thick Texas drawl, "I bet y'all heard that Ebby died drunk." Before I could respond, he fixed his gaze on me and said, "Well, it's just not true! I was Ebby's sponsor when he died, and I know for a fact he died sober!"

He extended his hand and introduced himself: "My name's Searcy." Then, with a grin, he added, "Now shake the hand of the man pushing my wheelchair—it's Dr. Bob's son, Smitty." In that moment, as I shook hands with Robert Smith, son of A.A. co-founder Dr.

Bob Smith, it felt as though my Higher Power had opened a portal to A.A.'s humble beginnings.

Later that year, I delved deeper into A.A.'s history and learned more about Ebby Thatcher's pivotal role. Ebby, a friend of A.A. co-founder Bill Wilson, shared a spiritual solution that sparked the chain of events leading to A.A.'s formation. Though Ebby struggled with relapse, he achieved sobriety in Texas, where Searcy sponsored him. Bill, inspired by Ebby's message, stayed sober and passed it on to Dr. Bob, planting the seeds of the fellowship that would later save my life.

That chance encounter in Minneapolis remains a cherished memory, a reminder of the miraculous connections that A.A. fosters and the enduring power of its message. In the wake of the 2025 convention, I'm grateful for the fellowship that continues to carry the "Language of the Heart" to generations of recovering alcoholics.

By Edward S.

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A Case for A.A. Literature Donations to Treatment Centers: True to Traditions

Alcoholics Anonymous groups and members have a powerful opportunity to extend our lifesaving message by donating copies of *Alcoholics Anonymous* (the Big Book) to treatment centers, including those operating for profit that, despite their resources, rarely purchase literature due to their non-affiliation with A.A. These facilities, independent of A.A., often lack our foundational text, leaving countless alcoholics without access to the Twelve Steps and personal stories that have guided millions to recovery. By providing the Big Book, we ensure that individuals in treatment encounter A.A.'s message of hope, paving the way to our fellowship. This act of service focuses on reaching the suffering alcoholic with a resource meant for their personal use, not supporting the treatment centers themselves. Aligned with A.A.'s primary purpose—to carry the message to those still suffering—donating the Big Book upholds the Twelve Traditions, involving no affiliation, endorsement, or breach of our principles.

The decision to donate the Big Book to treatment centers raises questions about adherence to the Twelve Traditions. Some members may hesitate, fearing conflict with A.A.'s principles, particularly around non-affiliation or endorsement. However, a review of the Twelve Traditions reveals that providing the Big Book to reach suffering alcoholics aligns seamlessly with our purpose while preserving A.A.'s foundational guidelines. Below is an analysis of each tradition, demonstrating (I hope!) that this act of service poses no breach.

Tradition 1: Donating the Big Book supports A.A.'s unity by sharing our message to alcoholics in treatment, reinforcing our common purpose.

Tradition 2: This action follows group conscience, as groups decide to donate, guided by a desire to help others.

Tradition 3: Donating the Big Book ensures access for anyone with a desire to stop drinking, regardless of their treatment setting or financial status.

Tradition 4: Groups autonomously choose to donate the Big Book, respecting their right to act independently in service.

Tradition 5: Donating the Big Book directly supports A.A.'s primary purpose of carrying the message to suffering alcoholics in treatment settings.

Tradition 6: Sharing the Big Book avoids affiliation or endorsement by providing literature solely for residents' personal use, not treatment centers' ownership, keeping A.A.'s spiritual aim untainted by material concerns.

Tradition 7: Donations of the Big Book upholds self-support by using only A.A. groups' voluntary contributions to fund literature, rejecting outside funds.

Tradition 8: Distributing the Big Book remains a nonprofessional act by sharing A.A.'s message as unpaid Twelfth Step work, distinct from professional counseling or hired services.

Tradition 9: This practice requires no formal organization, just group initiative to share the Big Book.

Tradition 10: Donating the Big Book avoids outside controversies by focusing solely on sharing A.A.'s recovery message, expressing no opinions on treatment centers or external issues.

Tradition 11: Donating the Big Book upholds anonymity by ensuring no individual A.A. member's identity is publicized. The act is a quiet, service-oriented effort (rather than promotional effort) to carry A.A.'s message to suffering alcoholics, relying on the power of attraction through the Big Book's principles and stories.

Tradition 12: Donating the Big Book embodies spiritual humility by prioritizing the principle of helping alcoholics over personal recognition, fostering A.A.'s tradition of anonymity.

By donating *Alcoholics Anonymous* to treatment centers, A.A. groups extend a lifeline to those in need, ensuring our message reaches alcoholics where they are. This practice not only honors our traditions but also embodies the heart of A.A.'s mission: to carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic.

By Katie D.

9TH & 10TH STEPS, TRADITIONS, AND CONCEPTS (OUR APOLOGIES FOR PRINTING OUT OF ORDER LAST MONTH)

Step 9: Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

Tradition 9: A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.

Concept 9: Good service leadership at all levels is indispensable for our future functioning and safety. Primary world service leadership, once exercised by the founders, must necessarily be assumed by the trustees.

Step 10: Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

Tradition 10: Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.

Concept 10: Every service responsibility should be matched by an equal service authority, with the scope of such authority well defined.

**Publicize an upcoming
District 10 Event:**

[https://district10nia.org/
publicize-an-upcoming-
district-10-event/](https://district10nia.org/publicize-an-upcoming-district-10-event/)



**NOVEMBER 21ST TO 23RD
36th Annual McHenry's
Soberfest
THE GRAND GENEVA RESORT**
7036 Grand Geneva Way,
Lake Geneva, WI
Registration at soberfest.org



Events

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 4TH

Speakathon

PALATINE CLUB

887 Wilmette Road, Suite D, Palatine, IL

Time 12:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Suggested donation \$5.00

14 speakers, food, fellowship & fun

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 18TH

32nd Annual NIA Big Book Conference - A Vision for You

LORD OF LIFE CHURCH

40W605 IL-38, Elburn, IL

Doors/registration. 8:00 a.m.

Time 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Cost \$15.00

Lunch. \$15.00 (optional)

Morning speaker Rick P. - Lowell, Michigan

Afternoon speaker Jamie R. - South Beloit, WI

Registration/lunch can be purchased

at the door & ends 10/18 at 8:00 a.m.



SATURDAY, OCTOBER 18TH

Gateway Treatment Clothing Drive

SERENITY HOUSE

1103 W. Park Avenue, Libertyville, IL

Time 8:30 - 11:00 a.m.

Donate gently used or new men's clothing to those in need.

Underwear must be new!

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 19TH

District 10 Fall Breakfast

PARKWAY BANQUETS SALON

657 Railroad Avenue, Round Lake, IL

Time 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Tickets available for purchase

NOVEMBER 14-16TH

2025 Illinois State Conference: 90 Years of Recovery, Unity & Service

hosted by Area 20 & District 40

HYATT REGENCY SCHAUMBURG

1800 East Golf Road, Schaumburg, IL 60173

Event \$35.00

Banquet Dinner \$56.00

Room + breakfast \$139.00

Room registration deadline 10/31/25

Registration. aa-nia-il-dist40.org

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7TH

District 10 Business

& Area 20 Informational Meeting

ST. GILBERT CATHOLIC CHURCH

301 E. Belvidere Road, Grayslake, IL

Food 5:30 p.m.

Meeting to follow Meat, coffee and water provided;

bring a dish to pass

Area 20 officers informally discuss the area's role in the
A.A. service structure, and what service opportunities are
available for you.

Meeting Spotlight

BONFIRE MEETINGS

Antioch Recovery Club

466 W. IL Rte 173, Antioch, IL. Bring a chair!

Time 8:00 p.m.

October 18th Guest Speaker

Treatment Meetings

Gateway - Lake Villa - Fridays

Men @ 7:00-8:00 p.m. (MUST be on list to attend)

Women @ 7:00-8:00 p.m.

ATP - Waukegan - Co-ed

Mondays & Fridays 7:30-8:30 p.m.

Saturdays 10:00 a.m.

WRS - Vernon Hills - Women

Thursdays 7:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Treatment Monthly Workshop

3RD THURSDAY OF THE MONTH AT 7:00 P.M.

Zoom ID 994 296 7947

Password redbook (all lowercase)

Contact Area 20 Treatment Chair

Kevin A. bbkevin8@gmail.com, 224-201-8978

Conscious Clips

"If you are distressed by anything external, the pain is not
due to the thing itself, but to your estimate of it; and this you
have the power to revoke at any moment."

- Marcus Aurelius, Meditations

"For in faith there is enough light for those who want to
believe, and enough shadows to blind those who do not."

- Blaise Pascal, Pensées

"Nothing is forever, not even your troubles."

- Arnold H. Glasgow

The Twelve Steps

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol — that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

NEXT DISTRICT MEETING SUNDAY, OCT 26TH (NO NOVEMBER MEETING)

St. Gilbert Catholic Church Grayslake, IL

5:30 p.m. Traditions MTG 6:00 p.m. Hybrid MTG

CONTENT DEADLINE FRIDAY, OCT 17TH

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! Any A.A. may contribute.

WEBSITES district10nia.org aa.org aa-nia.org 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.

NEW D10 ZOOM MEETING

ID 861 1954 7045

PW DISTRICT10

There are ten (10) open positions that need to be filled. If you are interested in learning more about a position, please join us at the next D10 meeting.

D10 Contributions 7/23/25 to 8/24/25 **\$631.25**
+ Pink Can **\$106.00**

District 10 will combine November and December meetings on December 7th. Meeting will include orientation to Area 20 operations –come meet our area Chairperson and Alternate Chairperson!

Corrections is looking for women volunteers to bring meetings into Lake County Jail —contact info on page 4

C.P.C. is looking for volunteers to deliver materials – contact info on page 4

Have an event flyer to distribute? Both district10nia.org and aa-nia.org offer easy submissions via their websites.

Treatment is in need of men's clothing for those coming out of jails and institutions – bring to next district meeting or contact info on page 4

Antioch Recovery Club is offering to **host your homegroup** for Saturday speaker meetings – 847-838-1882 to sign up or request more information.

Treatment needs **Grapevines and Big Books** – contact information on page 4.

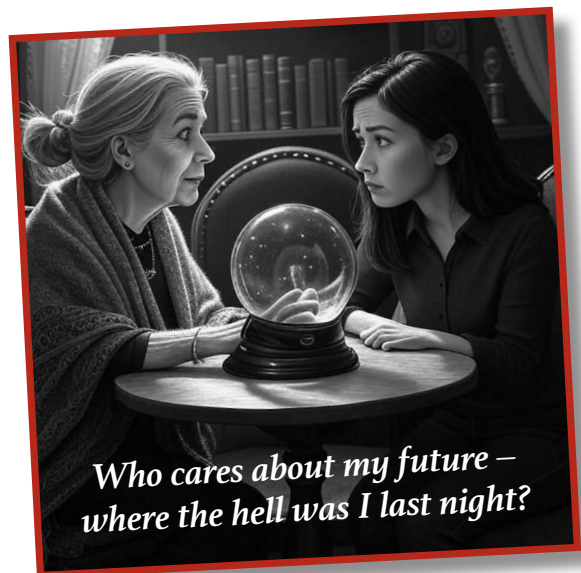
Literature has **newcomers packets** that can be purchased for \$2.00 – contact information on page 4

Looking for District 10 Meeting Minutes?
Visit <https://district10nia.org/minutes/>.

Looking for delegate and/or Area 20 committee reports, updates and agendas? Visit aa-nia.org/delegate/ and aa-nia.org/agendas/.

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.



*Who cares about my future –
where the hell was I last night?*