

District 19 Newsletter

September 2020

Newsletter@dist19aa.org



Short and Sweet...

A Design For Living-

We in our turn, sought the same escape with all the desperation of drowning men. What seemed at first a flimsy reed, has proved to be the loving and powerful hand of God. A new life has been given us or, if you prefer, "a design for living" that really works.

Big Book, pg 28



Who did I hurt?

How can I fix it?

Step Nine

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

Tradition Nine

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

Step 9 -

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

“The readiness to take the full consequences of our past acts, and to take responsibility for the well-being of others at the same time, is the very spirit of Step Nine.” – Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, p. 83

BREAKING DOWN STEP NINE OF AA ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

So what is Step Nine of AA Alcoholics Anonymous? Step Nine is that biggie step, the one we likely have created some anxiety over because it involves making amends.

It is suggested that we make direct amends to people whenever possible. What does that mean? There are three kinds of amends:

Direct Amends – taking personal responsibility for your actions and confronting the person who you would like to reconcile with.

Indirect Amends – finding ways to repair damage that cannot be reversed or undone by doing things like volunteering and helping others.

Living Amends – when you show others as well as yourself that you have made a genuine lifestyle change and are making a commitment to yourself and those that you have hurt that you will & have discarded your previous destructive behaviors.

We have already begun making amends to ourselves by changing some of our behaviors, attitudes and beliefs. The part of the amends process whereby we change ourselves has an effect on everyone around us and goes on long after we’ve spoken directly to someone we have harmed.

When it comes to making amends to others, there are usually a lot of fears and expectations involved. We may be afraid about making financial amends, or afraid of rejection, retaliation and a host of other doubtful outcomes. However, making amends doesn’t always have to be a nerve-racking, dreadful or joyless experience. In fact, maybe you’ll find that you feel excited about the possibility of healing a relationship or happily anticipating the relief you will feel after having made a particularly scary amends or even paying off a debt. There is freedom that is gained by cleaning up the past, a freedom to live peacefully in the present.

To keep things as simple as possible, you can get your head in the game by focusing on the purpose of the Ninth Step. Keep in mind the three concepts or “The Three R’s” of the Ninth Step that are associated with making amends:

Tradition 9 Long Form—

Each A.A. group needs the least possible organization. Rotating leadership is the best. The small group may elect its secretary, the large group its rotating committee, and the groups of a large metropolitan area their central or Intergroup committee, which often employs a full-time secretary. The trustees of the General Service Board are, in effect, our A.A. General Service Committee. They are the custodians of our A.A. Tradition and the receivers of voluntary A.A. contributions by which we maintain our A.A. General Service Office at New York. They are authorized by the groups to handle our overall public relations and they guarantee the integrity of our principal newspaper, the A.A. Grapevine. All such representatives are to be guided in the spirit of service, for true leaders in A.A. are but trusted and experienced servants of the whole. They derive no real authority from their titles; They do not govern. Universal respect is the key to their usefulness

*The 12 Steps tell us **how** the program of AA works and the 12 Traditions tell us **why** it works-*

“Our traditions are a guide to better ways of working and living. And they are to group survival as AA’s 12 Steps are to each member’s sobriety and peace of mind. Most individuals cannot recover unless there is a group. The group must survive or the individual will not.” - Bill W.

Historical AA Events for September-

Sept 1, 1939 – First AA group founded in Chicago.

Sept 13, 1937 – Florence R, first female in AA in NY.

Sept 19, 1965 – The Saturday Evening Post publishes “Alcoholics Can Be Cured Despite AA”

Sept 21, 1938 – Bill W. & Hank P. form Works Publishing Co

Sept 30, 1939 – article in *Liberty* magazine, “Alcoholics and God” by Morris Markey

– <https://www.aa-oregon.org>

JANUARY 2016

That Old Hippie

Now that she has some sober time, she's ready to start dating again. But this guy?

Like many women in AA, I was addicted to relationships. I realized that fact years ago, and visited psychiatrists to discover the reason. "It's because my dad left when I was young," I'd cry. Whenever the conversation turned toward my alcohol consumption, I'd get a new shrink and had to start the process all over again. How I loved to play the victim.

I was married and divorced three times, with a string of unhealthy relationships when I stumbled into the rooms of AA. I always felt that as long as I had a man at my side everything was OK. I used relationships to validate myself. My pattern was to find 'em and fix 'em; the more broken they were, the better I liked them. Their problems gave me something to focus on, so I didn't have to look at my own. I always had a man waiting in the wings for the moment I decided to end a relationship. I always ended them. I was a real heartbreaker. And I never slept alone.

During my first year in AA I did really well at fellowship, but a sponsor and those Steps were not for me. As a result, I went back out drinking for 10 more years, a decision that just about killed me. I went to treatment in 2006 and came out determined to stay sober: I'd get a sponsor and work those Steps. Problem was, I met "the guy who understands me" in that rehab. We planned to attend AA meetings together, but more often than not, we got drunk. I was fortunate, because at one point I had a moment of clarity and realized that I had to get serious about my program. I told him goodbye and asked a patient and loving woman to sponsor me and help me to understand how to live a sober life. He died about three years ago. Sadly, he was struck by a tractor-trailer while walking drunk along a highway.

Slowly, I began to grow in the program of AA. I joined a home group and made coffee. Ser-

vice work really did help me stay sober. I was willing to do anything my sponsor suggested, but one of her suggestions seemed impossible—no relationships for a year! I was filled with fear at the prospect of being truly alone for the first time in my life. But I listened to her and as the result of my self-imposed solitude, I was able to focus on discovering who I really was.

One autumn night, as I was chatting away before my home group meeting, I spied a man with a gray beard and a long ponytail stumbling into the meeting room. As we took our seats, I whispered to my sponsor, “That old hippie will never stay sober.” After the meeting she cautioned me about judging others. I nodded but didn’t give it serious thought. That man came to a few meetings but confessed that he really liked listening to live music, and he thought he could go to bars for that purpose alone and just “sip sodas.” One night he wasn’t at the meeting and I said to my sponsor with smug satisfaction, “I was right, he’s probably drunk right now.” That statement was met with a frown.

A week later, he was back. He appeared in the church kitchen as I was cleaning up after the meeting. He announced that he had been given service work to do and proceeded to help me with the coffee detail. He grabbed a coffee urn and attempted to dump it into the sink, but instead splashed it all over me in the process. That was the last straw. I didn’t like him from the get-go, and now I really felt a strong dislike. I was rude and impatient, but he just smiled and talked about how happy he was to help. I complained to my sponsor, and she just pointed me to the Third Step and the section in the Big Book about acceptance.

Winter turned into spring, and one day this hippie asked me to go contra dancing with him. I declined, feeling secretly satisfied at my ability to say no to a man. One night, I joined some home group members for dinner and a rock and roll revival show—and the hippie was there. His positive outlook and ever-present smile were infectious, but I remembered my sponsor’s direction and was carefully reserved. He asked me to go on a 5K benefit walk for autism. After checking with my sponsor, I said yes. We learned a lot

From the District 19 Accessibility Chair; aka “Sooz Says....”



Ideas About Accessibility: Discussion Points for In-Person Meetings - Aug 2020

Many alcoholics are excited about returning to in person meetings. Though we're all at the mercy of current government protocols as well as abiding by the plan put in place by our meeting spaces, groups are starting to talk about what it will look like for us. The following are some suggestions passed on by Area 72 worth considering as we attempt the new normal.

Each group will need to draft their own detailed protocol outlining a comprehensive COVID-19 exposure control, mitigation and recovery plan. This is to be posted during the meeting. This should lay out exactly what it will look like to attend your group's AA meeting. For example, Masks must be worn 100% of the time. There are varying points of view on masks, but remember our traditions, specifically tradition 4 which states "that the freedom individual groups have carried with it the admonition to protect the fellowship as a whole." Currently masks are a requirement we cannot afford to get political over. Another 'controversial' topic is the keeping of a voluntary attendee log for the purposes of notifying folks if they have been infected. This should be kept with the group's secretary and is strictly voluntary.

Those that test positive should contact the meetings they have attended so they may in turn contact others who may have been exposed. Alcoholics Anonymous doesn't

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Items of Note for District 19

www.dist19aa.org

Here is the link to the No Reservations website:

<http://www.noreservationspeakermeeting.org/>

This way you can find out the dates of the meetings and who is speaking along with costs and so on. **17311 Reservation Rd, La Conner**

General Meeting Questions:

Joe W. - 360.853.5639 / John L. - 360.661.0780 -

A list of on-line resources to use during this time of Covid 19

Go here for a listing of mostly local Zoom meetings: SnoCoAA.org
You will find a roster of meetings by day of the week on the home page.

Go here for a listing from the Area 72 website-
<https://area72aa.org/online-virtual-meetings/>

Want a service position outside your Home Group? **Try the Central Office.** Located at 1625 E. Marine View Dr. in Everett the CO can always use people to help with the phones. Shifts during the week are just two hours. At night you staff the phone from 7pm to 7am, once a month. It's service work that puts recovery into action. To get involved call 425-252-2525 during normal business hours (7am to 7pm) and tell them you want to answer phones. Someone will get back to you.

about each other that day. His was a book whose cover I never should have judged.

In June, our home group went to Founders' Day in Akron, Ohio. It was guys with guys and girls with girls, and I watched him. His enthusiasm for our program and for life was enchanting. We began dating, with the approval of our sponsors. For the first time in my life, someone took me on a date, brought me home, said goodnight on my doorstep and went back to his own place. He courted me, to use an old term, and I quickly realized that my feelings for him were not the self-seeking ones of the past. What I felt for him was genuine affection. Here was a man who put sobriety above all else and truly lived each day as if it were his last.

Today, that hippie and I are husband and wife and partners in recovery. Every day is an adventure for us. We love to go to AA meetings locally as well as in different states and have visited most of AA's landmarks in just a few short years. Last July, we spent a night at the Wilson House in Vermont—it was an especially spiritual experience for both of us. We were able to buy a home that we lovingly call Serenity Cottage. It's not a mansion, but it's filled with love.

I'm still amazed sometimes when I remember that by taking my sponsor's good orderly direction and getting out of God's way, I was given a partner for life. We put our individual sobriety first, keeping our programs separate. The AA Traditions are applied in our marriage relationship whenever possible—it's a formula that has worked beautifully so far. We walk together in a life that's truly beyond our wildest dreams. I would have never imagined that the hippie who spilled coffee on me would teach me lessons about judging others and acceptance. It just goes to show that as long as I continue to trust my Higher Power, all will be well.

—A.S., *Middletown, Pa.*

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belong in the press, particularly as a hotspot for infection. The best way to avoid that is to take all these precautions, whether you believe in it or not.

A meeting may look like this. Ahead of the meeting time, group members could consult a pre-meeting checklist that provides a specific guide for cleaners. This includes bathrooms, all surfaces, heavily touched areas such as door knobs; identifying specific spots so not overlooked. Handwashing directions and suggestions as to what not to touch is posted in bathrooms. Shared literature for new comers is kept in Ziplock bags, dated with a sharpie; considered 'safe' 3 days after sealed.

Seventh Tradition baskets are set stationary, not passed, and money sealed for 3 days before handling, or handled with gloves by the treasurer. Many groups will continue to use services like Paypal and Venmo as an option. Upon entering, group members screen individuals with a questionnaire and temperature check using a no-touch forehead thermometer, turning away those with fever. Chairs are set up 6 feet apart for social distancing. At meetings conclusion, group members reverse clean with a post meeting checklist.

Pausing coffee service is recommended, which allows reallocation of funds for cleaning supplies and disposable PPE such as facemasks and gloves, to encourage people to stay, even if they did not come prepared.

Area 72's Young Persons chair, Will, has offered to Zoom with groups to discuss COVID opening up checklists and inventory questions. Also, some are considering hybrid meetings but I'll have to save that topic for another month.

<https://www.governor.wa.gov/> Religious and Faith Organizations is the popular category chosen for AA.

accessibility@dist19aa.org



District 19 History

Learn about the Home Groups of District 19

One for the Road Group

The One for the Road Group was a result of a new fellowship hall that was established August 1, 1994 at the Rainbow's End in Everett, WA. The meeting relocated to Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, Mukilteo Boulevard, Everett, WA in 2012. The Rainbow's End closed the meeting room as a result of a pending sale of the property.

The One for the Road group met 5 days a week Mondays – Fridays – 5:15 to 6:15 PM. After moving in 2012 the attendance dropped dramatically on account of the new location and further proximity from downtown Everett, WA.

The One for the Road group recovered its membership attendance over time and continues to meet on an abbreviated schedule of Tuesday's and Friday's from 5:15-6:15 PM. Our meetings are comprised of alternating secretaries. Our meeting materials and food are organized in 2 movable boxes – one for each meeting. The acting secretary is in possession of the movable boxes. The church was not interested in the group storing our meeting materials in the basement of the church.

Our meeting room is handicapped accessible. The format of the meeting continues to follow the AA preamble, various rotating meeting members reading "How it Works", "The Twelve Traditions", and the "Promises". The secretary selects a reading from approved AA publications and the group shares its experience strength and wisdom for 5 minutes or less till the end of the meeting. We conduct the 7th tradition half-way through the meeting.

The first Tuesday of the month is our business meeting following the regular meeting. Our birthday meeting is the last Tuesday of the month. We use a standard business meeting procedure worksheet. We have monthly treasurers' reports, literature reports, and GSR reports, and old business and new business.

We have an annual picnic, social meals after meetings, bowling, and Seahawk football social get togethers. Members contribute to and attend the annual 19th district picnic, assembly, stapling party, and gratitude banquet. Periodically the group conducts a group inventory meeting with district facilitators. Current legacy membership includes Debra H., Guy A, Tom N, Wanda, Mary A., Rob F., Sheri C., Tony G., Joe F., Steve E., Darrin S, Susie R. and newer home group members.

Calendar of Events– September 2020

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3	4	5 No Reservations Mtg First Saturday of every month– Open Meeting
6	7	8 7:00pm- Central Office Meeting- 1652 E. Marine View Drive	9	10 7:00pm– District 12 Business Meeting, 1401 Poplar	11	12
13	14	15 Service Manual Study 6-7:30– 34 Oakes (18th and Baker) Second Tuesday	16	17	18	19 -Conway Old Timers Meeting-Potluck at 5/Speakers at 6
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30 5:30– 3rd Legacy Meeting 7:00pm– District 19 Business Meeting 47th and Alger, Zion Lutheran Church			

If you have any AA related announcements to share, email me and I'll include it here.

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