

District 19 Newsletter

February 2023

Newsletter@dist19aa.org

Meeting Info: Call (425)
252-2525

<http://www.dist19aa.org>



But I Already Have a God

When I came through the doors of AA in August of 1990, I had been a Roman Catholic nun for more than 10 years. Despite this, I had hit rock bottom. I was completely powerless over alcohol and my life was beyond unmanageable.

But I came to the program still filled with pride, arrogance and the cocksureness that Bill W. writes about. I saw the word “God” throughout the Twelve Steps and was arrogantly pleased—at least you people were on the right track. I thought, I’ve had 10-plus years of rigorous religious training behind me. What could AA possibly teach me?

Yet I read the Big Book avidly and found myself on every page. It was a huge relief to learn that I was not alone, that there were others who felt, thought and acted as I did. But I took great exception to Ebby T.’s suggestion to Bill: “Why don’t you choose your own conception of God?” To me that smacked of idolatry. You can’t just create God, I thought self-righteously.

It took me a very long time to be able to get honest and ask myself a simple question: If belief in God were all that is required to get sober and stay sober, why hadn’t that worked for me?

In my life, I had God morning, noon and night. In my religious community, we prayed together five times a day. In addition, we had two half-hour periods of silent meditation each day, plus daily mass, spiritual readings at each meal and private prayer as well. I was steeped in God all day, every day. So why couldn’t I stop drinking?

The answer was very simple. In spite of being immersed in the concept of “God,” God was not real to me. I had never once asked what God’s will was for me. I was too busy dictating terms to God. Yes, I had taken my vows for life. I had given myself completely to God, in theory. The reality was that I had not turned my will and my life over at all. I had built no relationship with God, I did not know or trust God and I couldn’t imagine relinquishing control of my life to anyone or anything, especially something I couldn’t see, hear or touch. I fought surrender with every single breath. “God” didn’t work for me because I didn’t let him/her.

Somehow, in spite of my arrogance, I stayed sober. I gave up just enough control to allow this power greater than myself to remove my obsession with alcohol. Over the years, I attempted to find a God of my own understanding, and in my own way I succeeded. The fact that I did stay sober is to me a testimony to the patience, love and good humor of my Higher Power.

A huge turning point came when I celebrated my 20th milestone in sobriety. I wasn't cocky. I wasn't proud, but I was in awe. Twenty years is a long time. How much had changed—in me, in the world—in 20 years. I felt as if my Higher Power said to me, "You're right, 20 years is a big deal but now let's start all over again."

That moment was a second beginning for me in establishing a relationship with this power greater than myself. For the first time, I felt able to define God for myself, to really choose my own conception of God.

And I understood that I wasn't "making up" God. Rather, I was understanding this power in a way that was very personal and individual to me. Since my native language is English, my Higher Power isn't going to speak to me in French. In the same way, the God of my understanding speaks to me in ways that are custom-made for me—in words, symbols, occurrences, encounters, in so many ways that are unmistakably, clearly from my God.

Today I seek to improve my conscious contact with this power through many different forms of prayer and meditation. I have learned that I can turn anything into a "god" and so I'm always changing my practice and approach. By this I mean that if I sit in a certain posture, light a candle, play soft music, and then get an "ah-ha" moment, I can believe that that awareness came from the candle, the posture and the song. So I repeat those external rituals to try to make sure God speaks to me again. I forget that the rituals are just that—rituals—and that they are not the God of my understanding.

So, I press on. I do many things—I sit in silence, I walk, I talk out loud, I read, I use meditative music—seeking my Higher Power in many different ways. The common denominator is that I keep seeking to maintain conscious contact.

I am no longer a nun, but I remain forever grateful for the years I spent in that life. They gave me a foundation on which I continue to build. In the intervening years, my Higher Power has led me in a direction that I could never have predicted or expected. Through everything that has happened in my life, my relationship with the God of my understanding has deepened and broadened. It has carried me through many challenges and through many joys.

I don't call my Higher Power "God"—I don't necessarily call this being by any name. It is simply a very real, powerful, loving presence. As the Big Book says, it is "a new power, peace, happiness, and sense of direction" that flows through me. I simply know I am loved. To those who came in feeling skeptical, I hope you remain.

Daily Reflections:

GETTING THE "SPIRITUAL ANGLE"

How often do we sit in AA meetings and hear the speaker declare, "But I haven't yet got the spiritual angle." Prior to this statement, he had described a miracle of transformation which had occurred in him—not only his release from alcohol, but a complete change in his whole attitude toward life and the living of it. It is apparent to nearly everyone else present that he has received a great gift; ". . . except that he doesn't seem to know it yet!" We well know that this questioning individual will tell us six months or a year hence that he has found faith in God.— A spiritual experience can be the realization that a life which once seemed empty and devoid of meaning is now joyous and full. In my life today, daily prayer and meditation, coupled with living the Twelve Steps, has brought about an inner peace and feeling of belonging which was missing when I was drinking.

THE LANGUAGE OF THE HEART, p. 275

STEP 2

Step Two "Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity." THE moment they read Step Two, most A.A. newcomers are confronted with a dilemma, sometimes a serious one. How often have we heard them cry out, "Look what you people have done to us! You have convinced us that we are alcoholics and that our lives are unmanageable. Having reduced us to a state of absolute helplessness, you now declare that none but a Higher Power can remove our obsession. Some of us won't believe in God, others can't, and still others who do believe that God exists have no faith whatever He will perform this miracle. Yes, you've got us over the barrel, all right—but where do we go from here?" Let's look first at the case of the one who says he won't believe—the belligerent one. He is in a state of mind which can be described only as savage. His whole philosophy of life, in which he so gloried, is threatened. It's bad enough, he thinks, to admit alcohol has him down for keeps. But now, still smarting from that admission, he is faced with something really impossible. How he does cherish the thought that man, risen so majestically from a single cell in the primordial ooze, is the spearhead of evolution and therefore the only god that his universe knows! Must he renounce all this to save himself? At this juncture, his A.A. sponsor usually laughs. This, the newcomer thinks, is just about the last straw. This is the beginning of the end. And so it is: the beginning of the end of his old life, and the beginning of his emergence into a new one.

Pg 25 & 26 of 12 Steps and 12 Traditions

TRADITION 2

Tradition Two "For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern." WHERE does A.A. get its direction? Who runs it? This, too, is a puzzler for every friend and newcomer. When told that our Society has no president having authority to govern it, no treasurer who can compel the payment of any dues, no board of directors who can cast an erring member into outer darkness, when indeed no A.A. can give another a directive and enforce obedience, our friends gasp and exclaim, "This simply can't be. There must be an angle somewhere." These practical folk then read Tradition Two, and learn that the sole authority in A.A. is a loving God as He may express Himself in the group conscience. They dubiously ask an experienced A.A. member if this really works. The member, sane to all appearances, immediately answers, "Yes! It definitely does." The friends mutter that this looks vague, nebulous, pretty naive to them. Then they commence to watch us with speculative eyes, pick up a fragment of A.A. history, and soon have the solid facts.

Pg 132 of 12 Steps and 12 Traditions

District 19 Service Positions 2023

<u>Officer</u>	<u>Current</u>
Secretary –	Joe T.
Treasurer –	Mike B.
Alt DCM –	Shay T.
DCM –	Sooz B.

<u>Committee Chairs</u>	<u>Current</u>
Accessibility	Angie M.
Archives	OPEN
Bridging the Gap Coord.	OPEN
Central Office Coord.	Alison W.
Corrections	Jeanne B.
CPC	Colleen S.
Grapevine/ Literature	OPEN
Gratitude Banquet Coord.	OPEN
Newsletter	Lorri J.
PI	OPEN
Picnic Coord.	OPEN
Schedules	OPEN
Third Legacy	OPEN
Treatment	Liz M.
Web	Laura M

Do you like to Help others? Would you like to join a committee?

Email: Newsletter@dist19aa.org

CONWAY OLD TIMERS SPEAKER MEETING & Potluck

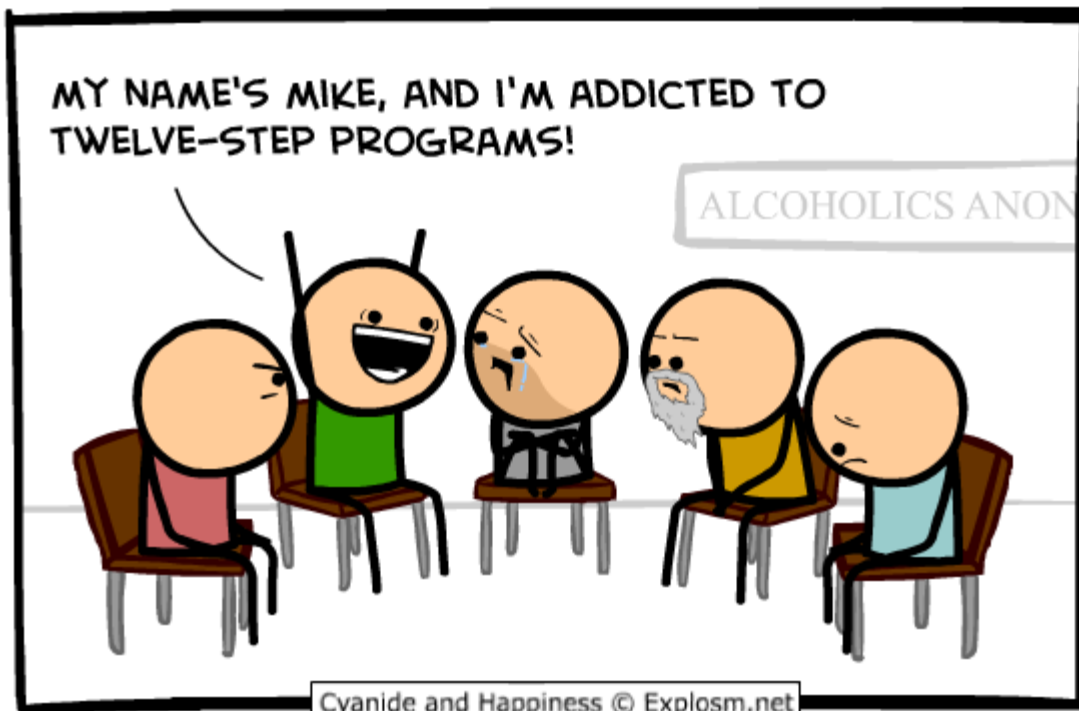
**3RD SATURDAY OF THE MONTH
POTLUCK STARTS AT 5:00PM SPEAKER MEETING IS AT 6PM**

MONTH	DATE	SPEAKER LINE-UP	
JANUARY	1/21/23	SHANNON D. 26 YEARS	KENNY D. 33 YEARS
FEBRUARY	2/18/23	BETSY A. 33 YEARS	STEVE W. 13 YEARS
MARCH	3/18/23	LAURA W. 12 YEARS	DENNIS W. 31 YEARS

**FIR CONWAY LUTHERAN CHURCH
18101 FIR ISLAND ROAD MT. VERNON, WA 98273**

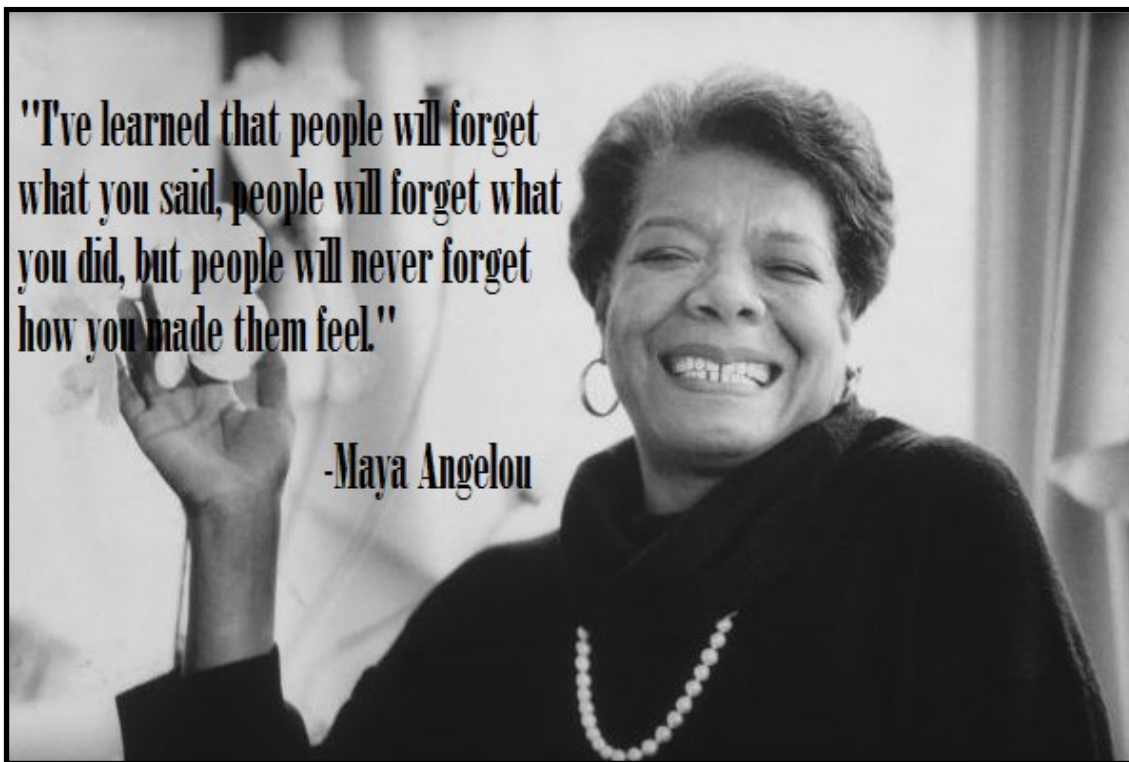


CHECK US OUT ON FACEBOOK: CONWAY OLD TIMERS SPEAKER MEETING ~ CONTACT JOHN A. ~ 360-708-3739



February 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7 7pm Central Office MTG Via Zoom ID: 874 5921 0224	8	9 7pm Dist 12 Business mtg 1212 California ST @ Recovery cafe	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22 Dist 19 3rd legacy mtg 5:30pm Business mtg @ 7pm- 8:30pm	23	24	25
26	27	28				



The General Service Office of AA is looking for members willing to correspond by mail with persons incarcerated. There is a greater need for male correspondence.

If you are interested in carrying the message in this way, email this information to corrections@aa.org - or send this form to address below.

Correspondence is done through electronic communication so there is no need to give your personal address.

Thank you for your service

CORRESPONDENCE FORM — for Outside A.A. Members Only CCS-3

PLEASE PRINT - Return to address below

I am a MALE FEMALE How many inmates are you able to write to?: _____

I can correspond in English French Spanish Other language _____

Name: _____ Phone (office use only): _____
(First and Last)

Address: _____ Email (office use only): _____
(P.O. Box or Street Address, City, State or Province, Postal or Zip Code)

Corrections Desk, General Service Office, Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163
 Direct: (212) 870-3085 Email: corrections@aa.org Fax: (212) 870-3003 Website: www.aa.org

**Have an idea or event
to share in the newsletter please feel
free to contact me at**

Newsletter@dist19aa.org

