

The DIALog



A PUBLICATION OF THE DALLAS INTERGROUP ASSOCIATION (est. 1947)

Dallas Central Office | 6162 E Mockingbird Ln, Ste 213, Dallas TX 75214 | 214.887.6699 | www.aadallas.org | help@aadallas.org

From the Director

We had a wonderful panel for our Concepts Workshop December 6, and a good turn-out with many different groups represented. Many thanks to everyone who attended the workshop.

We need many more volunteers for the 12th Step Initiative, so please send in your name if you are interested.

With the holidays coming up many groups will be opened all day for Christmas and New Year's, New Year's Eve. (Check the website event calendar for the groups we know are participating.)

Closing for December will be:

- Friday, December 12th for inventory. We will not be open for sales or group pickups. Please do not ask us to make a sale if you come by. We need an accurate inventory and the only way is with our trusted volunteers, a locked door and no interruptions.
- For the holidays we will close Wed, December 24th and Thursday December 25th, but we will open on Friday, December 26.
- We will close New Year's Eve and New Year's Day, Wed. December 31st and Jan. 1st, 2015. We will be open Friday, January 2, 2015.

Have a safe and sober holiday season. Remember, if you need to talk, our phones are answered by a member of Alcoholics Anonymous 24/7. See you in 2015.

Janis R.



Visit Us Online!

At www.aadallas.org you'll find group announcements, an events calendar, a searchable group directory, online bookstore & more.

STEP 12 & TRADITION 12

Step 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.

Tradition 12: Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

FROM THE EDITOR

Step Twelve is the big payoff step for me. Aside from the spiritual awakening, carrying the message and practicing the principles parts, the step itself, as discussed in "Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions," opens, "The joy of living is the theme of A.A.'s Twelfth Step, and action is its keyword."

I'm all for joy! "Life is not a dead end, not something to be endured or mastered," the book continues, on page 107. Before recovery, I was all about the mastery. As long as I had all the things I wanted in place on the outside -- career, family, money -- then the hell with the inside. And there were times, certainly, that hell seemed preferable to the way I was living.

Not anymore, thank you God and A.A.

Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, I have the golden opportunity to take the action of carrying the message to other alcoholics. The first time a friend tried to carry the message to me, I was too oblivious to accept it.

The friend spoke to me about her mother, telling me that she was an alcoholic but that she became sober through Alcoholics Anonymous.

I had absolutely no idea that my friend was trying to Twelve Step me through her mother's example; all I thought was, How sad that her mother is an alcoholic, and why is she telling me about it?

By the time I was ready to do something about my drinking, I was, grudgingly, well acquainted with A.A. But the day an A.A. member carried the message up to me in rehab, I was ready to hear it. And be inspired by it. I wanted to do that, too. And I have, and I do. In all different ways, including carrying the message at



treatment centers, in jails, with newcomers, with sponsees, when I lead a meeting and with those who come to the Dallas Intergroup Association Central Office for help. I try to practice the principles in everything I do. I may be the only example of A.A. that people see, so it's imperative that I be a good one.

And I benefit.

This issue of The DIALog carries stories of the why and how of Step Twelve, along with an examination of Tradition Twelve.

Especially in this holiday season, may we all experience the joy of living.

Andrea H.



HOW I CARRY THE MESSAGE: MORE THAN MEETINGS

By Jimmy D.
Chicago Group, Dallas

I was first Twelve-Stepped by the man who became my sponsor (though I had no clue what a sponsor was) across a picnic table before a Big Book study meeting on a Thursday night in June 1997.

He sat across that table from me, and told me some of his story. He got me to tell him some of mine.

How fortunate I was that sitting there was an active, involved member of A.A. And while I didn't become sober until August, the seeds were planted and taking root that June evening.

Meetings were only a small component of what was considered being "vested" in the program, and he followed our tradition of bringing the newcomer up to the program, not the program down to the newcomer.

Greg did a terrific job of "gauging the reaction of his prospect," as Bill W. so richly describes in his essay that is part of Concept Nine.

It would be a couple of months before I surrendered to a power greater than myself, as Greg had suggested, but I watched that power work in others in my home group and in the life of my sponsor.

Greg continued carrying the message to me day by day, consistent in the direction he gave me and exemplifying accountability, availability, respectability and responsibility in his actions both in and out of the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Over the years, I've had the opportunity to participate in many Twelve Step calls; most of the recipients could not or would not stay sober for any length of time.

In every instance, however, I was told that person-to-person service is what we offered the new man – we "sponsored" him into A.A.

We got in the car, and we went places together. If there has ever been a "bad" Twelve Step in my 17 years in A.A., it has been only when I did not give to the newcomer exactly what was given to me.

More lives have changed in a booth at Denny's than have ever changed in a meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous: eyeball to eyeball is where we connect, identify and recover.

And that's the way I teach my sponsees to do it, and the way that they and their sponsees do it, passing it on, and on and on.

WHY I STILL DO STEP 12

By Millie H.
Friendship Group, Lewisville

My recovery began in Al-Anon meetings and open A.A. meetings. My husband's drinking was worse than mine, I thought, and my college-age children were being kicked out of school because of drugs and alcohol.

I was emotionally bankrupt, and had the gift of desperation.

And I was so busy looking at their drinking and bad behavior that I blocked out my own drinking history. I was in a lot of pain, and called the minister of the church we had been attending to tell on my husband about his drinking. (I did not tell him about my drinking.)

The minister told me that he was an alcoholic and that A.A. and Al-Anon meetings were at the church. I still remember how he laughed when I asked him how long we'd have to go to those meetings.

After attending my first Al-Anon meeting, I knew in my "knower" that if I stayed with those people that they would help me get through it, and anything else in my life, and they told me that I was not alone.

They gave me hope.

I stayed in Al-Anon, and denied that I was an alcoholic for more than a year without drinking. I was afraid to drink. I continued going to open A.A. and Al-Anon meetings in so much pain because I did not want to admit that I was an alcoholic.

I already knew that Al-Anons did not like A.A.'s, and A.A.'s did not like Al-Anons. I thought I was doomed and no one would help me. Finally, I was in so much pain that I kept thinking and saying to myself, "Are you going to wait until you have a heart attack and have to go to hospital without any insurance and tell them to call A.A.?" I knew that was what I needed to do.

I was so scared and suffered so much from economic insecurity that I was suicidal when I finally surrendered to A.A.

The Twelve Steps and A.A. have given me a God of my understanding that keeps me sober and helps me with my life. I have a sponsor, and I talk to her often, letting her know what I am thinking and feeling.

Every day, I ask God to help me to stay in the last three steps and to be of service to others. I love to sponsor alcoholics and help them work the steps and witness the miracle of our program.

I always ask my sponsees to welcome the newcomer. Now that I am retired, I go to one or two meetings a day. I may see an alcoholic who needs help. I'm currently doing a Big Book study at my home. I am very grateful for everything that God and A.A. have done in my life, and it is with gratitude that I pass it on and experience great joy.

After all these 38 years of sobriety, I've found that what the old-timers told me in the beginning is so true: You have to give it away to keep it.

Twelve Step calls have changed since my early sobriety. Many new people come to us from treatment centers, and I don't often get the opportunity to go out and bring in a new wet drunk. In early sobriety I went out with three other alcoholics from the Alpha Group in Dallas one night to take a drunk woman to a meeting. She was quite loud and unruly, and I was embarrassed to be sitting by her. Of course, I would not feel that way today.

Another time in early sobriety, the Dallas Central office called me to take a new woman to a meeting in Dallas. I was so scared, and didn't know what to do. I called my sponsor, and she told me not to worry about it; the new woman probably wouldn't remember a thing that I said. Clearly, I must have thought that it was my job to say the exact right thing to save her.

Once, soon after I had had back surgery, I got a call around 11 p.m. to go with another sober woman to pick up a drunk woman and take her to Maggie's House, a recovery center in Dallas. It was a very cold night, with ice and snow still on the ground. I put on a coat over my warm pajamas, and we headed out. We had to stop several times so our new woman could vomit beside the road. She is still sober today.

I wish we could all get to go on more Twelve Step calls because it is so rewarding and keeps us sober, no matter what happens to the new person.



Today my Twelve Step work consists of going to meetings, sharing in meetings, welcoming the newcomers, sponsoring, answering the phone when I get calls from other alcoholics, and being active in my home group. I am very happy with my A.A. life. My higher power takes care of all my needs, and most of my wants. And I trust that He always will.

REACHING BEHIND BARS, THE HAND OF A.A.

By Freda W.
Carrollton Group

Nineteen years ago this month, I came to Alcoholics Anonymous as a legal consequence of my alcoholism.

Having narrowly escaped the prison system myself, the natural service path that called me initially was the area of corrections.

Shortly after completing the steps with my sponsor, I was "sentenced" to prison meetings at the Gatesville women's unit in Huntsville, Tex., through D.A.A.M.E.S., the Dallas Area Alcoholic Messenger Envoys program still active in carrying the message to those inmates today.

I went, humbly and insecurely, to share what I feared would hold no interest to those incarcerated women.

My goal was to stay out of jail, not go in!

But as I had embraced the entire premise of Step Twelve and believed (as I still do) that I can't stay sober unless I am willing to share my experience with others, off I went, primarily to please that sponsor.

What unfolded early for me and what I believe is among the greatest gifts of my is simply a heart for service. As long as I stay true to my program, it does not fade.

I also believe it to be the direct result of strong sponsorship and examples that pointed me toward corrections from the very beginning. My prayer is that I continue to offer that same example.

At the risk of spouting some lengthy, ego-ridden A.A. resume outlining my years in service, I hope it will suffice to say I have been active in many arenas and worn many hats.

I have never been without multiple commitments; Alcoholics Anonymous stopped being what I did and became more what I am long ago.

My passion for corrections service remains strong and seems to fulfill some purpose I've been assigned for my life.

Or maybe not, but still I find that opportunities that physically move me to "carry" the message are the most gratifying, although often the least convenient.

Life can still be baffling, confusing and even disappointing at times even when I am very aware of all my blessings. I will never control the

outcomes of many things, but I always have control over my decisions to serve.

I "get" to serve with no recognition required or attention deserved for doing what needs to be done. I simply get to stay sober.

Go to Jail

To carry the message to Texas inmates, first contact your group's corrections chairman. For further guidance, call the Dallas Central Office, (214) 887-6699.

NEW IN TOWN

Tish H. and David H.
Caprock Group, Silverton

We've been in recovery for 12 years now. And we share the same sobriety date, Feb. 11, 2002. (We also quit smoking a year later on that same day.)

We're entirely grateful that God led us to A.A. and that A.A. gave us a relationship with the God of our understanding that keeps us sober one day at a time.

We have a good life today, one that we could never have imagined possible.

Living in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, we became a part of its strong A.A. and Al-Anon. The great meetings, the awesome sponsorship, all our friends and all the program functions kept us so busy that the years flew, happily.

In 2012, we had an opportunity to retire. We moved to a small town in the Texas panhandle called Silverton.

David's sponsor and his wife had moved there a few years earlier. When we arrived, he and David began working together as electrical contractors.

The pace in Silverton is much slower, the population much smaller and so with A.A. and Al-Anon. The people, however, are as friendly and welcoming as anyone could hope for.

There are a lot of volunteer opportunities in our town; all the churches work together to help those in need.

Our continued journey in recovery means one meeting a week in town. We travel 50 to 75 miles to attend other meetings.

Out of self-preservation, we started an Al-Anon group on Monday nights. The meetings are smaller, but the blessings are not.

And we try daily, no matter what, to give back what we have received. However we can.

SUBMISSIONS

The next issue of The DIALog will feature articles on Step One, Tradition One and the first Concept. We're accepting articles on those topics, as well as stories about your last drink or drunk. Tell us about your experiences! Deadline for submissions is Jan. 7. Please send original articles of 250 to 300 words to andreaahig@aol.com or janis@aadallas.org; the subject line should read: The DIALog.

TRADITION 12: RESTRAINT OF PERSONALITY VS. PRINCIPLES

By John M.
Little Elm Group

Tradition 12 is a vital bookend to our Twelve Traditions. During the



founding of A.A., in 1935, there was a dark social stigma associated with alcoholism.

The founders and initial members were acutely aware of the suffering and shame that alcoholism can bring to oneself, and to others around him. Thus "confidentiality" was exercised to attract and convince newcomers that A.A. places a strong emphasis on the anonymity of those present.

Of course, once having gained access to a higher power, some alcoholics would love to use their inner resource at the level of press, radio and film. The A.A. pamphlet on anonymity ("Understanding Anonymity") states that some were "motivated by good will, others by personal gain."

It is important to remain anonymous to strengthen the spirituality of our program. Bill W. repeatedly talked about the word "anonymous" having "immense spiritual significance" to our members. I can say that at the area level of A.A., I see hundreds of recovered alcoholics respecting principles.

God speaks through our group conscience, our collective voice derived from the fellowship of the spirit. These principles protect the group from us.

There have been times when my own personality has tried to emerge before principles, but as we learn in Step Three, we are no longer running the show. I am merely an agent of God. God's voice speaks through the Group Conscience.

Tradition Twelve is humbling, as well as imperative to the person with one day, or 50 years.

So, it is becoming our code that there are things that no A.A. ever does, lest he divert A.A. from its sole purpose and injure our public relations. And thereby the chances of those sick ones yet to come.

To the million alcoholics who have not yet heard our A.A. story we should ever say: "Greetings and welcome. Be assured that we shall never weaken the lifelines which we float out to you. In our public relations, we shall, God willing, keep the faith."

HOW TO CHAIR A MEETING

By Kirk A.
Friendship Group, Lewisville

There are good ways, and there are not-so-good ways, to chair a meeting. My home group held a chairing workshop the other week, with a panel featuring Janis R., director of the Dallas Intergroup Association; Jimmy D. of the Chicago Group (see his story on Step Twelve in this issue); and Sidney P. of the Georgetown Group.

They were with us all afternoon, sharing information and taking questions.

Follows is the takeaway:

- Chairing is a perfect way to carry give service, carrying the message.
- Keep the meeting focused on alcoholism.
- When someone talks too long, the chairman can say: "Thank you.

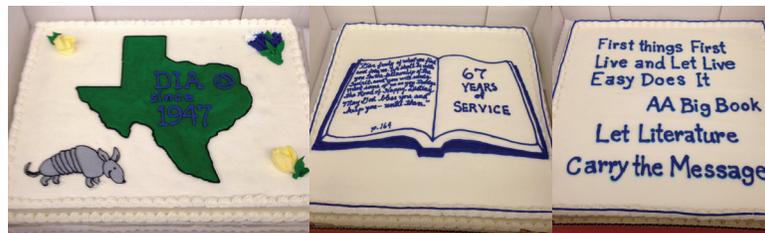
If there's time we'll try to come back to you." Then call on someone you trust to get the meeting back on track.

- When someone cross talks or offers advice to another, say: "Thank you. Someone will talk to you after the meeting about that." And then be sure that is followed up.
- When the meeting goes off track, you can repeat the topic in a polite way. You can say you are doing this for the benefit of those who came in late.
- Always be sure there are greeters at the door, to give a face of A.A. to the newcomer and to all alike.
- Make everyone feel welcome. If the coffee is not made, ask a shy and relatively new person to make it. That will make him feel a part of the group.
- Always follow group formats, guidelines and bylaws when leading a meeting. If your group has a rule against using non-A.A. literature, abide by that. If you are attending a meeting and a chairman uses non-A.A. literature, speak up or take the chairman aside and quietly explain the group rule on the issue.
- If a member is stealing from the basket, be sure to have people sitting around him to discourage this by their presence.
- If someone disrupts a meeting, take him out of the room with a couple of other members, and have your own meeting with him. Kindness works, but call the police if needed.
- If someone routinely identifies himself as "an alcoholic and addict" let him be.
- Non-A.A.'s, including nursing and other students, are welcome to attend open meetings. They should not speak or take notes. Have members speak to them after the meeting.
- If a chairman does not show up for his commitment, have someone else take the commitment and be sure that his sponsor knows.
- If a chairman shows up drunk, it is everyone's responsibility to make sure a meeting takes place.
- When someone comes in who is drunk, offer him a seat and a warm welcome. He might eventually turn out to become the best chairman of all.

And remember, in the end God is in charge.

If you would like a chairing workshop at your group, contact the Dallas Central Office, at (214) 887-6699 or janis@aadallas.org.

CELEBRATING 67 YEARS





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 all 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 it 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.

The Twelve Traditions

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon AA unity.
2. 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.
3. The only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.
6. An AA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the AA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every AA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. AA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the AA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

Group Contributions November 2014

	Nov 14
A Daily Reprieve	189.11
Addison Group	50.00
Allen Group	50.00
Aquarius Group	25.00
Carrollton	200.00
Carry the Message	33.50
Casa Group	10.00
Chicago	0.00
Clean Air North	2,050.62
Colony Group	40.00
Cornerstone	125.00
Dallas North	562.50
Duncanville	75.00
Forney Group	60.00
Friendship Group	0.00
Frisco Group	540.44
Garland Clean Air	0.00
Highland Park Women's Group	167.50
Lake Highlands	20.00
Lakeside Group	0.00
Lakewood	1,421.00
Lambda	0.00
Legacy	0.00
McKinney Fellowship	10.00
McKinney Miracle Group	44.68
McKinney Serenity Group	0.00
New Freedom	465.05
ODAAT	0.00
Ray of Hope - Seven Points	20.00
Richardson	30.00
Ross Avenue Group	10.00
Rowlett	20.00
Serenity Circle	25.00
Shivering Denizens	100.00
Southwest Clean Air	39.95
Step Up	0.00
Terrell Group	60.00
The Gift of Sobriety	30.00
Town North	70.00
Town South	0.00
Traditional	61.00
White House	50.00
Wylie Group	0.00
TOTAL	<u>6,655.35</u>

TO SUBSCRIBE TO THE DIALog

Get your DIALog hot off the presses! A yearly subscription is \$12; two years, \$18. Please contact carrie@aadallas.org or call the Dallas Intergroup Association at (214) 887-6699.



News, Updates & Events... [more on aadallas.org](http://www.aadallas.org)

DIA Intergroup Reps Meeting

Dec. 11 from 8 to 9 p.m.

First United Lutheran Church,
6202 E. Mockingbird Lane, Dallas 75214

The meeting is in the separate building behind the church. Gifts will be handed out to all reps who made 100% of the meetings!! And it is a great prize. For more information about being an Intergroup Rep see the aadallas.org Dallas Intergroup Association website for the page dedicated to that.

DIA Office CLOSED for Inventory

Dec. 12 from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Dallas Central Office,
6162 E. Mockingbird Lane, Suite 213, Dallas 75214

Not the most fun we have ever had, but something we have to do once a year. The Big Book does advise it however: "A business which takes no regular inventory usually goes broke. Taking a commercial inventory is a fact-finding and a fact facing process. It is an effort to discover the truth about the stock-in-trade," page 64. Please make a note of the day because we will not be open for sales.

Citywide Dallas December Meeting

Dec. 13 from 5 to 8:30 p.m.

Lover's Lane Methodist Church,
9200 Inwood Road, Dallas 75220

The speaker this month will be Kim B. of the Preston Group. Potluck dinner starts at 5 p.m.; please bring a side dish. The speaker meeting begins at 7 p.m. Free childcare, as always, for the entire meeting. Sign language interpreter available by request.

New Year's Eve Celebration

Dec. 31 at 7 p.m. to 12:30 a.m.

Getemsober Group,
9090 N. Stemmons, Suite C, Dallas 75247

Bring a dish and bring a friend to Getemsober's birthday party and New Year's Eve celebration. For further information: (214) 673-6644, or Getemsober2@gmail.com.

The Joy of Living: 25th Anniversary River Roundup

Jan. 15 at 3 p.m. to Jan. 18 at 2 p.m.

Don Laughlin's Riverside Resort,
Bullhead AZ 86442

The discount code is RRU15. For information: www.rcco-aa.org, or (928) 542-5265.

68th Tyler Anniversary

Jan. 9 at 5 p.m. to Jan. 10 at 10 p.m. \$20

Harvey Convention Center, 2000 W. Front St.,
Tyler TX 75702

Register online: www.tyleranniversary.com. Friday: Speakers include Michelle B., Al-Anon; Winston N., A.A.; Don P., Marco Island, Fla. Saturday: Some of the speakers include, Boston Jim, Susan P, Jack G, Rich B. There are plenty of events and dinners to keep everyone happy! Holiday Inn rates, \$89. ask for Anniversary rates.

The Joy of Living: River Roundup

Jan. 15 at 3 p.m. to Jan. 18 at 2 p.m.

Don Laughlin's Riverside Resort,
Bullhead, AZ 86442

Discount code: RRU15. For information: www.rcco-aa.org, or (928) 542-5265.

The Border

Feb. 13 at 3 p.m. to Feb. 15 at noon. \$35

Radisson Suite Hotel,
1770 Airway Blvd., El Paso 79925

The El Paso Jamboree features recovery along with a banquet and golf tournament. For information: www.aael Paso.org.

Sister to Sister 21st Annual Conference

March 6 at 4 p.m. to March 8 at noon. \$130

Three Mountain Retreat,
F.M. 182, Clifton TX 76643

This Waco women's retreat registration includes lodging, meals, workshops and trail rides. Speakers include Judy K., Al-Anon, and Kyle B., A.A. For more information: Virginia S., (254) 709-6682.