



AA Area 73 District 11 Newsletter

February 2024 Volume 109

West Virginia – Wild, Wonderful, and Sober

Grapevine Corner

“Tough times never last, but tough people do.” - Robert H. Schuller

“You can make heaven out of hell, or hell out of heaven. The choice is yours.” - Shannon L. Alder

“Difficult roads often lead to beautiful destinations. The best is yet to come.” - Zig Ziglar

“If you’re going through hell, keep going.” - Winston Churchill

Hello, everyone, welcome to the middle of winter. The February edition of Grapevine Magazine has a special section titled, Getting Through Tough Times. That topic is appropriate for this time of year. Members write stories about how they have handled various difficult times and remained sane while also keeping sober. The story titles include: “So worth living”; “Accepting the road ahead”; “When grief comes”; “Faith and Insight”; “We cherish each day”; “In the right place”; and “Walking through fear.” I don’t have a favorite story in this issue. Don’t forget to read Dear Grapevine. There are some good letters/mini stories in that section.

To receive the Grapevine quote of the day, log on to www.aagrapevine.org and provide your email address at the end of the quote. Grapevine has started providing stories of the week in email which is another good reason to sign up. While on the website you can subscribe to The Grapevine magazine, order books, and play with the sobriety calculator among other things.

Please don’t forget to read At Wit’s End which is near the end of the magazine.

*Also, every Monday is Grapevine’s fun half-hour Grapevine Podcast. It features jokes, interviews, and member sharing at www.aagrapevine.org/podcast. You can also follow Grapevine on Instagram at: [alcoholicsanonymous_gv](https://www.instagram.com/alcoholicsanonymous_gv).

And finally:

A chicken crossing the road is poultry in motion.

If you don't pay your exorcist you get repossessed.

Show me a piano falling down a mine shaft and I'll show you A-flat minor.

A grenade thrown into a kitchen in France would result in Linoleum Blownapart.

2nd Step

Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

2nd Tradition

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.

2nd Concept

The General Service Conference of A.A. has become, for nearly every practical purpose, the active voice and the effective conscience of our whole Society in its world affairs.

2nd Promise

We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness

2nd Reward

Faith instead of despair.

The 2nd Tradition (LONG FORM)

For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority — a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience.

AREA INFO

1. Here's some info for those wishing to make financial contributions:

- District 11
Make check payable to
District 11
PO Box 1831, Martinsburg WV 25402
- Area Contribution:
Make check payable to
Area 73
PO Box 461, Morgantown WV 26507-0461
- General Service Office contribution:
Make check payable to
GSO
Po Box 459, Grand Central Station. New York, NY 10163



BIG ANNOUNCEMENT!!!!

Beginning this month, the newsletter will feature a new section called “AA Around the World”. It will feature AA’s stories, letters, poems, etc., gathered by your very own intrepid reporter & world traveler. Check it out below!

Dear Alcohol,

Thank you for all you've done for me, keeping by my side for all these years, but I feel you've outlived your use-by date. I no longer love you nor do I need you dominating my thoughts and my life.

Alas for you, I've started on a new one-way journey and I haven't purchased a return ticket. You're on your own now. I'm quite sure you'll find some other poor unsuspecting soul to inhabit and persecute but please do not come back to me and tell me we can work this thing out. I'm never going to believe you again.. I'm totally done with you and your lies.

Of course I believed it all at first seduction but over these past 40 plus years you've forced me into so many situations where you've embarrassed, harassed and downgraded me and my self esteem in the most horrific & extreme ways. I'm just so tired of you and your manipulative cunning ways and your insidious self in general. You didn't seem to care even if my bones were broken or I was all bruised and left for dead in the middle of the road....

As a result of these years of degradation I do not feel sorry for you in any way. I'll never regret this monumental decision of mine. Enjoy your friendless life in the gutter - I should've kicked you to that particular kerb a long time ago.

My family and in particular my children, warned me not to enter into a relationship with you but you seduced me with your lies. I so wish I had listened to them and not you. Well, those lies don't work for me anymore, my belief in you is shattered. You took me away from all those I loved, only thinking of yourself. My only regret now is that I held onto you for so bloody long. My resolve is strengthened now by having my loved ones embrace me back, you'll never come between us again.

I wonder now how you got me into such a state of denial, how could I have gone willingly into a relationship that was characterized by your abuse, isolating me, depriving me of my sense of self, money, jobs, opportunities, friends, family and basically everything I needed to fulfil my life. Under your dictatorship I used to cry often and my sad moments became days on end, eventually leading to many suicidal thoughts, which to my shame, I voiced aloud.

I am now so thankful I didn't act on these thoughts. I have met many, many like-minded, sincere, happy old and new friends since our breakup. I now remember what a good belly laugh feels like, I feel as happy as I was before I was introduced to you. I feel I've regained my power that you robbed me of. My life is improving exponentially every single day. The only thing I'll miss out on now are some memories of what should've been my happy life, but it's worth it to be rid of you. It's been nearly 100 days since you visited and already life feels more manageable.

We started this relationship on happy terms but we have become purely toxic and the buck stops right here.

GOODBYE Addiction, Welcome Back Life.

DISTRICT MEETING NEWS

SEVERAL DISTRICT MEMBERS HAVE MENTIONED THAT THE ANNIVERSARY LIST BEING PUBLISHED IN THE NEWSLETTER IS NO LONGER ACCURATE AS MANY PEOPLE HAVE MOVED, PASSED AWAY, ETC.

THEREFORE IT WAS SUGGESTED AND AGREED THAT IT WOULD NOT LONGER BE PUBLISHED HERE IN THE NEWSLETTER, BUT WOULD INSTEAD BE PUBLISHED ON THE WEBSITE. EACH DISTRICT AA MEMBER WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR SENDING IN THEIR OWN ANNIVERSARY & CELEBRATION INFORMATION

We are asking all groups and individuals to send their Name, sobriety celebration date, years of sobriety and meeting they are celebrating at.

Send to Rusty.danstuxedo@hotmail.com. Put in the subject matter "**AA Anniversary**".

IN OTHER NEWS..... Since the monthly district meeting minutes are now being published on the website: <https://aawv11.org/> they will no longer be published here.

DISTRICT INFORMATION

1. FULL District Meeting minutes are now being posted monthly, and you can view them at <https://aawv11.org/>
2. Please note that if you'd like to view the monthly newsletter online, you can do so at <https://aawv11.org/>
3. And, if you'd like to have the newsletter delivered to your inbox every month, please send an email request to AAdistrict11@gmail.com
4. **If YOU have an announcement you want posted here** (sober room for rent, items for sale, looking to carpool to meetings, etc.) please send your announcement to us at AAdistrict11@gmail.com. Deadline for submission in next month's newsletter is the 25th of each month

Coming Events & Announcements

1. FREE BOWLING NIGHT!!! – Saturday March 9th from 6:00-8:00pm at Pikeside Bowl 3485 Winchester Avenue Martinsburg, WV 25405

The background is dark blue with stylized line-art illustrations of bowling balls and pins in light blue and pink. The word "Bowling" is written in a large, yellow, cursive font, and "NIGHT" is written in a large, white, outlined, sans-serif font below it.

Bowling NIGHT

MARCH 9TH, 2024

6PM - 8PM

FREE EVENT

PRIZES

Pikeside Bowl

3485 Winchester Ave
Martinsburg, WV 25405

RSVP By March 1st to

District11Activities@gmail.com

Sponsored by District 11

2. Area 73 Annual Convention – August 9-11 2024 at the Lakeview Resort in Morgantown West Virginia – (304) 594 1111. Rooms at \$109 +tax per night – use room code "Area 73"- Flier Attached



The flier features a vibrant, colorful background with a blue sky, green hills, and a large, multi-colored rainbow. A red and blue rocket is shown launching from the rainbow, leaving a trail of green and black lines. The text is primarily in purple and yellow. In the top right corner, there is a circular logo for AA Recovery with the words 'UNITY', 'SERVICE', and 'RECOVERY' around a central 'AA' symbol. At the bottom left, there is a QR code and a button for 'ONLINE REGISTRATION'. At the bottom right, it says 'Hosted by District 16' and provides the website 'www.district16wv.or'.

Area 73 Convention
August 9-11 2024

Lakeview Resort
1 Lakeview Dr.
Morgantown, WV
304-594-1111
Rooms 109+tax/night
Room code: Area 73

TO SOBRIETY AND BEYOND

4th Dimension

Rocketed to the

ONLINE REGISTRATION

Hosted by District 16
www.district16wv.or

For more detailed information on these events, please speak with your group's GSR.

District 11 Meetings On-line

According to the latest Where and When published June 2021, all groups are meeting in person or have a hybrid meeting format except for the following which are on-line.

Daily at 7:30am- Eye Opener Group Hybrid

<https://www.gotomeet.me/EyeOpenerGroup>

Dial in at [\(646\) 749-3122](tel:6467493122)

Access Code: 604-461-373

Daily at 5:30pm - Early After Work Friends of Bill W. Group

Zoom Meeting ID 671-314-2769

Password: 118

Daily at 7:00pm - Doomsdayers Group

Join Zoom Meeting ID 942-899-066

Password 049396

Sundays at 2:00pm - Women On A Journey Group

Join Zoom Meeting ID 274-008-239

Password: woaj

Wednesday at 7:00pm – Wednesday Night Men's Group Hybrid

<https://www.gotomeet.me/EyeOpenerGroup>

Dial in: [+1 \(646\) 749-3122](tel:+16467493122) Access Code 604-461-373

CALL FOR NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS.....

Anyone wishing to submit an announcement, or story for the newsletter is encouraged to do so by emailing Pam W. at AAdistrict11@gmail.com

February 2024



STEP TWO

“Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.”

Step Two gives hope because we learn that we are not alone, there is help and there is something greater than ourselves that can help give us a new and free life. Right after Step One leaves us with no hope with its blunt honesty—no control, no choice, no power—Step Two gives hope and tells us that a Power greater than ourselves can restore us to our right minds. For me it was very helpful that the second step didn't say “came to believe IN a Power” but instead, “came to believe THAT a Power greater than ourselves” because I didn't believe IN anything. For the first time in my life I was invited to just believe and to begin to think about what a Higher Power was--not what I was told it should be. The emphasis of Step Two is not on who or what the Power is, but on what the Power can and will do for us, IF we are willing.

Step Two specifically addresses the mental obsession, which none of us can remove on our own. The word “believe” is an action word—what we truly believe is reflected in our actions. I am restored to sanity as a result of cooperating or allowing the Power into my consciousness and depending upon it rather than my own insane thinking and feelings. The great news is that Step two is probably the easiest Step out of the 12 because all you have to do is answer yes to a simple question;

1. Do I believe there is a Higher Power?

or

2. Am I willing to believe there is a Higher Power?

The other great news is that we don't even have to understand the Power; although Tradition Two states that it is loving so that is a great start.

The first and clearest demonstration of the Power that I saw was when other alcoholics around me stay sober and live a happy life. As I continue to work the Steps on a daily basis I become more and more conscious of the Power. Today I continue to gain experience with this awesome Power, I become more teachable and I rely more on God than on myself. The spiritual principles that are the foundation of this step are open mindedness, willingness, faith, trust and humility.

TRADITION TWO

“For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience.”

Whether I like it or not, the group conscience is a far more infallible guide than the decision of any individual member, however good or wise the person may be. Individually, as the result of the 12 Steps

we have a spiritual awakening—in other words we come to depend upon a Power greater than ourselves to direct us in all matters. This Higher Power is our new source of strength, a source of positive direction and as such how we operate in life takes on an entirely different complexion. We experience a new inner security, a sense of meaning and purpose, we review our mistakes and become willing to have them removed. Above all we improve our conscious contact with God.

Just like us as individuals, every AA group follows this same cycle of development. Though AA groups are the same in its primary purpose, each group does have its own special atmosphere, its own customs, peculiar state of development and is an unique entity that is not like any other.

In addition, each AA group has a group conscience; the collective conscience of its membership. Just like us as we work the Steps, grow and practice the principles in all our affairs, each group grows, learns and matures as a spiritual entity. As this process and spiritual maturing continues, the group becomes better able to make good decisions, receive right direction and lean on God in conducting its affairs.

In the First Tradition it was emphasized that in AA we have no government or coercive human authority and yes despite the fact that we do have safeguards to guide us both as individuals and as groups, we do veer off on tangents which can be frightening at times. However, as we mature and become willing to follow the guidance of a loving God, the spiritual principles, the Steps and the Traditions we can depend absolutely on the long-term stability of AA and the group itself.

If we, as AA members remember who our authority is then the collective conscience of the group is very dependability. We don't need punishments, rules or leaders and we can enjoy a kind of democracy rarely possible elsewhere because our ultimate authority is a loving God.

CONCEPT TWO

“When, in 1955, the A.A. groups confirmed the permanent charter for their General Service Conference, they thereby delegated to the Conference complete authority for the active maintenance of our world services and thereby made the Conference—excepting for any change in the Twelve Traditions or in Article 12 of the Conference Charter—the actual voice and the effective conscience for our whole Society.”

One key principle in this concept is the “delegation” of authority to our trusted servants to speak for our groups. If you want AA to remain strong, now and for the future, then have a strong Home Group that knows and follows the Traditions and elect GSRs who are committed to actively participating at the District and Area level. Obviously it is impossible for thousands of AA groups, and the many millions of AA members that are scattered all over the world, to actually manage and conduct all the tasks that AA does to carry the message. Which is why we must delegate, although keep in mind that we the AA Groups retain the power (virtually supreme) to alter the AA world-service structure, and to criticize its operation. Which means we as members have a responsibility to be an active member in a Home Group because that is where all of the final responsibility and authority rests. AA really is ours; to take care of, to grow, to strengthen. This is an amazing gift and a grave responsibility.

However, practically speaking, absolutely nothing could be accomplished, nor would our AA group's conscience be heard, unless the groups delegated the actual operational authority to chosen service representatives, who are fully empowered to speak and to act for them. As stated (see Concept I), for AA groups to be able to actually fulfil their primary purpose, they have to delegate someone to represent them to the General Service Conference. Our groups do this by electing and delegating authority to our GSR to speak for the group at the District and Area level. Then the Area elects a delegate to attend the General Service Conference in New York. In this way the voice of our groups is heard through our elected delegate. In making this huge shift of authority in 1955, Bill W. deeply hoped that we as a fellowship could avoid the pitfalls that other organizations have so often fallen into, due to their failure

to properly delegate and distribute their own authority, responsibility, and leadership. There is only one exception to this rule. The Twelve Traditions, and the Six Warranties of Article XII, cannot be changed without the consent of $\frac{3}{4}$ of all listed groups worldwide, by a written ballot.

One way to keep AA strong is to ensure that your Home Group is strong; by helping your group know and follow the 12 Traditions and Concepts, by electing the best possible person as your GSR, by attending your group's business meetings, taking an active role in the service structure and taking the responsibility to teach sponsees about the 12 Traditions and Concepts.