

## District 12 Dispatch

District 12’s General Service philosophy, as derived from “A.A.’s Legacy of Service” (Bill W., 1951), is to assist its GSRs to help ensure that their groups carry the message. *“Our Twelfth Step – carrying the message – is the basic service that the A.A. Fellowship gives; this is our principal aim and the main reason for our existence.*

*Therefore, A.A. is more than a set of principles; it is a society of alcoholics in action. We must carry the message, else we ourselves can wither and those who haven’t been given the truth may die.*

*Hence, an A.A. service is anything whatever that helps us to reach a fellow sufferer...”*



District 12 General Service is supported by the voluntary contributions of the groups it serves and is guided and directed by the Three Legacies of Recovery, Unity and Service, the guiding principles by which A.A. members recover and by which our Society functions through the principles of A.A.’s **Twelve Steps**, **Twelve Traditions** and **Twelve Concepts**.

District 12’s General Service primary purpose is to stimulate A.A. members interest in general service by relying on good communication as the primary means to show that *“service can add a rich dimension to their sober lives and Twelfth Step work, and that participation is vital to the future of A.A.”* (S23)



### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- About District ..... 1
- Step Four ..... 2
- Tradition Four ..... 3
- Concept Four ..... 4
- Events ..... 5
- Books & Grapevine ..6

## STEP 4

**“MADE A SEARCHING AND FEARLESS MORAL INVENTORY OF OURSELVES.”**

### **The One Thing I Need To Know About Step 4:**

**It's about causes and Conditions**



#### HOW TO DO AN INVENTORY: SEARCHING AND FEARLESS

So how do you actually do a personal inventory? Most of the people you will be relying on to guide you through Step Four probably believe there is no exact right or wrong way to practice this step. I think that what is important, is that we follow the general principle of self-honesty, and that we are willing to be “searching and fearless” in the pursuit of truth (By the way, when we say “fearless,” we do not mean you will have no feelings of fear; fearless means you will not let your fears stop you from being thorough in your inventory process. With Step Four, it means you commit to rigorous honesty as you focus on events in your life, including your own weaknesses, and specifically not on anyone else’s weaknesses).

Old timers will take the approach of reviewing the seven deadly sins as laid out in the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, while others will benefit from a review of sampling the more significant events from their lives as well. Using the process outlined in the Big Book is an essential guideline to reviewing the biggies: resentments, fears and sexual conduct.

#### MYTHS ABOUT THIS STEP

**This step is meant to tear you down.** Members who complete this step say they feel a newfound confidence once they’ve finally faced themselves. They are ready to start the next chapter of their lives as sober and better versions of themselves.

### **Principle of this Step:** **Courage**



### **What Can I Surrender in this Step?**

- 1.) Fear of looking at who I was, and
- 2.) Any desire to regret the past

### **QUESTIONS TO ASK WHILE DOING YOUR FOURTH STEP**

Here are some questions to help guide and prepare you for doing Step Four- they by no means take the place of doing the Fourth Step inventory as laid out in the Big Book of AA:

- What people, places or things do you resent and what led to those resentments?
- How did your behavior contribute to your resentments?
- How have your resentments affected your life, your relationships with others and yourself?
- Who or what do you fear and why? And how do you respond destructively or negatively to your fears?
- Who or what do you feel ashamed or guilty about?
- What feelings do you have the most trouble allowing yourself to feel, and how do you act out?
- How have your fears and resentments affected your friendships, and your family, work and romantic relationships?
- Have you compulsively sought after sex? Have you used sex to try to fill a spiritual void or loneliness? Have any of your sexual practices hurt others or your self?
- What do healthy relationships look like to you?
- Are there secrets that you haven’t told anyone or written about in your step work?



## Tradition 4

SHORT FORM:

“EACH GROUP SHOULD BE AUTONOMOUS EXCEPT IN MATTERS AFFECTING OTHER GROUPS OR AA AS A WHOLE.”



### TRADITION 4 GRANTS AA GROUP FREEDOM WITH RESPONSIBILITY TO THE WHOLE

Each 12-step group has complete freedom to decide for itself the program content of its meetings and the topics that will be discussed. The group can decide if the meeting will be open or closed and when and where the meeting will be held. Each group can decide to change its meeting format and has complete authority to spend its funds as needed.

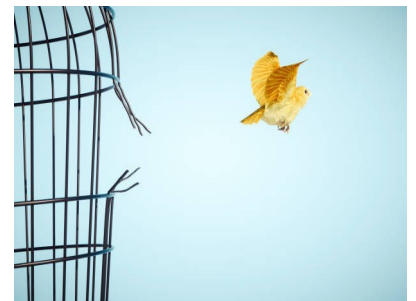
**More than most people, the alcoholic leads a double life. He is very much the actor**

The group can also decide how it wishes to begin and end its meetings. Some groups close with a prayer, while others have a moment of silence. In all of these matters, each group has total freedom. It is entirely up to the membership of that individual group.

But the second part of this tradition reminds each group that it has a responsibility also to the worldwide fellowship and other groups. By adhering to the traditions and principals of its program, each group can assure that it will not stray too far away from the program's basic tenets.

### HOW GROUP AUTONOMY CREATES DIFFERENT ENVIRONMENTS

One AA member described what it was like when encountering groups that did things differently. He says that when he first came into AA, he learned how it went in his little group, and as he went to other groups in neighboring towns, he would think, "They don't do their meetings right," simply because they weren't the same as the first group he went to.



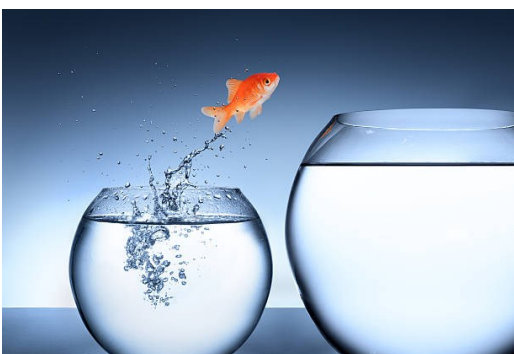
**This idea is clearly summarized in the last sentence of Tradition Four, which observes, “On such issues our common welfare is paramount.”**

**Overriding Idea of T4:**  
Our Decisions Affect Others

**Principle:**  
AUTONOMY

### STEP-TRADITION PARALLEL

“If I don't seek the advice and help of others in matters affecting them, then I again become God in my own life, the exact nature of my wrongs.” The steps help to restore my relationship with God (through inventory among other things) and the traditions show me how to get along with God (and others). I was God in my own life. I was a dictator. With others, I was just the opposite. I sought their approval. The fourth tradition solves this dilemma: I seek to be one with God and to be one with others about matters affecting them. There are certain things that must be done alone with God, such as writing inventory. Writing inventory is an autonomous function. Interesting parallel.



## CONCEPT 4

### PRINCIPLE OF THE CONCEPT:

#### PARTICIPATION

### ONE THING YOU NEED TO KNOW:

#### TRUSTED SERVANTS HAVE A RIGHT OF PARTICIPATION

*Throughout our Conference structure, we ought to maintain at all responsible levels a traditional "Right of Participation" taking care that each classification or group of our world servants shall be allowed a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge.*

simplify.

#### TRUSTED SERVANTS HAVE A RIGHT OF PARTICIPATION

This Concept basically tells us that there should always be a right to vote and debate (*discuss*) by certain world trusted servants equal to the job they perform.

No organizational charts here.

The idea of "participation" can usually stop the misapplication or misuse of final authority, while reminding us at the same time that the "spiritual corporation" of A.A. should never include any members who are regarded as "second class."



We all have a desire to belong. There are no "second class" members of A.A. These are a couple of lines I pulled out while reading this Concept.

As I'm sitting here at work today, this Concept really comes into play. We are going through a restructuring process on a national level and the realization has come out that those who work with the day to day activities and challenges have a lot to offer. For my part in the organization, there will be a national task force to implement what I do nation-wide. The first thought is to put management staff on this task force but what will that accomplish? They don't understand the day to day challenges. One of the purposes of the restructure is to utilize the talents of those involved on a daily basis. The same principal applies to this Concept of Participation.

All of us deeply desire to belong. We want an A.A. relation of brotherly partnership. It is our shining ideal that the "Spiritual Corporation" of A.A. should never include any members who are regarded as "second class". Deep down, I think this what we have been struggling to achieve in our world service structure. Here is perhaps the principal reason why we should continue to ensure "participation" at every important level. Just as there are no second-class A.A.'s, neither should there be any second-class world service workers either.



### CONCEPTS CHECKLIST

1. Do we understand the spiritual principles underlying the "Right of Participation"?
2. What does "in reasonable proportion" mean? Do we understand when it is appropriate for A.A. paid staff to have a vote at the General Service Conference or in our local service structure?
3. Do we expect that, because we are A.A. members, we should be allowed to vote at any group, even if we are not active members of that group?

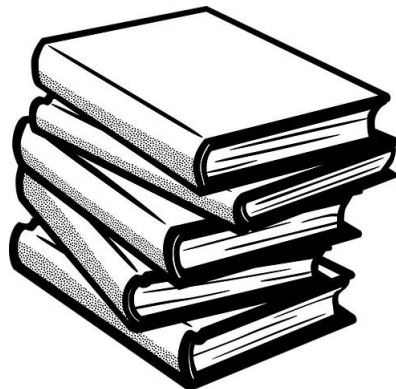


- 4-5-2025 Area 35 Spring Assembly— St. Cloud MN
- 4-25-2025 Superior Roundup—Superior WI
- 4-25-2025 Sunlight of the Spirit Weekend—Fairmont MN
- 4-25-2025 Came to Believe Workshop—Elk River MN
- 5-2-2025 Iron Range Get together—Grand Rapids MN

**All events with flyers can be found at**  
**twinportsaa.org**

## TWIN PORTS INTERGROUP

- Reading library stocked with all AA books and literature
- Flyers and announcements for events
- Volunteer opportunities galore
- Meeting directories



2024 W 3rd St  
Duluth MN 55806  
218-727-8117

**\$3.00 each sale on Grapevine Books**



Twin Ports Area Intergroup is here to help anyone who has a drinking problem. Our sole purpose is to carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous and to be of service to A.A. Groups in Northern Minnesota & Wisconsin.

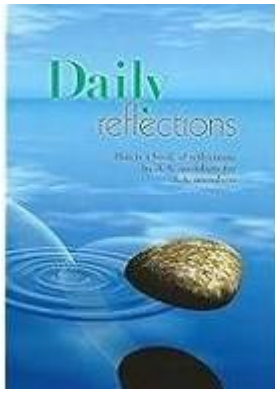
### **Contribute to the Newsletter**

- Your personnel story
- Anniversary or pot luck at your Home Group—Flyers are needed
- Events for the web site
- [ahlgrenscott@yahoo.com](mailto:ahlgrenscott@yahoo.com)

Twinportsaa.org



**Must Have!!**



We have not once sought to be one in a family, to be a friend among friends, to be a worker among workers, to be a useful member of society. Always we tried to struggle to the top of the heap, or to hide underneath it. This self-centered behavior blocked a partnership relation with any one of those about us. Of true brotherhood we had small comprehension.

We finally saw that the inventory should be ours, not the other man's. So we admitted our wrongs honestly and became willing to set these matters straight.

We were having trouble with personal relationships, we couldn't control our emotional natures, we were a prey to misery and depression, we couldn't make a living, we had a feeling of uselessness, we were full of fear, we were unhappy, we couldn't seem to be of real help to other people. . . .

We realize we know only a little. God will constantly disclose more to you and to us. Ask Him in your morning meditation what you can do each day for the man who is still sick. The answers will come, if your own house is in order. But obviously you cannot transmit something you haven't got. See to it that your relationship with Him is right, and great events will come to pass for you and countless others. This is the Great Fact for us.



**Month of April in A.A. History**

1951 - Meeting of the First General Service Conference

1941 - Ruth Hock reported there were 1,500 letters asking for help, as a result of the Saturday Evening Post Article by Jack Alexander.

1939 - Marty Mann attended her first meeting at the home of Bill and Lois Wilson in Brooklyn.

**AAGRAPEVINE Books**  
 Flip through the pages.  
 Add these new soft cover editions to your library.

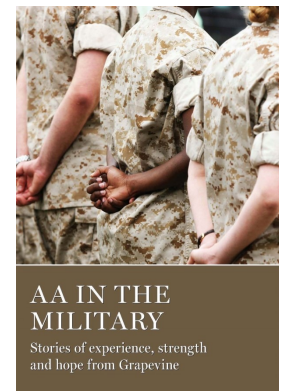
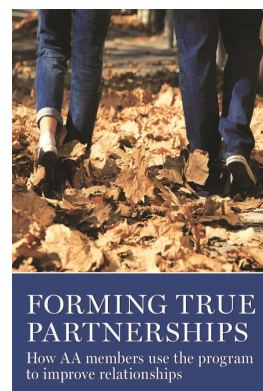
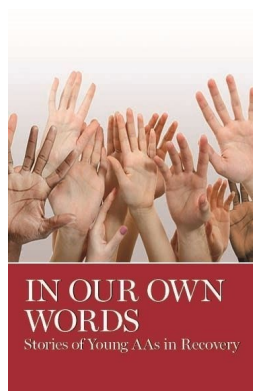
**OTHER AVAILABLE GRAPEVINE TITLES:**

- The Best of Bill
- Spiritual Awakenings I and II
- One on One (Sponsorship)
- No Matter What (Adversity)
- A Rabbit Walks Into a Bar
- Voices of Long-Term Sobriety
- Beginners' Book
- In Our Own Words (Young AA's)
- Forming True Partnerships
- I Am Responsible-The Hand of AA

Order online [AAGrapevine.org](http://AAGrapevine.org)  
 Click on Store then the Books tab. Or by phone: (800) 631-6025  
 Price for single title \$11.50 (\$10.99 for 5 or more copies)

*AA Grapevine books are also available at Central Offices and Intergroups.*

**Grapevine Books**



I am responsible. When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there. And for that I am responsible.