

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)

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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.”

Principle of this Step:
Service

The one thing I need to know about Step 12:

“Go give it away”



Step Twelve of Alcoholics Anonymous reads: “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.” This step marks a turning point—not just in personal recovery, but in our responsibility to others. The spiritual awakening referenced here isn’t necessarily dramatic; it often unfolds gradually, through the humility, honesty, and willingness cultivated in the previous eleven steps. By the time we reach Step Twelve, we’ve experienced a profound internal shift, one that compels us to give back what was freely given.

Carrying the message is both a privilege and a duty. It’s not about preaching or persuading—it’s about sharing our experience, strength, and hope with those still suffering. Whether through sponsorship, service work, or simply being available to listen, we become living examples of recovery. In this way, Step Twelve is deeply aligned with AA’s Twelfth Tradition: “Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.” We carry the message, not our egos. Our stories may differ, but the principles—honesty, compassion, and service—remain universal.

Practicing these principles in all our affairs is where Step Twelve truly comes alive. It challenges us to bring the spiritual toolkit of AA into every corner of our lives—family, work, community, and beyond. This is not perfection, but progress: striving to be honest when it’s hard, to be kind when it’s inconvenient, and to be of service even when no one’s watching. In doing so, we honor the legacy of AA and help ensure its future. Step Twelve is not the end—it’s the beginning of a life rooted in recovery, guided by spiritual principles, and sustained by service.



What Can I Sur-

render in this Step?

- 1.) Fear that I don’t have anything to give
- 2.) Laziness in practicing these principles in all my affairs

MYTHS ABOUT THIS STEP:

You’re fully cured once you get through all 12 steps. TRUTH: There is no cure for alcoholism – for the physiological chemical imbalance in the body (the allergy) that causes an alcoholic to develop the phenomenon of craving once alcohol enters their system. One CAN become *recovered* however from the seemingly hopeless state of mind and body that is found in every alcoholic. Through an active taking of the 12 Steps, the alcoholic can find a life beyond their wildest dreams.

“Our book is meant to be suggestive only. 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.

Abandon yourself to God as you understand God. Admit your faults to Him and to your fellows. Clear away the wreckage of your past. Give freely of what you find and join us. We shall be with you in the Fellowship of the Spirit, and you will surely meet some of us as you trudge the Road of Happy Destiny.

May God bless you and keep you-until then.”



“Old Behavior isn’t Old Behavior If We’re Still Doing It”

Tradition 12

“Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.”

Overriding Idea of Tradition 12:

Principles First – People Second

Principle:

Principles B4 Personalities

☐ Anonymity as a Spiritual Foundation

Tradition Twelve states: *“Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.”* This powerful reminder invites us to practice humility in all our affairs. In AA, anonymity isn’t just about protecting identities—it’s about fostering an environment where ego takes a back seat and spiritual principles take the lead. By removing personal ambition and recognition from the equation, we create space for unity, trust, and shared purpose. Anonymity levels the playing field, allowing each member to contribute without fear or favoritism.

☐ Principles Before Personalities

At the heart of Tradition Twelve is the call to prioritize principles over personalities. In service work, this means we focus on the message, not the messenger. Whether we’re chairing a meeting, presenting at a workshop, or participating in a group conscience, our goal is to uphold AA’s values—not to promote ourselves. This tradition protects us from the pitfalls of ego-driven leadership and reminds us that our personal opinions, charisma, or credentials must never overshadow the collective wisdom of the Fellowship. It’s a safeguard against division and a guide toward spiritual integrity.

☐ Anonymity in Action

Practicing Tradition Twelve means embracing anonymity not just in name, but in spirit. It shows up when we let go of credit, when we serve quietly, and when we speak for AA rather than ourselves. In public settings, it means we don’t identify as AA members in media or press, preserving the Fellowship’s reputation and protecting individual privacy. In service settings, it means we listen more than we speak, and we seek consensus over control. Anonymity is the soil in which AA’s unity grows—it nurtures humility, fosters inclusivity, and keeps our primary purpose front and center.

STEP-TRADITION PARALLEL:

The twelfth step poses the question, “What is a spiritual awakening?” I believe that the evidences of a spiritual awakening are found in a person who practices the twelfth tradition in all their affairs. Such a person sacrifices self in order to practice principles. Their motive in practicing all of the traditions is anonymity: they sacrifice to help others.

The twelfth tradition completes the twelfth step in the following way: I become spiritually awake when I carry the message by anonymously practicing sober principles.

Traditions Inventory

1. Why is it good idea for me to place the common welfare of all AA members before individual welfare? What would happen to me if AA as a whole disappeared?
2. When I do not trust AA’s current servants, who do I wish had the authority to straighten them out?
3. In my opinions of and remarks about other AAs, am I implying membership requirements other than a desire to stay sober?
4. Do I ever try to get a certain AA group to conform to my standards, not its own?
5. Have I a personal responsibility in helping an AA group fulfill its primary purpose? What is my part?
6. Does my personal behavior reflect the Sixth Tradition—or belie it?
7. Do I do all I can do to support AA financially? When is the last time I anonymously gave away a Grapevine subscription?
8. Do I complain about certain AAs’ behavior—especially if they are paid to work for AA? Who made me so smart?
9. Do I fulfill all AA responsibilities in such a way as to please privately even my own conscience? Really?
10. Do my utterances always reflect the Tenth Tradition, or do I give AA critics real ammunition?
11. Should I keep my AA membership a secret, or reveal it in private conversation when that may help another alcoholic (and therefore me)? Is my brand of AA so attractive that other drunks want it?
12. What is the real importance of me among more than a million AAs?

The Only Problem We Ever Really Have Is Separation From God

CONCEPT 12

“The Conference shall observe the spirit of A.A. tradition, taking care that it never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds and reserve be its prudent financial principle; that it place none of its members in a position of unqualified authority over others; that it reach all important decisions by discussion, vote, and whenever possible, substantial unanimity; that its actions never be personally punitive nor an incitement to public controversy; that it never perform acts of government; that, like the Society it serves, it will always remain democratic in thought and action.”

ONE THING YOU NEED TO

KNOW:

This Concept Simply Reviews the 6 Warranties



PRINCIPLE OF THE CONCEPT:

SPIRITUALITY

Concept XII anchors AA's service structure in spiritual principles, ensuring that our trusted servants act with humility, responsibility, and transparency. It introduces the six Warranties of the General Service Conference — enduring safeguards that protect AA's integrity and unity. These Warranties are not just procedural; they are spiritual commitments that reflect our collective conscience and our reliance on a Higher Power.

The six Warranties are: (1) that the Conference shall never become the seat of perilous wealth or power; (2) that sufficient operating funds, plus an ample reserve, be its prudent financial principle; (3) that no Conference member shall ever be placed in unqualified authority over another; (4) that all important decisions be reached by discussion, vote, and whenever possible, substantial unanimity; (5) that no Conference action shall ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy; and (6) that though the Conference may act for the service of AA, it shall never perform acts of government. Together, these Warranties form a spiritual firewall against misuse of power and ensure that AA remains a fellowship of equals.

Each Warranty reflects a Tradition in action. For example, the prohibition against punitive action and public controversy echoes Tradition Ten's commitment to avoiding outside issues. The emphasis on discussion and substantial unanimity mirrors Tradition Two's reliance on group conscience. These Warranties also reinforce AA's commitment to self-support, shared leadership, and spiritual rather than political authority. They guide our service bodies to act with love and restraint, even when faced with difficult decisions.

Ultimately, Concept XII is a call to spiritual stewardship. It reminds us that AA's service structure exists not to rule, but to serve. The Warranties protect our Fellowship from internal division and external distraction, allowing us to focus on our primary purpose: carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers. When we honor these principles, we help ensure that AA remains a sanctuary of hope, humility, and unity — today and for generations to come.

This Concept consists of the General Warranties of the General Service Conference. It is cast in stone; that is, although Bill leaves the door open for alterations and changes in the other Concepts and points out that the rest of the Conference Charter “can be readily amended,” these General Warranties — like the Twelve Steps and the Twelve Traditions — be changed only by “written consent of three quarters of all A.A. groups” in the world! Why?

Because “these Warranties indicate the qualities of prudence and spirituality which the Conference should always possess These are the permanent bonds that hold the Conference fast to the movement it serves.”

Concept 12 Checklist:

1. How do we guard against becoming a “seat of perilous wealth or power”?
2. How do we practice prudent use of our Seventh Tradition contributions and literature revenue?
3. Do we insure the spiritual liberties of all A.A. members by not placing any member in the position of absolute authority over others?
4. Do we try to reach important decisions by thorough discussion, vote and, where possible, substantial unanimity?
5. As guardians of A.A.'s traditions, are we ever justified in being personally punitive?
6. Are we careful to avoid public controversy?
7. Do we always try to treat each other with mutual respect and love?



Contribute to the Newsletter

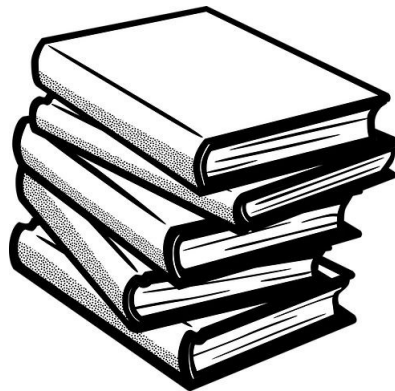
- Your personnel story
- Anniversary or pot luck at your Home Group—Flyers are needed
- Events for the web site
- ahlgrenscott@yahoo.com

**All these events can be found on
“twinportsaa.org” with flyers and directions**

- 11-20-2025: District 12 meeting—Duluth
- 11-22-2025: Grapevine Writing Workshop—Duluth
- 11-29-2025: MN Founders Day—Bloomington
- 1-16-2026: Area 36 Recovery, Unity, & Service Conference—Mankato
- 1-17-2026: Area 35 Winter Workshop—Hibbing
- 2-13-2026: Wils Rice Roundup—Mahnomen MN
- 2-27-2026: West Central Regional Service Conference—Cedar Rapids IA

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

The Twelve Steps

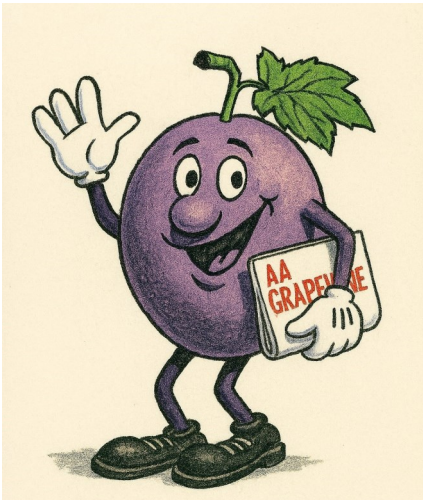
1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral 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 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 that 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.



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.

Daily Reflections December



HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

This month marks four impactful years since the premiere of the AA Grapevine Half-hour Variety Hour Podcast. - 1.2 million downloads - 212 episodes - 24,000 listens per month.

We deliver a new episode every Monday. Don't miss out—listen wherever you get your podcasts or visit aagrapevine.org/podcast.

In every copy:

- Letter from the editor
- Dear Grapevine
- Discussion topic
- Alcoholism at large
- At Wits End



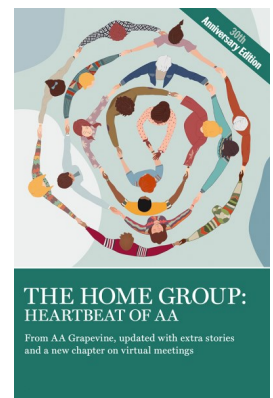
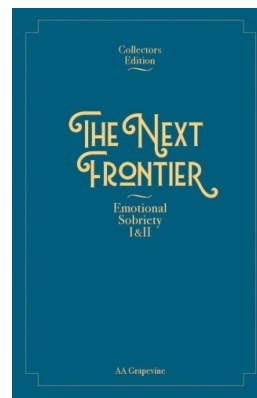
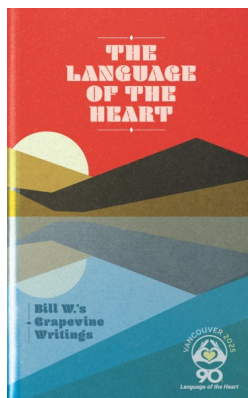
November 2025

This month's featured section is "Early Days of AA," showcasing articles from our vast Story Archive about what AA was like years ago. Grapevine also celebrates the 50th anniversary of our beloved AA book *Living Sober*.

- 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.
- 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.
- True ambition is not what we thought it was. True ambition is the deep desire to live usefully and walk humbly under the grace of God.
- Life will take on new meaning. To watch people recover, to see them help others, to watch loneliness vanish, to see a fellowship grow up about you, to have a host of friends—this is an experience you must not miss. . . . Frequent contact with newcomers and with each other is the bright spot of our lives.
- . . . work with other alcoholics. . . . It works when other activities fail.
- In A.A. we aim not only for sobriety—we try again to become citizens of the world that we rejected, and of the world that once rejected us. This is the ultimate demonstration toward which Twelfth Step work is the first but not the final step.

Month of December in A.A. History

- 1934 - Bill admitted to Towns Hospital for the fourth and last time
- 1934 - Bill has Spiritual Experience at Towns Hospital.
- 1934 - Ebby visits Bill at Towns hospital, brings William James' book, *Varieties of Religious Experience*.
- 1934 - Bill & Lois start attending Oxford Group meetings.
- 1948 - Dr. Bob's last major talk, in Detroit.
- 1955 - *Man on the Bed* painting by Robert M. first appeared in Grapevine. Painting originally called *Came to Believe*



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.