Area 35—District 12 **1-20-2026**
Volume 3, Issue 3

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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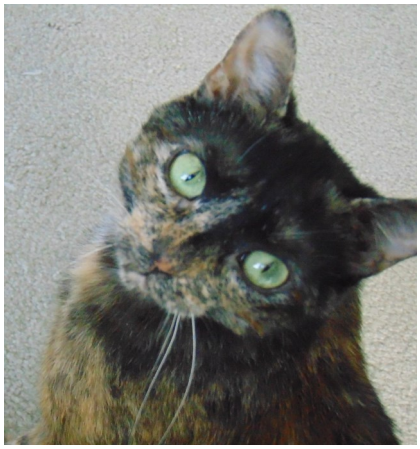
Step 3

"Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him."

Principle of this Step:
Faith

What Can I Surrender in this Step?

- The person I was before taking these Steps.
- My belief that I know better than God what is right for me.



The One Thing I Need To Know About Step 3:

Real Action Starts With a Decision

The Spiritual Dimension of A.A.'s Step Three

Step Three: *"Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him"*—marks a profound spiritual pivot in the recovery journey. It invites a shift from self-reliance to a deeper trust in something greater than our own limited thinking. Spiritually, this step is less about a dramatic surrender and more about a quiet willingness to stop steering life by fear, ego, or old survival patterns. It opens the door to humility, not as humiliation, but as the recognition that we don't have to run the show alone anymore.

At its core, Step Three is about relationship—between the individual and their Higher Power. This relationship is intentionally personal and flexible, allowing each member to define a Higher Power in a way that feels authentic. The spiritual action here is consent: a daily decision to align our choices with principles like honesty, compassion, patience, and courage. Instead of forcing outcomes, we begin to cooperate with a Power that works through conscience, community, and quiet intuition. Many members describe Step Three as the moment they stop fighting life and start flowing with it.

Spiritually, Step Three becomes a practice rather than a one-time event. Each day offers new opportunities to turn over fear, resentment, control, and self-will. As members continue to make this decision, they often discover a growing sense of peace and freedom. Life doesn't suddenly become easy, but it becomes more navigable because they're no longer relying solely on their own strength. Step Three becomes the spiritual foundation for the rest of the program—an ongoing invitation to trust, to let go, and to allow a Higher Power to guide the unfolding of a sober, meaningful life.

MYTHS ABOUT THIS STEP

If you depend on a higher power, you will lose your individuality. On the contrary, turning our will over to a Higher Power leads to true independence of the spirit. As we practice being conscious of a Higher Power, it will gradually turn from a hunch or occasional inspiration to an active, working part of our mind.

"All Action Result From Thoughts – So It's The Thoughts That Matter"

"We can't think ourselves into right acting – but we can act ourselves into right thinking"

Tradition 3 Short Form

"The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking."

Overriding Idea of Tradition 3:
Desire Is All You Need

Principle:
"MEMBERSHIP"

AA Tradition Three — The Spiritual Principle

At the heart of Tradition Three is a radical spiritual welcome: *"The only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking."* This principle cuts through judgment, qualifications, and human gatekeeping. Spiritually, it reminds us that grace is bigger than our opinions, and that God's love reaches people long before they "look good," "act right," or "fit in." Tradition Three protects the newcomer's right to belong, even when they arrive messy, confused, or afraid.

This tradition also teaches humility. It asks us to surrender our instinct to control who "should" be here. Instead, we trust that God brings the right people at the right time, and that our job is simply to keep the door open. When we let go of our personal preferences and fears, we make room for compassion to guide us. Humility becomes a spiritual practice of stepping aside so that grace can do its work.

Tradition Three also calls us to practice unconditional acceptance. Many of us arrived in AA feeling unworthy, ashamed, or convinced we didn't belong anywhere. Yet AA welcomed us without conditions. That same spirit of acceptance becomes our responsibility to extend to others. When we greet the newcomer with kindness rather than judgment, we embody the spiritual truth that healing begins with belonging.

Finally, this tradition invites us to remember that AA is a spiritual fellowship, not a club with membership rules. God is the ultimate authority on who belongs here—not us. Tradition Three keeps AA grounded in love, simplicity, and openness. It reminds us that every person who walks through the door is a child of God seeking hope, and our spiritual task is to make sure they find it

STEP-TRADITION PARALLEL

The relationship of the third tradition to the third step is a profound one. The third step poses the question: What do I need to do in order to turn my will and my life over to the loving care of God as we understand him? The tradition answers the problem posed in the third step. The only requirement I need to fulfill in order to turn my will and my life over to God's loving care is a desire to stop drinking. It is unbelievable that all the power of the universe is available to care for me if I only have one desire: to stay sober.

Traditions Inventory

1. In my mind, do I prejudge some new AA members as losers?
2. Is there some kind of alcoholic whom I privately do not want in my AA group?
3. Do I set myself up as a judge of whether a newcomer is sincere or phony?
4. Do I let language, religion (or lack of it), race, education, age, or other such things interfere with my carrying the message?
5. Am I over impressed by a celebrity? By a doctor, a clergyman, an ex-convict? Or can I just treat this new member simply and naturally as one more sick human, like the rest of us?
6. When someone turns up at AA needing information or help (even if he can't ask for it aloud), does it really matter to me what he does for a living? Where he lives? What his domestic arrangements are? Whether he had been to AA before? What his other problems are?

Concept 3

"To insure effective leadership, we should endow each element of A.A.—the Conference, the General Service Board and its service corporations, staffs, committees, and executives—with a traditional "Right of Decision.""

ONE THING YOU NEED TO KNOW:

Trusted Servants Have a Right of Decision

PRINCIPLE OF THE CONCEPT

TRUST

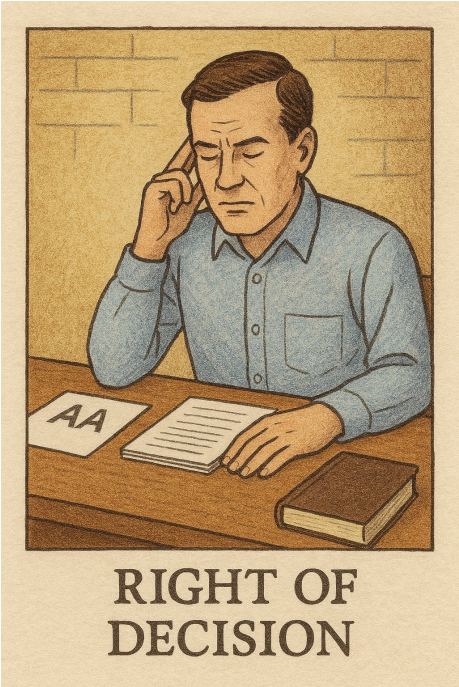
The Right of Decision is rooted in trust. When A.A. asks its trusted servants—whether at the Conference, the General Service Board, or in our committees and service offices—to make decisions on our behalf, we are practicing a deep spiritual principle: we are choosing faith over fear. Instead of trying to control every detail, we acknowledge that God works through people who are willing to serve. This trust allows our Fellowship to function with grace rather than rigidity.

Spiritually, the Right of Decision invites humility. It reminds us that no group can foresee every situation, and no set of instructions can cover every circumstance. By giving our leaders the freedom to act responsibly and prayerfully, we admit that our own understanding is limited. Humility opens the door for God's guidance to flow through the people we have chosen to serve, rather than through rules alone.

This Concept also teaches responsibility. A trusted servant who holds the Right of Decision is not free to do whatever they want—they are free to do what they believe is right for A.A. as a whole. That requires prayer, listening, patience, and a willingness to put personal preferences aside. The spiritual principle here is accountability to a Higher Power and to the Fellowship, not to ego or impulse.

Finally, the Right of Decision strengthens unity. When we empower our servants to act with spiritual maturity, we reduce confusion, avoid unnecessary delays, and keep our focus on our primary purpose. Unity grows when we trust one another enough to let people serve. In this way, the Right of Decision becomes more than a management tool - it becomes an expression of love, faith, and shared purpose within A.A.

Bill warns against using "The Right of Decision" as an excuse for failure to make the proper reports of actions taken; or for exceeding a clearly defined authority; or for failing to consult the proper people before making an important decision. But he concludes: "Our entire A.A. program rests squarely upon the principle of mutual trust. We trust God, we trust A.A., and we trust each other."



Concepts Checklist:

- Do we understand what is meant by the "Right of Decision"? Do we grant it at all levels of service or do we "instruct"?
- Do we trust our trusted servants — GSR, DCM, area delegate, the Conference itself?

"Old Behavior isn't Old Behavior If We're Still Doing It"

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

- 2-21-2026: Waters od Life / Gnesen potluck & speaker celebration—Duluth MN
- 2-27-2026: West Central Regional Service Conference—Cedar Rapids IA
- 3-7-2026: Serenity Club Annual Banquet— Superior WI
- 3-28-2026: Area 35 Assembly—Alexandria MN
- 4-17-2026: Superior Roundup—Superior WI
- 9-2027: West Central Regional Forum—Duluth MN

The Twelve Concepts
OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

1. Final responsibility and ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.
2. 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.
3. To insure effective leadership, we should endow each element of A.A.—the Conference, the General Service Board and its service corporations, staffs, committees, and executives—with a traditional "Right of Decision."
4. At all responsible levels, we ought to maintain a traditional "Right of Participation," allowing a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge.
5. Throughout our structure, a traditional "Right of Appeal" ought to prevail, so that minority opinion will be heard and personal grievances receive careful consideration.
6. The Conference recognizes that the chief initiative and active responsibility in most world service matters should be exercised by the trustee members of the Conference acting as the General Service Board.
7. The Charter and Bylaws of the General Service Board are legal instruments, empowering the trustees to manage and conduct world service affairs. The Conference Charter is not a legal document; it relies upon tradition and the A.A. purse for final effectiveness.
8. The trustees are the principal planners and administrators of over-all policy and finance. They have custodial oversight of the separately incorporated and constantly active services, exercising this through their ability to elect all the directors of these entities.
9. Good service leadership at all levels is indispensable for our future functioning and safety. Primary world service leadership, once exercised by the founders, must necessarily be assumed by the trustees.
10. Every service responsibility should be matched by an equal service authority, with the scope of such authority well defined.
11. The trustees should always have the best possible committees, corporate service directors, executives, staffs, and consultants. Composition, qualifications, induction procedures, and rights and duties will always be matters of serious concern.
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.

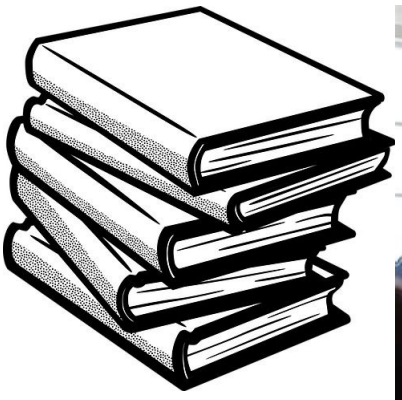
TWIN PORTS INTERGROUP

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

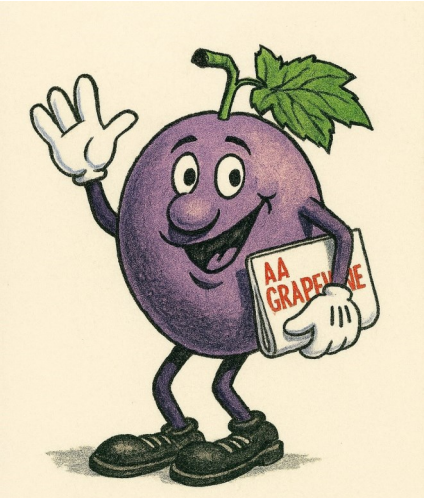
2024 W 3rd St

Duluth MN 55806

218-727-8117



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.

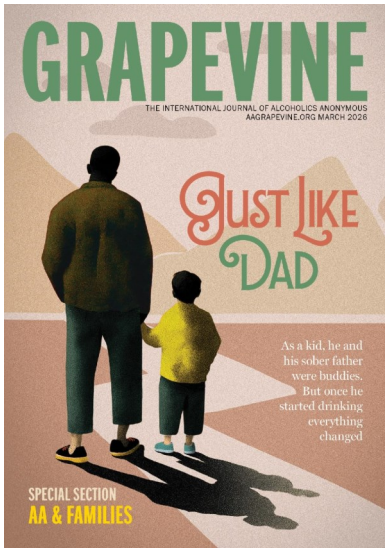


Daily Reflections for March

Your Daily Reflection each day can be found at "Twinportsaa.org"

- **It works—it really does.**
- **Once we have placed the key of willingness in the lock and have the door ever so slightly open, we find that we can always open it some more.**
- **Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.**
- **On awakening let us think about the twenty-four hours ahead. We consider our plans for the day. Before we begin, we ask God to direct our thinking, especially asking that it be divorced from self-pity, dishonest or self-seeking motives.**
- **We have entered the world of the Spirit. Our next function is to grow in understanding and effectiveness. This is not an overnight matter. It should continue for our lifetime.**
- **The more we become willing to depend upon a Higher Power, the more independent we actually are.**

March 2026

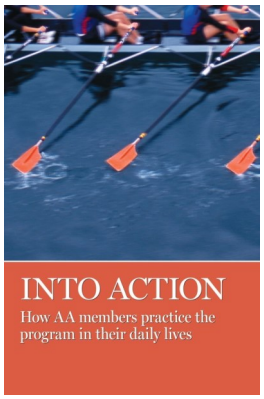


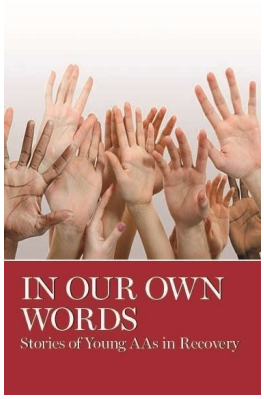
Month of March in A.A. History

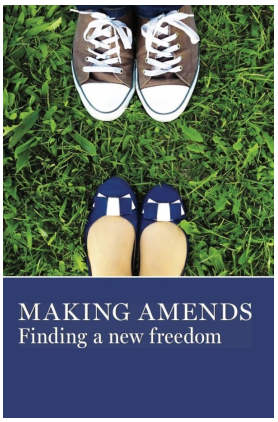
- 1938: Bill begins writing the book Alcoholics Anonymous. Works Publishing Inc established to support writing and printing of the book.
- 1941: 1st Prison AA Group formed at San Quentin.
- 1941: Jack Alexander's Saturday Evening Post article published and membership jumped from 2,000 to 8,000 by years end.
- 1944: New York Intergroup was formed.

In every copy:

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







AA Grapevine YouTube

The Grapevine has a YouTube channel where visitors can listen to submitted stories from A.A. members.

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.