

## 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.*

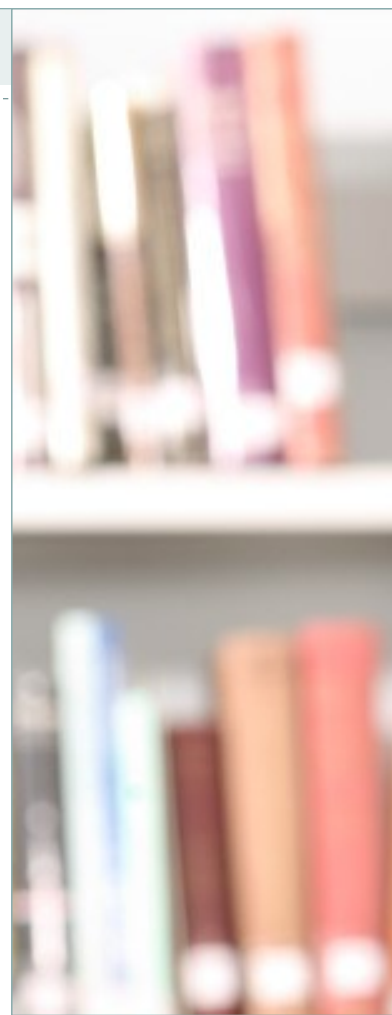
*Therefore, A.A. is more than a set of principles; it is a society of alcoholics in action. We must carry the message, else we ourselves can wither and those who haven’t been given the truth may die.*

*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 5

**“Admitted to god, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs”**

### The One Thing I Need To Know About Step 5: **Others See Us Better Than We Do**

**Principle of this Step:  
“Integrity”**



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

Fear of sharing my inventory with another human being.

Step Five of Alcoholics Anonymous invites members to admit to God, themselves, and another human being the exact nature of their wrongs. While simple in wording, this step often brings up deep fear. Fear of being judged, rejected, or exposed can feel overwhelming, especially for those who have spent years hiding behind secrecy and self-protection. Yet Step Five is not about punishment or shame; it is about honesty and relief. By speaking the truth aloud, members begin to break the isolation that fuels alcoholism and discover that they are not as alone as they once believed.

Much of the fear surrounding Step Five comes from the belief that our mistakes define who we are. Alcoholism thrives on this confusion, telling us that if others knew the full story, we would be unlovable. Step Five gently challenges that lie. Sharing our inventory with a trusted person helps separate our actions from our worth as human beings. As fear loosens its grip, many experience a profound sense of being accepted as they are—flawed, human, and still worthy of dignity and care.

Another fear tied to Step Five is the loss of control. Letting someone else hear our most guarded thoughts can feel risky, especially for those who learned early in life to rely only on themselves. However, this step is not about giving power away; it is about gaining freedom. When secrets are brought into the light, they lose their ability to control us. Courage grows through the act of sharing, and trust—carefully placed—becomes a new and healthier foundation for living.

Ultimately, Step Five shows that fear does not disappear by avoidance, but by facing it with honesty and support. Many members report that after completing this step, they feel lighter, clearer, and more connected to both themselves and others. Overcoming fear in Step Five is not a one-time victory but a meaningful turning point. It teaches that truth heals, connection strengthens, and that freedom from addiction is deeply tied to the courage to be seen just as we are.

#### **MYTHS ABOUT THIS STEP**

**It’s not necessary to share your defects with another person—it’s enough that your Higher Power knows.** It’s very important to reveal your inventory to another person, so you can receive feedback and experience. You’ll feel a huge weight lifted once you confide in another. This will allow you to move on to Step 6 with humility.

#### **IN YOUR PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS:**

1. Am I now able to forgive others and myself?
2. Am I ready for a sincere attempt to become what I can be?
3. Do I get wrapped up in the affairs of the world rather than giving first place to spiritual development?

#### **AT WORK:**

1. Am I willing to believe that my boss or coworkers are entitled to the truth about my abilities and my work?

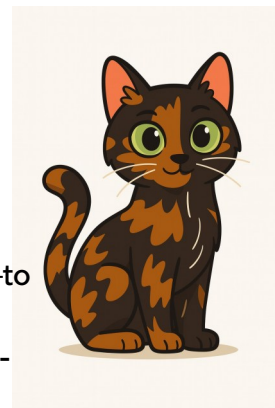


## Tradition 5—Short Form

**“Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.”**

**Principle:  
“Purpose”**

**Overriding Idea of Tradition 5  
“We Only Have One Purpose”**



### **The Vital Importance of AA’s Tradition Five**

Tradition Five of Alcoholics Anonymous states, “Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.” This simple sentence lies at the very heart of the AA Fellowship. From its earliest days, AA discovered that its strength and effectiveness depended on staying focused on one clear mission: helping alcoholics achieve and maintain sobriety. By defining and protecting this purpose, Tradition Five ensures that AA remains a place where a suffering alcoholic can reliably find hope, identification, and a proven path to recovery.

At its core, Tradition Five emphasizes focus over well intentioned expansion. Alcoholics Anonymous does not exist to solve every problem its members face, nor to address social, political, or even broader health issues. Those concerns, while important, can dilute the clarity of AA’s message if they take center stage. The tradition reminds groups and members alike that doing one thing well—sharing the experience, strength, and hope of recovery from alcoholism—is far more powerful than trying to do many things poorly. This singleness of purpose helps keep meetings consistent and understandable, especially for newcomers who often arrive confused, desperate, and searching for a solution.

Tradition Five is also essential to AA’s unity. When groups remain centered on their primary purpose, personal agendas and outside interests are less likely to create division. History has shown that when AA groups drift toward other causes or missions, disagreements tend to follow, weakening the fellowship as a whole. By agreeing that the group exists to carry the message to alcoholics, members find common ground regardless of background, beliefs, or personalities. This shared purpose forms a strong bond that transcends individual differences and allows AA to function as a unified spiritual entity.

Another crucial aspect of Tradition Five is its direct impact on personal sobriety. AA literature often highlights the paradox that sobriety is best maintained by giving it away. Helping another alcoholic is not merely an act of service; it is a vital part of one’s own recovery. When members focus on carrying the message, they strengthen their own commitment to sobriety and remain connected to the spiritual principles of the program. In this way, Tradition Five protects both the newcomer who needs help and the longtime member who needs to stay sober.

Ultimately, Tradition Five safeguards the future of Alcoholics Anonymous. Because groups around the world adhere to this guiding principle, AA meetings remain remarkably similar in purpose, whether they are held in a large city or a small rural town. This reliability means that an alcoholic, anywhere in the world, can walk into a meeting and hear the same life-saving message of recovery. By staying true to its primary purpose, AA continues to offer a clear way out for those who still suffer, ensuring that the hand of the fellowship is always there when help is needed most.

### **We Only Have One Purpose**

It is the great paradox of A.A. that we know we can seldom keep the precious gift of sobriety unless we give it away. This Tradition delineates pretty clearly our individual primary purpose, as well as the group’s. Each of us is but a small part of the whole, but by joining AA’s primary purpose to our own, we become something bigger than our individual selves.

### ***Am I willing to surrender my old primary purposes?***

To work this tradition means that I am willing to say “yes” to this question and rearrange the rest of my priorities. Devoting myself to a new primary purpose means that I am willing to let go of many old ideas.

## Concept 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.

### ONE THING YOU NEED TO KNOW:

#### Trusted Servants Have a Right of Appeal



### PRINCIPLE OF THE CONCEPT “DEMOCRACY”

**Alcoholics Anonymous Concept Five** centers on a simple but deeply protective idea: throughout A.A.’s service structure, a traditional Right of Appeal ought to prevail so that minority opinion will always be heard and personal grievances carefully considered. This concept was articulated to guard the Fellowship against the dangers of hasty or poorly informed decisions, especially at higher levels of service where actions can affect A.A. as a whole. By insisting that dissenting voices have not only permission but legitimacy, Concept Five balances majority rule with humility, reminding trusted servants that collective wisdom is strongest when it listens before it decides

The spiritual reasoning behind the Right of Appeal begins with A.A.’s understanding of human fallibility. No individual, committee, or majority is immune from error. Concept Five acknowledges that minorities are sometimes right, and even when they are not, their willingness to speak up forces deeper reflection and more thorough discussion. This practice mirrors A.A.’s spiritual emphasis on honesty and open-mindedness—principles essential to recovery. By welcoming dissent, the Fellowship practices humility, recognizing that truth often emerges through careful listening rather than authority or numbers

Concept Five also reflects A.A.’s spiritual commitment to justice and compassion. The Right of Appeal and the related Right of Petition ensure that individuals may seek redress for personal grievances without fear of reprisal. Spiritually, this upholds the dignity of each member and trusted servant, reinforcing the idea that service is an act of love rather than control. When members know they will be heard, fear diminishes, trust grows, and service structures become safer places for honest participation. This atmosphere of psychological and spiritual safety strengthens unity rather than threatening it.

Finally, the Right of Appeal embodies a balance that is central to A.A.’s spiritual design: freedom paired with responsibility. Minorities are encouraged—even obliged—to speak when conscience demands it, yet once heard, they are also called to respect the informed group conscience. This prevents tyranny by either the majority or the minority and keeps decision-making grounded in spiritual principles rather than ego or dominance. In this way, Concept Five serves not only as a governance safeguard but as a living spiritual practice, teaching A.A. how to listen, trust, and act together for the common good.

### Simplify:

Every member of A.A.’s world service structure has the right to state a minority opinion when they feel the majority has crossed over to the dark side.

We have to recognize that there are times when the minority can be right and it is our responsibility to listen to their petition. We have seen many examples where a well stated and well crafted minority opinion can change the outcome entirely.

In the spirit of democracy, allowing the minority opinion to be heard is vital to the unity we profess we must have in Tradition One. Being able to balance the right of appeal with majority decision ensures we will never be subjected to the tyranny of either the majority or the minority.



### 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)

All these events can be found on “[twinportsaa.org](http://twinportsaa.org)”  
with flyers and directions

- 4-17-2026: Superior Roundup—Superior WI
- 4-17-2026: Sunlight of the Spirit Weekend—Fairmont MN
- 5-1-2026: Iron Range Get Together—Hibbing MN
- 5-2-2026: Hold the Door Workshop—Duluth MN
- 5-16-2026: St. Cloud Roundup—St. Cloud MN
- 5-22-2026: Gopher State Roundup—Bloomington MN
- 9-2027: West Central Regional Forum—Duluth MN



0800 AA WORKS  
aa.org.nz  
help@aa.org.nz

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS  
AOTEAROA / NEW ZEALAND

## TWIN PORTS INTERGROUP

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

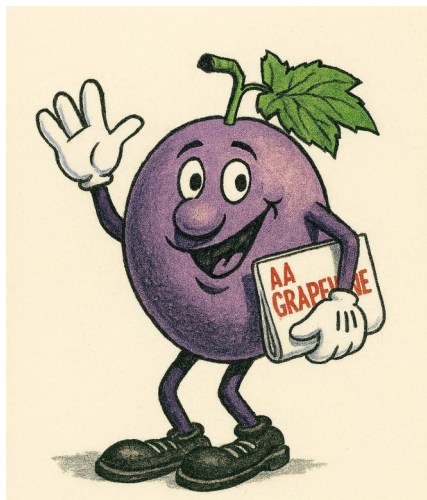


2024 W 3rd St  
Duluth MN 55806  
218-727-8117

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.

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



May 2026



### 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.

## Daily Reflections for May

Your Daily Reflection each day can be found at [“Twinportsaa.org”](http://Twinportsaa.org)

- **Cling to the thought that, in God's hands, the dark past is the greatest possession you have – the key to life and happiness for others. With it you can avert death and misery for them.**
- **Somehow, being alone with God doesn't seem as embarrassing as facing up to another person. Until we actually sit down and talk aloud about what we have so long hidden, our willingness to clean house is still largely theoretical.**
- **Such parts of our story we tell to someone who will understand, yet be unaffected. The rule is we must be hard on ourself, but always considerate of others.**
- **All of A.A.'s Twelve Steps ask us to go contrary to our natural desires . . . they all deflate our egos. When it comes to ego deflation, few Steps are harder to take than Five. But scarcely any Step is more necessary to longtime sobriety and peace of mind than this one.**
- **. . . our Society has concluded that it has but one high mission – to carry the A.A. message to those who don't know there's a way out.**
- **Day by day, we try to move a little toward God's perfection. So we need not be consumed by maudlin guilt. . . .**

### Month of May in A.A. History

- **1935**— Alone in the lobby of the Mayflower Hotel in Akron OH between the bar & the telephone, Bill W. makes 11 phone calls & finally gets Henrietta Seiberling, who introduces him to Dr. Bob.
- **1938**—Bill W. & other AA's begin writing the Big Book.
- **1939**—Clarence S. of Cleveland OH tells Dr. Bob, his sponsor, he won't be back to Oxford Group meetings in Akron & will start “AA” meetings in Cleveland.
- **1940**—Washington D.C. Sunday Star reports founding of 1st AA group in the nations capitol, meeting every Tuesday night.

