

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 9

“Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.”

Principle of this Step:
Discipline

The One Thing I Need To Know About Step 9:

The Action Continues

“Humility leads to strength and not to weakness. It is the highest form of self-respect to admit mistakes and make amends for them.”— John. J. McCloy

So what is Step Nine of AA Alcoholics Anonymous? Step Nine is that biggie step, the one we likely have created some anxiety over because it involves making amends.

It is suggested that we make direct amends to people whenever possible. What does that mean? There are three kinds of amends:

Direct Amends – taking personal responsibility for your actions and confronting the person who you would like to reconcile with.

Indirect Amends – finding ways to repair damage that cannot be reversed or undone by doing things like volunteering and helping others.

Living Amends – when you show others as well as yourself that you have made a genuine lifestyle change and are making a commitment to yourself and those that



What Can I Surrender in this Step?

- 1.) My hesitation to take action, and
- 2.) Fear they won't accept my amends, and
- 3.) Fear of the outcome

We have already begun making amends to ourselves by changing some of our behaviors, attitudes and beliefs. The part of the amends process whereby we change ourselves has an effect on everyone around us and goes on long after we've spoken directly to someone we have harmed.

When it comes to making amends to others, there are usually a lot of fears and expectations involved. We may be afraid about making financial amends, or afraid of rejection, retaliation and a host of other doubtful outcomes. However, making amends doesn't always have to be a nerve-racking, dreadful or joyless experience. In fact, maybe you'll find that you feel excited about the possibility of healing a relationship or happily anticipating the relief you will feel after having made a particularly scary amends or even paying off a debt. There is freedom that is gained by cleaning up the past, a freedom to live peacefully in the present.

To keep things as simple as possible, you can get your head in the game by focusing on the purpose of the Ninth Step. Keep in mind the three concepts or “The Three R's” of the Ninth Step that are associated with making amends:

Restoration means bringing something back to its former state, usually things that have been damaged. This can mean restoring our reputations, and even restoring trust in a relationship.

Resolution as recovering addicts, means we likely have past experiences that plague us or disturb us in some way. Finding a resolution to these problems means coming up with answers and solutions and laying them to rest.

Restitution as it relates to the Ninth Step is the act of returning something material (or abstract) to its rightful owner.



MYTHS ABOUT THIS STEP

We have to disclose every detail of our mistakes. Full disclosure may harm the one with whom we are making amends, or quite often, other people. It won't make us feel any better to increase the burden of another.

It's about getting them to like you again. This Step is not about getting back in the good graces of those we've harmed – it's about our willingness to do the footwork, take the action, and leave the results up to God. We're not in charge of the outcome, only the work to get us there.

Tradition 9

“A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.”

Overriding Idea of T9:

Organization and Service Aren't Mutually Exclusive

Principle:

SPIRIT OF SERVICE

TRADITION SUMMARY

ORGANIZATION AND SERVICE AREN'T MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE

In the beginning, our founders really felt like we didn't need much organization and structure in the Fellowship, and then they went and created a bunch of it. “It is clear that we ought never to name boards to govern us, but it is equally clear that we shall always need to authorize workers to serve us. It is the difference between the spirit of vested authority and the spirit of service.”

One of the best examples of this is if you should ever find yourself needing to reach out to GSO for their ideas on a specific issue that your group, District or Area may be having; you can be relatively sure regardless of what you are asking about will garner a response that generally starts off with something like, “That's a great question. Our shared experience in A.A. is....” and they will offer suggestions of solutions from those that have gone before us to help you with your concern. They cannot tell us what to do, but they can help us.

The organization of our Fellowship is crucial to our being able to carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic, but that structure is not there to govern, but to serve.



STEP-TRADITION PARALLEL

The first nine steps delivered us from the bondage of our past experiences with alcohol. We finally arrived at the place where we could say to ourselves, “I have totally faced my past. And there is nothing left in my past that I'm ashamed of. There's nothing left that hurts anymore. There's nothing left in my past that's painful. There's nothing left in my past I need to forgive or need to be forgiven for. I'm at total oneness and peace with my past.” Well, that's a tremendous statement to be able to say. That's an enormous statement for any person to be able to say about their life. And that's what the first nine steps give us. And the ninth tradition assures me that once my ninth step amends have been made, I will be led to that profound place of peace I have always sought in my life: divine order.

The ninth tradition not only contains the secret of divine order but also contains the personal principle that will keep an alcoholic like me in divine order. It is so simple. I give up control. I stop organizing myself. I stop trying to organize God into my limited ideas of order.

How does this ninth tradition relate to the ninth step? My life gets unimpeded flow of divine love in a triangle consisting of you, myself and God. Whenever the divine order of that relationship is disturbed, I can restore order by making the unmade amend that put my life out of order. The ninth step poses the question, “After making amends, how do I stay reconciled with you today?” The ninth tradition answers that question by implying that I remain in the divine order by not organizing you, myself or God and spontaneously being of service to you and God.

TRADITION'S INVENTORY

1. Do I still try to boss things in AA?
2. Do I resist formal aspects of AA because I fear them as authoritative?
3. Am I mature enough to understand and use all elements of the AA program—even if no one makes me do so—with a sense of personal responsibility?
4. Do I exercise patience and humility in any AA job I take?
5. Am I aware of all those to whom I am responsible in any AA job?
6. Why doesn't every AA group need a constitution and bylaws?
7. Have I learned to step out of an AA job gracefully—and profit thereby—when the time comes?
8. What has rotation to do with anonymity? With humility?

CONCEPT 9

SHORT FORM:

“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.”

PRINCIPLE OF THE CONCEPT:

simplify.

VISION



ONE THING YOU NEED TO
KNOW:

WE LEAD TO SERVE RATHER THAN LEADING TO GOVERN

As we study the Concepts, the ninth change that is taking place in us is that we understand we must become selfless leaders.

What are the changes that need to take place in our lives in the ninth concept in order to serve as good leaders? We need to surrender old ideas about leadership and be willing to put aside any personal ambitions, feuds, and controversies that prevent us from offering effective leadership.

We need to become a spiritual example, someone who can personally put principles, plans, and policies into such dedicated and effective action that others want to back us up and help us with our job.

We Lead to Serve Rather than Leading to Govern

This topic came up in my workplace the other day. The conversation was about all the talented people we have working for us and the rate that they leave or burn out because we don't give them room to grow. How can we create opportunities for them to expand their talents, teach others and at the same time, make room for the new and talented people yet to come?

This is one of the reasons we practice the principal of rotation in our service positions. I was a group treasurer for close to five years. I got very good at it and I owned it. I still want to collect the money and see that the books are done right. Ownership isn't a good thing and fortunately someone came along who was willing and with some training, he does a pretty good job at it. The point is – we took the time to know this person, saw his talents and asked him to serve.

“Leadership in A.A.: Ever a Vital Need” is a must read. It's a short article in Concept IX in the A.A. Service Manual. It talks about the various types of leadership and reminds us that our leaders do not govern and that they are human just like the rest of us.

I guess the point I wish to make is that it's our responsibility as a fellowship to continually be on the watch for those in our fellowship with those special skills and qualities and a genuine desire to serve. I guess that means we have talk to others, to learn more about them, to show a genuine interest in them and befriend those as they come in the door. I've found that if you actually tell someone you need help with something and they have the right skills, they will help.

“A.A. has such a diverse membership and each member possesses their own special skills, it's our job to recognize them and to put them to good use for the well being of Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole.”

CONCEPTS CHECKLIST

1. Do we discuss how we can best strengthen the composition and leadership of our future trusted servants?
2. Do we recognize the need for group officers? What is our criteria for election?
3. Do we sometimes give a position to someone “because it would be good for them”?
4. Do I set a positive leadership example?



“A leader in A.A. service is therefore a man (or woman) who can personally put principles, plans and policies into such dedicated and effective action that the rest of us want to back him and help him with his job.



Contribute to the Newsletter

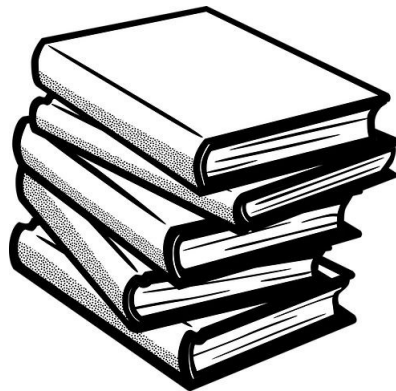
- Your personnel story
- Anniversary or pot luck at your Home Group—Flyers are needed
- Events for the web site
- ahlgrenscott@yahoo.com

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

- 9-5-2025 Heartland Roundup—Park Rapids
- 9-12-2025 Area 52 Roundup—Minot ND
- 9-12-2025 Duluth Roundup—Duluth MN
- 9-13-2025 St. Cloud Intergroup Roundup—St. Cloud MN
- 9-18-2025 District 12 meeting—Duluth
- 9-19-2025 West Central Regional Forum—Omaha NE
- 10-3-2025 Recovery on the River—Eau Claire WI

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
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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 Area Intergroup is here to help anyone who
has a drinking problem.

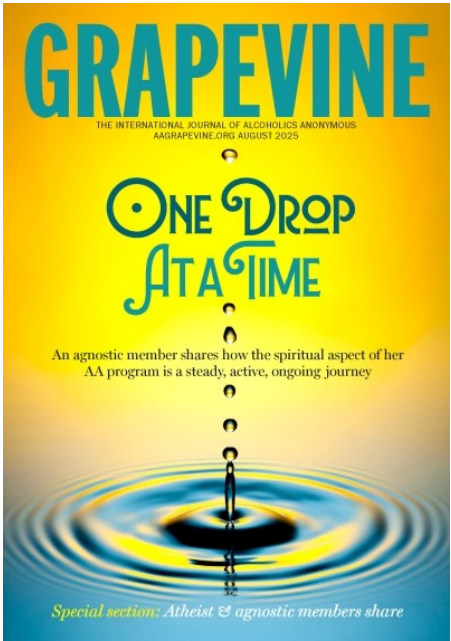
Our sole purpose is to carry the message of Alcoholics
Anonymous and to be of service to A.A. Groups in
Northern Minnesota & Wisconsin.

Grapevine Greeting Cards



Daily Reflections August

- 9/2 The willingness to grow is the essence of all spiritual development.
- 9/3 We feel a man is unthinking when he says sobriety is enough.
- 9/7 We are there to sweep off our side of the street, realizing that nothing worth while can be accomplished until we do so, never trying to tell him what he should do. His faults are not discussed. We stick to our own.
- 9/12 For the readiness to take the full consequences of our past acts, and to take responsibility for the well-being of others at the same time, is the very spirit of Step Nine.
- 9/16 . . . no society of men and women ever had a more urgent need for continuous effectiveness and permanent unity. We alcoholics see that we must work together and hang together, else most of us will finally die alone.
- 9/20 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.
- 9/28 Practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics.



In every copy:

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



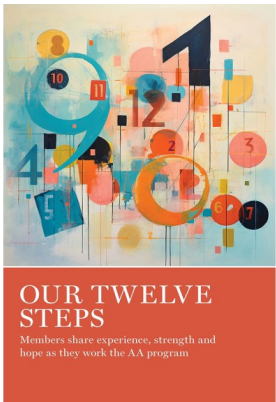
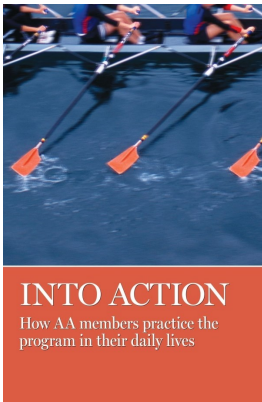
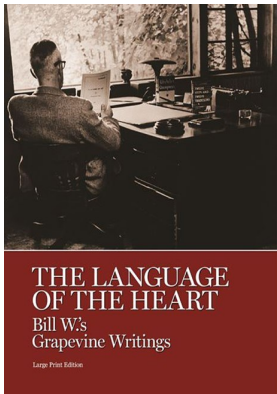
September 2025

This month’s featured section is “Stories of Gratitude.” AA members share powerful, personal stories about being thankful, appreciating the moment, helping others and living life to its fullest.

Month of September in A.A. History

Sept, 1930	Bill wrote 4th (his last) promise in family Bible to quit drinking
Sept. 1939	1st AA group founded in Chicago.
Sept, 1946	1st A.A. group in Mexico.
Sept. 1937	Florence R, 1st female in AA in NY.
Sept. 1938	Bill W & Hank P form Works Publishing Co.
Sept, 1971	First European Convention, Bristol, England

“The only problem we ever really have is separation from God.”



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.