

Regmaker

AUG. / SEPT. 2020



Your Meeting in Print

Editorial

We're five months in to the new normal of virtual AA meetings and the Fellowship continues to thrive. Many of us, through God's grace, continue fulfilling AA's primary purpose - to stay sober and to help other alcoholics to find sobriety.

Groups all over the world are sharing their delight at the influx of newcomers to meetings, and the growth in meeting sizes. Who knows - perhaps the accessibility and ultimate 'anonymity' of online meetings has allowed for some people to reach out to AA for the first time - coupled with the ultimate convenience (us alcoholics are undisciplined!) this is proving a winning combination and perhaps online meetings will remain a staple AA offering? Whatever the future holds many of us have had the privilege of hearing, supporting, interacting and sharing with alcoholics from all corners of the globe; this has been an enormous blessing and bright spot in many of our lives.

Of course many of us still miss in person meetings and the Fellowship has displayed great restraint and patience not starting up meetings until we are absolutely sure that we can fulfil the many requirements that meeting as a group requires in Level 2.

The current scenario where we need to wait for the good of the Fellowship, brings to mind such an important message from Bill W featured in AA Comes of Age - pp 287- 288:

Preserving our unity:

'Gradually we saw that the unity, the effectiveness, and even the survival of A.A. always would depend upon our continued willingness to give up our personal ambitions and desires for the common safety and welfare.

Just as sacrifice meant survival for the individual, so did sacrifice mean unity and survival for the group and for A.A.'s entire fellowship.

Viewed in this light, AA's Twelve Traditions are little else than a list of sacrifices which the experience of twenty years* has taught us that we must make, individually and collectively, if AA itself is to stay alive and healthy' **now 85 years*

This message could not be more relevant in 2020 - 85 years later.

Enjoy this free edition of Regmaker and please send us your comments and suggestions and most importantly your stories to the AA General Service Office of South Africa at gso@aasouthafrica.org.za

Yours in Service,
The Regmaker Team

Regmaker

Your Meeting In Print

Your Meeting in Print

Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for AA membership. We are self-supporting through our own contributions. AA is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organisation or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy; neither endorses nor opposes any cause. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

The opinions expressed in Regmaker are not necessarily those of the editor, the publisher or AA as a whole. They are the opinions of the writer at the time of writing.

GSO Contact Details:

Tel: 011 867 5950

e-mail: gso@aasouthafrica.org.za

website: www.aasouthafrica.org.za

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THE I FACTOR

Dirk, Highveld Group

walked through the doors not knowing what to expect. The thing I knew

about AA was that I could get help for the problem I had. I had a problem that I tried to fix numerous times. I knew I drank too much, but am I an alcoholic? What makes a person an alcoholic? I now know that I am an alcoholic, for sure. I have been a recovering alcoholic for the past 472 days. When I walked through the doors of AA, I did not know what to expect.

Much to my surprise you were **a bunch of happy bright** eyed people and not a bunch of sad hopeless drunks. I could not figure out why you were happy to see me. At this point in my life I was at rock bottom and what I did know was that I could not be counted on and did not give my loving wife the support that she needed from me. I was surely not a role model for my kids and not the father they needed. I think my feelings at this stage were that the world owed me and I had no other choice than to drink and all would be better. I could have not been more wrong.

From the first time I took a drink I was hooked. I loved the smell, the taste and the way it made me feel. My wife still tells me I made drinking look so good she even wanted to have a drink by just looking at me. It only took one drink to calm me down and relax me, the only down point was that after that one drink I had to have a lot more. After one I could not stop, I had to get so drunk that I could not remember what I did.

From the start I was comfortable with everybody in the room, it is not easy to put in words but I knew every one of you although I did not know any of you. I found a new family in AA, my brothers and sisters in the Fellowship. Nobody judged me and told what to do and what not to do, but there were a lot of suggestions.

It took me a while to start with step work, I knew I was an alcoholic but could I do what was expected from me? I did not know whether I could do all the things I had to, whether it was going to be too much for me? That is where the I factor came in, I thought I had this and I could do this, I didn't need AA, I knew best, I just needed to stay sober and I would be OK. Before I knew it, I was so close to a relapse it scared the living daylight out of me, I needed to do the steps and I had to get a sponsor, my life depended upon it.

I did my steps, not at all easy but I did all of them and I didn't die, so it wasn't that difficult. I now know that I cannot walk the road of sobriety alone. I needed God, my family and each and everyone in AA. I do understand now why you were so happy to see me walking through the doors that first time. You needed me just as much as I needed you.

“Those events that once made me feel ashamed and disgraced now allow me to share with others how to become a useful member of the human race.” p.492

“I listened to their stories and found so many areas where we overlapped – not all the deeds, but the feelings of remorse and hopelessness. I learned that alcoholism isn’t a sin, it’s a disease.” p.344

“We talked of intolerance, while we were intolerant ourselves. We missed the reality and the beauty of the forest because we were diverted by the ugliness of some of its trees.” p.50

Zoom Meeting

Henning V, New Freedom

My name is Henning and I am an alcoholic. This is my 13th year living a daily life of sobriety and recovery.

My world has been drastically altered by the arrival of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Having learned from meetings, literature, my sponsor and members in our Fellowship that I needed to remain active to ensure my sobriety, the virus had literally thrown a spanner in my works.

I wondered, how would I ever get back into my comfort zone regarding my regular meetings?

As my opinion is that group meetings are a vital part in maintaining my sobriety, as well as contact with my sponsor and members of the fellowship how would this now be possible? With groups closing their doors en masse, what was to come of AA's message: "Our doors are always open?"

Fortunately the online meeting platform "Zoom" was introduced to me, as prior to this I knew of online meetings, but none locally. I knew from the onset that to make the change from group meetings to Zoom meetings I had to become willing to try something new with an open mind.

Initially I very cautiously attended my first meeting via Zoom. I was welcomed as though I was a newcomer, which in this instant I was. That meeting took me back in time to my first meeting when I entered the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Those old feelings of fear of the unknown, my lack of confidence etc. came rushing back, but these soon faded by listening to the members sharing their strengths, hopes and dreams. Information regarding online meetings increased daily, and I

I was welcomed like a newcomer, which in this instance I was.

soon became comfortable in chairing and sharing at these meetings. Meetings both nationally and internationally became a God send for me. They have turned out to be an exceptional opportunity for myself and I would hope of course fellow members, to broaden our horizon.

I can now experience meetings all over the world, hearing people talk about recovery, and their high and low points. Anytime of the day or night, when not in a good space I can, as suggested, join a meeting and am assured that on leaving the meeting, I will be in a better space. I have the faith that my Higher Power, God, will be at that meeting as well.

There are however disadvantages to only be able to attend online meetings presently. Firstly, my duty as an alcoholic to pass on the message of hope and that there is a solution to the still suffering alcoholic. How do I 12 step someone that has reached out for help? Will passing on information regarding online meetings be sufficient for the person to recover? How can Zoom meetings ever simulate the experience of the physical contact and fellowship during and after a meeting? Another aspect of the disadvantage is the affordability of these online meetings. As our fellowship is entirely committed to move forward with ideas how to address problems that crop up as they surely will, I believe that decisions taken will have the good of our members at heart.

For now I personally am grateful that I have the opportunity and the means to attend meetings. Being actively involved in service, the Zoom platform has provided all of us doing service, the space to have meetings regarding the upcoming 2020 Conference, as well as JWRA monthly meeting. The meetings enable us to ensure that communication continues with the service structures of our Fellowship. To close, online meetings are different, but can you imagine not being able to attend any meetings for the foreseeable future? In Gratitude.

COVID-19 | Response

Jason, KZN

Jason the Alcoholic

Greetings my extended family. My name is Jason and I am an alcoholic. Covid-19 became an instant barrier to my world. I could not work, I could not attend meetings, I could not do so many things that contributed to my wellbeing. This pandemic made me realise what I had taken for granted. How was I supposed to cope?

The only way I knew how was to refer to our 36 Spiritual tools for guidance. Steps 1, 2 and 3 brought me to a degree of peace. I accepted that this disease was out of my control and I knew that only God could and would resolve this problem in His time. I was prepared to let God take control of my life once again.

I take Covid-19 on a one day at a time principle. I have had a lot of time to work our programme and if there is any good that has come out of this pandemic for me will be Jason working a bit more on himself. Zoom meetings have become our platform to meet the people we love and those that share our common problem. I am really grateful for those that have initiated and are maintaining these meetings in KZN and throughout the world. It is simply mind blowing as to how simple it has become to attend real time meetings with members throughout the world. Thank God for Technology.

My home group members have started our weekly Zoom meetings and it is really comforting to be in their midst again. We have pledged to commit to our responsibilities as a Group to our Area. It is only because I am an AA member practicing love, patience and tolerance that my home remains happy and peaceful amongst all the turmoil of the world and for that I am eternally grateful.

Jason the trusted servant

The first challenge we were confronted with in KZN was the cancellation of National Convention 2020 over the Easter Weekend. I am the secretary of the committee and can testify to the emotions experienced by the committee and all the members of KZN. It was not easy but our Chairman and the committee ensured that the entire KZN fellowship had an opportunity to express their views about an event that we encouraged them to take ownership of. I will be failing in my duty if I did not acknowledge the outstanding manner in which Pravin.S the chairman of National Convention 2020 executed his mandate.



COVID-19 | Response continued...

The National Convention Committee 2020 together with the entire KZN fellowship has certainly fulfilled 2 out of 3 of its purposes and that is to raise funds and create a new tier of service personnel. We passionately await an opportunity to host a convention in the future.

It was only a few days after lockdown that members took the responsibility of facilitating Zoom meetings. This platform is used by all who can access it and we are concerned about those that cannot. Members are encouraged to make telephone calls to group members that don't have access to Zoom meetings.

We all pray for this to pass so our meetings start up with the necessary precautions.

The membership has been lovingly reminded about our 7th Tradition and we are extremely grateful to those that contribute in these trying times. Fincom and Service Arms Committees have started Zoom meetings to address their respective mandates.

I attended the first Virtual Board Meeting on 16th and 17th May 2020. It was very productive. The Board has now decided to use this platform for most of their meetings, a huge saving to the Fellowship. It's clear to me that Covid-19 has brought about changes that will positively affect our Fellowship.

I am learning so much by embracing the third legacy (service) of our Fellowship.

I thank you for my life.

Jason J – KZN Regional Trustee

*Covid-19 has brought about
changes that will positively
affect our Fellowship.*

AA's Third Legacy

Basil P, Centurion

The triangle is reputed to be one of the strongest shapes in nature. It is no coincidence, then, that our Fellowship has adopted the equilateral triangle as part of its logo. It really implies that all legacies are equal in strength but that there's a progression in application, ie.

Recovery first, then Unity and, finally, Service.

My sponsor had just two responses to all my queries in my early days in the Fellowship, viz. "The Penny will Drop" and "Do Service".

I was sometimes frustrated with him, as, that is all he said whenever I posed a problem to him, be it financial, personal, emotional or spiritual. But, as I grew in the Fellowship, I understood the merits of his simple advice. As I got involved in Service, I began to experience what Recovery felt like.

Aside from attending open meetings, I got involved in Step / Workshop Meetings which were adjuncts to each other. I began to experience a perfect balance in AA, where the open meetings were allowing me to fellowship and identify with speakers, and the Workshop meetings were guiding me through the Steps, Traditions, and Concepts. These workshop meetings are such an integral and complementary aspect of the A.A. recovery programme, that, I believe, one can't do the one, without doing the other. Ideally, an equitable balance between the two is called for.

Doing Service is necessary and beneficial, but doing a variety of Service is better for me in the long term. Doing different types of Service allowed me to learn new skills, meet more people, and further entrench and solidify my sobriety, like nothing could. I don't believe in a 'gap' period between service positions – there's plenty of work for us to do in A.A. I can't afford to become complacent and rest on my laurels. Service positions are available at Group, Area and National levels. There are always vacancies that we have no takers for.

When asked to serve in A.A., I have no option but to say 'Yes' - this is a demonstration of my gratitude to the Fellowship. I plan to continue doing service (in and out of the Fellowship) as long as I want to enjoy continued, happy, quality sobriety".

As Bill Sees It

“Pride is the basic breeder of most human difficulties, the chief block to true progress.”

— A.A. World Services Inc., As Bill Sees It

“It is plain that a life which includes deep resentment leads only to futility and unhappiness”

— A.A. World Services Inc., As Bill Sees It

“Most of us would declare that without a fearless admission of our defects to another human being, we could not stay sober. It seems plain that the grace of God will not enter to expel our destructive obsessions until we are willing to try this.”

— A.A. World Services Inc., As Bill Sees It

“We shall have to settle, respecting most of our problems, for a very gradual progress, punctuated sometimes by heavy setbacks.”

— A.A. World Services Inc., As Bill Sees It

“Self-searching is the means by which we bring new vision, action, and grace to bear upon the dark and negative side of our natures.”

— A.A. World Services Inc., As Bill Sees It

“We have found that God does not make too hard terms with those who seek Him. To us, the realm of spirit is broad, roomy, all inclusive, never exclusive or forbidding to those who earnestly seek. It is open, we believe, to all men.”

— A.A. World Services Inc., As Bill Sees It

“A spot-check inventory taken in the midst of disturbances can be of very great help in quieting stormy emotions. Today’s spot check finds its chief application to situations which arise in each day’s march. The consideration of long-standing difficulties had better be postponed, when possible, to times deliberately set aside for that purpose.”

— A.A. World Services Inc., As Bill Sees It

“The perverse wish to hide a bad motive underneath a good one permeates human affairs from top to bottom. This subtle and elusive kind of self-righteousness can underlie the smallest act or thought. Learning daily to spot, admit, and correct these flaws is the essence of character-building and good living.”

9 A.A. World Services Inc., As Bill Sees It



Doing a Step 9 during Covid-19

Gouni-Mae, Constantia Sunrise

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

Or infect them or others with the virus ...

I recently celebrated my first year in recovery. I’ve come this far, only because my Higher Power holds me in the palm of His hand and is making me a teachable human being. I have a wonderful sponsor and a sage grand sponsor who guide me through the Steps. This is my first time in Stepville – at the moment Step 9 is squarely on my radar. Gather those Step 8 lists!

As my housemate is a quadriplegic and therefore high risk, we’ve been ‘in quarantine’ since a week before Level 5 lockdown. So, the only time I venture out from our home is when I take Tinks, the Labrador for an early-morning walk – or rather, she takes me. We order our groceries online and the Zoom rooms have become a much-loved extension of the house.

Subsequently, I have only been able to make an eyeball-to-eyeball amend to my friend and housemate. She was first on the list as she was at the coalface during my years of shattering and clandestine active alcoholism.

Now, the Big Blue Book tells me, at this stage, “we need more action” and “now we go out to our fellows and repair the damage done in the past”. Sweeping my side of the street seemed tricky though. I’ve written down my Now, Sooner or Later, Maybe and Never Lists; yet unable to venture out.

Three people on my lists have passed away – my amends to them take the form of writing letters to be read at the graveside when it’s safe to do so.

What to do regarding the rest? I’ve learned to love the Steps I’ve done thus far; working them like a firefighter in a pile of wet braai wood; having an experience with each one of them.

Yet, resorting to Skype or Zoom or a WhatsApp video call to establish contact with those on my list, for me, is sloppy seconds. I need to have that person, physically, in front of me to do this properly.

I’m not in a hurry to get to Steps 10, 11 and 12. I’ve learned that, yet again, my Higher Power is in full control of the amount of time I end up spending on each Step. So, I got down on my two kneecaps and asked my Higher Power for direction to do the right thing, asking that I’ll be made aware of that Divine Spark of His.

This happened. He has helped me to see this time as a way of marinating in this Step. Step 9. Paying more attention to it. Is everyone that should be on my list, listed? Have I been honest? I’m also careful not to over-think this. That’s the stuff of the ego.

So, I’ve relaxed in my slacks regarding not being able to make amends, in person. For now. That time will come. It’s God’s time, so I needn’t get anxious or feel that I’ve gotten a flat tyre in working the Steps. I have even moved two people on my Never List and a few on my Maybe List to my Sooner or Later List.

I see the 9 in Covid-19 as a classic reminder that for me, this is Step 9 Time.

Okay, where’s that firefighter!

The New Dawn

John P, Surfers Corner

In July 2017 I was transferred to Cape Town on a promotion with a huge national company. We lived in Bloemfontein at that stage and professionally, life was good. I earned a good salary and got a promotion.

However, personally I was in ruins as we lost our youngest son in 2013 in a car accident. I was looking for God and a solution to all the pain and pressure of life and found the solution in a bottle.

This lifestyle only made me feel more helpless and out of control. I was a 34-tonne truck on Van Reenen's pass, going downhill without brakes. I have visited and looked for help from professionals but did not hear or find a solution to my alcohol addiction.

In December 2017, after a visit to Bloemfontein and leaving my wife there to attend to business matters, I drove back to Cape Town and had to sleep over in Beaufort West as I had drunk heavily the night before. The next day, after entertaining myself well the night before, I had an appointment with a physician as I had many health issues. He examined me and admitted me to hospital for three days to perform all the necessary tests.

The outcome was not surprising... I was in bad shape, my blood pressure was sky high, my liver was under pressure and I drastically needed to change my lifestyle. I still did not listen and just took the pills and carried on my merry way.

At a follow up three months later the doctor asked me what I thought the cause of my poor health was and I said I think I drink too much. I was referred to a psychologist who suggested I book into a clinic for three days to dry out so that I could make a sober decision about my life going forward.

This in itself was a big step for me as I could not remember when last I was without alcohol for more than a day, let alone three days. I was scared, anxious and doubtful as I also felt I was in control and did not have a problem... I just needed to tone my drinking down.

After 3 days it dawned on me that this was how I wanted to live and feel, without regrets and a "babbelas" every day, and yes it is what I always wanted deep inside but did not know it.

I wanted to live a life without all the issues alcohol brought; when I look back over my life it had all the damage that alcohol brought to my life and everything was just misery, fear, death and disappointment. I realized that alcohol did not add any joy to my life. I did a 3-week programme in rehab where they assisted me and showed me the way.

It is now 29 months later. I have a wonderful relationship with God, a sponsor, a home group and a programme that I work.

I have freedom from all that held me back in life and I live life every day as best I can.

I wish to light the path to as many as I can and wish my fellows a beautiful life.

With a little help from his friends

Bob S, Richmond, Indiana

Mid-summer, 1938 was a watershed period for the writing of our Big Book - it almost did not happen! Donations from the Rockefellers, Charles Towns, and others were helpful, but Bill Wilson's upcoming Big Book project remained on hold, even doubtful.

Bill W. had written two pre-manuscript drafts: THERE IS A SOLUTION (Chapter One) and BILL'S STORY (Chapter two) during the late spring months of that year—please notice the reverse order. These chapters were only a beginning effort to publish a short book that could sell for a dollar (about \$18.00 today). Happily, Doctor Silkworth added, THE DOCTOR'S OPINION that July.

Bill had endured financial struggle for over a year and had become understandably discouraged. By early fall he had not written anything for three months—he finally stated: “I am not an author.” However, his partner, Hank Parkhurst, convinced him that just a few more chapters were needed to justify the \$1.00 price.

Hank's adavance was successful! Bill began writing the next two chapters, MORE ABOUT ALCOHOLISM and WE AGNOSTICS ON September 15, 1938.

Thank God for Hank Parkhurst! I have always considered Hank and Ebby Thacher as two unsung heroes of AA history, although neither of them remained sober for timely periods.

Bill may have made the touchdown, but Ebby handed him the bail and Hank became his inspiring hard-driving coach!

Not to forget Jimmy Burwell who is given credit for “God as we understood Him.”

By December Bill had finished the manuscript including HOW IT WORKS, INTO ACTION, WORKING WITH OTHERS, plus four other chapters. Jim Scott helped write the Akron personal stories and the NY stories were also included. But in early 1939, Tom Uzzell, editor of Colliers Magazine, reduced the manuscript dramatically and a Dr Howard (perhaps an alias) changed the tone from: “Thou must under pain of drunkenness, “ to “This is what we did.”

The finished book was published in April of 1939. It sold for \$3.50. So, Bill was gifted with many helpful friends as he constructed this marvelous life-saving book for us. Thank you, God!

“...this marvellous life-saving book for us.”

The Conference & The Warranties

Angus M, George

There are six warranties that govern the annual AA Conference – they are in place to guarantee that the Conference will always act in the best interests of the Fellowship as a whole:

The Conference:

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

"It must never be forgotten that the purpose of **Alcoholics Anonymous** is to sober up alcoholics. There is no religious or spiritual requirement for membership. No demands are made on anyone. An experience is offered which members may accept or reject. That is up to them.

Guidelines|Writing Regmaker articles

WELCOME to the pages of the Regmaker, where we hope you'll feel at home. The Regmaker is your magazine and more half of every issue is written by AA members who have never written before.

With a little willingness and a desire to share, AA members have been submitting their personal stories, their sorrows and joys, their ups and downs and in betweens to the Regmaker for many years.

Without your written experiences and opinions, the magazine cannot continue to be an effective tool for sober living and a vital, accurate picture of the Fellowship as a whole. So, if you've hesitated – thinking you can't do it – why not consider joining AA's meeting in print? You might just keep coming back!

As you plan your article, keeping in mind AA's singleness of purpose, you might want to leaf through a few old issues to get an idea of the sort of articles most often published. Then close the magazine and do your own thing! Say what you want to say, not what you think we'll publish. And don't be timid about branching out; a change of pace is great as long as it relates to your AA experience.

FORMAT If possible, articles should be typed. If you don't have a computer, don't worry about it. Just write clearly and legibly. If you quote from AA literature, please give the correct name of the source, along with the page number.

LENGTH Maybe you heard a one-liner in a meeting that you'd like to pass along, maybe you just want to relate one short but sweet incident, or maybe you really want to go in-depth on a particular subject – no matter how short or long, the important thing is that you say what you want to say. The average contribution varies from one to three typed pages and cut according to the space allowed however, editing is normally quite slight.

WE DO NOT PUBLISH - personal prayers, event flyers/ announcements, tributes to individual AAs, drama, anything not relating to Alcoholics Anonymous (such as articles about the field of alcoholism treatment, legislation, medical advances etc.).

WHERE TO SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTION
Send your completed article to GSO via e-mail to gso@aasouthafrica.org.za or post to Box 11416, Randhart, 1457

How to buy the Regmaker

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Your subscription will entitle you to receive Regmaker for one full year. The subscriber will receive a minimum of 4 issues per year, but in the event of additional issues being printed, these will be supplied at no extra cost to the subscriber. The subscriber will also receive one free back copy of Regmaker. (This applies to the first year only.) The subscription will run for 12 months as from the date entered on your application. To initiate your subscription, please enter all the necessary details in the space provided below and sign where indicated. Return these details, together with proof of payment to GSO and your copies of Regmaker will be delivered to you.

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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.

The Twelve Traditions

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.
6. An A.A. group ought never endorse, finance or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

***"God, grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change,
the courage to change the things I can,
and the wisdom to know the difference."***

***"God, skenk my die gemoedskalmte
Om te aanvaar wat ek nie kan verander
nie,
Moed om te verander wat ek kan
En wysheid om die verskil te ken."***

