



THE WESTWORD

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER PUBLISHED BY THE CALGARY INTERGROUP OF AA

To receive a digital copy of the WestWord please subscribe through www.calgaryaa.org or email westword@calgaryaa.org

Everyone
WELCOME **POTLUCK BBQ**
WITH
WALKING EAGLE FAMILY



**PEARCE
ESTATE PARK**

*Bring your famous dish or just
come fellowship*

**AUGUST 8, 2026
12 TO 4 PM**

1440 17A ST SE



Walking Eagle



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.

INTERGROUP CONTACTS:

Intergroup Chairperson	cgigchair@gmail.com	Intergroup Alternate Chair	cgigalterchair@gmail.com
Intergroup Archives Chair	cgigarchives@gmail.com	Telephone Monitoring Chair	phonemonitor301@gmail.com
Public Information Chair	pichair.calgary@gmail.com	12 Step Chair List	12steplist@calgaryaa.org
WestWord Editor	westwordeditor@gmail.com	Intergroup Secretary	cgigsecretary@gmail.com
Calgary Central Office	centraloffice@calgaryaa.org	Intergroup Treasurer	cgigtreasurer@gmail.com
Banff Roundup Chair	cgigbanffchr@gmail.com	Intergroup Special Events	cgigevents@gmail.com
Intergroup/CGSC Liaison	cgscintergroup@gmail.com		

CGSC CONTACTS:

Chairperson	chair@cgsc.ca.org	Alternate Chairperson	altchair@cgsc.ca.org
Treasurer	Treasurer@cgsc.ca.org	Secretary	secretary@cgsc.ca.org
Treatment Chair	treatment@cgsc.ca.org	Corrections Chair	corrections@cgsc.ca.org
C.P.C. Chair	cgscpc@gmail.com	Grapevine Chair	grapevine@cgsc.ca.org
Bridging the Gap Chair	cgscbtg@gmail.com	Group Rec/Registrations	groupregistration@cgsc.ca.org
Tech Position	administrator@cgsc.ca.org	Treatment Facilities	treatment@cgsc.ca.org
Gratitude Roundup	gratituderoundup@cgsc.ca.org	Intro to Service Chair	introtoservice@cgsc.ca.org

UPCOMING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

DATE	COMMITTEE	ADDRESS
No meeting in July Next meeting Aug 20 - 7pm	Bridging the Gap	4021 4 st SE Calgary Online @ Google Meet @ https://meet.google.com/pqz-xqwb-jjf
Aug 4 - 7pm	Intergroup General	1802 33 ave SW Calgary
Aug 5 - 7pm	District 75 Committee	Zoom Meeting ID: 838 0522 6189
Aug 5 - 7pm	CGSC Treatment Centre	4021 4 st SE Calgary
Aug 17 - 7:30pm	Calgary General Service	1802 33 ave SW Calgary
Aug 18 - 6:30pm	Cooperation with the Professional Community	4021 4 st SE Calgary
Sept 22 - 7pm Now a Quarterly Meeting	Public Information	Zoom Meeting ID: 764 5364 8741 Passcode: Serenity
September 28 - 7pm	Intro to Service	Zoom The Meeting ID: 924 0372 1605. Passcode: 632249

MEETING INFO & CHANGES

NEW MEETINGS:

Garnet Block - New Woman's Meeting Tuesday's at 4pm, New open meeting Monday's at 3pm. Also New Monday Night Midnighter
Hodgkiss Group - First meeting, Saturday September 19 at 8PM. 14555 84 ST.,SE, Beginner meeting, steps 1,2,3 plus maximum 3 topics.

MEETING CHANGES:

Woman of SMOG – Friday 7pm-8pm Zoom meeting Zoom Meeting ID: 403-397-1392, Password: 649183

Regal Group – EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY MEETINGS HELD AT SALVATION ARMY CENTRE OF HOPE ON WEDNESDAYS AT 7pm. ARE CANCELLED.

Ogden Group - The Thursday night 8:30pm meeting is changing to 8pm

MEETING INFO / SUPPORT:

MAAT Group- We are seeking your support - please come for a visit - Thursdays at 7:00 pm - Step & Tradition - B'day last Thursday - 912-19 St NE, Calgary, AB (back door)

Freedom Group: The Freedom group will be doing a Stampede BBQ on Tuesday July 7th at 5pm prior to our 7:30pm meeting.

Awakenings: No meeting June 6th. Will resume June 13th

Monthly Intergroup Service Commitments

Sunday Morning (9:00am) Ramada Breakfast Meeting	AA Group
Aug 2	Vacant
Aug 9	Regal Group
Aug 16	Midnapore Group
Aug 23	Vacant
Aug 30	Vacant
Phone Monitoring Dates	AA Group
July 27-Aug 2	SMOG
Aug 3-9	Deer Ridge
Aug 10-16	Glenmore Group
Aug 17-23	PPG
Aug 24-30	Regal Group

Treatment Speakers

Location & Time	AA Group
Alpha House Tuesdays 8pm	Regal Group
Alpha House Fridays 8pm	Ogden Group
Dream Centre Sundays 7pm	Fellowship Group
Drop In Centre Thursdays 7:30pm	TBD
Renfrew Detox Fridays 7pm	Homeward Bounders
Sunrise Healing Lodge Tuesdays 8pm	Garnet Block
Nam Recovery Tuesdays 10am	TBD
Simon House Tuesdays 7pm	Bridging the gap (volunteers)

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Happy Birthday!

July Birthdays						August Birthdays						
Back to the Book Airdrie		NW Group		Knox Nooners		MAAT Group		NW Group				
Billie Sue P	8 Years	Allison F	1 Year	Jaz	2 Years	Shiffone	1 Year	Evren M	3 Years			
Mary R	10 Years	Travis F	1 Year	Ben F	5 Years	Marshall D	44 Years	Dave W	6 Years			
19th Hole Mens		Andy D	2 Years	Brad C	15 Years	19th Hole Mens		Stacey G	10 Years			
Travis M	2 Years	Deanna S	4 Years	Martin W	40 Years	Jarret H	13 Years	Jarred W	10 Years			
Daniel B	3 Years	Kelli F	9 Years	Stephen D	42 Years	Wes F	16 Years	Leslie P	27 Years			
Craig B	6 Years	Joanne T	10 Years	New Beginnings		Tracy C	31 Years	Roger D	39 Years			
Benjamin F	8 Years	Amy B	40 Years	Crystal	2 Years	Ogden Group		ABC Group				
Stampeders		ABC Group		Joanne B	3 Years	Levi A	5 Years	Lib B	39 Years			
Gary V	32 Years	Cindy P	29 Years	Debbie	3 Years	Jim K	18 Years	Awakenings				
Ogden Group		Awakenings		Paul	11 Years	Mary S	24 Years	Ryan G	13 Years			
Shaun J	1 Year	Garry B	12 Years	Shelbi	12 Years	Karol K	50 Years	Bob J	39 Years			
Che S	3 Years	Tracy S	18 Years	Emma M	13 Years	Step, Stories & Beyond		New Beginnings				
Blake B	5 Years	Amanda H	32 Years	Andrea L	27 Years	Dave B	2 Years	Al S	37 Years			
New Life		Fellowship Room		Ian S	30 Years	Mike D	15 Years	Joanne G	38 Years			
Adrian W	10 Years	Alex	1 Year	Ken R	40 Years	Bob C	54 Years	Garnet Block				
Unity Group		Jonelle	8 Years	Regal Group						John K	1 Year	
Andrew P	1 Year	Just For Today		Jason F						2 Years	Terri Jo	1 Year
Amen Group		Bryan N	3 Years	Chris D						5 Years	Rylen	1 Year
Gerard Y	1 Year	Lionel G	28 Years	Brad I						12 Years	Heston	1 Year
Recovery Group		Kincora Group		Jim M						27 Years	Kathy K	2 Years
Lynda M	6 Years	Allison	1 Year	Midnapore						Heather	2 Years	
Chris H	25 Years	Dale	1 Year	Stan J						2 Years	Kevin	4 Years
Marsh E	52 Years	Rob H	9 Years	Lynda W						8 Years	Ben F	5 Years
Pam C	10 Years	Chad H	18 Years	Michael B						13 Years	D-Rail	5 Years
Rule 62		Adam M	18 Years	Alice M						52 Years	Mike R	6 Years
Steve H	10 Years	Step, Stories & Beyond		Airdrie Country GP						Shayne B	6 Years	
Deer Ridge		Matt A	1 Year	Cam Mc						2 Years	Ganesh	8 Years
Gord P	10 Years	Vanesa S	12 Years	New Life Group						Artyom	11 Years	
Holly S	10 Years	John B	66 Years	Reid						57 Years	Angus	13 Years
Char V	16 Years	Regal Group		Kincora						Tuff-Kik	23 Years	
Jack W	20 Years	Jason F	2 Years	Haroon						1 Year		
Midnapore		Edgemont		Melissa M						7 Years		
Dustin H	1 Year	Brayde G	1 Year	Wayne H						14 Years		
Jared V	1 Year	Andy D	2 Years	Beautiful Hope								
Hannah M	3 Years	Wed Morn Eye Opener		Marlene F						1 Year		
Susan A	9 Years	Jack A	39 Years									
Richard H	10 Years											
Pat M	43 Years											
Candlelight												
Kelly R	20 Years											

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Calls for Service & Announcements

Bridging the Gap



Are You Looking to "Dip Your Toes" Into Service?

Then BTG Needs You...

As we continue to share the Bridging the Gap message at more and more treatment and detox facilities, **BTG is in real need of more Temporary Contacts.** Temporary Contacts are "AA Tour Guides" and we take newcomers to their first AA meeting, where we help the newcomer find a Home Group, find a Temporary Sponsor and answer all their AA related questions. Being a Temporary Contact only take an hour or two of your time, and **volunteering is SO EASY online via this QR Code:**



So, if you're looking for a small service commitment, or if you have a sponsee who is looking to start their service journey, becoming a Temporary Contact is a great opportunity.

Next BTG Meeting Thursday August 20th at 7pm

The BTG Committee meets at 7pm on the third Thursday of every month in person at Central Office (4021 4th Street SE), AND NOW on Google Meet at

<https://meet.google.com/pqz-xgwb-jjf>

Join us for our next meeting on **Thursday August 20th at 7pm.**

We are actively looking for people to be "Bridgers" who **OCCASIONALLY** attend existing Treatment meetings at various detox/treatment facilities, and at the end of the meeting, explain the BTG Temporary Contact Program and help clients sign up for this service.

There are ad hoc Bridger opportunities at: Alpha Detox on Tuesday or Friday nights at 8pm, at Sunrise on Tuesday nights at 8 pm, and at The Drop In Centre on Thursday nights at 7:30pm.

Come to our meeting to learn more, or reach out to Leslie at cgscbtg@gmail.com

Volunteer with Intro to Service

Help Shape Our Intro to Service events that welcome and support new AAs twice a year.

4th Monday of Every Month (Hybrid)

7 to 8 pm

Calgary Central Office

4021 4 St SE, Calgary, AB T2G 2W4

For the Zoom link, please email introtoservice@cgscaa.org.

Cooperation with the Professional Community (C.P.C.)

Grow in your recovery!

Attend a CPC Committee meeting!

C.P.C. is an AA. committee offering unique service opportunities giving you a chance to carry the message directly to various industry and professional groups, either through your own network connections, or by participating in already established projects like the Student Doctor's Meeting and the Student Nurses Information session - both ongoing for many years.

Committee members can bring the A.A. message to professionals and to students at professional schools in your community, helping them to understand how and why A.A. works. A.A. has always valued friends in all professional fields. These associations have been mutually beneficial and completely in keeping with the A.A. Traditions.

We are looking for new C.P.C. members who would be interested in sharing the message of A.A. or helping to open doors to:

- Accounting Professionals
- Clergy
- Criminal Justice Students
- Social Work Students
- EAP Providers
- Educators
- Health Care Professionals
- HR Professionals
- Legal and Law Enforcement Professionals
- Medical and Nursing Students
- Not-for-profits
- Unions
- Etc., etc., etc.

Attend a C.P.C. Committee Meeting in person at Central Office or via Zoom on the 3rd Tuesday of every month at 7:00 pm (excluding September and December which will be the 22nd)
Contact the C.P.C. Committee for more information at cgscpc@gmail.com



HADDON GROUP PRESENTS



**MAY 30, JUN. 27,
AUG. 29, OCT. 31**



JUL. 25, SEPT. 26

**FOLLOWING THE BIRTHDAY
MEETING FROM 8:30 - 10:30PM**

**@ ST. ANDREWS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
703 HERITAGE DR. SW**

For more information contact
Peter 403.589.2682 or
Kevin 403.863.1673

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Calls For Service & Announcements

SPONSOR/SPONSEE
Service Opportunity

ARE YOU LOOKING FOR ACTIVITIES
 INVOLVING SERVICE FOR YOU AND
 YOUR SPONSEE?

Come and join us at the
Cooperation with the Professional Community
 Committee meeting, held on the 3rd Tuesday of
 each month at Central Office

- Multiple CPC committee positions available
- Continuous volunteer and service opportunities

Come learn and grow with us!

AA Central Office: 4201 4th Street SE Calgary
 For further information please reach out to our CPC
 Committee Chairperson at: cgsccpc@gmail.com

Alcoholics Anonymous 13 Week Traditions Study Through our Second Legacy of Unity!

Commencing: Wednesday, April 1, 2026

6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Okotoks Evangelical Free Church

28 Westland Road, Okotoks

Enter through the South Entrance

Bring your own copy of these books:

1. **AA Comes of Age**
2. **2025 edition of AA Service Manual**

Crosstalk, arguing and double dipping encouraged.
 Bring an open mind! Highlighters if you wish.

For inquires call (250) 295-5334

Public Information Committee

Carrying the Message to the Suffering by Informing the General public
If Interested Contact: Picchair.Calgary@Gmail.com



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Fellowship & Events



District 83
IRRICANA

CAMPING
\$38 for power & water
\$28 for power only
\$23 tent site, no services
Contact Norm @ 403-827-1889
or campspot.com

contact:
Cal @
403-554-9310
Danielle @
403-896-5045

AA SPEAKERS
Friday - Buck B.
Saturday - Dave S.
(current Delgate)
AL-ANON SPEAKER
Wendy L.

Pope & Unity

PIG ROAST
potluck

AA Foundations Workshop
with Kevin O.

BOYS/GIRLS RAFFLE
\$25 *CASH ONLY*
Kids under 18 FREE

POTLUCK
Bring your best side dish!

AUG 21-22

Friday
4:00 - Snack, arrival, setup
6:00 - Bring your own dinner
(BBQ available)
7:00 - AA speaker - Buck B.
8:30 - Campfire meeting

Saturday
9:00 - Coffee & fellowship
10:00 - Registration starts
10:30 - Call-up meeting
11:45 - Lunch (provided)

11:15 - Al-Anon speaker - Wendy L.
9:45 - Foundations Workshop - Kevin O.
4:00 - Al-Anon skit
4:30 - AA Trivia
5:00 - Pig Roast potluck
6:30 - Countdown
7:00 - AA speaker - Dave S.
8:30 - Raffle & 50/50
9:00 - Campfire meeting
10:00 - Cleanup

Irricana Community Hall

Save the Date!

AA Sponsorship Seminar

9:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

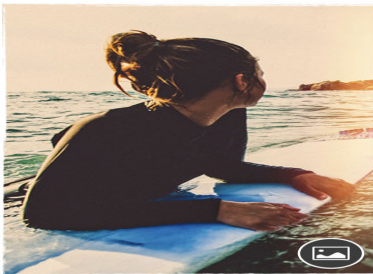
Saturday, October 3, 2026

Southwood United Church,
10690 Elbow Dr SW, Calgary

Hosted by District 83

- No cost
- Snacks and lunch will be provided
- Text Jon G. (403) 669-5206 with any questions

AUGUST



GARNET BLOCK CAMP-OUT

Friday August 28 5pm to August 30th

Friday night camp-fire meeting, Saturday night speakers both 8pm

Wyndham Carseland Provincial Campground Site A.

Contact David N Davidneault123@gmail.com or come to the Garnet there will be a signup sheet

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Fellowship & Events

BIG BOOK STUDY

FACILITATED BY MARY S
AND STEPHEN F

STARTING SEPTEMBER 14TH, 2026
(MONDAY'S)
6:30PM - 8:00PM

LOCATION: NEW BEGINNINGS
SOUTHWOOD UNITED CHURCH
10690 ELBOW DR SW, CALGARY

DON'T FORGET YOUR BIG BOOK AND HIGHLIGHTERS!

JOIN US IN THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE SPIRIT 2026



23rd ANNUAL BIG BOOK STUDY RETREAT
AT CAMP KINDLE IN BEAUTIFUL WATER VALLEY

Fellowship | Learning | Campfire Meetings
Serene Natural Setting

Facilitated by: Cliff G from Oklahoma and Christina G
from Akron Ohio
Dates: Nov 20 - Nov 22, 2026
Location: Camp Kindle,
29479 Range Rd 61a Water Valley, AB
Cost: \$300 per guest includes all food,
accommodation & activities for the weekend



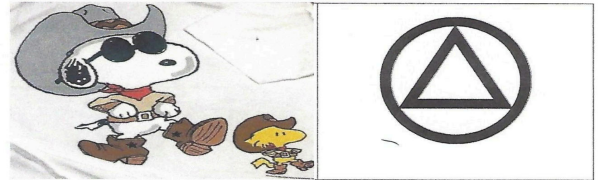
To register or for more info: fellowshippyc@gmail.com

EXPERIENCE A WEEKEND OF FELLOWSHIP, RECOVERY, AND INSPIRATION
RESERVE YOUR SPOT EARLY THIS RETREAT SELLS OUT EVERY YEAR

Registration Opens: August 17, 2026



CLARESHOLM AA ROUNDUP "Common Unity"



Saturday, Sept. 26, 2026

Where: Claresholm Social Centre, 5009 2 St E, Claresholm AB
(One block east of traffic lights at Hwy 2)

When: Registration starts at 10 am.
Coffee and donuts will be available for early birds.

Details: Call Up Meetings
AA and Al-Anon Speakers
Lunch
Roast Beef Supper
50/50 Draw
Door Prizes

Cost: \$30.00 per person. Tickets available at the door.

Contacts: Kathi L. - 403-625-0423 (Evenings & Weekends)
Kyla S. - 403-801-8628 (Text only)
Rick G. - 403-934-7601

SUNDAY NIGHT Speaker Meeting

Need a
MEETING ?

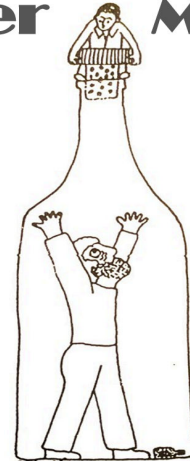
Aug 2 - Karen
(Unity)

Aug 23 - Shelly
(Harvest Hills)

Aug 9 - Art
(Kincora)

Aug 30 - Chad
(Go For It)

Aug 16 - Lisa
(Go For It)



WHEN: EVERY SUNDAY 7:30 - 8:30 PM
WHERE: PARKDALE UNITED CHURCH
2919, 8 AVENUE NW, CALGARY

SPONSORED BY DISTRICT 77

FOR A GOOD SEAT AT THE BACK... WE SUGGEST YOU ARRIVE EARLY AS SEATING IS LIMITED.

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Grapevine August 2026



Sober Travel

The August issue is “**Sober Travel!**” featuring fun, helpful stories by AA members about getting out and going places in sobriety, and the many ways we stay sober while on the road and in the air.

Road Trip

By: Bob K. | Hampton, Virginia

I have been happily attending in-person meetings for 35 years now. But after the 2020 pandemic altered the landscape of AA, I began to integrate online meetings into my schedule.

Just in Time

By: John G. | Hollywood, Florida

“Flight delayed” the sign said. Good to know, but what do I do now? I had just gotten out of treatment.

Rain, Mud, Sobriety

By: Jane E. | Kings Park, New York

I had just celebrated two years of sobriety in autumn of 1989, and my beloved partner was sober four months longer than me. I decided the two of us needed to go away on a vacation.

Mother Earth, Father Sky, God & me

By: R.J. | Muscle Shoals, Alabama

When I had 11 years of sobriety I started feeling the need to put a name to my Higher Power. I’ve always been open and have sought out a lot of religions.

Hear this!

By: D.M. | Happy Valley, Oregon

Traveling with my family has always been a challenging time for me in sobriety. It takes me out of my regular routine.

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Delegates Corner

Delegate's Corner – August 2026 – Area 78

My name is Dave S and I am an alcoholic. I am grateful to share a few sober words with you this month. I hope you are enjoying your summer and hitting some of the events in Area 78. I am currently working on answering a few questions from members who have sent emails to me. The fact finding never ceases!

Most recently I have had the opportunity to introduce two of our AA pioneers in Calgary as they spoke at the District 77 Speaker Meeting – Jimmy S (who is as far as we know is sober longer than anyone else in the world in Alcoholics Anonymous with 72 years sober) and John B who just within a week or two ago celebrated 66 years of sobriety.

The gentlemen did great! They spoke for half an hour each and shared many gems of their sobriety journey. The room was packed – thank you all to those who showed up.

There continues to be camp-outs and round-ups to attend. Val and I just had a quick trip to help a family member move back to Kelowna. I got to visit my son and jump in the lake a few times. We also got to attend a meeting – what a small world! The chair of the meeting was the DCM for Kelowna – we attended the forum together in Saskatoon.

Please check out our Treasurer's letter to the membership of Area 78 on Area78.org as well as many other events including our fall business assembly in Edmonton in September – it is free for anyone to attend – voting members pay a registration fee.

This weekend we are heading out to Wasa Lake, BC for a one day round up. This is a home-town visit for my dear wife Val who grew up in the area. Later in the month we are going to the Irricana pig roast. I recently made a discovery on our website – I will be sure to attend the Wild Rose round-up which is in Edmonton September 12, 2026 – the 10:30 am speaker will be our Alternate Delegate Jeff B. There will also be many great international speakers.

I was reading the July 2026 Grapevine. There are so many great stories on many great subjects and topics. On page 63 there is information on how to submit your story to be published by the Grapevine. It is truly how we get well – by sharing with each other our experience, strength and hope.

Keep 'er between the mustard and the mayonnaise! We will hopefully see you trudging the road of happy destiny at one of these events.

Love,

Dave S - 403 852-7659 - delegate@area78.org

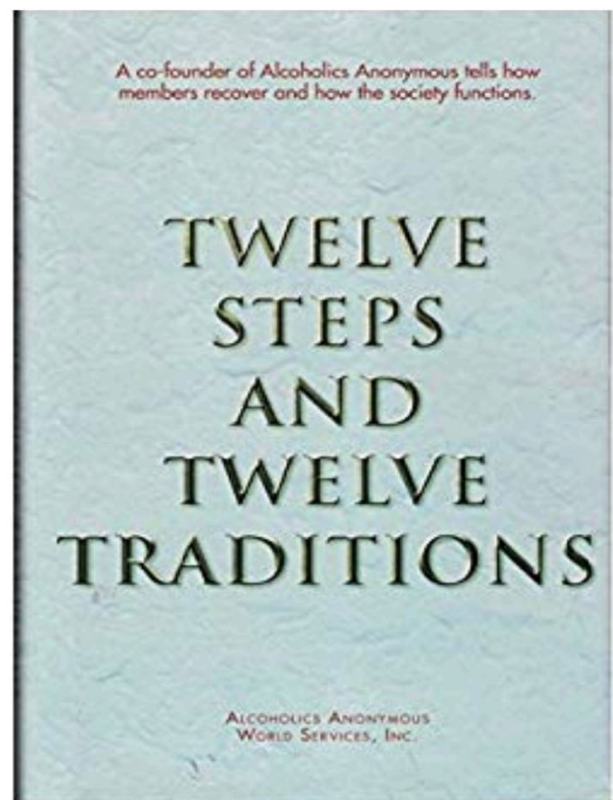
Tradition 8

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS will never have a professional class. We have gained some understanding of the ancient words “Freely ye have received, freely give.” We have discovered that at the point of professionalism, money and spirituality do not mix. Almost no recovery from alcoholism has ever been brought about by the world’s best professionals, whether medical or religious. We do not decry professionalism in other fields, but we accept the sober fact that it does not work for us. Every time we have tried to professionalize our Twelfth Step, the result has been exactly the same: Our single purpose has been defeated. Alcoholics simply will not listen to a paid twelfth-stepper. Almost from the beginning, we have been positive that face-to-face work with the alcoholic who suffers could be based only on the desire to help and be helped. When an A.A. talks for money, whether at a meeting or to a single newcomer, it can have a very bad effect on him, too. The money motive compromises him and everything he says and does for his prospect. This has always been so obvious that only a very few A.A.’s have ever worked the Twelfth Step for a fee.

...

No individuals have been more buffeted by such emotional gusts than those A.A.’s bold enough to accept employment with outside agencies dealing with the alcohol problem. A university wanted an A.A. member to educate the public on alcoholism. A corporation wanted a personnel man familiar with the subject. A state drunk farm wanted a manager who could really handle inebriates. A city wanted an experienced social worker who understood what alcohol could do to a family. A state alcohol commission wanted a paid researcher. These are only a few of the jobs which A.A. members as individuals have been asked to fill. Now and then, A.A. members have bought farms or rest homes where badly beat-up toppers could find needed care. The question was—and sometimes still is—are such activities to be branded as professionalism under A.A. tradition? We think the answer is “No. Members who select such full-time careers do not professionalize A.A.’s Twelfth Step.” The road to this conclusion was long and rocky. At first, we couldn’t see the real issue involved. In former days, the moment an A.A. hired out to such enterprises, he was immediately tempted to use the name

Alcoholics Anonymous for publicity or money-raising purposes. Drunk farms, educational ventures, state legislatures, and commissions advertised the fact that A.A. members served them. Unthinkingly, A.A.’s so employed recklessly broke anonymity to thump the tub for their pet enterprise. For this reason, some very good causes and all connected with them suffered unjust criticism from A.A. groups. More often than not, these onslaughts were spearheaded by the cry “Professionalism! That guy is making money out of A.A.!” Yet not a single one of them had been hired to do A.A.’s Twelfth Step work. The violation in these instances was not professionalism at all; it was breaking anonymity. A.A.’s sole purpose was being compromised, and the name of Alcoholics Anonymous was being misused.



Reprinted from 12 Steps and 12 Traditions, Pg.168, 172, with permission of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc.

https://www.aa.org/sites/default/files/2022-01/en_tradition8.pdf

Step & Tradition 8

Step 8 – “Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.”

STEPS Eight and Nine are concerned with personal relations. First, we take a look backward and try to discover where we have been at fault; next we make a vigorous attempt to repair the damage we have done; and third, having thus cleaned away the debris of the past, we consider how, with our newfound knowledge of ourselves, we may develop the best possible relations with every human being we know.

This is a very large order. It is a task which we may perform with increasing skill, but never really finish. Learning how to live in the greatest peace, partnership, and brotherhood with all men and women, of whatever description, is a moving and fascinating adventure. Every A.A. has found that he can make little headway in this new adventure of living until he first backtracks and really makes an accurate and unsparing survey of the human wreckage he has left in his wake. To a degree, he has already done this when taking moral inventory, but now the time has come when he ought to redouble his efforts to see how many people he has hurt, and in what ways. This reopening of emotional wounds, some old, some perhaps forgotten, and some still painfully festering, will at first look like a purposeless and pointless piece of surgery. But if a willing start is made, then the great advantages of doing this will so quickly reveal themselves that the pain will be lessened as one obstacle after another melts away.

These obstacles, however, are very real. The first, and one of the most difficult, has to do with forgiveness....

When listing the people we have harmed, most of us hit another solid obstacle. We got a pretty severe shock when we realized that we were preparing to make a face-to-face admission of our wretched conduct to those we had hurt. It had been embarrassing enough when in confidence we had admitted these things to God, to ourselves, and to another human being. But the prospect of actually visiting or even writing the people concerned now overwhelmed us, especially when we remembered in what poor favor we stood with most of them...

From Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, p.77-79.

Tradition 8 – “Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.”

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS will never have a professional class. We have gained some understanding of the ancient words “Freely ye have received, freely give.” We have discovered that at the point of professionalism, money and spirituality do not mix. Almost no recovery from alcoholism has ever been brought about by the world’s best professionals, whether medical or religious. We do not decry professionalism in other fields, but we accept the sober fact that it does not work for us. Every time we have tried to professionalize our Twelfth Step, the result has been exactly the same: Our single purpose has been defeated.

Alcoholics simply will not listen to a paid twelfth-stepper. Almost from the beginning, we have been positive that face-to-face work with the alcoholic who suffers could be based only on the desire to help and be helped. When an A.A. talks for money, whether at a meeting or to a single newcomer, it can have a very bad effect on him, too. The money motive compromises him and everything he says and does for his prospect. This has always been so obvious that only a very few A.A.’s have ever worked the Twelfth Step for a fee.

Despite this certainty, it is nevertheless true that few subjects have been the cause of more contention within our Fellowship than professionalism....

At last, however, a plain line of cleavage could be seen between professionalism and non-professionalism. When we had agreed that the Twelfth Step couldn’t be sold for money, we had been wise. But when we had declared that our Fellowship couldn’t hire service workers nor could any A.A. member carry our knowledge into other fields, we were taking the counsel of fear, fear which today has been largely dispelled in the light of experience....

The job was not to do Twelfth Step work; it was to make Twelfth Step work possible. It was a service proposition, pure and simple....

This is the exciting welter of events which has finally cast up A.A.’s Tradition of non-professionalism. Our Twelfth Step is never to be paid for, but those who labor in service for us are worthy of their hire.

From Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, p.166-171.