

# NNIG MONTHLY MEETING SPEAKER



August 13, 2022  
Mike S, Riverside, CA  
Minden/Gardnerville Group  
Speaker at 7:00  
Silver Legacy Silver Baron Rm 1-6

Silver Legacy - 407 North Virginia St., Reno - Doors open at 6:30

## August, 2022

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### GENERAL WARRANTIES OF THE NORTHERN NEVADA INTERGROUP ASSOCIATION OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

In all its proceedings, the Intergroup Association observes the spirit of AA Traditions, taking great care that the Intergroup Association never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds, plus a reserve be its prudent financial principal; that none of the Intergroup Association members shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority over any of the others; that all important decision be reached by discussion, vote and whenever possible, substantial unanimity; that no Intergroup Association action ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy; that though the Intergroup Association may act for the service of AA Groups in the Northern Nevada area and parts of Northern California, it shall never perform any acts of government; and that, like the Society of Alcoholics Anonymous, the Intergroup Association itself will always remain democratic in thought and action.

*(The above is adapted and modified from "The AA Service Manual", and AA Co-Founder Bill W's. Twelve Concepts for World Service; Concept XII, as adopted by the General Service Conference on April 26, 1962. This adaptation of copyrighted AA material has been approved by the General Service Board)*

#### CENTRAL OFFICE

436 S. Rock Blvd.,  
Sparks, NV 89431  
Monday thru Friday  
9:00 AM to 5:00 PM

Saturday 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM

24 Hour Answering Service:

(775) 355-1151 Fax: (775) 355-1560

EMAIL: officemanager@nnig.org

Web Site/Meeting Schedule: nnig.org

The Bracer: nnigbracer@gmail.com



## NORTHERN NEVADA INTERGROUP

### Lunch & service

When she took out her sandwich,  
he got to see what a special worker she was

Several years before I stopped drinking for good, I wanted to learn about the program I heard could fix alcoholics. After looking up the address of the local AA office in the phone book, I decided to pay them a visit. Their office was located in a downtown building I was familiar with, so I got in my car, took a few swigs from my bottle and was on my way.

The office door simply said "AA". Inside there was a tiny lady sitting at a corner desk typing. I asked her for information about AA. She got up and showed me the literature displays and explained how to use the directory to find an AA meeting. I shuffled around for a while, glanced at a few pamphlets and then asked her why anyone would ever go to AA.

"Wait a minute," she said. She immediately stopped what she was doing at her desk, put her work away, cleared off an area, brought out a sandwich and started eating. Pointing to a chair, she said, "I'm taking my lunch break now. Why don't you have a seat." I thought she was a little off her rocker. Then she started telling me her story and how AA had saved her life.

I had no idea at the time, but that's Tradition Eight. This kind, wonderful, non-professional alcoholic service worker was experienced enough to separate her professional work from her Twelfth Step work.

She never knew it until much later, but the short time I spent with this lady was the reason I developed the courage to come into AA years later. I don't remember the details of her story, but I remember the feeling of hope and recovery she gave me that day.

So whenever I think about this Tradition, I'll always remember the gift of grace I was given by a lady I'd never met, sitting in a place I'd never been, who was practicing not only the Traditions but the principles of AA to the fullest. **BY: ALEX M. | LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY**

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**Halloween Committee Members needed  
for the NNIG Halloween Bash  
October 29, 2022. Call Central Office**

AA's

## Recovery Step Eight:

*"Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all."*

Three

## Unity Tradition Eight:

*"Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers."*

Legacies

## Service Concept Eight:

*"The Trustees of the General Service Board act in two primary capacities: (a) With respect to the larger matters of over-all policy and finance, they are the principal planners and administrators. They and their primary committees directly manage these affairs. (b) But with respect to our separately incorporated and constantly active services, the relation of the Trustees is mainly that of full stock ownership and of custodial oversight which they exercise through their ability to elect all directors of these entities."*

### **Concept VIII – The General Service Board Acts in Larger Matters of Policy and Finance, and Has Custodial Oversight of the A.A. Corporations.**

Having introduced and discussed relationships between the General Service Conference and the General Service Board in Concepts Six and Seven, Bill goes on to discuss matters of practical operations of A.A.'s world services in Concept Eight. Here he introduces two other components of the A.A. world service structure, the corporations. Incorporated legally under the laws of the State of New York, the world service structure includes Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. (AAWS) and The Grapevine, Inc. These corporate entities carry out day-to-day world service operations and activities.

AAWS is often referred to as the "publishing arm" of A.A., and is charged with developing, publishing and distributing our literature, books and pamphlets, as well as other operations of the Fellowship including communications with our members and groups. The Grapevine, Inc. produces, publishes and distributes the A.A. Grapevine, often referred to as "our meeting in print".

As Bill points out, the Board (Trustees) devotes itself to larger and critical matters of policy, finance, group relations, public relations and leadership. The Trustees are expected to skillfully manage, plan and execute. They must not be burdened with the endless questions and difficulties that arise daily, weekly and monthly in the routine conduct of world service affairs. The corporate entities were created in order to do this. Each of the corporations has its own charter, its own corporate directors, its own working capital, its own executive, its own employees, and its own office and equipment. The two corporations carry out their assigned functions, duties and responsibilities independently, but with Board oversight. The Board serves as a "holding company", charged only with custodial oversight of the two corporate entities. Board involvement is usually limited to such matters as mediating difficult situations and assuring that the separate corporations operate within their budget and within the general framework of A.A. and its headquarters policy. In modern parlance, it might be said that the Board oversees but does not "micro-manage".

Bill says that this corporate structure is in line with modern business practice, and has demonstrated that it is superior to any other method of operation. Having many committees or departments of the Board trying to carry out the needed day-to-day work, for example, would be very cumbersome and ineffective.

Finally, in Concept Eight, Bill argues that two corporations (AAWS and The Grapevine) are necessary because of the differences in their purposes and activities. Placing all the needed activities under one corporation would create executive difficulties, require too many executive talents in one person, and over-concentrate executive authority. Bill's wisdom was proven once again when a recent proposal to combine the two corporations in order to save money and create efficiency did not receive Conference approval.

*This is a 12 part series written by members of the 12 Concepts Study Group in Reno, Nevada. Efforts were made to use simple, everyday language. Each concept is written by an individual member of the group and is not necessarily the opinion of AA as a whole or NNIG. We hope this series will help our community to understand the Concepts and bring interest to those wanting to know more about them. Revised May, 2017.*



# NNIG & AREA EVENTS

EVENTS HOSTED BY NORTHERN NEVADA INTERGROUP TO SUPPORT CENTRAL OFFICE

**NNIG Monthly Speaker Meetings**  
Silver Legacy – 407 North Virginia Street, Reno 89501



**Monthly Speaker Meeting**  
Doors open at 6:30 PM  
Speaker at 7:00 PM



All meetings located in Silver Barron Room 1-6  
Unless otherwise noted

August 13, 2022

Host Group- Minden/Gardnerville Group  
Speaker- Mike S. – Riverside, CA.

September 10, 2022

Host Group - Positive Acceptance Group  
Speaker- Michelle Q.- Sparks, NV.

October 8, 2022

Host Group – A Vision for You  
Speaker – John S. – Santa Clara , CA.

November 5, 2022

Host Group - RENYPAA  
James S. – Reno, NV.

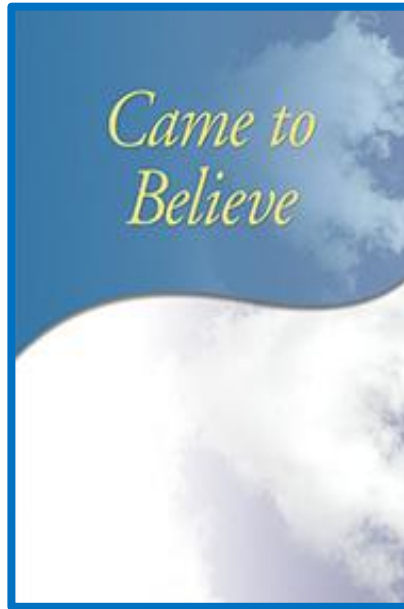
December 10, 2022

Host group -District 2  
Rosy T.- Seal Beach, CA.

Speaker Chair – Kevin B. (775) 470-4614  
Need more info call: Central Office – (775) 355-1151  
Join us for dinner at Cafe Central inside the Silver legacy @ 5pm

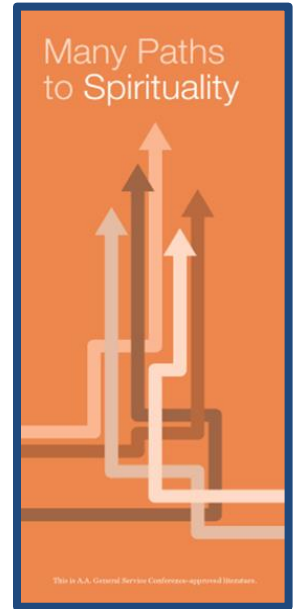
## BOOK OF THE MONTH

**\$2 OFF**



## PAMPHLET OF THE MONTH

**\$0.45**



## OTHER AREA EVENTS

**Tickets on sale NOW!**

**NNIG** 

# GRATITUDE DINNER

2022

Saturday  
November 12th, 2022

ATLANTIS HOTEL CASINO - RENO NV  
Doors open 4:30pm Dinner @ 6pm  
Speaker @ 7pm

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**UNITY:**

## CELEBRATING THE FELLOWSHIP

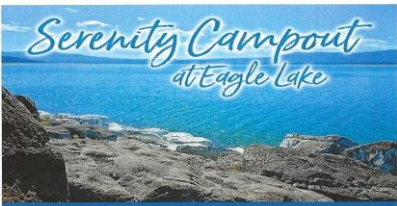
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AA Speaker Paul W.  
Los Angeles, CA.

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TICKETS \$59  
Only at  
CENTRAL OFFICE  
775-355-1151

*Serenity Campout at Eagle Lake*

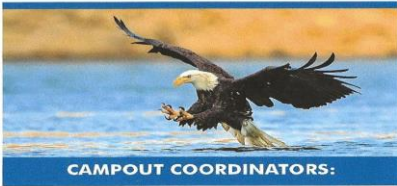


**"Keeping Our Fellowship United"**  
**Area 42—District 20**  
*Alcoholics Anonymous & Al-Anon*

**August 19<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>, 2022**

**Lassen County Youth Camp**  
Susanville, CA 96130  
(At Eagle Lake)

**DISTRICT 20**  
P.O. Box 1033 ★ Chester, CA 96020



**CAMPOUT COORDINATORS:**

**Jodie G.** 530-816-0592  
aa.jodie@outlook.com

**Jay S.** 530-251-7211  
J.AA.Area42@gmail.com

**Anna L.,—Co. Chair**  
530-616-9017

General Service District 16 Presents

"A.A. Beyond The Home Group"  
An Interactive Workshop



Saturday August 20th, 2022  
10AM - Noon

Evelyn Mount Community Center ~Tuscarora Room  
1301 Valley Road, Reno

Presentations, Panel Speakers  
Pot Luck Lunch, Door Prizes

Questions? - Contact Dave Hassell - 775-301-3754 or  
daveh.renonv@gmail.com

## Central office report from Ronda H. August 1, 2022

Volunteer hours- 115 hours

Calls into Central Office:

- Calls for AA help - 7
- Calls for Alanon/Alateen - 1
- Meeting information- 39
- Retail/merchandise- 8
- Other 12 step programs- 1
- Events - 13
- New to A.A. -4
- Business/Central office- 85
- Total calls - 158
- Visitors - 281 and 2 dogs

1. Book of the month is "Came to Believe...", this is \$2 Off, \$7. Pamphlet is "Many Paths to Spirituality" \$0.45.
2. Volunteers' positions have been filled.
3. The website had 18,846 pageviews. New - 43%, Returning 57%
4. Please let your Home Group know of the Bracer.

Ronda  
Central Office Manager



## Previous Birthdays



# July 2022

## Joanne P. 10 YEARS

### June Birthdays

Ann G. - 18 years

Ron T. - 11 years

May

Donn T. 32 Years

April

Paul 51 Years

March

Kent L. 40 Years

Kim D. 45 Years

February

Skip 22 Years

December

Sean S. - 32 Years

Mystery Person!!

- 34 Years

November 2021

Rich T. - 35 Years

Shawn - 30 Years

October 2021

Sharon F. - 37 Years

Nancy T. - 36 Years

September 2021

Phil S. 45 Years

Mike 26 Years

August 2021

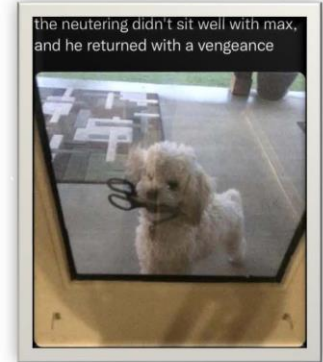
Linda G. 29 Years

Danny S. 19 Years

July 2021

Barbara M. 46 Years

Joanne P. 9 Years



Rule 62

Did you know you can share your sobriety and gratitude in a practical way by joining the A.A. Birthday Club? Sign Up today and be featured in the Bracer Birthday Club section of the Bracer. Show your Support for your NNIG & Central Office, Join the Birthday Club. A donation of only one dollar for every year of your sobriety. Envelopes available at Central Office, NNIG Business Meeting or Intergroup Representatives

**"Step 1  
Beginners"**  
Monday 6:30pm  
1015 N Sierra St.  
Reno

**"Drama in  
the Desert"**  
Friday 6pm  
1550 Ramsey Ct  
Silver Springs

**Please respect  
all meeting  
place mandates  
about face  
coverings.**

**"Verdi Bookies"**  
Sunday 5:30pm  
Bridge St. & 3 St.  
Verdi

**"MAMMOTH  
LAKES GROUP"**  
MONDAY-FRIDAY  
NOON  
63 LAKE MARY RD.  
MAMMOTH LAKES CA

**AA ANSWERING  
SERVICE NUMBERS**

Reno, Sparks, Carson City and all of Northern Nevada: (775) 355-1151  
Las Vegas and all of Southern Nevada: (702) 598-1888  
Mammoth Lake: (760) 934-3434  
North Lake Tahoe: (530) 546-1126  
South Lake Tahoe: (530) 541-1243  
Susanville, CA: (775) 355-1151  
White Pine County/Ely: (775) 296-0656 Jim C.



## N.N.I.G. STEERING COMMITTEE

Last Tuesday of each month, 5:30 PM  
Central Office, 436 S. Rock Blvd., Sparks

## N.N.I.G. BUSINESS MEETING

First Tuesday of each month, 6:30 PM  
Alano Club, 1640 Prater Way, Sparks

## N.N.I.G. MONTHLY SPEAKER MEETING

7:00 PM Silver Legacy - Silver Baron A  
2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of the month

## N.N.I.G. H&I

First Monday of each month, 5:30 PM  
Central Office 436 S. Rock Blvd., Sparks

**CENTRAL OFFICE  
OPEN HOUSE**

Come Visit YOUR  
Central Office

August 27, 2022 10am-1pm  
436 S. Rock Blvd  
Explore Literature,  
Chips & Recovery Gifts  
There will be Refreshments  
& Door Prizes

## District Meetings

- DISTRICT-2** 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month, 6:30 Central Office  
Zoom # 91904741396 Password D2
- DISTRICT 4** First Thursday of each month, 7:00 PM-  
Zoom ID: 876 7717 4234 PW: District4
- DISTRICT 6** 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of even numbered months-  
For information email  
[district6@nevadaarea42.org](mailto:district6@nevadaarea42.org)
- DISTRICT 8** First Sunday, 3:30 p.m. on odd months  
Call (760) 937-8407
- DISTRICT 10A** Third Sunday of every other month, 1:30 PM  
680 River St. Elko, NV
- DISTRICT 10B** Dark since 2017
- DISTRICT 11** Only holds meetings 4 time a year, call DCM
- DISTRICT 12** 2nd Saturday of each Month at 5:00 PM- 457  
Esmeralda Street Wolf Center, Fallon NV
- DISTRICT 14** 3<sup>rd</sup> Wed of each "Odd" month at 6:00 PM -265  
Bear Street in Kings Beach CA
- DISTRICT 16** Meeting is held 3rd Tuesday of the month  
Sparks Family Christian Church 510 Greenbrae  
Blvd 6:00PM-7:00PM
- DISTRICT 18** DARK DISTRICT
- DISTRICT 20** Third Saturday of Jan, Mar, May, Aug & Oct  
10:30 AM- Contact DCM @  
[district20@nevadaarea42.org](mailto:district20@nevadaarea42.org) for location
- DISTRICT 22** 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of every month 6:30 PM @  
Central Office

## AREA CLUBS

### Reno / Sparks Clubs

Alano Club Sparks, 1640 Prater Way (775) 359-2727  
Driars Club Reno 345 S. Wells Avenue (775) 324-9210  
Triangle Club Reno 635 S Wells Avenue (775) 324-7977

### Clubs outside Reno/Sparks Area

Alano Club Carson City, 1800 HWY 50 East (775) 882-0443  
Bishop Alano Club (760) 873-6700  
Elko Alano Club (775) 738-4747  
Las Vegas Triangle Club (702) 435-0597  
South Lake Tahoe (530) 541-1243

## 8TH STEP PRAYER

"We attempt to sweep away the debris which has accumulated out of our effort to live on self-will and run the show ourselves. If we haven't the will to do this, we ask until it comes."

(p. 76 BB)

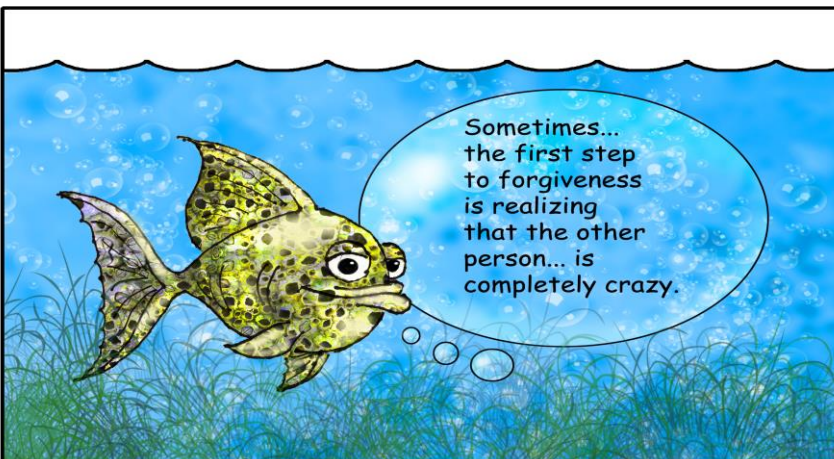
God help me to become willing to sweep away the debris of self will and self reliant living. Thy will be done for this person as well as for me. AMEN

The office will be closed the following days in 2022

Monday September 5<sup>th</sup> Labor Day  
Friday October 28<sup>th</sup> Nevada Day  
Friday November 11<sup>th</sup> Veterans Day  
Thursday & Friday November 24, 25 Thanksgiving  
Saturday December 24<sup>th</sup>  
Friday & Saturday December 30, 31 Inventory

## Drink Like A Fish

by Rick M.



## Lakes Crossing Center Meetings

Lakes Crossing would like to start meetings back up at their facility. This is a psychiatric evaluation and treatment center, for incarcerated individuals.

**Location: 500 Galletti Way, Sparks, NV 89431**

### The Need:

- Provide two meetings both on Monday's at 6pm.
  - o One serves primarily women. The women's building could get by with every other week if volunteers are scarce. If another day is better for the women's building, we can do that too, any day but Wednesday works for them.
  - o One at the main building. Requested every week.

### Requirements:

- All volunteers must be vaccinated against Covid.
- New volunteers to Lake's Crossing must undergo a quick background check which isn't to explore all legal entanglements, just current ones that are open.
- Orientation. This could be done at any of the TB Tests/readings. Please coordinate with Melissa Curley, facility coordinator. 775-688-0492
- The third step which is the most labor intensive is the 2 step TB test. This requires the person to come in to get test administered, then come back 3 days to get it read, then come back a week from the first administration, they have to come back again to get the other arm tested and then return again 3 day later.
  - o The facility is a 24 hr facility so nurses are available all day to read the tests at your convenience.

### Contact:

Joe H. NAGSC Corrections Chair, 415-203-4888  
[nagsccorrectionalfacilities@nevadaarea42.org](mailto:nagsccorrectionalfacilities@nevadaarea42.org)





My name is William Patrick Joseph D., I go by Pat.

**What is your sobriety date?** 6/18/1969.

**What is your home group?** My home group is the Truckee River Men Stag at 7:00 at St Luke's on Lakeside drive every Thursday night.

**Where did you get sober at?** Okinawa.

**Please briefly describe your drinking.** It started out semi social. But I experienced problems early on in my drinking especially with blackouts. Doing bizarre behaviors and things of this nature that I did not remember doing and would not believe that I would actually do those things but the people with me insisted that I did. Alcohol became very important to me as I grew up in a big family. My father was alcoholic and a very angry, angry, angry man. It seems as though he took out his anger on me. I don't know how much of that had to do with my behavior, but from an early age I remember him always calling me a "damn dumb ass". That began when I was 3 years old. And it just persisted until I left home at 17 and joined the Army. I don't know whether alcohol became important to me for this reason but the "damn dumb ass" message did not have the power when I drank. In other words, it was almost a magic elixir for me. It didn't shut down that "damn dumb ass" message but it didn't have the same impact when I was drinking. I joined the army when I was 17 and I drank whenever opportunities presented themselves. Early in my military career the only drinking I was able to do was when I was off duty. As my career progressed, I was rising high up in the hierarchy of whatever office I was in, so I could pretty much go and come as I wanted. I took every opportunity to go wherever it was and have a couple of drinks and go back to my office. I was in the combat arms for about 7 years and I'd drink at any opportunity.

I got married when I was 20 years old. I don't remember proposing to the young lady but she insisted I did. This was in 1950. She was in the women's army corps and wanted to get married and get pregnant so she could get out of the women's army corps. She insisted that I had proposed to her and wanted to set a wedding date, so I volunteered to go to Korea. They put me on orders to go to Korea and right at the last minute they took me off orders and put me on orders to go to Germany. I didn't have an excuse not to get married, so I got married and had 4 children. I was not a good father or husband. Alcohol was more important than being a husband or a father.

Amazingly enough all during my drinking career, which spanned about 23 years and I was never confronted about a drinking. I was always told what a great job I did even though I was a blackout drinker. At one point in time when in Vietnam I was what they called a personal staff NCO which meant I was the commander's enlisted personnel representative. I got injured in Vietnam, evacuated to Okinawa and was left without anything to drink or any of my Darvon or Librium. I had 1000's on my desk in Vietnam and people would come in, they'd say what's that for, and I said the gray and maroon is good for headaches and the black and chartreuse is good if your hands are shaking or something of this nature. Help yourself, some people even got to the point where they called me Doctor Dunn.

**The next question is what brought you to Alcoholics Anonymous?**

I was injured in Vietnam and they couldn't keep me in the country, but they wanted to treat me first at a hospital in Okinawa. Then they sent me to a hospital back in the United States. They took all of my alcohol and all of my condiments, as I referred to them, and was left without anything to drink. In Vietnam, my office was where my hooch was so I always had a drink handy. I was left without any of that and it took approximately 3 days for me to get from my unit in Vietnam to this hospital in Okinawa, we stopped off in Japan to pick up some more wounded soldiers. On the plane I was all right, I



was not wounded I was injured, and there's a distinction on this plane. It was full of horribly wounded, maimed young servicemen. On this plane I was saying to myself "you know you can't even get an honorable wound". Basically, I went to Vietnam to have myself killed. I figured that's one way I can stop drinking. I took a huge insurance policy out on my children, named them beneficiaries and then went to Vietnam with the intention of having myself killed. I was putting myself in harm's way. Two back-to-back tours in Vietnam. I finally got to the hospital in Okinawa. They did a triage while taking the troops off the plane. The doctor watching this asked the Corpsman where's he going? The corpsman came up, checked my casualty tag on my toe, he said I was going to surgery to repair damage that had been caused. He said to take me to the medical ward, he needs a medical work up first. This doctor saw me going into withdrawals. My next memory was being called into the Colonel's office and he's sitting there with a white coat on and what appeared to be my health record in his hand. And he said "Sergeant, do you think you might have a drinking problem?" I said "yes Sir I do". He asked "do you want to do something about it?" I said "yes Sir I do." He asked if I ever heard about Alcoholics Anonymous? 38 years old and had never heard about Alcoholics Anonymous. He asked would you want to give it a try and I said yes Sir. People said "boy you were sincere right from the get go" and I said sincere my ass I just wanted to get out of his office. Like I said, I would turn protestant if I had to, to get out of there. He said somebody will be in touch with you. This is still kind of fuzzy to me, but my next memory coming out of his office is that they probably had this all set up! I believe, to this day, that AA had that whole damn island wired. This Marine gunnery sergeant, which is the same rank I had in the Army, Senior Sergeant. He said you must be Pat D. I said I am. He said, my name's Bill, I'm an alcoholic, he grabbed my hand he wouldn't let me go, "look me in the eye" he said you don't have to run anymore. I thought I don't know anything about this A. A. stuff but they know who I am, this guy even knows how I think. He took me to my first A.A. meeting. Keystone group of Alcoholics Anonymous in Okinawa. He then introduced me to Ford Powell, a first-class Navy guy who introduced himself to me and said "I'm your sponsor while you're here". I thought that A.A. was a military program. I mean everyone I had met in A.A. up to this point had a uniform on. Ford asked if I had any money and I said yes. Give me \$2.37, I gave him \$2.50 and he said this is yours and he gave me my big book. \$2.37 that's what my big book cost me, because I hear these people talk about a \$100,000 big book and mine was \$2.37. He said read it and I did that night. I also remember I got down on my knees in my room that night and said something to a God I don't know. They had asked me about God of my understanding I told him "here was my impression that God looked like Charlton Heston that needs a haircut and one of his chariot wheels fell off and he was pissed off" and that's the impression of God that I had because I grew up in a Catholic family. I went to a Catholic school with the nuns and all I heard about was how many sins I committed. We went to every damn religious event. We went to mass every morning before school, it was never a religion for me, and then of course there's my dad in that relationship. I was asked if I thought I could believe that maybe that God loves me? I said it'd take a stretch. They asked why don't you use our God. You have heard in these meetings we have a loving god so use ours. After that meeting I when I got on my knees I'd say "I don't know" because I knew I was going to hell. Eventually I call it the velvet hammer, I got away from the vengeful punishing God to a God who has one job and that's to love me unconditionally. I spent my first couple months in that hospital in Okinawa and eventually got evacuated back to the states and the seed had been planted. I eventually got to that point, as I

said, I thought that A.A. was a military program and when I found out that it was not, it was too late because I had then fallen in love with A.A. I said there's no way in hell you're going to get rid of me so I did but I did everything that was ever asked of me and twice over. I wanted you to accept me but because of the shame and everything about my drinking I was almost afraid to say anything about my drinking in A. A. for fear that you would say "out you go" we don't like your kind in here! I found out that they just want to use me as a horrible example for these young people to see that this is what can happen to you.

I got back to the states and doing a temporary job at the Naval Postgraduate school and was looking at some rosters and noticed one of the students was an executive officer of mine in Vietnam. I thought well this would be a good opportunity to talk to him and make any kind of amends that I may have needed to make to him. I asked him to lunch and told him if I had done anything at all to embarrass him over there, I just want him to know how sorry I was. I'm now sober in Alcoholics Anonymous and this is an amends step, if I had done anything to offend you, I just want to apologize and see how I can make it right and he kind of chuckled. He said you know Pat, my brother has been in A.A. for years, he said I know quite a bit about it. He said I want you to know if there was any inkling whatsoever that you had a drinking problem, I would been the first one to confront you about it. He said "now let me remind you not only did the sergeant major (that's the highest enlisted men in the unit) had a drinking problem to the extent where he couldn't do his job and we had to relieve him of his duties. You took over his job and yours. You did an excellent job in both of them that's why one of the metals you got was because you jumped in you did both jobs in an outstanding manner. In fact, we wanted to see if we could have promoted you to take over that certain Majors' job." Although I do not remember all of this, I remember parts of it. But obviously I did it, he said, for 3 months. I stopped drinking on a number of occasions because of the damage I was doing to my family and my own value system. I hated myself for some of the stuff that I was doing, being unfaithful to my wife, not being there for my kids when I promised to be there. I had myself sent to Korea in 1964, for example, because I knew that I could drink with impunity but again I did a good job in Korea, from all the records I have available to me, and in some cases did an outstanding job. I always thought that I was not doing a good enough job from that "damn dumb ass" message.

And still, to this day, I still carry that! It's not as bad as it used to be but most of the time that message wants to intrude into my consciousness in the form while working on my computer. I think that I'm punching the right buttons and I'm not, so I have a dialogue with the computer and it's not cooperating. My pretty wife comes in and shuts the office door when she hears me arguing and cursing the computer.

**What are some of the big changes that you've seen or have you seen any really big changes in Alcoholics Anonymous?** I don't see any big changes in our fellowship and I think I the reason is that we always refer to the first 164 pages. There's been more of an attempted outreach. We attracted a lot of young people because of the fun we had in AA. You know there's a few of us who were not satisfied with what we were getting so we started the Monterey Bay Group. We had about 30 service commitments in that group and people would actually pay to be nominated. We set up a bus trip, in 1975, where we would take a bus to the Pacific Group in Los Angeles

and we would take over their meeting. Then the Pacific Group would come up to Monterey and they would do the same thing. And it's still going on. Also, a bunch of us were in H&I and went every week to Soledad and every seventh week we would go to San Quentin. We would travel around California to hear different speakers in different cities. We played volleyball on Sunday mornings on Carmel beach, have a bonfire and food. We were very active. I moved to Reno in 1980 and did the same thing, I got involved.

**What's your favorite part of the big book, is there something in there that you just absolutely love?** We are not saints. We were willing to grow along spiritual lines. I do a third step prayer every morning and a gratitude list, I've been doing that ever since I've been sober. I have my initial big book held together in some parts with duct tape. I love the promises. I was introduced to Alcoholics Anonymous as a result of the failure to have myself killed. And that's exactly what happened. We read the promises at our meeting and every one of them has come true.

**What is one of the most important things that you've learned in Alcoholics Anonymous, the life thing, life skill or life acceptance?** I was introduced to Alcoholics Anonymous and as a result of A.A. I began a career as an alcoholic counselor. Fairly early in sobriety I wanted to do something not only within A.A. itself but within the community to be of some kind of service. Someone suggested I talk to this doctor, a psychologist that's working with alcoholics, she said to talk to Kirk Perry and I did. He called me in for an interview. They were considering treating soldiers with substance abuse problems. He asked what are you doing now to enhance your life? I said I'm going to college and he asked what are you taking in college, I said general studies.

When I got out of the Army I decided that my retirement wasn't going to be sufficient to feed my family and I needed something else so I started looking for jobs. I went down to the Monterey employment office that had an employment security trainee position and got interviewed by this blue haired lady. She asked what do you want and I said I'm interested in the security training. She said you should you have 2 years college and I said I have 2 years armed forces institute to your college equivalency. She said that's not good enough and I told her it's accepted worldwide, but not in Monterey County, not in her office? She asked if I had a report of separation and I said yes I have a report separation that says the military specialty, personnel administrative supervisor, appropriate civilian occupation employment office manager. She looked at that and looks at me and said so you think you can just come in here and take over this office? I said no ma'am I'm simply asking if there is a possibility that that I might be eligible because of some of the work that I've done for quite a few years in the army, she said no. I got so damn angry I talked to a colonel who was a friend of a California congressman who went to bat for me all the way to Sacramento and fought tooth and nail. He came back and said, the last thing I do I'm going to change that, it may take many years, but it's gonna change! A man named David Bob asked me about sitting in on a couple of his groups. I sat in on a few of the groups and he says, you know, you're a natural for this, why don't you change your major to counseling psychology and I will mentor you through. I got a two-year degree and I went to catch up in college and got my bachelor's degree in and they offered social services with a major in counseling psychology. All this has helped me start this career which has lasted for 50 years.



## . . . From Our Fellows and From God

ARE YOU THE TYPE OF PERSON who makes lists? There are a lot of us around. We make lists of household items, groceries, and toiletries; of things to do today, tomorrow, and over the weekend; of holidays, vacations, and activities for special events.

At many Step discussion meetings in my area, I hear my fellow AAs share their fear upon reaching the Eighth Step. Usually, it's the fear of the impending Ninth Step confrontation with those they have harmed. "What will she think?" or "What will he say?" followed by our famous "What an order! I can't go through with it."

Eventually, I was asking the same questions and entertaining similar fears. However, something had to be done because old-timers said that their sobriety depended on how successfully they continued to practice all twelve of the Steps. So I began putting a list together. Fear of losing my sobriety overrode my fear of losing someone's goodwill.

Naturally, at the head of the list I put my own name, right? No. I was far too used to being first in the universe, far too self-centered. But didn't I hurt myself more than anybody else by my drinking? Perhaps, but amends to myself began the moment I put the cork in the bottle. At least, that's the way I came to see it.

My immediate family was high on my list. First my parents, whom I had long blamed for certain deficiencies in my makeup (in addition to my alcoholism); my brother and sisters who, I felt, had always made unreasonable demands on me.

There were the stores where I had begun a history of petty thievery during my teens. Small thefts, but they totaled up to a pretty penny.

There were couples whose marriages, already a bit shaky, I had done nothing to help. Fact is, I contributed to the grounds for at least one divorce.

There were jobs where I cheated employers of their fair due, as well as setting a very poor example by my drunkenness.

There were romantic love objects, persons used and then tossed aside.

And how many were victims of my big-shotism--people I promised to help find living quarters or jobs through my "connections"? What connections?

That's a broad outline of my first serious approach to making amends. What did I do about it all? How do you make amends to somebody who has moved to you-know-not-where? How do you return stolen goods to a now-defunct store?

Our founding fathers wisely provided the Eighth Step as a means of collecting our wits, of charting our course as we prepare for a journey that might well prove to be stormy. It is a course where I might find it impossible, due to circumstances, to make amends, but not impossible to include my willingness on my list. To become willing. The Step is also about that, isn't it?

The Eighth Step provides a time of calm reflection before we get down to the actual amends-making task. As the "Twelve and Twelve" says, "It is the beginning of the end of isolation from our fellows and from God." **BY: W. H. | MANHATTAN, NEW YORK**

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## Step Eight: Persons We Had Harmed

In mental preparation of my Eighth Step list, I discovered that some names came to mind naturally. In most instances, we want to change for the better where our children and family are concerned.

However, I found there were other people I did not want to make amends to, people I held some resentments toward--so I

impulsively concluded they didn't deserve any amends. I have to keep in mind that had I behaved in a more reasonable manner, they might not have responded as they did. If the circumstances had been reversed, I might have taken the same action they chose. I have to allow others to make mistakes and be human. Harboring resentments because of something others did is, in effect, imposing my values upon them. By imposing my standards upon them, I am trying to assume God's role. I must realize I am not responsible for the actions of others, whether I approve of them or not. If I take on that task, I am passing judgment on them for reacting in a way that was unacceptable to me. I am taking their inventory.

In this Step, it states that we "became willing to make amends." This implies that there is going to be some conscious effort on my part to make all the needed amends. Those that come easy, to my old way of reasoning, would be an excellent stopping point. Yet the Step says we became willing to make amends to all those we had harmed. In going to these other people, I don't need to crawl or go on and on about how sorry I am, because this would make me appear worthless. I don't believe I need apologize for being human; rather, I simply need to acknowledge that I was at fault and humbly ask them to pardon me. I do not need to make amends on my hands and knees; I need to walk tall, without false pride. When I go in humility and sincerely ask people to forgive me, this will remove the burden from my shoulders. They, too, may have been at fault, but I am neither their God nor their conscience. I am responsible only for myself.

For me, this Step offers two features: I am being responsible, by owning up to my wrongs and making amends for them; at the same time, I accept others as they are, regardless of what they did, or of what they may do when I go to them to make amends.

It's a Step with a double feature. When doing it, we make a double play. After finishing it, we receive double indemnity. Our reward is two for the price of one. **BY: B.D. | REYNOLDSBURG, OHIO**

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