

District 13 Newsletter

Volume 13 Issue 05

May 2008

Statement of Purpose

The primary purpose of this newsletter will be to carry the message to alcoholics and practice the AA principles in all its affairs. This newsletter's goal is to create a more informed community within AA as it serves District 13. The opinions expressed are those of the contributor, not necessarily that of District 13 or AA as a whole.

Tradition Five

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

Step Five

Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs

Concept Five

Throughout our structure, a traditional "Right of Appeal" ought to prevail, so that minority opinion will be heard and personal grievances receive careful consideration.

ANONYMITY LETTER TO THE MEDIA

GENERAL SERVICES OFFICE OF
ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

March 17, 2008

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS
A NOTE OF THANKS A REQUEST FOR HELP

From time to time we write our public media friends to thank them for helping us observe our longstanding tradition of anonymity for members of Alcoholics Anonymous.

First, let us express our deep gratitude to you. From the beginning of A.A. in 1935, its members have recognized that word of mouth is not sufficient by itself to carry the program's message of hope and recovery to the many people still suffering from alcoholism. The public media has been a vital part of this effort, and today we estimate that there are more than two million successfully recovering members of Alcoholics Anonymous in more than 180 countries.

Second, we respectfully request that you continue to cooperate with us in maintaining the anonymity of A.A. members. The principle of anonymity is a basic tenet of our fellowship. Those who are reluctant to seek our help may overcome their fear if they are confident that their anonymity will be respected. In addition, and perhaps less misunderstood, our tradition of anonymity acts as a restraint on A.A. members, reminding us that we are a program of principles, not personalities, — and that no individual A.A. member may presume to act as a spokesman or leader of our fellowship. If an A.A. member is identified in the media, we ask that you please use first names only, (e.g. Bob S. or Alice F.) and that you not use photographs or electronic images in which members' faces may be recognized.

Again, we thank you for your continued cooperation. Those who wish to know more about our fellowship please visit the section "Media Resources" on www.aa.org. Although our fellowship does not comment on matters of public controversy, we are happy to provide information about A.A. to anyone who seeks it.

Sincerely,

Public Information Committee
of Alcoholics Anonymous

Inventory & Discipline

- ***Anonymous Submission***

When I was in high school I had a tie-dye shirt with a picture of a pair of hands in the shape of the third eye symbol, it said "Discipline is never an end in itself, only a means to an end". This image came to me this morning in meditation. As it came and left I found myself thinking of how difficult it is to meditate sometimes. The thought was that it requires discipline and sometimes great amounts of will power to do so at certain times. It seems to me that the discipline required to start one meditating is of course not an end in itself.

In the Big Book, at the end of Step 11 there is a line that says: "We alcoholics are undisciplined. So we let God discipline us in the simple way we have just outlined." It further occurred to me that the results of our efforts at this discipline of meditation is not even a means to an end. Instead the discipline of daily prayer and meditation is not an end, nor a means to one either, it is a bridge that leads us over the river of chaos our lives have led us to. On one side of the river is our life living with untreated alcoholism, whether drinking or not. On the other side is a life which can include emotional balance and sanity without the aid of the alcohol which once worked, but has now turned against us.

“...meditation is not an end...it is a bridge that leads us over the river of chaos our lives have led us to.”

And so, this all came together with other thoughts that had occurred to me earlier this morning as I got ready for work. The thoughts were about some of the various comments I have gotten from friends who think I am too hard on myself at times. Amazingly I don't see it this way. What I get from daily inventory are observations that are necessary to cross this river by the elimination of character defects. And one can't root out and identify character defects without appearing hard on yourself because to the outside world those defects are indistinguishable from the rest of me. I really don't feel I am not being hard on myself, I am being hard on my character defects. Which, while they may appear as part of me, are in fact are separate. Or at least my prayer is that they soon will be separated from me.

I don't believe the elimination of one's character defects is an easy process, and of course to do so first starts by identification of them. From the outside it may appear as an act of asceticism and mortification, or some kind of self-condemnation. But from the inside it just doesn't feel that way. I am sure there are other ways to change oneself, this just happens to be the way that feels most natural to me right now. Of course, that too can change with time.

God grant me the Serenity to Accept the Things I cannot change, Courage to change the things I can, and Wisdom to know the difference.

AA'S ONE ULTIMATE AUTHORITY

Did you ever wonder why things were the way they were in AA? Did you ever say to someone when discussing the state of things in AA, "Who's in charge over there anyway?"

The simple answer is "You are!" But as with everything else in AA, it's still only with the help of a Higher Power. This is because Alcoholics Anonymous has one ultimate authority, that is a loving God as He may express Himself in a well-informed group conscience. So, if that's the case, then what about the old timers, or the people who lead the meetings, or even those who serve on our service boards at the District or Area levels? Well, it turns out that our leaders are only trusted servants; they don't govern anything. As a matter of fact, even though we may create service boards or committees, those boards and committees are directly responsible to those they serve, you.

This upside-down triangle shaped service structure means that unlike the rest of the world, the members of AA have ultimate authority over the way AA is run. But that doesn't mean it's a free-for-all. As a matter of fact, it's a tremendous responsibility. We can't go off half-cocked and shake things up just because we don't like something. We owe it to ourselves, the future members of A.A., and the program that saved our lives to obtain information necessary to arrive at that well-informed group conscience. Once we have clear unbiased information, we can more easily make the decisions that may affect others for years to come.

Writing or calling A.A. World Services in New York will help us get some of this information out, but it will most likely come in the form of suggestions on how groups have handled similar situations in the past all the while supporting each group's right to make their own decisions. They'll never tell us what to do, or send out the Tradition Police to whip some misguided group in to shape, or even force them to conform to the latest standard we have decided to hold ourselves to.

No, ultimately AA is in our hands. It's not up to New York, or to the Area, or even the District we attend meetings in. So if we don't like something about the meeting we're attending or the way things are done in AA we should start by getting active.

Attend a group business meeting, find out about our service structure, read the pamphlets and books our fellowship has published that contain the collective experience of those who came before us and who went through many of the same growing pains. If you feel strongly about something or would like to get active, ask questions and dig up information. Do something.

Remember nothing gets done in AA, not even recovery, without action. Ask your GSR, DCM or Delegate to be of service to you and your group. They work for you, not the other way around. Step up as a member and be of service yourself, go from being a taker to a giver. You will never wonder who's in charge again.

Signed,

A Member

Dates To Remember

**District 13 Function
Committee**

Tuesday Nights @
Good Shepherd Church
Nashua 6-7pm

District 13 GSR Meeting

Wednesday April 16th
7pm Merrimack YMCA

Area Committee Meeting

Sunday, April 27th
1 - 4pm Hooksett

**General Services
Conference**

April 27th - May 3rd
New York City, NY

**Area Assembly -
POST CONFERENCE
ASSEMBLY**

(hosted by District 9)
Saturday May 17th
8am - 4pm, Concord, NH

Area Committee Meeting

Sunday, June 22nd
1 - 4pm Hooksett

Area Committee Meeting

Sunday, July 27th
1 - 4pm Hooksett

**THE DISTRICT 13 FUNCTION
COMMITTEE PRESENTS**

**A COFFEE HOUSE
EVENT!**

An evening of acoustic guitar and vocals featuring

Mike K.
Bobby K.
Chris Q.
Edmund L.

The Unitarian Universalist Church
58 Lowell Street, Nashua, NH
6:00pm—10:00 pm

This is an open meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous
Donations are appreciated

Newsletter Deadline

This is YOUR Newsletter. If you would like to contribute an article or personal experience for publication or advertise an upcoming event for your group, please send the information to:

District 13 News
P.O. Box 3513
Nashua, NH 03061
Email: newsletter@nhaa13.org

**Deadline For Next Issue —
May 16th 2008**