

AA District 18 Newsletter

Volume 2, Issue 3

December 2021



The holidays can be a challenging time of year for all of us whether a veteran in sobriety or new to sobriety. We have included ten tips to help you stay sober during the holidays, which are based on tips provided by Box 4-5-9 published by AA in 2013. Box 4-5-9 is a quarterly newsletter published by the AA General Service Office that you can subscribe to for free.

1. **Line up extra activities for the holiday season.** Arrange to take newcomers to meetings, answer the phones at the CSO, volunteer at the alkathon, or volunteer to serve food during the holidays to those in need.

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Tradition 12 Checklist

These questions were originally published in the AA Grapevine in conjunction with a series on the Twelve Traditions that began in November 1969 and ran through September 1971.

The D18 newsletter committee felt that republishing these questions related to each tradition would help further the growth of individuals and groups in their understandings of the traditions, and might stimulate some dialogue. We have modified this month's questions to reflect the most relevant questions related to Tradition 12.

We continue in providing answers to some of the questions posed, to show how these traditions can be practiced in all our affairs.

Tradition Twelve: Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

1. Why is it a good idea for me to place the common welfare of all AA members before individual welfare? What would happen to *me* if AA as a whole disappeared?
2. Should I keep my AA membership a secret, or reveal it in private conversation when that may help another alcoholic (and therefore me)?
3. Is my brand of AA so attractive that other drunks want it?
4. What is the real importance of *me* among more than a million AAs?

Answer to number 2:

When thinking about this question, it's important to put the situation into context. Anonymity is an important aspect of the AA program, as it protects both AA and ourselves. The goal of the 11th and 12th traditions, is to keep us humble and to protect the AA name. At the same

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2. **Be host to AA friends, especially newcomers.** If you don't have a place to throw a party, take a person out to eat.
3. **Keep your AA telephone list with you.** If a drinking urge comes, or you're put into a situation you're uncomfortable with, call an AAer or your sponsor.
4. **Find out about the special holiday events put on by different AA groups in your area, and go!** If you're nervous to go alone, take someone newer than you are.
5. **If you're feeling wobbly, attend a meeting or a zoom meeting.** With the advent of zoom, zoom meetings are available 24/7. If you google 24/7 zoom meetings, you can find a zoom meeting to attend.
6. **Remember that it's okay to say no.** If you're feeling nervous about an event that involves liquor, it's fine to skip it.
7. **Have a plan.** If you're going to a party, have a plan. Bring your own favorite non-alcoholic beverage and make a plan on what you're going to do if you start feeling like you want to drink. You can go for a walk if you're feeling like drinking, call an AAer, or call it an early evening and go home. It's never a bad idea to have a set amount of time that you will spend at a party.
8. **If you have to go to a drinking party,** bring an AAer with you if you can. If you can't bring an AAer, bring some food or candy that you enjoy with you.
9. **Stay in the present.** There is nothing worse than to get yourself worked up about temptations that you may encounter during the holiday and what "might" happen at an event, whether it's with family or friends. Remember—"one day at a time"
10. **Enjoy the true beauty of the holiday.** Go outside at night and enjoy the lights. Reflect on what you're grateful for, those that you love and what brings you joy.
11. **Don't forget to pray in the morning for your Higher Power to keep you sober.**

point, anonymity is a principle that can be poorly understood.

When I was relatively new to the program, I went to visit an AAer that was in the hospital. While I knew their first name and last initial, it was a bit embarrassing to go to the front desk and mention their first name and last initial for who I was visiting. Fortunately, I had their hospital phone number and was still able to visit this person. When I relayed this story to my sponsor, she said that we are not to be strangers from one another and proceeded to bring up section 241 in, As Bill Sees It.

It states, "In some sections of A.A., anonymity is carried to the point of real absurdity. Members are on such a poor basis of communication that they don't even know each other's last names or where each lives. It's like the cell of an underground". "In other sections, we see exactly the reverse. It is difficult to restrain A.A.'s from shouting too much before the whole public, by going on spectacular 'lecture tours' to play the big shot". "However, I know that from these extremes we slowly pull ourselves onto a middle ground. Most lecture-giving members do not last too long, and the superanonymous people are apt to come out of hiding respecting their A.A. friends, business associates, and the like. I think the long-time trend is toward the middle of the road -- which is probably where we should be."

Hearing that passage from my sponsor, made me think about anonymity in a different light. My feelings on anonymity have changed as I've grown in the program and I've come out of hiding. When I was new to AA, I was more comfortable with being super-anonymous. I felt very vulnerable, was filled with shame, did not feel secure in my sobriety, and was still getting to know the program and the people within the program.

As I've grown in my sobriety and the program, I'm more towards the middle of the road. If I was talking to someone that needed help in getting sober, I would have no issue giving them resources and information for meetings. Whether I would mention my involvement in AA, would depend on whether it would put them more at ease, or make them feel more uncomfortable. When I was just getting started in AA, I would have been mortified to know someone both in and out of the program. At the same point, not everyone is like me and may find comfort in knowing someone that is there. Whether to disclose my involvement all comes down to how I can best be of help to a potential newcomer. -KS

Upcoming Events for December

DISTRICT 18 NEWSLETTER/WEBSITE MEETING

- DATE: THURSDAY, DECEMBER 9TH
- TIME: 6:00P
- PLACE: ON ZOOM
 - MEETING ID: 860 4525 2243
 - PASSCODE: 508512

CHRISTMAS FOR KIDS

- DATE: SATURDAY, DECEMBER 18TH 2021
- TIME: 2-4P
- PLACE: CSO
- PLEASE RSVP WITH NUMBER OF KIDS IF ATTENDING

GSR MEETING-HYBRID

- DATE: SUNDAY, DECEMBER 19TH 2021
- TIME: 2P
- PLACE: AT CSO AND ON ZOOM
 - MEETING ID: 847 7367 1591
 - PASSCODE: 987449

DISTRICT 14 ALKATHON

- DATES: DECEMBER 24TH -DECEMBER 31ST 2021
- DOORS OPEN DECEMBER 24TH / CHRISTMAS EVE AT 5PM AND THE FOLLOWING DAYS' HOURS ARE 8AM – 9PM.
- DAILY MEETINGS: 10AM (BREAKFAST), NOON (LUNCH), 2PM & 7PM (DINNER).
- SPEAKER MEETINGS EVERY EVENING (AL-ANON & AA).
- FAMILIES WELCOME
- LOCATED IN THE BASEMENT AT CATHEDRAL CATHOLIC GRADE SCHOOL LOCATED: 200 SOUTH 2ND ST, BELLEVILLE IL 62220 (ENTER AND PARK IN REAR)

IMPORTANT DATES IN DECEMBER AA HISTORY

DEC 1934 - BILL & LOIS START ATTENDING OXFORD GROUP MEETINGS.

DEC 1934 TO MAY 1935 - BILL WORKS WITH ALCOHOLICS, BUT FAILS TO SOBER ANY OF THEM. LOIS REMINDS HIM HE IS SOBER.

DEC 1938 - TWELVE STEPS WRITTEN.

NOV/DEC 1939 - AKRON GROUP WITHDRAWALS FROM ASSOCIATION WITH OXFORD GROUP. MEETINGS MOVED FROM T HENRY & CLARENCE WILLIAMS TO DR BOB AND OTHER MEMBERS HOMES.

DEC 1939 - FIRST AA GROUP IN MENTAL INSTITUTION, ROCKLAND STATE HOSPITAL, NY.

DEC 1940 - 1ST AA GROUP FORMED IN **ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI.**

DEC 1950 - GRAPEVINE ARTICLE SIGNED BY BOTH BILL AND DR BOB RECOMMEND ESTABLISHING AA GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE.

DEC 1955 - 'MAN ON THE BED' PAINTING BY ROBERT M. FIRST APPEARED IN GRAPEVINE. PAINTING ORIGINALLY CALLED 'CAME TO BELIEVE'

DEC 7, 1949 - SISTER IGNATIA RECEIVED POVERELLO MEDAL ON BEHALF OF A.A.

DEC 11, 1934 - BILL ADMITTED TO TOWNS HOSP 4TH/LAST TIME (FALL '33, '34 IN SUMMER, MIDSUMMER AND FINAL ADMITTANCE).

DEC 12, 1934 - BILL HAS SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE AT TOWNS HOSPITAL.

DEC 12, 1937 - BILL MEETS WITH ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION AND TRIES TO GET MONEY.

DEC 13 OR 14, 1934 - EBBY VISITED BILL AT HOSPITAL, BROUGHT WILLIAM JAMES'S BOOK, "VARIETIES OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE".



Well, it's finally upon us. The big-time holidays, Hannukah, Christmas and New Year's, among others. It's amazing how another year has gone past, and I'm happy to be sober. If nothing special happens this year during the holidays, I know the best gift I have ever received was the gift of sobriety.

This special gift all started with the first word in the title of Chapter 5 of the Big Book, 'HOW'. There are a lot of acronyms said in and around AA meetings, but to me this one is key. Honesty, Open-mindedness, Willingness. Sometimes, I think the order is incorrect. I prefer to put Willingness in the front, so now I have WHO. Who, me? For me, without willingness, the other two would be difficult to achieve.

Am I willing to be Honest today? As my drinking had progressed throughout the years, so did my dishonesty. I certainly didn't want to be accountable for my actions. I certainly wanted to get my way, no matter what. I certainly didn't want anyone know how much I drank. To become honest again, I had to be willing to look at myself and be willing to work on my honesty. The first essential principle is honesty. Without that one, it would be a difficult task to work the Steps. And I learned that dishonesty was not only hurting myself, but others as well, which I already knew, but didn't much care about. Honesty is the only way.

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Willingness continued

Am I willing to be Open-minded? In my drinking days, I shut out every suggestion. I refused to listen to anyone who tried to help me. I was stuck in my ways of doing things the same way over and over again, not caring if I got a different result, though a new result never appeared in most cases. But when I came into AA, I had to learn to be open-minded to listen to those who have worked the Steps and attended meetings, who shared their stories and then try the suggestions presented to me. I had to be open-minded to changing my way of thinking. Because my way was not working.

Willingness, Honesty and Open-mindedness, it is what I had to change to be able to work the program, the Steps. There is nothing I regret about changing this in my life, but I will be honest and say that it was not easy. There were many times where it hurt to be honest, but I knew it was the right thing to do, for myself and others.

Today, my willingness continues to grow, to try different things, to improve myself and discover different ways to be of service. Service inside AA and on the outside.

So this holiday season, I am willing to have an enjoyable holiday sober. I am willing to enjoy family and friend's company. I am willing to live outside the box that held me back for so many years.

May you all have a Blessed Holiday this year and the next. Best of all, have a Happy New Year, sober. -**John G.**



D18's Festive December wordsearch

L F Q C A I U K Y D Y H M A H T K Z M U V D Z B S Q Y M X F
 C E H I K T Z Q G Y M P Q I V A F J N M K E L V R V Z B R R
 L D T J H T H P D R W I Z C Q N S Z J S K D C T I E Z Q L O
 Q V C U A G R K M W I O Y P I F L E E D K G R A E I H J I S
 Z V R R Y A I T K A P M L F E V J W C D W D O H L K Z Q W T
 V Z O V P L B N E F V U H F K Z G F J V W E L F I T W Q W Y
 L Y K K O C G Z G H U J M L L Q O I U P E Z A I L E E V Y N
 J V B P T H N N K E M P N H D R E S X N A M W O N S H W I O
 S A I T J R Z X M Q R U G T P Y H E P S T U Z S K T T J D F
 W G L R S I W Q Q E U B G J O Y K N S Q W O U A L T A L O P
 C S G E O S M C U O S O R G T J U W M C L Z S N E E E K G B
 Q E X K M T K Z Z L G C N E D E C E M B E R B T U X R U B Z
 Z L Y C D M A O A S O K F E A S A Q Y P I T R A B A W F Z N
 T D Z A W A E F O Y C K R P X D D W A B N A T Z B H E M A W
 R N D R K S G N I K C O T S W O N S H H W H R W C O K K G Q
 M A F C M X B R O U B F K J V J H E C N J I E R H F T Q K A
 N C Z T G U F E V G Q R R W G N U V H J Z M P A B F X Z H A
 B A W U I S W T O D T W Q W T N E M A N R O A T K V Y V P M
 G I C N C R Z N Q P B M H D T L A W T I C N P S P S B T N F
 V L I C W I K I X X D J E M I M F K F Z G X G C I T Y I K R
 K O J R R J I W C W Q E P N C Q K R S C A K N R Q Y K N L N
 F O Q G P O A A T X R A D D E Q F S H S G I I Z E I U W O C
 X H O T O R N F I R C N I O P I D I N S P F P U J D G R F A
 P N H W I D V E V E L T B O G E M H C I Y O P P R S T X A N
 L N O F Y Y A T Y N E K K N S N T B V D G G A P I H S I X D
 Z U V S D V I J B G M M G S E O D F U Y U Z R C P B W D E Y
 Z V S D I I B T I D Y Z J Y P H Z F H N J O W O E E R L D C
 Z C Y O Q L N F C O M S L T G E X D B X Y Z L L T R E E O A
 L V Y P R E T J T T J R Z S Z H C K H Q V E L U C M G B A N
 L S T C T Y C E H N D H I F K O P O H S K R O W N C A G O E

Bell	Ornament
Candles	Santa
Candy	Snow
Candy Cane	Snowman
Chimney	Star
Christmas	Stocking
December	Tree
Deer	Winter
Elf	Work Shop
Frosty	Wrapping Paper
Gift	Wreath
Gingerbread	
North Pole	
Nutcracker	

DO YOU HAVE AN UPCOMING EVENT OR A BIRTHDAY IN JANUARY, or are you interested in contributing to the newsletter? Please send any of the above to info@aa-district18.org by 1/2/22 being mindful of our steps and traditions. Any suggestions or comments are always appreciated and can also be sent to info@aa-district18.org . Thank you for subscribing to our newsletter!