

AA District 18 Newsletter

Volume 4, Issue 1

January 2023



We have some late breaking news for District 18.

- **The Rainbow Recover Group** has switched to being online only and is now the **Grateful and Sober Group**.
- **New District 18 Officers** – see page 4

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AA Grapevine Discussion: Spiritual Awakenings

This month, we continue with AA *Grapevine* discussion questions. We highly encourage our readers to read the AA *grapevine* article relevant to the discussion, but it is not necessary to have read it or to be familiar with it. We are answering the questions based on our own experience with the hope that our answers will be helpful to our readers.

This month's discussion questions are from January's AA *Grapevine* issue, and are related to Spiritual awakenings.

"Were you raised with religion? Did you struggle with Step Two when you got to AA? What is your concept of a Higher Power? Has it changed over time? What are some things members have shared or AA literature that has helped you?"

Working Step 2

While I was raised with religion and believe that God has the power to do miracles, I could relate to the author even though we come from different faith backgrounds. We're similar in that we're both female alcoholics. While her struggle was with listening and applying the message, my struggle was with faith. Growing up in the church, I had a lot of questions that I could never get answers to. This resulted in doubt and led to a lot of struggles in my belief in God. While I have never given up on my faith in God, once I started drinking, I drifted away from a relationship with Him as I was living a lifestyle contrary to His

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Working Step 2 (cont'd from pg. 1)

desires. This resulted in a lot of shame and guilt. I actively avoided Him for years as I knew He didn't approve of my drinking. However, I also wasn't willing to give up alcohol. Alcohol made life worth living and worked as decent solution to a number of problems for many years, at least until the consequences started showing up. After one night of drinking resulted in a number of serious consequences, I was finally willing to admit that I was an alcoholic and knew that AA had a solution to alcoholism. So, I showed up on AA's doorstep for the first time.

I can still remember the first time of hearing, "How it works". I was glad they read it as it gave me a sense of how AA worked with the twelve steps. However, I was skeptical. It seemed strange that a spiritual program would be the solution to my alcoholism. It didn't make any logical sense to me. I don't think it's by accident that in, "How it works", it states that, "...if you're willing to go to any length to get it, **then** you are ready to take certain steps". My last drunk made me more than willing as I had had enough pain and I didn't want to drink again, so I began to work the steps.

When working Step Two, I was already finding I had to put this principle into practice. I can still remember my sponsor at the time asking me, "Are you willing to believe that a power greater than yourself can restore you to sanity"? I had to make a decision. Was I willing to have faith, place my trust in God and work the steps even though it made no sense to me? I was certainly willing to believe and give it a shot, which is all Step Two takes. In the 12&12Bill W says, "that the hoop you have to jump through is a lot wider than what you think" when it comes to Step Two. I didn't realize how wide that hoop was until I read, "Came to Believe". In this book, a number of alcoholics share their experience in how they came to believe in a power greater than themselves. For many of them, even though they were willing to believe, the process of coming to believe took many years.

From listening to others, belief in a Higher Power is not the only concept that is a sticking point. For others, admitting insanity when it comes to alcohol can be another huge issue. The Big Book does an excellent job of showing this by using the analogy of the jaywalker on pages 37-38 of the Big Book. Despite jaywalking causing the jaywalker a number of problems, the jaywalker continues to jaywalk despite the

consequences getting worse. While the story always gives me a giggle, it becomes a lot less funny when I think about it in the context of my alcoholism. It shows how serious alcoholism is and how insane our reaction is to it, which is not easy to admit or look at. It also shows that the consequences of alcoholism get worse with time. Even for those that haven't suffered a lot of consequences, the consequences will get worse if you're an alcoholic like me.

If you're struggling with Step Two, please know that you're not alone! Many others have struggled with it and have gone on to work a successful program.

-KS

Spiritual Awakenings

I was raised Catholic by loving parents. Growing up, I never saw my parents drink, especially my father. Maybe he didn't drink because he grew up with an alcoholic father, who spent more time in bars than with his son. I attended mass regularly with my family and was active in the church through high school. The church had a program that I really liked called Teens Encounter Christ (TEC). Through that program of going away for a weekend, I found more spirituality than all the masses I had attended. It was a special time and feeling that I cannot put into words, but the feelings were powerful. Soon thereafter, I began drifting from religion as my dependence on alcohol and other substances began increasing. And all but gave up religion once I went away to college, where I found a new life, the party life.

I did return to the church in 1997 when I married my wife, and we began attending mass together. After a few years, I decided I didn't want to go anymore, as I just wasn't getting anything out of it. Nor was I trying to get anything out of it. I discovered going to church for one hour a week could lift me up for a day, but it couldn't carry me for a week. I wasn't putting any extra work into it and didn't have the time for it. There were more important things to attend to.

Years went by, and left to my own devices, my drinking starting taking control of my life. Along the way, I tried quitting on my own, with limited success. But none lasting very long. All those times I tried to quit on my own, I never

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thought to ask a higher power for help. It was just brute force willpower.

Eventually, I came to A.A. and got stuck on Step 2. 'Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.' The first thing that came to mind when I read this was God. Even though I was raised Catholic, I didn't want to reestablish a relationship with God. At the time, I felt the God I had prayed all those fox-hole prayers to didn't answer them. He left things I asked for go unanswered, and things I desperately wanted, nothing. The things that I didn't want to happen did happen. That made me mad, bitter, and angry with God.

To complete this step, I would need the help of my sponsor and all those that attended the meetings I attended, since I was over complicating this step. I was told by my sponsor and others that this step is not about naming my higher power, but believing there could be something out there greater than myself. My sponsor told me to not worry about whom or what the name of this higher power is right now, that will come later. I had been running the show for so long, doing the same thing over and over again, expecting different results, only to be disappointed when the results were the same. This step allowed me to begin releasing the control I had over my life. It helped introduce simple prayers into my daily routine. 'Higher power, I need your help to stay sober today.' For me it was the beginning of reestablishing a relationship with my higher power, the one I had abandoned and whom I call God today.

Throughout working the steps, I've had moments that really felt powerful, a bit out of the norm. One such feeling came when I completed Step 4. First there was a feeling of relief, followed by a sense that I now knew who and what I had become due to my alcoholism. There was a understanding that I could not have completed this without the help of my higher power and my higher power was with me throughout the process of discovering my defects. So I my spiritual awakening was acknowledging my higher power, God, had been with me my whole life, and I had finally accepted God back into my life. God was helping me achieve what I thought was impossible, sobriety and sanity. When I go through each day remembering, "Thy will, not

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INTERESTING DATES IN JANUARY AA HISTORY

JAN 1937: Fitz M. & others bring AA to Washington D.C. area

JAN 1937: Bill & Lois attend Oxford Group house party West Point New York; Bill got job with Quaw & Foley stockbrokers.

JAN 1939: Dr. Bob states in a letter to Ruth Hock that AA had to "get away from the Oxford Group atmosphere."

JAN 1940: First AA group founded in Detroit, MI.

JAN 1940: The first AA meeting not in a home begins at King School, Akron, OH.

JAN 1941: AA Bulletin No.2 reports St. Louis Group has 10 members.

JAN 1943: Canadian newspaper reports 8 men meet in at "Little Denmark", a Toronto restaurant, to discuss starting Canada's first AA group.

JAN 1943: Washington Star reports 300 attend the Capitals 1st AA banquet.

JAN 1952: The AA Grapevine publishes its memorial issue on Dr. Bob.

JAN 1961: Dr. Carl Jung answers Bill W.'s letter with "Spiritus Contra Spiritum."

JAN 1971: The New York Times publishes Bill Wilson's obituary on page one.

JAN 1988: West Virginia AA begins 1st statewide toll-free telephone hotline.

JAN 1988: John L. Norris M.D., non-alcoholic member of the AA General Service Board dies. 1st former Chairman, Trustee, Trustee Emeritus. "Our beloved Dr. Jack."

mine, be done," I will be able to have a sober and sane day.

John G



As we begin a New Year and the first month of that year, I thought I would look at Step One's **vital principle**, 'Honesty'. I found the following statement in one of my recovery manuals associated with honesty, 'Understanding the problem prevents ignorance and belligerent denial, two great enemies of recovery.' When I first read that statement, my past started making sense. I was ignorant about alcoholism, where I didn't recognize the signs, like drinking every day. When I tried to quit on my own, I still denied I was alcoholic, nor even considered I was. Even when my friends would tell me that they were alcoholic while they were still drinking, I couldn't believe they would say something like that. I know I certainly wouldn't. The definition of *belligerent* is aggressively hostile. I had an aggressively hostile denial about how my drinking had taken over my life. To escape this denial, I accepted my situation as normal, that this is the way it will be, and I could continue drinking.

Step One is all about Honesty. I had to be willing to take a honest look at myself, where I was at and where I had come from. I had to relearn how to be honest, and this required a good deal of truthfulness, sincerity and frankness with myself. Finally seeing the truth that had been there all along, I understood Step One, and could admit that I was powerless over alcohol. And seeing the mess of my life, I could admit that my life had become unmanageable.

I soon realized that in order to successfully work the remaining steps, I needed to practice honesty in all my affairs, everyday. Honesty is very powerful. It can give you respect, strength and courage, as well as gaining the trust of family and

Continued on page 5

Upcoming Events for January

GSR MEETING-HYBRID

- DATE: SUNDAY, JANUARY 15TH, 2023
- TIME: 2:00 PM
- PLACE: AT CSO AND ON ZOOM
- MEETING ID: 860 0054 3107
- PASSCODE: 093088

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

SPEAKER JAM, DESSERT POTLUCK AND TRIVIA NIGHT

- DATE: FEBRUARY 18TH, 2023
- TIME: 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM
- LOCATION: CENTRAL SERVICE OFFICE
409 BROADWAY, UNIT C-1, SOUTH ROXANA, IL

41ST ANNUAL FIVE CORNERS CONVENTION

- DATE: FEBRUARY 17TH & 18TH, 2023
- TIMES: SEE ATTACHED FLIER
- LOCATION: MINER CONVENTION CENTER
2610 EAST MALONE, MINER, MO

GREAT RIVER ROUNDUP

- DATE: MARCH 10TH & 11TH, 2023
- TIMES: SEE ATTACHED FLIER
- LOCATION: PERE MARQUETTE LODGE
ROUTE 100, GRAFTON, IL

New District 18 Officers

Officer elections were held at the December 2022 GSR meeting. We would like to congratulate each member and wish them success and our support in their new positions.

DCM – Karin S.

Alternate DCM – Forrest M.

Secretary – Rachel A.

Treasurer – Dave L.

Honesty (cont'd from pg. 4)

friends. Even when I've done wrong, being honest about it usually resolves the issue. It's hard to remember the tales we weave, when we practice to deceive. When I am honest every day, I leave no doubt on the table.

-JG

Some Humor

Going Under

A drunk named Murphy worked at the local brewery. One day while stirring a vat of beer, he lost his balance and fell in. Mrs. Murphy was called to the brewery and was given the awful news of his drowning. After regaining her composure, she expressed gratitude that at least his death had been merciful and quick.

The foreman, shaking his head, said, "I don't know about that, Mrs. Murphy. He got out twice to go to the bathroom."

Published in the January 2023 Grapevine by Anonymous, Washington, D.C.

Supersaturated Solution

My Chemistry teacher's a liar. He says that alcohol is a solvent. I have been drinking it for years and it hasn't solved any of my problems!

Published in the July 2021 Grapevine by Dusty B., Hancock, Maine

An elderly man is stopped by the police at 1 A.M.

The officer asks where he's going at this time of night.

The man replies, "I'm going to a lecture about alcohol abuse and the effects it has on the human body."

The officer laughs and says, "Oh really? And who is giving that lecture at this time of night?"

The man replies, "My wife."



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DO YOU HAVE AN UPCOMING EVENT OR A BIRTHDAY IN FEBRUARY, or are you interested in contributing to the newsletter? Please send any of the above to info@aa-district18.org by 01/31/23, 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!



District 18 AA Activity Committee Presents

February Speaker Jam

Dessert Pot-luck
Trivia Following Speaker

Central Service Office (CSO)

409 Broadway Unit C-1, South Roxana, IL 62084

Saturday, February 18th
6:00~9:00pm

Speaker starts @ 6:30:

Scott H. from the Tue. Night Group

- Open Meeting. Bring your favorite dessert to share!
- Trivia subjects will vary, with a special – “Resentment Bonus Round”, we’re sure you’ll identify with!



Your 41st Annual Five Corners Convention

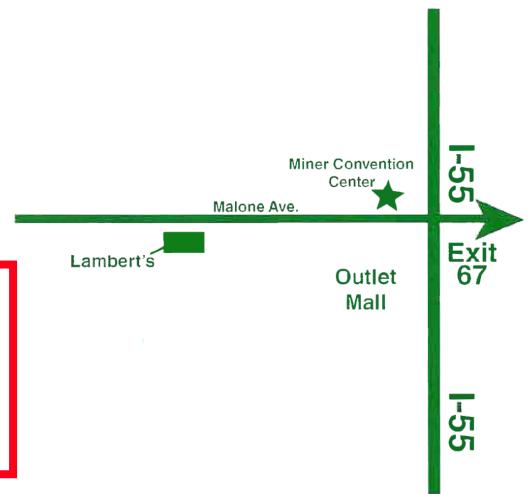


HOST STATE - ILLINOIS

February 17th & 18th, 2023

LOCATION

**Miner Convention Center
2610 East Malone
Miner, Missouri**



special **Special Lodging Rates**
(5 Corners Convention #330551)

Drury Inn \$119 (573) 472-2299

Pear Tree Inn \$99 (573) 471-4100

Free Registration

Free Bingo

Entire Convention Non-Smoking

Registration Begins 3:00 p.m. - Friday

First Speaker 7:00 p.m. - Friday

**Contact: Chairman - 870-740-8113 – Email: hartsfieldlc@gmail.com
www.fivecornersconvention.com**

GREAT RIVER ROUNDUP



www.GreatRiverRoundup.com

PERE MARQUETTE LODGE
MARCH 10TH & 11TH, 2023

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

“We Will Know Peace”

10TH FRIDAY, MARCH 10TH, 2023
 1:00PM Roundup Check-In
 3:00PM AA Stick Meeting
 8PM **AA SPEAKER DEYA D. MIAMA, FL**
 10:00PM Red Ball Meeting

11TH SATURDAY, MARCH 11TH, 2023
 10AM **AA SPEAKER BILL H. ST. LOUIS, MO**
 1:30PM **AL-ANON SPEAKER MARY W. EDWARDSVILLE, IL**
 3:30PM Discussion Meeting
 6:30PM Banquet
 8PM **AA SPEAKER THIERRY F. YONKERS, NY**



Lodge reservations are separate from the **Great River Roundup** Hotel room and cabin reservations may be made by contacting:
Pere Marquette Lodge & Conference Center
 Route 100, Grafton, IL 62037
 618.786.2331

When inquiring about rooms be sure to tell the lodge that you are with the **Great River Roundup**

Other Lodging in Area:
 Ruebel Hotel: 618.786.2315
 Tara Point Inn & Cottages: 618.786.3555

All banquet registrations **MUST BE** received by **Friday, March 3RD, 2023**. Banquet seating is on a first come first serve basis and seating is limited to 192.

For more information call:
 Amber @ 618.806.6443 or
 Nina @ 618.514.3953

Sign language interpreter available if requested by 02/01/23.

2023 Great River Roundup - Registration Form

Please fill out (1) registration form **PER** person and list your **FULL NAME** to better streamline the registration process. Banquet seating is assigned so if you want to sit together **YOU MUST** register together. Please list the **FULL NAMES** of the people you would like to sit with on the back of this form. Register online at www.GreatRiverRoundup.com or send registration and payment to: **Great River Roundup - P.O. Box 522, Wood River, IL 62095.**

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ **STATE:** _____ **ZIP CODE:** _____

EMAIL: _____ **VOLUNTEER AT EVENT?** _____ **IF YES, PHONE #** _____

PURCHASE A REGISTRATION \$20.00 X _____ **PURCHASE A BANQUET \$20.00 X** _____ **TOTAL:** _____

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