AA District 18

Newsletter

Volume 6 | Issue 9 | September 2026 *Editor: Matt B. Tuesday Night Group, Main St. Community Center, Edwardsville*

Serenity Prayer

God, grant me…

The serenity to accept the things I cannot change,

The courage to change the things I can,

And the wisdom to know the difference!

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Announcements

Area 21 Sept 2026 Pre-Assembly Meeting
Quality Inn Vandalia, 1920 Kennedy Blvd., Vandalia, IL
9/12/526 5:00-7:00pm
Speaker was changed from Pam B to Rose M (Hillsboro) no flyer update yet

Assembly Meeting
09/13/26 9:00 am

- **New Big Book Study Edwardsville - Weds Night. Click for info**
- **Weds Night Thrive meeting in Granite City is cancelled.**
- **Looking for Volunteers to "Bridge the Gap" - helping newcomers coming out of Treatment. Click to Sign UP**

***District 18 GSR's *- Southern Illinois Area 21 presents a new Service Information YouTube video. Click here for GSR Training Video .**

Looking for Volunteers to "Bridge the Gap" - helping newcomers coming out of Treatment. Click to Sign UP

- New Women's Meeting Granite City -Saturday 1pm Click for Info
- New Meeting in Granite City- Sat. 2116 Club Meeting 7pm - 8pm, Closed Discussion Click for Info
- New Meeting in Granite City - Thurs. Attitude Adjustments a New Way of Living Click for Info
- Open Speaker Meeting 7:30pm
  *District 18 GSR's *- Southern Illinois Area 21 presents a new Service Information YouTube video. Click here for GSR Training Video .

We need your help! Area 21 and the GSO are wanting to make sure they have the correct information for each group's GSR in District 18. **You can make sure your group's GSR is current by filling out the below form**. All GSRs will receive a digital GSR kit and can sign up for a GSR kit to be mailed. **Link to GSR change form.** You can also go directly to the Area 21 website, hover over home, and click "change form" to access the same form. **Link to Area 21 website.**

We have also posted a link on this website under District 18 for easy access. **Thank you!!!**

Click here to download 2024-2026 AA Service Manual.
AA Service Manual

Humor Corner

I got so drunk one night I woke up on the couch with the television remote in my hand and the TV still playing. I figured I must have passed out watching a movie. Then I looked across the room and realized I'd spent half the night pointing the remote at the ceiling fan. Apparently, I'd been trying to change the channel for three hours while the fan just kept showing the same five blades. Tough crowd.

I got so drunk one night I decided to make myself a sandwich before bed. The next morning I found the bread on the counter, mustard in the silverware drawer, cheese in the pantry, and a dinner plate in the refrigerator. There was no sandwich anywhere. Apparently, I had all the ingredients for dinner but lacked the executive management necessary to complete the merger.

Thoughts on Step 9

Well, I mean, I figure staying sober is making amends. I thought staying sober was staying sober. And making amends is making amends. I've known of men who could stand at a podium like this and bring tears to the eyes of everybody in the room. And there's a wife right down on the first row been waiting for 16 years to hear two words. I'm sorry.

Let me tell you what I mean by don't just tell me how sick you got unless you can tell me how well you're getting. I heard of a man who had an AA meeting boasted that on his last drunk it took six cops to get him to jail. And he laughingly said that he hit one of them broke man's jaw was bare fists. All right. But he never once mentioned picking up the hospital tab or putting groceries on at man's table while he was in the hospital.

History of Recovery. Father Joseph Martin A Talk About the 12 Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous (p. 25). History

Spotlight on Step 9

"Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others."

Step Nine is where willingness becomes responsibility. In Step Eight we made our list and became willing. Now we begin repairing the damage our alcoholism left behind. This is more than saying, "I'm sorry." An amend means doing what we reasonably can to set things right.

That requires courage, but it also requires wisdom. The *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* emphasizes good judgment, careful timing, courage, and prudence. Some amends can be made immediately; others must wait, be limited, or perhaps never be made directly because doing so would cause additional harm. Our desire to clear our conscience must never come at someone else's expense.

Step Nine also teaches us to keep the focus on our own conduct. We are not there to explain ourselves, collect apologies, or remind someone what they did wrong. We clean our side of the street and accept responsibility for the consequences of our past.

The *Little Red Book* describes amends as having tremendous power to change our relationships with God, other people, and everyday sober living. Through them, broken relationships may begin to heal, self-respect can return, and resentment can lose its grip.

Step Nine is not about erasing the past. We cannot undo what happened. But we can stop running from it. By honestly facing the harm we caused and doing what we can to repair it, we begin transforming regret into responsibility—and responsibility into freedom.

A.A. Historical Note — September 30, 1939

When *Liberty* Magazine Gave A.A. Its First National Break

In September 1939, Alcoholics Anonymous was still a tiny, uncertain fellowship struggling to survive. The Big Book had been published only a few months earlier, but sales were disappointing. There were roughly 100 sober alcoholics scattered among the early groups, and few Americans had ever heard of their unusual approach to alcoholism. Then came one of A.A.'s first important encounters with national publicity.

AA 9th Step Prayer

Oh God,
I pray for the right attitude to make my amends,
Being ever mindful not to harm others in the process.
I ask for Your guidance in making indirect amends.
Most important, I will continue to make amends
By staying abstinent, helping others &
Growing in spiritual progress.

https://www.aacle.org/twelve-step-prayers/

Another prayer for Step 9 ...

O God, grant me the right heart and mind to make my amends, keeping me mindful not to cause further harm. Guide me in making indirect amends where needed, and strengthen me to continue making amends through abstinence, service to others, and growth in spiritual maturity; through Jesus Christ, my Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Grapevine Daily Quote

"When I've examined a situation all ways from Sunday, and the only thing I can see are bad consequences, then I can say, 'God, I don't have the least idea what to do.' That seems to be the magic phrase for me. Then something happens, and it is usually an action I hadn't thought of doing, and the result is good for all."

"Distilled Spirits," Irasburg, Vermont, December 1997, AA Grapevine

There are somethings I can do well and others things that completely baffle me. Recognizing when I need help is one of those baffling things. Pride often interfere's with my recognition of the need to seek assistance. When I humbly recongize that I need help with something, I ask my HP for guidance and direction. The answer usually comes because I asked.

John G

On September 30, 1939, the nationally circulated *Liberty* magazine published Morris Markey's article, **"Alcoholics and God."** Charles Towns, owner of Towns Hospital, where Bill W. had repeatedly been treated for alcoholism, had helped interest Markey in the fledgling movement. Bill reportedly wasn't particularly pleased with the article's title, fearing its religious emphasis might frighten away alcoholics who were suspicious of religion.

Whatever reservations Bill had, people responded.

Approximately **800 letters seeking help** poured in from alcoholics and their families. Ruth Hock, secretary of the young Alcoholic Foundation, personally answered the inquiries and included information about the newly published book *Alcoholics Anonymous*. Several hundred copies of the struggling book were sold, but something far more important happened: A.A. suddenly found itself corresponding with suffering alcoholics and their families far beyond New York and Akron.

The article helped demonstrate something that would become fundamental to A.A.'s growth: **the message could travel farther than the messenger.** An alcoholic did not necessarily have to be sitting across the table from Bill W. or Dr. Bob to discover hope. The printed word could reach into a home hundreds of miles away and tell someone who believed himself hopeless that others like him had recovered.

A.A. was still small, poor, and largely unknown. But on September 30, 1939, a door opened. Soon other publicity would follow, and the Fellowship would begin expanding dramatically.

Sometimes carrying the message begins simply by making sure someone, somewhere, has a chance to hear it.

Humor in Sobriety

I used to treat the doorbell ringing unexpectedly like the opening scene of a hostage situation. I'd freeze wherever I was and immediately start wondering who it was, what they wanted, and why decent people couldn't call first. Then I'd creep toward the window and peek through the blinds with one finger, trying not to disturb them, like a man conducting surveillance from a suburban safe house. If they knocked too, things were clearly escalating. In sobriety, I've become the kind of person who actually answers the door, which still feels unnecessarily bold. Most of the time it's a neighbor, a delivery, or somebody trying to sell me new windows despite the perfectly adequate windows currently separating us. Nobody has arrived with warrants, subpoenas, or particularly difficult questions. Turns out, not every unexpected knock means trouble is coming. Sometimes it's just a guy holding a package I ordered three days ago and completely forgot about, while I'm hiding behind the curtains wondering how he found me.

Tech Corner / Cyber Security Tips

A common cybersecurity mistake is plugging an unfamiliar USB drive into a computer. Imagine someone finding a small flash drive in a parking lot or receiving one unexpectedly in the mail. Curiosity may tempt him to plug it in to see what it contains. That simple action could expose the computer to malicious software designed to steal passwords, personal information, or financial records. Some infected USB devices can begin causing damage as soon as they are connected. The warning sign is simple: **if you do not know where a device came from, do not connect it to your computer.** The same caution applies to memory cards and other unknown storage devices. If a legitimate business sends one unexpectedly, contact the company first and verify it. Good cybersecurity sometimes means resisting curiosity. An unknown device should be treated much like an unknown package: determine where it came from before opening it.

Matt B.

AA History in September

September 1:
1939 – 1st AA group founded in Chicago

September 5
1907 – Nancy Flynn, author of "Independent Blond" born

September 11:
2001 – 30 Vesey St, New York, AA's first Office is damaged during the World Trade Center attack

2001 – Father Mychal J., September 15, 1979 Died sober in the World Trade Center attack

September 12:
1942 – U.S. Assist. Surgeon General Kolb speaks at dinner for Bill and Dr Bob

September 13:
1937 – Florence R, 1st female in AA in NY

September 13:
1941 – WHJP in Jacksonville, FL airs Spotlight on AA

September 17:
1954: Bill D, AA #3 dies.

September 18:
1947 – Dallas Central Office opens its doors

September 19:

1965: The Saturday Evening Post publishes article "Alcoholics Can Be Cured – Despite AA"
1975 – Jack Alexander, author of Saturday Evening Post article, dies

September 21:
1938 – Bill W & Hank P form Works Publishing Co

September 24:
1940 – Bill 12 steps Bobbie V who replaced Ruth Hock as his secretary in NY

Step 9 Thoughts

"Their simplicity and workability are such that no special interpretations, and certainly no reservations, have ever been necessary." — Dr. Bob, *The Fundamentals—In Retrospect*

Step Nine can get complicated in a hurry if a person lets it. He can start wondering whether the other person deserves an apology, whether bringing up the past will make things awkward, or whether enough time has passed that everybody should forget about it. Before long, he has talked himself out of doing anything.

Dr. Bob's point cuts through that thinking. The Steps were meant to be simple and workable, not endlessly negotiated. For the person making amends, Step Nine means facing the damage honestly and doing what he can to set things right. Sometimes that means an apology. Sometimes it means paying back money, correcting a lie, or changing the way he treats somebody from that day forward.

He cannot control whether the other person forgives him. That is not the deal. His job is to clean up his side of the street and leave the rest alone.

An Ode to Sobriety

I practiced my apology
A dozen different ways,
With explanations ready
For those old drinking days.
Then someone gently told me,
"Skip the speech. Just own it."

I knocked on doors I'd rather
Have quietly passed on by.
Some welcomed me with kindness,
Some barely said goodbye.
Turns out making things right
Doesn't guarantee applause.

I paid a few old debts back,
Some money, some respect.
I learned that saying "sorry"
Was only part of the check.
Changed behavior, strangely enough,
Is worth more than a promise.

September 30:
!939 – Morris Markey runs story on AA, Alcoholics and God in Liberty Magazine

September 30:
1975 – Bill W a biography by Robert T is published

September 30:
2003 – Searcy W. died today, sober 20,962 days in a row

Other significant events in September for which we have no specific Dates:

1930: Bill wrote 4th (last) promise in family Bible to quit drinking.
1939: Group started by Earl T in Chicago.
1940: AA group started in Toledo by Duke P & others.
1940: Journal of Nervous and Mental Diseases gives Big Book unfavorable review.
1946: Bill & Dr. Bob both publicly endorsed National Committee Education Alcoholism founded by Marty M.
1946: 1st A.A. group in Mexico.
1948: Bob writes article for Grapevine on AA "Fundamentals – In Retrospect".
1948: 1st issue of Grapevine published in "pocketbook" size
1946 – 1st AA group in Mexico City is formed

Highlighting the 9th Promise of AA:

"Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change."

For many of us, drinking did more than damage our lives—it distorted the way we looked at them. Resentment made us believe everyone else was the problem. Fear convinced us something bad was always around the corner. Self-pity told us life had treated us unfairly. Even when circumstances were good, we often found something wrong with them.

Promise Nine tells us that recovery can change more than our behavior. It can change our perspective.

As we practice the Steps, we begin to discover that we do not have to approach every situation with fear, suspicion, anger, or the need to control it. We learn acceptance. We become grateful for things we

Some wrongs I couldn't straighten
Without causing greater pain.
So wisdom meant accepting
I couldn't fix each stain.
Sometimes the best amends
Is leaving someone in peace.

I thought I'd feel much taller
When all this work was done.
Instead I felt much lighter—
And that was twice the fun.
My ego wanted medals;
Recovery handed me a broom.

So here's to sober living,
Where actions match my words.
Where "sorry" means I'm changing,
Not merely being heard.
I cannot rewrite yesterday—
But today I write much better.

A Haiku to my Disease

Bottle promises peace,
Night steals what the morning needs—
Thirst wakes up again.

A haiku to Sobriety!

Sunrise finds me whole,
Yesterday loosens its grip—
Today becomes mine..

once overlooked. Problems still come, but we begin asking what we can do about them rather than whom we can blame.

The remarkable thing is that the world itself may not have changed very much. We have changed.

A.A. describes recovery as a new way of living, not merely a way of avoiding the first drink. Living Sober reminds us that sobriety can become something we actually enjoy rather than the grim existence many of us once imagined.

Promise Nine is evidence of that transformation. Life still contains disappointment, difficulty, and loss, but we no longer have to meet them as the person we once were. With a changed attitude and outlook, we begin each day believing that life is something to participate in rather than something to escape.

Spotlight on Tradition 9:

"A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve."

Tradition Nine can sound almost contradictory. Alcoholics Anonymous should never be organized, yet anyone who has attended a group business meeting knows that somebody has to make the coffee, pay the rent, order literature, answer the phone, and coordinate the work that keeps A.A. available.

The key is the difference between organization and service. A.A. does not create a hierarchy that governs its members. Instead, it creates committees, boards, and service positions to accomplish necessary work. Those entrusted with these responsibilities are not rulers; they are servants, accountable to the members they serve.

This principle grew from experience. As A.A. expanded, some structure became necessary, but the Fellowship remained cautious about creating authority that could tell individual alcoholics or groups what they must do. A.A.'s service structure exists to help carry the message, not to control the Fellowship. Pass It On describes this development as moving toward a structure designed "not to govern but to serve."

Tradition Nine is also a lesson in humility. A service title does not make anyone more important. Chairpersons rotate. Committee members come and go. The work continues.

We organize the work, not the alcoholic. That simple distinction helps protect the freedom, equality, and spirit of

A Devotion for the Christian in Recovery

Verse

Psalm 22:9–11 "But you brought me out of the womb. You made me trust while at my mother's breasts. I was thrown on you from my mother's womb. You are my God since my mother bore me. Don't be far from me, for trouble is near. For there is no one to help." (WEB)

Meditation

There are moments in recovery when we recognize how deeply we need God—not as a distant idea, but as the One who has held us from the beginning. The psalmist remembers that trust in God began long before he understood anything about life. Yet now, in trouble, he feels the ache of abandonment and pleads for God's nearness. Many who have walked through fear or loss understand this tension. We know God has kept us through dangers we didn't see, and yet there are seasons when trouble feels close and help feels far away. These verses remind us that honesty before God is not a failure of faith—it is the expression of trust. When we confess our fear and need, we discover that the God who carried us from the womb still carries us now, drawing near with compassion and steady love.

Collect

Faithful God, who has held us from the beginning and remains near in every trouble, draw close to our hearts when fear rises and strength fades. Carry us by Your mercy and sustain us by Your steadfast love, that we may rest in Your presence and trust Your unfailing care; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Hymn Verse

Love Divine, all love excelling,
Joy of heav'n, to earth come down,
Fix in us Thy humble dwelling,
All Thy faithful mercies crown.
Jesus, Thou art all compassion,
Pure, unbounded love Thou art;
Visit us with Thy salvation;
Enter ev'ry trembling heart!
(TLH 351 – "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling," verse 1)

service that have allowed A.A. to remain united while carrying its message around the world.

Spotlight on Concept 9 of Service

Concept Nine reminds us that good leadership is essential at every level of A.A.'s service structure. Its short form tells us that capable service leadership, together with sound and appropriate methods for selecting leaders, is indispensable to A.A.'s future functioning and safety. It also recognizes that the trustees of the General Service Board must assume primary leadership in A.A.'s world service affairs.

That can sound strange in a fellowship where we frequently say our leaders are "but trusted servants." Yet Concept Nine shows us that being a trusted servant does not mean avoiding leadership. A.A. needs people willing to accept responsibility, make difficult decisions, listen carefully, and sometimes stand up for an unpopular position.

Bill W. understood that effective A.A. leadership is different from authority or command. The best leader does not ask, "How much power do I have?" but rather, "How can I best serve?" Good leaders seek the group conscience, consider minority opinions, admit when they are wrong, and remain willing to change direction when experience shows a better way.

Concept Nine also reminds us that choosing our trusted servants matters. Popularity, friendship, or simply finding someone willing to take the job should not be our only considerations. We should look for willingness, judgment, experience, humility, dependability, and the ability to work with others.

There is a lesson here that reaches beyond committees and service boards. Recovery calls each of us to become more responsible. Sometimes service means following; sometimes it means listening; and sometimes it means having the courage to lead.

Concept Nine teaches that leadership and humility are not opposites. In A.A., the strongest leadership often comes from the person who is willing to serve without needing recognition, authority, or applause. That kind of leadership helps protect A.A. today and preserves it for the alcoholic who will need us tomorrow.

Grapevine Daily Quote

"Everyone around me said, 'Quit drinking,' but no one was able to tell me how."

"The Perfect Curve," Austin, Texas, November 2004, Voices of Long-Term Sobriety

Call it fortunate or unfortunate, no one ever told me to quit drinking. I was able to do that on my own numerous times. After a brief periods of sobriety, I discovered I had no defense against that first drink. I found that defense in AA, which guided me to a HP, and working the steps. By practicing the principles of the steps, I believe I can remain sober today. That's a big deal for an alcoholic like myself. I'm truly grateful for AA.

John G

My Daily Renewal

I can't fix a broken wagon wheel, but I can use the parts to make a new one. There are pieces of my past that can never be restored to what they once were. Some relationships remain broken. Some opportunities are gone. Some mistakes cannot be undone. For years, I wasted energy wishing I could rebuild yesterday exactly as it had been. Recovery has taught me a better lesson. While I may not be able to repair everything that was damaged, God can still use every broken piece for a new purpose. My failures have become wisdom. My pain has become compassion. My regrets have become reminders of His grace. What once seemed like a pile of shattered parts has become the very material from which God is building a different life. I no longer measure my future by what was lost, but by what God is still creating. Brokenness is not the end of the story when it rests in the hands of the Master Builder.

O God, take the broken pieces of my life and use them for Your good purposes. Build within me a life that reflects Your grace, and renew me today with hope, gratitude, and the confidence that nothing is beyond Your redeeming power. Amen

Some suggestions for Meeting Topics

1. **Making Direct Amends**
   Step Nine moves us from willingness to action—taking responsibility for the harm we have caused.
2. **Except When to Do So Would Injure Them or Others**
   Why making amends requires judgment, patience, and concern for others rather than simply relieving our own guilt.
3. **Amends Are More Than Apologies**
   The difference between saying "I'm sorry" and genuinely working to repair the damage we caused.
4. **Living Amends**
   When the best amends may be demonstrated through changed behavior practiced consistently over time.
5. **Cleaning Up Our Side of the Street**
   Making amends without demanding forgiveness, agreement, or a particular response from the other person.
6. **Courage, Humility, and Step Nine**
   Facing people and situations we once avoided and accepting responsibility without excuses.
7. **Tradition Nine: A.A. Ought Never Be Organized**
   Exploring how A.A. can function effectively without becoming a conventional hierarchy.
8. **Trusted Servants, Not Governors**
   Tradition Nine and the distinction between organizing necessary services and exercising authority over A.A. members.
9. **Promise Nine: "Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change."**
   How making amends can fundamentally change the way we see ourselves, other people, and the world around us.
10. **From Resentment to a Changed Outlook**
    How taking responsibility for our own conduct can free us from years of blame, anger, and bitterness.

If you ever got to the checkout line and realized you'd forgotten the milk... but not the whiskey...you just might be an alcoholic!

"I am not the saint I ought to be, I am not yet the disciple I wish to be, but by the grace of God, I am no longer the man I used to be."
— Commonly attributed to Augustine of Hippo

Recovery reminds me that God measures my life by direction more than distance. It is easy to become discouraged because I still see my faults so clearly. Yet when I look back honestly, I also see God's patient work. The person who once lived in denial is learning truth. The person who sought escape is learning faithfulness. I still have far to go, but I no longer have to pretend I have not come far at all. Gratitude grows when I remember that grace is not only about where I hope to be, but also about how far God has already brought me.

O God, thank You for the work You have already done in my life. Keep me humble, keep me growing, and never let me lose sight of the grace that has brought me this far. Amen.

11. **Concept Nine: Good Service Leadership**
    Why A.A. recognizes that capable, trustworthy leadership is necessary at every level of its service structure, even though its leaders do not govern the Fellowship. The Service Manual describes good leadership as indispensable to A.A.'s future functioning.

12. **Leadership by Example**
    Connecting Step Nine, Tradition Nine, and Concept Nine: accepting responsibility, serving rather than controlling, and allowing our actions to demonstrate the principles we profess.

Step Nine: More Than an Apology

When many of us first hear Step Nine, we think it means going around saying, "I'm sorry." But Step Nine asks considerably more of us. It says we make direct amends wherever possible, except when doing so would injure someone. An apology may be part of an amend, but an amend is really about repairing damage, accepting responsibility, and changing the way we live.

The Big Book moves us from words into action. After inventory and willingness, we are told to go out and "repair the damage done in the past." We are not there to explain ourselves, defend our behavior, or point out what the other person did wrong. We clean our side of the street. More importantly, the purpose goes beyond simply putting the past in order: A.A. says we are preparing ourselves to be of greater service to God and to the people around us.

The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions adds another important dimension. Step Nine requires judgment, timing, courage, prudence, and a willingness to accept the consequences of our past while remaining concerned about the well-being of others. Sometimes an amend means repaying money. Sometimes it means admitting a lie. Sometimes it means correcting damage we caused. And sometimes the most meaningful amend is changed behavior—living differently day after day. Daily Reflections describes both repairing the damage and "mending our ways."

Living one day at a time in recovery means I've discovered that I don't always have to understand why I'm being stretched. There are seasons when it seems like every inconvenience arrives at once, every plan takes longer than expected, and my patience gets more exercise than I ever intended to give it. Apparently, life has its own training program.

I still have days when I'd rather skip the lesson and move directly to graduation. Waiting has never been my favorite subject. Neither has uncertainty. But when I look back over my life, I realize that some of the qualities I value most today—patience, compassion, humility, and perseverance—were never learned during the easy seasons. They were quietly developed during the ones I would never have chosen.

Recovery has taught me that growth often feels uncomfortable while it's happening. Just because I don't enjoy the process doesn't mean the process isn't good for me. God has a way of accomplishing important work long before I recognize what He's doing.

Living this way keeps me sober because it reminds me that today's challenges are not necessarily obstacles to my recovery—they may very well be part of it. I can meet this day with faith instead of frustration, trusting that even the difficult moments are helping shape me into someone I could not become any other way.

Dr. Bob on Prayer

In *The Fundamentals—In Retrospect*, Dr. Bob presents prayer not as something added to the A.A. program after the fact, but as something woven into its beginnings. Looking back on the development of the Twelve Steps, he says they grew from the early members' trials and difficulties and from a humble desire, "sought in personal prayer, for divine guidance." The program, in his telling, was not merely invented by a committee. It emerged through experience accompanied by prayer and a willingness to be directed by something greater than themselves.

For Dr. Bob, prayer is closely connected with **guidance rather than control**. The Steps are simple and practical, but he believed the quality of life produced by them depended upon sincerely attempting to follow them "under divine guidance." Prayer therefore becomes less about persuading God to arrange circumstances according to our wishes and more about seeking the direction necessary to live rightly within those circumstances.

That same attitude extends beyond personal recovery. Dr. Bob says the Traditions deserve "serious, prayerful consideration." Decisions affecting A.A. should not be driven merely by personality, ambition, popularity, or organizational power. Prayer helps place the individual—and the Fellowship—under guidance rather than ego.

This is why Step Nine is not primarily about getting another person to forgive us. We cannot control whether someone accepts our apology, trusts us again, or even wants to hear from us. We make the amend because our spiritual growth requires us to become people who take responsibility for what we have done. The other person may benefit—and we sincerely hope they do—but their reaction is not the measure of whether we have worked the Step.

The deeper work happens within us. Pride gives way to humility. Fear gives way to courage. Guilt begins to lose its grip. Isolation gives way to relationship. The Little Red Book describes amends as a process that develops spiritual understanding, strength, self-respect, courage, and responsibility.

Step Nine does not ask me merely to say I am sorry. It asks me to become someone who lives sorry differently.

Matt B.

"As is a tale, so is life: not how long it is, but how good it is, is what matters."
— Seneca the Younger, Letters from a Stoic (Letter 77)

Recovery has changed the way I measure a successful day. I no longer ask whether it was easy, exciting, or productive. I ask whether I lived it honestly. Did I stay sober? Did I tell the truth? Did I show kindness? Did I grow a little? A meaningful life is not built by collecting years but by faithfully living the day that is in front of me. When enough good days are lived with purpose, they become a good life.

O God, help me live this day with honesty, gratitude, and purpose. May today's choices honor You and become another faithful step in the life You are shaping. Amen.

This is especially important because Dr. Bob repeatedly warns against self-importance. The alcoholic ego, he observes, does not surrender easily. Prayer reminds us that sponsors, leaders, and even the founders themselves are not the source of recovery. They are only human instruments. The recovering alcoholic is to remain humble, modest, and conscious of being "eternally under divine direction."

For Dr. Bob, then, prayer is fundamentally an act of **humility, surrender, listening, and dependence upon God**—followed by the willingness to act upon the guidance received.

Morning Prayer for Sobriety

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, for bringing me to the dawn of a new day. I pray that You would give me strength this day to remain sober and free from the temptation to drink. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Your will be done, and not my own. Amen.

Evening Prayer for Sobriety

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, for bringing me to the close of this day. I thank You for another day of sobriety, kept by Your grace and mercy. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Your will be done, and not my own. Amen.

DO YOU HAVE AN UPCOMING EVENT OR A BIRTHDAY IN October, or are you interested in contributing an article to the newsletter? Please send any of the above to info@aa-district18.org, by September 22, being mindful of our Steps and Traditions. Any suggestions or comments are always welcome and appreciated, and may be sent to info@aa-district18.org !!!

THANK YOU for subscribing to our newsletter!!!

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.