



## Principles, What a Way to Live

Principles are Not Flexible

By Rick R.

When I entered the program of Alcoholics Anonymous, I *identified* with just about everything I had read and heard, and I began to recognize where I went wrong up to that point. I realized that I had **no direction in my life**, no *moral compass* to speak of, and that the failure in my personal relationships manifested itself in low self-esteem (self-loathing). I felt inferior, unworthy, disrespected, isolated, unappreciated, disliked, etc. etc. I was going to have to depend on something outside of myself to govern my judgment and my decision-making. One of the first default positions I would take to surrender to these new realities was to concede to the fact that, as an alcoholic, *my brain did not process information properly*, and that I was going to have to trust in something more reliable. Living by *Principles, What a Concept!* There are people who believe that if we all lived by one simple principle, we wouldn't need any other laws on this planet, and that principle is *The Golden Rule: Do unto others as you would have others do unto you*. That simple statement gave me an understanding of how I could begin adopting a value system, based on principles, where I did not have to originate my own rules. While reading a book on economics, the author stated that "*a man who lives by principles has 99% of his decisions already made for him*". With that in mind, I began to establish a system of principles that are consistent with the AA program, and, I might add, with most of the other successful philosophies of life. I would read the *St. Francis Prayer in the 12X12* daily. *I attend a step study meeting weekly to reinforce these principles*. I try to make sure that I am not modifying these standards to evade the tougher actions. I was complaining about another member of our group one day, to one of my mentors at that time, and he suggested that I try to *place principles before personalities*. I responded, yes, but I do not agree with his principles. He then said it was not *his principles* that we are talking about, but that it was *my principles that needed to change*. He then informed me that we cannot be selective about who and when we apply these values. I must treat everyone with respect, and that goes for *the smallest, innocent child to the most errant rogue that I might encounter*. I know that it seems like an impossible task, but I assure you that if you start with the child and work your way to the rogue, it will get easier, if you don't let your ego convince you otherwise.

There are many suggestions in the Big Book and the 12X12 that have given me plenty of material to work with so that *this does not have to become a crisis management project*. It is more like *a lifelong pruning of my unwanted, destructive behaviors*. Here are a few of those suggestions: *Restraint of tongue and pen, Drop the word blame from your thoughts and speech, Stop fighting everyone and everything*, and so on. I have adopted some variations of my own such as: *I cannot read minds, I cannot control anyone but myself, everybody gets amnesty*. I am sure you can add to the list. When I practiced this approach long enough to see the *change in my self-esteem*, I realized that I am no better or worse than anyone else and that my brain had been lying to me. If we all had amnesia, we would all be pretty much the same. *The only thing that makes us different is the things we carry around between our ears*. It may be time to reprogram the mental software to default to the principles that have proven to work so well for so many. No one could ever fault us for living by the principles that we learned in AA.

## AA Central Office of Shreveport

24 Hr Hotline  
(318) 865-2172

[office@aa-shreveport.org](mailto:office@aa-shreveport.org)

[www.aa-shreveport.org](http://www.aa-shreveport.org)

## New Office Hours

Mon & Thurs 10am-5pm  
Tues, Weds, & Fri 10am-4pm

## Groups Responsible for

# HOT LINE

# Oct 2020

No Guarantee Oct 6-11

Primary Purpose Oct 12-18

Margaret Place Oct 19-25

Basic Training Oct 26-Nov 1

*This is a great service  
that you do for  
the person  
that is still suffering.*

## THE HOT LINE OUR MISSION:

*"When anyone anywhere reaches out I want the hand of A.A. to be there. For that I am responsible." BW*

If your group is not currently taking the hot line at least one week a year, please call us to add your group!  
Call the Central Office for the schedule!

*We need the help of your group and individuals to keep the 24 hour Hotline open for the still suffering alcoholic!*

# We need you!

## Step Ten: Beginning of the Maintenance Steps

Understanding the Disease of Alcoholism Takes Time

By Rick R.

After being in the program for a while, it occurred to me that initially, there was no way I could have performed all the measures suggested in the steps on my first go-around. Coming from an alcoholic's approach to the issues we plan to address, we eventually come to understand that we can only give it our best effort to start the process. Understanding the disease of alcoholism takes time. We can however establish a framework without concluding that we have completed the steps. As we continue to grow in the program more will be revealed about the steps taken and that is where step 10 becomes the opportunity to revisit past steps and fill in the empty spaces as we evolve. That does not mean that we cannot address those issues when we become aware of them. If we stay sober long enough to get to this level of understanding we will continue to repair our broken relations with others and clear up legal, marital and financial problems that can be a distraction when it comes to looking at the deeper rooted emotional, mental and spiritual issues. We cannot ignore the need for up-keep and maintenance in the program no more than we can ignore the Up-keep and maintenance when we purchase a new car. Brake shoes wear thin, oil gets dirty, coolant evaporates etc.... The same effect takes place in the process of recovery. If we become complacent at any level of this process, as it often happens, we may relapse or, miss out on the promises set forth in step nine.

Step Ten, "Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it". (BB Pg. 59) I believe that most of the members of A.A. that actually go through the steps, as suggested in the Big Book, have been doing this to some degree since they became aware of it in the 4th and 5th steps, and the reason why they reintroduced us to this topic in the tenth step was to make it clear that we will continue to do this for the rest of our lives. We are never finished when it comes to taking the steps. There is a line that we cross if we are committed to the goal of becoming the best we can be in life and that is where we stop asking "Why we must do all the things that the program suggests" to a point where we start asking the question "Why wouldn't we do these things that result in freedom of the mind. The biggest misconception that we have is the idea that, somehow, we are responsible for becoming an alcoholic and this is simply not the case. Alcoholism is a disease that we did not have the capacity to decide to become afflicted with when we were born. You might say that alcoholism is a byproduct of guilt, shame, and low self-esteem based on habits and deeds of the past. When we took our first drink it did something for us than it did not do for the normal person. It masks all our fears and insecurities temporarily but did not erase those embarrassing behaviors from our minds and our conscience. We behaved poorly as we evolved through our adolescence and young adulthood due to the fears and inhibitions associated with alcoholism. Who could fault the person who discovers they have a disease, takes it upon themselves to treat that disease, restores and accounts for all the faulty behaviors that stem from that disease, makes restitution and becomes a model citizen? This is the natural development that evolves as the result of taking the steps and continue the up-keep and maintenance process and I Thank God that the program of Alcoholics Anonymous has taken one hell of a load off my mind and I am at peace mentally when my head hits the pillow at night.

***The Message is published to improve communications between local A.A. Groups and encourage the participation of A.A. members in services and activities that promote sobriety. Opinions expressed in letters and articles are those of the authors and do not indicate endorsement by Central Office of Shreveport Intergroup or Alcoholics Anonymous.***

# PO Box 1980

## Making the Call

*BY: TRACY C. | ASHLAND, KENTUCKY*

My telephone service was disconnected two weeks ago. It was entirely my fault for letting the payment go, but I immediately placed the blame on the telephone company. From a pay phone near my home, I made two very rude calls to the company's toll-free number. I was hurriedly disconnected by both operators. This morning, I awoke to the realization that I had to make amends to these operators. I went to the same pay phone to make the call. A different operator answered this time and listened quietly as I explained my need to make amends. She advised me to call back in an hour. I returned home and within ten minutes, my phone rang.

Puzzled, I picked up my "disconnected" phone, and the same pleasant voice asked, "How long have you been in the Fellowship?" After she worked out a payment schedule I could easily afford, I asked how I could possibly return the favor. "Call and invite someone to a meeting," she said. I made the call.

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### Sense and nonsense on the road to recovery

JUST A LITTLE CONFUSION THERE, like that attributed by L. M. of Florida to an often-arrested lush. The guy got so bombed one day that he became filled with love for all mankind. As he lurched along the street, he heard the sound of a siren approaching, so he prayed aloud, "Dear Lord, please help the poor sick person in that ambulance."

Shortly afterward, the vehicle passed him, whereupon he added, "Forget it, Lord. It was only one

We've all seen the new member who stays sober for a time, largely through sponsorship. Then maybe the sponsor gets drunk, and you know what usually happens. Left without a human prop, the new member gets drunk, too. He has been glorifying an individual, instead of following the program.

"Certainly, we need leaders, but we must regard them as the human agents of the Higher Power and not with undue adulation as individuals. The Fourth and Tenth Steps cannot be too strongly emphasized here, 'Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves .... Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.' There is your perfect antidote for halo-poisoning."

AA Co-Founder, Dr. Bob, June 1955, "The Fundamentals in Retrospect," Best of the Grapevine

**Thanks** to all the **Central Office Backers** contributions for the month of **August 2020**. If you would like to be a Central Office Backer (COB) just give us a call (318-865-2172) and we will happily email, fax or mail the application to you.

**August 2020 \$175.46**

**August 2020 Personal Donations...\$1,045.65**

**Thanks** to all the **Group Contributions August 2020...\$1,48.30**

Five-Thirty...\$200.00  
LUCUSU...\$18.30  
Minden...\$760.00  
Sobriety 101...\$59.00  
Twin City...\$10.00

*Bill W. said "I am responsible. When anyone reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. to always to be there. And for that I am responsible."*

***Thanks for helping your Central Office be responsible.***

## **Addresses for Group Contributions for 2020:**

### **Central Office of Shreveport**

2800 Youree Dr., #362A, Shreveport, LA 71104 (50%)

### **District 1, Area 27**

P. O. Box 3924, Shreveport, LA 71133 (10%)

### **Louisiana Area Assembly, Inc. (ADDRESS CHANGE!!!)**

7350 Jefferson Hwy., Suite 485-179

Baton Rouge, LA 70806 (10%)

### **The General Service Office**

P. O. Box 459, Grand Central Station,  
New York, NY 10163-0459 (30%)

*(Percentages are suggested based on support of four service entities)*

*(Use your group conscience)*

*August 2014 updated*

**STEP TEN:** *“Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.”*

**TRADITION TEN:** *“Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy. ”*

*Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions pg. 176  
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**TRADITION TEN:** (The Long Form)

*“No A.A. group or member should ever, in a way as to implicate A.A., express any opinion on outside controversial issues— particularly those of politics, alcohol reform, or sectarian religion. The Alcoholics Anonymous groups oppose no one. Concerning such matters they can express no views whatever*

*The A.A. Group...Where it all Begins Pg. 45-46*

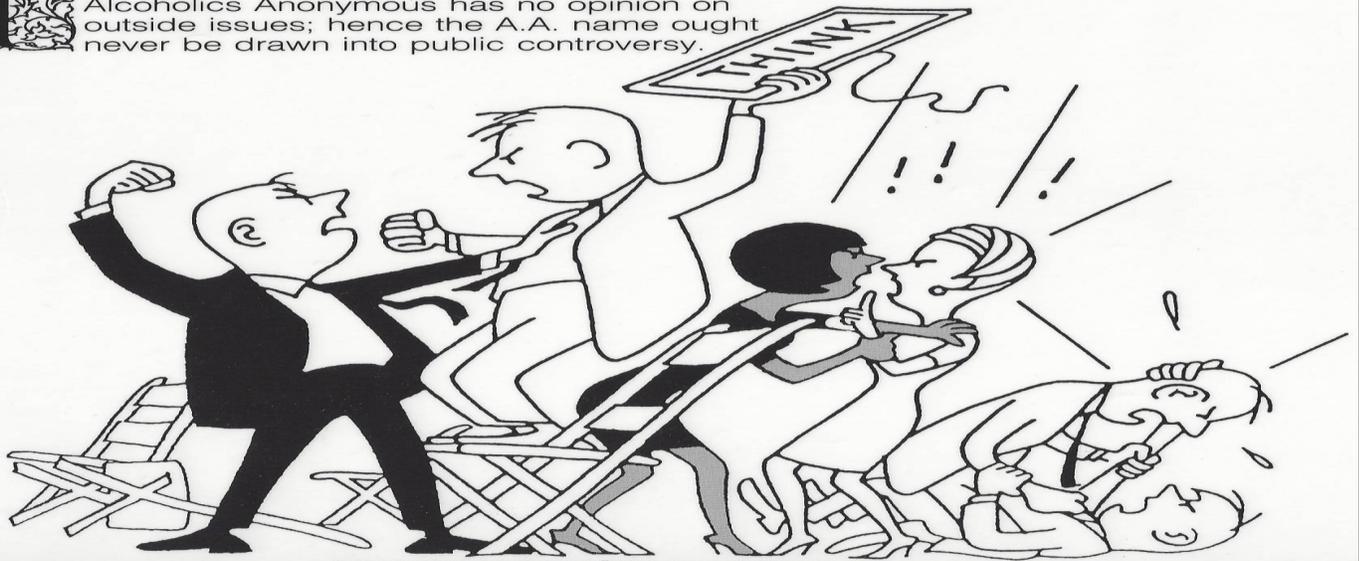
**Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the AA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.**

1. Do I ever give the impression that there really is an “AA opinion” on Antabuse? Tranquilizers? Doctors? Psychiatrists? Churches? Hospitals? Jails? Alcohol? The federal or state government? Legalizing marijuana? Vitamins? AI-Anon? Alateen?
2. Can I honestly share my own personal experience concerning any of those without giving the impression I am stating the “AA opinion”?
3. What in AA history gave rise to our Tenth Tradition?
4. Have I had a similar experience in my own AA life?
5. What would AA be without this Tradition? Where would I be?
6. Do I breach this or any of its supporting Traditions in subtle, perhaps unconscious, ways?
7. How can I manifest the spirit of this Tradition in my personal life outside AA? Inside AA?



#### TENTH TRADITION

Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.



Based on a series of drawings in the A.A. Grapevine. © Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc.

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**CONCEPT TEN:** *“Every service responsibility should be matched by an equal service authority— the scope of such authority to be always well defined whether by tradition, by resolutions, by specific job description or by appropriate charters and bylaws.”*

*Twelve Concepts for World Service, By Bill W. Page43*

# Beavers Bend Round Robin

**October 23 - 25 , 2020**

**Beavers Bend State Park Group Campsite 2 Broken Bow, OK**

## Friday

- 11:00 Committee Meeting
- 12:00 Registration Opens - \$20 (includes meals)
- 2:30 AA Meeting
- 4:00 Old Timers Call Up Meeting
- 5:00 Dinner
- 6:30 Al-Anon Open Meeting
- 8:00 AA Speaker – **TBA**
- 10:00 Campfire Meeting



**Bunk in Cabins \$15 for the weekend!**

## Saturday

- 7:30 Breakfast
- 9:00 Newcomers Call Up Meeting
- 10:15 Committee Meeting
- 12:00 Lunch
- 1:15           Mens Meeting  
                  Womens Meeting  
                  Al-Anon Meeting  
                  Alateen Meeting
- 2:30 Alanon Speaker Meeting– **TBA**
- 4:00 Dessert Auction
- 5:00 Dinner
- 5:30 Sobriety Countdown
- 6:00 AA Speaker – **TBA**
- 8:00 Raffle
- 9:00 Dance
- 11:00 Campfire Meeting



**Camp Above Hill - \$15/night  
Below Hill - \$12/night  
RV Site – 20/night**



**All Pets must be on leash or in kennel**

## Sunday

- 7:00 Breakfast
- 8:00 AA Speaker – **TBA**
- 9:00 Drawing for Newcomer Prize
- 10:00 Hugs & Kisses

Contact : Jill T – 870-403-3897

**Mary S. -903-824-1973**

***FOOD, FUN, FELLOWSHIP !***

***Join our Facebook Group: Beavers Bend Round Robin***

GOD PRESENTS



*What It Was Like  
What Happened*

# The Tulane Group

Tuesday Night Speaker Meeting

*What It Is Like  
Now*

## OCTOBER

<b>6</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>DILLARD S.</b>	<b>MAURICE W.</b>	<b>CATHY M.</b>	<b>MELANIE C.</b>

★ **8:00PM**

**THE HIGHLAND CLUB** ★

123 UPTOWN STREET  
CITY, STATE 12345

• Alcoholics Anonymous •

# Welcome to the Tattoo Convention

BY: TERRA V. | TEMPE, ARIZONA

## How an amends for a little white lie led to a surprising encounter with Arizona AA history

Last year, during our state's Young People's convention, an elegant woman in one of the elevators made positive comments about my tattoos and we engaged in discussion. Eventually, she saw my YPAA (Young People in AA) badge and asked what kind of convention was being held at the hotel.

Always mindful of breaking the anonymity of everyone wearing a badge, I thought about saying "spiritually like-minded people." Then I remembered the inside joke that some of us YPAAs call ourselves: a tattoo convention. So, that's what I told her. We were a tattoo convention.

I felt pretty satisfied with my answer until the next morning when this woman and I were seated at adjacent tables in the restaurant for breakfast, both waiting for the rest of our parties. She politely engaged me in conversation. She asked me to consult with her on some ideas for a tattoo she wanted to have done. While I could have offered opinions, I am not a tattoo artist and was forced to admit my lie. By then, some of my friends showed up and encouraged me to tell her the truth.

So, we told her that we generally don't admit to being AA members in public places because of the multiple reasons for personal anonymity, such as staying humble, not looking for recognition for something we should be doing anyway, and not influencing another's perception of AA based on the activities of any one member or any group of members.

I acknowledged that while I thought my intentions were noble, I hadn't been honest or honorable and I had treated her with disrespect. I said I regretted my actions, not because I got caught, but because I was wrong. She accepted my amends, agreed not to judge the rest of AA based on my misconduct, and said she'd keep the true meaning of the badges from her friends also staying in the hotel.

Then she shared something with me. She knew nothing of AA, what it was about or what we do, but she knew of its existence because her grandfather was a sober member of AA in the 1940s. He moved to that city from the East Coast and her grandparents wrote letters to AA in New York so they could locate AA meetings in Arizona.

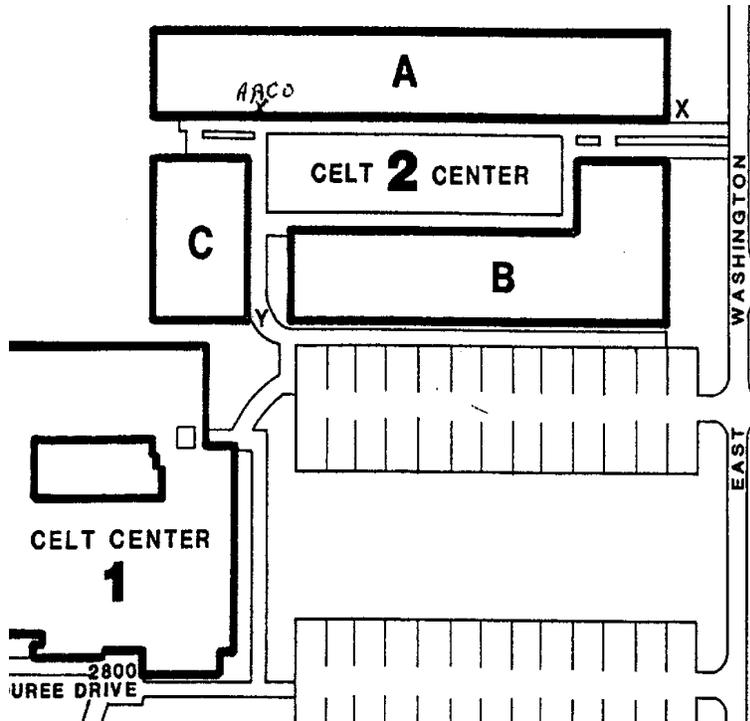
Later that day, our area archivist made a small presentation in a side room where she showed us letters from the first AA members in our state. These were people who started AA in Arizona when they moved to Phoenix from the East Coast and asked the AA foundation in New York to help them find people in Arizona to get sober.

That's how I learned I had been speaking to the granddaughter of the woman who wrote the letters that brought AA to my city and sobered up the people who created the Fellowship that saved my life.

And thanks to that woman, I also learned a valuable lesson about integrity.

## Central Office

Please come by to check out our selection of approved AA World Services Books, Step workbooks, daily meditations, Bill W.'s Autobiography, Al-Anon books and workbooks and more. Colorful tri-plate medallions, recovery jewelry and greeting cards that make *our anniversaries memorable*.  
If you don't see what you are looking for we will order it for you **upon** availability.



## The Central Office Intergroup

**The Central Office of Shreveport**  
**2800 Youree Dr., Suite #362 Bldg A**  
**Shreveport, LA 71104-3646**

