



God Leaves the Door Open for Everyone

No Need to Over Think This Issue

By Rick R.

The Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.) program is open to anyone that has a desire to stop drinking. It makes no difference if you are an atheist, agnostic, Buddhists or a member of one of the vast number of religions in the world. All of us have the same opportunity to get well through the steps. They were fashioned that way to ensure that no alcoholic is left out. We embrace everyone that walks through that door. If step two had been written to say, "Came to believe that God", rather than, "a Power greater than ourselves." could restore me to sanity, I wonder if A.A. would have succeeded in the way that it has, especially when we consider the problems that the Oxford group had with this issue.

I have seen people talking of religion, and others that were irritated with any talk of God, yet we still hold hands at the end of the meeting and say a prayer and everyone leaves the meeting feeling a little better. I personally know priests and ministers in the program, and they seem to adjust to the diversity of the landscape. I wish that it could be simpler for each person, but there are no two people that are identical in this matter. Speaking for myself, if I wanted to be freed from the deadly obsession of alcoholism, I had to trust the guidance of the two books that are suggested, and the leadership of the more experienced members of the group, to come to terms with a concept of a power greater than myself. I was the one in the *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* (12&12) that "tried religion and had found it wanting". I also read that, "even the militant atheist got through the hoop with room to spare". I did not believe in the God of the religionist, in the same way, that I thought, they did, but I did not think I was an atheist either.

The Power Greater than myself option, was a good start for me. Something happened to me within minutes after arriving at my first introduction to three people, sitting on a bench in the front yard of a little house in Los Angeles, where they held their meetings, and I the obsession to drink was gone, and I have not had, nor wanted, a drink since then. You might call that a miracle, and you might be right, depending on your definition of a miracle, but it came to me as a *profound Change of Perception* brought about by the Love, Understanding and Compassion I sensed as they welcomed me.

These experiences were a great way for me to start, but NOW, WHAT ABOUT PRAYER? Who or what do I pray to? I heard about doorknobs and icons, the ocean, and other such things but that way of thinking did not set well with me. I did not want to be too glib about such an important matter. Then I noticed that, in step two, it did not say that I had to believe in anything, only that I had to believe that a power greater than myself, could restore me to sanity. The collective wisdom of the A.A. program and the people in it have been the framework for my faith in a higher power. The experience that I had in that front yard, fifty-one years ago, was all I needed to know to get on with the rest of the program. I pray to God every day to show me what to do and to give me the strength to do it and I still do not know for sure, who or what God is. I use the word God, only to describe the spiritual influence that A.A. has had on this drunk. I pray to God as I understand God, and he expresses himself in my consciousness, the only thing left for me to do is to separate the wheat from the chaff.

AA Central Office of Shreveport

24 Hr. Hotline
(318) 865-2172

office@aa-shreveport.org
www.aa-shreveport.org

Office Hours

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

Groups Responsible for

HOT LINE

March 2020

Margaret Place March 1-7

Personal Recovery March 8-14

5:30 Highland March 15-21

Fairfield March 22-28

No Guarantee March 29- April 4

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 3: “Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.”

*Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions pg. 34
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TRADITION THREE: “The only requirement for A.A. membership is the desire to stop drinking.”

*Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions pg. 139
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The only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking.

1. In my mind, do I prejudge some new AA members as losers?
2. Is there some kind of alcoholic whom I privately do not want in my AA group?
3. Do I set myself up as a judge of whether a newcomer is sincere or phony?
4. Do I let language, religion (or lack of it), race, education, age or other such things interfere with my carrying the message?
5. Am I overimpressed by a celebrity, a doctor, a clergyman, an ex-convict? Or can I just treat this new member simply and naturally as one more sick human, like the rest of us?
6. When someone turns up at AA needing information or help (even if he can't ask for it aloud), does it really matter to me what he does for a living? Where he lives? What his domestic arrangements are? Whether he had been to AA before? What his other problems are?



THIRD TRADITION

The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.



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

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CONCEPT THREE: “As a traditional means of creating and maintaining a clearly defined working relation between the groups, the conference, the A.A. General Service Board and its several service corporations, staffs, committees and executives, and of thus insuring their effective leadership, it is here suggested that we endow each of these elements of world service with a traditional “Right of Decision.”

*Twelve Concepts for World Services, pg.13
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Accept the Things We Cannot Change

95% is OK with me.

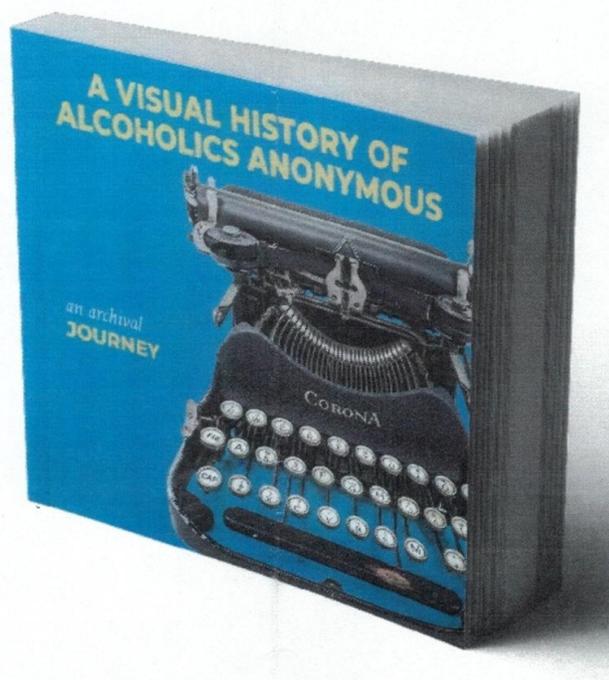
By Rick R.

About 90% of the Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.) meetings that I attend close with the Serenity Prayer. *God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference, amen.* There are a lot of words synonymous with Serenity and they all amount to what I would call, Peace of Mind. On page 417 in the book Alcoholics Anonymous (Big Book) it says “And, Acceptance is the answer to all of my problems today.) Bingo!! So why has it taken me so long to settle on this simple sentence? The desire to drink alcohol was lifted from me from my very first meeting in A.A. and it has never returned. Prior to that, from the moment I woke up each morning until I got my first drink, I was an emotional wreck. The absence of that mental obsession to drink freed me up and I was highly influenced by the collective message of the meetings that I attended. Over a long period of time, I started to recognize the cause and effect of my defects and shortcomings, and I began to address these issues with the help of the members of my group that seemed to have the answers for me. Dealing with the wreckage of the past and being in an environment where we talked about these issues made my journey much easier than I thought it would be. I had to deal with a failed marriage, child support, parenting issues, legal matters, and an assortment of life issues that stem from my neglect and irresponsibility. One of the things that often goes unnoticed about the process of clearing up the wreckage of the past is that while doing this I had stopped making those mistakes that caused all my grief. As a result of practicing the principles I have learned in the A.A. program I have regained the respect of my first wife and have been married over 50 years to my current wife. I got it right the second time around, but I did not dismiss my need to correct the damage done in my first marriage.

Having said all of that, where do I address the acceptance statement? It would be easy for me to rest on my laurels, as they say, but I am never finished when it comes to examining my motives or how I act today. If I were finished why would I still attend A.A. meetings? Over the years in the program, I noticed some habits that we alcoholics seem to continue to discuss before and after a meeting such as the traffic on the highway, the red-light systems, not enough parking at the market, the inconvenience of a rainstorm, politics, and religion, criticizing other people places and things. etc. For some reason, talking about all these inconveniences seems to be my way of distracting attention away from my own thinking and behavior. To put it in simple terms, there is a percentage of people driving on the highway that are going faster than the speed limit, a percentage will go slower than the speed limit and others may cut me off, and that is never going to change. I cannot talk politics and religion over and over and I am never going to change the percentages of those other people. I have two choices when I am traveling on the highway. My first choice is to take it and my second choice is to leave it and take the back Rd”; But wait the speed limit is too slow on the back Rd, maybe I will take the highway. All the issues that I have struggled with I have pro and con percentages and that I am never going to change in this lifetime. Today I accept the things I cannot change and as a result I am at peace 95% of the time and that is good enough for me.

NEW ITEM

From
World Services



Come by & visit
Or we would be happy to mail!

Thanks to all the **Central Office Backers** contributions for the month of **January 2021**. 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.

January 2020 \$1,209.58

January 2020 Personal Donations...\$3,541.88

Thanks to all the **Group Contributions January 2020...\$636.75**

COI Meeting...\$13.00

Compound...\$500.00

Keystone...\$35.00

Sobriety 101...\$48.75

Twin City...\$10.00

Unity...\$30.00

January INTERGROUP...It Is What It Is...\$325.56

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

7350 Jefferson Hwy., Suite 485-179

Baton Rouge, LA 70806 (10%)

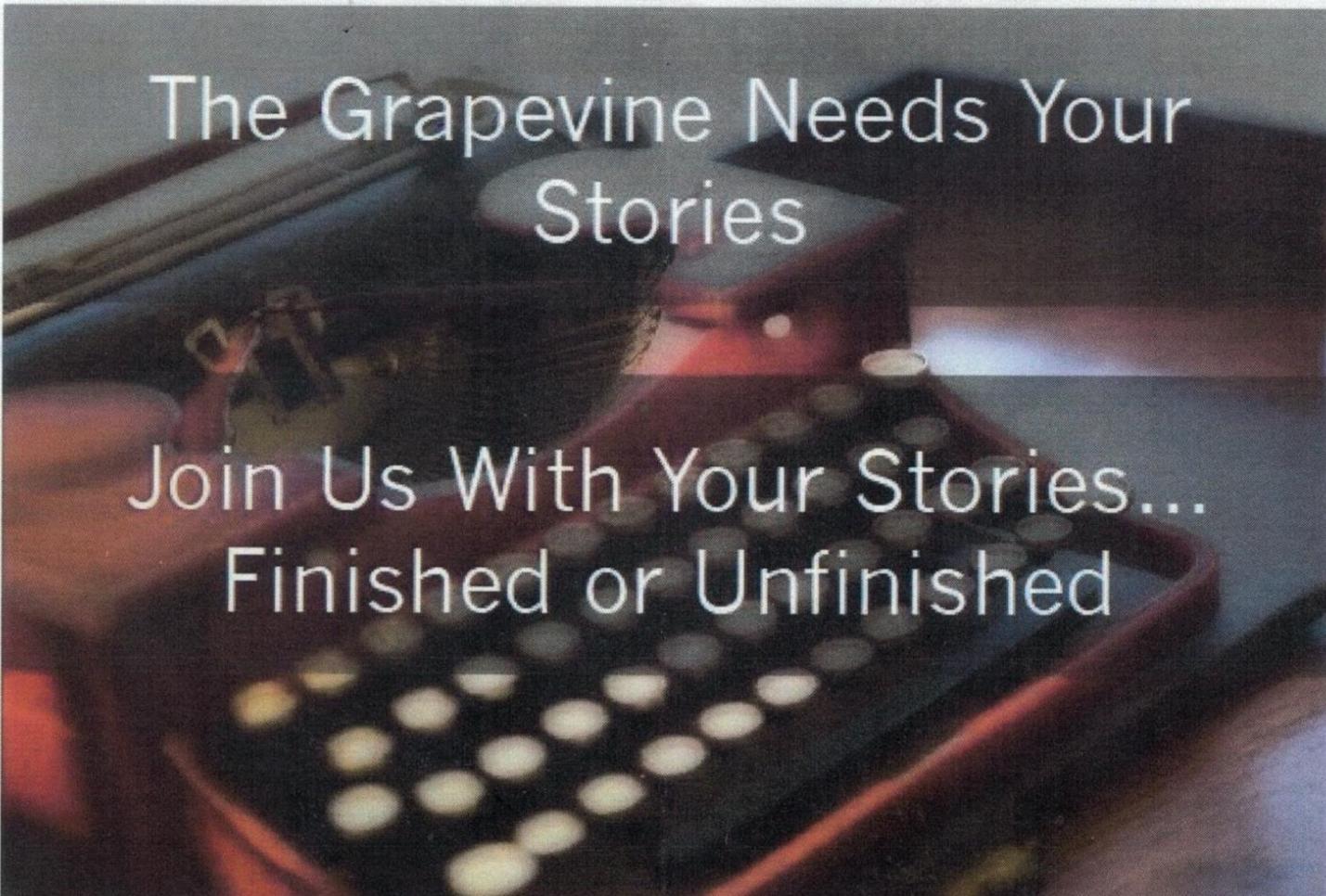
The General Service Office

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)



The Grapevine Needs Your Stories

Join Us With Your Stories... Finished or Unfinished

Special Guest: Peter G.-Published Author

Share Your Story

Positive Feedback from an Accomplished Author

Win a Free Grapevine Subscription (and more)

Ongoing Support to Finish Your Story

Fellowship

Saturday, March 20th 2-3:30 pm

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86168136321?pwd=VFBhOERsLzI2YURORUhmVnICeWRIZz09>

Meeting ID: 861 6813 6321

Passcode: Grapevine

For Live Link Email: carterchris1@outlook.com

PANCAKE BREAKFAST

Sponsored by Tri-State

Tickets are \$10.00

(Can be obtained from committee members)



At Highland Club

1711 Tulane Ave.,

Shreveport, LA 71103

Call the club @ (318) 636-9388 for directions.

Saturday, March 27th, 2021

Breakfast served at 8:30am

There will be a drive-up/take-out option for the food.

Speaker Bill H. at 10:00am

of Shreveport with 7 Years

Zoom sign in 827 2603 8162 – No passcode

You can join zoom as early as 9:30 am

By phone 312-626-6799 sign in 82726038162

More information about the 75th Tri-State Convention?

tristateconvention@yahoo.com or office@aa-shreveport.org

**Tickets Also Available at
Your Central Office!!!**

MARCH

Tulane Group Speakers

**MARCH
2**

MELISSA G.

**MARCH
9**

JAMES B .

**MARCH
16**

JERRY S.

**MARCH
23**

TERRESA R.

**MARCH
30**

CLYDE

8PM@ THE HIGHLAND CLUB
1711 TULANE AVE. SHREVEPORT, LA 71103

SAVE THE DATE

...**ROCKETED INTO A**

FOURTH DIMENSION...

The 75th Tri-State Convention
November 5th - 6th - 7th, 2021

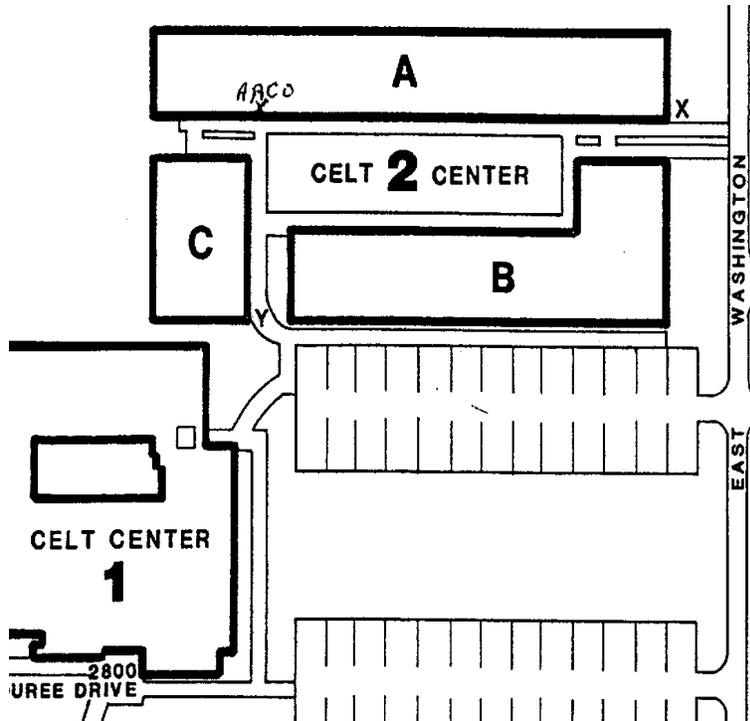
Le Bossiér Hotel
4000 Industrial Dr.
Bossier City, LA 71112

Convention Committee Planning Team Meetings are usually the first Sunday of each month (unless moved for a holiday) at 2:00pm at the Central Office of Shreveport at 2800 Youree Dr., Building A, Suite 362, Shreveport, LA 71104. Everyone is asked to practice social distancing and the wearing of face masks to aid in protecting the members of our fellowship and their families. For more information call the Central Office at 318-865-2172 or send an email to tristateconvention@yahoo.com or visit the Central Office's website at www.aa-shreveport.org

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.

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**

