

# The Update

*This is a member to member publication.  
The view points expressed here do not represent AA as a whole.*

## D I S T R I C T 1 4

### S T E P 2

C a m e t o b e l i e v e t h a t a p o w e r g r e a t e r  
t h a n o u r s e l v e s c o u l d r e s t o r e u s t o s a n i t y

**SPECIAL  
POINTS OF  
INTEREST:**

- Step 2
- Tradition 2
- Birthdays

I never thought I would get step 2. It wasn't because I had a horrible experience with GOD as a child or that it was forced on me. I was pretty sure GOD had given up on me just as the rest of my friends and family had. As I listened around the rooms of AA I found that a small piece at a time I could start to believe that GOD had only left my life because I wasn't asking for his help anymore and I was pretty sure I could do things on my own. I understand today that my GOD does not go where he is not invited, this explains why I thought he left my life, and I wasn't interested in what I thought to be a weakness.

I just started asking for help and giving thanks and life started to get a little easier. I at this point really didn't know what I believed in and I was told I only needed to be willing. I found that if I forgot to ask for help my day would not go well and that when I stopped for a few minutes and asked for help (usually the serenity prayer) things started to work better. I don't have a great prayer schedule I use the serenity prayer and the St. Francis prayer the most.

As time goes on my Higher Power has evolved, as my sobriety changes and I become more willing things change. I now believe in GOD (Good Orderly Direction) I can tell you my GOD loves me and wants the best for me, I trust, or I try to, everyday even when things don't look like they are going to work out. I know that there is always a reason why things turn out and most times I don't need to know why. I am not a saint and I often get frustrated when things don't go how I would like them.

I still don't know what it is I truly believe in, what I do know is that I am staying sober 1 day at a time and life gets better and it has little to do with me. I started out with a Sunday school version of GOD and now I think I am at a point where it is an adult version. I personally don't care what it is, I know that it is working in my life and I choose to call it GOD.

I am really thankful that the program did not ask me to define it nor did they ask me to believe in something they came up with. Today I just talk with My Higher Power like a friend and we have a great relationship. To believe in something other than me is a great experience.

If you are having trouble with this step just try not to define it until you can get your own definition. You are welcome to use mine until you get one of your own.

I was not sure I was insane, I soon learned that I was indeed. I had tried to control my drinking, and found myself drunk each time. I found that insanity meant doing the same thing over expecting different results. I did lots of things over in my life expecting different results and finding I was getting the same result. I still do things over and over, today I know the step says restore me to sanity, soundness of mind comes slowly to me. The promises say "sometimes slowly sometimes quickly", I think I am a slow learner. Today I have a great life and I am pretty sure the only part I play in that is asking for help and giving thanks and trying to do the right things.

Pam V.



This is the March 1, 1941 Saturday Evening Post magazine containing AA's first major publicity. As a result of this Jack Alexander article, AA's membership nearly doubled.

**INSIDE THIS  
ISSUE:**

Service and Me Personal Story	2	Watch your thoughts. they become words.
Service and Me	2	Watch your words. they become actions.
Tradition 2	3	Watch your actions. they become habits.
Birthdays	4	Watch your habits, they become character. Watch your character, It becomes your destiny.

By: Frank Outlaw

## Service and Me

I am an alcoholic, been sober for a while now and want to tell you a little about me and the service work that I did to get me to where I am today.

I came into this program young, 22. Some would say and did say, "I spilled more than you drank". That may be true but at the time I was at my bottom. I had reached a level that I did not like myself, did not like you, and did not want to live any more. I had had enough of this, I was not sure what to do, how to do it, and did not even know what "it" was. I had been to doctors, shrinks, counselors you name I did it, nothing worked. I had a close friend and a co-worker who was in the same boat that I was. She went to her doctor and he advised that she try not drinking and to go to Alcoholics Anonymous. Well, she did the first part, she did not drink, and I did. She did not attend AA meetings for another month. Then one day she asked me to attend a Friday Nite Open meeting with her. I said sure I would attend, I would be there for support for her, I did not need the AA program. I did not even know what it was really all about so how could I need it. (A little note here, back then we did not have computers and the internet as handy as we do today, I did not do any research, did not go to the library to learn what AA really was. I just knew that it was for people who drank too much). We went out for dinner just before that meeting and of course I had a rye and coke, which was to be my last to date, ODAAT. We attended that meeting and there was an older gentleman who spoke. He shared his experience, strength and hope. I could not relate to most of his story as in the time (age), what he did for a living, being married, kids, jobs, etc., but what I could relate to or identify with (not sure what I did that night related or identified) but it worked. I decided to give this thing a try. Maybe I was one of those people who could get help from this program.

I will give you little more history here. As mentioned I was young. I had not lost a job, yet. I had not lost my family, yet. I had not lost my car through accidents, yet. But I did lose the biggest thing, me. I found out after being sober just a short time that I was very close to losing my job. The co-worker I

talked about earlier was also my boss and she was ready to fire me, but the HR manager decided to give me another chance. I did not lose my car to an accident or accidents but I could not drive it- I had no money to put gas in it but I always found money to drink.

So, not knowing anything about anything when it came to AA, I attended only open meetings. I did not know that I could attend a closed meeting- the book said it was for members only and I was not a member. I did not know how to become a member and no one asked me to be a member. Then one Friday night someone asked me to attend the Tuesday Night Beginners meeting. At this time I was three months without drinking just by attending Friday Nite Open meetings, and holding on to what each of those speakers said. That is what kept me dry for that time. On Tuesday I went to the Kiwanis Centre on Lochiel St. and attended my first closed AA meeting. I do not remember a lot of what was said but there were a few things that I still remember. 1- Take the cotton out of your ears and put it in your mouth. I could talk a lot (not at meetings). I had opinions about everything and I was right and you were wrong. 2- Get a sponsor - I did not know what a sponsor really was, or how to pick one, so I picked the oldest member in the group at the time. She was older in years and in sobriety. 3- Get a home group- I asked my sponsor that I just got if I could join that Tuesday Night Beginners group and she said yes. So the journey begins.

I started going to meetings. I went out for coffee after the meetings, I met with my sponsor- I would not call her the phone weighed too much but I would go over to her house and talk to her and the rest of the folks who hung out at her house. We did not have email or texting at that time. I was struggling though. I thought I was too young, I had not lost enough, and I had not hit a low enough bottom. I still thought that maybe I could drink again. I did start working the steps, the best that I could at the time. I did not know how to be thoroughly honest or open about what was and did

happen to me. I was as honest as I could be. I had to get rid of some of my garbage though. I started working on my fourth, did it, and then did my fifth. I felt better- I had not gotten everything out, but enough to continue in the program and not go out drinking. But I still had it in my mind that I could drink again. I did not tell anyone though, as I said I could not be honest. Someone at the Tuesday Night Beginners group must have known there was something happening with me because I was given the key to the Lochiel St Centre and asked to be the set up person for the meeting. Wow, someone trusted me enough to give me a key and to do set up. Then, they said, by the way, you will be attending the GSR meeting on the last Tuesday of every month to represent the group. But, but what is this all about, I will miss my home group and you said that I cannot miss my home group unless it is a funeral and it had better be my own. I was told this is different; you are doing your group's work so go to that GSR meeting and report back to us the next week. Okay, I did that. A little note here- I no longer feel the same way about the funeral thing. Being a shift worker and having other obligations, I do miss my home group occasionally but I tell the members of my group when I will not be there. I am accountable to them; I was not when I was drinking and new in sobriety but I am today.

I attended that GSR meeting. I knew nothing. They were using words that made no sense to me. I was totally lost but I listened and I wrote things down and I took that back to my group the next week. I would not ask questions at the GSR meeting because that would make me look like I was stupid, which was my interpretation of asking questions. I do not feel that way any more. Asking questions is how to find out more about service, sobriety, and life. I attended the GSR meeting monthly and then reported back to my group of the happenings. My group at the time did not push for attendance at the Area Assemblies so I did not attend them for a

while. Then I heard members talk at the GSR meeting about these Area Assemblies and that these assemblies were learning experiences, were fun, and something that a GSR should do. The members I heard talk were the DCM, the Alt. DCM and the secretary, I did not really know what these terms were and what they were all about, I just thought these were the guys in charge of this thing and they were saying that I should go so I thought I had better talk to the group about this. My home group could not afford it and neither could I so I did not attend assemblies for a while. I wanted to go to the assemblies so I saved for a while and finally was able to go. This was another WOW moment for me. I did learn so much. I learned that sending the GSR to the Assembly is a group responsibility as much as making sure the rent is paid, the coffee is made and the literature is purchased. I brought that home to my group and we started saving for the GSR to attend. I also learned that AA just does not happen. We have to elect people into positions to make sure this AA thing keeps going. I learned that this is an every learning process.

I am so happy that I was introduced to service work. I am so grateful to those long timers who were there for me at the beginning, who told me those three things that I mentioned earlier. Be quiet, get a sponsor and get a home group. Without these things in my life I am sure, no I know that I would not have the sobriety that I have today. Service means to me that I am committed to this program, to my sobriety, my life and my higher power. I never felt successful at doing twelve step calls. I never felt that I was successful as a sponsor way back when because everyone that I 12 stepped got drunk and every person that I sponsored early in my sobriety got drunk. So doing the service work at the district level was something that I felt that I was giving back to AA. The program that gave me a life, a life today that would not be complete without doing what I do.

Today I am committed to make sure that AA is here for future generations. I have changed home groups since; I now belong to the Forest-Lakeside Group. I have a sponsor- not the same one that I had when I came in we grew in different directions so I needed to change. I still need to have

Continued next page

a sponsor. I talk to her regularly. I do not need one because I want to drink today; I need her because I am still an alcoholic. I also need her because I am still in service and I do not always know the answers. I need to have someone who has gone before me to learn from their experience.

Now I would like to ask you- Do you have a home group? Is your Group represented at the district and at the Area Assemblies by your group GSR? Do you have a sponsor? If you answered no or I do not know to any of these questions maybe it is time to do some investigation. I am not the expert on service or on the AA program but I know that I am sober

today because of what I have done since coming into the program. I have a faith in a higher power, I have a home group, I have a sponsor and I am active in my sobriety and in AA. Without all of those things I would not be where I am today.

Yours in love, service and understanding  
Mary B.



The Man on the Bed

**For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority - a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.**

- Do I criticize or do I trust and support my group officers, AA committees, and office workers? Newcomers? Old-timers?
- Am I absolutely trustworthy, even in secret, with AA Twelfth Step jobs or other AA responsibility?
- Do I look for credit in my AA jobs? Praise for my AA ideas?
- Do I have to save face in group discussion, or can I yield in good spirit to the group conscience and work cheerfully along with it?
- Although I have been sober a few years, am I still willing to serve my turn at AA chores?
- In group discussions, do I sound off about matters on which I have no experience and little knowledge?



"We were having trouble with personal relationships, we couldn't control our emotional natures, we were a prey to misery and depression, we couldn't make a living, we had a feeling of uselessness, we were full of fear, we were unhappy, we couldn't seem to be of real help to other people.... When we saw others solve their problems by a simple reliance upon the Spirit of the Universe, we had to stop doubting the power of God. Our ideas did not work. But the God idea did.

**"For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority – A loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience."**

Editorial by Bill W.

© 2001, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, page 52

A.A. Grapevine, January 1948  
Sooner or later, every AA comes to depend upon a Power greater than himself. He finds that the God of his understanding is not only a source of strength, but also a source of positive direction. Realizing that some fraction of that infinite resource is now available, his life takes on and entirely different complexion. He experiences a new inner security together with such a sense of destiny and purpose as he has never known before. As each day passes, our AA reviews his mistakes and vicissitudes. He learns from daily experience what his remaining character defects are and becomes ever more willing that they be removed. In this fashion he improves his conscience contact with God.

Every AA group follows this same cycle of development. We are coming to realize that each group, as well as each individual, is a special entity, not quite like any other. Though AA groups are basically the same, each group does have its own special atmosphere, its own peculiar state of development. We believe that every

AA group has a conscience. It is the collective conscience of its own membership. Daily experience informs and instructs his conscience. The group begins to recognize its own defects of character and, one by one, these are removed or lessened. As this process continues, the group becomes better able to receive right direction for its own affairs. Trial and error produces group experience and out of corrected experience comes custom. When a customary way of doing things is definitely proved to be best, then that custom forms into AA Tradition. The Greater Power is then working through a clear group conscience.

We humbly hope and believe that our growing AA Tradition will prove to be the will of God for us.

Many people are coming to think that Alcoholics Anonymous is, to some extent, a new form of human society. In our

discussion of the First Tradition, it was emphasized that we have, in AA, no coercive human authority. Because each AA, of necessity, has a sensitive and responsive conscience, and because alcohol will discipline him severely if he back slides, we are finding we have little need for manmade rules or regulations. Despite the fact that we do veer off at times on tangents, we are becoming more able to depend absolutely on the long-term stability of the AA group itself. With respect to its own affairs, the collective conscience of the group will, given time, almost surely demonstrate its perfect dependability. The group conscience will, in the end, prove a far more infallible guide for group affairs than the decision of any individual member, however good or wise he may be. This is a striking and almost unbelievable fact about Alcoholics Anonymous. Hence we can safely dispense with those exhortations and punishments seemingly so necessary to other societies. And we

need not depend overmuch on inspired leaders. Because our active leadership of service can be truly rotating, we enjoy a kind of democracy rarely possible elsewhere. In this respect, we may be, to a large degree, unique.

Therefore we of Alcoholics Anonymous are certain that there is but one ultimate authority, "a loving God as he may express himself in our group conscience."

Bill W.

The A.A. Grapevine, January, 1948

# BIRTHDAYS

Highlighted birthdays are 1, 5, 10....

April

<u>Name</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Group</u>
Jack S.	1	1966	Forest Lakeside Group
MaryJo C.	5	1990	St. Peters Group
Line M.	6	2003	Forest Lakeside Group
Beryl A.	19	1990	St. Peters Group
Melanie L.	24	2008	St. Peters Group
Alfred S.	26	1978	St Georges Group
Lynne W	29	2004	St Georges Group



Apology to Rick R. From the Eastland Group'——Birthday was published wrong last month. Should have been March 21 2008.

May

<u>Name</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Group</u>
Dave O.	4	1998	Sunday Morning Group
Paul S.	7	2009	Downriver Group
Kathy K.	8	2007	Sunday Morning Group
Tony D.	8	2005	Forest Lakeside Group
Breanne M.	12	2009	Beginners/Reflections Group
Ron B.	13	1987	Theford Workshop Group

# CAMPOUT

**AUGUST 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>**

## **Don't Give Up**

W H E R E

**The Lakewood Christian Campground**

**4297 Lakeshore Road, Camlachie**

**(519) 899-4415    Email – [lakewood@xcelco.on.ca](mailto:lakewood@xcelco.on.ca)**

**Camping or Cabins Available**

ALL CAMPERS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR MAKING THEIR OWN RESERVATIONS

### Friday, August 5<sup>th</sup>

**REGISTRATION                    4PM TO 9PM**

8:30PM                            AA OPEN SPEAKER MEETING FOLLOWED BY CORN ROAST

### Saturday, August 6<sup>th</sup>

**REGISTRATION                    9AM TO 5PM**

10:30AM                        AA PANEL

12 NOON                        TOONIE LUNCH (HOTDOG, CHIPS & POP)

1:30PM                        AL-ANON AND AA SPEAKERS

5:00-6:30PM                  BARBECUE

7:00-7:30PM                  DCM REPORT, DELEGATE REPORT  
& SOBRIETY COUNTDOWN

7:30PM                        AA OPEN SPEAKER MEETING

OPEN MIKE AFTER MEETING

<i>Barbecue &amp; Registration.....</i>	Adult - \$15	Child 6 to 12 - \$10	Under 6 - Free
<i>Registration.....</i>	\$5.00		

Steve (519) 381-9454    Dave (519) 491-8914    Paul (519) 337-1237