

K.I.T.—KEEP IN TOUCH

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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Area 62 State Newsletter

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The KIT newsletter is distributed at each Area Assembly. Deadline for the next issue is **September 1, 2005**.

SUBMISSION OF ARTICLES,
DISTRICT HAPPENINGS OR
CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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KIT (Keep in Touch) presents the experience and opinions of members of Alcoholics Anonymous on the disease of Alcoholism. Opinions expressed here are not those of Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole, nor does publication of any article imply endorsement by Alcoholics Anonymous or the South Carolina Area Assembly.

Please do not be concerned if your story did not appear in this issue of KIT. Your story or article may be incorporated in a future issue. If for any reason the KIT Committee has decided not to publish an article that has been submitted, we apologize.

The KIT Committee members would like to thank everyone for taking the time to write an article for this publication. If you have any questions or comments regarding the publication of KIT, please contact a KIT Committee Member. We welcome your feedback.

What events are happening in your district or group between October 2005 and March 2006 that you would like published in the next KIT???

The Twelve Steps to Insanity

1. We admitted we were powerless over nothing. We could manage our lives perfectly, and we could manage those of anyone else who would allow it.
2. Came to believe that there was no power greater than ourselves, and the rest of the world was insane.
3. Made a decision to have our loved ones and friends turn their wills and their lives over to our care.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of everyone we knew.
5. Admitted to the whole world at large the exact nature of their wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to make others straighten up and do right.
7. Demanded that others either "shape up or ship out".
8. Made a list of anyone that had ever harmed us and became willing to go to any lengths to get even with them all.
9. Got direct revenge on such people wherever possible, except when to do so would cost us our lives or, at the very least, a jail sentence.
10. Continued to take the inventory of others, and when they were wrong, promptly and repeatedly told them about it.
11. Sought through nagging to improve our relationship with others though we could not understand them at all, asking only that they knuckle under and do things our way.
12. Having had a complete physical, emotional and spiritual breakdown as the result of these steps, we tried to blame it on others and to get sympathy and pity in all our affairs.

Do you really want to go back to the way things were??



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

AREA 7 & 10 FOUNDER'S DAY PICNIC—
SATURDAY, JUNE 18TH—NOON
Timmons Park-Greenville

2005 INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION
June 30– July 3, 2005
"I am Responsible"
Toronto, Canada

2005 AREA COMMITTEE MEETING
September 11, 2005, 10:00 AM
The Holiday Inn—Coliseum, Columbia

2005 SC AREA ASSEMBLY
October 1-2, 2005
The Holiday Inn—Coliseum, Columbia

2005 SOUTHEASTERN CONFERENCE
October 20– 23, 2005
Holiday Inn Crown Plaza Ravinia-Atlanta, GA

A Tale of Two Meetings...

In late 2001, several members of Greenville's Summit Group became interested in forming a group with the following ideas in mind: 1) closer to their homes, 2) on Wednesday & Sunday evenings 3) at an earlier time than the typical 8pm meetings. Contrary to jokester's who say "all it takes to start a new meeting is a coffee pot and a resentment", seems these AA members had neither.

After talking to many churches & meeting together several times over dessert, the members found one church that was willing to house the group on what was typically "church" nights. Unfortunately, this one church was still further from everyone's home than any wanted (we are a selfish lot!!), so the discussions came to a quiet halt. Turns out these AA members looking for a new meeting place lived on opposite sides of the county!! After several more months and more desserts, some of the AA members on the eastside of Greenville found a church that was happy to have them and on April 14, 2002, The Pelham Group was formed with 7 members. This group meets at Ebenezer Methodist Church on the east side of Greenville. In June of that same year, The Pathways Group began with 4 members. This meeting is held at St. James Episcopal Church in the northern part of town. Both are at 6:30 on Wednesdays and Sundays. And everyone who was involved from the beginning got just what God had planned all along!!! Both of these meetings are thriving with anywhere from 30-50 AA members at each meeting!!

God sure knew what He was doing!!

THE SPIRITUALITY OF TRADITION TWELVE

*Tradition Twelve*The short form of the 12th Tradition:

Twelve—Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

The long form of the 12th Tradition:

And finally, we of Alcoholics Anonymous believe that the principle of Anonymity has an immense spiritual significance. It reminds us that we are to place principles before personalities; that we are actually to practice a genuine humility. This to the end that our great blessings may never spoil us; that we shall forever live in thankful contemplation of Him who presides over us all.

Message from the Primary Purpose Group, Dallas Texas

This represents my present understanding of these 2 Traditions (11 & 12). Yep, there is a great deal of confusion regarding the topics "Anonymity." I say topic because we are concerned with two different slants on the word.

Practical anonymity is expressed in Tradition Eleven: *Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films.*

There is where we put our pride in our pocket and do our very best to avoid any personal publicity or recognition for our blessing of recovery. Unfortunately, many celebrities are of the opinion that public recognition of their success in sobriety via the AA Program will attract more alcoholics to our Fellowship. With only few exceptions, those who do return to drinking.

We are bound by anonymity to not mention the names of others who are in our Fellowship to even members within our Fellowship without their permission. I remember one occasion where Clancy was invited to a confab where his purpose was to explain the Traditions to the crowd. He put the needle in them real deep because on the flier announcing the conference, they spelled out his full name. You may already be aware that Dr. Bob had a view on anonymity which I strongly endorse and he wrote: "We need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films." (TV came into it a little later.)

deals with Spiritual Anonymity. And it seems to me that Tradition Twelve relates directly to Step Twelve. In both Principles, we are acknowledging the source of our Solution. Many groups close their meetings with the Lord's Prayer. It seems to me this Prayer summarizes Tradition Twelve very well. First, it begins with the acknowledgment of who He is; OUR Father; not mine, not yours, He is ours and this puts us all on a common level. There are no big ones and there are no little ones in AA. We are all equal in our Fellowship.

We close the Prayer with the phrases, "For Thine is the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory." This is His Kingdom and since He is our Father, we are all related at the same level, Brothers and Sisters wanting to do His will. Our ladies are Princesses and the guys are Princes in God's Kingdom which makes for a wonderful but heavy duty heritage. And, because it is from Him, we must place his principles before trying to please the unwilling, uninformed or the ignorant. Principles before personalities must be honored to preserve the integrity of the program He gave us.

The Practical & Spiritual described by the same word but look at 2 different aspects of our application of anonymity. My ego was deflated at depth by taking the action of our program and He rewarded me with an intimate relationship with Him and since I owe it all to Him, the days I have are His to do with me as He pleases so I can continue to receive His many blessings.

From: Silkworth.net: Tradition Twelve

A glance at the Twelve Traditions will instantly assure anyone that "giving up" is the essential idea of them all. In each Tradition, the individual or the group is asked to give up something for our general welfare.

Tradition Twelve, in its mood of humble anonymity, plainly enough comprehends the preceding eleven. The Twelve Points of Tradition are little else than a specific application of the spirit of the Twelve Steps of recovery to our group life and to our relations with society in general. The recovery steps would make each individual AA whole and one with God; the Twelve

Points of Tradition would make us one with each other and whole with the world about us. Unity is our aim.

Our AA Traditions are, we trust, securely anchored in those wise precepts; charity, gratitude, and humility. Nor have we forgotten prudence.

Last, in Tradition Twelve, we see "anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities."

AA History Lovers member

The word 'anonymity' in Tradition 12 would be better understood if it were changed to 'humility'. If you read the 'Long Form' of Tradition 12 you will see that in this Tradition we are not talking about protecting anonymity, as in Tradition 11. In that Tradition, we are asked to protect our anonymity at the level of the media only.

The idea of protecting someone else's anonymity or what they say in a meeting is 'common sense' and common respect. People need to feel as safe as possible in AA and gossip about another or what they have said in the 'sacred' environment of an AA meeting would be very unimportant to people on a spiritual path. Mutual respect is the key to good relations and it is no different here.

A trusted servant at the Conference level. . .

My home group reads the long form of the 12th tradition just prior to the close of each meeting because it leaves us with such wonderful spiritual principles. To me, it means that no one is special in AA regardless of who or what they are. Dr. Bob's comment when asked how he felt about his contributions to the AA program pretty well sums it up when he replied, "I don't know about that—I just work here". Also prior to his death when there was talk about building this huge mausoleum for he and Anne, he told Bill "let's just get buried like other folks".

Whenever I can put principles before my personality and do whatever is best for others and the fellowship things go very well in my life.

**How to bust up an AA group
...in 10 easy lessons**

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| <p>you do condescend to put in an appearance, always be late. Say to yourself, "What's the use of me being on time? The other guys are always late." Besides you can always pull that old classic gag about having a change a tire.</p> <p>2. On cold rainy meeting nights, say to yourself, "There won't be anybody at the meeting anyway." And then lean back and turn on the TV.</p> <p>3. In case you ever do come to a meeting, always find fault with any decisions that have been made, or any actions that have been taken by the group during your absence.</p> <p>4. Never accept any office of responsibility. Try to realize that is much easier to criticize what others have done than to do anything yourself.</p> <p>5. If asked to give your opinion on any subject, be sure to have nothing to say. Always remember that a still tongue makes a wise head, and that if you keep silent long enough the other members will all think you are very profound.</p> <p>6. In case you ever have anything to say, never express yourself during the meeting. Wait until the meeting is all over and then,</p> | <p>1. Seldom come to meetings. Whenever</p> <p>7. Do nothing more than is necessary to make the group a success; but when others roll up their sleeves, and devote either time or money to the organization, howl like a coyote about the outfit being run by a clique.</p> <p>8. Be sure to let all the members know that you conferred a great favor upon them by joining their group in the first place. Try to give the impression that your membership lends prestige to the group.</p> <p>9. In case hot dogs and coffee are served after the meeting, don't bother to stick around long enough to be sociable, and maybe wash up a few cups, or sweep up a couple of cigarette butts. The other members don't have to get up as early in the morning as you do, and besides they are more used to such lowly chores.</p> <p>10. In any kind of a disagreement or controversy, never wait to hear the other members' side of the story. Knowing both sides will only get you confused, and will interfere with your righteous judgment. Don't talk, Act. Just get up in disgust, and make an impressive exit. This will draw forth terrific applause from the audience and will prove to all the other members that you are a great soul, a Man of Action, and not given to idle words.</p> |
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**Identification is "The Essence
of Our Common Bond"**

"My name is Rosemary P., and I am an alcoholic.' That's a simple introduction. And powerful! It tells you who and what I am, instantly. It immediately connects me to you if you, too, are an alcoholic."

Speaking at the June 1989 Northeast Regional Forum in Portland, Maine, Rosemary called identification "the very essence of our common bond" and expressed concern that "the way we traditionally introduce ourselves at meetings has changed so much, the word 'alcoholic' often is omitted entirely."

The delegate (Panel 39) for Central New York pointed to a new crop of introductions heard around AA-from "I'm cross-addicted" and "I'm chemically dependent" to "I'm a recovering person." She said that she is "always tempted to respond, 'you're a cross-addicted what?' "You're a chemically dependent what?' And 'Whom or what are you recovering from?' " Her frustration mounts, she added "because I need to know that you're at the meeting for the same reason that I'm there - for ongoing recovery from the disease of alcoholism."

Rosemary further believes that the breakdown in the way we identify ourselves "puts a serious strain on our unity and singleness of purpose. When I say at an A.A. function that 'I'm a drug addict and an alcoholic' or 'I'm a cross-addicted alcoholic,' I am telling you that I'm a special kind of alky - my case of alcoholism is different from yours! I add an extra dimension to my disease - one that, because of our singleness of purpose, should not be addressed at an A.A. meeting. I have just cut our common bond in half and, more importantly, I have diluted my own purpose for being there."

In her area, Rosemary noted, "it was thought that after a person was around AA for a while, all other descriptive words would fall away and we would hear, 'I am an alcoholic.' But this has not happened. We see people sober in AA for two, three, four years and more-still clinging to the treatment jargon they were first taught. They have not made the transition."

What we need to do, Rosemary suggests, is to separate our issues and take them separately to the programs designed to address them: Narcotics Anonymous for drug addiction; Overeaters Anonymous for addiction for food, and so on. When participating in these various meetings, she feels, "we should identify ourselves accordingly."

It has been suggested, she said, "that we approach treatment facilities and, in the spirit of cooperation and concern for the newcomer, ask that they instruct their patients on how to separate their addictions rather than group them together under the label of 'addictive personalities' - using the catchall phrase we hear so often, that 'a drug is a drug is a drug.' "

The idea of seeking outside cooperation is all very well, Rosemary observed, "but I wonder if the real answer doesn't lie squarely within our own Fellowship. Isn't it the responsibility of each of us to keep our program intact, to pass it on to the newcomer as it was given to us? Importantly, can we do this with patient explanation, tolerance toward differences - and more patient explanation? I believe we can, through committed sponsorship, strong home groups and active service. That way our new members will learn how to be a part of A.A., not a fragment of it."

Most of us, Rosemary concluded, "have heard it said that if A.A. is ever destroyed, it will be destroyed from within. In my opinion, apathy, cloaked often in the guise of 'live and let live,' is one of our greatest enemies. But the destructive force is not those members who introduce themselves as 'cross addicted alcoholics' - it is the attitude of those members who sit back and say, 'So what!'"

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An alcoholic is a person who wants to be held while he's isolating.

The idea that alcoholics, drug addicts, sex addicts, overeaters, etc. should all just go to AA meetings was started by a treatment center that only had one van.



I have held many things in my hands, and I have lost them all; but whatever I have placed in God's hands, that I still possess.

If God were small enough to be understood, He's wouldn't be big enough to be God!

You don't have to be sick to want to get well; but if you don't want to get well, you ARE sick!



I would rather go through life sober, believing I am an alcoholic, than go through life drunk, trying to convince myself that I am not.

There is only one way to coast...and that's downhill.

I can't do His will my way.

Reputation and Character...

"The circumstances amid which you live determine your reputation;
The truth you believe determines your character.

Reputation is what you are supposed to be;
Character is what you are....

Reputation is what you have when you come to a new community;
Character is what you have when you go away.

Your reputation is made in a moment;
Your character is built in a lifetime....

Reputation is what men say about you on your tombstone;
Character is what the angels say about you before the throne of God."

- William Hersey Davis

WHAT IS WRONG WITH AA??

This fundamental question has been asked by every alcoholic at some point in sobriety. It has been said that if one doesn't include AA on one's Fourth Step at least once, then one needs to get more involved with the program. If one feels there is something wrong with AA then the person can be assured they are in conscious contact with something!

After all, the active alcoholic's way quickly takes the person on the road titled "The High Cost of Low Living" and creates all kinds of trouble. Instead of asking: what is wrong with AA perhaps a better question would be "what is wrong with my perception of AA?" One facet of alcoholism is that it is a disease of perception.

One can answer the above question by looking at the chapter called "Doctor, Alcoholic, Addict" now called "Acceptance was the Answer" in the Fourth Edition. The more one focuses on what is wrong with AA, the more will be wrong with AA. The more one focuses on what is right with AA, the more right AA will appear to be.

Although it is unfortunate, a great deal of AA bashing exists. This perhaps is because a high

expectation exists for it to "just work". A recovering alcoholic has to do a lot of work in the program. Someone has to want sobriety (life) bad enough to go to any lengths for victory over alcohol (death). Bill W. coined the popular phrase "Easy Does It, But Do It!" AA is a choice-based spiritual way of life which demands persistent, rigorous honesty and willingness. The program is simple, but not easy.

AA goes against all the things we have learned to take on through the eyes of King Alcohol. Those things are: fear, hate, pain, victimiza-

tion, and any and all manner of negative feelings & interactions. AA instead supports healing—mentally, physically & spiritually, life-affirming and loving manners of support and guidance. AA encourages us to grow into the people God intended us to be.

There is nothing wrong with AA itself. The untreated alcoholic mind can always find something wrong, however, just for an excuse to get drunk or self-destruct. The following table illustrates this point:

Characteristic	Untreated Alcoholic Mind	AA Design for living
Fear	Terror	Faith & Trust
Loneliness	Isolation	Fellowship & Love
Self-Loathing	Despair	Self Acceptance & Forgiveness
Self-Centeredness	Ego	Belief in a Higher Power

Characteristic	Untreated Alcoholic Mind	AA Design for living
D	Despair	Faith & Trust
R	Restless	Serenity
U	Unwilling	Willingness
N	Negative	Positive Feeling & Outlook
K	Killjoy	Joy