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The Next Right Thing

By Allan G. Tennessee

For many years I've heard this concept in meetings — "The next right thing."

I decided to check the Big Book and stories in the current edition and all previous editions to see if there is some justification to imply this is part of the AA recovery program.

I found "right thing" in four current stories and below in the Big Book's main text.

"To sum up about sex: We earnestly pray for the right ideal, for guidance in each questionable situation, for sanity, and for the strength to do the RIGHT THING." pg. 70

"Reminding ourselves that we have decided to go to any lengths to find a spiritual experience, we ask that we be given strength and direction to do the RIGHT THING, no matter what the personal consequences may be." pg. 79

"Never avoid these responsibilities, but be sure you are doing the RIGHT THING if you assume them. Helping others is the foundation stone of your recovery." pg. 97

It seems that doing the "right thing" in life is part and parcel of taking the Steps

and a repeated theme in the Big Book.

Of course the begs the question of how do we know what IS the "right thing."

I've had trouble discerning this in recovery and sometimes my idea of the "right thing" was really the wrong thing.

Sometimes helping someone, believing it's the right thing, is actually the wrong thing. This is addressed in WORKING WITH OTHERS.

"Be certain ... he is not trying to impose upon you for money, connections, or shelter. Permit that and you only harm him. You will be making it possible for him to be insincere.

You may be aiding in his destruction rather than his recovery.... " pg. 96-97

Discovering the NEXT right thing might be delusional. For instance "Being still inexperienced and having just made conscious contact with God, it is not probable that we are going to be inspired at all times." pg. 87

The solution the Book repeatedly gives is similar to pages 87-88: "As we go through the day we pause, when agitated or doubtful, and ask for the right thought or action. We constantly remind ourselves we are no longer running the show, humbly saying to ourselves many times each day "Thy will be done." Continued on page 2

Leadership in A.A.: Ever a Vital

(Excerpts from Bill W.'s article in the April 1959 Grapevine. See Concept IX, page 36 of "Twelve Concepts for World Service" for the full article)

Somewhere in our literature there is a statement to this effect: "Our leaders do not drive by mandate: they lead by example." In effect, we are saying to them, "Act for us, but don't boss us."...

Therefore, a leader in A.A. service is a man (or woman) who can personally put principles, plans, and policies into such dedicated and effective action that the rest of us want to back him up and help him with his job. When a leader power-drives us badly, we rebel; but when he too meekly becomes an order-taker and he exercises no judgment of his own—well, he really isn't a leader at all....

Good leadership originates plans, policies, and ideas for the improvement of our Fellowship and its service. But in new and important matters, it will nevertheless consult Continued on page 2

The Lord is my sponsor, I shall not want.

He makes me to go to many meetings.

He leads me to sit back, relax, and listen with an open mind, He restores my soul, my sanity, and my health. He leads me in the path of sobriety, serenity, and fellowship for my own sake.

He teaches me to think, to take it easy, to live and let live, and do first things first.

He makes me more humble and grateful.

He teaches me to accept the things I cannot change, to change the things I can, and gives me the wisdom to know the difference.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of despair, frustration, guilt, and remorse, I will fear no evil.

For Thou are with me, your program, your way of life, your twelve steps, they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies: rationalization, fear, anxiety, self-pity, resentment.

You anoint my confused mind and jangled nerves with knowledge, understanding, and hope. No longer am I alone, neither am I afraid, nor sickened, nor helpless, nor hopeless.

My cups runs over, Surely sobriety and serenity shall follow me every day of my life, one day at a time, twenty-four hours at a time.

As I surrender my will to You and carry Your message to others, I will dwell in the house of Higher Power, as I understand him, one day at a time, forever and ever.

Big Book Trivia

April Answers: Beginning with the 4 Edition all religious references were removed from the stories in the back of the book.

Extra Credit: In the Fourth Edition A Student of Life was written by a lady that was born in Urbana, and later in life as a practicing alcoholic attended graduated school at the U o I.

April Question: How many printing were made of the Third Edition of the Big Book from 1976 through 2001.

Extra Credit: Which printing of the Third Edition was printed twice one in 1993 and one in 1994?

Did you know?

That it is May 20, 2016 will be the 75th anniversary of the first woman's A.A.

Next Right Thing *Continued from page 1*

"How do you find the "right thing" to do? Do you actually try or do you just mouth the phrase in meetings to sound good?

Have you ever done the "wrong" thing, believing it was the "right" thing?

BTW, in my search I never found the phrase "the next right thing."

Allan G. is an internationally known amateur A.A. Historian and co-administrator of the largest amateur A.A. history group in the world.

Leadership *continued from page 1*

widely before taking decisions and actions. Good leadership will also remember that a fine plan or idea can come from anybody, anywhere. Consequently, good leadership will often discard its own cherished plans for others that are better, and it will give credit to the source....

Good leadership never passes the buck. Once assured that it has, or can obtain, sufficient general backing, it freely takes decisions and puts them into action forthwith, provided, of course, that such action be within the framework of its defined authority and responsibility...

Another qualification for leadership is give-and-take, the ability to compromise cheerfully whenever a proper compromise can cause a situation to progress in what appears to be the right direction. Compromise comes hard to us all-or-nothing drunks. Nevertheless, we must never lose sight of the fact that progress is nearly always characterized by a series of improving compromises. We cannot, however, compromise always. Now and then, it is truly necessary to stick flat-footed to one's conviction about an issue until it is settled. These are situations for keen timing and careful discrimination as to which course to take....

Leadership is often called upon to face heavy and sometimes long-continued criticism. This is an acid test. There are always the constructive critics, our friends indeed. We ought never fail to give them a careful hearing. We should be willing to let them modify our opinions or change them completely. Often, too, we shall have to disagree and then stand fast without losing their friendship. *Copyright © by The A.A. Grapevine, Inc.;*

Looney Tunes (Urbana) will relocating on May 21, 2016 to Quest Church on 2004 S. Philo Road (East Side Between Mieres and County Market). May 14th with the last meeting at the Unity Church location.

**DISTRICT 12 HOTLINE VOLUNTEER FORM
(ALL INFORMATION IS KEPT STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL)**

First Name: _____
Last Initial: _____
City: _____
Phone: _____
Alternate Phone: _____
Email: _____
Sobriety Date: _____

Circle one: Male Female

Check all activities you would be willing to do to help a fellow alcoholics. *Must have 1 yr. sobriety and worked 12 steps for calls and visits and must have a Valid license and a vehicle to give rides

- Make a phone call
- Make a home/hospital visit
- Give a ride to a meeting
- Give a ride to Detox/Treatment Centers

Days & Hours Available: (Check Days and list hours available, specify AM or PM)

Sunday _____
Monday _____
Tuesday _____
Wednesday _____
Thursday _____
Friday _____
Saturday _____

Any Restrictions? Any Comments?

Return completed forms to:

By Mail: AA District 12
P.O. Box 2413
Champaign, IL, 61825-2413

**Guidelines to Volunteers for the District 12
AA Hotline**

First and foremost, thank you for signing up to do the incredible commitment of answering the phone when an alcoholic in need reaches out for help! It is one of the most rewarding ways to "give back what has been so freely given to us." As a local hotline volunteer, your commitment is very important. Please read all the instructions below and call either Committee chair Jake T at (217)493-0517 or Antonia D (504)655-0892 with any questions.

- Please save the Hotline number in your phone. It's 217-531-3259.
- If your number or availability changes or you wish to be removed from the list please email: answeringservice@aa-eci.org or contact Jake T at (217)493-0517 or Antonia D (504) 655-0892.
- If the hotline calls and you are unable to assist it is fine to pass, do not attempt to find someone else to assist the caller.
- For 12 step calls be clear to establish if the caller has a desire to stop drinking. Do not be afraid to call 911 if you think the caller is going to bring physical harm to themselves or is in need of immediate medical attention. If the caller is intoxicated and the situation is not that urgent, try to keep the call short. You will know when someone genuinely wants help. If they do not, have a desire to stop drinking compassionately cut to the chase and end the call. Remember, there is a difference between carrying the message and carrying the alcoholic.
- Make sure to encourage the caller to get to a meeting as well to get contact information of other alcoholics at the meeting; the hotline is for emergencies only but please encourage them to get numbers at meetings for people to talk to.
- We suggest when giving rides to someone or going to a home or hospital on a 12 step call you don't know, to bring someone with you.
- If you issue with a caller or someone abusing the hotline please let the committee chairs know their name and number.
- If your number is disconnected when the call center tries to reach you, then the answering service will remove you as a volunteer. You will have to contact us to be re-added.

Thanks for your service!

GUIDELINES FOR BRIDGE THE GAP VOLUNTEERS

All volunteers who wish to carry the message to treatment centers must be in agreement with, and abide by the following guidelines.

- 1) One year of continuous sobriety, having completely worked the 12 steps and having a current sponsor are the requirements to participate.
- 2) You may bring a sponsee with 10+ months of sobriety with you to observe, as long as they listen only and do not participate. Do not bring anyone else who has not been assigned a position.
- 3) If you cannot attend your scheduled obligation it is your responsibility to find a fill-in from the phone list which will be updated and placed in the binder.
- 4) We are there to represent Alcoholics Anonymous, not religion, other 12 step programs or any other organization.
- 5) If you are looking to "hook-up" you are in the wrong place. "13th stepping" will not be tolerated. This activity robs newly sober alcoholics of the opportunity to put their full attention on recovery. If a client of the opposite sex asks for your phone number, please direct them to the appropriate panel member of the same sex.
- 6) Meeting is conducted by one of the three panel members who agrees to chair the meeting. Bridge The Gap and Orientation meeting formats are inside the binder. The committee chair person can tell you which format to follow for your facility. Current committee chairs are:

Prairie Center: Mark G.

Pavilion: Sherri G.

- 7) Pavilion volunteers: Said "binder" is located along the right side of the mail boxes in the New Choice office. Please ask an employee to retrieve it for you.
- 8) To allow time for clients to ask as many questions as possible, it is important that we only answer questions asked of the clients. This is not a speaker meeting or a forum to tell our stories. We are there to share our experience, strength and hope only on their questions.
- 9) It is up to the chair person to stop any distractions during the meeting, including cross talk between clients or clients trying to answer questions. The opening remarks state that the "panel members" will answer questions. Sometimes a client will need a gentle reminder that this is not a "group" session and only the panel members reply to the questions/topic.

Updated: March 2016

District 12 Business Meeting Minutes**March 20, 2016**

The meeting was opened by Mona Lee H. at 2:00 PM. The Serenity Prayer and the Traditions were read. The minutes of the February meeting were circulated.

District 12 Meeting Reports**DCM** – Mona Lee H ALT-DCM – Mike G.

Mona reminded everyone of upcoming women's events this year:

Annual A.A. Women's Luncheon (A Closed Meeting), April 17, 2016, Chicago, IL

Annual Midwest Woman-to-Woman Seminar, October 7-9, 2016, St. Louis, MO (http://midwest-wtw.org/Home_Page.php)

Mona and Martin B. attended the SIA Spring Conference and Area Assembly, hosted by District 18 on March 11, 12 & 13, and both reported that the conference was very good and a great opportunity to meet people from other communities; the next Area Assembly will be in Springfield and Mona is offering rides

Mona proposed the idea of starting to collect donations at District 12 business meetings because this is something other districts are doing

Mona said that there will be a Corrections Workshop hosted by District 11 on 4/30/16 in Decatur; flyer is available at http://www.aa-sil18.org/index_files/Page274.htm

Mike was absent

Treasurer – Cheri P. Cheri explained that the 2016 budget is not yet passed. Rosemary T. motioned to request that all Committee Chairs bring a dollar amount of what they need for 2016 to the next District 12 business meeting on 4/17/16, Linda Z. seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously. Mike W. motioned that District provide PI- CPC Chair Russ S. \$100.00 immediately, Cheri P. seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Cheri also provided this report: Beginning balance as of 2/1/16 was \$5,269.11. After standard bills paid (answering service \$195.20, Fellowship Circle rent \$125.00, telephone \$82.19) as well as disbursements to Corrections of \$535.40 and a down payment to Urbana Civic Center for December 2016 Area of \$125.00, and an inflow of \$1,289.40 in group donations, the remaining working cash balance (current balance less prudent reserve of \$3,100.00 and Corrections literature of \$213.91) was \$2,181.81.

Mike W. motioned to approve the Treasurer's report, Terry M. seconded the motion, and the Treasurer's report was passed unanimously.

Committee Reports

Answering Service – Antonia D. Jake THotline number: 217-373-4200; Committee News: Used 215 minutes, added more volunteers to make calls for us, and had a group conscience; Service Opportunities: Yes: Those with under 1 year of sobriety and a valid license can give rides and those with over 1 year of sobriety and a valid license can give rides and/or do 12-step calls

Corrections – Phaedra H. DJ B, and Tony Goals: Add more people; Service Opportunities: Yes, volunteer to take meetings into the jails, especially Friday or possibly another day at the Champaign downtown jail; Spread the word at meetings, etc.: Yes, we need more male volunteers for the Friday downtown jail meeting, but please note these are done in a 1:1 setting and can be difficult

Grapevine – Terry M Committee Purpose: Make Grapevine and related information available to District groups and encourage subscriptions and submissions as well as use of the Grapevine in 12-step work;

Meeting List – Liza W.– NO REPORT

Newsletter – Martin B. Please send your anniversary or event announcements to newsletter@aa-eci.org

PI-CPC – Russ S. Committee News: Looking for health fairs in the District 12 area; Service Opportunities: Need Piatt County volunteer

Treatment Centers – Mark G. and Sherri G. Goals: Continue with a steady flow of volunteers for all Orientation and Bridge the Gap positions; Service Opportunities: Tuesday 8:00 PM positions at Prairie Center are open and Mark is looking for women who can commit to one evening per month; Spread the word at meetings, etc.: Yes, please continue to spread the word at homegroups and in meetings and encourage sponsees to see us to be added as fill-ins or to take on a position when available

Website – Rosemary T. Goals: Look into creating a searchable meeting list on the website which would allow sorting/filtering by location, day, time;

District 12 Business Meeting Minutes

April 17, 2016

The meeting was opened by Mike G. at 2:00 PM. The Serenity Prayer was read. The minutes of the March meeting were circulated. Terry M. raised a question about the accuracy of the notes under the "Old Business" section, and, after some discussion, Roland W. motioned to accept the minutes except for the "Old Business" section, and Antonia D. seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

District 12 Meeting Reports

DCM – Mona Lee H. was absent

Mike provided an update re: the December 2016 Area Assembly;

Treasurer Cheri was absent

Committee Reports

Answering Service – Antonia D. Committee Purpose: To give meeting times, help facilitate rides, and take 12-step calls; Goals: Add more volunteers, especially men, distribute new volunteer flyers, and update availability for men and women; Committee News: Used 313 minutes (which was an overage) and requesting an extra \$100 for 2016 budget (\$86.40 to cover the cost of hotline increases and the rest is for the cost of the flyers); Service Opportunities: Yes and have new volunteer flyers; Spread the word at meetings, etc.: Yes

Archives – Mike W. – NO REPORT

Corrections – Phaedra H, DJ Band Tony C. – NO REPORT

Grapevine – Terry M Promote subscriptions to Grapevine and submissions to Grapevine;

Meeting List – Liza W we are planning to go to print with the following changes/additions/omissions: Danville Monday meeting is changed – not womens and no AC, Looney Tunes meeting is changing location starting May 21 to Quest Church, 2004 Philo Rd, Urbana, Whistle Bell meeting is added, Hour House speaker meeting on the last Sunday of every month is added, Danville Friday 9:30 and Danville Saturday 1 PM meetings are omitted because these are no longer meetings, Rantoul Friday noon meeting is omitted because it is no longer a meeting, and Gifford Tuesday 5:00 PM meeting is omitted because it is no longer a meeting;

PI-CPC – Russ S Committee News: New literature has arrived and is being distributed and requesting an extra \$100 for 2016 budget in addition to last month's allotment which may handle literature needs for the rest of this year

Treatment Centers – Mark G Sherri G new guidelines have been prepared

Website – Rosemary T. Goals: Look into creating a searchable meeting list on the website which would allow sorting/filtering by location, day, timeGSR Reports

District 12 Officers and Committee Chairs

DCM	Mona Lee H. (dcm@aa-eci.org)
Alt. DCM	Michael G. (alt-dcm@aa-eci.org)
Secretary	Katrina R. (secretary@aa-eci.org)
Treasurer	Cheri P. (treasurer@aa-eci.org)
Corrections	Mike K. (corrections@aa-eci.org)
Treatment Facilities	Mark G. & Sheri G. (treatment-centers@aa-eci.org)
Meeting List	Liza W. & Mona M. (meeting-list@aa-eci.org)
Answering Service	Antonia D. and Jake T. (answering-service@aa-eci.org)
Newsletter	Martin B (newsletter@aa-eci.org)

Grapevine	Terry S. (grapevine@aa-eci.org)
PI-CPC	Russ S. (picpc@aa-eci.org)
Website	Rosemary T. (webmaster@aa-eci.org)
Archives	Mike W. (archives@aa-eci.org)

District 12 holds its meetings on the 3rd Sunday of every month at 2pm in the New Fellowship Corner at 1714 Springfield Ave, Champaign.

If you would like to submit something for publication, or just send comments or questions to the for a Committee, please email newsletter@aa-eci.org. Deadline for submissions is the 20th of each month.