



LIFELINE



I am responsible when anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. always to be there, and for that I am responsible.

life-line | \ 'lif- līn : 1. A rope or line used for life-saving, typically one thrown to rescue someone in difficulties in water. 2. A thing on which someone depends for a means of escape from a difficult situation. <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com>

Ask yourself three questions every day

The Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius famously said that our lives are what our thoughts make them. In other words, by simply changing the way we think and our focus, we can change our lives. Bearing this in mind, choosing gratitude can have a huge impact on your life.

As practicing alcoholics, chances are, we were focusing on all the misery in our lives—the things that life had inflicted on us, and the things that we had inflicted on ourselves. But now that we are sober, we have to change our thinking patterns if we want to change our drinking patterns.

When I first came into recovery more than 30 years ago, my sponsor told me to buy a notebook and write down 10 things I was grateful for, and then add three things to that list every day. I stopped numbering my list when I got to 5,000 items.

Why did I write a gratitude list? Because I didn't want to be miserable, and if being grateful was the solution, then that's what I would do. And importantly, a grateful heart doesn't drink. I learned very quickly that the struggle stops when gratitude begins.

Now that you're working the program, in the fellowship, the secret word remains "gratitude." Definitely go out and get that notebook, and add three items every day.

In addition, consider what master motivator Tony Robbins says about our brains—that they are "question-answering machines." In other words, whatever question you pose to your brain, it will think and

**Look back and be grateful,
look ahead and be hopeful,
look around and be helpful.**

Gratitude in Early Recovery



think until it comes up with an appropriate answer.

Take for example, if we ask, "Why is my life so horrible?" Our brains will go to a quick, not always the best answer: "Because I'm a (fill in the blank)!" That could be pretty self-defeating depending on what your "blank" is.

That's why it's important to ask yourself better questions.

So here are three than can make a huge difference in your early recovery and in the day-to-day level of happiness you experience.

1. What's great about my life today?

We tend to live in the past or the future, either reliving past disasters or awaiting more bad things to happen. The program tells us that if we have one foot in the past and one foot in the future, we are making a you-know-what of the present. And be-

sides, the reason we call it the present... is because it's a gift!

So what's great about your life right now?

- You're clean and sober.
- You have a program.
- You have a Higher Power who loves you and wants the best for you.
- You're getting your life back.

Hey, I'm doing all the work for you! So you tell me... what's great about your life right now?

2. How can I serve today?

Our co-founder Dr. Bob, in his last speech to an AA gathering, reminded us that our philosophy of life as sober people is to be of love and service, "We all know what love means, and we all know what service means," Bob told us.

My sponsor had a quote from a Roman philosopher on the back of his AA business card—"God divided man into men that they might help each other."

(Ignore the gender-specificity of the ancient Romans. What did they know about inclusiveness?) The real issue is this: How can you serve today?

Can you set up chairs in a meeting? Can you visit a sick friend or relative? Can you call a newcomer? By serving others, we remind ourselves what true love means.

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3. Where would I be if I wasn't clean and sober?

It's amazing how quickly we take recovery for granted. But ask yourself what your life would be like right now, right at this very minute, if you weren't working your program. Would you be living in a nice place? If it's not that nice, is it possible that the place where you'd be living be even worse? Might it have bars instead of walls? Might you be on the street, in the hospital, or six feet under?

All knowledge is by comparison, so contrast the life that you currently have with the life that you would have had if you had kept on dancing with your disease.

Studies show that by deliberately cultivating gratitude, we can increase our well-being and happiness. And importantly, a grateful heart doesn't drink or use.

So focus on gratitude and watch your life get great.

<https://www.aacle.org/gratitude-in-early-recovery/>



Step 11 Overview

We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

Step 11 is not only a maintenance step, but a step rooted in growth. By practicing it daily, we allow ourselves to become more connected to our Higher Power, and in turn becoming more in tune with His plan for our lives. Having thoroughly practiced each of the preceding steps, we now begin to grow in our spirituality.

For many of us, prayer and meditation are not things we actively utilized in our days of active addiction outside of the occasional "foxhole" prayers. You know the ones: "God, if you get me out of this situation, I will never do this again," or "God, if you can just get me past this hangover, I will never drink again." For most of us, these prayers never held any real meaning. If we were lucky enough to get through the aforementioned situation, there was no time before we found ourselves right back in the same position. For those of us who never utilized prayer in our daily lives, we were left wondering at this point how to genuinely pray, and our literature provides us with an 11th step prayer to get us started.

Step 11 Prayer

"Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace! That where there is hatred, I may bring love. That where there is wrong, I may bring the spirit of forgiveness. That where there is discord, I may bring harmony. That where there is error, I may bring truth. That where there is doubt, I may bring faith. That where there is despair, I may bring hope. That where there are shadows, I may bring light. That where there is sadness, I may bring joy. Lord, grant that I may seek rather to comfort, than to be comforted. To Understand, than to be understood. To love, than to be loved. For it is by self-forgetting that one finds. It is by forgiving that one is forgiven. It is by dying that one awakens to eternal life. Amen."

This prayer acts as a great guideline for how we can begin to strengthen our contact with our Higher Power. No matter who or what we have decided our Higher Power to be, the prayer suggests we desire to know how we can be of better service to our fellows. This prayer asks we be shown how we to make a difference in the world; a world that, during our active addiction, many of us rarely gave a passing thought. We are asking for guidance to step out of ourselves and be there for others.

At this stage in our recovery, we find ourselves no longer seeking the answers to selfish questions. Questions like, "how can I get (insert thing here) to make myself feel better" start to diminish. Now we ask what we can do to make the lives of those around us better as a service to our fellows. As we begin to fortify contact with our Higher Power, our true selves are slowly revealed.

<https://www.recoveryconnection.com/step-11-overview/>

5 Tips for a Sober Thanksgiving



Thanksgiving is upon us! Like many, you are probably looking forward to a big dinner,

spending time with the family, a short work week and shopping. In the midst of family time, shopping and eating, you may find that you may have to fight your cravings to drink. Holidays are a common time when we turn to alcohol to celebrate or help with the anxiety that arises during the holiday season. Here are some tips that can help deter you from your alcohol cravings.

5 Tips to Curb Cravings for Alcohol:

1. Contact your support group: Let your support group know where you're going and your concerns so they can be available to answer your call or come pick you up (if necessary). By having them on standby, they can be there to offer advice and support if you are struggling, giving you strength in numbers.

2. The buddy system: Consider taking a sober friend to any Thanksgiving gathering that will be serving alcohol. This way, you can talk to your sober friend throughout the evening. They will encourage and help you through the cravings.

3. Keep your glass full: When you arrive at the dinner, keep your cup full of a nonalcoholic beverage. Have your buddy or the host keep your drink refilled to

avoid the temptation at the drink station.

4. Talk to the host: Don't be embarrassed to let the host know about your recovery. They will probably accommodate you and provide a selection of non-alcoholic beverages. If you're not sure about what they will serve at the party, you can always bring your own non-alcoholic drinks.

5. Exit plan: Don't feel that you have to stay the entire time at the Thanksgiving event. If you are feeling uncomfortable, then thank the host for a lovely time and leave. It's better to leave than to stay and risk drinking.

The temptation to drink may be strong, especially since you will be in a festive spirit. Don't let this come between you and your sobriety.

<https://www.recoveryconnection.com/5-tips-for-a-sober-thanksgiving/>

We are well into pre-season football and many people are beginning to wonder, "can I do this sober?" Between football pools, fantasy leagues, and the party environment of football games, is the reward (experience) worth the risk (sobriety)?

Many of us grew up surrounded by football as a family pastime every weekend, especially during fall and winter holidays. Many of us enjoyed football even before we picked up a drink or drug, but it became a trigger. Once we began drinking and/or using at every game. Our brains now associate football with being intoxicated.

Does it have to continue being that way or can we go back to enjoying it while staying sober, like we did as kids?

The truth of the matter is that the environment surrounding the Great American Sport can be triggering. It can cause some to glorify the past as they watch friends and family enjoy their alcoholic beverages and other "extra-curricular activities" during a game. Football season can also cause some co-occurring addictions to present themselves since they reside in close proximity such as gambling, overeating, love, etc.

Some people decide to take a year off of football and focus solely on staying sober, avoiding triggering events completely. Others dabble in these activities to see if they're still enjoyable sober, and there are those who absolutely refuse to give up something that's been such a huge part of their life. In any of these circumstances, we can remain sober, happy, joyous, and free if we practice these two particular principles in our affairs: honesty and willingness.

We must absolutely be *rigorously honest* with ourselves, which also requires tremendous self-awareness. Secrets keep us sick, and those secrets include feeling triggered and/or mentally glorifying drinking or using. If we ignore these feelings and thoughts, they will grow. Once these grow into an obsession, they are challenging

to shake. Willingness comes into play when we realize we are triggered or glorifying the past, and we have to avoid those triggers for a little while. We will lose anything we put before our sobriety – 100% of the time.

ARE YOU READY FOR SOME (SOBER) FOOTBALL?!

So, if that means missing a few games out of our season ticket passes or even missing an entire season, we must be willing to do that for our sobriety. Remember, we are constantly changing, growing, and improving our spiritual condition. What happens to trigger us today may not trigger us in a year, a month, or even a day. Everything is temporary, so if we find ourselves unable to be in those environments right now, that doesn't mean we'll never be

able to be in them. We can practice acceptance, one day at a time.

How to stay sober during football season, while also enjoying football:

1) Make sure you're spiritually fit. This means you're regularly attending meetings, working and living the steps, have a sponsor, being honest about triggers, and are feeling grateful for your sobriety.

2) Take a sober friend to all events where alcohol will be present. It's easier to stay sober when you have someone else who also values their sobriety.

3) Have an exit strategy in case you do start feeling uncomfortable. If triggers arise, don't be embarrassed to leave.

4) Always have a non-alcoholic beverage in hand. This is especially helpful if it has some sugar, since our bodies oftentimes confuse a craving for alcohol with a craving for sugar.

5) Join a sober tailgate! Believe it or not, there are sober tailgates everywhere and some even have meetings before the game. You can search for these on the internet or even ask people at the various meetings you attend for suggestions. If you can't find one, start one!

<https://www.recoveryconnection.com/staying-sober-during-football-season/>

A QUICK GUIDE TO STEP 11: PRAYER, MEDITATION AND RECOVERY

In the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous, where the 12-step program is outlined, Step 11 reads: *Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for the knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.* If those words seem like a tall order to any newcomer in recovery, rest assured that, like all the other steps, Step 11 can be practiced at a very basic level to begin with. Many of us were perfectionists (or at least highly competitive) before coming into recovery, but the practice of Step 11 is a personal matter that is between the individual and their Higher Power, not a competition or another task to cross off the to-do list. If we approach Step 11 as a lifelong relationship rather than a chore, we will understand that all relationships have to begin somewhere...and be willing to put the time and effort into developing a closer bond with our higher self.

A New Way of Life That's Automatically Very Different from the Old

Few recovering addicts and alcoholics can claim to have led a very rational lifestyle or maintain they have taken a level-headed approach to daily life when in the grips of substance abuse. Just by the nature of addiction, it is probable that few of us carefully weighed the pros and cons of our daily decisions, asked others for advice and followed it, or spent much time seeking answers from a source of higher wisdom; we were way too busy hurtling from one crisis to another, desperately seeking gratification from our drug of choice or whatever behaviors gave us satisfaction. However, the chase was a futile one, because no matter what we ingested or how we acted out, we still felt scared, lost and alone a good portion of the time.

Entering into a new way of life – recovery – we have already begun to learn some humility and acceptance of life on life's terms. Whether this means coming to grips with the devastation our addiction created, accepting limitations, or being willing to make gradual progress, we have begun to grow spiritually. It may look different for everyone, but whether we realize it or not, we have already started doing what Step 11 asks us to do: stop reacting to life on autopilot, and start trying to learn what the right path is and then taking that path, even when we don't understand it.

Tips for Practicing Step 11

The great thing about the 12-step program is that, since it's spiritual and not religious, it doesn't interfere with any way you may

already have of practicing the principles of prayer and meditation. So, if you belong to a religion, you might decide to return to it with renewed vigor...or embrace something entirely new. The only requirement is that you be willing to practice what might be a very rusty or completely new skill! If we truly approach this step with willingness and humility, before long, we begin to experience hope, peace and fulfillment from seeking answers from a Higher Power or Higher Self, whatever you believe it to be.

Here's how to begin practicing Step 11:

- Read the step on page 86 of the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous. It gives concrete ideas and suggestions of what to ask yourself in the morning and at night.
- Try to spend equal amounts of time praying – “Talking to your Higher Power” – and meditating – “Listening to your Higher Power”.

If meditation seems difficult, set the bar low: try to be still and focus on your breath for 2 minutes. If the silence makes you fidget, push past it, or try different forms of meditation, such as free guided meditations you can find online.

As you begin to feel supported by your new practice of prayer and meditation, feelings of calm, strength and direction will begin to replace the cravings, doubts and fears that once dominated. Soon the feelings of belonging and connectedness we first experienced in recovery will become even stronger as we continue to draw closer to fulfilling our purpose in life, whatever that might be. <https://renascent.ca/quick-guide-step-11-prayer-meditation-recovery/>



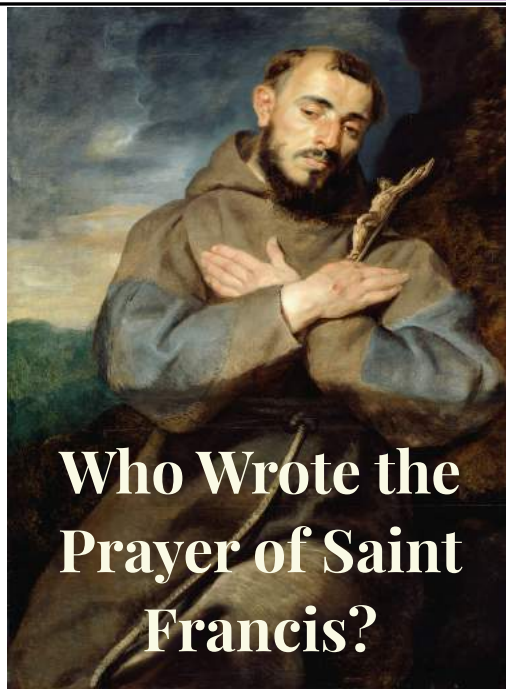
*“Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me bring love.
Where there is offence, let me bring pardon.
Where there is discord, let me bring union.
Where there is error, let me bring truth.
Where there is doubt, let me bring faith.
Where there is despair, let me bring hope.
Where there is darkness, let me bring your light.
Where there is sadness, let me bring joy.
O Master, let me not seek as much
To be consoled as to console,
To be understood as to understand,
To be loved as to love,
For it is in giving that one receives,
It is in self-forgetting that one finds,
It is in pardoning that one is pardoned,
It is in dying that one is raised to eternal life.”*

The Spiritual Principle of Step 11 is Self-discipline: The last steps are about maintaining spirituality and deepening it through regular behavior. In step 11, we engage with this while practicing discipline in two mutually reinforcing ways. First, we pray and meditate regularly. Second, we do not pray for our selfish gain and reinforce our willfulness. Instead, we seek to remain steady on the spiritual path.

<https://12steppers.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Spiritual-Principles-of-AA-PDF.pdf>

What will surprise many readers is that no serious scholar today, Franciscan or otherwise, would place the Peace Prayer among the authentic writings of St. Francis. In recent decades it has become evident that the prayer originated during the early years of the 1900's, but until recently no one has pointed out the exact year. Finally, researchers are getting to the bottom of the mystery.

The first appearance of the Peace Prayer occurred in France in 1912 in a small spiritual magazine called La Clochette (The Little Bell), published in Paris by a Catholic association known as La Ligue de la Sainte-Messe, "The Holy Mass League," founded in 1901 by a French priest, Father Esther Bouquerel (1855-1923). The prayer bore the title of "A Beautiful Prayer to Say During the Mass" and was published anonymously. The author could have possibly been Father Bouquerel himself,



but until now the identity of the author remains a mystery.

The prayer was sent in French to Pope Benedict XV in 1915. This was soon followed by its 1916 appearance, in Italian, in the *Osservatore Romano*. Around 1920, the prayer was printed by a French Franciscan priest on the back of an image of St. Francis with the title *Priere pour la paix*,

"Prayer for Peace," but without being attributed to the saint. A holy card from a later date has it ascribed to William the Conqueror. Between the two World Wars, the prayer circulated in Europe and was translated into English.

The first translation in English that we know of appeared in 1936 in "Living Courageously," a book by Kirby Page (1890-1957), a Disciples of Christ minister. Page attributed the text to St. Francis of Assisi. Other sources give Cardinal Spellman credit for the title by which it is known today. There is evidence that he came across the prayer in Italy, brought it back with him to the United States, and had it printed under the title "Prayer of St. Francis". During the Second World War and immediately after, this prayer for peace began circulating widely as the Prayer of St. Francis and over the years has gained a worldwide popularity with people of all faiths.

<https://www.monasteryicons.com/product/Who-Wrote-the-Prayer-of-Saint-Francis-did-you-know>

Grapevine Meeting! 4th Tuesday of each month
6:30 pm

Did you know that The Area 29 Grapevine Committee is a traveling literature store? We have a large variety of AA Grapevine books for sale. Please reach back out if your group, District, or intergroup is hosting an event or workshop and would like us to come and sell literature.

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85217774704?pwd=TVhEdFpKdmxSRINvNnJHU1pYWDVaQT09>

Meeting ID: 852 1777 4704 Passcode: 019347

Brandi D., Area 29 Grapevine Committee Chair

For more info: grapevine@marylandaa.org

Group and District GVR's encouraged to attend, all are welcome!

Are you looking for a fun service position?

Please join us and find out more! All are welcome to attend!

**2023 Calendar for Area 29
Maryland General Service, Inc.
All Committee and Assembly meetings will
continue to be offered via Hybrid
for the foreseeable future.**

November 18 Area Committee, **hosted by District 20**
Otterbein United Methodist Church, 108 East Franklin
St., Hagerstown, MD

December 16 Area Assembly, **hosted by District 40**
Trinity United Methodist Church, 703 West Patrick St.,
Frederick, MD 21701

**IMPORTANT: NOTE DATE CHANGE FOR DECEMBER
MEETING!!**

- Zoom link for Hybrid option will be included in emailed meeting invitation each month
- 8 a.m. to 9 a.m. Coffee, donuts, and fellowshiping
- 8:20 a.m. Orientation for new GSRs and DCMs
- Attendees will be asked to provide your own lunch.
- 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Business Meeting (meeting ends when business is concluded).
- Meetings may be subject to COVID restrictions as determined by the facility. These will be communicated via email prior to that meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84124993206?pwd=OVBWNjJjeHg4eFFibkhNcDRyOXhUZz09>

Treatment Center Committee

"The District 36 Treatment Center Committee"

is looking for female fellowship members,

who are willing and have a year

or more of sobriety to bring

in-house A.A. meetings into

the Jude House

Wednesday Evenings 7:00pm.

Please contact this committee at our email:

treatmentcommittee36@gmail.com

This is a very rewarding experience!

Come join up and try it out!

The Committee Contact:

treatmentcommittee36@gmail.com



Does your Home Group have a GSR?

(General Service Representative)

Does it have an alternate GSR?

Have your GSR & Alternate GSR contact

Debbie P. (301)-825-2740

Your group's voice needs to be heard.

You could be the link between your Home Group and the General Service Organization

2 year service commitment. Make a commitment to your group and your sobriety.

Anyone is eligible.

When?

6:30PM on the 3rd Monday of every month

Where?

Presbyterian Church

115 W. 2nd St.

Frederick, MD

Or on zoom

(Meeting ID:81101121309 Passcode:District)

District 36 Workshop The 4 Angles of Sponsorship

What does a Sponsor "DO" ?

Why do I "NEED" a Sponsor ?

How do I "BECOME" a Sponsor ?



As your Sponsor I will "HELP" you to -- ?

What is a "SERVICE" Sponsor ?

Saturday, November 18, 2023
5:00pm – 9:00pm

Immaculate Conception Church
28297 Old Village Road
Mechanicville, MD 20659

Footprints in the Winter Sand

ASHORE Resort & Beach Club
10100 Coastal Highway
Ocean City, MD 21842

Friday, February 2nd - Sunday, February 4th, 2024

Schedule

Speakers

Friday, February 2nd	3:00 pm – Open A.A. Speaker Meeting	Dave D. Annapolis, MD
	4:30 pm – Open Al-Anon Speaker Meeting	Luanne D. Salisbury, MD
	8:30 pm – Open A.A. Speaker Meeting	Harold L. St. Louis, MO
Saturday, February 3rd	10:00 am – Open Al-Anon Speaker Meeting	Lori G. Oklahoma City, OK
	2:00 pm – Open A.A. Speaker Meeting	Tommy T. Staten Island, NY
	8:00 pm – Open A.A. Speaker Meeting	Lillie H. South Portland, ME
Sunday, February 4th	10:00 am – Open A.A. Speaker Meeting	Linda B. Waldorf, MD

Bridging the Gap Information

District 1 looking for AA members who are willing to be a *Bridging the Gap* Temporary Contact.

What is a Temporary Contact?

- A TEMPORARY CONTACT is an AA member in the Bridging the Gap Program who helps a newcomer make the successful transition from a treatment or correctional facility into AA.
- A TEMPORARY CONTACT is not committed to help with every case; he or she simply assists when he or she can.
- This is basic 12th Step work, and the initial contact is like a 12th Step call.
- Being a TEMPORARY CONTACT is not the same type or level of commitment as being a sponsor. It is simply helping a newcomer to get started in AA.
- A TEMPORARY CONTACT does not provide lodging, money, or other social services.


What is a Temporary Contact expected to do?

- Meet or make contact with the newcomer before or soon after the newcomer leaves the facility.
- To avoid any misunderstandings, explain clearly that this is a temporary arrangement.
- Try to do the things outlined in the AA pamphlet; [Bridging the Gap](#).
- Take the newcomer to a meeting and introduce him or her to other AA members.
- Explain group membership and the value of having a home group.
- Explain sponsorship to the newcomer, referring to the pamphlet; [Questions and Answers about Sponsorship](#) and perhaps help the newcomer find a sponsor.
- Review the many different meeting formats – open, closed, speakers, etc.
- Ensure the newcomer knows how to obtain a listing of meetings or provide a list to him or her.
- Introduce the newcomer to AA conference-approved literature and the *AA Grapevine*.

How to become a TEMPORARY CONTACT:


Speak to your Intergroup rep or DCM, or if you want more information feel free to email btg@calvertaa.org.

NOVEMBER 2023

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
					Gary E., 1 yr, Cove Point	Robert M., 25 yrs, King- ston Creek
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Joe, 1 yr, Bedouin	Jim M., 22 yrs, 12 Step Home	Tanya, 1 Yr, Grapevine	George B., 4 yrs, Patuxent River		John K., 13 yrs, Cove Point	
					Dane P., 21 yrs, Owens- ville	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Roland H., 30 yrs, Jude House AM Eye Opener	Bill L., 13 yrs, Harmo- ny		Austin, 10 yrs, Sunrise	Ed, 16 yrs, Sunrise		Robbin E., 4 yrs, Helping Others
Charlie A., 37 yrs, Bedouin Daily Re- flections						
Pat S., 39 yrs, Never Too Late						
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
					Steven E., 1 yr, Clean Air	Freddie S., 18 yrs and Hugh C., 13 yrs, Helping Others
26	27	28	29	30		
Peggy K., 26 yrs, ODAAT		Rick K., 1 yr, Laurel Grove		Jeanine W. 27 yrs, St Charles Step		



DECEMBER 2023

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	JD M., 3 yrs, Saturday Morning 12 & 12 Casey M., 32 yrs @ Kingston Creek
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Phil T., 40 yrs, Never Too Late						
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
				Casey H., 1 yr, Pop- lar Hill		Steve H., 33 yrs, Kingston Creek
31	<i>Congratulations</i>					

In this series, we've been trying to accomplish three things. First, we wanted to introduce newly recovering addicts and alcoholics to the Twelve Traditions, the foundational principles of 12 step recovery programs. As for any readers with a bit of time under their belts, we wanted to provide them with a chance to reflect on these traditions and what they mean. This carried into our second goal, which was to provide readers with multiple interpretations of the text. Finally, we wanted readers to walk away with some ideas regarding how they might apply these principles to their own personal recovery. With the Eleventh Tradition, the last goal might be a bit harder to fulfill.

To be fair, the last goal is actually easy to meet in a broad sense. We might apply the Eleventh Tradition to our lives in much the same fashion we apply Tradition Ten. In fact, the two are quite similar in a few ways. They both pertain to anonymity, not only that of individuals but of the groups as well. Applying anonymity to our own lives should be a cinch. So the problem with the last goal isn't whether or not it's achievable wherein Tradition Eleven is concerned. The problem instead lies in the question of whether or not most alcoholics would ever be given the opportunity to break the Eleventh Tradition in the first place.

We never know where life may take us next. For this reason, it is important that we understand the Eleventh Tradition, even if we feel we may never encounter it

Tradition Eleven suggests that we not simply rush out to tell our story without thinking twice about it.

in real life. Because if the opportunity to break this tradition *does* happen to arise, we must be prepared to do the right thing. Otherwise, we risk doing great (and potentially irreparable) harm to the recovery community.

What Is Tradition Eleven?

If you look at the corresponding chapter in *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* (also known as the 12&12), you'll find the Eleventh Tradition defined thusly:

"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."

It's hard for most of us to imagine that this issue would even come up. Perhaps some of us wish to work in these fields, but not the vast majority. And as for the rest of us, what are the odds of somebody randomly approaching us for an interview?

At this point, we must remind ourselves that the Twelve Traditions apply to the

not only be egotistical but potentially a waste of time and resources as well.

There's no need to advertise an organization that most people already know about.

Of course, things get a little more complicated when we try to apply the Eleventh Tradition to our personal lives. We've met many recovering alcoholics who think that their lives would make a good subject for a book. But what if they were to actually sit down and write their autobiography today?



groups and the organization as a whole. The Eleventh Tradition speaks not necessarily to AA members, but rather AA itself. Rather than engaging in self-promotion, the groups are expected to run on their own. They shouldn't be putting out television ads or getting billboards made. These measures might boost their attendance, but would also cause them to come across as insincere. Instead, AA groups should allow the history of the program to do all of their promoting for them.

There's certainly no shortage of third-party promotion. We see AA appear in movies and television shows. Doctors and psychiatrists recommend the Twelve Steps to those who engage in chronic substance abuse. A few positive press articles on recovery programs might hit our Facebook feed from time to time. Even without self-promotion, AA has cemented itself in the public eye. Most people know that the program exists long before they ever suspect that they themselves might one day need its help. In this light, self-promotion would

Do famous people violate the Eleventh Tradition when they talk about their recovery?

Could they talk about AA, or would that violate Tradition Eleven? Surely many authors have written about their recovery experience in the past. Did they violate the Twelve Traditions in doing so? Well, that might be a complicated question. The short answer is that it depends on who you ask.

Multiple Interpretations

A while back, we covered an extensive list of sober celebrities. We referenced celebrated musicians such as Steven Tyler, who says that he needs a meeting every day if he is to stay sober. Even if he doesn't say "AA" at any point, most people will be able to guess at what he's talking



about. Should he be chastised for violating the Eleventh Tradition?

(continued on page 11)

(continued) There are a couple of different schools of thought on this particular issue. We'll begin with those who do not perceive a violation.

Unfortunately, we can't always control our anonymity. And when a person gets famous, it seems that every little fact about their personal lives usually becomes public record at one point or another. Those who defend sober celebrities from claims of Eleventh Tradition violations might point to this likelihood. The assumption is that these celebrities would eventually be outed as alcoholics anyway, so they may as well steer into the skid and embrace their recovery for all to see. Besides, some of these celebrities might be role models to others who struggle with alcoholism. When these fans hear a cherished icon talk about meetings, they might be influenced to seek recovery for themselves. From this perspective, violating the Eleventh Tradition seems to do a lot of good.

Now, let's look at things from the perspective of AA's stricter adherents. These individuals see no reason to justify breaking the Eleventh Tradition. Yes, doing so *might* achieve some good in a few random cases. But what if the celebrity in question relapses? If everyone knows that AA was their primary means of recovery, AA's critics will latch onto the story in a heartbeat. Instead of seeing a person who needed to work harder on their recovery, people will choose to see a celebrity who was failed by the program. This damages AA, the treatment community, and everyone who might have sought treatment before seeing the negative press. Taking this possibility into account, Eleventh Tradition violations suddenly look a lot less benign.

It's not our job to chastise or defend celebrities, so we won't offer an opinion one way or the other. Anyone given a chance to speak publicly about their recovery should think about both of the ar-

guments above. Decide for yourself whether or not you run the risk of breaking Tradition Eleven. No matter how you choose to proceed, we will offer a few last pieces of advice that might make your decision easier.



Following the Eleventh Tradition

Before making your decision, consider this last section from the Eleventh Tradition chapter of the 12&12:

"To us...[Tradition Eleven] represents far more than a sound public relations policy. It is more than a denial of self-seeking. This Tradition is a constant and practical reminder that personal ambition has no place in A.A. In it, each member becomes an active guardian of our Fellowship."

If you can't commit to anonymity, you might not want to share your story at all.

If you consider writing a book or giving an interview just to get your name out there, then you can't claim that you're also doing it to help people. Perhaps you might achieve both, but you likely care about one more than the other. If you really feel that you must discuss AA in such mediums, you should consider doing so anonymously. Otherwise, you might want to leave the program out of your story.

Anonymity allows us to tell our stories in a way that lends to the Eleventh Tradition

policy of attraction without self-promotion. You aren't promoting yourself if you do an anonymous interview about the Twelve Steps and how they work for you. As long as you stay focused on your own experiences instead of trying to "sell" the program, few are likely to see much of a problem with speaking anonymously to the press. Furthermore, nothing in the Eleventh Tradition appears to brand such a practice as unacceptable.

Still, while anonymity might prevent direct violations of the Eleventh Tradition, we must be careful. There's a reason that we say we should focus on our experiences rather than our opinions. Think of it another way. Have you ever read a negative movie review that actually made you want to see the film? How about a positive review that made you decide *not* to see a film? Maybe their opinion didn't match your perception of the film's content. Likewise, we can't expect people to seek recovery because of testimonials alone. They need to gain an understanding of the program and what it entails. Anecdotal evidence provides this understanding much better than a self-centered opinion piece—no matter how enthusiastic that opinion might be.

The Eleventh Tradition exists to protect the program from ego. In order to practice it in our personal lives, we must learn to assess our own intentions. Do we wish to tell our stories in order to help others? Or are we doing so out of little more than selfish ambition? In the latter case, we might not help as many people as we hurt. And feeding our ego wouldn't do much to benefit our own recovery, either. Sobriety is life-saving and should be regarded as a serious matter. Don't risk throwing it away just because you *might* get five minutes of fame in the process. Your life isn't worth such a petty gamble.

<https://www.amethystrecovery.org/embracing-eleventh-tradition/>

New Grapevine Mobile Apps are available!

For more info, follow <https://www.aagrapevine.org/apps>

DISTRICT 35 INVITES YOU TO A NINTH STEP FORUM

"Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others."

Come and listen as members share their experiences with our Ninth Step

(And maybe share yours!)

Become inspired and encouraged to take this step.

Alleviate your fears!

MAKING AMENDS

Saturday, November 4th
Peace Lutheran Church
11610 Rubina Place
Waldorf, MD 20602

Forum begins at 12:30 pm
Ends approximately 3:00 pm
Door Prizes

FOOD AND FELLOWSHIP AT NOON

Grapevine materials will be available – make great sobriety birthday and holiday gifts!

Southern Maryland Intergroup Association

START EACH DAY WITH A GRATEFUL HEART

2023 Gratitude Dinner

November 11th, 2023
Doors Open at 5:30 PM

Immaculate Conception Church
28297 Old Village Road
Mechanicsville, MD 20659

Featured Speakers
Jeanine W. and Tom M.

Menu

Appetizers

Smoked Brisket
Garden Salad

Main Course

Fried Oysters
Stuffed Ham
Fried Chicken
Parsley Potatoes
Sweet Potatoes
Yellow and Zucchini Squash Medley
Green Beans
Rolls

Dessert

Cupcakes and Cookies
and Bring a Dessert to share

Entertainment

Hometown
Karaoke and DJ

50/50 Raffle
Door Prizes

"Gratitude is the sweetest thing in a seekers life - in all human life. If there is gratitude in your heart, then there will be tremendous sweetness in your eyes."

Tickets

\$25 per person

For Ticket Information, E-Mail the event chair at the following address
gratitude.dinner@somdaa.org



AREA 29 MULTI DISTRICT
ELECTION YEAR TRAINING EVENT

General Service

BRING THE HEAT AND A HEART FOR SERVICE

CHILI COOK-OFF

Sunday 11/5/2023

2:30-5:00 PM

Hot Prizes for the best chili!

WHICH DISTRICT CAN MAKE THE BEST CHILI

St Stephens Church, 901 Courtney Road, Halethorpe, MD

GSR & DCM TRAINING

\$5
SUGGESTED

ENTRY DEADLINE 11/2/23

CONTACT 410-949-6456 TO ENTER

CO-HOSTED BY ACCESSIBILITIES & DISTRICT18@MARYLANDAA.ORG

IN-PERSON SPANISH AND ASL INTERPRETATION PROVIDED

Southern Maryland's 13th Annual Roundup

with Al-Anon participation

24 Hours a Day

DoubleTree by Hilton
Annapolis, Maryland

March 15-17, 2024



SPEAKERS

Pam H. Amherst, OH
Robert M. Columbus, OH
Lisa L. Boyton Beach, FL
Harold L. St. Louis, MO

Carole C. Columbus, OH
Kelly C. Columbus, OH
John E. Nashville, TN
Al Anon: Teresa S. Clinton, MD

"FAITH HAS TO WORK TWENTY-FOUR HOURS A DAY IN AND THROUGH US, OR WE PERISH." -BB, pg. 16

Fall 2023 **CONTRA** Study

September 14, 2023 through December 28, 2023
Thursdays from 9:00 PM to 10:00 PM Eastern Time (US/Canada)
Moderated by Trusted Servants from Area 29 (Maryland) & Area 13 (DC)

Zoom Meeting ID: 814 7038 7175

Passcode: 195173

Dial-in number for phone callers: +1 (301) 715-8592

We invite all A.A. members to this virtual study of the
CONcepts, **TRAD**itions & *The A.A. Service Manual*

Sep 14, 2023 – Registration & Orientation

Sep 21, 2023 – Traditions 1, 2 & 3

Sep 28, 2023 – Traditions 4, 5 & 6

Oct 5, 2023 – Traditions 7, 8 & 9

Oct 12, 2023 – Traditions 10, 11 & 12

Oct 19, 2023 – Service Manual, pp. I-VIII, 1-6, 85-104

Oct 26, 2023 – Svc Man Ch 1 2 3 & pp 105-14, 160-2

Nov 2, 2023 – Svc Man, Chapters 4 5 6 & pp 164-8

Nov 9, 2023 – Svc Man, Chapters 7 8 9 & pp 169-73

Nov 16, 2023 – Svc Man Ch 10 11 12 & pp 155-9, 163

Nov 23, 2023 – Service Manual, pp. 115-154

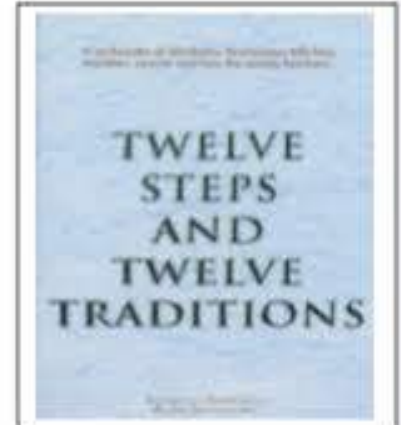
Nov 30, 2023 – Concepts pp I-VIII, C1-C2, Con 1 2 3

Dec 7, 2023 – Concepts 4, 5 & 6

Dec 14, 2023 – Concepts 7, 8 & 9

Dec 21, 2023 – Concepts 10 & 11

Dec 28, 2023 – Concept 12



CONTRA Study Materials (provided via email following registration):

Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, B-2 (free participant download at www.aa.org)

The A.A. Service Manual combined with The Twelve Concepts for World Service, BM-31, 2021-2023 edition

AA Grapevine Traditions Checklist, July 2018 revision

Fall 2023 CONTRA Study Service Manual Questions

A.A.W.S. Concepts Checklist, SMF-91, 08/18 edition

We will cover approximately three chapters of reading material per week, with associated questions. Only those who have read the assignment and have written answers to the weekly questions will be invited to read their answers to the group. All others are welcome to join the meeting and listen.

Presented by Districts 10 & 17, Area 29 (MD)

and District 2, Area 13 (DC)

For more information, contact:

2023contrastudy@gmail.com

SMIA Meeting Minutes

October 14, 2023

Opening: Katherine L. opened with the Serenity Prayer.

Board Members present:

Katherine L. – Vice Chair, Rob A. – Parliamentarian and Kristi P. – Secretary

Groups & Committees Represented:

Ray C. – Never Too Late, Paul S. – Cove Point, Bill L – Sunderland/Bookstall, Bruce O. – Waldorf, Amanda W. – ODDAT, Jamie R.- North Beach, Roy B. – Solomons, Lorraine J. – Bedouin, Pat S. - Charlotte Hall, Scott A. – Basic Text, Duke R. – Basic Text, Todd M. – St. Charles Step, Nathan H. – Waldorf

SMIA Chair Report: Buddy F. not available due to attendance at the Intergroup Liaison Committee Conference for Area 29 in Cincinnati.

Vice-Chair Report: No report

Secretary Report: Read by Kristi P. – September 2023 minutes were accepted as read.

Treasurer Report: 8/25/23 – 9/24/23 report provided was accepted as read. Total assets \$11,859.00. The Treasurer’s Report is available on-line at <https://somidintergroup.org/finance.html>

Committee Reports

Archives: No report

By-Laws Committee: No report

Lifeline: Going well

Phone Report: No report

Serenity Breakfast: No update

Gratitude Dinner: Scheduled for November 11th at Immaculate Conception. Everything is moving along. There will be another committee meeting on October 25th.

Flyers available online.

Corrections and Treatment:

Charles County – no update. Anchor – Tuesdays (6 volunteers), RCA every day except Sunday, Jude House – every Wednesday. Calvert County-good group of women trained, Mark is doing an amazing job. Avenues Mondays and Thursday meetings continue as reported previously. Corrections—detention center orientations are held twice a year, next round of orientations will be next February. Men’s meetings on first and third Wednesdays; Women’s meetings on second and fourth Wednesdays. St. Mary’s – no update. Still only 2 meetings per month through July and no women’s meetings. Paul is participating in Bridging the Gap, has 2 clients, he has reached out to one. Provides reminders of different types of meetings, etc. Buddy has Bridging the Gap cards that you can scan and other information. Will have copies at the next meeting

PI/CPC: no update.

Web Report - 9/9/23-10/14/23

Total Visitors (initial visit)	3333– up 31%
5 Most Frequently visited pages	Home Page – 3492
	Where and When Calendar- 397
	Where and When Search - 313
	Minutes - 268
	On-Line Meetings - 179
Referring Sites	Direct
	Others
	Search Engines – Google, Duck-DuckGo, Yahoo

Bookstall Report – Bill L. - 9/9/23-10/14/23

There were 891 visits to the On-Line Bookstall since the September meeting. There were 10 orders since the last meeting; 6 are processing and 4

were completed

Completed orders totaled \$633.75

Bookstall orders from World Services totaled \$603.36

Site Updates and Changes

No significant changes this month.

Meeting Change Information

The Upon Awakening Group at The Great recovery Lounge increased to two additional meetings, now meeting Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 8:00 AM.

Meeting Status

Currently there are 133 meetings in our service area; 122 meetings are in-person, 7 meetings are hybrid, 6 meetings are on-line only, and 5 meetings are reported as suspended. Of those 4, 1 has an on-line presence.

Document Posts and Updates

Mobile App 2023 4.10 released – 9/30/23

Lifeline posted – 9/29/23

Finance Page updated – 9/26/23

Minutes posted – 9/19/23

Where and When: no report

Old Business – none

New Business – District 35 is holding a 9th Step Workshop on 11/4 at Peace Lutheran from 8-12:30. District 36 is holding a Four Angles of Sponsorship Workshop on 11/18 from 5-9 at Immaculate Conception. Will have 3 speakers, food and beverage. In need of volunteers. SMIA will be holding a Workshop on the History of AA. Voted and approved motion to hold workshop on 2/24/24. Discussed review of prudent reserve per the bylaws. Tabled until Treasurer is available to discuss.

For the Good of the Order – Paul S. left a laptop at the Jude House to allow for clients to meet via zoom

Meeting adjourned with the Responsibility Pledge and the Lord’s Prayer.

“Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.”

November 2023

Southern Maryland Intergroup Association Inc Treasury Report

**Monthly Contributions:
\$226.50**

www.somdintergroup.org/contribute
SMIA, PO Box 767, Charlotte Hall, MD 20622

**Southern Maryland Intergroup Association Inc
Statement of Financial Position
September 25, 2023 - October 24, 2023**

Assets

Primary Business Checking	5,075.69
Prudent Reserve	6,300.74
PayPal	184.91
Bookstall Cash on hand	100.00

Total Assets 11,661.34

Expenses

Bookstall	(615.45)
Liability Insurance	
Lifeline Printing	(113.46)
Misc	
Phone Answering Service	(25.10)
PO Box Rental	
Rent	(150.00)
Webmaster	
Website Maintenance	(112.57)
Where and When	

Total Expenses (\$1,016.58)

**Southern Maryland Intergroup Association Inc
Yearly Statement of Activity
May 1, 2023 - Apr 30, 2024**

Revenue

Contributions	2,978.61
Bookstall	1,750.80
Gratitude Dinner	
Serenity Breakfast	

Total Revenue 4,729.41

Expenses

Bookstall	(2,694.28)
Liability Insurance	(273.00)
Lifeline Printing	(609.46)
Misc	(380.00)
Phone Answering Service	(149.95)
PO Box Rental	(114.00)
Rent	(900.00)
Webmaster	(930.00)
Website Maintenance	(299.86)
Where and When	

Total Expenses (\$6,350.55)

Annual Net Assets (1,621.14)

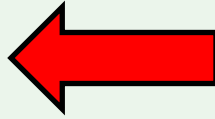
WHERE DO WE SEND OUR CONTRIBUTIONS?

1) All contributions can be made online:
www.somdintergroup.org/donate.php

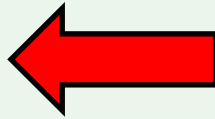
2) Or they can be mailed to the appropriate office location:

*****PLEASE NOTE THAT GSO AND MARYLAND GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE ADDRESSES HAVE CHANGED*****

**General Service Office
 Post Office Box 2407
 James A Farley Station
 New York, NY 10116-2407**



**Maryland General Service Inc.
 P.O. Box 207
 Benson, MD. 21018**



**Southern Maryland Intergroup (SMIA)
 P.O. Box 767
 Charlotte Hall, MD 20622**

**District 1 Trust Fund (Calvert)
 P.O. Box 234
 Barstow, MD 20610**

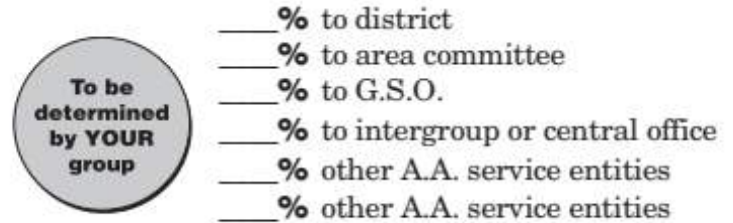
**District 35 (Charles)
 P.O. Box 1981
 La Plata, MD 20646**

**District 36 (St. Mary's)
 P.O. Box 1334
 California, MD 20619**

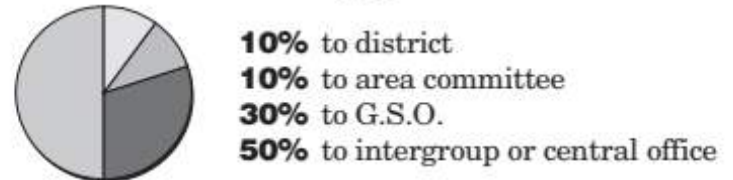
Samples of Group Contributions to A.A. Service Entities*

Distribution Plan of _____
 (YOUR GROUP NAME)

Your Group Service # _____
 (Be sure to write group name and service # on all contributions.)

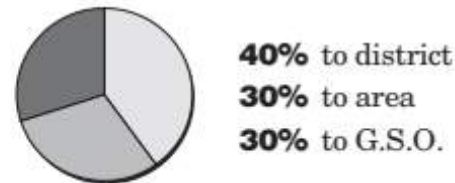


OR



OR

If you have no intergroup/central office.



ATTENTION GROUP TREASURERS:

****Remember to include the 6-digit GSO Group Number on all correspondence to Maryland General Service.***

DISTRICT 35 - CHARLES CO.

**Please come out and join us
at our next District Meeting -
the first Thursday of the
month @ 7pm**

**Peace Lutheran Church
11610 Rubina Place
Waldorf MD 20602**

**Mailing address:
PO Box 1981, La Plata,
MD 20646**

NEW BOOKSTALL HOURS:

First and Third Thursday of the
month 6:00pm - 6:45pm
Second Saturday of the month 9am - 10am

**DISTRICT 1
CALVERT COUNTY**

**SERVICE
OPPORTUNITIES**

- **Accessibility Chair**
- **Grapevine Rep**

District Meeting:

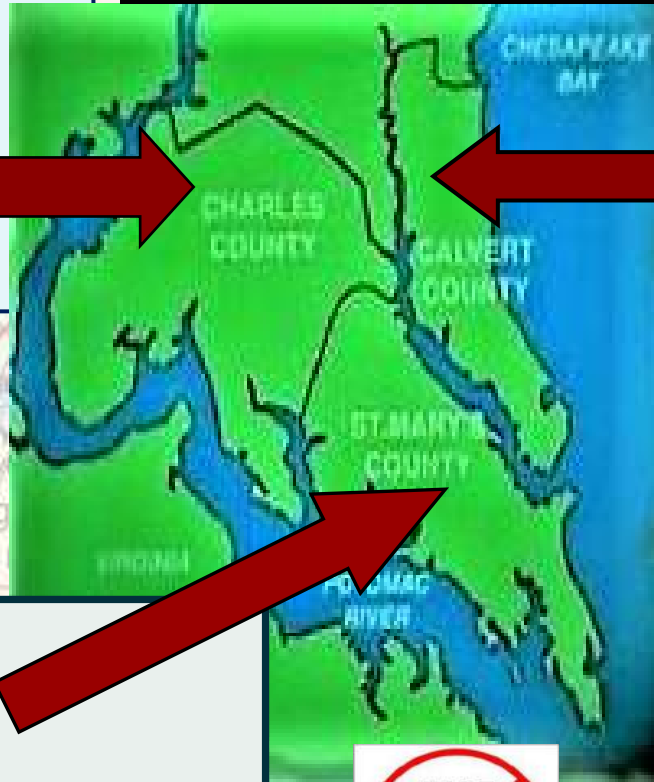
**7 PM, 3rd Monday
St. Paul's Episc.
Church**

**Prince Frederick, MD
District 1 Trust Fund**

PO Box 234

Barstow, MD 20610

www.calvertaa.org



**SERVICE KEEPS US
SOBER**

DISTRICT 36

ST. MARY'S COUNTY

PO Box 1334, California, MD 20619

www.district36mdaa.com



DISTRICT NOTES

The next SMIA Meeting will be held on

Saturday, November 11 10:00 AM

Join us in person @

**Immaculate Conception Church,
28297 Old Village Road, Mechanicsville, MD
20659**

Or via Zoom @

**[https://zoom.us/j/99982597908?](https://zoom.us/j/99982597908?pwd=QzVLcUZrVHdacFlrYUNZN21tdkluQT09)
[pwd=QzVLcUZrVHdacFlrYUNZN21tdkluQT09](https://zoom.us/j/99982597908?pwd=QzVLcUZrVHdacFlrYUNZN21tdkluQT09)**

**Please send any up-
dates for the Where &
When to:
[smia.whereandwhen@
somdaa.org](mailto:smia.whereandwhen@somdaa.org)**

**Current meeting guides
are available at the
monthly SMIA meeting
on a limited basis.**

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

THE DEADLINE FOR ALL LIFELINE SUBMISSIONS IS THE 27th OF EACH MONTH.



The spiritual substance of anonymity is sacrifice. Because A.A.'s Twelve Traditions repeatedly ask us to give up personal desires for the common good, we realize that the sacrificial spirit - well symbolized by anonymity - is the foundation of them all. It is A.A.'s proved willingness to make these sacrifices that gives people their high confidence in our future. [https://](https://www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie/)

www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie/

“There is, however, a vast amount of fun about it all. I suppose some would be shocked at our seeming worldliness and levity.”

RECOVERY COACH BARNEY FIFE

LET'S GO OVER OUR RELAPSE PREVENTION PLAN...

ARE YOU KEEPING SECRETS? NIP THAT IN THE BUD.

ARE YOU ISOLATING? NIP IT IN THE BUD.

ARE YOU SKIPPING MEETINGS? NIP IT! NIP IT IN THE BUD.



Lord of Laughter - com

“Our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern.”

Our primary purpose is to help the still suffering alcoholic. SMIA is committed to this principle and provides a 24x7 Telephone Service. We need phone volunteers! Go to our website, www.somdintergroup.org. Click on the Phone List link, complete the online form - this is a secure method to add your name to the 12-Step Call List. This protected information is only shared with the Phone Committee Chair. You will be amazed before you're half way through.

It must never be forgotten that the purpose of Alcoholics Anonymous is to sober up alcoholics. There is no religious or spiritual requirement for membership. No demands are made on anyone. An experience is offered which members may accept or reject. That is up to them.

— Bill W. —

QUOTES



RECOVERY.

You must be present to win.

SMIA SERVICE TEAM:

- Chair: Buddy F.
- Vice Chair: Katherine L.
- Secretary: Kristi P.
- Treasurer: Rebecca B.
- Parliamentarian: Rob A.
- Where & When: Pat P.
- Lifeline: Keith H.
- Telephone: Melissa W.
- Digital/Written Media: Bill L.
- Archives: John Z.

The Lifeline is an unofficial newsletter published by Southern Maryland Intergroup Association, Inc. Any opinions expressed are those of the writers. They are not endorsed by SMIA, any group or AA as a whole. Group secretaries and individuals are encouraged to send group news, anniversaries and events. Material may be edited for space and content. Please send all Lifeline correspondence to: somdlifeline@gmail.com