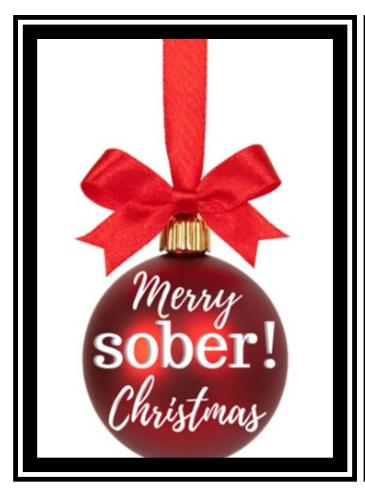


# **South Jersey Intergroup Announcements**

If you have anything you would like to share - send it to <a href="MEWSLETTER@AASJ.ORG">NEWSLETTER@AASJ.ORG</a>

Wed Dec 4 - MENS annual dinner will take place at Adelphia's 1750 Clements Bridge Rd. Deptford from 6pm - 11pm \$45 donation for more info call Jack: 856-456-5909

Sat Jan 18 - Woodstown Grp will celebrate their 70th anniversary FFF 5pm eat 6pm speakers Catholic Community of Holy Spirit Parish Ctr 2 Lamplighter Dr Woodstown donations welcomed.





# **INSIDE OUR NOVEMBER/DECEMBER ISSUE**

1 & 2	South Jersey Intergroup Announcements
3	Help Wanted/Printable Meeting List
4	Step 11
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10	. One of the Best Promises
11	. Sitting in Silence, Listening
12 & 13	Stories Like Mine
14	Word Search - Steps to Recovery
15 & 16	. Fellowship Events

# PRINTABLE MEETING LIST ARE NOW AVAILABLE

South Jersey Intergroup Association of

# **Alcoholics Anonymous**

24 Hour Telephone Hotline (856) 486-4444

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2514 Cherry Hill, NJ 08034
Office Location:1000 White Horse Rd. Suite 702 Voorhees, NJ 08043
Office & Literature Phone: (856) 486-4446
For Literature Sales Hours, call or visit aasj.org/literature

Our Meeting List is constantly updating.
Use the QR CODE below to see the most up-to-date
Meetings or Find a ZOOM Link.

SCAN QR HERE



Answering Service 12-step list: More volunteers are need for the 12-step list. Signup sheets available for anyone wishing to take a copy to their home groups. Contact the Answering service. answeringservice@aasj.org.



SJ Intergroup is looking for your personal recovery stories to be published in our by-monthly newsletter. If you are interested in sharing your story, we would love to hear from you. Your story needs to be a maximum of 500 words and can be published anonymously, if you prefer. If

you have any questions, or would like to submit your story, please send

Sobriety isn't easy, but neither is living with the shame & guilt caused by drinking.

MY GREATEST ACT OF SELF-LOVE WAS THE DAY I BROKE UP WITH ALCOHOL.

# **Step Eleven**

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

Step 11 of AA is meant to deepen your spiritual foundation by establishing a daily practice of prayer, meditation, or other connection to your Higher Power. It's also a reminder of your commitment to turning your life and will over to that larger governing force.

One of the biggest tenets of Alcoholics Anonymous' ethos is that your connection to your spiritual guide is what will keep you strong in your sobriety. As the <u>Big Book states</u>, "There is a direct linkage among self-examination, meditation, and prayer... when they are logically related and interwoven, the result is an unshakeable foundation for life."

AA Step 11 formalizes the routine of making conscious contact with your higher power through a practice of your choice. For many, this is daily prayer and communication with the power you've identified as greater than yourself. The act of routinely checking in with God as you understand Him keeps you rooted in the process of honesty, humility, and acceptance that you've established throughout the 12-step journey.

Yet, there's more to AA Step 11 than just meditation or prayer. It's also another siren call for humility. Often, prayer can be a very selfish endeavor—we pray for things that we want or situations to go our way. Even when we pray for the benefit or health of others, we're still asking God to bend His will to our own.

Step 11 ensures that we're not putting our egos at the forefront of our spiritual relationship. Instead, all we ask is for the awareness to recognize our higher power's will for us and the strength to listen and act accordingly. Just as we exhibited the

humility to admit our wrongdoings, we must again have the grace to set aside our own wants for our greater spiritual good.

There's a good chance you already began praying or meditating at the beginning of your 12-step journey. But it's easy for this practice to slip from day to day or even fall off entirely as life gets in the way. Step 11's placement near the end of the 12 Steps of AA is a reminder to consistently come back to your spiritual practice, especially if it's fallen by the wayside. You may find that your daily conversations with God or your higher power are what help keep you moving forward through your sober life.

# **SOBRIETY**

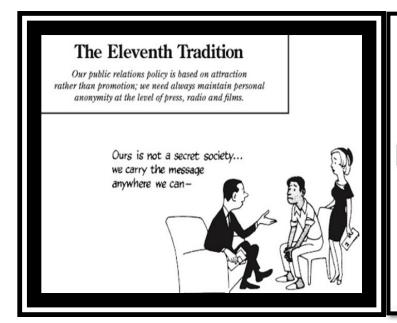
Whether you have one day or one thousand days, you are an inspiration.

You have one day that someone else hasn't reached yet.

YOUR EXAMPLE CAN CHANGE LIVES.

# **Tradition 11- Long Form**

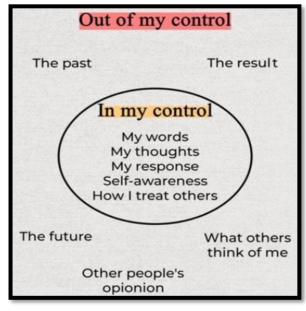
Our relations with the general public should be characterized by personal anonymity. We think A.A. should avoid sensational advertising. Our names and pictures as A.A. members ought not be broadcast, filmed, or publicly printed. Our public relations should be guided by the principle of attraction rather than promotion. There is never need to praise ourselves. We feel it better that our friends recommend us.



I am so thankful for my sober date. It could have easily been the date on my tombstone.

# **Concept 11 - Long Form**

While the Trustees hold final responsibility for A.A.'s world service administration, they should always have the assistance of the best possible standing committees, corporate service directors, executives, staffs, and consultants. Therefore the composition of these underlying committees and service boards, the personal qualifications of their members, the manner of their induction into service, the systems of their rotation, the way in which they are related to each other, the special rights and duties of our executives, staffs, and consultants, together with a proper basis for the financial compensation of these special workers, will always be matters for serious care and concern.





# **Step Twelve**

"Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs".

# AA STEP 12: SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

The concept of "spiritual awakening" has many meanings. Keeping it simple, a spiritual awakening is really just a psychic change that, among other things, eliminates our obsession to drink. For some it can be quite a powerful and immediate experience, for others it is an ongoing co-current part of working the 12 steps.

The co-founder of AA, Bill W. mentions in his autobiography that for him it was a sudden, strong "white light" and life-changing event: "I stood upon a summit where a great wind blew. A wind not of air, but of spirit. In great, clean strength it blew right through me. Then came the blazing thought, 'You are a free man.'"

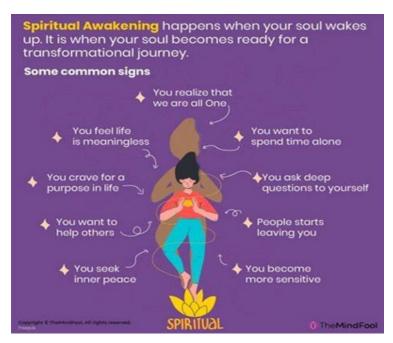
It gives me chills every time I read that, because after that moment, Bill never took another drink. Thanks to him there are many more free men and women today. For most of us, the "aha" moments, that may not be a white light, are regular events and part of the spiritual awakening that happens over time in a subtle and gradual way.

### AA STEP 12: CARRYING THE MESSAGE

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

The second part of the 12th step is about carrying the message of recovery to other people. This is not because AA is a cult, it's because "we keep what we have by giving it away." To keep it simple, when we work with others, our lives change. So, we don't help another alcoholic because they're sick—we help another alcoholic because we are sick, and part of our recovery is that we need to be helping others.

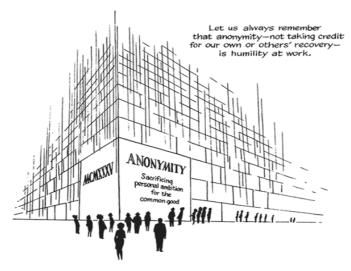




# **Tradition 12 - Long Form**

"Twelve – 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.

# The Twelfth Tradition Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.



# MOST OF US IN EARLY RECOVERY

# **CONCEPT 12**

## **Short Form:**

"The Conference shall observe the spirit of A.A. tradition, taking care that it never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds and reserve be its prudent financial principle; that it place none of its members in a position of unqualified authority over others; that it reach all important decisions by discussion, vote, and whenever possible, substantial unanimity; that its actions never be personally punitive nor an incitement to public controversy; that it never perform acts of government; that, like the Society it serves, it will always remain democratic in thought and action."

# RED FLAGS HGNORED WHEN I STILL DRANK:

- hiding bottles & empties
- drinking any time of the day
- continuing until blackout.
- prioritizing booze over everything
- picking high aby drinks I don't enjoy
- calling into work from hangovers
- always breaking moderation tactics
- daily dread until I pour a glass

# **LEARNING TO GIVE IT AWAY**

By: Bob T. | Washington

Sponsorship was missing in my attempts at permanent recovery for more than 10 years in and out of A.A. When I came back almost nine years ago, I did not know what to do to stop drinking. I didn't know where to begin, except to ask for help. I didn't know how to work the Twelve Steps of A.A., moreover how to apply their underlying principles to my life. I did not know how to find that working relationship with God that the Big Book promised would solve all of my problems. I didn't even know what I didn't know, or that I didn't know!

I was given a sponsor in the recovery house that I spent six months in. The first thing he did was tell me I never had to drink again—and I believed him. He then gave me a list of things he wanted me to do every single day—and that would be the topic of our daily phone calls. I did those things, which included working the Steps as they are laid out in the first 164 pages of the Big Book—one sentence at a time.

I would call him daily, and usually the first thing out of my mouth was how horrible my life was, and how badly I was feeling, and how my wife and children hated me, and I would never find another job again, and, and. He would ask me what I read today, what meeting I went to, what I heard, and who I had helped. He wouldn't directly respond to my whining. He would ask questions that had no bearing on my situation, like "Have I considered if I was being selfish? Dishonest? Resentful? Fearful? Inconsiderate?

I realized months later what he was doing—he was re-directing my attention away from what I thought was my problem, to what was the solution to my real problem.

# "TODAY IS THE TOMORROW I WORRIED ABOUT YESTERDAY"

### Learning to Give it Away....continued

I do not believe that sponsors are infallible—but nothing my sponsor has asked me to do has ever harmed me (sometimes it hurt!). What using a sponsor does is demonstrate to myself both surrender and faith; Surrendering the right to run my life all by myself, and the Faith that God will use this person to help me find His will. I used to tell my sponsor that he saved my life—and he would have none of that. One day after saying that to him he replied, "Bob, I have been sponsoring six men for the past year, and you are the only one staying sober."

Let's look at the flip side of the sponsorship concept—sponsoring others. The first sentence in the chapter "Working With Others" says "Practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics." The first sentence in Chapter 12 of the Twelve and Twelve says, "The joy of living is the theme of AA's Twelfth Step and action is the key word."

After working the Fifth Step, the manager of the recovery house I was in assigned two guys new to the recovery house to me. I was to take them through the book just like my sponsor did with me. So with three months sobriety I was helping guys go through the book, and that I believe is the difference in my sobriety today.

I had been in Federal Way, Wash., only a few months, was divorced, living with my Dad, and had just started a new job. It was Christmas time I had a very bad case of the blues. I thought about drinking almost every Friday afternoon for a while. At a meeting, my sponsor Pat introduced me to a man from DuPont—he was in a wheelchair. He had been hit by a car carrying a Christmas tree across town while drunk. He lived in a tiny, bare bones apartment and his wife and children would have nothing to do with him. Working with this man lifted me up out of my self-manufactured misery and I had a good Christmas.

# One of the best promises in the book is on page 100:

"Both you and the new man must walk day by day in the path of spiritual progress. If you persist, remarkable things will happen. When we look back, we realize that the things which came to us when we put ourselves in God's hands were better than anything we could have planned. Follow the dictates of a higher power and you will presently live in a new and wonderful world, no matter what your present circumstances!"

I am thrilled to watch guys I sponsor and many others come in to AA broken and hopeless, and in a few short years going out into the highways and bi-ways and bringing the good news of AA to suffering alcoholics. As a sponsor, I get my greatest joy in AA out of two things:

- 1. When a sponsee calls, and instead of running down their list of problems, they talk about their sponsees, and how to help them with their current problems—even though I know that my sponsee is going through a tough time—it has lost its hold on them while working with others.
- 2. When a scared newcomer walks into the meeting, followed by your sponsee who has brought him in. It's not the look of horror on the newcomer's face that is amusing, but the look of sheer glee on the face of your sponsee who brought him in!! That is priceless.

It is in sponsorship that I have finally found the missing ingredient in my life: A sense of a well-defined purpose. We, as alcoholics, are uniquely fitted for this great work of mercy to our society. And we do it one soul at a time

Recently one my home groups founding members passed away—and what a testimony it was of a life well spent, working for the sake of others. For we all know, in the end, we won't be remembered for our possessions, or job titles, or even our golf scores, but we will be remembered for how well we have loved. And that is at the heart of what sponsorship really is.

### TWISTED - Stinking Thinkin'

- Let me alone, I will do it my way.
- Don't bug me about getting a job.
- I'm not that bad. I never did that.
- It never gets any better I can't drink for the rest of my life.
- I only wanted one drink

### TRUTHS—Sober Thinkin'

- Live and Let Live.
- First Things First.
- But for the Grace of God.
- One Day at a Time.
- Think, Think, Think.

# Sitting in Silence, Listening - Linda I.—EL GRANADA, CALIF.

In early sobriety it was suggested to me that I think of prayer as talking to God and meditation as listening. That idea took hold. I sobered up in 1972; in 1984 I learned how to meditate at a Catholic retreat center, under a priest who had spent 25 years in Japan studying Zen Buddhism. That was my introduction to the practice of meditation, and it took.

In 1985 I was down and out with chronic fatigue, so I began a meditation meeting in my home, mostly to get me up and out of bed. My group, mostly local women alcoholics, met from 7 to 7:30 A.M., Monday through Friday. There was no talking. It was just sitting in silence, listening, for 30 minutes. At 7:30 I'd gong a gong and we'd all stand in a circle and bow, using the word Namaste, which means "I honor the divine in you." They'd leave and I'd go back to bed.

It's now years later and I'm into my sixth year of healing from chronic fatigue. I believe that there's a touch of good in every single thing. The biggest gift of living with chronic fatigue for 19 years is that I became dedicated to meditation-to listening to God-and I learned how to quiet my mind. The morning meditation ended a few years ago, but a Wednesday night meditation group continues. The best gift of meditation, from my perspective, is that I've been introduced to the Spirit of the Universe by experiencing it in the very breath that I breathe. I love that God is available to all equally, that he's all about love, and that some of us experience that source of love by simply practicing the AA principles in all our affairs.

# **Stories Like Mine**

I used to believe I was living my life, going out, laughing & having fun, but it was always with a drink in my hand and it definitely wasn't fun the next day.

I would promise myself a limit and set myself a target so I would be sensible. I'd even be pleased with myself on the rare occasions of organizing lifts home, but all that did was give me the green light to drink more.

I tried cutting down, moderating, changing drinks, and not drinking during the week ..blah blah. You name it, I tried it. I explored every possible way to keep the balance, but none of it worked. The thought of not drinking made me feel lost, and even angry about why I couldn't drink like everybody else.

I never thought I could enjoy nights out, nights in, social events or just LIFE without alcohol in it somewhere.

How would I be confident enough to chat, dance, or meet new people, and would everyone think I'm boring because I'm not drinking anymore??

But it's not until you remove alcohol that you realize life becomes BETTER than you could have ever imagined. You start to understand more about yourself as the layers unpeel, and you start to see what life is truly about and smashing down alcohol like it's going out of fashion isn't one of them anymore.

Total freedom from hangovers, remorse, guilt and embarrassment is a life I grab with both hands now.

You don't have to be at rock bottom to look at your relationship with alcohol, but I know that for me it was only a matter of time. I'm truly grateful that I removed alcohol & turned my life around. I'm not saying it's easy but it's sure is worth it!!

My journey from drinking every weekend (and a lot during the week) for 7 years to going 7 months alcohol free has been challenging, but so rewarding.

I use to love to drink and party, and part of me still does and wants to drive to the liquor store, crack open a beer, and catch a buzz.

Not going to lie, seeing old photos and videos of me is hard for me in a few different ways. I miss my old life. I look at this girl and I'm completely different.....but the same. And as I see old videos and pictures, I feel sad for how lost, lonely, and hurting I was.

My life looked different from those pictures, but I promise you it was far from. Struggles in my relationship, who I was, and where I was going in life were drowning me.

I look at her and want to give her the biggest hug and tell her that everything is going to be alright. Because here I am today, so much stronger, brighter, and fuller. I can look back now and thank her for never giving up ,even though she wanted to.

I am exhausted, I have been awake since midnight. I had drinks yesterday and of course, I fell asleep/ passed out at around 9. Then of course, the booze woke me up and I could not fall back asleep at all. Getting out of bed at 6am this morning to start my day was and is horrible. I look like crap. I have this awful cough, probably from being dehydrated. I have to take my dog for his morning walk and I barely had the energy to get my coat on, but I did it. I have been, since midnight, beating myself up over it, again and again. I have BEEN HERE so many times. So many times at Day 1 again! This is beyond ridiculous because I know how toxic this behavior is, and as much as I think I can moderate my drinking, I CAN'T! And you know what else I was doing beside beating myself up over it?? The devil in my head was saying "Oh my God, how are you going to be able to get through the next day without having a drink....or the weekend....or the whatever." Seriously!! What in the is in this drug, does it completely turn us into zombies so we can't think properly anymore? Stupid question, yes it pretty much does! I am so tired of this and yet, my brain still says go have another one, have another one...after being awake all night and feeling like how I do! Uggghhh...but I am NOT going to give up, I am picking my tired butt back on Day1 and I am just hoping at SOME point something kicks in and I just say I am FINISHED!

"When all the little things really bug me, it's because there's a big thing I'm not facing."

'Irritable restless, and discontent—that is my normal state as an alcoholic. Going to meetings, working the Steps, and praying and relying on my Higher Power are the ways I get restored to sanity. By doing so, I actually achieve some peace and serenity. But even when I am in a calm space, if little things still bother me, I now know to look beyond my alcoholism.'

'It's amazing how my first instinct these days, even with considerable time in the program, is to deny or ignore things that are uncomfortable in my life. It's been my experience that not facing what at first appears to be no big deal often turns it into one and quickly makes my life unmanageable. And the first warning I've done this is when all the little things (stuck in traffic, misplacing my keys, a line at the market) start to really bother me.'

"Today, I've learned to acknowledge these things and recognize them for what they are: indications that there is something bigger that I'm not facing. A soon as I take the time to look at what's really going on, I immediately begin to feel better. And once I begin to apply the tools I've been given in this program to deal with whatever is going on, I find that it really isn't such a big deal after all. Today, I use the little things to help me become aware of and to deal with the big things."

Getting sober, meant I had to learn to love myself, instead of wanting to escape myself.

# WORD SEARCH

# Steps to Recovery

XGVD CGQFYGV Q W х т AUAMS G D . ZWMO R Q В S C S D RWMO S A S ν U E A J z H R C L N N EMRXAC 0 A R S C ν Y N EΥ D U S N E UTZ D L UΚ R G U G L Х E E G ı т C М K W Н G E ERZ т U т z TEGV х SY ν TKC т G ı NGAW D S QRNV EX Р т н В В EZM Q U O RLOO D ERC EYWC D В EX т R G HAL T S IDEHTGNERTSQDCECIMN

higher power experience awakening addiction strength confide halt consequences inventory admitting guidance recovery choices hope

committment surrender counselor serenity service share willingness forgiving gratitude humility sponsor sober

# Fall 2024 CONTRA Study

September 10, 2024 through December 17, 2024 Tuesdays from 9:00 PM to 10:00 PM Eastern Time (US/Canada)

Moderated by Trusted Servants from Areas 13 (DC), 29 (Maryland) & 45 (Southern New Jersey)



Zoom Meeting ID: 847 4641 4040 Passcode: 330331

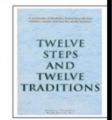
Dial-in number for phone callers: +1 (301) 715-8592

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

> Sep 10, 2024 – Registration & Orientation Sep 17, 2024 – Traditions 1, 2 & 3 Sep 24, 2024 – Traditions 4, 5 & 6 Oct 1, 2024 – Traditions 7, 8 & 9

Oct 8, 2024 – Traditions 10, 11 & 12
Oct 15, 2024 – Service Manual, pp. I-VIII, 1-6, 85-104
Oct 22, 2024 – Svc Man Ch 1 2 3 & pp 105-14, 160-2
Oct 29, 2024 – Svc Man, Chapters 4 5 6 & pp 164-8
Nov 5, 2024 – Svc Man, Chapters 7 8 9 & pp 169-73
Nov 12, 2024 – Svc Man Ch 10 11 12 & pp 155-9, 163
Nov 19, 2024 – Service Manual, pp. 115-154
Nov 26, 2024 – Concepts pp I-VIII, C1-C2, Con 1 2 3

Dec 3, 2024 – Concepts 4, 5 & 6 Dec 10, 2024 – Concepts 7, 8 & 9 Dec 17, 2024 – Concepts 10,11 & 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 2024 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 Trusted Servants from

Areas 13 (DC), 29 (Maryland) & 45 (Southern New Jersey)
For more information, contact:
2024contrastudy@pmail.com



~ Save the Date ~ March 14 -16, 2025 The Claridge Hotel, Atlantic City NJ



July 3rd - 6th 2025

Areas 44 & 45 Ad-Hoc Committee for 2025 International Convention Hospitality Suite are looking for Service Volunteers!!

MEETING INFO

7 PM Every Last Thursday Of Odd Months

ID: 833 5908 4488 PW: 0540445 Donations are needed to make our Areas 44 & 45 Hospitality Suite a great event. We need donations to help cover the expenses of Archives Transportation, Refreshments & Souvenirs. SCAN

QR CODE

Donation

Options



All Donations Are Separate from 7th Tradition Contributions

Please Display Donation Cans @ Your Home Group & District Events Any questions? Contact: Mike R. at 2025-ICHS-Chair@ njarea44.org Roy C. at archives@snjaa.org SOUTH JERSEY INTERGROUP YOUNG
PEOPLES OF AA

JOIN US FOR THE MONTHLY BUSINESS
MEETING

SJIYPAA

**COMMITTEE MEETING** 

**EVERY FIRST THURSDAY @7PM** 

# SJ INTERGROUP OFFICE

1000 WHITEHORSE RD VOORHEES, NJ 08043 SUITE 702

OFAA TO GET INVOLVED, HAVE FUN, FELLOWSHIP & BE OF SERVICE

CONTACT BEN C FOR MORE INFO 973-224-6726





# Accessibilities Committee

Planning & Brainstorming

Monthly Meeting

The 3rd Thursday at 7pm

A discussion meeting is being held on the topic of the accessibility needs within Area 45. Anyone can attend. Ideas/suggestions or to request ASL interpretation for this meeting email <a href="mailto:Accessibilities@sniaa.org">Accessibilities@sniaa.org</a> Phone: 609 498 5458

ID 853 5251 2630 Passcode 626374 Join Zoom Meeting

https://us02web.zoom.us/i/85352512630?pwd=MUtjN2tVTkRjL0xyWnc5dWQ5OUVsdz0

# WHAT TO TELL MYSELF WHEN I'M FEELING DISCOURAGED

- This is tough. But so am I.
- I may not be able to control this situation.
   But I am in charge of how I respond.
- 3. I haven't figured this out...yet.
- This challenge is here to teach me something.
- 5. All I need to do is take it one step at a time. Breathe. And do the next right thing.