

Carrying The Message

South Jersey Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous Newsletter

January / February 2026



Steps 1 & 2 • Traditions 1 & 2 • Fellowship & Service

Beginning with Honesty

January brings us back to the beginning — not just of a new year, but of the program itself. Step One asks us to admit powerlessness and to acknowledge when life has become unmanageable. For many of us, this realization was not a single moment, but a gradual understanding that something had to change.

Honesty is the principle that guides this step. Not honesty as self-criticism, but honesty as clarity. It allows us to stop negotiating with reality and begin meeting life as it is.

As we move into February, we are gently introduced to Step Two and its guiding principle, Hope — the willingness to believe that change is possible and that we do not have to face it alone.

This newsletter is offered as a place to find shared experience, practical information, and support from across our Intergroup.

Table of Contents

- 02 Beginning with Honesty (Step One)
- 03 TOC & Intergroup Meetings/ Meeting Updates
- 04 Chair's Letter / Intergroup Announcements
- 05 The Service Spotlight
- 06 Fellowship & Events
- 07 Step 1, Concept 1, and Tradition 1
- 08 Step 2, Concept 2, and Tradition 2
- 09 Help Wanted/ Literature Coupon / Newsletter Submissions
- 10 Meeting Updates/New Meetings, Crossword Puzzle



Intergroup Meetings

Public Information Committee Meeting

01/28/2026
7:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Join Public Information and help share AA's message by distributing literature and resources to the public

South Jersey Intergroup Office
1000 White Horse Rd #702
Voorhees, NJ 08043

South Jersey Intergroup Meeting

01/21/2026
02/18/2026
8:00 pm - 9:00 pm

SJAA Intergroup meeting is a monthly business gathering where representatives from local meetings coordinate essential community services—like maintaining the 24-hour hotline and local meeting lists—to ensure the AA message stays available to anyone seeking help.

St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church
1989 Rt 70 E (Marlton Pike East)
Cherry Hill, NJ
Zoom
ID: 424-122-113, Password: 276748

Cherry Hill Bookers Committee

02/04/26
7:00 pm

Bookers are representatives from AA home groups who book speakers from other AA home groups to speak at their meeting and book speakers from their group to go out to other AA meetings to speak.

St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church
1989 Rt 70 E (Marlton Pike East)
Cherry Hill, NJ

CHAIRPERSON'S MESSAGE



As we begin a new journey through the Steps and Traditions this year, we are also beginning a new rotation of service within our Intergroup. It is a fundamental principle of our program that we serve one another to stay sober ourselves, and leadership is simply another way to give back what was so freely given to us.

We are pleased to introduce our new Intergroup Chairperson, Gina. She brings a heart for service and a deep commitment to the South Jersey fellowship. Below, she shares a few words of welcome and her vision for the year ahead.

As the child of an alcoholic, I thought I knew about the disease and therefore avoided alcohol for most of my life. What I didn't know was that the disease was progressing regardless of whether I was drinking or not. When I started having a glass of wine, while preparing dinner, I instantly became a daily drinker at the age of 36. When reflecting on this I often think of the passage in the Dr's Opinion "once having formed the habit and found they cannot break it, once having lost their self confidence, their reliance upon things human, their problems pile up on them and become astonishingly difficult to solve"

I found myself attending my first AA meeting in 2008 after getting arrested in a blackout. Unfortunately, after 5 months I returned to daily drinking for another 2 years. When I finally returned and started attending meetings regularly, I had a few short relapses before my last drink in April of 2012.

Recovery followed in the traditional method, home group, sponsor and step work. After getting my 10 year coin, my sponsor acknowledged my dedication to service work at the group level, sponsoring women, greeting, coffee commitments, chairing, secretary and treasurer commitments. She then suggested I try some service work below the group level.

I started by getting a time slot on the Hotline, then was asked to be the co- chair and finally chair of the Answering Service. I had also been my home group's GSR and on the Area 45 Budget & Finance committee. When SJIG found itself with a vacancy in the Vice Chair position six months ago, after checking with my service sponsor, I stood up to take the position. Letting go of my other commitments was the hardest part, but in order for this alcoholic to stay in balance, I need to concentrate on one service opportunity at a time.

"I hope to promote both unity and camaraderie among all our volunteers."

It is a privilege and honor to be selected as the SJIG Chairperson for the next 2 years and I hope to promote both unity and camaraderie among all our volunteers. I would like to take this opportunity to send a message of gratitude for all those outgoing committee chairs and steering members. Thank you for your service. It is my belief that SJIG is vital to the local fellowships by providing such necessary services. I encourage all to participate in the many opportunities for service.

Warmly,
Gina H.

The Service Spotlight

Answering the Call with JoAnne D.

"It was a lifeline in my early recovery and continues to help me stay sober 27 years later."



My name is JoAnne and I am an alcoholic. I am currently serving as chairperson of our South Jersey Answering Service, which provides information about AA to those seeking help.

My association with the AA Hotline began 27 years ago when someone came to my home group meeting expressing a need for phone volunteers. I have been involved in one capacity or another ever since. I committed to a weekly time slot and then put my name on the 12th step volunteer list. I also volunteered to oversee time slot commitments my home group had for 13 years.

In the summer of 2023 Gina H., then the co-chair of the Answering Service asked me to attend training on a new call routing system we were switching to and become part of a committee she was forming to bring our service up-to-date.

In an age of endless phone prompts and voicemails it's nice to be able to be that live

person who answers the telephone to help direct a person to a meeting in their area or answer a few questions or just listen. If you can shake a newcomers hand in a meeting and have gone through the steps of recovery, you can be of service on the Hotline. It was a lifeline in my early recovery and continues to help me stay sober 27 years later.

The Service Grid



Scheduling: JoAnne D. & Ben S.

Open Positions

- Manages volunteer time slots and updates phone numbers as necessary using the Access Direct Service system.



Recruiting: Brandon N. & Kirk N.

Open Positions

- Recruiting volunteers at meetings to assist phone volunteers in talking with callers.



Training: JoAnne D. & Kirk K.

- Train new people and distribute resources for phone volunteers to refer to.



Day Captains:

One Open Position: Saturday

- Oversees daily volunteers. Follows up on missed calls and returns them as necessary



Phone Volunteers:

Open Positions: Tier 2

WE NEED YOU!



NEXT TRAINING SESSION

Saturday, 3/14/26 @ 10 AM



SJIG OFFICE or VIRTUAL

1000 White Horse Rd,
Voorhees, NJ.



Ready to help? Email JoAnne at:
answeringservice@asj.org

Fellowship & Events



Red Lion's 45th Anniversary

Monday, February 9th
7:00pm Dinner
8:00pm Speaker
*100 Stokes Road
Medford, NJ 08055*



Recovery Game Night

Saturday, January 24,th
8:30pm
*The 400 Club
42 Berlin Rd,
Clementon, NJ*



Bingo

Saturday, February 24th
8:30pm
*The 400 Club
42 Berlin Rd,
Clementon, NJ*



Atlantic City 60th Area 45 Gen. Service Convention

Fri, March 20 - Sun, March 22, 2026
\$45
*Bally's Conf. Center
1900 Pacific Av.*



Superbowl Watch Party

Sunday, February 8th
6:30pm
*482 Social Hall
6072 N. Crescent Blvd.
Pennsauken, NJ*



Matt Talbot Retreat #57

April 24 - April 26, 2026
Malvern, PA

To learn more or to register visit:
malvernretreat.com/events/matt-talbot-57-2026/



The Northeast Regional AA Service Assembly

February 20-22
2:00pm
*Holiday Inn By the Bay
88 Spring St
Portland, ME 04101*
To learn more or to register visit:
www.NERAASA.com



The Power of We - Cape May Round Up 2026

March 6 @ 12:00pm - March 8 @ 12:00pm
\$40.00 – \$65.00
*The Grand Hotel Cape May
1045 Beach Ave.
Cape May, NJ 08204*
To learn more or to register visit:
aasepia.org/event/round-up-2026/



We Were Reborn - EACYCAA Young People's Convention 2026

March 26 - March 29, 2026
\$40.00 Pre-Registration
*Harrah's Resort
777 Harrah's Blvd.
Atlantic City, NJ 08401*
To learn more or to register visit:
njypaa.org
Contact: Ben C. (973) 224-6726

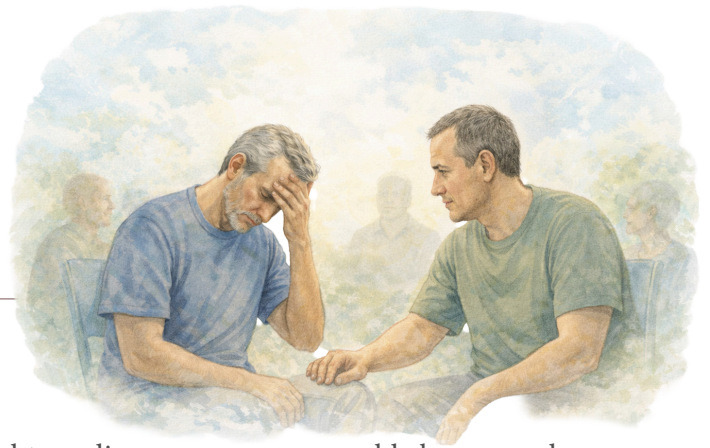


Monthly Fellowship Dinner

First Sunday of the Month
7:00pm
*3rd Step Candlelightt Group of AA
Shore Diner: 6710 Tilton Road, Egg Harbor Twp.*

Step 1

“We admitted we were powerless over alcohol – that our lives had become unmanageable.”



Principle of Step 1: HONESTY

When we first walked into the rooms of A.A., we thought our lives were unmanageable because when we drank, we wound up in strange places, with strange people, in strange positions (some of us – literally). How grateful we were when our sponsor, or other caring members of the Fellowship, helped us fully understand what co-founder, Bill W. meant in *More About Alcoholism* (top of page 35 in the Big Book – 4th Edition) when he said, “So we shall describe some of the mental states that precede a relapse into drinking, for obviously this is the crux of the problem.”

We are grateful that we were helped to understand that our mental states, or our thinking, WAS/IS the crux of our problem. Selfishness/Self-Centeredness! That, we are told, is the root of our troubles (not alcohol). Driven by a hundred forms of fear, self-delusion, self-seeking, and self-pity, we go to the only thing that has proven to provide us the release we seek from these “fleeting forms” – alcohol.

If we ever need proof of our powerlessness over “a seemingly hopeless state of mind and body” (which is one definition of alcoholism), all we have to do is look at the many examples of how our life was unmanageable while drinking – and how it wasn’t the alcohol that made our life unmanageable.

Interesting Side Note: Step 1 is the only step that talks about alcohol. The remainder of the Steps share solutions on how to deal with what the REAL problem is – the noise that lives between my left ear and my right ear (more commonly referred to as our defects of character).

Tradition 1

“Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.”

Principle of Tradition 1: UNITY

"We Before Me". This tradition highlights that true unity begins with an individual’s internal balance and connection to a Higher Power. By applying the Twelve Traditions to all areas of life, recovery expands from personal sobriety into healthy, loving relationships and selfless service. Prioritizing our common welfare ensures we remain connected to the community, transforming the isolation of addiction into a shared life of recovery, unity, and service.

Concept 1

“Final responsibility and ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.”

Principle of Concept 1: RESPONSIBILITY

Alcoholics Anonymous is described as an "upside-down organization" because the ultimate authority and final responsibility for its world services reside within the collective conscience of the individual groups rather than a central board. This structure, rooted in Tradition Two, was established by co-founder Bill W. to ensure that the fellowship's future would be guided by the groups after the founders were gone. By delegating specific tasks to the General Service Board—such as publishing literature and providing public information—while retaining final decision-making power, A.A. maintains a spiritualized democracy where leaders serve as trusted servants instead of governors.

Step 2

“Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.”



Principle of Step 2: HOPE

In Step 1, we learned our problem wasn't alcohol – it was/is our mental states (our thinking) that was the crux of the real problem. How perfect it is that just 10 pages later (page 45, “We Agnostics” – 4th Edition), Bill shared with us the solution to that problem: “Lack of power, that was our dilemma. We had to find a power by which we could live, and it had to be a Power greater than ourselves. That's exactly what this book is about. Its main object is to enable you to find a Power greater than yourself which will solve your problem.”

Check! How simple is that? This one of twelve simple suggestions is much easier than I ever imagined. I thought solving the drink problem was going to be insurmountable. When I figured out that it's not a drink problem I need to solve, but a think problem – and that simply believing there is a Power out there that is greater than I am that can help me solve it – well, that made life much easier to bear.

I then get to ask myself why I shouldn't apply to life's problems this same readiness to change my point of view. I was having problems with relationships, couldn't control my emotions, was prey to misery and depression, couldn't make a living, had a feeling of uselessness, was full of fear, was unhappy and couldn't be of help to others. I was/am “maladjusted to life, in full flight from reality and an outright mental defective” (B.B. – Doctor's Opinion – Page xxvi – 4th Edition). All of this was true until the day came I could finally believe that a Power greater than myself could run my life better than I could – and all I had to do was let it.

Tradition 2

“For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority – a loving God as he may express himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern.”

Principle of Tradition 2: IDENTIFICATION

Tradition 2 emphasizes that true authority in a relationship or group comes from a collective conscience guided by a Higher Power, rather than any one individual. By moving away from the need to “play God” or dominate others, individuals can find freedom from their fear of authority and learn to trust the group's shared wisdom. This shift allows for healthier connections where members lead by humble example as elder statesmen rather than complaining as “bleeding deacons”

Concept 2

“The General Service Conference of A.A. has become, for nearly every practical purpose, the active voice and the effective conscience of our whole society in its world affairs.”

Principle of Concept 2: RELIANCE

To manage its global affairs effectively, A.A. groups delegate their authority to the General Service Conference, which acts as the collective voice and conscience for the entire fellowship. The Conference listens to the groups and then directs specific service entities, such as the General Service Board and A.A. World Services, to carry out the necessary work. This system ensures that while operational authority is delegated for efficiency, no major action is taken unless the groups, through the Conference, direct it to be done.

Service & Help Wanted



LITERATURE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED



Roles: Help with inventory, sales, and organization



Shifts Available: Make your own hours



Hours of Operation: Monday & Tuesday 10am-3pm & 6pm-8pm | Wednesday - Friday 10am-3pm



Contact to Volunteer: literature@asj.org | 856-486-4446



Literature Office Location: 1000 White Horse Road, Suite 702 Voorhees, NJ 08043

Newsletter Submission Info:

Share Your Experience:

We welcome articles, event info, and announcements to inform our local groups.

Email Us:

newsletter@asj.org

South Jersey Intergroup Office Info:

1000 White Horse Road, Suite 702 Voorhees, NJ 08043-4413

Office: 856-486-4446

24 Hour Hotline: 856-486-4444

info@asj.org

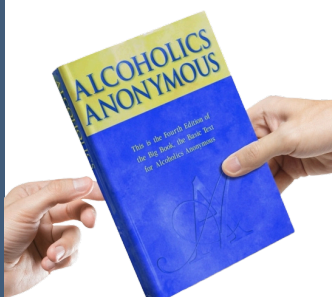
In need of AA Literature?

Looking for meeting lists, cards, or literature? We've got you covered.

Visit Our Literature Office:

1000 White Horse Rd, Suite 702, Voorhees, NJ 08043

Please call ahead: 856-486-4446



Bring This Coupon During Your Next Visit

\$2.00
off

any in-stock literature available at the AASJ Literature Office

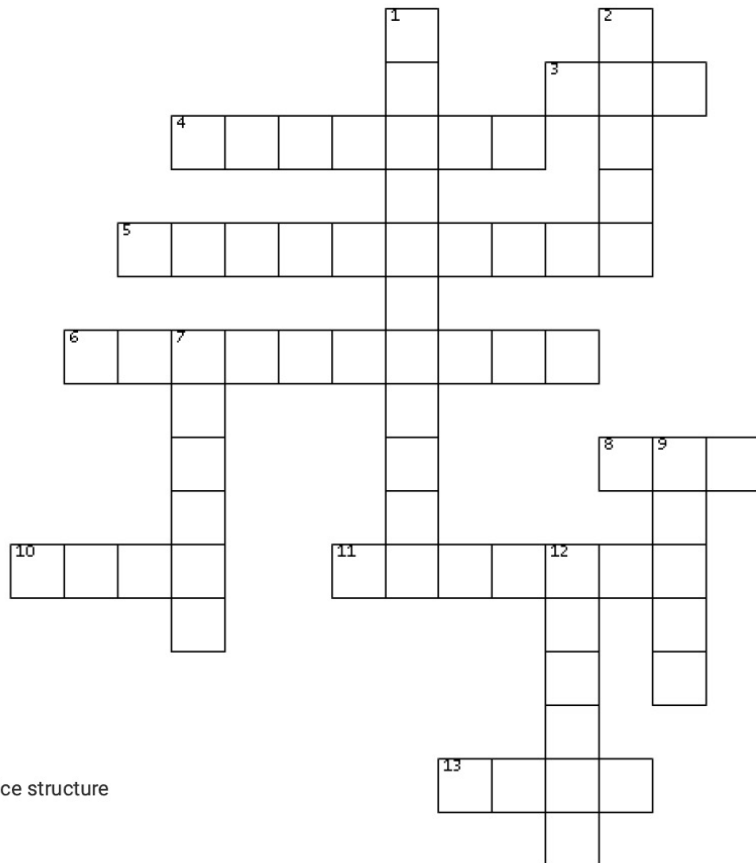
MEETING UPDATES (Dec 2025 and early Jan 2026)

List includes new meetings, and existing meetings which have changed time, day or location

For the most up-to-date meeting information, always visit aasj.org or use the Meeting Guide app. The meeting list is updated several times per week. For any meeting updates, questions, concerns, etc., please contact meetinglist@aasj.org

Meeting Name	Meeting day	Meeting Time	Location	Type
Two A's in Alcoholics Anonymous	Tuesday	6:30PM	Swedesboro	Prayer & Meditation, Step
Last Stop Camden	Wednesday	6:30PM	Camden	Open
Defects and Desserts Women's mtg	Thursday	7:00PM	Sewell	Big Book, Step
Moorestown Barber Group	Friday	6:00PM	Moorestown	Step
Roadmap to Recovery	Friday	7:15PM	Medford	As Bill Sees it
Just the Right Time Women's mtg	Saturday	5:30PM	Audubon	12 & 12, literature, speaker
Back to the 40s	Sunday	5:00PM	Clementon	Class going through the steps as they did in 1940s

SJAA Intergroup Crossword



ACROSS

3. AA's foundational text
4. Step One guiding principle
5. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other _____
6. The opposite of isolation
8. A trusted servant connecting their group to the broader AA service structure
10. The second step's guiding principle
11. The act of giving back in AA
13. Anyone interested in A.A. is also welcome to attend an _____ meeting

DOWN

1. AA's responsibility statement begins with "I am _____"
2. Step Three involves a decision to turn our will and our _____
7. A trusted servant, not a governor
9. A spiritual awakening as a result of these _____
12. AA has no opinion on outside _____