

### STEP FOUR

**“Made a searching and fearless inventory of ourselves.”**

Making a searching and fearless inventory of myself stirred more fear than contentment. Realizing a thousand forms of fear is what put me in this position in the first place became my reality.

Facing the fact that if I truly wanted to be free of this spiritual malady, I had to be brave while looking at the parts of myself I didn't want to face, let alone want anyone to know. Calling on my Higher Power for the strength to search my soul for the parts of myself which kept me ill and tethered was tough, but beneficial, not only to me but to those I could help.

Once I saw which defects of character held me back from my true self and that I was the one who set the ball rolling, it was easier to accept with the guidance of my sponsor and the Big Book's instructions that my past knowledge of self was not enough.

After taking action and being freed of what I kept within I physically, mentally, and emotionally felt lighter. It works! It really does!

I am grateful to have found the program and the willingness through the power of the Spirit of the Universe to have to let go of the things inside I had hopelessly held onto for so long.

Essence, Bellmawr, NJ

The views and opinions expressed herein are those of each individual and do not necessarily represent the opinions or policy of South Jersey Intergroup or AA as a whole.

### TRADITION FOUR

**“Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole.”**

This Tradition gives our groups of A.A. freedom. I had never heard of an organization with no rules (and still can't think of one). As I studied the Fourth Tradition, I learned that typically, rules are in place due to fear. The members of any other organization must adhere to rules in order to keep the group aligned with the mission of that group. A.A. wishes only to fulfil our purpose to stay sober and be helpful to another alcoholic.

As we know, individual members of Alcoholics Anonymous are members, when they say they are members, and all members are welcome (Tradition three). We are unique in the sense that our experience shows how any individual, regardless of their past has the capacity to change. Ironically, giving the groups autonomy, actually keeps us in line with the structure of A.A. To learn what would not hurt A.A., we A.A. groups must listen for the direction of our Higher Power, our ultimate authority, within our group conscience (Tradition Two) and refer to the remainder of the Traditions for guidance. When we honestly do this we have little chance of failure.

I am grateful to be a part of a strong 30-year-old homegroup where there is a great amount of enthusiasm and energy. Through new ideas on how to serve the newcomer, and how to allow our meeting to run smoother, we exert our autonomy muscles regularly! When doing so, we hear the expression of our loving God through the voting process and reference of the A.A. Traditions.

Anonymous in South Jersey

## A MESSAGE FROM SOUTH JERSEY INTERGROUP CHAIR

Please visit your listing at [aasj.org/meetings](http://aasj.org/meetings), and click ZOOM UPDATE to submit your new password and meeting link.

We're always striving to deliver you a secure virtual meeting environment. Starting April 5th, we've chosen to enable passwords on your meetings and turn on Waiting Rooms by default as additional security enhancements to protect your privacy. Meeting Passwords Enabled "On"

Going forward, your previously scheduled meetings (including those scheduled via your Personal Meeting ID) will have passwords enabled. If your attendees are joining via a meeting link, there will be no change to their joining experience. For attendees who join meetings by manually entering a Meeting ID, they will need to enter a password to access the meeting.

For attendees joining manually, we highly recommend re-sharing the updated meeting invitation before your workweek begins. Here's how you can do that: Log in to your account, visit your Meetings tab, select your upcoming meeting by name, and copy the new meeting invitation to share with your attendees. For step-by-step instructions, please watch this 2-minute video or read this FAQ. For meetings scheduled moving forward, the meeting password can be found in the invitation. For instant meetings, the password will be displayed in the Zoom client. The password can also be found in the meeting join URL.

## GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE CLOSURE

As a result of Coronavirus (COVID-19), New York State has shut down 100% of operations of "nonessential" businesses/organizations. The General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. located at 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY is closed, effective March 20, 2020, until further notice.

A.A.W.S. and A.A. Grapevine staff are "teleworking" until further notice as we continue our commitment to serving the A.A. Fellowship. Although we are available to support our membership and groups, these circumstances limit our abilities to be as effective as we would like. We ask that you please limit your communication with G.S.O. to email or Contact Us: <https://www.aa.org/contactus>

We also have limited ability to access and process regular mail. Once again, it would be helpful, if possible, to email your correspondence. If you are a member and are considering sending a contribution, doing so online would be most helpful. Make a contribution.

We appreciate your understanding and invite you to click on the following informative links regarding our office and the history of Alcoholics Anonymous.

**Inside This Issue:** ♦ Step Four, Tradition Four  
♦ ♦ AA History ♦ ♦ SJIG News and Updates ♦  
♦ Articles from AA Members ♦ ♦ Letter from  
General Service Office

## **NEWS FROM GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS**

**The General Service of Alcoholics Anonymous (G.S.O.) U.S./Canada functions as a repository for A.A. members and groups who are looking for the shared experience of the Fellowship. As the global situation related to Coronavirus (COVID-19) continues to develop, we are fully committed to continue to serve as a resource center of shared experience to help navigate this unprecedented public health emergency. It is important to note the G.S.O. is not an authoritative body over our groups, nor does it initiate rules or directives, as each A.A. group and entity is autonomous and decisions are made through its group conscience. Providing guidance on health issues is outside the scope of the A.A. sharing that G.S.O. offers. For anyone experiencing health and safety questions, it is suggested they contact national, state/provincial and local health authorities for appropriate information. However, in response to the global outbreak, we do have some general experience regarding how some A.A. groups and members have begun to address this issue. Many are following “social distancing” guidelines established by local, state, provincial, and federal officials, while at the same time maintaining their recovery and attending digital A.A. meetings. By attending digital meetings, groups can focus on A.A.’s primary purpose: to carry its message of recovery to the alcoholic who still suffers. Many groups have alerted local A.A. offices or hotlines if they are temporarily not meeting in their regular**

**space. Some groups have shared that they are utilizing digital platforms such as Zoom, Google Hangouts, or conducting conference calls. A.A. groups are also creating contact lists, keeping in touch by phone, email or social media. Many local A.A. central/intergroup offices, and areas have added information to their websites about how to change a meeting format from “in-person” to a digital platform. A.A. in the digital age has certainly taken on a new meaning in these challenging times. We are here to help by providing a list of resources. • General Service Office Website: [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org)-**

**Videos/Audios <https://www.aa.org/pages/-US/videos-and-audios>**

**Read/Listen/ASL “The Big Book” and Twelve Steps/ Twelve Traditions Book [https://www.aa.org/pages/en\\_US/read-the-big-book-and-twelve-steps-and-twelve-traditions](https://www.aa.org/pages/en_US/read-the-big-book-and-twelve-steps-and-twelve-traditions)**

**A.A. Archives and history [https://www.aa.org/pages/en\\_US/archives-and-history](https://www.aa.org/pages/en_US/archives-and-history)**

**A.A.W.S. YouTube Channel <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC2nfvf9DeDA7QYvLeq4pQ-w>**

**A.A. Grapevine website: <https://www.aagrapevine.org>**

**Audio, digital, hard copy resources**

**A.A. Grapevine YouTube Channel [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCI9uFLJ\\_\\_aXT3-At0PIPWUQ](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCI9uFLJ__aXT3-At0PIPWUQ)**

**A.A. Online Intergroup: <https://www.aa-intergroup.org/>**

**Understanding Anonymity: [https://www.aa.org/assets/en\\_US/p47\\_understandinganonymity.pdf](https://www.aa.org/assets/en_US/p47_understandinganonymity.pdf)**

## **News Regarding Hospitals & Institutions Commitments** **Contact Debbie at [handi@asj.org](mailto:handi@asj.org)**

All H&I commitments are cancelled until further notice. We are in the process of, hopefully, setting up video conference meetings. More information will be provided, as soon as the logistics are worked out.



### **BIARRITZ INTERNATIONAL A.A. CONVENTION**

October 9, 2020 to October 11, 2020

Venue: Le Grand Large , 1 rue Dalbarade, 64200 Biarritz, France

**DURING COVID-19 LOCK-DOWN VENUE HOTEL RESERVATIONS ARE SHUT.**

(Attempts to book dates on the hotel website will show hotel as fully booked.)

- Al-Anon & YPAA participation
- Theme: KEEP IT SIMPLE

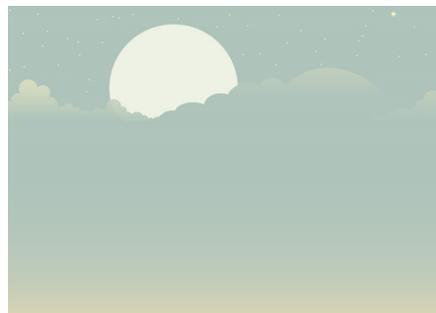
Speakers: Karen Casey, Ph.D., lecturer, and program member since 1974 will be the speaker of note,

Karen will also facilitate a two-hour workshop/presentation on the Saturday afternoon.

Karen is author of recovery reference books "Each Day A New Beginning", "In God's Care", among over 25 other books.

**ALL accommodations HAVE UNOBSTRUCTED OCEAN/SUNSET VIEW**

- Fly direct to Biarritz Airport (BIQ)
- Website: <https://aaconventionbiarritz.com>
- Registration: Pre-Registration (online) €35.00 (after 30 August €42.00)
  - Venue Accommodation from €55.00/night/person (B&B)
  - Alternative Accommodation from €30.00/night/person (B&B)
- Extend your stay at convention discounted tariffs, enjoy tourism in the region



## ARCHIVES REPORT

Hope everyone is safe and well! Archives continues to encourage completion of Old Timers and group history reports! Hopefully we will all be back together again soon! Great big shout out to group members setting up and hosting Zoom meetings for their home groups. Big thanks to the website and technology committee for staying on top of the updates so we are all able to stay informed and connected.

Be safe and be well!

Rick and Jen.

## SOCIAL COMMITTEE INFORMATION

All Social Committee Events cancelled until further notice.

It appears that the AA Founders Day Committee has cancelled Founders Day Events for June. [www.founderday.org](http://www.founderday.org)

The Social Committee had previously scheduled a Founders Day Event to be a Speaker Meeting with coffee and cake. It is our hope to have it be a ZOOM meeting.

*85<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Founding of AA*

*Speaker: Chris B.*

*Wednesday, June 10 at 7:00 PM*

*Spiritual Foundation of Unity – Tradition meeting*

*Holy Trinity Lutheran Church*

*201 Warwick Road*

*Magnolia, NJ*

*(Pending the lift of shelter-in-place.)*

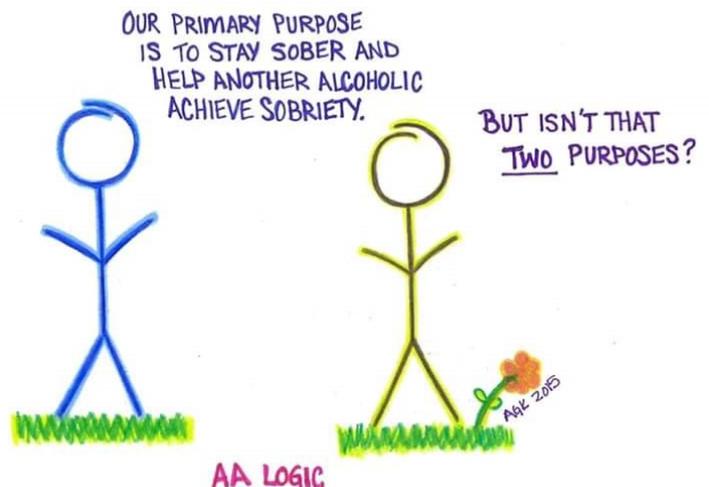
## Editorial Policy

Anonymous South Jersey is a monthly newsletter published by and for members of South Jersey Alcoholics Anonymous. Opinions expressed herein are NOT to be attributed to AA as a whole, nor does publication of information imply any endorsement by either AA or South Jersey Intergroup. Quotations and artwork from AA literature are printed with permission from AA World Services, Inc., and/or the AA Grapevine, Inc.

Contributions from readers are encouraged—you can write about your experience, strength and hope in general, or you can focus on one of the steps or traditions. You can also write about something that touched you at a meeting, something that bothered you at a meeting, or some service commitment you especially enjoy. Submissions are edited for space and clarity. Contact information is required and anonymity is respected.

Due to space limitations, we are unable to publish flyers for events in this newsletter. However, we are happy to include your gathering in the general list of fellowship announcements.

Please send your submissions to  
[newsletter@aasj.org](mailto:newsletter@aasj.org).



## THIS MONTH IN AA HISTORY

1935: Dr. Silkworth told Bill to quit preaching at drunks & tell them of obsession & allergy.

1950: Saturday Evening Post article "The Drunkard's Best Friend" by Jack Alexander.

1958: The word "honest" dropped from AA Preamble, "an honest desire to stop drinking".

April 1, 1939: Publication date of Alcoholics Anonymous, AA's Big Book.

April 1, 1966: Sister Ignatia died.

April 2, 1966: Harry Tiebout, M.D. died.

April 3, 1941: First AA meeting held in Florida.

April 3, 1960: Fr. Ed Dowling, S.J., died. He was Bill W's "spiritual sponsor."

April 7, 1941: Ruth Hock reported there were 1,500 letters asking for help as a result of the Saturday Evening Post Article by Jack Alexander.

April 10, 1939: The first ten copies of the Big Book arrived at the office Bill and Hank P. shared.

April 11, 1938: The Alcoholic Foundation formed as a trusteeship for A.A. (sometimes reported as May 1938)

April 11, 1941: Bill and Lois finally found a home, Stepping Stones in New Bedford.

April 16, 1973: Dr. Jack Norris presented President Nixon with the one millionth copy of the Big Book.

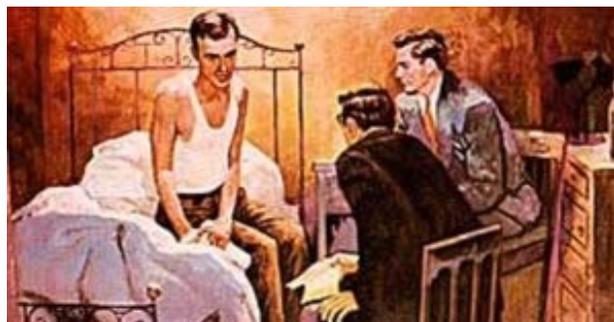
April 22, 1940: Bill and Hank transfer their Works Publishing stock to the Alcoholic Foundation.

April 23, 1940: Dr. Bob wrote the Trustees to refuse Big Book royalties, but Bill W. insisted that Dr. Bob and Anne receive them.

April 24, 1940: The first AA pamphlet, "AA", was published.

April 25, 1951: AA's first General Service Conference was held.

April 30, 1989: Film "My Name is Bill W." a Hallmark presentation was broadcast on ABC TV.



**"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."**

## DAILY INVENTORY – DAILY ACTION

The twelve step program of AA is outlined in what is known as the Big Book of AA – it is the basic text by which hundreds of thousands, even millions of people all over the world live their lives. This article will address just a few pages of that book. These pages outline a step by step daily action one should take to live a life of freedom....spiritual, emotional and physical freedom. Pages 84-88

Having read and studied the BB of AA over the past several years, I have come to realize there is not one right interpretation of this basic text. Like the many spiritual books that have been written in history, the Torah, the Koran, the Bible, there are many versions and interpretations...yet the basic core message remains the same.

The same holds true to the BB. Throughout this book there are prayers and promises, timelines and warnings, but mostly there are directions. Very straightforward, step-by-step (no pun intended) directions on how to live a happier life free from the bondage of selfishness and addiction.

One such set of directions lies in pages 84-88, steps ten and eleven. What follows is a breakdown, line by line, of the specific directions provided to us by Bill Wilson and Dr. Bob Smith, of what we need to do in our daily lives to live happy, joyous and FREE!

Halfway down page 84 it begins....”this thought brings us to Set Ten, which suggests we continue to take personal inventory and continue to set right any new mistakes as we go along. By this time in our recovery, or in our lives, we will have established a conscious contact with our Higher Power – whoever or whatever that may be. We start with the assumption that you, the reader, have a basic belief in something greater than yourself. That you believe this entity, (Big G as I like to call my HP) is all powerful and controls most of what happens in our lives. This Almighty loves us all unconditionally and is the source of all grace and blessings – He created all life as we know it and guides and protects us. It is the belief that my main purpose in this life is to be of maximum service to Big G and others each and every day. Pages 84-88 lay the foundation for fulfilling that purpose.

We begin with taking an inventory each day of our thoughts, words and deeds to see how they measure up with fulfilling this purpose. By taking this inventory and following the steps outlined in these pages, we launch on the lifetime adventure of growing “in understanding and effectiveness.” The way we take this daily inventory is to watch for “selfishness, dishonesty resentment and fear.” Every one of us possesses these four character defects at some point and usually on more than one day. It goes on to state, “when they crop up..” not if, but when . The authors knew human behavior well enough to know that NONE of us is perfect. These defects will rear their ugly heads most definitely in our lives, for some of us more often than others. So when we review our day, our thoughts words and deeds, we will more than likely find at least one instance where we were either selfish and/or dishonest and/or resentful and/or fearful. When we note these occurrences, we immediately ask Big G to remove that defect and bless us with His grace.

Next we talk about what happened with another person. Someone we trust. A confidante. We do this because if you are like me, I can convince myself of just about anything. I have a knack for rationalizing my bad behavior and justifying my actions or words. The truth is, never is it okay to be selfish, dishonest resentful or fearful. These defects cause harm, not only to others but to ourselves. That is why it is critical to identify these behaviors, ask God to remove them at once, and talk it over with another person to make sure we are on the right path.

Maria M., Monmouth Beach, NJ



Please direct all  
communications to:  
P.O. Box 459  
Grand Central Station  
New York, NY 10163  
Fax: (212) 870-3003

April 9, 2020

Dear friends,

As we, together, follow the global developments related to the response to the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic, the experience, strength and hope offered by A.A. groups, Intergroups and Central Offices, AA Grapevine and La Viña, and the General Service Office has never been more evident.

The extraordinary effort taking place across our Fellowship is heartening in this truly difficult time: A.A. groups who are unable to gather at their usual locations are now meeting on virtual platforms. These virtual meetings have provided A.A. members, as well as those newly seeking help, the ability to connect with recovering alcoholics across the U.S., Canada and internationally – and stay sober one day at a time.

Local Intergroups and Central Offices are also providing support and resources to help A.A. groups navigate technology that might be unfamiliar to many members. In addition, some offices have developed "best practices" that have been helpful to a number of groups – especially those new to digital platforms.

Although our physical doors are closed for the time being, the General Service Office continues to provide services to the Fellowship. Members can continue to download A.A. literature and service material from the aa.org website. We respond to nearly 200 letters a week from members in correctional facilities in the U.S. and Canada. Further, we are working around the clock to field the steady stream of national and local media requests, with the understanding that an accurate representation of our efforts can help members and others who might be struggling during this unprecedented period. There has been a lot of media coverage of A.A. in recent weeks.

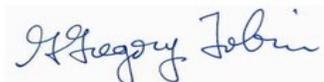
As an important additional resource to A.A. members, AA Grapevine has provided free access to all 2020 Grapevine and La Viña stories, including the audio Grapevine stories.

Your groups' support and participation in the Seventh Tradition is always a fundamental element of the Fellowship, and is especially crucial now. It ensures that groups sustain good relationships with their landlords so that they have a place to meet once we can gather again, and it ensures that A.A.'s vital services continue. Shared experience reflects an increased use of the "digital" basket wherein groups and members utilize digital payment options for Seventh Tradition contributions to support the group and local entities. Many Intergroups and Central Offices and Area service structures have added information to their websites about digital contributions.

For contributions to the General Service Office members can access the online contributions link on aa.org. You may also continue to send checks via standard USPS mail. Subscriptions to Grapevine and La Viña are available on the aagrapevine.org website, along with their other materials. Support is even more important given that revenue from literature sales has substantially decreased for the time being.

It is clear that our shared efforts ensure that the hand of A.A. will always be there when anyone, anywhere reaches out. We thank you for your continued support.

Yours in gratitude and fellowship,



G. Gregory Tobin  
General Manager