



# ALKI-LINE



TAKE ONE, IT'S FREE

The Area 11 A.A. Newsletter Vol. 32 No. 2 April – May 2023

### Step Three

“Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him*”.

The Big Book states “The first requirement is that we be convinced that any life run on self-will can hardly be a success. On that basis we are almost always in collision with something or somebody, even though our motives are good.” (Pg. 60). "Will" is defined as an expression of desire, choice, willingness, consent, or in negative constructions of refusal; mental powers manifested as wishing, choosing, desiring, or intending; the power of control over one's own actions or emotions. "Life" is defined as a principle or force that is considered to underlie the distinctive quality of animate beings; the sequence of physical and mental experiences that make up the existence of an individual. The essence of Step Three is making the decision that I turn my thoughts and actions, my emotions, my desires, all of it, over to the care of God.

This was demonstrated to me through an experience that I had with my career. I had finished getting my master's degree and my next step was to study for the board exam in the field I desired to work in. My plan was to have a few months to study for the exam. When I went to sign up for the test, the testing dates were slim and far apart. I could test in August (10 days away), or I could test in January, months away. In that moment, I turned to my Higher Power. “I had a plan, God, why are these dates not suitable to MY plan?!” My motives were good – right? I did the work, now I just wanted to pass the test. The real test that I was being presented with was “can I trust God?”

The message I got was clear, “do the work and let God take care of the rest”. I didn't necessarily trust that I would pass the exam, but I knew that waiting to test was not an option given my current position at my job. At that moment, I made the decision to turn to God's will and just do the work without knowing the results. I spent the following days studying 10 to 12 hours per day. Even on my “off” time, I was quizzing myself. The day before the exam I was in a panic. I couldn't

find my wallet and I just “needed” to purchase one more mock exam. I was in collision with myself. My partner looked at me and said “if you don't know it by now, you're not going to learn it by tomorrow. Go take a break.” Trust in God fell over me. He was right. It wasn't that I knew that I was going to pass, it was that I knew that if I kept operating from this nervous self-seeking energy, I was surely going to fail. The first requirement hit me: “Any life run on self-will can hardly be a success.”

I made a decision to truly let go, again. I didn't take that last mock exam and I took the time to relax. It dawned on me that if I failed, I could test again. If I passed, I would be certified. I was not tied to either outcome. I took the test the next morning and I passed. I firmly believe that had I stayed in that frantic mindset, I would have failed. That situation demonstrated to me how many times in that process I took my will back. Taking my will back happens. The point is that when I recognize it, am I willing to let it go again?

I think about this experience often when I am trying to force my will on a situation in my life, to pre-determine what I think should be. My life goes better when it's under the care and protection of God, and not Liz. I let go and let God.

– Liz

### Step Four Experience, Strength, and Hope

“Well, that was easy,” I thought as I looked down at my first completed Fourth Step. I was just a few months sober and eager to start my Fifth Step. I was convinced that once my sponsor heard my story, she would understand why I drank so much. She may even realize that I was just a victim of circumstance and not an alcoholic after all. Then she could teach me how to drink like a lady, and I would live happily ever after.

With my Fourth Step in hand, I called her to let her know I was ready to move forward. “That's wonderful,” my sponsor replied, “you filled in *all* of the columns?” “Yes, well, except for the column where I had to write down my faults and what

I had done," I said confidently. There was a pregnant pause on the other end of the line that I didn't expect, then she asked for an example from my list.

The first person on my resentment list was my stepfather, who physically and emotionally abused my mother and me when I was four. He was in our lives just long enough to cause lasting damage to my mental and emotional well-being. It warped my sense of security and diminished my self-worth. After that point, I was never the same. And he was to blame. The anger I had forgotten lived deep down inside me spewed out as I recanted the events that changed the trajectory of my life. How dare my sponsor question me? I paused and waited for an apology.

"You're right," she said softly after a moment. "You didn't cause that, you didn't deserve that, and you were powerless over the situation at the time. That must have been difficult." Finally, she was getting it. She broke my train of thought and said, "I'm curious. How old are you now?" I hesitated for a moment. "Twenty-eight," I uttered.

What my sponsor said next was, to this day, one of the most profound God moments in my life. She explained that she, too, had instances of abuse in her childhood, and for years she not only held onto the anger but also watered it and fed it until it grew into a monster of a resentment that almost killed her. When she got to A.A. and started to work the Steps, she realized she harbored the resentment, built walls to avoid getting hurt again, and harmed countless people — all because of an incident that happened to her decades earlier. She explained that she had a choice today, and that today she chose not to let fear, anger, or ghosts from the past dictate who she is.

At the time of my Fourth Step, I had spent almost three decades on earth; it never once occurred to me that I didn't have to continue to be the version of myself that developed as a result of my trauma. What happened to me as a child was not my fault, but it was my choice and responsibility to heal as an adult. I realize now what a painful existence it was to drink poison for all those years and wait for my foes to die. Part of me believed if I stayed angry and closed off enough, I would protect myself from ever getting hurt like that again. Instead, I developed emotional baggage that I dragged around with me from relationship to relationship. I harmed anyone who tried to get close to me and nearly killed myself with alcohol.

After that conversation with my sponsor, I did my Fourth Step correctly. I listed where I had been at fault for every resentment on my list. Understanding my own defects and destructive patterns does not excuse the behavior of the

people who harmed me and does not change my past. It enables me to take action by working Steps Five through Twelve. This allows me to change the things I have control over, and experience peace and serenity in the present. Since I live in a world where I am powerless over everything except my actions and attitude, it is a design for living that really works.

In case you are wondering, I never did learn to drink like a lady — but thanks to Step Four, I stayed sober, and the possibility of this drunk living happily ever after feels closer than ever before.

— *Jessi S.*

## **By Grace, Never Alone**

On the outside you'll never see

the turmoil that's within.

Her soul hangs impatiently

in limbo, grasping for life.

He holds her hand,

though he too is unseen.

Wrapping love around her

breathing air into her spirit.

She isn't broken.

She isn't alone.

She is a survivor,

beautifully imperfect within his grace.

Never alone, sharing space

with a garden of perfectly imperfect souls.

Through his unconditional love,

she learns to breathe again.

— *Jennifer B.*

"We thought "conditions" drove us to drink, and when we tried to correct these conditions and found that we couldn't to our entire satisfaction, our drinking went out of hand and we became alcoholics. It never occurred to us that we needed to change ourselves to meet conditions, whatever they were." page 47, *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*.

## **Steps, Traditions, and Concepts Three & Four**

**Step Three:** “Made a decision to turn our will and lives over to the care of God *as they understood God*”.

**Tradition Three:** “The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.”

**Concept Three:** “To insure effective leadership, we should endow each element of A.A.—the Conference, the General Service Board and its service corporations, staffs, committees, and executives—with a traditional “Right of Decision.”

\*

**Step Four:** “Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.”

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

**Concept Four:** “At all responsible levels, we ought to maintain a traditional “Right of Participation,” allowing a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge.”

## 2023 Area 11 Pre-Conference Assembly

2023 (Panel 73) General Service Conference Theme: A.A.’s

Three Legacies — Our Common Solution

**Saturday, April 1 @ 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.**

Pitkin Center (30 Greenfield St., Wethersfield)

Bring your own lunch

*Who should come?*

GSR’s (General Service Representatives), DCMs (District Committee Members), District and Area Service Committee Chairpersons, District Officers, Area Officers and **all interested A.A. members within Area 11 (CT)**

*What will be discussed?*

This is an opportunity to share your thoughts on A.A. General Service Conference Agenda Items and topics with your Area 11 Delegate before your Delegate attends the Conference.

Informational packets with all important details have been distributed to DCMs (District Committee Members). Please contact your local DCM to obtain this packet. If you are unable to reach your DCM, please email [alt-delegate@ct-aa.org](mailto:alt-delegate@ct-aa.org).

## Area 11 A.A. Service Manual Meeting

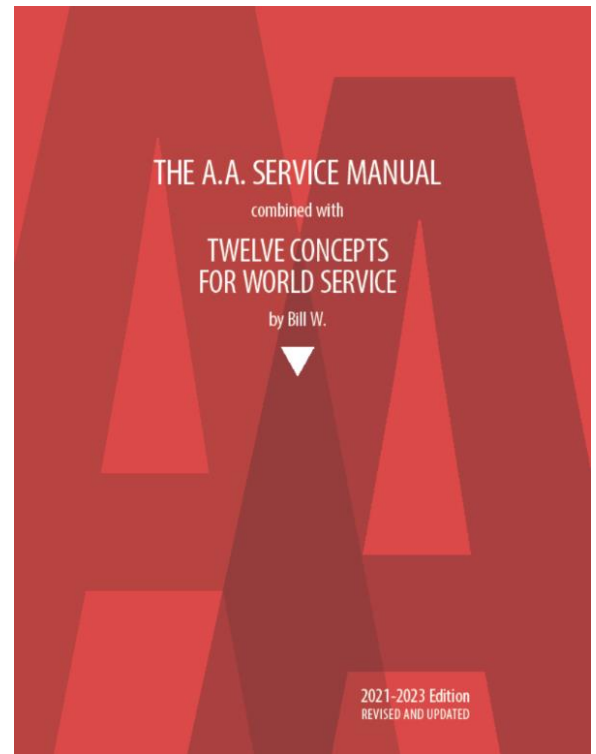
*Meets every second Monday of the month at 8 p.m.*

**March 13, 2023 at 8 p.m.**

**Login Information (on Zoom):**

Meeting ID: 853 6254 9241

Password: 162425



Reviewing the material in advance is strongly encouraged! Content to be covered: Chapter 1 (“The Group and its G.S.R.”), pages 7-12 in the 2021-2023 A.A. *Service Manual*—**access to the A.A. *Service Manual* as a PDF [here!](#)**

**All A.A. members are welcome!**

## Create & Print Meeting Schedules and more! on the Area 11 Website

Our Area 11 Website continues to evolve and be a central source of information and communication. This resource is even more critical during these times of limitations with in-person interaction. Some, but not all, of recent enhancements/additions include:

- **\*\*Create & Print meeting schedules\*\***
- Landing page links to crucial information & events
- Meeting finder tool
- Contact information for the Area 11 Officers
- District maps and information

- From the events calendar, links to events outside of Area 11

Visit [www.ct-aa.org](http://www.ct-aa.org)

## “What’s New” on [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org)

Did you know that [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org) has a “What’s New” section linked directly off the home page? (Scroll to the bottom of the landing page and click on “What’s New”)

You can find up to date announcements, activities, and more, along with notices from the past few months. Access info on a F.A.Q. for the 2025 International Convention, Special Forums, Press Releases, Requests to the Fellowship, PSA Announcements, Quarterly Reports, and more!

[Click here and check it out!](#)

## News and Notes

### Box 4-5-9 Fall 2022

Newsletter from the General Service Office: [Box 459 | Alcoholics Anonymous \(aa.org\)](#). Scan the QR code below!



### Delegate’s Reports

Monthly Delegate’s Reports are available on [www.ct-aa.org](http://www.ct-aa.org) in English and Spanish. [Click here for quick access.](#)



## AAGV – Podcasts

Visit [www.aagrapevine.org/podcast](http://www.aagrapevine.org/podcast) for a new podcast each week! Tune in for the Ask-it Basket, trivia, recovery-related jokes, & more!

## Subscriptions and Literature

Visit [store.aa.grapevine.org](http://store.aa.grapevine.org) for magazines, books, & more!

## Carry the Message Project

Want to help another alcoholic? Grapevine and La Viña are Great Twelfth Step Tools!

Give a gift subscription to an alcoholic who needs it. Great for: Sponsees \* Newcomers \* Prisons \* Detoxes \* Doctor’s Offices \* Group Celebrations \* District and Area Events \* Giveaways.

Go to <https://www.aagrapevine.org/carry-the-message> to get started. Carry the Message, it’s easy!

## We Want To Hear From You!

The Alki-Line is a bi-monthly publication by the Area 11 Alki-Line Committee, a dedicated team of trusted servants, whose primary purpose is to offer current events, articles, and information that foster experience, strength, and hope in recovery, in the spirit of the Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous and in particular “to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.”

Share your stories, essays, articles, poetry, etc. with others through the Alki-Line. We are accepting submissions of one page or less:

**Email:** [alkiline@ct-aa.org](mailto:alkiline@ct-aa.org)

**Mail:** Alki-Line, P.O. Box 7060, Meriden, CT 06450

**Hand:** your material to your GSR

The Alki-Line has many service positions and would benefit significantly from more district representation.

This newsletter is by and for alcoholics; however, we review submissions by all interested in the A.A. program of recovery. Material may be edited for clarity and length. This newsletter and earlier issues can be downloaded at [www.ct-aa.org](http://www.ct-aa.org).

*This is an honest fellowship; we presume all submissions are original or in the public domain. Following publication all, copyright reverts to the owner.*

*The Gratitude List.* 

Visit the Alki-Line page at: <https://ct-aa.org/alki-line/> to tell us something you are grateful for.