

# BOOZE NEWS

## DECEMBER 2025

AREA 21-DISTRICT 14

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## 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.

## TRADITION TWELVE

Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

## LONG FORM

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.



# A December to Remember

## **The First “AA Christmas” – December 1934**

Bill W. entered Towns Hospital for the last time on December 11, 1934, where he had the spiritual experience that led to permanent sobriety.

Many AA historians refer to this as “Bill’s first sober Christmas.” This makes December a month associated with “new beginnings” in AA’s origin story.

## **The First Holiday Season for the Oxford Group Alcoholics (1934–35)**

Before AA formally existed, Bill and Lois spent the 1934–1935 holiday season with Oxford Group members who supported Bill’s early sobriety. Lois later wrote that the holidays were still emotionally difficult, even with Bill sober — something many alcoholics relate to today.

## **The Rockefeller Dinner — December 1937**

On December 13, 1937, Bill W., Dr. Bob, and several early members held the famous dinner with Rockefeller associates at the Union Club in New York. Although they hoped to receive major funding, the Rockefeller representatives encouraged AA not to accept large sums, believing spiritual integrity was more important. Their support, however, led to the creation of the Alcoholic Foundation (later AA’s General Service Board). This event is often cited as shaping AA’s self-support Tradition.

## **The First AA Radio Appearance — December 1940**

In December 1940, Marty Mann became the first AA member to publicly share about alcoholism over the radio. This was during the holiday season, when drinking culture was especially visible. Her outreach significantly raised AA’s national profile. Her sharing helped countless people find AA during a hard time of year.



# TRADITION TWELVE

## *a checklist for groups*

“ANONYMITY IS THE SPIRITUAL FOUNDATION OF ALL OUR TRADITIONS, EVER REMINDING US TO PLACE PRINCIPLES BEFORE PERSONALITIES.”

1. Why is it a good idea for me to place the common welfare of all AA members before individual welfare? What would happen to *me* if AA as a whole disappeared?
2. When I do not trust AA's current servants, who do I wish had the authority to straighten them out?
3. In my opinions of and remarks about other AAs, am I implying membership requirements other than a desire to stay sober?
4. Do I ever try to get a certain AA group to conform to *my* standards, not its own?
5. Have I a personal responsibility in helping an AA group fulfill its primary purpose? What is *my* part?
6. Does my personal behavior reflect the Sixth Tradition—or belie it?
7. Do I do all I can do to support AA financially? When is the last time I anonymously gave away a Grapevine subscription?
8. Do I complain about certain AAs' behavior—especially if they are paid to work for AA? Who made *me* so smart?
9. Do I fulfill all AA responsibilities in such a way as to please privately even my own conscience? Really?
10. Do my utterances always reflect the Tenth Tradition, or do I give AA critics real ammunition?
11. Should I keep my AA membership a secret, or reveal it in private conversation when that may help another alcoholic (and therefore me)? Is my brand of AA so attractive that other drunks want it?
12. What is the real importance of *me* among more than a million AAs?

*\*These questions were originally published in the AA Grapevine in conjunction with a series on the Twelve Traditions that began in November 1969 and ran through September 1971. While they were originally intended primarily for individual use, many AA groups have since used them as a basis for wider discussion.*



# SOBRIETY TOOLKIT

## *The 12 Principles*

It is important to note that the list of spiritual principles associated with the Twelve Steps is not conference-approved literature. Alcoholics Anonymous does not publish an official, authoritative list assigning one single principle to each Step. For this reason, the principles listed here should be understood as helpful interpretations, not official AA doctrine, and they should always be considered in conjunction with AA's conference-approved literature, especially *Alcoholics Anonymous (the Big Book)* and *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*.

### **Honesty — Step 1**

Recovery begins when we tell the truth—first to ourselves, then to another person, and eventually in all aspects of our lives. This principle invites us to stop minimizing, rationalizing, and hiding. Honesty opens the door to change.

**Literature Connection:** Big Book p. 58 (“How It Works”) emphasizes rigorous honesty as essential.

### **Hope — Step 2**

Hope means believing that sobriety and sanity are possible. Step 2 reminds us that our story is not over and that help exists—both spiritually and through the fellowship.

**Literature connection:** Big Book p. 60–62 describes the hopelessness of our situation and the hope found in a spiritual solution.

### **Faith — Step 3**

Faith is the decision to trust a Power greater than ourselves—even if we don't fully understand it. The principle isn't about perfection; it's about willingness to try a new direction.

**Literature connection:** Big Book p. 63 describes making the decision to turn our will and lives over.

### **Courage — Step 4**

Courage allows us to face ourselves honestly. Step 4 asks us to look at the patterns, harms, and fears that fueled our drinking. This work is not easy, but it is freeing.

**Literature connection:** Big Book p. 64 calls this “a courageous and thorough” inventory.

### **Integrity — Step 5**

Integrity is demonstrated when we admit the exact nature of our wrongs to ourselves, God, and another human being. In Step 5 we begin to live without secrets.

**Literature connection:** Big Book p. 72–75 highlights the importance of complete candor.

### **Willingness — Step 6**

Willingness is the quiet turning point of recovery. We don't remove our defects ourselves; we simply become ready for change. This principle marks the beginning of real transformation.

**Literature connection:** Big Book p. 76 discusses becoming “entirely ready.”



# SOBRIETY TOOLKIT

## *The 12 Principles*

### **Humility – Step 7**

Humility means recognizing that we are not the center of the universe and that we need help. Step 7 invites us to grow through surrender, not self-will.

**Literature connection:** Twelve & Twelve, Step 7 describes humility as a “chief activator of all our virtues.”

### **Love – Step 8**

Love—sometimes called brotherly love—guides our willingness to make amends. This kind of love is action-based.

**Literature connection:** Twelve & Twelve, Step 8 discusses the importance of repairing relationships to grow in love and tolerance.

### **Responsibility – Step 9**

Step 9 teaches us to take responsibility for the harms we caused.

This principle includes making things right whenever possible, while avoiding actions that would injure others.

**Literature connection:** Big Book p. 83–84 outlines the amends process and spiritual outcomes.

### **Discipline – Step 10**

Also seen as perseverance or self-discipline, this principle helps us continue inventory on a daily basis. We remain teachable, accountable, and willing to correct our course.

**Literature connection:** Big Book p. 84–85 describes continued inventory as a daily practice.

### **Awareness – Step 11**

Spiritual awareness comes through prayer, meditation, and conscious contact. This principle helps us listen, reflect, and respond rather than react.

**Literature connection:** Big Book p. 86–88 offers detailed instructions for morning and evening practice.

### **Service – Step 12**

Service is the natural expression of a spiritual awakening. We carry the message, help others, and practice these principles in all our affairs. Service keeps us sober and connected.

**Literature connection:** Big Book p. 89 (“Practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics.”)



# dictionary definitions

## **Anonymity (noun)**

the quality or state of being anonymous.

## **Awakening (noun)**

the act of waking up from sleep.

the act of becoming aware for the first time.

a revival of interest or attention.

renewal of religious interest.

## **Foundation (noun)**

the act of founding.

a basis upon which something stands or is supported.

an underlying base or support; especially: the whole substructure of a building.

## **Humility (noun)**

freedom from pride or arrogance.

## **Message (noun)**

a communication in writing, in speech, or by signals.

a piece of information that is sent or delivered to someone.

## **Personality (noun)**

the quality or state of being a person.

the complex of characteristics that distinguishes an individual or a nation.

the totality of an individual's behavioral and emotional characteristics.

## **Principles (noun)**

a comprehensive and fundamental law, doctrine, or assumption.

a rule or code of conduct.

a habitual devotion to right conduct.

## **Spiritual (adjective)**

of, relating to, consisting of, or affecting the spirit.

concerned with religious values.

incorporeal or immaterial in nature.



# WHEN THE SEASONS SHIFT

## *Our Spirits Can Too*

As daylight shortens and the colder months settle in, many of us in recovery notice our mood, energy, or motivation begin to dip. For some, this shift is mild; for others, it can feel **heavy, familiar, or overwhelming**. These seasonal changes don't reflect a weak program or poor spiritual condition — they're simply part of being human. The good news is that the 12 Steps offer a spiritual framework that can help anchor us when our emotional landscape becomes unsteady. **While the Steps are not a medical solution for seasonal depression or other mental-health conditions**, many sober alcoholics find that the principles behind them provide **grounding, connection, and hope** during challenging times. Here's how different Steps — and their guiding principles — can help us walk through the darker months with clarity, honesty, and support.

### Step 1 – Acceptance

Just as we admit powerlessness over alcohol, we can also admit powerlessness over the season or our moods. Step 1 invites us to acknowledge what is — and to stop fighting the feelings. Acceptance doesn't mean defeat; it opens the door to care and action.

### Step 2 & 3 – Hope and Surrender

These steps remind us that a Power greater than ourselves can restore us to sanity — and light. Seasonal depression often tells us “this will never pass.” Step 2 reminds us it will. Step 3 asks us to trust that Power with our well-being, even when we can't see the sunlight.

### Step 10 & 11 – Daily Practices

Consistent inventory, prayer, and meditation can be grounding tools through long winter days. The Big Book (pp. 85–88) describes daily reflection and spiritual routines that can help us maintain conscious contact even when our emotions dip. That “pause when agitated or doubtful” can also mean pausing when tired, isolated, or low.

### Step 12 – Connection & Service

Depression thrives in isolation. Service is an antidote. Making a phone call, checking on a newcomer, or volunteering to chair a meeting can reawaken a sense of purpose and connection — the heart of Step 12.

Seasonal depression can make even simple routines feel heavier, but we don't have to face it alone or rely solely on our own strength. **The 12 Steps invite us into acceptance, connection, spiritual practice, and service** — a path that can shine light into the darker corners of winter.

By practicing these principles, reaching out for support, and taking gentle care of ourselves, **we strengthen the foundation that recovery offers us year-round**. And when we combine AA's spiritual tools with appropriate professional help, we give ourselves the best chance to move through the season with hope, honesty, and connection.

As always, **remember that you are not alone**, no matter how long the nights feel. Our fellowship walks this path together — **one day, one tool, and one honest conversation at a time**.

The 12 Steps are spiritual tools that support recovery, but they are not a cure-all for clinical conditions such as depression, anxiety, or other mental health diagnoses. Members are encouraged to seek professional help, therapy, or medical guidance when experiencing symptoms of seasonal depression or any mental health concern. AA is not a substitute for professional treatment; it can be an important supplement alongside it.



## Step 12 and a Spiritual Awakening

Thank you for your support this year. I've found new purpose in sobriety, have grown spiritually, and revived my writing back thanks to AA. If my stories of hope help even one person achieve sobriety, that is my greatest reward.

My "Spiritual awakening" refers to a transformative change that can end one's obsession with drinking. For some, this happens suddenly; for others, it's a gradual process alongside the 12 steps. Bill W.'s co-founder, described his as an intense, immediate event. I discovered a "Power" greater than myself and remained grateful for it. I remind myself that I'm still growing and have a lifetime to explore spirituality in its many forms.

The key points in AA Step 12 are: the Twelve Steps emphasize attraction over promotion; lead by example and wait until others show interest. When speaking to someone struggling with alcohol or drugs, share your own experience honestly without labels, focusing on your journey and results. Let newcomers decide if your story resonates. I've learned to introduce myself at meetings, shake hands or tell everyone "hi" to make attendees feel welcome, and remind everyone that seeking help is encouraged and valued. That's why we're here. Attending meetings and listening well supports sobriety and helps you connect with the group.

Everyone's journey and story are unique and often challenging. Many people have limited free time due to family, children, illness, work, and other demanding commitments. But in reality, meeting makers make it. I'm retired and regularly attend meetings. Sponsoring three friends keeps me active and supported. I chair meetings when asked, give talks at AA events when requested, and offer support to others. I'm grateful for honest feedback from AA friends who support and guide me—the effort you put in truly returns to you.

In summary, a spiritual awakening empowers individuals to achieve, experience, and believe in ways previously unattainable, providing valuable support for sustained sobriety. Practicing honesty, tolerance, humanity, peace of mind, and compassion on a daily basis can reinforce this process. Engaging with the twelve steps, placing trust in a "Higher Power", cultivating self-awareness, sharing personal experiences, and offering service to others—one day at a time—collectively contribute to a fulfilling journey toward sobriety.

My ending thoughts. The holiday season is often joyful, but it can also cause stress, sadness, or anxiety for many people due to expectations, financial concerns, and seasonal pressures. This makes AA friendship especially valuable now, as most of us experience these emotions in some form. My family and I wish everyone a happy and rememberable sober holidays. What are your thoughts?

**John D.**



# Your District 14 Alkathon Guide

## 🎄 ALKATHON PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETINGS 🎄

Help us plan this year's Holiday Alkathon Event!

🌟 Everyone is welcome!



### MEETING DATES & TIMES:

**Sunday, November 23 – 12:00 PM**

**Sunday, December 7 – 12:00 PM**

**Thursday, December 18 – 7:00 PM**

📍 Location: Upstairs Board Room, 623 Alano Club,  
120 N 3rd Street, Belleville, IL

💻 Join via Zoom: Meeting ID: 720 074 2222

📞 Contact: Megan G – 618-580-4777

mark your calendar  
for the event

DECEMBER 24TH -  
JANUARY 1ST

DOORS OPEN AT 5PM CHRISTMAS EVE & EVERY DAY  
AT 8AM FROM CHRISTMAS DAY TO NEW YEAR'S EVE

**Wednesday, 12/24 – Oxford Houses & SOILLYPAA**

**Thursday, 12/25 – VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

**Friday, 12/26 – New Day 'Big Book', New Athens,  
O'Fallon Trailer Group**

**Saturday, 12/27 – Gatehouse Group, 623 Legacy Group**

**Sunday, 12/28 – Women of Integrity, St. Henry's, Sober  
Gals**

**Monday, 12/29 – Al-Anon All Day**

**Tuesday, 12/30 – Thirsty Thursday's, How it Works,  
Half Measures**

**Wednesday, 12/31 – Friend's of Bill W., Mascoutah &  
Shiloh Men's, Busted Ego**

**Wednesday, 1/1 – VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

start here for

service

opportunities



check the

line up



**FULL  
DETAILS,  
FLYERS, &  
MORE CAN  
BE FOUND  
HERE**





# A Letter From the Editor

As we close out a full year of the Booze News, I want to take a moment to acknowledge the privilege it has been to serve District 14 through this little newsletter. Month after month, we share stories, history, practical resources, and the program of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Putting this newsletter together each month has reminded me of something our program teaches again and again: service doesn't just keep us sober; it keeps us grounded and grateful. I'm deeply thankful for everyone who contributed over the past year — from writers and submitters to those who simply opened the newsletter and let it be part of their recovery.

As we look toward another year, I want to extend an open invitation to anyone who feels even the slightest nudge toward service. We are always welcoming new committee members, and the commitment is very low-stress, flexible, and newcomer-friendly. Whether you have ideas, writing talent, tech skills, or just enthusiasm, there's a place for you here. You don't need prior experience — just a willingness to participate and a desire to help carry the message.

Thank you for allowing me to serve in this role and for supporting the Booze News throughout the year. Here's to another year of sobriety, growth, unity, and connection – God Willing.

Austin N.

**District 14 Booze News Chair**





# Upcoming Events

FULL DETAILS FOR  
THESE EVENTS ARE  
LISTED ON THE  
DISTRICT 14  
WEBSITE!

## District 14 GSR Meeting

**December 21 @ 1:00PM - 2:00PM**

In-person at the O'Fallon Trailer Group,  
108 Carbon Hill Rd, O'Fallon, IL  
Or via Zoom ID: 720 074 2222

## Delegate's Roundtable Meeting

**Thursday, December 4 at 7:00PM CST.**

Zoom Meeting Information:  
Meeting ID: 883 6069 3283  
Passcode: 413794

## SOILLYPAA Bingo Night

**Saturday, December 6**

Doors Open at 4:00PM, Games start at  
5:00PM, & a Speaker follows at 8:00PM  
623 Club, 120 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, Belleville, IL

## D18 4th Annual Christmas for Kids Holiday Event

Saturday, December 13 at 2:00PM - 4:00PM  
Pics with Santa, Crafts, Hot Cocoa & more!  
Central Service Office  
409 Broadway, Unit C-1, South Roxana IL

*We Want to Hear  
from you!*



**You can now submit your  
own content to the Booze  
News for publication!**

There is a brand new  
submission form on the  
District 14 Website where  
you can submit feedback,  
articles, art work, birthdays,  
events, poetry, your favorite  
sober stuff, literature  
recommendations, sober  
playlists, ANYTHING!

*Submissions will be reviewed & may be  
lightly edited for clarity or space, but the  
original will not be modified.*

*Submissions may not include harmful  
language, images, or violent content.  
Being included in the Booze News is at  
the sole discretion of the committee.  
Please remember our 12 Traditions  
where applicable when making a  
submission.*

*Reminder!*

You can always reach us via email  
to make suggestions or comments  
at: [boozenews.d14.a21@gmail.com](mailto:boozenews.d14.a21@gmail.com)