

## Concept III

*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.”*

We saw in Concept I how all A.A. members are responsible for the well-being of Alcoholics Anonymous, and in Concept II the importance of delegating authority to our trusted servants. Concept III solidifies the *trust* we have in our GSRs, DCMs, and Delegates by granting each the right to make decisions.

In our individual recovery programs, no one could decide for us if we were alcoholic or not. The decision [Tradition 3] was ours alone. In Step 3 we each make a decision again, this time about the direction our life will take. It is plain to see if these decisions are made by anyone but the alcoholic, the program has little chance of success.

Our trusted servants should be allowed to make decisions based on what they see and hear. If the home group or the Area “instructs” how one should vote, rather than “inform” their trusted servants about the issues, then their hands are tied and they become a simple messenger. Likewise, the Board should not micro-manage every aspect of the General Service Office of magazine staff. Efficiency and morale would suffer.

Bill W. warns against using “The Right of Decision” as an excuse for failure to make the proper reports of actions taken; or for exceeding a clearly defined authority; or for failing to consult the proper people before making an important decision. But he concludes: “Our entire A.A. program rests squarely upon the principle of mutual trust. We trust God, we trust AA, and we trust each other.

James H.  
P64/A68 Southwest Texas

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DISTRICT12 NEWSLETTER FOCUS — TO INFORM THE AA COMMUNITY OF INFORMATION PERTAINING TO DISTRICT 12, AREA 68, AND GSO AND TO ENLARGE GROUP PARTICIPATION.

# Tradition Three

“When I stopped living in the problem and began living in the answer, the problem went away.”

– [Alcoholics Anonymous](#)

“It is a spiritual axiom that every time we are disturbed, no matter what the cause, there is something wrong with us.”

– [Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions](#)

“I have found that the process of discovering who I really am begins with knowing who I really don't want to be.”

– [Alcoholics Anonymous](#)

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

No matter who you are, what you've done, how low you have sunken into alcoholism, how emotional or violent you may be, you will never be denied the right of membership in Alcoholics Anonymous. And we don't pronounce people alcoholics; you are an alcoholic and a member of Alcoholics Anonymous only when you declare yourself one.

We need never forget that the newcomer of today, however troubled as that person may be, will become a principal teacher of patience, love and tolerance in the future. One of our greatest gifts is to see the new person come alive with our Spirit and to grow in sobriety.

Our membership includes every kind of

character imaginable, our membership cuts across all boundaries of race, creed, color, politics, financial standing and language. Our long form of Tradition Three states that our membership ought to include all who suffer from alcoholism, and I think as a fellowship we want to insure that everyone has the same chance to recover that we were given. We need to remember that we are always inclusive, never exclusive, and that we may refuse none that want to recover from alcoholism.

Jonathan Smith  
SWTA 68 – Alternate Delegate

## **HELP WANTED**

Reach out to fellow AA's in treatment facilities. **“GIVE BACK WHAT YOU HAVE BEEN GIVEN!”** H&I sign-ups will be held at the 720 Club, Kerrville, TX 3rd Sunday of the Month





# Welcome to Alcoholics Anonymous Southwest Texas Area 68 - District 12

## WELCOME TO DISTRICT 12 ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

... serving Bandera, Gillespie, Kerr, Kendall, and Kimble counties in the hill country of Texas.

Anybody can look at the schedules and events here, but if you want the full benefits of the site as a District 12 A.A. member, **please register and login**. The more District 12 A.A. members who sign up, the more useful the site becomes!

## GET INVOLVED!

There are many opportunities to get help or to help other alcoholics in our district.

To learn more about service opportunities [click here](#)

# Check out the NEW WEBSITE!!

## [www.aa12.org](http://www.aa12.org)

The more who register,  
the more useful the website.

Post or Update Your Meetings!  
Post Events!

Everyone who registers can be notified!

# Message from the Delegate

## Greetings District 12,

We are looking very forward to gathering for our next assembly in your backyard during the SWTA 68 Pre-General Service Conference Assembly. This annual assembly is important in that not only will we vote on any local matters important to our Area, but also one of the highlights of every Pre-General Service Conference is the 'mock conference'.

But let's back up. What's a conference and why is it important? Many years ago, all matters important in Alcoholics Anonymous were handled by our co-founders; Bill and Dr. Bob and a handful of non-alcoholic trustees. They worked together through the New York Headquarters to make all the decisions for Alcoholics Anonymous. But Bill knew they were not going to live forever. Who was going to take care of Alcoholics Anonymous after they were gone? Would the growing number of AA groups trust a few unknown non-alcoholic men in some office in New York with the all of the business of Alcoholics Anonymous? How could these men act for us, but not really know what we need? Thus the idea of a conference of Delegates from specific geographic areas (now numbering 93 Delegate Areas across the US and Canada) was born. Dr. Bernard Smith was a non-alcoholic friend of AA and one of the chief architects of the conference structure. Here I share perhaps 2 of his most con-

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**Our spiritual way of life: steps, traditions and concepts**

**SWTA 68 Pre General Service**

*Hosted by District 12*

**April 8-10, 2016**

BOG

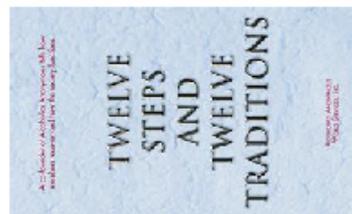
**YO Ranch Hotel and Conference Center**

2033 Sidney Baker, Kerrville 78028

Single room is \$109, Double is \$119

Cutoff date **March 9, 2016** - Use Code: SWTA68 for reservations

BOG



Madeline A., chair 830 459-0322. Mary P. and Melissa O., Registration 830 928-4977.

Hospitality Mindy G and Teresa D. 713 822 3591.

<http://aa-swta.org/events>

## Step 3

***"Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity"***

I figure my Higher Power used alcohol to help me find my knees.

I had to be convinced of the existence of a power greater than myself ... and alcohol was my teacher. I kneeled at the porcelain throne, shoved there by a spirituality whose proof was documented on a label ... right there ... 80 proof.

And so, with Step 1, I acknowledged alcohol to be a power greater than myself. Alcohol was a Higher Power.

After finally dragging myself daily through the doors of Alcoholics Anonymous awhile, I heard one of the simplest bits of divine revelation to ever grace my ears. An old timer grouched, "There are only two things you need to know about God ... There is one, and it ain't YOU!"

It took something that simple to cut through all the spiritual spaghetti in my head, bringing me solidly into Step 2. I needed a power greater than ME to restore MY muddled head to sanity. I'd tried so many ways to do it myself, with all the sophisticated, educated might I could muster. I fell short ... repeatedly. I was a puny, ineffective God.

I figure any Higher Power that could be understood by my 3-pound brain wouldn't be much of a Higher Power. But, I have a place to start.

So long as my Higher Power isn't alcohol, and so long as it isn't me ... then WHATEVER that Higher Power is ... I believe that is how I want to live my life. To such an incomprehensible God am I willing to turn over my will and my life. Step 3.

David H., Kerrville

## **AA GRAPEVINE**

Roger C. of California informs us that back in ancient times, a king condemned a man to death for habitual drunkenness. The offender begged for mercy and was told he'd be spared if he could complete three tasks within fifteen minutes. First, he must consume a keg of ale; then, extract a sore tooth from an angry lion; and finally, obtain a loving kiss from a woman noted for her venomous hatred of men.

The drunkard quickly finished off the keg of ale and was sent into the lion's den. Considerable time then elapsed, during which were heard the sounds of ripping, roaring, and gnashing of teeth.

Eventually, the drunk emerged, torn and bleeding. Bowing to the king, he asked, "Now, Your Majesty, where is the lady with the bad tooth?"

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**“SELF-SUPPORT: WHERE  
MONEY AND SPIRITUAL-  
ITY MIX”**

***WHERE TO SEND YOUR  
GROUPS 7TH TRADITION  
CONTRIBUTIONS***

**DISTRICT LEVEL SUPPORT -**

DISTRICT 12 TREASURER: P.O.  
BOX 290556 KERRVILLE, TX  
78029-0556

**AREA LEVEL SUPPORT -**

SWTA 68 TREASURER P.O. BOX  
720651 MCALLEN, TX 78504

**WORLD SERVICE SUPPORT -**

THE GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE  
GRAND CENTRAL STATION P.O.  
BOX 459 NEW YORK, NY 10164-  
0423

**SWTA 68 Panel 66 Area Officers &**

**Committee Chairs**

Delegate	Denise T.	delegate@aa-swta.org
Alt. Delegate	Jonathan S.	altdelegate@aa-swta.org
Chairperson	Michael P.	chairperson@aa-swta.org
Alt. Chair	Cathy H.	altchair@aa-swta.org
Area Registrar	Barbara R.	registrar@aa-swta.org
Secretary	Rae T.	secretary@aa-swta.org
Treasurer	Dean D.	treasurer@aa-swta.org
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SWTA 68 WEBSITE		http://www.aa-swta.org

**News from District 12 DCM**

2016 looks very promising. There has been great attendance at recent District meetings. I'm so excited about District 12 hosting Area 68, Panel 66 Pre-General Service Assembly 2016 at the YO Ranch Hotel April 8-10, 2016. We will need a lot of help. It will be a great opportunity for service work! Hope to see you at the next District meeting on March 18, 2016 at the 720 Club at 2.00 p.m.

In service, Sandy T. District 12 DCM

**District 12 Trusted Servants**

DCM - Sandy T.  
Alt DCM - Tracy Mc.  
Treasurer - David S.  
Alt Treasurer - Brian M.  
Secretary - Sarah J.  
Alt Secretary- Whitney W.  
PICPC - Kathleen K.  
CFC - Marty M.  
H&I - Jim W.  
Newsletter- Patrick Mc.  
Grapevine- Paul H.  
Archives - Jayson J.  
Bilingual - Greg M.  
Webmaster - David H.

If your group has an event coming up and would like it in the newsletter, please contact:  
Pjmcadan@yahoo.com

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vincing reasons for a conference structure: “we need it to ensure the recovery of a child being born tonight” and “we need it to ensure that changes in A.A. come only as a response to the needs and the wants of all A.A., and not of any few”. (Reprinted from The A.A. Service Manual Combined with the Twelve Concepts for World Service, page S20).

So in preparation for the annual gathering of these 93 Delegates in New York, our Area’s ‘mock conference’ will help shape events as we pull several items from the General Service Conference Final Agenda and review them committee style, just as it is done at the General Service Conference. It is amazing that very often; the actual results at the General Service Conference end up actually mirroring what we come up with during our mock conference. And at the mock conference, **everyone in attendance who wants to participate gets to participate!** So come join the fun! Thank you all for your service!

## A fruitful moment of silence

The custom of observing a moment of silence followed by the Serenity Prayer at the beginning of an AA meeting is widespread. Its primary purpose, of course, is to enable members to quiet their minds and focus on the situation at hand: the meeting. This is exactly what I did for many years--pause and prepare for sharing.

As the meeting progressed and I listened intently to the comments by the participating members, I'd weigh each one and consider whether I could identify or learn or even agree with what was being said. But after a few years of this at my home group, listening to many of the same people, I gradually became aware that I was, in my thoughts, standing in judgment and criticism concerning several of the long-comers: John always uses so much profanity--how can this be a Higher Power speaking through a member? Then there's Mary--she always says the same thing ad infinitum. And Betty--her comments never reflect the true AA philosophy.

My attitude continued in this vein for a considerable period of time until one day I became aware of my conduct: after a number of Steps Four and Five over the past ten years, I still had outstanding defects in the area of impatience and judgmentalism.

I'd lived in the program long enough to know that, having once identified my character shortcomings, immediate action was required. As I pondered this, it occurred to me that I had a convenient tool to use: from that point on at every meeting, when we were asked to observe the moment of silence, I would pray that I'd remain openminded to whatever anyone said. Who was I to question through whom messages were being sent?

Shortly after this, I expanded my prayer, and now as I bow my head and close my eyes, I quiet myself and focus by praying, "Dear God, keep me openminded as I listen to my fellow members and make me be prudent in whatever I have to say."

It works, and meetings are never boring anymore.