



SHARE GUIDE

ELKHART CENTRAL SERVICE OFFICE NEWSLETTER

HAPPY NEW YEAR

The Central Service Office would like to thank the A.A. community for your patience while we regrouped to publish our Shareguide. We are looking forward to a great new year in 2015. Our mission is to encourage recovery and enhance communications within the Elkhart AA Community.

If you are interested in contributing to the Shareguide please contact the Central Service Office. You can contact us in person, phone, or email by visiting our website at:

aaelkhart.org

We also encourage our groups and individual members to get involved with YOUR Newsletter. We welcome articles, editorials, and ideas.

Email us!! The ShareGuide email is:

shareguideaa@gmail.com

**Smooth seas do not
make a skilled Sailor**

-Anonymous

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.

SURRENDER IS THE
INTERSECTION BETWEEN

ACCEPTANCE AND CHANGE



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The following story is an **editorial** submitted by a member of AA. The comments shared in this story and throughout this publication are not necessarily the opinion of the CSO or AA as a whole.

Acceptance - Step One

WE ADMITTED WE WERE POWERLESS— THAT OUR LIVES HAD BECOME UNMANAGEABLE

I guess I admitted some sort of powerlessness when I walked into my first meeting of my own free will. I did not have any concept of the 12 steps. I just knew I needed help. Alcohol and drugs were destroying my life. A close neighbor, witnessing my self destruction, approached me after one of my four day binges. She knew I was broken and beaten at that time, and I was, so I was willing to go to an AA meeting with her. Little did I know how that one decision, and her small gesture to help, would change the course of my life drastically.

Reflecting back, I did not hear a thing at that meeting, my mind was too foggy. The welcome greeting I received was enough for me to return to meetings. Somehow, I felt I belonged among these people. They welcomed me in a world where I felt broken and lost. The Fellowship of A.A. was my first glimmer of hope and a glimpse of living a sober happy life.

My first year of recovery was wonderful. I began to experience life again. I managed to stay away from drugs and alcohol simply by hanging out with my new sober friends and attending meetings. Everything about me and my life began to change. Just the fact that I was sober changed so many things.

As I continued to attend meetings and stay active in the Fellowship, I found a sponsor. I even began to grasp *my own* belief in a Higher Power. But there were things I didn't do. There were things that I did not fully understand about my illness. I did not follow and go through the **complete program of action**. I thought I understood the 1st step, and I did to a certain extent, but I didn't truly *study* and apply **ALL** of the 12 Steps. The outcome was once again drunkenness. The 1st step means powerless, now and always! Powerless over the amount I take once I start to drink. AND powerless to stay away from it no matter how much the desire or wish. This is the true dilemma of the Alcoholic. My only option is abstinence due to what happens when I drink, but unless I experience an *entire psychic change*, I will drink again. This psychic change is accomplished through the 12 steps, all of them. Abstinence is not enough for one who has the alcoholic malady.

My first admission is that I am not like other people. I can never drink alcohol safely. And I stay sober one day at a time with all three parts of our triangle: **UNITY** of the Fellowship, **RECOVERY** through the study of the 12 Steps, and **SERVICE** through unselfish, constructive action by helping others to achieve sobriety.

~Anonymous

We feel that elimination of our drinking is but a beginning

Big Book, Page 19

THE 12 STEP PRINCIPLES

Honesty Step 1. We admitted that we were powerless over alcohol - that our lives had become unmanageable.

Hope Step 2. Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

Faith Step 3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.

Courage Step 4. Made a searching and fearless inventory of ourselves.

Integrity Step 5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

Willingness Step 6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

Humility Step 7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

Brotherly Love Step 8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.

Justice Step 9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

Perseverance Step 10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

Spirituality Step 11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

Service Step 12. Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to other alcoholics and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step



HOPE – Step Two

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

At this point, *it's a good idea* that we have a Sponsor, someone to guide us through the Steps. We gain understanding of Alcoholism by attending meetings, and reading literature like the Big Book. We begin to understand that some sort of miracle is needed to keep us away from alcohol. At certain points we might feel we can do it on our own, but deep down we understand our dilemma.

We now look to step two: If, when you honestly want to, you find you cannot quit entirely, or if when drinking you have little control over the amount you take, you are probably alcoholic. If that be the case you may be suffering from an illness which only a spiritual experience will conquer. Big Book page 44

12 & 12; bottom of page 32: Few indeed are the practicing alcoholics who have any idea how irrational they are, or seeing their irrationality, can bear to face it. Some will be willing to term themselves as “problem drinkers” but cannot endure the suggestion that they are in fact mentally ill. **They are abetted in this blindness by a world which does not understand the difference between sane drinking and alcoholism.** “Sanity” is defined as “soundness of mind.” Yet no alcoholic, soberly analyzing his destructive behavior, whether the destruction fell on the dining room furniture or his own moral fiber can claim “soundness of Mind for himself.

Therefore step two is the rallying point for all of us.

“The Promises” in the Big Book (pages 83-84) are read at A.A. meetings worldwide. However, there are many other promises expressed throughout the Book...here are just a few.

Here are thousands of men and women, worldly indeed. They flatly declare that since they have come to believe in a Power greater than themselves, to take a certain attitude toward that Power, and to do certain simple things, there has been a revolutionary change in their way of living and thinking. In the face of collapse and despair, in the face of the total failure of their human resources, they found that a new power, peace, happiness, and sense of direction flowed into them. This happened soon after they wholeheartedly met a few simple requirements. Once confused and baffled by the seeming futility of existence, they show the underlying reasons why they were making heavy going of life. Leaving aside the drink question, they tell why living was so unsatisfactory. They show how the change came over them.

(Big Book p 50-51)

The feeling of having shared in a common peril is one element in the powerful cement which binds us. The tremendous fact for every one of us is that **we have discovered a common solution. We have a way out on which we can absolutely agree, and upon which we can join in brotherly and harmonious action.** This is the great news this book carries to those who suffer from alcoholism. (Big Book Page 17)



Words Worth Repeating

God's Gift: What you are is God's gift to you, what you make of yourself is your gift to God.

Consequences: You choose your behavior, but the world chooses your consequences!

Relationships: Relationships are like putting miracle grow on my character defects.

Wisdom: Wisdom is in the heart, not simply in the head. It is listening, discerning and seeking what is right. Wisdom is a gift from God for the good of ALL his people.

**WE CAN'T SOLVE
A PROBLEM WITH
THE SAME MIND
THAT CREATED IT**

Sponsorship in the Big Book

Where is the role of sponsor described in the Big Book?

Neither the word "sponsor" or "sponsorship" appears in A.A.'s Basic Text, the **First 164 pages of the Big Book**. However, Chapter 7 "Working With Others" describes what a sponsor does, but the word "sponsor" was not introduced to A.A. for several years after publication of the Big Book.

Some say that everything in the Big Book from page 89 through page 164 is the "sponsor's instruction manual."

The Bottom of Page 18 in the Big Book describes the attributes many think are found in a good sponsor: "But the ex-problem drinker who has found this solution, who is properly armed with facts about himself, can generally win the entire confidence of another alcoholic in a few hours. Until such an understanding is reached, little or nothing can be accomplished".

"That the man who is making the approach has had the same difficulty, that he obviously knows what he is talking about, that his whole deportment shouts at the new prospect that he is a man with a real answer, that he has no attitude of Holier Than Thou, nothing whatever except the sincere desire to be helpful; that there are no fees to pay, no axes to grind, no people to please, no lectures to be endured - these are the conditions we have found most effective. After such an approach many take up their beds and walk again".

Although there are no rules for sponsorship, here are SOME attributes that can be helpful: A sponsor should have experience practicing all 12 steps from the Big Book; A Sponsor should have a Sponsor; A Sponsor should have some time on the playing field as a **Recovering** Alcoholic; A Sponsor should be active in Service, and live the Principles of the 12 steps.

Upcoming Events & Announcements

Tradition 1:

Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on A.A. unity.

ELKHART

MINI CONFERENCE

"There is a Solution"

Saturday, March 21, 2015

9:30a-4:00p

Calvary United
Methodist Church
2222 Indiana Ave, Elkhart

Volunteers NEEDED

Contact Jackie G
574-238-8499
jmg4nurse@gmail.com

61st Indiana State Convention

Feb 28-Mar 2, 2014

French Lick Springs Resort
8670 W. State Road 56
French Lick, IN

SECOND SUNDAY BRUNCH

**Each Second Sunday
Each Month**

After Sunday AA Meeting
10:45 At Serenity Hall
Sponsored by Serenity Hall
Donation \$5/\$3 for kids

SATURDAY NIGHT SPEAKER MEETING

**Serenity Hall 8PM
Every Saturday
5th Saturday is Alanon Speaker**

Sponsored by CSO

JAN	Eye Opener
FEB	C.S.O
MAR	
APR	Belmont Group
MAY	
JUN	Back to Basics
JUL	
AUG	How it Works
SEP	That's Why We're Here
OCT	New Hope
NOV	Sunrise Group
DEC	

Sign up through the CSO

AREA 22 SPRING DCM CONFERENCE

Goshen, IN
March 22, 2015
10am-4pm
Shrock Pavilion
411 W. Plymouth, Goshen, IN

A.A. District Meeting

4th Monday Each Month
7PM @ Serenity Hall
Send your GSR
ALL AA MEMBERS WELCOME
Group Service Rep's (GSRs)
Communicate information to and from Groups to District

2015 A.A. INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

July 2-5 2015
Atlanta, GA
AA World Services -80 Years

Happy, Joyous and Free
Get a group together for a road trip!
Registration Now Open
Pre-Registration ends
May 12, 2015

CSO Board Meeting

3rd Monday Each Month
7PM @ Serenity Hall
Send your CSR

ALL AA MEMBERS WELCOME

Central Service Rep's. (CSR's)
Communicate information to and from Groups to CSO

Election of CSO Board Members

**Monday, February 16th
7:00 pm -Serenity Hall**

AL-ANON POTLUCK DINNER/SPEAKER

Bristol United Meth. Church
SATURDAY March 31st
6:00 pm Doors Open
6:30 Dinner 7:30 Speaker

ShareGuide

We would like to hear from you with thoughts, ideas, and comments about the Shareguide. We hope to improve communication between this office and groups, as well as help groups communicate with each other. The Shareguide will be more successful with your input. Contact the Shareguide through the CSO by email, in writing, or in person. Email is the most effective and fastest way to communicate.

shareguideaa@gmail.com

ST. PATRICK'S DAY DINNER

SOUTH BEND, IN
March 22, 2015 --6PM
Clay Methodist Firehouse
17646 Cleveland Rd.

AL-ANON POTLUCK DINNER

Serenity Hall
SATURDAY JANUARY 31st
6:00 pm Doors Open
6:30 Dinner
8:00 Speaker
Bring a Dish to Pass

Remember: We publish the Shareguide Quarterly. If you would like an event or announcement published, think in advance! Some events herein are associated with other groups in Recovery. They are not necessarily endorsed by Alcoholics Anonymous or the Elkhart Central Service Office. They are printed to encourage fellowship, healing, communication, and recovery.

Mission Statement and Disclosure: The Shareguide is published quarterly to communicate information and promote unity throughout Elkhart A.A. Community. The information printed herein are not necessarily statements of A.A nor imply endorsement by either Elkhart C.S.O. or A.A. as a whole. It is financially supported by contributions to Elkhart Central Service Office/Intergroup.