

District 12 Dispatch

District 12’s General Service philosophy, as derived from “A.A.’s Legacy of Service” (Bill W., 1951), is to assist its GSRs to help ensure that their groups carry the message. *“Our Twelfth Step – carrying the message – is the basic service that the A.A. Fellowship gives; this is our principal aim and the main reason for our existence.*

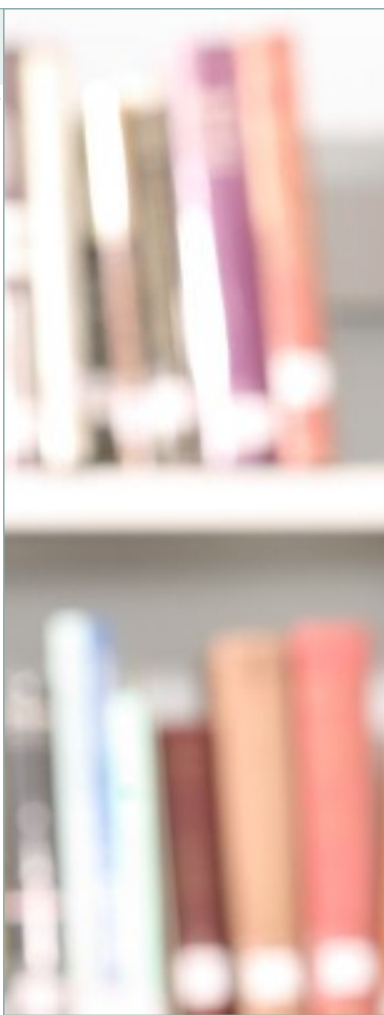
Therefore, A.A. is more than a set of principles; it is a society of alcoholics in action. We must carry the message, else we ourselves can wither and those who haven’t been given the truth may die.

Hence, an A.A. service is anything whatever that helps us to reach a fellow sufferer...”



District 12 General Service is supported by the voluntary contributions of the groups it serves and is guided and directed by the Three Legacies of Recovery, Unity and Service, the guiding principles by which A.A. members recover and by which our Society functions through the principles of A.A.’s **Twelve Steps**, **Twelve Traditions** and **Twelve Concepts**.

District 12’s General Service primary purpose is to stimulate A.A. members interest in general service by relying on good communication as the primary means to show that *“service can add a rich dimension to their sober lives and Twelfth Step work, and that participation is vital to the future of A.A.”* (S23)



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Step 4

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

Principle of this Step:
“Courage”

The One Thing I Need To Know About Step 4: It’s About Causes & Conditions



What Can I Surrender in this Step?

- 1.) Fear of looking at who I was, and
- 2.) Any desire to regret the past

Step Four — “Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves” — is often described as the moment when recovery shifts from the surface level to the soul level. It’s where we stop running from ourselves and begin the courageous work of looking inward with honesty, compassion, and spiritual openness. This step isn’t about self condemnation; it’s about illumination. It invites us to examine the patterns, fears, resentments, and wounds that have shaped our lives so we can finally understand them rather than be driven by them.

At its heart, Step Four is an act of deep soul searching. It asks us to sit quietly with the truth of who we’ve been — not to shame ourselves, but to see ourselves clearly. We explore the stories we’ve carried, the defenses we’ve built, and the ways we’ve harmed others and ourselves. This kind of inner inventory becomes a spiritual excavation: we dig beneath the surface to uncover the roots of our behaviors, the beliefs that no longer serve us, and the emotional debris that has kept us stuck. In that process, we begin to discover the person we were always meant to be.

This step becomes transformative when we approach it with humility and willingness. Step Four teaches us that honesty is not a weapon but a doorway. As we write, reflect, and pray our way through this inventory, we begin to feel a shift — a sense of clarity, relief, and even hope. We realize that we are not defined by our past but freed by our willingness to face it. Step Four prepares the ground for healing, forgiveness, and spiritual growth, making space for the grace that will carry us into the rest of the Steps.

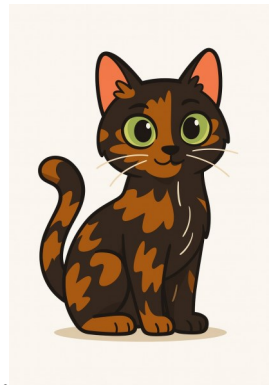
A Sex Prayer:

“God, please help me mold my sex ideals and help me to live up to them. Help me be willing to grow toward my ideals and help me be willing to make amends where I have done harm. Please show me what to do in each specific matter, and be the final judge in each situation. Help me avoid hysterical thinking or advice. Amen.”

“God, please grace me with guidance in each questionable situation, sanity, and strength to do the right thing. If sex becomes very troublesome, quiet my imperious urge, help me not to yield and keep me from heartache as I throw myself the harder into helping others. Help me think of their needs and help me work for them. Amen.”

MYTHS ABOUT THIS STEP

This step is meant to tear you down. Members who complete this step say they feel a newfound confidence once they’ve finally faced themselves. They are ready to start the next chapter of their lives as sober and better versions of themselves.



“Step Four is where the light of truth meets the courage of willingness. When I face myself honestly, I stop being afraid of who I’ve been and start becoming who I’m meant to be.”

Tradition 4 Short Form

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



Overriding Idea of Tradition 4: Our Decisions Affect Others

Principle:
“Autonomy”

AA Tradition Four: The Freedom of Group Autonomy and the Adventure of New Meetings

Tradition Four reminds us that *“Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole.”* This principle gives every AA group the freedom to shape its own meeting format, atmosphere, and style. Autonomy isn’t just an organizational detail—it’s a spiritual gift. It allows groups to respond to the needs of their members, guided by a Higher Power rather than a central authority. This freedom keeps AA flexible, creative, and alive, ensuring that the message of recovery can reach people in many different ways.

Because each group is its own unique expression of recovery, no two meetings are exactly alike. Some are structured and quiet; others are lively and full of laughter. Some focus on the Big Book, others on the Steps, and others on open sharing. This diversity is one of AA’s greatest strengths. It means that no matter where we go, we can find a meeting that speaks to us. And when we step outside our home group and visit new meetings, we get to experience the richness of AA’s variety firsthand. Every room has its own flavor, its own rhythm, and its own way of carrying the message.

Visiting new meetings is one of the most rewarding practices in recovery. It reminds us that AA is bigger than our familiar circle. When we walk into a meeting in a different town—or even just across the city—we hear new voices, new stories, and new perspectives. We’re reminded that the program works everywhere, for all kinds of people. Exploring new meetings keeps our recovery fresh and our hearts open. It strengthens our gratitude for the fellowship and deepens our understanding of Tradition Four: that autonomy, when guided by love and responsibility, creates a vibrant and welcoming AA for all.

Step-Tradition Parallel

If I don’t seek the advice and help of others in matters affecting them, then I again become God in my own life, the exact nature of my wrongs. The steps help to restore my relationship with God (through inventory among other things) and the traditions show me how to get along with God (and others). I was God in my own life. I was a dictator. With others, I was just the opposite. I sought their approval. The fourth tradition solves this dilemma: I seek to be one with God and to be one with others about matters affecting them. There are certain things that must be done alone with God, such as writing inventory. Writing inventory is an auton-

Traditions Inventory

- Do I insist that there are only a few right ways of doing things in AA?
- Does my group always consider the welfare of the rest of AA? Of nearby groups? Of Loners in Alaska? Of Internationalists miles from port? Of a group in Rome or El Salvador?
- Do I put down other members’ behavior when it is different from mine, or do I learn from it?
- Do I always bear in mind that, to those outsiders who know I am in AA, I may to some extent represent our entire beloved Fellowship?
- Am I willing to help a newcomer go to any lengths—his lengths, not mine—to stay sober?
- Do I share my knowledge of AA tools with other members who may not have heard of them?
- What “questions” could we ask ourselves before we make a decision to use our autonomy?
- Does autonomy excuse or justify improper behavior?

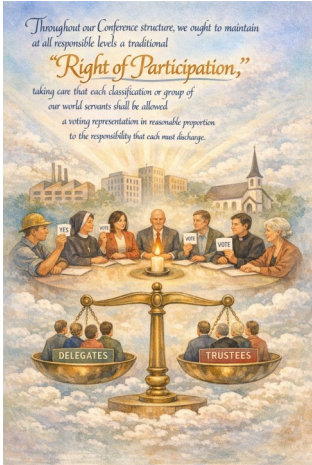
Concept 4

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.

ONE THING YOU NEED TO KNOW:

PRINCIPLE OF THE CONCEPT “PARTICIPATION”

Trusted Servants Have a Right of Participation



The Spiritual Angle of AA’s Concept Four

AA’s Concept Four teaches that *“participation is the key to harmony.”* On the surface, it sounds like a simple guideline for good group functioning, but spiritually it reaches much deeper. This Concept reminds us that every member—no matter their sobriety time, background, or confidence level—has a God given place and voice in the fellowship. When we participate, we honor the truth that our Higher Power works through people, not around them. Participation becomes a spiritual act of showing up, offering what we can, and trusting that our small contribution matters in the larger tapestry of AA.

At its heart, Concept Four invites us to move from passivity to responsibility. Many of us spent years hiding, avoiding, or letting others carry the weight. In service, we learn a new way of living: we step forward, we speak honestly, and we take part in the group conscience. This is deep soul work. It asks us to overcome fear, ego, and the old belief that we have nothing to offer. Spiritually, participation becomes a practice of humility—acknowledging that we are neither the center of the universe nor irrelevant. We are simply one part of a greater whole, guided by a Higher Power who works best when we are willing to be used.

Finally, Concept Four teaches that harmony is not the absence of disagreement but the presence of shared purpose. When everyone participates, the group becomes spiritually balanced. No single personality dominates, and no one is left out. The collective conscience becomes clearer because it reflects many experiences rather than a few opinions. In this way, participation is not just a procedural principle—it is a spiritual safeguard. It protects AA from becoming a hierarchy and keeps us rooted in the humility, unity, and love that make recovery possible. Through participation, we practice the spiritual truth that God speaks most clearly when all of us listen, share, and serve together.

CONCEPTS CHECKLIST

- Do we understand the spiritual principles underlying the “Right of Participation”?
- What does “in reasonable proportion” mean? Do we understand when it is appropriate for A.A. paid staff to have a vote at the [General Service Conference](#) or in our local service structure?
- Do we expect that, because we are A.A. members, we should be allowed to vote at any group, even if we are not active members of that group?

“When I offer my voice with humility and listen with an open heart, I become part of the harmony God is creating in our fellowship. Participation isn’t just service—it’s how I let my Higher Power work through me.”

“Old Behavior isn’t Old Behavior If We’re Still Doing It”



Contribute to the Newsletter

- Your personnel story
- Anniversary or pot luck at your Home Group—Flyers are needed
- Events for the web site
- ahlgrenscott@yahoo.com

All these events can be found on “twinportsaa.org”
with flyers and directions

- 3-27-2026: Aim for Ames Roundup—Ames Iowa
- 3-28-2026: Stearns County Roundup—Cold Spring MN
- 3-28-2026: Area 35 Assembly—Alexandria MN
- 4-11-2026: Gratitude Night—Minneapolis MN
- 4-17-2026: Superior Roundup—Superior WI
- 4-17-2026: Sunlight of the Spirit Weekend—Fairmont MN
- 9-2027: West Central Regional Forum—Duluth MN

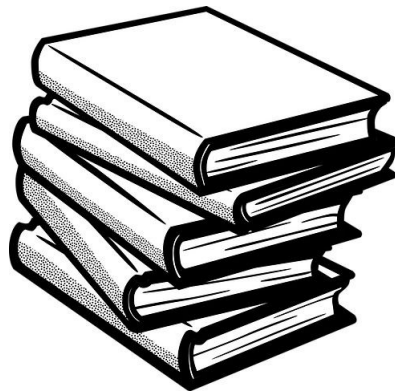


0800 AA WORKS
aa.org.nz
help@aa.org.nz



TWIN PORTS INTERGROUP

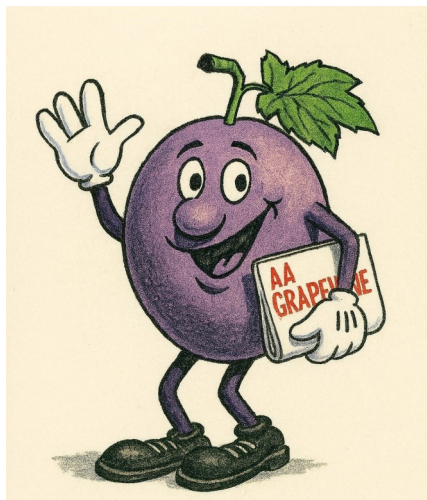
- Reading library stocked with all AA books and literature
- Flyers and announcements for events
- Volunteer opportunities galore
- Meeting directories



2024 W 3rd St
Duluth MN 55806
218-727-8117

Twin Ports Area Intergroup is here to help anyone who has a drinking problem.

Our sole purpose is to carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous and to be of service to A.A. Groups in Northern Minnesota & Wisconsin.



April 2026



In every copy:

- Letter from the editor
- Dear Grapevine
- Discussion topic



AA Grapevine YouTube

The Grapevine has a YouTube channel where visitors can listen to submitted stories from A.A. members.

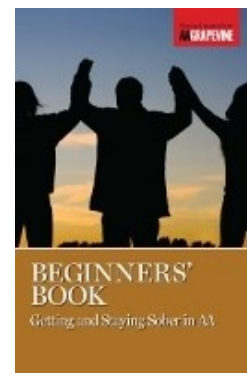
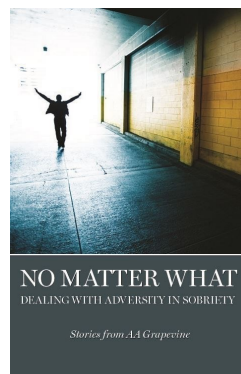
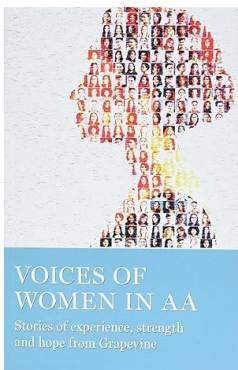
Daily Reflections for April

Your Daily Reflection each day can be found at “Twinportsaa.org”

- Demands made upon other people for too much attention, protection, and love can only invite domination or revulsion. . . .
- We have not once sought to be one in a family, to be a friend among friends, to be a worker among workers, to be a useful member of society. Always we tried to struggle to the top of the heap, or to hide underneath it. This self-centered behavior blocked a partnership relation with any one of those about us. Of true brotherhood we had small comprehension.
- . . . where alcohol has been involved, we have been strangely insane.
- . . . harboring resentment is infinitely grave. For then we shut ourselves off from the sunlight of the spirit.
- . . . we ask God to direct our thinking, especially asking that it be divorced from self-pity, dishonest or self-seeking motives.
- All A.A. progress can be reckoned in terms of just two words: humility and responsibility. Our whole spiritual development can be accurately measured by our degree of adherence to these magnificent standards.

Month of April in A.A. History

- 1935: Dr. Silkworth told Bill to quit preaching at drunks & tell them of obsession & allergy.
- 1939: April 1st—Publication date of Alcoholics Anonymous, AA’s Big Book.
- 1941: Ruth Hock reported there were 1,500 letters asking for help as a result of the Saturday Evening Post Article by Jack Alexander.
- 1958: The word “honest” dropped from AA Preamble, “an honest desire to stop drinking”.



I am responsible. When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there. And for that I am responsible.