

## 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.*

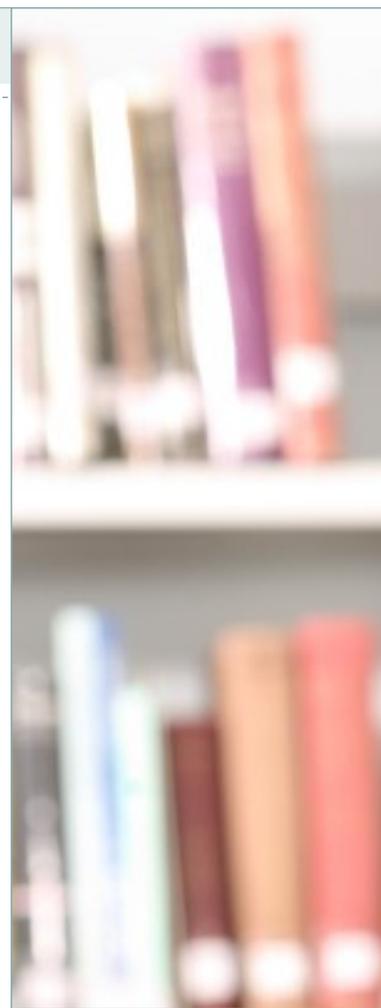
*Therefore, A.A. is more than a set of principles; it is a society of alcoholics in action. We must carry the message, else we ourselves can wither and those who haven’t been given the truth may die.*

*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 2

**“Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.”**

### The One Thing I Need To Know About Step 2: The Solution To My Problem Isn't Me

#### Principle of this Step: Hope



Step Two—“Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity”—invites us into the first real stirring of hope after the devastation of Step One. When we admit powerlessness, it can feel like standing in the ruins of our old life. Step Two doesn't demand certainty, theology, or perfect faith; it simply opens a door. It whispers that maybe, just maybe, we are not beyond help. That tiny “maybe” is the seed of hope. It's the moment when the darkness is no longer absolute, because a sliver of light has found its way in.

Hope in Step Two is not passive or sentimental. It is a courageous act of imagination. We begin to picture a life not ruled by alcohol, even if we don't yet know how to live it. We start to believe that restoration is possible—not because we suddenly feel strong, but because we sense that strength can come from beyond our own limited resources. This hope grows as we listen to others in the rooms who have walked the same path and found healing. Their stories become living proof that sanity can be restored, that broken lives can be rebuilt, and that we are not uniquely doomed.

As hope takes root, Step Two becomes a turning point. It shifts us from despair to possibility, from isolation to connection, from self-reliance to spiritual openness. Hope doesn't solve our problems, but it gives us the willingness to continue. It softens the heart just enough to let grace in. In this way, Step Two is the spiritual spark that prepares us for the deeper work ahead. It reminds us that recovery is not about doing the impossible—it's about allowing ourselves to be helped, guided, and restored by a Power that wants us whole.



#### What Can I Surrender in this Step?

- 1.) My desire to control everything myself, and
- 2.) My belief that I am responsible for the outcome of my life

### MYTHS ABOUT THIS STEP

**Your higher power has to be God.** This is a big misconception in Alcoholics Anonymous. Your higher power can be anything that you believe in: the Universe, nature, Buddha, music, love, Allah, humanity or even AA itself. Another thing to remember is that your Higher Power doesn't need to have a gender (even though in 1939, Bill W. felt it easier to use one for our basic text). AA doesn't require you to believe in anything that you don't want to; each step is a suggestion along the road to a sober life.

### Step Checklist

#### IN YOUR PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS:

1. Am I obsessed with what others are not doing in my life rather than what I can contribute to the relationships I am in?
2. Am I relying on an obsession with food, sugar, caffeine, or smoking rather than relying totally on a HP?
3. Am I ready to believe that I can be restored to sanity in all my relationships and “appetites?”

#### AT WORK:

1. Am I a workaholic? Do I have a balance in my life around work? Do I need sanity here?
2. Am I obsessed with financial success? Am I ready to be restored to sanity financially and be content with giving service, knowing that the miracle of sobriety is enough?

#### WITH GOD AND IN A.A.:

1. Do I trust the relationship I have with HP or am I just trying to use HP for my purposes?
2. Do I ask HP for sobriety and relief from the obsession to drink or am I trying to do it by myself?
2. Am I seeking the experience, strength and hope of the sponsor HP has sent me? Or, am I still trying to run the show?

## Tradition 2 Short Form

“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.”



### Overriding Idea of Tradition 2: God Speaks Through His Kids



**Principle:**  
“IDENTIFICATION”

Tradition Two reminds us that the heart of Alcoholics Anonymous is not individual authority, personal opinion, or force of personality, but a spiritual principle: for our group purpose, there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. This Tradition invites us to trust that guidance emerges not from any one member’s will, but from the collective humility, honesty, and willingness of the group. When we gather to make decisions, we are not simply exchanging ideas; we are seeking a spiritual direction that rises from the shared experience and sincerity of the members.

This principle protects AA from the dangers of ego, domination, and personal agendas. It reminds us that no matter how passionate or experienced any one of us may be, the group conscience is wiser than any individual. When we pause, listen, pray, and reflect together, something greater than ourselves can work through us. The loving God of our understanding does not shout orders; He speaks quietly through patience, respect, and the willingness to hear one another. Tradition Two teaches us that unity is not achieved by winning arguments, but by seeking guidance beyond our own limited viewpoint.

The second half of the Tradition—“Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern”—keeps our service structure grounded in humility. AA does have leaders, but they lead by example, not by authority. They serve because the group has entrusted them with responsibilities, not because they hold power. A chairperson, GSR, DCM, or committee member is simply a fellow alcoholic performing a task on behalf of the group. Their role is to facilitate, not to command; to listen, not to dictate; to help the group discern God’s will, not to impose their own.

When we combine these two ideas—spiritual authority expressed through group conscience, and leadership rooted in service—we create a Fellowship that is both spiritually guided and practically functional. Tradition Two ensures that AA remains a place where every voice matters, where decisions are made with care, and where leadership is an act of love rather than control. By practicing this Tradition, we keep our groups healthy, our unity strong, and our purpose clear: to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers

#### STEP-TRADITION PARALLEL

Each tradition answers the question raised by the parallel step. The second step raises the question of how I can come to believe and what is sanity. I came to believe by trusting the group conscience in A.A., and then I began to trust God and eventually the world. The experience of trusting A.A. to keep me sober is the experience that gave me confidence in God and in you. This is how the second tradition helped me to come to believe.

### Examples of leadership in our groups

An **elder statesman** is the kind of trusted servant who leads by example rather than authority. Their influence comes from humility, patience, and a genuine desire to help the group grow. They listen more than they speak, they encourage participation, and they remember that the group conscience—not personal preference—is the ultimate authority. Their presence brings steadiness, unity, and a sense of spiritual maturity that helps the group stay focused on our primary purpose.

A **bleeding deacon**, on the other hand, is someone who believes they *should* be running the show. They may have long service time, but their ego gets tangled up in their opinions. Instead of guiding, they push; instead of inviting discussion, they insist on being right. Their frustration often comes from feeling unappreciated or overlooked, and if unchecked, this attitude can divide the group. The contrast reminds us that the spirit of service—not the length of service—is what keeps AA healthy and united.

## Concept 2

“The General Service Conference of A.A. has become, for nearly every practical purpose, the active voice and the effective conscience of our whole society in its world affairs.”

### Long Form

“When, in 1955, the A.A. groups confirmed the permanent charter for their General Service Conference, they thereby delegated to the Conference complete authority for the active maintenance of our world services and thereby made the Conference—excepting for any change in the Twelve Traditions or in Article 12 of the Conference Charter—the actual voice and the effective conscience for our whole Society.”



### ONE THING YOU NEED TO KNOW:

**The Conference Listens – Then Speaks**

### PRINCIPLE OF THE CONCEPT **RELIANCE**

#### **The Heart of Concept Two: Trusted Delegation**

Concept Two teaches us that A.A. functions best when the Fellowship entrusts responsibility to those who serve on its behalf. Just as a home group delegates tasks to its GSR, the entire Fellowship delegates authority to the General Service Conference. This isn't delegation as a formality—it's delegation rooted in trust. We empower others to act because no single group, district, or individual can carry the full weight of A.A.'s world services alone. Delegation ensures that A.A.'s collective conscience can be heard, processed, and acted upon with clarity and unity.

#### **Delegation as a Spiritual Practice**

Delegation in A.A. is not about giving up control—it's about practicing humility. When we delegate, we acknowledge that others have gifts, perspectives, and experiences that enrich our Fellowship. We let go of the illusion that we must manage everything ourselves. This mirrors our personal recovery: we learn to rely on a Power greater than ourselves, and in service, we learn to rely on the group and its trusted servants. Delegation becomes a spiritual discipline that keeps ego in check and invites collaboration, patience, and faith in the process.

#### **Delegation in Action: How It Strengthens Us**

When A.A. delegates authority effectively, it creates a structure where decisions can be made thoughtfully and efficiently. Delegates, trustees, and service workers are empowered to act—not as rulers, but as guardians of A.A.'s principles. This frees the Fellowship from paralysis and allows world services to function smoothly. At the group level, delegation prevents burnout, encourages participation, and builds unity. When we trust our representatives to carry our voice, we strengthen the chain of service that connects every member—from the newcomer to the Conference floor.

### **Concepts Checklist**

1. Do we have an understanding of the history of the General Service Conference (the “Conference”)?
2. What is a Conference Advisory Action?
3. Does our home group's G.S.R., D.C.M., area delegate report back to the group on the highlights of the Conference and Conference Advisory Actions?
4. Is our group meeting its wider Seventh Tradition responsibilities?

**“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](mailto:ahlgrenscott@yahoo.com)

All these events can be found on “[twinportsaa.org](http://twinportsaa.org)”  
with flyers and directions

- 1-15-2026 District 12 meeting—Duluth
- 1-16-2026: Area 36 Recovery, Unity, & Service Conference—Mankato
- 1-17-2026: Area 35 Winter Workshop—Hibbing
- 1-31-2026 Trusted Leadership Training—Zoom
- 2-1-2026: Intergroup Gratitude Party—Duluth
- 2-13-2026: Wils Rice Roundup—Mahnommen MN
- 2-27-2026: West Central Regional Service Conference—Cedar Rapids IA

## The Twelve Concepts

OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

1. Final responsibility and ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.
2. The General Service Conference of A.A. has become, for nearly every practical purpose, the active voice and the effective conscience of our whole society in its world affairs.
3. 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.”
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.
5. Throughout our structure, a traditional “Right of Appeal” ought to prevail, so that minority opinion will be heard and personal grievances receive careful consideration.
6. The Conference recognizes that the chief initiative and active responsibility in most world service matters should be exercised by the trustee members of the Conference acting as the General Service Board.
7. The Charter and Bylaws of the General Service Board are legal instruments, empowering the trustees to manage and conduct world service affairs. The Conference Charter is not a legal document; it relies upon tradition and the A.A. purse for final effectiveness.
8. The trustees are the principal planners and administrators of over-all policy and finance. They have custodial oversight of the separately incorporated and constantly active services, exercising this through their ability to elect all the directors of these entities.
9. Good service leadership at all levels is indispensable for our future functioning and safety. Primary world service leadership, once exercised by the founders, must necessarily be assumed by the trustees.
10. Every service responsibility should be matched by an equal service authority, with the scope of such authority well defined.
11. The trustees should always have the best possible committees, corporate service directors, executives, staffs, and consultants. Composition, qualifications, induction procedures, and rights and duties will always be matters of serious concern.
12. The Conference shall observe the spirit of A.A. tradition, taking care that it never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds and reserve be its prudent financial principle; that it place none of its members in a position of unqualified authority over others; that it reach all important decisions by discussion, vote, and whenever possible, substantial unanimity; that its actions never be personally punitive nor an incitement to public controversy; that it never perform acts of government; that, like the Society it serves, it will always remain democratic in thought and action.

## TWIN PORTS INTERGROUP

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



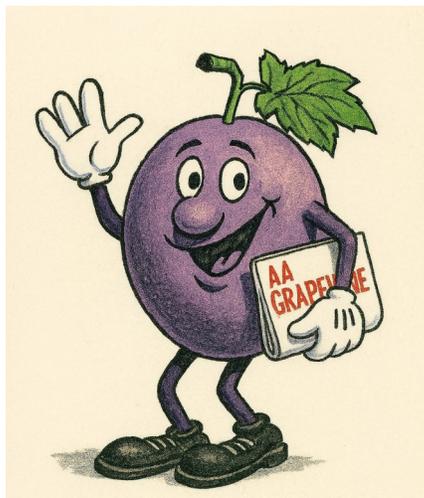
2024 W 3rd St  
Duluth MN 55806  
218-727-8117

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.

# Daily Reflections for February

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



The AA Grapevine Half-Hour Variety Hour. Featuring AA members Don and Sam.

The AA Grapevine Half-Hour Variety Hour. Featuring long-time AA members Don and Sam.

Each week Don and Sam will interview a different member about their experience, strength and hope, in a casual “meeting after the meeting” manner. Special features will enhance each episode.

A new podcast episode will be available in English every Monday at 9:00 am EST.

## In every copy:

- Letter from the editor
- Dear Grapevine
- Discussion topic
- Alcoholism at large
- At Wits End



## AA Grapevine YouTube

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

- “. . . Step Two gently and very gradually began to infiltrate my life. I can't say upon what occasion or upon what day I came to believe in a Power greater than myself, but I certainly have that belief now.”
- Therefore, Step Two is the rallying point for all of us. Whether agnostic, atheist, or former believer, we can stand together on this Step.
- We asked ourselves why we had them [fears]. Wasn't it because self-reliance failed us?
- Selfishness — self-centeredness! That, we think, is the root of our troubles
- Are these extravagant promises? We think not. They are being fulfilled among us — sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly. They will always materialize if we work for them.
- A.A. is no success story in the ordinary sense of the word. It is a story of suffering transmuted, under grace, into spiritual progress.
- When told that our Society has no president having authority to govern it, no treasurer who can compel the payment of any dues, . . . our friends gasp and exclaim, “This simply can't be. . . .”

## Month of February in A.A. History

- 1937: The Oxford Group's “alcoholic squadron” meets at Hank P.'s home in NJ
- 1939: 400 copies of the Bog Book's “Original Manuscript” are sent to doctors, judges, psychiatrists & others for comment
- 1939: A Montclair NJ psychiatrist (Dr. Howard) suggests swapping the “you musts” in the Big Book for “we ought”
- 1940: The 1st clubhouse for AA's opened at 334 ½ West 24th Street in NYC



**INTO ACTION**  
How AA members practice the program in their daily lives



**IN OUR OWN WORDS**  
Stories of Young AAs in Recovery



**MAKING AMENDS**  
Finding a new freedom

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.